JOHNSON CREEK
PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN

2015-2018

Introduction

The Johnson Creek Public Library is a very well-regarded and well-used community resource that provides highly valued services to the public. Respondents to a community library survey and those that attended a community conversation indicated a high-level of satisfaction with the resources and services provided by the library, in addition to indicating they find the services and resources provided by the library as very important to the community.

The library began a strategic planning process in April of 2015 and completed the planning process in September 2015. The library hired WiLS, a non-profit Wisconsin organization that provides planning and project management services to libraries, to coordinate and facilitate the planning process.

The process began with gathering data from a number of sources including an assessment of library assets and capacities, collection usage statistics, a survey on library technology usage, a community-wide survey about library resources and services, and Wisconsin library data from the Division for Libraries and Technology in the Department of Public Instruction.

On June 17, 2015 twenty-four community members attended a community conversation to discuss aspirations and challenges to identify services and resources the library can provide to help the community reach its aspirations and address its challenges. This information along with the other data and information was compiled and assessed to inform the development of the strategic plan. On August 19, 2015 library staff and library board trustees convened for a planning session to develop strategic goals and initiatives for the library.

Some of the main findings of the planning process include:
- In comparison to other Wisconsin public libraries with a municipal population within 10% of Johnson Creek, Johnson Creek Public Library's overall funding is a little below average.
- The library provides significantly more programming to children than comparable communities.
- The library maintains a collection near the average of its peer libraries despite being in a facility half the size of the average of the other comparable libraries.
- While the library has just two fewer open hours each week than the average of comparable libraries, it maintains these open hours with about one half-time employee less than libraries in similarly sized communities.

The library wishes to thank everyone that helped with the development of this strategic plan. The library is very grateful and appreciative to all the community members that took time to respond to surveys and attend the community conversation.

Strategic Service Goal I

Maintain current funding and develop new funding sources.

Rationale

While the library operates with funding, both at the municipal level and overall, that is similar to communities of the same size, without expanding its funding sources the library cannot continue to provide the current level of services and develop new programming that community members expressed a desire for both in the community survey and during the community conversation. Both the staff, about a half-time employee less than the comparable libraries, and the facility, half the size of the other libraries, are beyond capacity.

This will take minimally maintaining funding from the community to cover current costs and annual regular expense increases, and for the library to develop new funding sources.

Initiative

A. Identify options for developing a library endowment.

>   *Activities*
>   1. Work with community leadership to identify current local non-profit foundations the library could partner with to develop an endowment within the existing foundation.
>   2. Explore foundation options for developing an endowment that exist or could be developed through the Bridges Library System.

Initiative

B. In partnership with library friends group, identify sources for funding a library endowment and potential sponsors for library programming.

>   *Activities*
>   1. Identify library resources, services and other areas that will benefit from outside sponsorship.
>   2. Develop a marketing brochure or packet to provide to potential sponsors.
>   3. Identify potential sponsors within the community for the different areas identified and communicate sponsorship opportunities to the potential sponsors.
>   4. Develop a marketing plan to increase awareness of the library as an option in the community where people can donate money. In particular, develop an informational brochure that could be provided to area attorneys and

financial planners to inform people about the library being a valuable community resource to consider when they engage in estate planning.

Strategic Service Goal II

Identify and implement options to increase staff capacity.

Rationale

The library is currently open 45 hours per week. The total weekly staff hours equals 108. Within this available time the staff must fulfill the following, to name a few:
- all administrative duties
- provide patron assistance and training
- manage the library collection from purchase through usage and removal from the collection
- develop and provide all library programming
- participate in both local governance as needed and required and in both the regional and state library community
- engage in continuing education to hone current skills and develop new skills
- manage maintaining the library facility including all library technology equipment
- develop library marketing and promotional materials, seek and engage in partnerships

As previously noted, the library staff does all of this while staffed at about 20 hours less per week than libraries in comparably sized communities in Wisconsin.

Initiative

A. Increase staff hours.

> *Activity*
> 1. Work with community officials to increase library funding to minimally bring the library's staffing level in line with the average of comparable libraries in Wisconsin, which would mean adding 20 hours per week.

Initiative

B. Explore finding unpaid interns and volunteers to increase staff capacity, especially during the summer.

> *Activities*
> 1. Work with local higher education institutions, including Maranatha Baptist University, to promote internship opportunities at the library.

2. Develop a comprehensive list of volunteer opportunities at the library that includes both ongoing volunteer activities and short-term projects. Work with the friends group to promote these opportunities in the community to recruit volunteers.

Initiative
C. Investigate potential shared staffing models.

Activity
1. Meet with school officials to discuss potential of a shared staffing model between the high school library and public library.

Strategic Service Goal III
Develop and expand library facility space to meet current demand and future library programing, technology, and material needs.

Rationale
The Johnson Creek Public Library has 3,276 square feet. This is just over half of the average, 6,220 square feet, of libraries in similar sized municipalities in Wisconsin. The library does maintain a collection that is near the average of the other libraries, however, the result is the library is out of space. The lack of space impacts the ability of the library to provide programming and limits the number of computers available for the public, six, which is one third less than the average of nine among the comparable libraries.

As the half-life of job skills continues to shrink each year, citizens look more and more to their public library as a place where they are able to learn or sharpen job skills, especially those related to office productivity software, and where they can use computers and the internet to research and apply for jobs or independent business opportunities.

Initiative
A. Identify opportunities to increase space available for library resources and programming.

Activities
1. Work with community leaders to identify feasible options to provide the library with more square footage, including expanding the library space in the current building.

2. Explore partnership opportunities to provide library programming off-site, including at the community center.

Initiative

B. Develop new space use models for the library meeting room.

   Activity
   1. Engage in space designing to reimagine the ways in which the current meeting space can be converted to serve as a place for teens and as a wireless lounge for patrons bringing their own devices and technology while maintaining the ability to use the meeting room for meetings and programming.

Strategic Service Goal IV

Provide high-quality programming to meet the educational and recreational needs for patrons of all ages.

Rationale

The Johnson Creek Public Library excels in providing programs for children. This is demonstrated through the comparison with other Wisconsin libraries in similar sized communities. Johnson Creek Public Library provided 154 programs for children in 2014 with a total attendance just over 2,600. This is equates to nearly 50 more programs than the average of the other 17 libraries that have a similar municipal population, and 500 more children that attended programming at Johnson Creek Public Library in 2014 than the average of those comparable libraries.

However, the data also indicates Johnson Creek Public Library provided just 15 non-children programs in 2014. On average, the comparable libraries offered 50 non-children's programs in 2014. As part of the planning process, Johnson Creek area residents were asked about programing preferences as part of a community survey and during the community conversation. Though the number of respondents to the community survey were not enough for the survey to be considered a scientific representation of the community, the consistency of the responses along with the input participants shared at the community conversation indicate a need and high desire for more programs for adults, especially programs that teach a subject or skill.

Initiative

A. Develop programs and resources that teach skills to adults.

<u>*Activities*</u>
1. Identify and develop specific skill-building program areas where there is potential to find area volunteers, partners and experts that could assist with delivering skill-building programs.
2. With assistance from the Bridges Library System staff, develop promotional and how-to-use materials for the Gale Courses offerings provided by the Bridges Library System. When applicable, partner adult program offerings with related Gale Courses.
3. Identify and purchase software and technology to develop program opportunities for patrons to learn skills related to content creation including audio, video, graphic design and other potential maker-space type of activities and applications.

Initiative
B. Develop programming opportunities specifically for older community members.

<u>*Activities*</u>
1. Identify and develop potential club-like activities for older citizens to join at the library to provide socialization opportunities.
2. Partner with the recreation center to develop older adult physical activity programs and classes.
3. Create programs for older adults to learn basic technology from email to internet to using handheld devices to network and PC security.

Initiative
C. Create programs and opportunities for teens to gather to collaborate, learn and socialize.

<u>*Activities*</u>
1. Create a teen council to aid in identifying programming and resources teens will engage with at the library.
2. Develop opportunities for teens to volunteer at the library, particularly facilitating multi-generational learning opportunities where teens are able to share their technology skills with older members of the community.

Strategic Service Goal V
Increase marketing of library services and resources and enhance library outreach services.

Rationale

The library has a current stable base of regular users. However, there is potential for the library to increase the visibility of the library and all it has to offer to both the Johnson Creek community and rural areas. While the library collection is heavily used, there are a number of online and digital content resources that are not accessed and used as much as they could be. These resources include learning and research content and tools that are available for patrons to increase their own advancement opportunities at no cost to the user. The use of these resources often increase with more awareness of their availability and instruction being provide to teach patrons how to access and use these resources.

Initiative

A. Develop marketing and informational materials about library resources and programs and make these materials available throughout the community.

Activities
1. Identify resources and service areas to develop or enhance marketing materials to broaden the reach in the community to inform those that do not regularly use the library of the resources available to them, especially related to digital content and online resources and learning opportunities.
2. Develop an email list for the library that people can sign up to receive information about current resources and programs being offered.
3. Increase signage in the community to direct area residents to the library and consider other signage opportunities in the community to improve awareness of current library offerings.
4. Evaluate training that is available for online resources to library users and determine resources the library can access in the statewide library community to increase training opportunities to patrons.

Initiative

B. Explore outreach service opportunities to the rural community.

Activity
1. Identify opportunities and potential partnerships to provide service to rural residents outside of the library facility, including off-site programming and material check-out.