



**2019-2022 Strategic Plan
Prepared by Kirsten Edwards
June 2019**

Adopted by the Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library Board of Trustees on June 18, 2019.

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The Planning Process:

After receiving an extension from the Indiana State Library in December 2018, the planning process began in February 2019. There was a three tier approach in gathering information to create the framework of the next three years.

The Director surveyed all Library Staff, both via SurveyMonkey and in person during monthly one-on-one meetings. Discussions and questions focused on Staff satisfaction with job duties, their thoughts on communication between the Director and their coworkers, opinions on current program and collection offerings, and suggestions on what populations and community partners the Library needs to connect with throughout the upcoming plan.

The next step in the planning process was meeting with stakeholders in the Library's service area. The Director and Trustees invited 31 people to the Library for a tour and conversation. 17 of the 31 invited accepted the invitation and met with the Director and Trustees in April and May 2019. Participants were asked a variety of questions, including why they use the Library, their opinion on current services and programs, suggestions on how the Library could better promote themselves, and what community groups they would like to see the Library collaborate with.

The people involved in this part of the planning process were from Hancock County Council and Commissioners, Mt. Vernon School District, Fortville Town Council, The Town of McCordsville, Vernon Township Trustees, both Staff and Board, employees from Greenfield Banking Company, and former Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library Trustees.

The final step in the planning process involved a public survey. This took place from April 25-May 17, 2019. There was a paper survey for patrons to use inside the Library. These surveys were used by twelve patrons. An online version through SurveyMonkey was sent out through the Library's Facebook page. The online survey was shared through the Town of Fortville and the Town of McCordsville and Fortville Action Inc. 188 people filled out the online survey, sharing their thoughts on programs, collections, customer service, marketing and promotional ideas, and a variety of general suggestions.

Once these three rounds of surveys and meetings were concluded, the Director compiled all of the statistics and notes. These notes were shared via email, shaped into a framework for the Strategic Plan, and discussed at the May 21, 2019 Board Meeting. By the time the planning process concluded, over 240 people were involved.

Statement of Community Needs and Goals:

Throughout the surveys, several common themes arose. Increasing the Library's marketing, programs, outreach as well as expanding Library services and communications were the biggest themes.

Communication was a common request. The communication needs range from internal communication between the Staff, Director, and the Board to better promotions and marketing throughout Vernon Township. The bottom line, residents want to be informed of what the Library has to offer.

Following the communication theme, a lot of residents mentioned the need for a stronger online presence, both in terms of using Library services – including e-books- offsite and finding information, especially in a mobile friendly way.

Expanding the Library's community engagement and outreach was requested by all three groups of residents surveyed. Some requests focused on getting into the Schools and Daycares more, while others mentioned a need to participate in more events in Fortville and McCordsville. There were also suggests to partner with the Fortville and McCordsville Town Offices, Hancock County Community Foundation, Rotary, Lion's Club, County Councils and the Boys & Girls Club.

Growing the Library's programming and events was the top requested improvement by Staff, and it got a moderate (mostly "good") ratings on the public survey. Groups that require more programs and focus are children, adults, seniors and lower income families.

The Library's collections – both print and digital – were rated the lowest on Library offerings through the public survey. The Staff shared similar comments, particularly about the scope and age of the collection.

There were some requests that cannot be reached in the three years of this current plan. A merger with the Hancock County Public Library or the building of a second location in McCordsville were heavily requested in the public surveys. However, the Library strives to collaborate and expand services whenever possible, as Staffing and budget allows. Part of the following plan will address ways that the Library can promote itself and reach residents throughout Vernon Township.

Our Mission:

The Library's Mission is to provide free access to information and experiences in a safe, welcoming space for the residents of Vernon Township.

Our Vision:

The Library envisions being a community place, improving the community's lives through programs, services and collections that engage, educate, and entertain the residents of Vernon Township.

Strategic Goals:

1. Increase Library's Communication
2. Improve Library's Online Presence
3. Increase Library's Community Engagement
4. Expand Library's Programming and Events
5. Build a Broader Collection
6. Continue Facility Maintenance and Improvements

Goal 1: Increase and Improve Library's Communication

Objective 1: The Trustees, Director and Staff will be well informed of Library happenings, plans, and standards.

Timeline and Activities:

- The Director will continue with written reports for each Board Meeting.
- The Director will continue with email updates after each Board Meeting. Depending on the changes, the Director will include more details in monthly Staff Meetings.
- The Director will meet with Staff individually monthly to check-in on progress of projects and give Staff an opportunity to ask questions or share ideas or concerns.
- Email will be the main form of communication between the Director and Trustees and the Director and Staff. Everyone is expected to check their email regularly. In the case of Staff, at least once per shift, for Trustees it's weekly.

Evaluation:

- At the end of 2019, Staff and Trustees will be surveyed by the Director to see if they feel better informed of Library happenings, policies, and procedures.
- The surveys will continue in December of 2020, 2021 and 2022 in preparation for the next Strategic Plan.
- Communication will be part of the annual review process for the Director and all Staff.

Objective 2: Vernon Township Residents will have a general knowledge and understanding of the following:

- The Library's location and hours
- The Library's programs, specifically Summer Reading Program
- The Library's involvement in community events and initiatives

Timeline and Activities:

- By the end of 2019, the Library will actively post programs and other updates on the following Vernon Township resources:
 - Hello Hancock Events Calendar, Town of Fortville Events calendar, town of McCordsville Friday email, and the Vernon Township Community Calendar
- By the end of 2020, the Library will provide their monthly newsletter via an email list.

Evaluation: There will be at least one more public survey to gauge how much their knowledge of the Library has improved.

Goal 2: Improve Library's Online Presence:

Objective 1: The Library will offer a fully interactive, supported online catalog for patrons.

Timeline & Activities:

- By Spring 2020, the Library will have cataloged all items in the collection into the Evergreen catalog. During the final implementation, the Library will promote the new service, including the benefits of a larger collection and improved notifications. Also during the first quarter of 2020, all Library Staff will be trained on Evergreen, both for the cataloging and the patron interface.
- By Summer 2020, the Library will be an active member of the Evergreen Consortium.
- By the end of 2021, the Library will have at least one Public Access Catalog in the building for patrons to utilize.

Evaluation:

- The concerns shared in the public survey will be remedied, including lack of notifications via text and email, inability to place holds from home on items that were currently on the shelves, integrated e-books in the regular catalog, and easier user experience when accessing patron accounts from home.

Objective 2: The Library will improve and expand its social media presence.

Timeline & Activities:

- By June 2020, the Library will draft a Social Media Plan, including ways to promote the Library's online presence.
- By January 2021, the Library will try forms of social media beyond Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Evaluation:

- The Library will see a 5% increase in Facebook likes and followers by Summer 2020, and a 10% increase by the Summer of 2021.
- By the completion of this plan, the Library will be active on at least two social media platforms, going beyond general promotion posts.

Objective 3: The Library will have a new website that is fully supported and current with content and events, with a mobile version.

Timeline & Activities:

- During April and May 2019, the Director, Staff and Trustees will work together to review, test, and add content to the new website. The domain will remain the same at www.fortville.lib.in.us.
- By June 1, 2019, the Library's new website will go live.

Evaluation:

- In December 2019, the Library will survey patrons on the new website, including any concerns or confusion they experience.

Goal 3: Increase Library's Community Engagement:

Objective 1: The Library will increase their presence in McCordsville.

Timeline & Activities:

- The Library will continue the pop-up collection in McCordsville's Town Hall, with Staff replenishing the cart regularly.
- The Library will increase outreach programs and collaboration within McCordsville.

Evaluation:

- The Director will check in with the McCordsville Town Manager in March 2020, the one year anniversary of the implementation of the pop-up collection. They will discuss the possibility of expanding or moving the pop-up collection to reach as many residents as possible.
- The Library will report annually on the programs and outreach visits to McCordsville, reporting at least one outreach program such as children's story time, technology class or Library card registration event a quarter, and at least 2 seasonal events a year. These numbers can shift as budget and Staffing allow.

Objective 2: The Library will collaborate with Libraries, Non-Profits and Community Groups throughout Vernon Township, Hancock County, and surrounding areas.

Timelines & Activities:

- The Library will continue its reciprocal borrowing agreement with the Hancock County Public Library and Pendleton Community Public Library. These agreements will be reviewed by the Library Directors annually.
- The Library will participate in the Imagination Library's annual drive through the Hancock County Community Foundation and the Hancock County Public Library, increasing donations by 5% each year.
- The Library will collaborate with the Vernon Township Trustees Office, Fortville Action Inc., the Town of Fortville, the Town of McCordsville, and Hancock County Community Foundations on local happenings, participating in events and initiatives as budget and Staffing allow.

Evaluation:

- The Library will increase community engagement by 10% each year, both in terms of visits and varying partners.

Goal 4: Expand Library's Programming and Events: The Library will offer free programs and events for all residents of Vernon Township.

Objective 1: The Library will plan programs for all ages, including seasonal and special events. A majority of these programs will be planned at least 60 days in advance, giving Staff the freedom to book last minute presenters or speakers.

Timeline & Activities:

- Library Staff will create a Programming Committee by December 2019. This committee will focus on the program calendar, ensuring there are program offerings for all ages.
- The Library will host at least one major event annually, starting in 2020. The event will be geared towards families or general audiences, differing from regular programming.

Evaluation:

- The Programming Committee will develop a Program Survey for patrons to complete after they attend a program. These surveys will help Staff when planning and reviewing programs.

Objective 2: The Library will collaborate with a community group on a Township-wide event, initiative or program.

Timeline & Activities:

- By the end of 2019, the Library will have collaborated on at least one community event.
- By the end of 2021, the Library will help develop a community event with at least one community partner.

Evaluation:

- When surveyed in 2022, Vernon Township Residents will identify the Library as a vibrant, engaged Community Place.

Goal 5: Build a Broader Collection: The Library will maintain a collection, both print and digital, that meets the community's needs.

Objective 1: The Library will do a thorough weeding of the Collection.

Timeline & Activities:

- The Director and Librarian will systematically weed the collections that have not been reviewed in the last two years. This will include removal of outdated, irrelevant and damaged items and the addition of materials to fill series or subject gaps.
- By January 2020, a new weeding schedule will be drafted and implemented, allowing the collection to be under constant review. The goal is to be proactive, not reactive to the collection needs.

Evaluation:

- Overall Circulation will increase by 3% by the end of 2020.
- When surveyed, patrons will rate the collection as "good" or "great", an increase over the "poor", "fair" and "good" ratings in the Spring 2019 survey.

Objective 2: The Library will regularly stock new releases, beyond the standard standing order authors, and be more proactive with reading trends.

Timelines & Activities:

- By December 2020, the Librarian will complete two trainings on collection development and publisher trends.
- By December 2021, Library Staff will have completed training on Reader's Advisory.

Evaluation:

- When surveyed, patrons will rate the collection as "good" or "great", an increase over the "poor", "fair" and "good" ratings in the Spring 2019 survey.

Objective 3: The Library will expand on the current Collection Development Plan

Timelines & Activities:

- The Director and Librarian will review the current Collection Development Plan, drafting updates for the Trustees to approve. The new Collection Development Plan will be in place and approved by January 2021.
- The Director and Librarian will craft a digital ordering schedule for e-books in 2021.
- The Library will research online database offerings that can build the online catalog. These will be databases that are different from our current Ancestry/Genealogy option. By 2022, there will be at least two new online resources added.
- In 2021, The Director and Librarian will create an online method for patrons to share their purchase requests.

- The Director, Business Office Manager, and Librarian will set a quarterly purchasing schedule, allowing patron requests to be purchased anytime of the year.

Goal 6: Continue Facility Maintenance and Improvements

Objective 1: Complete the interior building projects – install a new Service Desk and Staff work station.

Timeline & Activities:

- The Director and Business Office Manager will verify plans with the selected vendor for the installation of the new Service Desk. The desk will be installed by December 31, 2019.

Objective 2: Repair or replace the broken sidewalk squares between the building and the parking lot.

Timeline & Activities:

- The Director and Business Office Manager will verify plans with the selected vendor for the replacement and repair of current broken sidewalk sections. This will be completed by November 2019.

Objective 3: The Library will have a fresh coat of exterior paint.

Timeline & Activities:

- The Director and Business Office Manager will verify the paint colors and schedule with the selected vendor. This will be completed by September 2019.

Implementation & Accountability

- Once approved, this Strategic Plan will be posted on the Library's website and shared via social media. It will be accessible and visible not only to Staff, but to patrons as well.
- The Director will update the Trustees quarterly on progress of the Strategic Planning Objectives during regularly scheduled Board Meetings.
- The Trustees will use the Strategic Plan as a basis for the Director's Annual Appraisal.
- The Director will use the Strategic Plan as a basic for Staff's Annual Appraisals, including benchmarks to make sure goals are met.
- Library Staff will use the Strategic Plan as the basic of future programming, outreach, and collection decisions. The goal is to be inclusive to community needs, offering services and programs that appeal to wider audiences.

Professional Development Strategy:

The current Library Staff is composed of two professional, fulltime positions, the Director and a Librarian. There is also a fulltime Business Office Manager. There are 7 non-certified positions, all 24 hours/week or less.

For professional development required LEUs/TLEUs to keep with their current Indiana State certifications. Both the Director and Librarian will participate in conferences, workshops, webinars and other trainings. Each professional is responsible for their own trainings. The Director will ensure he/she receive at least 20 LEUs/TLEUs a year, with the Librarian earning a minimum of 10 LEUs/TLEUs a year. Attendance at state and national conferences is dependent on available funding.

Starting on Columbus Day 2019, all Staff will participate in a mandatory Staff Development Day. This will be an annual day-long event covering trainings with the Director as well as outside professionals. For 2019, a representative from the Indiana State Library and an HR Consultant will lead trainings on customer service and sexual harassment.

The Director will lead monthly Staff meetings that will include a training component. These trainings will either be in a group setting or individually scheduled as Staff schedules allow.

Facilities Statement:

The Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library was established in 1918 as the Fortville Library. The Library left the original Carnegie building and moved to the current building in 1986. Our current facility is just over 8,000 square feet.

Starting in October 2018, the Library underwent the following building and facility improvements:

- Park Lot Resurfacing/Lining: Completed October 2018
- LED Light Installation (Exterior and Interior): Completed November 2018
- Interior Paint Project: Completed Early December 2018
- Duct and vent cleaning: Completed December 15, 2018
- Flooring Project (New Carpet and Vinyl): Completed January 2019
- Cubicle Installation for Librarian and Business Office Manager: Completed February 2019

Per Objective 6, the following projects will be completed by December 31, 2019:

- New Service Desk – including Staff work space
- Exterior Paint Project
- Sidewalk Square Replacement

As the time approaches for the 2022-2025 plan to be drafted, the Library will be in need of roof repairs/replacement. That will be the major building project of the following plan.

Financial Resources:

The Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library is funded through the Hancock County Economic Development Income Tax (EDIT – the Library portion). These funds go to the Hancock County Public Library and the Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library.

As of January 1, 2019, the Operating fund for the Library was \$263,254.16. Including the Rainy Day fund, the available funds of the Library are \$373,622.68 as of April 30, 2019.

The Library owns the building it is currently in, and currently has no debt or bonds.

The Library has an Endowment through the Hancock County Community Foundation, which gives approximately \$3,800 each March.

In 2018 and 2019, the Library received the following grants that covered programs, supplies and professional development:

- November 2018: Indiana Humanities Novel Conversation Grant - \$1,000
- January 2019: Indiana State Library Foundation Grant - \$1,000
- February 2019: Harwood Institute Grant through MCLS – Fees for Workshop (approximately \$2,500.)

Technology Plan:

The Library has a contract with AVC Technologies for their IT support. The Director and Business Office Manager hold annual audit meetings with AVC Staff in the fall to review contracts and plans for the upcoming year.

The following is a list of AVC services:

- Firewall
- Anti-Virus Software
- SPAM Filter
- Windows Office Suite, currently through Windows 7 with a Windows 10 upgrade by December 31, 2019.
- Wireless Routers, with Meraki Access Point licensing. License up for renewal on February 21, 2022.
- 3 servers, housed in the Library, with offsite backups.
- Staff and patron computers from the following years:
 - 2011 – 1 Staff computer
 - 2012 – 2 public computers
 - 2015 – 5 public computers
 - 2016 – 1 Staff, 1 public
 - 2018 – 2 Staff, 2 public
 - 2019 – 1 Staff
- The replacement plan will be the 2011 and 2012 computers in 2020, the 2015 computers spread out in 2021 and 2022, as the budget allows. With the 2016 and 2018 computers replaced during the new planning period in 2023.
- There are 7 VOIP Polycom phones. They will be upgraded by 2021, as the budget allows.

In addition to the AVC support and products, the Library leases 2 Canon copier/printer units from Gordon Flesch. The Director and Business Office Manager will review the contracts and equipment every 18 months with their Gordon Flesch representative. There will be a coin vending box added to the copier in May 2019, which will be up for replacement in 2024.

Currently, the Library owns one projector that hooks up to the meeting room computer. It is older, and will be replaced by 2021, as the budget allows.

The Library just purchased a new Brother Fax machine in April 2019. There is no plan to replace the machine during this Strategic Planning period.