



To: Orange County Board of County Commissioners
From: Lucinda Munger, Director, Orange County Public Library
Date: November 15, 2016
Subject: Library System's Strategic Plan

The Orange County Public Library system has completed its 2017-2020 strategic planning process, work funded by an LSTA State Library Grant.

In the years since the Board of County Commissioners approved the library system's 2013-2016 strategic plan, we have:

- Developed a more diverse and accessible collection
- Expanded relationships with community organizations and local government
- Upgraded our visual presence and facilities
- Offered more and better services, programs and technologies that respond to the needs of new and existing customers

To complete this plan, the library system worked with Floricane, a strategic planning firm from Richmond, VA.

The plan in your packet reflects input from residents, community organizations, members of the business community, library users, library staff, elected officials and county staff. In total, over 600 individuals contributed to our work.

The plan also contains a narrative describing our strategic planning process.

Our next steps are: 1) to take each strategy outlined in the plan and create objectives, measurements and 2) to name who within the library system will move each project forward.

We will submit progress updates on a regular basis as outlined by the county manager.

Attachment

Orange County Public Library
2017-2020 Strategic Plan



Orange County Public Library
Orange County, NC

**Strategic Plan
2017-2020**

Orange County Public Library
Hillsborough | Carrboro
919.245.2525 | bit.ly/ocplibrary | Facebook | Twitter

Acknowledgements

We spoke with hundreds of Orange County, NC residents as part of our strategic planning process. (Appendix A outlines the process in detail). Overall, we heard from 600 people, including our entire staff and many of our volunteers. The themes and strategies in this plan emerged as a direct result of listening to so many important voices. We would like to extend our appreciation to those who took the time to participate and look forward to sharing the plan's progress and success with you.

Strategic Planning Committee

Lucinda Munger, Library Director
Andrea Tullos, Assistant Library Director
Libbie Hough, Communications Specialist
Bessie Mbadugha, Community Member
Erin Sapienza, Community Librarian

Strategic Planning Consultants

Lesley Bruno, Floricane
John Sarvay, Floricane

Welcome from the Library Director

The library's 2017-2020 strategic plan comes at the end of an election cycle riddled with anger, anxiety and divisiveness. Many of us long for a place to restore our sense of civility and safety and our sense of connection.

As a public servant, community member and library director, I have wanted to know how the library can act as a connector and convener for people in search of those values. This strategic planning process provided some exciting answers to this question, but they did not come from me. Through its thoughtful participation and feedback during this process, the Orange County community has shown the library how to proceed, and what to continue doing well.

From across the county, we received compliments for the high quality services and creative programs we provide, and for our attempts to be inclusive and welcoming to our entire community. In our parent focus group, for example, we expected feedback around offering more story times, a broader selection of books and kid-friendly technology. Instead, we were told that we already excel in those areas and to keep it up but also consider new initiatives.

Over 600 county residents participated in the formation of this plan. They challenged us to raise our game and to look outward. They want us to lift our gaze from computer screens, data sheets and shelves. They asked us to look at and listen more closely to them, so that together we can find the answers to our questions. In addition to offering traditional library services, they want us to move out of our comfort zone and meet people where they are. They want the library to be a greater part of the civic life of an already engaged community.

They said, "Don't just be a 'library', be a leader."

This new path will include partnering with county community centers, early childhood learning centers and K-12 schools, among others. It will include connecting more with adult learners and serving a more deliberate role in improving the quality of life in this amazing county. Our strategic plan gives us the framework we need to chart this journey. And...it's going to be EPIC!

Yes, EPIC. When you read our plan you will notice that our four strategic themes taken together challenge the library to be EPIC.

- **Engage with Ideas** – Develop and deliver a community engagement plan for the library.
- **Partner for Impact**- Focus our partnerships around issues that are important to the community.
- **Build Inclusive Spaces** – Create digital and physical spaces where people can come to connect with each other, share ideas and learn.
- **Create Stronger Connections** – Strengthen the systems and connections that help us better serve the community.

We are proud of where we have come from and are excited about where we will go as a library system. We look forward to opening a new southern branch, of developing new ways to serve rural residents, and to establishing partnerships for greater impact throughout Orange County.

Our success will not come down to doing any one thing or person in particular. It comes down to us – you, me, each other – to provide residents with safe and welcoming spaces where we can all share ideas and learn. With your help, the Orange County Public Library can be a place where our community can restore its sense of sanity, civility and connection.

Sincerely,

Lucinda Munger

Lucinda Munger
Library Director

Guiding Principles

Our Organizational Vision

We will set an example for other public libraries by providing safe and welcoming spaces for the people of our community and allow their ideas to flourish.

Our Organizational Values

- Commitment to Public Service
Providing a well-trained, enthusiastic staff that delivers superior customer service and responds to customer needs

- Inclusiveness
Serving the entire community through diverse resources and programs

- Fostering Fun and Lifelong Learning
Offering engaging, excellent programs and services, and promoting literacy and educational opportunities

- Collaboration
Accomplishing more together with partners working toward common goals

- Respect
Practicing kindness, promoting open dialogues and creating an environment of encouragement

Our 2017-2020 Strategic Direction

Strategic Mission Statement

During this plan’s three year window and in service to our organizational vision, we will focus our efforts on listening and learning from a broader audience, expanding our reach throughout the county, ensuring that our partnerships are in service to our strategic goals, making our spaces more inclusive, and strengthening our internal and external support systems and relationships.

Key Strategic Themes

Our 2017-2020 Strategic Plan is organized around four central themes.

E NGAGE WITH IDEAS	We will ensure that the library is engaging targeted audiences throughout our community.
P ARTNER FOR IMPACT	We will focus and strengthen our strategic partnerships to create opportunities for change in our community.
B UILD I NCLUSIVE SPACES	We will establish physical and digital spaces where all people can come together to connect with each other, share ideas and learn.
C REATE STRONGER CONNECTIONS	We will strengthen the systems and connections that enable us to better serve our customers.

THEME:
ENGAGE WITH IDEAS

We will ensure that the library is engaging targeted audiences throughout our community.

As the Orange County community grows, our continued priority is to work to ensure all residents of Orange County -- from toddlers to teens, students to seniors, rural to suburban -- find value in the library.

Strategy #1

Develop and deliver a community engagement plan for the library.

Use information from existing community outreach and partnership efforts and the strategic planning process to meet people where they are. The community engagement plan will:

- Identify key audiences with which the library would like to maintain or strengthen its engagement.
- Incorporate visual and demographic data (e.g. age, socioeconomic and education levels, race, etc.) and geographic relationship to existing or future library facilities, and potential program and service partners for each audience.
- Include a defined process to continue or develop outreach efforts, programs and services for each audience.
- Link the library's work with the Board of County Commissioners' strategic goals and the county's commitment to social justice.
- Complement the library's marketing and communications plan and further increase public awareness of the library's services and programs.

THEME:
PARTNER FOR IMPACT

We will focus and strengthen our strategic partnerships to create opportunities for change in our community.

The library has partnerships across Orange County and is committed to strengthening those connections to serve our customers. Over the next three years, we will emphasize strategic partnerships to increase literacy for children birth to five, school-aged children and adults.

Strategy #2

Develop a partnership framework to guide and shape our community relationships.

Library staff will develop a partnership framework with clear definitions and guidelines. The framework will:

- Include an inventory of existing partnerships, and identify partnership gaps and opportunities for the library to evaluate in the future.
- Establish clear processes with suggested timelines for ongoing review and evaluation of the library's partnership efforts.
- Integrate this work with the library's marketing and communications plan in order to promote our partners, increase awareness of our combined efforts and raise the library's visibility in the community.

Strategy #3

Focus our partnerships around issues important to our community.

The library director will work with area partners to:

- Evaluate the library's existing focus on and commitment to literacy for children birth to five, school-aged children and adults.
- Work with our partners to establish clear and measurable outcomes for our work.

THEME:
BUILD INCLUSIVE SPACES

We will establish physical and digital spaces where all people can come together to connect with each other, share ideas and learn.

Orange County residents, regardless of where they live in our community, deserve equal access to the opportunities a full-service library system can create. We will extend the reach of the library system throughout the county with a new branch location in Carrboro and an improved website. We will continue to support county efforts to increase Internet access to all residents.

Strategy #4

Develop a comprehensive “space” plan for the library.

Library staff will develop a plan to extend the reach of the library to every corner of Orange County, ensuring equal access to library programs, services and materials. The plan will include:

- An evaluation of physical space and how each library building is utilized, including the Main Library in Hillsborough, the two current Carrboro locations and the plans for a new branch library in Carrboro.
- An evaluation of the Library Station Kiosk and opportunities to extend the electronic kiosk model to other locations in Orange County.
- Surveying customer and staff for suggestions and collaborating with Orange County’s Community Relations Department to improve ease of use of the library website.

THEME:
**CREATE STRONGER
CONNECTIONS**

We will strengthen the systems and connections that enable us to better serve our customers.

Like all county government departments, we exist to meet the needs of our residents. To increase our effectiveness, we will continue to develop our support network, forge relationships with other library systems and foster a customer-focused work culture.

Strategy #5

Increase the Friends' ability to raise funds and advocate for the library system.

- Library leadership will work with the Main Library Friends and the Southern Branch Friends groups to establish a unified, integrated approach to helping the library meet the needs of the public.

Strategy #6

Build relationships with area libraries.

- Library staff will develop a process and timeline to identify and reach out to nearby libraries with the goal of creating opportunities for collaboration.
- Library leadership will determine how to support and enhance the process.

Strategy #7

Invest in ongoing staff development.

To better serve library customers, library staff will design a staff development plan that:

- Promotes unity and clarity of purpose among library divisions.
- Strengthens relationships and bolsters team effectiveness.
- Sharpens customer service skills.
- Raises cultural sensitivity.
- Develops leadership skills.

Appendices

This brief section of appendices describes the strategic planning process and the library's current operational state. For more detailed information about the library, please visit bit.ly/ocplibrary.

Appendix A

The Strategic Planning Process

The process for developing this strategic plan began in July 2016 with initial planning discussions, and progressed through subsequent discovery, blueprint and construction phases, with final approval and adoption in December 2016.

A strategic planning committee, including lead library administrative staff, one community volunteer and two consultants from Richmond, VA based Floricane LLC (www.floricane.com) worked closely to develop project objectives, scope of work and desired outcomes; identify key stakeholders and audiences to engage during the process; source emerging themes; and draft the goals, strategies and tactics that form the backbone of the plan. Additionally, the committee spent time reviewing the library's previous strategic plan and related institutional documents.

From the outset, the committee emphasized public and staff engagement as a critical component of this process, and designed a discovery phase that would source input from a variety of stakeholders. All told, this phase resulted in feedback from more than 600 people, including library customers, community and business leaders, parents, teenagers, educators, county commissioners, Friends of the Library, Club Nova members, library staff, and members of the general public. Feedback was collected via focus group discussions, an online and paper customer survey, a full-day all staff retreat, and 15 individual stakeholder interviews.

These conversations provided a unique window into the needs and wishes of library customers, from a variety of perspectives. Within the first 15 minutes of the parent focus group, for example, participants asked for more LGBTQ books and programming and requested a more formalized partnership with the home school community. The middle and high school students who attended the teen focus group expressed a desire for their own "adult-free" space within library branches and increased collaboration between the library and schools to ensure that, for instance, titles required for AP students are available and lent for an extended period. These were but a few examples, but ultimately it was clear that the community had no shortage of

bold ideas and helpful feedback. All input will be kept and considered throughout the implementation of this plan.

In September, the committee aggregated the results of the discovery phase into a set of key emerging themes and supporting high level strategies. These were presented to the public during a seven day, county wide charrette process in early October. Respondents were invited to review the themes and strategies, and indicate the two or three areas that felt the most urgent or compelling.

Committee members regrouped around the charrette results and drafted a strategic plan designed to elevate the library's service and expand access to all Orange County residents, energize and engage current and future customers, and create a more unified county wide library system. Library staff members were provided an opportunity to review and comment on the draft before a final version was submitted to the Orange County Board of Commissioners in November 2016.

Beginning in January 2017, the library will 1) assign objectives, tactics and measurements to each strategy outlined in the plan 2) identify staff and/or staff groups within the library system who will move each project forward.

Appendix B Library Current State

The Orange County Public Library (OCPL) has provided library services to the community since 1910. Below is a summary of our current statistics.

- Operational Budget for 16-17: \$1,999,664, (28% increase from 2010). Circulation: 446,787 items borrowed (65% increase since 2010).
- Annual Programming Attendance: 12,437 (51% increase since 2010). Annual number of library visitors: 300,004 (69% increase since 2010)

Current Library Locations:

- Main Library – 137 W. Margaret Lane; Hillsborough, NC 27278
- Carrboro Branch - 900 Old Fayetteville Rd; Chapel Hill, NC 27516 (McDougle Middle School)
- Cybrary - 100 N. Greensboro Street; Carrboro, NC 27510
- Library Station Kiosk - Adjacent to the Cedar Grove Community Center
5800 NC-86 N

In addition to physical branches and kiosks, library card holders have access to a wide variety of books, periodicals, papers, research, data and other information via the library's section of the Orange County website.

Visit: http://www.orangecountync.gov/departments/library/online_resources.php