



TIPPECANOE COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2022 – FY 2024

Introduction & Background

The Tippecanoe County Public Library (TCPL) located in north central Indiana first opened in 1882 and is now a four-branch library system. TCPL's branches consist of the Downtown Library, the Wea Prairie Branch, the Wyandotte Branch, and the Klondike Branch. The library's service population is estimated at 165,000, serving much of Tippecanoe County. TCPL branches house a collection of nearly 340,000 items and circulate over 1.5 million items per year.

This plan represents the overall strategy for TCPL over the next three fiscal years and is presented to the Board of Trustees for approval in April 2021. Upon approval, library staff will finalize an activity plan to support the overall strategy and evolve while working toward goals. Staff will regularly review progress toward meeting plan goals and report to the Board.

The planning process was inclusive and enlightening. TCPL remains committed to the community and the core library services they provide. They are excited about the focus this plan will bring through Fiscal Year 2024. The Board met to discuss and review current library offerings and to bring clarity about the future direction of services, programs, and facilities. The Library hopes this plan inspires growth and change over the next three plus years that lead to increased impact in the community.

The Library engaged in a strategic planning process with assistance from consultant Amanda E. Standerfer from [Fast Forward Libraries](#). The Planning Team included:

- Michelle Brantley, Marketing Director & Brand Manager at Greater Lafayette Commerce
- Amy Wood, Executive Director at Lafayette Adult Resource Academy
- Gail Summers, TCPL Board Member and QI Director at Valley Oaks Health
- Mary Springer, TCPL Board Member and Retired School Librarian
- Rain Gerteis, TCPL Branch Assistant
- Tia Love, TCPL Branch Assistant
- Melissa Freed, TCPL Youth Librarian
- Tori Tracy, TCPL Head Reference Librarian
- Neal Starkey, TCPL Divisional Librarian
- Jos N. Holman, TCPL County Librarian

The Planning Team met several times during the strategic planning process starting in October 2020 to ensure momentum and give input on various aspects of the process. The Planning Team played a vital role in developing the community survey and final plan documents.

Planning Process & Data Highlights

In order to create a cohesive, actionable plan, the Board and staff reviewed a wide variety of existing data, conducted a Community Survey, gathered input from staff/Board through surveys and an environmental scan and SOAR analysis. Eight community focus groups were held with 45 community members attending, and eight community members also participated in interviews. The Community Survey was completed by 312 community members and was key for understanding current Library strengths, services valued by the community, and areas of focus for future growth. Feedback from all evaluations indicated the desire for TCPL to increase community partnerships through more outreach services, add diverse programming, improve awareness of services, and update the downtown library facility. Staff feedback also indicated the need to improve staff culture and increase communication across departments.

At the retreat session in December 2020 and January 2021, Board and staff members reviewed process learning and narrowed strategic directions and goals. Staff focused on possible activities to achieve the plan goals. The retreat sessions brought cohesion to the developing plan and allowed for the plan's design to emerge. The Board spent time refining the vision and mission statements at their March 2021 meeting.

Vision

Enriching lives by offering opportunities to explore, learn, connect, and grow.

Our vision is what we aspire to achieve in the community by effectively carrying out our mission as a public library. We know that the library enriches lives and working towards this vision will focus our attention on providing enrichment programs, services, spaces, and materials for people to explore, learn, connect, and grow.

Mission

We welcome all to engage and connect through equitable access to materials, resources, learning opportunities, technology, and library programs.

Our mission states how we operate as a public library to achieve our vision for the community. We are committed to being a welcoming place for the entire community and for providing equitable access to the materials, resources, services, technology, programs, and spaces we provide. This statement will guide how we organize our work throughout the life of this plan.

Values

1. **Respect for all.** We treat all our customers, and each other, as valued, responsible individuals.
2. **Service.** We provide excellent services that respond to changing, diverse customer needs.
3. **Integrity.** We follow the highest ethical standards of honesty and openness.
4. **Fiscal accountability.** As a public institution, we practice sound fiscal management.
5. **Confidentiality.** We safeguard all users' rights to request and obtain information in confidence, within state and federal statutes.
6. **Parental responsibility.** We expect parents to guide and supervise their children's use of library collections, services and programs. TCPL's board and staff do not serve in loco parentis, as a substitute for parents.
7. **Professional growth.** The board and staff mutually commit to their continuous professional development.

Our values reflect the way we work together and with the community. We strive to uphold these values in all our interactions and through the services we offer. These values form the foundation of the goals in this strategic plan.

Strategic Directions

This plan is divided into three strategic directions forming a value proposition equation:

$$\textit{Community Connector} + \textit{Experience Makers} = \textit{Valued Resource}$$

During the Board and staff retreats, the discussion focused on the essential ways the library should move forward to increase community outreach and visibility, enhance the resources and services provided through materials and programming, and improve the overall library experience by implementing physical improvements at the library's downtown facility. We want to connect with the community in our physical buildings and through expanded community partnerships. We also aim to increase community input regarding programming and collections while providing a creative, technology-rich hub for the community.

Goals, Activities, Measures

The following pages give additional detail for each strategic direction, including potential activities for each goal and possible metrics. Library staff will draft the activity plan that will serve as an implementation guide. Regular activity updates will be presented at future Board meetings.

COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

We unite our community by reaching out to all, developing strong partnerships, and bringing people together.

Public libraries are a central source of connection in their communities. TCPL seeks to connect with patrons across all demographics, acknowledging that connection with the library is different for everyone. Through in-house events and expanded outreach efforts, we will increase awareness of specialty library services while encouraging new engagement. TCPL is committed to strengthened connections with valued partners, collaborating across sectors to meet a variety of needs in our community.

Goals	Activities
1) We are a community space for inclusive collaboration, connection, and civic engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host networking events, book groups, and diverse programming that encourages civic engagement. • Provide meeting space for community nonprofit groups.
2) We have enhanced outreach efforts to broaden our impact and visibility in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentivization for increased library usage and inviting others. • Library presence at community events and pop-up library events. • Enhance communication and publicity efforts via social media and other platforms.
3) We have strong relationships with community partners with complimentary missions for maximum collaboration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New list of community partners and plans for connection with new partners. • Participation in key community initiatives.

Potential Measures of Success

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in library-led community events. • Patron feedback and increased overall library usage indicates new publicity is successful. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partnership evaluation shows increased connections with new partners and deepened connections with others. • Increased usage of library meeting spaces. |
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EXPERIENCE MAKERS

We are the community’s resource for information, technology, and learning, providing equitable access to all.

One of the library’s fundamental functions is to provide access to knowledge, information, and entertainment through a variety of materials and services, both traditional and digital. TCPL will expand access to more diverse programming while evaluating all collection materials and expanding where appropriate. We will collaborate with local partners to enrich our programs and encourage a culture of lifelong learning and creativity. Throughout these objectives, we will strive to evaluate and implement user-centered technology that enhances traditional and emerging library services.

Goals	Activities
1) We are building a literate community by cultivating the joy of reading as a pillar for individual and community strength.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate collection needs including input from community. • Evaluate library usage patterns and patron habits. • Continue curbside service and expand home delivery options.
2) We embrace lifelong learning by offering responsive and diverse programming that inspires, entertains, provides information, and sparks creativity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recurring programs for increased access and participation. • Increased programming to create and have hands on experiences. • Partner more for community educational programming.
3) We help community members navigate digital literacy by providing access to equipment and training for increased confidence with technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update technology plan and evaluate current hardware replacement plan. • Train staff to better assist patrons with various tech needs. • Offer group and one-on-one tech training opportunities.

Potential Measures of Success

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased program attendance and patron satisfaction with programming. • Increased understanding of patron usage patterns. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in overall digital literacy skills in the community. |
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VALUED RESOURCE

We are a vital, valued community resource supporting growth, innovation, and aspirations with a deeply engaged staff and Board.

TCPL aims to be a community space that provides valuable resources, functional facilities and opportunities for all. Our facilities are welcoming places that invite community members to engage with the library through a wide variety of library services. TCPL staff is engaged in positive teambuilding, and our Trustees are knowledgeable about the library’s needs and committed to sustainable stewardship of resources. Above all, we have a culture of inclusivity and transparency that positively impacts our daily interactions with patrons and community partners.

Goals	Activities
1) We have versatile, welcoming, and inclusive spaces for community members to gather and engage with the library and each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remodel downtown facility to improve comfort and overall welcoming aesthetic. • Develop flexible seating and spaces to better accommodate small groups.
2) We have a supportive work environment that encourages staff learning and co-creation which leads to excellent service to the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create opportunities to get feedback about staff culture. • Review processes and procedures while improving communication across departments. • Develop individual learning plans for staff. • Staff contribution/participation in the profession.
3) We are an essential community resource with high standards for accountability, transparency, and stewardship.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand opportunities for regular community feedback. • Review transparency practices and update long-term financial plans. • Provide Trustee training. • Engage the Friends and Foundation for expanded volunteer and donor opportunities.

Potential Measures of Success

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patron surveys and focus groups provide valuable community input. • Board members increase knowledge and understand roles and responsibilities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff indicates increased job satisfaction and reports positive workplace culture. • Overall library culture represents inclusivity and transparency. |
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Next Steps

After this plan is adopted by the Board, staff will complete the activity plan to guide implementation. Implementation is a continual process, and the timing of certain activities will be determined by priority and influenced by various factors such as physical space remodels. Review and adjustment of the activity plan will happen on a regular basis.

Evaluation of the plan will be ongoing once the plan implementation is underway. Measurements for each goal will vary, and some activities will be best evaluated by collecting data through patron and community surveys. Other activities will be evaluated based on information collected in-house such as circulation, usage statistics, and program participation. Some goals will be met by creating deliverables, like plans for outreach and partnerships. Continued reporting of successes and challenges will ensure that the library is transparent about progress and open to community feedback.

The library commits to a comprehensive review and update of this plan at its completion. This plan will move TCPL significantly forward in guiding next steps on plans for increased outreach, expanded access to diverse resources, and overall improved patron experience. This plan is an investment in the future of the library as a growing asset of the community.

Theory of Change

As part of our strategic planning process, we wanted to look even further into the future and identify the change we hoped to see in our community as a result of the library's work. We used the framework of a theory of change to put together statements and a graphic for the high-level, long-term outcomes we aspire to achieve. While this does not represent a traditional theory of change as our process was not deep, we believe this chart and graphic shows the relationship between the library and community in a clear and compelling way and that this exercise can guide the library's future strategic planning efforts.

What will the community look like in 10 years because TCPL is a thriving institution that responds to community needs?

Because the library...	The community will...
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Responds to community needs and works to reach everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Value and rely on library services that adapt to community needs over time• Be resilient• Feel supported by the library• See the library as a community hub
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inspires literacy and reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have increased literacy rates• Have increased school readiness scores• Have increased high school graduation rates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a strong community of readers • Have an educated populace • Have economic growth • Have reduced poverty rates
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is committed to lifelong learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be full of creative people • Be knowledgeable about current events • Evolve its understanding and tolerance for new ideas and differing perspectives • Promote social development • Have increased personal self esteem • Promote self sufficiency
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a community resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to the library for leadership and inspiration • Actively partner with the library on broad community initiatives • Use library spaces for meetings and collaboration • Be informed about what is happening in the community • Be more engaged in the community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a community connector and fosters civic engagement, inclusivity, and diversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be diverse and open to transparent, honest, respectable, and fair dialogue • Be a place that attracts people to visit and live • See themselves in the library's collections, programs, and staff • Promotes democracy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treats staff as a valuable asset and carefully stewards resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Want to work at the library • Have great experiences when they come to the library • Be proud of library facilities • Want to visit the library • Understands the value their tax dollars provide • Place value on the library as a community service