



LONG-RANGE PLAN SUMMARY

BACKGROUND The library board created a Strategic Planning Committee in 2023 to recommend a new long-range plan. Our previous plan, adopted in 2017, was briefly extended after the board addressed hiring a new library director and a decision on our Story Center grant by the Mellon Foundation.

The committee held a series of meetings between January and March 2024. The group, made up of board members and the library's management team, analyzed the previous long-range plan, discussed state standards for public libraries, conducted an analysis of our library's strengths and challenges, and considered big-picture planning needs. The group brainstormed ideas, prioritized suggestions, and identified key areas of emphasis and the most critical areas to be addressed.

This plan represents a four-year agenda of important themes and specific areas of work. We created a proposed timeline for addressing the priorities, recognizing that our staff has limited time to focus on topics beyond regular operations and planning. The plan also includes suggestions for broader board member awareness and participation as well as community input as plans are realized.

KEY THEMES Everyone involved ranked the most important ideas generated and then the group noticed common ambitions that appeared. We came up with general terms to describe our long-range plan aspirations:

affinity connection
currency education flexibility
growth Inclusion
listening planning representation
response time

We then grouped these concepts into a series of five themes that we would like to make sure we keep at the forefront of library planning and in the months and years ahead:

- > **Build community**
- > **Demonstrate responsiveness**
- > **Consider new options and benefits**
- > **Value creativity and innovation**

In all of our efforts, we want to make sure that effort yields value and produces results that will create opportunities and results for our patrons and community, leading to our final theme;

- > **Produce meaningful and enduring outcomes**

CRITICAL AREAS FOR FOCUS This plan reflects seven areas of specific focus and library work between now and 2027. The plan also includes timeline guidance for planning and execution of these themes:

- > **SPACE ASSESSMENT:** Develop a plan that reconsiders and envisions use of physical library spaces to better meet current uses and future needs.
- > **STORY CENTER IMPLEMENTATION:** Define an implementation plan based on our grant proposal that will set targets for 2024 that will clarify mission and define issues landmarks and issues for coming years.
- > **VOLUNTEER CORPS:** Define steps needed for coordinating and recruiting library volunteers of all ages.
- > **MARKETING REFRESH:** Explore new channels of communication and opportunities for messaging, including defining key themes and introducing the entire community to benefits and services that the library provides.
- > **COUNTY OUTREACH & PRESENCE:** Explore options for library outreach beyond central facility, including input from residents and analysis of library usage data, population trends and projections, and innovative outreach strategies.
- > **MINORITY STAFF RECRUITMENT:** Gather input from community leaders and groups about how the library can better publicize and connect with the widest possible pool of candidates for staff positions and library careers.
- > **PRIVATE BOARD ENDOWMENT GUIDANCE:** Develop guidelines for the purpose, support, and future use of Danville Library Inc.'s long-held trust fund.

TESTING NEW WAYS TO CONNECT IN THE COMMUNITY This plan intends to identify areas and groups that may have been overlooked or underserved, providing an opportunity to regularly engage specific groups of patrons in to improve services.

- > **ENGAGE TARGET AUDIENCES:** The staff and board should identify 1 or 2 target audiences annually for focused outreach and connection, monitoring outcomes to expand successful strategies.

AREAS FOR REGULAR OPERATIONAL REVIEW & IMPROVEMENT This plan intends to identify areas and groups that may have been overlooked or underserved, providing an opportunity to regularly engage specific groups of patrons in to improve services.

- > **MOMENTUM BUILDERS:** Identify ways to continue or expand momentum for areas that are working well.
- > **PROGRAMMING & COLLECTION GAPS:** Analyze current efforts and trends to address specific needs for improvement.
- > **BOARD & STAFF TRAINING:** Improve board understanding of library issues and operations; Emphasize professional growth for staff.
- > **BOARD & STAFF CONNECTION:** Build better understanding of the roles and functions of both groups.
- > **PATRON CONNECTION:** Gather feedback about services, programming, and outreach to guide planning and modifications.
- > **AGENCY & GOVERNMENT CONNECTION:** Expand community partnerships and open channels of awareness and communication.

BOYLE COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
LONG-RANGE PLAN — FINAL
2024-27

KEY THEMES TO ENHANCE LIBRARY IDENTITY

Drawing from the ideas presented by committee members, we discussed the common qualities that defined our goals to clarify the big-picture qualities that frame our ambitions. We realized that the following attributes are important components of how we strive to grow as a library and community presence. The terms in parentheses were the descriptive qualities or results that embody each theme.

- > **Build community** (inclusion, affinity, connection, representation)
- > **Demonstrate responsiveness** (flexibility, growth, listening)
- > **Consider new options and benefits** (currency, education, time, planning)
- > **Value creativity and innovation** (response)
- > **Produce meaningful and enduring outcomes**

CRITICAL AREAS FOR LIBRARY FOCUS

Based on an analysis of library strengths, needs, and opportunities, committee members made up of board members and library leadership brainstormed areas in need of attention in the months and years ahead. Descriptions under each heading reflect topics raised in committee discussions that feed into specific areas of library activity.

SPACE ASSESSMENT

- * Retain planner/architect to facilitate planning and discussion
- * Reconsider use of public physical spaces
- * Plan for efficient use of staff space
- * Consider new signage and presentation options
- * Assess facility needs for new enterprises (Story Center, maker space, document storage)

STORY CENTER IMPLEMENTATION

- * Develop initial implementation plan for 2024
- * Note landmarks and areas of work for future years of grant
- * Define areas of emphasis and mission
- * Develop a working list of areas/populations that have been underrepresented or underserved that can be shared to spark wider discussions about collections, programming, and outreach

VOLUNTEER CORPS

- * Plan needed steps for coordinating and recruiting library volunteers of all ages and share implementation plan
- * In addition to supplementing library operations, these efforts could assist with marketing, advocating for library services and issues, and spreading awareness of the library in the community
- * Plans for Friends, potential for a similar group for young adults

MARKETING REFRESH

- * Retain branding/marketing consultant to guide launch of re-introduction of library benefits and identity
- * Explore new channels of communication and opportunities for messaging
- * Pull together easy-to-understand and use Library Cardholder Kit / Owner's Manual showing benefits (databases, subscriptions, tools) available to patrons both in-house and online
- * Clarify messaging for staff and board about communicating the library's purpose and value in a consistent way
- * Think about ways of reaching target audiences

COUNTY OUTREACH & PRESENCE

- * Create a team to explore options for library outreach beyond central facility
- * Gather and analyze existing data and trends on community use of library services and programs
- * Consider available community growth projections
- * Organize conversations with county stakeholders
- * Develop recommendations for the board on need, opportunities, and feasibility of expanded outreach

MINORITY STAFF RECRUITMENT

- * Develop a plan to improve recruitment of minority candidates for staff positions, including input from community leaders and groups. The effort could also include ways to make local residents more aware of library careers

PRIVATE BOARD ENDOWMENT GUIDANCE

- * Develop guidelines for the purpose and use of the private Trust Fund/Endowment
- * Discuss need for development efforts or a campaign to enhance library support

> THE FIRST SIX AREAS WOULD INCLUDE A BOARD MEMBER VOLUNTEER TO BE INVOLVED WITH STAFF ON THAT TOPIC.

TESTING NEW WAYS TO CONNECT IN THE COMMUNITY

Recognizing that activities from across the long-range plan are intended to identify areas and groups that may have been overlooked or underserved, the committee sees an opportunity to regularly implement new strategies to engage specific groups of patrons in novel ways. The staff and board could identify 1 or 2 target audiences annually for focused outreach and connection, monitoring outcomes to improve service and seek broader ways to incorporate successful strategies.

ENGAGING TARGET AUDIENCES

- * With input from Story Center planning, internal discussions, and marketing input, identify specific audience the library could seek to engage in new ways through services, programming, outreach. Be aware of the need to constantly build new generations of patrons
 - * Assess results of initial efforts and plan for both ongoing efforts and lessons that could influence overall operations
 - * Consider making this a fixture of library strategic thinking that could feed into all areas of emphasis
- > TO BE PART OF BOARD DISCUSSION AND LEADERSHIP AND STAFF-LEVEL PLANNING PROCESS BEGINNING IN SPRING 2025**

AREAS FOR REGULAR OPERATIONAL REVIEW & IMPROVEMENT

Based on an analysis of library strengths, needs, and opportunities, committee members made up of board members and library leadership brainstormed areas in need of attention in the months and years ahead. Descriptions under each heading reflect topics raised in committee discussions that feed into specific areas of library activity.

- > TOPICS WILL BE PART OF ANNUAL BOARD DISCUSSION AND LEADERSHIP PLANNING PROCESS BEGINNING IN SPRING 2025**

MOMENTUM BUILDERS

- * Focus on areas that are working well, and identify ways to continue or expand momentum
- * FYI: SWOT identified children's and youth programming, tech resources, diversely talented staff, outreach, website/social media marketing, institutional stability. Don't want to let any of this go unintended!

PROGRAMMING & COLLECTION GAPS

- * Analyze current efforts and trends internally
- * Share findings with board including ways to address needs

BOARD & STAFF TRAINING

- * Board — facilitate understanding of how library works; committee plans; Staff — set internal cultural values to embrace/manifest
- * Define areas of need; Include opportunities for growth, including looking at training options beyond our immediate area

BOARD & STAFF CONNECTION

- * Build better understanding of operations and areas of focus

PATRON CONNECTION

- * Gather feedback from patrons about services, programming, and outreach to guide planning and modifications
- * Use information for decisions internally and to inform board decision making

AGENCY & GOVERNMENT CONNECTION

- * Build partnerships with organizations in the community
- * Maintain open channels of communication and connection with county government