



THOMAS CRANE PUBLIC LIBRARY

JULY 2017 - JUNE 2022

STRATEGIC
PLAN

THE WORLD WE LIVE IN IS ALWAYS CHANGING, and faster than ever as digital technology permeates and influences every aspect of daily life. Public libraries have always been adaptive organizations, functioning at various times as book repositories, information providers, educational institutions, and social advocates. Most recently, libraries have taken on new roles as digital literacy centers and community gathering places.

The Thomas Crane Library periodically engages in a wide-ranging community-based planning process that elicits input from city residents and stakeholders and then adapts services to meet current and anticipated community needs.

The resulting Strategic Plan articulates overall service priorities and specific goals and serves as the Library's organizational compass for the next five years, guiding the development of annual action plans and helping us provide exceptional services. Strategic planning makes it possible for the Library to make a real difference in the everyday lives of Quincy residents.

HOW WE PLANNED

During the final year of the Library's 2013-2017 Plan, the Board of Trustees and the Director of Libraries initiated a new planning process using a modified version of the *Strategic Planning for Results* method authored by Sandra Nelson for the Public Library Association. Library consultant Ruth Kowal was retained to assist with the planning process.

COMMUNITY INPUT

The feedback process began with ten focus groups held at various Library locations during the summer and early fall of 2016. In all, 54 adult participants and 22 teen participants answered the following questions:

- What are some issues facing you in this period of your life?
- How do you now spend your free time? How do you think that will change over the next 5 years?
- How do you pursue personal and occupational development (such as exploring hobbies, increasing work-related skills and knowledge, expanding your career or social networks and meeting new people, or discovering new ideas and interests)? How do you think that will change over the next 5 years?
- Are there new or different things you wish the library would provide?

In September 2016, the Library conducted a community survey that was available online and in print at all Library locations and at selected non-Library locations, in English and in Chinese. Nearly 2,500 people responded to the survey. Simultaneously, we set up large easels at each Library location, asking visitors to respond to the following questions:

- What do you love about this library?
- What could this library do better?
- If you could borrow anything from the library, what would it be?
- What new programs or services would you like the library to offer?

LIBRARY & CITY DATA SCAN

At the same time, we compiled and analyzed five years of Thomas Crane Library usage statistics, surveyed current and emerging trends in public library service nationwide, and gathered census and planning data about the City of Quincy and its residents. A brief summary of current library services and community demographic projections, entitled *State of the Library / State of the City*, was published in October 2016.

COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Library invited 21 community leaders to participate in an ad hoc advisory committee charged with recommending library service priorities for the coming years. Community Planning Committee members, including one Library Trustee and one Library employee, represented a variety of organizations and demographic audiences in the city and brought a great deal of community knowledge and experience to the planning process.

The Committee met in October and November of 2016 to review the current state of library services, develop visions for Quincy's future, identify community needs, and determine how the Library could best help the city move toward the envisioned ideal future. The Committee selected areas of service and specific audiences that the Library should focus on in the next several years.

LIBRARY STAFF & TRUSTEE REVIEW

Taking into consideration the discussions and perspectives of the Community Planning Committee—and the feedback received directly from residents via focus groups and surveys—the Library's management team assessed the Library's ability to adopt the recommended service priorities and forwarded four overall service priorities to the Board of Trustees. The Board reviewed and approved the adoption of these four priorities in December 2016.

From December 2016 through March 2017, the entire library staff participated in a series of small group sessions to further define the scope of each priority, and to develop goals and measurable objectives to support the priorities. The staff also reviewed and updated the Library's organizational values. A working draft of the entire plan—including mission, values, priorities, goals, and objectives—was presented to the Board of Trustees in March and formally approved in June.



KEY THEMES EMERGED during the course of the public engagement phase of the planning process. The accelerating pace of growth and change in the city, bringing in new residents young and old; the increasing ethnic and linguistic diversity of the city’s residents; the need for equal access to learning, cultural and recreational opportunities regardless of income or technological expertise; the desire for a sense of engagement and belonging within neighborhoods and to the larger community, especially given the impact of technology on face-to-face relationships—these concerns emerged repeatedly in focus group and Committee conversations.

In the community survey, 24 possible services were grouped into five broad topic areas. Respondents were asked to select the services most important to them, which they thought should be priorities for the Library in the next few years. The results reflect the community’s view that supporting reading and learning remains a core function of the Library, with the development of collections in all formats for all ages and the provision of in-person and online learning and cultural opportunities of paramount importance.

Younger residents (in their teens, 20s and 30s) expressed particularly strong interest in digital equipment and services at the Library and in having both opportunities and physical spaces to connect with others around shared interests. Parents of minor children singled out early literacy services and STEAM programs for children as high priorities. Older adults prioritized lifelong learning resources and programs and showed a keen interest in digital literacy.

We also heard from focus group participants that the Library should “be the space” where the community comes together. Focus groups and Committee members also suggested that the Library should serve as an information hub for the city, both as a repository and referral center (a traditional library role) and also as an enabler of peer-to-peer information sharing. Taking this role a step further, participants asked the Library not to wait for people to come to us, but instead actively reach out into the community to connect residents with Library resources and services where they are.

All of these themes have been incorporated into our service priorities and goals and will inform the development of each annual action plan.

OUR MISSION & VALUES

The Thomas Crane Public Library inspires curiosity, sparks imagination, fosters community, and connects people to the online world.

ACCESS We provide free, equitable, and private access to information and services for everyone.

SERVICE We respect all people and respond to their needs with friendly service.

INCLUSION We celebrate the diversity of our community and create a welcoming environment for all.

EXCELLENCE We provide high quality professional services that exceed expectations.

INNOVATION We embrace creativity, initiative, continuous learning, and fun.

COLLABORATION We work together as a staff team with trust and mutual support, and collaborate with community partners to achieve common goals.

STEWARDSHIP We make the best use of available resources and honor our community’s heritage in the careful preservation of historic library facilities and collections.

INSPIRE CURIOSITY
LIFELONG LEARNING

Residents will have convenient and engaging resources and programs that inspire curiosity and support individual growth.

FOSTER COMMUNITY
LOCAL ENGAGEMENT & RESOURCES

Residents will have opportunities and spaces to engage and connect with others, and have easily accessible information about local programs, services and resources.

CONNECT TO THE
ONLINE WORLD

DIGITAL ACCESS & LITERACY
Residents will have access to the Internet, digital equipment, user-friendly gateways to online resources, and the training and support they need to use them effectively.

SPARK IMAGINATION
FUN & ENRICHMENT

Residents will have a wide variety of literary, arts, and cultural resources and experiences to enhance their free time and enrich their personal lives.

OUR GOALS & OBJECTIVES

We have developed eleven interdependent goals that reflect the Library’s four service priorities and describe specific benefits that the community—or target populations within the community—will receive.

For each goal, we have established benchmarks that will provide meaningful ways to measure progress toward reaching the goal. Each objective includes a measurable target and a time frame for meeting the target.

GOAL 1: *Children aged 0-7 will discover the joy of reading & develop strong language & literacy skills.*

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each year, 6,000 children aged 0-7 will attend early literacy programs at the library.
- ✘ Each year, 5,000 parents and caregivers will attend early literacy programs at the library.
- ✘ Each year, 500 children aged 0-7 will attend early literacy programs presented at non-library locations.
- ✘ Each year, at least 192,000 physical items for children aged 0-7 will be borrowed .
- ✘ Each year, 10,000 user sessions will be logged on library early literacy workstations and tablets.
- ✘ Each year, 95% of parents/caregivers surveyed will say that they learned new ways to read, sing, play, talk and/or write with their children at library early literacy programs.

GOAL 2: *Children aged 0-12* will have engaging resources and activities that nurture interest in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math (STEAM).

OBJECTIVE

- ✘ Each year, at least 1,000 children will participate in STEAM activities.

GOAL 3: *Adults* will have the resources and programs they need to explore ideas and learn new skills.

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each year, there will be at least 208,000 uses of educational and research materials for adults in all formats.
- ✘ Each year, at least 6,800 adults will attend library-sponsored educational programs and events.
- ✘ Each quarter, at least 70% of physical adult nonfiction materials will have circulated within the previous 24 months.

GOAL 4: *Adults and New Immigrants* will have the support they need to improve their English language literacy and communication skills to meet their personal goals.

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each year, 60% of full-year literacy students will complete at least 45 hours of tutoring.
- ✘ Each year, at least 100 individuals will receive literacy tutoring or other literacy services.
- ✘ Each year, 4,000 people will attend English Talk Time programs.
- ✘ Each year, 90% of English Talk Time students surveyed will say they feel more confident about what they have learned.
- ✘ Each year, 85% of literacy students surveyed will say they learned something that is helpful to them.

GOAL 5: *Teens* will experience a welcoming environment and enjoyable social activities.

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each year, 1,600 teens will participate in library-sponsored social activities.



GOAL 6: *Younger Adults and New Residents* will have fun and engaging activities, and comfortable spaces, that foster social networks and community connections.

OBJECTIVE

- ✘ Each year, 600 adults will participate in library-sponsored social/recreational activities.

GOAL 7: *Adults and New Residents* will have expert guidance in finding information about community services and activities.

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each year, at least 10 outreach opportunities will be offered at non-library locations, for residents to engage with library staff and learn about library and community resources.
- ✘ Each year, 2,600 people will receive individualized community information and referral assistance.
- ✘ Each year, there will be 2,500 page views of community information and referral pages on the library website.

GOAL 8: *Everyone* will have high-speed Internet service in the library, public use computers and other digital equipment, easy access to online resources, and opportunities to explore new technology in a supportive environment.

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each week, an average of 2,000 user sessions will be logged on library desktop computers.
- ✘ Each week, there will be at least 250 in-library uses of library laptops, tablets and other digital devices or equipment.
- ✘ Each week, an average of 2,000 user sessions will be logged on the library's wireless Internet service.
- ✘ During all peak usage periods, the average Internet download speed will meet or exceed 35 Mbps for individual users at each library location.
- ✘ Each year, at least 24 opportunities to explore new technology will be provided for teens and adults.



GOAL 9: *Adults and Seniors* will be comfortable using commonplace digital resources, services and devices.

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each year, at least 5,000 adults will receive individualized technology instruction.
- ✘ Each year, at least 7,500 online technology instruction sessions will be provided.

GOAL 10: *Everyone* will enjoy a wide variety of popular and new reading and media in the formats they prefer, with minimal waiting periods and expert advice on choosing among the options.

OBJECTIVES

- ✘ Each month, no more than five Quincy library users will be on the waiting list for any title.
- ✘ Each quarter, at least 85% of physical fiction books and all physical media will have circulated within the previous 24 months.
- ✘ Each year, 80% of adults and teens surveyed will say that the assistance they receive from staff in selecting and accessing materials is very good or excellent.
- ✘ Each year, 80% of adults and teens surveyed will say that they are satisfied or very satisfied with the selection and availability of materials they can access with their library card.

GOAL 11: *Everyone* will have fun, engaging, and diverse cultural experiences.

OBJECTIVE

- ✘ Each year, at least 6,500 people of all ages will attend library-sponsored cultural programs and events.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN IS THE WORK OF MANY.

The Board of Trustees supported the process from initiation to completion, and provided thoughtful and valuable feedback all along the way.

Consultant Ruth Kowal shared insights from her work with other innovative urban libraries and skillfully facilitated many group discussions.

Library patrons and city residents who responded to surveys, answered our in-library engagement questions, and participated in focus groups provided rich feedback. Their input has been a critical component of the planning process and we are grateful that so many people shared their opinions.

Community Planning Committee members carved time out of their busy days to talk about Quincy and the Library, share their community expertise, and help us select service priorities that address the city's current needs.

The Library staff devoted much time, creativity and enthusiasm to the process, melding many ideas together and crafting them into a concrete Plan.

We thank all those who contributed their knowledge, ideas, and passion to this planning process.

COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Elizabeth Campbell, Quincy Access Television
Kim Chan, Quincy Asian Resources, Inc.
Susan Chinsen, Boston Asian American Film Festival, Chinese Historical Society of NE
Kelly Cobble, Quincy Art Association
Sean Glennon, Quincy Dept. of Planning & Community Development
Paul Hall, Quincy Symphony Orchestra
Ron Iacobucci, Quincy Career Center
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Deepani Jinadasa, Quincy Community Action Programs, Inc.
Margaret Laforest, Quincy Chamber of Commerce/Discover Quincy
Jonathan Lanham, Father Bill's Mainspring
Nina Liang, City Councilor-at-Large
Michael E. Marrapodi, Quincy College
May Mayyasi, Board of Library Trustees
Sandra McGunigle, Manet Community Health Center
John Molloy, Quincy Council on Aging
Frank Poon, South Shore Elder Services
Madeline Roy, Quincy Public Schools
Theresa Tangney, Library Staff
Josephine Vidal, Quincy Lions Club
Maggie Yeung, Quincy Head Start

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Deirdre Sullivan, Collection Development
Jessie Thuma, Circulation & Readers Advisory

STRATEGIC PLANNING CONSULTANT

Ruth Kowal