

Rochester Public Library Strategic Plan
Completed March 2010

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Committee Members.....	2
Community Vision.....	3
Community Needs	3
Current Conditions	3
Mission Statement.....	4
Goals and Objectives	4
Library Commons	4
Lifelong Learning.....	4
Business and Career Information	5
Government Information.....	5
Local History and Genealogy.....	5
Selected Activities	6
Library Commons	6
Lifelong Learning.....	6
Government Information.....	8
Business and Career Information	8
Local History and Genealogy.....	8

Introduction

The standard framework for public library planning is *The New Planning for Results*, a text used to guide this collaborative effort between community residents and staff. First, a planning committee made up of various stakeholders from the community, interested members of the library board and staff will help the library identify community needs. Then, library staff use their skills to develop new programs and services to address the needs identified by the committee. The process was completed in less than six months but adaptations to this plan will occur frequently as the needs of patrons shift and change.

The major responsibility of the committee was to identify the needs of the Rochester community based on current conditions and a vision for the future. Sarah Hjeltness-Garley, Director of the library, managed committee meetings and worked with staff to reach consensus on the programs and services that would best meet the needs identified by the committee.

Committee Members

The Library would like to thank the many members of the community and library staff that have committed much time to the planning process. Members of the Strategic Planning Committee included the following:

- Shelby Berta, Rochester Resident
- Candi Campbell, Rochester Resident
- Terry Day, Rochester Resident
- Sarah Hjeltness-Garley, Library Director
- Steve Knobloch, Rochester Resident
- Christina Lauwerens, Rochester Resident
- Joan Martin, Technical Services Assistant
- Toby McDaniel, Rochester Resident
- Tim Olmsted, Library Board President
- Marge Ray, Technical Services Assistant
- Bobbe Ryan, Public Services Assistant
- Kathy Ryan, Reader's Services Librarian
- Angel Roberts, Rochester Resident
- Jim Rominger, Rochester Resident
- Dorothy Ross, Rochester Resident
- Cheryl Sorensen, Board Trustee
- Lois Weissberg, Rochester Resident

Community Vision

Rochester, Illinois will become a community where children, adults, retirees and the elderly thrive. A place where local businesses keep money in Rochester and local history forms a foundation for future growth. Our schools and public library will remain excellent centers of learning and continue to improve. Families will have access to exceptional day care facilities and low-cost recreational opportunities. The community, especially seniors, will have access to prompt and reliable health care.

Community Needs

Current Conditions

Strengths in Rochester include excellent schools and a commitment to local business. A lack of crime makes the area feel “small town” while its proximity to a larger city means access to various cultural opportunities and events. Rochester is home to an excellent police force, public library and volunteer fire department.

Although there is a commitment to local business, weaknesses include a lack of variety in small businesses, leaving many residents few opportunities to shop locally. Additionally, many residents feel that surrounding communities provide for residents’ basic needs, whereas Rochester lacks access to services such as physicians, veterinarians, transportation options. Rochester schools, because of their success, are now becoming overcrowded and a lack of ethnic diversity means children are not being exposed to the mosaic of cultures that will surround them as they leave Rochester. Additionally, a shift in focus from extracurricular athletics to academic endeavors such as art and music is important to ensure students succeed in higher education.

Expansion of local parks and the construction of a medical facility are two opportunities that will greatly improve the lives of local citizens. Continued growth will hopefully mean housing construction for single and middle class individuals as well as an increased need for local business.

Rochester, like other small communities faces threats brought on by current economic conditions. Job loss affects all aspects of community life. The continued addition of upper income housing causes more and more individuals to seek residence outside of Rochester in order to live within their means.

The following are community needs which the Rochester Library is well situated to address.

- Better communication between businesses and the public.
- An open and involved public in terms of local politics and community events.
- More communication and contact with other communities in this area, specifically the smaller farming communities surrounding Rochester.
- Information for small business owners to aid in the creation of small businesses.

- A common location for community information.
- More volunteer opportunities for residents.
- An increased interest in local history.
- Internet access to community information.
- Technology training for all residents, including seniors.
- A focus on higher education opportunities for students and continued education for adults.

Mission Statement

Rochester Public Library District Patrons will have access to innovative library services that continually adapt to patron needs. Additionally, the Rochester Library will:

- Provide an environment, both physical and virtual, that encourages interaction among community members and organizations.
- Provide lifelong learning opportunities through a variety of print and digital media.
- Provide career, finance, and small business information that will aid in community growth.
- Provide a common place and forum for local governance discussions.
- Provide opportunities for residents to explore their personal heritage and develop a tangible history of the community.

Goals and Objectives

Library Commons

Goal 1: Adults and families will have access to information on local events and community organizations.

Objective: By the end of FY11 at least 80% of patrons will indicate the library as their main source for information regarding local events and organizations.

Goal 2: Adults and children will have increased access to library volunteer opportunities and regarding local volunteering opportunities.

Objective: Volunteering at the library will remain steady throughout the year and will range from 3-5 individuals.

Lifelong Learning

Goal 1: All patrons will have access to current library technologies.

Objective: In FY11 the library will implement three new technologies for patron use and show a 30% increase in computer usage.

Goal 2: Adult patrons will have opportunities to improve their technology skill sets.

Objective: Technology trainings will occur in the library with an average of 10 patrons in attendance by the end of FY11.

Business and Career Information

Goal 1: Individuals seeking or facing a change in career will have access to information regarding obtaining employment.

Objective: Titles in the area of Economics (320s) will see a 15% increase in circulation by the end of FY11.

Goal 2: Entrepreneurs will have access to information regarding the creation and sustainability of small businesses.

Objective: The areas of Adult Education (374s) and Management and Public Relations (650s) will see a 15% increase in circulation by the end of FY11.

Government Information

Goal 1: Patrons of voting age will have access to information concerning elected officials, candidates seeking office and public policy issues.

Objective: Open forums will occur in the library with an average of 20 patrons in attendance for each election year.

Goal 2: Patrons will have access to the information necessary to make informed voting decisions.

Objective: Political Science (320s) materials will see a 15% increase in circulation by the end of FY11.

Local History and Genealogy

Goal 1: Patrons will have access to resources that encourage them to explore their genealogy and cultural heritage

Objective: Training about online genealogy research will occur in the library with an average of 10 patrons in attendance by the end of FY11.

Goal 2: Patrons will have access to local history resources in a variety of formats.

Objective: The Library will begin digitizing high-use local history documents and see a 25% increase in use of those specific materials.

Selected Activities

Library Commons

1. The Rochester Library will seek to create multiple volunteer opportunities for library patrons. Seniors in particular will have the opportunity to volunteer in our **Senior/YA tutoring program**. Seniors will tutor children and young adults in the areas of reading, writing, Math and family and consumer sciences. *(LC: Goal 2)*
2. In order to foster a sense of community cohesion, the Library will strive to create a **clearinghouse of community information** through two activities. *(LC: Goal 1)*
 - a. Information regarding community events happening in the Community Room will be included in the Library newsletter.
 - b. The Library will subscribe to print and digital newsletters for all community organizations. These publications will be compiled and housed in the library for public use. This will be treated as a traditional library collection and a display will be created to promote the materials.
3. Currently **Senior Gaming** is a popular program at the Library. This program was a result of previous strategic planning efforts. This program aligns with current efforts to create a space for community gathering that is recognized and inviting, therefore the Library will continue to offer Senior Gaming opportunities – Bingo, Wii Bowling, Scrabble, Bunko, etc. This will focus on activities that cause community members to come together, share their stories and spend time learning about and with one another. *(LC: General)*

Lifelong Learning

1. The Library will provide **technology trainings for adult patrons**. In order for these trainings to be successful, many new technologies will need to be purchased, including laptop computers available both for patron checkout and training use. The Community Room can then be transformed into a classroom/computer lab to support patron learning. Training topics will include but not be limited to the following. *(LL: G1, G2)*
 - Email Use
 - Internet Searching
 - Facebook Accounts
 - Ancestry.com
 - E-bay Sales
 - Online Job Searching
 - RSS Feeds and RSS Readers

2. “**Topics to Chew On**” has long been a learning resource for Seniors in the Rochester community. The Library will continue to offer “Topics” and seek new ways to make this program intergenerational and inclusive of new technologies. *(LL: G2)*
3. The **Springfield Area Big Read**, which begins in February of 2011 will be a great opportunity for patrons to participate in lifelong learning opportunities. The technology component of the program will seek to encourage participation among residents age 18-24 years of age, however all patrons will be encouraged to participate.

Music is a major theme of the book chosen for the Big Read. The major goal of the project will then be to prompt residents to explore how music has influences their lives. Patrons will do so through an “expression contest” and will submit audio, video or textual explanations to a dynamic, participatory based online environment. The Library will have **digital media technologies** such as digital cameras, microphones and digital audio recorders **available for checkout**, purchased through the ILEAD U grant. Libraries will hold training sessions with these technologies for their patrons. Librarians will also create online, video tutorials using screen-capture software as an additional training resource for patrons. *(LL: G1, G2)*

4. **Downloadable media**, including ebooks, audiobook, music and movies will be offered to library patrons in FY11. This service will allow the Library to reach out to new and existing patrons using portable electronic devices such as ebook readers, iPods and mp3 players. *(LL: G1)*
5. Due to the increased demand for computer access and the lack of physical space to install new desktop machines, the Library will begin offering **laptop computers available for checkout** and use in the Library. As noted above these will also be used to create a computer lab environment for technology trainings. *(LL: G1)*
6. The Library will seek out opportunities to use **social networking tools** to create a community among patrons and encourage exposure to current library technologies. *(LL: G1, G2)*
7. Resources will be focused on pulling in a larger and less gender specific audience in the **Rochester Reads Book Discussion Group**. This will allow more patrons access to the community knowledge created in book discussion groups. *(LL: General)*
8. Increased **staff technology training** will be necessary to deal professionally with patron technology use issues. *(LL: General)*

Government Information

1. The Library will host **open forums for local and state elections**. (*GI: G1, G2*)
2. **Staff training** regarding the providing of **government information in a reference environment** will be increased. (*GI: G1, G2*)
3. **Voter registration services** will be provided to patrons of voting age. (*GI: G1, G2*)
4. **Local government information** will be incorporated into the new library **website**. (*GI: G1, G2*)
5. Additional materials will be purchased in order to create a **substantial political science collection**. (*GI: G1, G2*)

Business and Career Information

1. Federal and state **income tax preparation courses** will be led by Audrey Mock, the current board treasurer. (*BCI: G1*)
2. Additional **materials** in the areas of **adult education and management and public relations** will be purchased. (*BCI: G1*)
3. A **standing order** plan will be purchased **with NOLO** to ensure the Library provides the have the most up-to-date forms and resources. NOLO materials cover the following topics. (*BCI: G2*)
 - a. starting a small business
 - b. planning an estate
 - c. handling personal finances
 - d. dealing with a divorce
 - e. protecting an invention
 - f. going to court
 - g. researching the law
4. A “Topics to Chew On” program regarding **investing and personal finance** will be held in conjunction with income tax preparation courses as noted above. (*BCI: G1*)
5. Technology trainings regarding **online job searching** will be held as will trainings regarding Digital Portfolios/Resume creation. (*BCI: G1*)

Local History and Genealogy

1. The interlibrary loaning of microfilm has increased and a microfilm archive of Rochester Times is currently kept, however patrons do not have access to a reader and instead visit

the nearest library that supports microfilm research. A **microfilm reader** will be provided for patron access. (*LH: G1, G2*)

2. **Technology training** will be provided for patrons interested in using Ancestry.com and Heritage Quest online databases **for genealogy research**. (*LH: G1, G2*)
3. High-use **local history items will be digitized** to be included in an online database of downloadable media such as Overdrive. (*LH: G1, G2*).