

Wood Library Strategic Plan

2022-2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wood Library Strategic Planning process took place from August to November 2021. During that time, the library conducted three separate community focus groups, sought community input through a questionnaire, and hosted individual retreats for library trustees and staff. The information gathered during these activities aided the Wood Library Planning Committee in developing the library's strategic plan.

The Board identified three core values that aligned with the library's mission statement. Those values are:

1. Equal and Inclusive Access - to ensure the right for all to obtain information
2. Literacy and Learning - to create and support a literate, knowledgeable society
3. Community - to positively contribute to our community

The following are the five primary goals that the library will focus on over the next five years (2022-2026):

1. Library Employee Relations: Investing in our strongest asset
2. Library Services: Improving community access and participation
3. Library Facility: Improving collections and evaluating space
4. Library Staff Development: Strengthening leadership development
5. Sustainability: Focusing socially, financially, and economically on a sustainable future

The Wood Library Board of Trustees is committed to creativity, flexibility, and resilience in providing services to the community. As the Library expands programs and seeks new initiatives, it will have the community's current needs in the forefront of its planning.

As new initiatives are developed and approved by the Board of Trustees to support the priorities outlined in the document below, a funding plan will be established to ensure that the new services and programs can be sustained.

MISSION STATEMENT

Wood Library provides a safe and inclusive environment where people can spark their imaginations, satisfy their curiosity, engage in lifelong learning, and make community

connections.

VISION STATEMENT

Wood Library aspires to be at the heart of the community where all are welcome to grow together and build a sustainable future.

STRATEGIC GOALS

1) Library Employee Relations: Investing in Our Strongest Asset

Project Leader: Executive Director

Project Team: Executive Assistant, Circulation Supervisor, Director of Development, Librarians

Purpose: Based on community feedback, the staff has been identified as the library's strongest asset.

A commitment to strong employee relations is a commitment to the growth of the organization. The library must make it a priority to identify ways to continue to invest in staff and their workplace to ultimately meet and exceed the needs of the community.

Measurement: This goal will be measured through annual staff development planning and employee engagement surveys.

Action steps:

- By March 2022, conduct an internal communications audit and implement new or updated communication channels that will be used to keep staff informed on library business and create a mechanism for staff to share library events with patrons.
- By May 2022, explore and determine the feasibility of longer desk shifts and other scheduling options.
- Monthly remind staff of the services offered by the EAP and other mental health resources to prevent staff burnout.
- Research and develop strategies to address burnout and increase employee satisfaction on an ongoing basis.
- Train new employees at both service desks to create a more skilled workforce and provide additional substitutes for shift coverage when needed.
- Schedule two staff training days per year that will focus on critical staff skills.
- Annually compare compensation and benefits to other local employers to remain competitive.
- Annually the Executive Director will work with staff to develop plans that include professional goals and relevant conferences and training sessions.

2) Library Services: Improving Community Access and Participation

Project Leader: Executive Director

Project Team: Director of Development, Librarians, Executive Assistant, Fundraising Committee

Purpose: The library has much to offer the community. Innovative programming, community outreach, and a user-friendly website are key to improving community access and participation. Staff must make every effort to increase the library's visibility in the community by promoting its varied offerings outside the walls of the library at local events, festivals, and nearby living facilities, or by partnering with other organizations. The library needs to explore and implement ways to bring library services to underserved populations, including the elderly and homebound, homeschoolers, and economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

Measurement: Post program and annual surveys will measure the number of patrons the library reaches as well as their satisfaction of services.

Action steps:

Outreach:

- By the end of 2022, customize the Wood Library brand for use in outreach efforts.
- By the end of 2022, develop and implement a communications plan to create an organized effort for all library promotions.
- By the end of 2023, determine the feasibility of securing and funding a book storefront as an ongoing revenue source for the library.
- Monthly promote the Pioneer Library System's "Books by Mail" program for homebound individuals in all library promotions.
- Annually develop a list of local homeschooling groups and schedule a tour to highlight the library's resources and provide potential programming.
- Annually develop a list of community events and local festivals and participate in at least 3 of them by manning a booth with information.
- Annually develop a list of community organizations and partner with two to take library services outside the building to underserved groups.

Programs:

These programs were identified by the community survey and focus groups and will be reviewed annually based on evaluations and participation.

- By June 2022, secure funding and the partnerships for computer classes for adults who do not qualify for the senior classes.
- By the end of 2022, determine the feasibility of streaming or recording in-person programs for homebound individuals.
- Once a month, hold a pop-up Maker Space program with expert instructors at the library for at least one age group.
- Each year, explore and offer a new program series by partnering with a community agency/organization to address a specialized need, e.g. entrepreneurship, employment, and social services.

Website:

- By the end of 2022, poll library staff and patrons regarding website usability, tracking comments for improvement.
- By the end of 2023, refresh the library website.

3) Library Facility: Improving Collections and Evaluating Space

Project Leader: Executive Director

Project Team: Executive Assistant, Head of Maintenance, Facility Advisor, Executive Committee

Purpose: The community survey revealed that unsafe traffic patterns entering/exiting the library and outdated collections were areas that the library should address. Meeting space is also important to our patrons. To continue the library's commitment to offering creative and welcoming spaces, the library will update and rethink its current spaces to meet the ever-changing needs of the community.

Measurement: This goal will be measured through patron statistics and how and if the library alleviates the current traffic and parking challenges.

Action steps:

Physical Plant:

- By the end of 2022, re-evaluate how patrons are using library spaces and propose necessary changes.
- By the end of 2022, add tutor spaces throughout the library building for small group studying.
- By the end of 2022, add interactive playspaces for kids in the Children's Library to support reading, learning, and play.
- By the end of 2022, investigate possible emergency exit for staff for additional safety measures.
- By the end of 2023, redesign spaces to better reflect patron usage.
- By the end of 2024, install a reading garden to provide more outdoor space and seating for patrons.
- By the end of 2025, work with the City of Canandaigua, New York State, and neighbors to survey traffic issues and to explore solutions.
- Annually update and review the building improvement plan.

Collections:

- By the end of 2022, conduct an audit of each department to ensure diverse collections.
- Annually brainstorm new methods to highlight collections.
- Annually cull and update collection items for all departments according to our Collection Development Policy.
- Every two years survey patrons on collections to ensure needs are met.

4) Library Staff Development: Strengthening Leadership Development

Project Leader: Board President, Executive Director

Project Team: Executive Committee, Volunteer Coordinator

Purpose: A vital part to a thriving organization is leadership. For an organization to be successful, that leadership must be an ongoing, dedicated investment with engaged trustees, active volunteers, and staff supporting the organization's mission.

Measurement: This goal will be measured by an evaluation from all involved parties including trustees, volunteers, and Friends of Wood Library, indicating their satisfaction and acknowledging their improvements.

Action steps:

Trustees:

- Prepare to meet the new standard of trustee education as of January 2023 and monitor compliance annually.
- Require that all trustees attend within their first year the *Roles and Responsibilities for New Trustees* workshop presented by the Pioneer Library System.
- By April 2022, appoint an ad hoc committee to investigate other board structures and explore other options, including succession planning and term limits, that may better serve the library's future needs and have a succession plan in place by October 2022.
- By October 2022, appoint an ad hoc committee to use interviews with newer trustees to evaluate and modify the onboarding experience for new trustees.
- The Nominating Committee will meet year-round to identify and cultivate future trustee candidates.
- Annually in January the executive committee will establish a board evaluation that will include a questionnaire to trustees, detailed progress on areas of governance, and general effectiveness of the current board and committee structure.

Volunteers:

- The Volunteer Coordinator will communicate with the Friends of Wood Library to enlist volunteers.
- The Executive Director will share Friends-relevant continuing education opportunities with the Friends of Wood Library as they arise.
- Annually the Volunteer Coordinator will meet with staff members to determine tasks available to volunteers to enrich their volunteer experience.
- By September of 2022, the Volunteer Coordinator will develop and implement strategies to attract, recruit, and train new volunteers.
- Twice a year the Volunteer Coordinator will hold an open call for volunteers such as posting on volunteer databases, attending volunteer fairs, etc.

Executive Director:

- Identify and attend on average one educational opportunity per quarter to keep the Executive Director up-to-date on leadership, coaching and management skills.

- Identify and attend on average one library-specific educational opportunity per quarter to keep the Executive Director up-to-date on library trends and best practices.
- Meet with the Executive Assistant weekly to delegate tasks.

5) Sustainability: Focusing Socially, Financially, and Economically on a Sustainable Future

Project Leader: Executive Director, Sustainability Team

Project Team: Library Board, Director of Development

Purpose: There is a major movement for communities as a whole to become more sustainable. Sustainability has many meanings for libraries, including being environmentally sound, socially equitable, and economically feasible. While the library does have existing community based funding, it is always important to continue to develop additional sources of funding.

Measurement: This goal will be measured by a successful completion of the New York Library Association Sustainability Initiative as well as appropriately increasing funding overall to Wood Library.

Action steps:

- By March of 2022, designate a Capital Campaign Chair to lead a fundraising committee for the Reading Garden.
- By June 2022, reinstate a Sustainability Committee composed of staff and community members to monitor the Green Business Partnership’s Sustainability Initiative to ensure progress is made each year.
- By 2026, Wood Library, under the guidance of the Executive Director, will achieve a more sustainable existence by following “The Roadmap to Sustainability” published by NYLA and become a sustainability leader.
- Every year, the Sustainability Committee investigates one possible new environmental-friendly initiative to support sustainability – bike repair station, electric vehicle charging station, etc.
- Annually hold a sustainability program or series, such as an Earth Fair, to promote green living in the community.
- Increase awareness of the Legacy Society every year through effective promotions, donor events, and donor visits by the Executive Director, Director of Development, and trustees.
- Develop a sustainable funding plan by the end of January 2023 that reviews the use of tax levy funds, endowment funding, annual fund contributions, and/or fund-raising events as well as expense control and includes interim goals for each year of implementation.