



2019 - 2022

STRATEGIC PLAN UPDATE



Patrick Heath
Public Library

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Patrick Heath Public Library Strategic Plan Update October 2019-September 2022

The Patrick Heath Public Library continuously strives to meet and exceed community needs through relevant and quality library services. Because this is so important to us, the library's strategic plan is updated every three years. As the Patrick Heath Public Library Advisory Board (PHPLAB), represents the library's community and is appointed by City Council, it was vital to solicit their expertise and guidance to formulate an updated strategic plan. The PHPLAB embarked upon the update in February 2019.

Planning Timeline and Accomplishments

Over the course of four (4) months the PHPLAB reviewed the library's values, mission and vision statements, and current strategic plan; conducted an environmental scan; determined what library priorities were most crucial to them as representatives of the constituents of the community; and reviewed and discussed community and library data, trends, and benchmarks.

Our commitment to be a welcoming and responsive library remains unchanged.

Library Values

Inclusive

Welcoming, open, engaged, sense of community

Responsive

Information navigation, knowledge sharing, reader's advisory

Respectful

Relationships: staff and patrons, staff and staff, staff and volunteers, staff and community partners

Patron Rights: privacy, freedom of thought, solitude

“The publicness of the public library is an increasingly rare commodity. It becomes harder all the time to think of places that welcome everyone and don't charge for that warm embrace.”

–The Library Book by Susan Orlean



Mission Statement

The Patrick Heath Public Library cultivates a love of reading, enriches lives through life-long learning and cultural exploration, and provides a welcoming space for people to engage and connect.

Vision Statement

It is the library's vision to:

- Be a welcoming, empowering place to the community
- Help library users into a productive and creative future
- Assure equitable access to the library's resources and services
- Be a dynamic force in the community

The PHPLAB also conducted an environmental scan which indicated that the library has many strengths including welcoming and engaged staff, a wide variety of programming, encouragement of local authors, strong partnerships, and technology availability and assistance. The library facility and its beauty, accessibility, setting, and comfort were also strengths.

The library contends with not being open more hours, funding constraints, uncomfortable seating and issues with sound in the community room, and lack of parking. The board also recognized that the library does not have a café or enough quiet areas.

The challenges we face are that we are open fewer hours and have a limited marketing budget to promote our services to people who can find programming opportunities elsewhere. In terms of funding we compete for donations with other organizations in the community. Lack of public transportation means we cannot serve everyone in the community who would like to use the library. As a one-facility library centrally located downtown we are not near the areas of the community experiencing rapid growth.



While the PHPLAB recognizes that the Internet has affected library use, it has also been an opportunity for the library to adapt to new technologies and new ways of providing information. Social media has opened a wide range of methods for us to cost-effectively communicate to the community to promote library programs and services. The community is very interested in seeing an expansion of programs, particularly for children and young adults, and our central location is ideal for many people in the community. Further, the building of a new Alamo Community College District (ACCD) school in the Balcones Creek neighborhood as well as population growth gives us many opportunities

to serve our community whether that be in a partnership for educational opportunities or expanded library facilities/services in other areas of town.

Data Gathering

The PHPLAB also determined that gathering input from the community should consist of a library survey. With assistance from the board we crafted a survey and gathered input from June 1 through July 10, 2019. Staff encouraged survey participation with general library patrons, library program participants, and community room users. Staff also attended some community events to encourage participation.

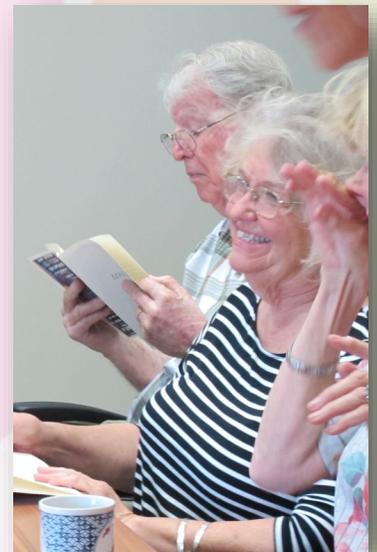
Survey Results

In the end, we received and analyzed 347 surveys. Nearly 53% of these survey participants live inside the city limits, 31% live in Kendall County, and approximately 17% live outside the county. Most respondents, nearly 75%, check out books and other materials. Approximately 47% attend library seminars and programs and 28% use meeting or study rooms. Eighty-two percent (82%) of respondents can use the library while 7-8% of respondents are not aware of services the library offers, or the library does not offer what they need or like. Nearly 57% visit the library between 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. with 52% visiting in the morning hours. Sixty-six percent (66%) think library hours are fine while nearly 17% would like the library to have some Sunday open hours.

The following service priorities from the Public Library Association's *Strategic Planning for Results* best describe what our community wants the library to provide:

Reading, Viewing and Listening for Enjoyment

Patrons who want materials and programs to enhance their leisure time will be able to access them easily and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options. Respondents want the library to help instill a love of reading in children and to continue bringing artistic performances to the library.



Visiting and Working in a Quiet, Comfortable Space

Patrons will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.



Learning at Any Age

Patrons will have the resources and programs they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives. Equally important to this community is for the library to be a central source for information about the community so that they can fulfill their civic responsibilities at the local, state, and national levels, and fully participate in community decision making.

Libraries always remind me that there are good things in this world. –Lauren Ward

Of the services the respondents would like the library to offer or expand, books and digital materials received the highest number of responses while café-style food, movies and audiobooks, and comfortable seating came in closely thereafter.

Nearly 200 open-ended comments revealed that for the most part the community lauds library staff, programs, collections, and facilities. Several comments lamented the lack of varied programming for tweens and teens. Others wanted more programs for kids. Several wanted more books, specifically new books; yet other respondents who have moved from larger library systems seek more digital options such as magazines and music, in addition to more e-books.

Some of the Comments

I am very impressed by the public library and personnel. The personnel is very invested and involved in the community. The library's mission of serving the underserved is very evident in their daily practices.

Everyone is so helpful and pleasant. To me that generates an environment of warmth and welcome. The variety of services is outstanding for our community. Thank you!

EMPLOYEES AND VOLUNTEERS ARE SO EAGER TO HELP AND SO VERY NICE

The YA section could do better in diversity of authors represented. The Fantasy section is a bit dated too, with a lot of older, white authors. Whoever buys for the children's section is doing a stellar job. More tables for laptop work would be great downstairs.

We would love to see a book club or battle of the books style competition for middle school age group. I would also love some additional digital resources. Especially magazines.

Would love to see a bigger selection of new books.

The survey results and comments were considered when staff and the PHPLAB determined goals, objectives and action items for the plan years.

Everything you need for better future and success has already been written. And guess what? All you have to do is go to the library.

—Henri Frederic Amiel



Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives also changed very little from the previous plan.

EXPLORE

OUR GOAL is to inspire people of all ages to read, view and listen for enjoyment.

OUR OBJECTIVE is to increase access to a variety of materials to meet customer needs.

Representative Actions

- Increase digital items' use and content, including magazines, movies and music.
- Consider adding collection metrics software to provide collections that are relevant and constantly changing.

OUR OBJECTIVE is to provide programming that evolves to meet the needs of the community.

Representative Actions

- Create a program evaluation process to continuously improve programming.
- Create a teen advisory board to be more responsive to the needs and wants of the young adult population.

ENRICH

OUR GOAL is to promote lifelong learning for all ages.

OUR OBJECTIVE is to increase resources, materials and community involvement to assist customers at every stage of learning and education.

Representative Actions

- Encourage use of electronic resources with a comprehensive marketing program.
- Digitize and make accessible collections in the Dietert Historical Archives.
- Create comprehensive individualized professional development programs for staff.

OUR OBJECTIVE is to partner with community organizations and individuals to enhance and create new learning opportunities and amplify existing opportunities.

Representative Actions

- Develop a Parents Night Out interactive program with Boerne Independent School District (BISD) to provide parents with learning strategies.
- Work with Boerne area assisted living and nursing facilities to interview and record residents, archiving their stories in the Dietert Historical Archives.



Goals and Objectives, *cont'd.*

ENGAGE

OUR GOAL is to be flexible in developing spaces and services to meet the needs of a growing, diverse community.

OUR OBJECTIVE is to connect with people in the community, through outreach and virtual services.

Representative Action

Conduct monthly programming and promote student library cards at secondary schools.



OUR OBJECTIVE is to meet the needs of people seeking quiet space.

Representative Actions

- Reinforce consistently the rules regarding quiet zones in the library.
- Replace study tables with individual workstations on the second floor.

OUR OBJECTIVE is to find innovative ways to serve high-growth areas in the community.

Representative Actions

- Fund a facilities master plan to determine needs in high-growth areas of the community. (See action 4.3.3 in the 2018 Boerne Master Plan.)
- Add book drops to locations in high-growth areas of the community.

Always underlying our goals and objectives is the commitment to provide superior customer service with staff who are open, welcoming and knowledgeable.

As in previous plans staff will continue to emphasize organizational competencies, particularly partnerships, fundraising, training and staff development, and marketing.

Initiatives for the library in the City of Boerne's *2018 Master Plan* include a recommendation to consider alternative funding sources and to continue to regularly collaborate with the organizations that support the Patrick Heath Public Library (i.e., Kendall County, BPLF, and FOBPL) to determine if there are additional ways to help support fundraising efforts.

The library staff and stakeholders are excited and encouraged by the opportunities presented in this updated strategic plan. The support shown by the community for the library enlivens and sustains the work we do. We will continue to actively listen to what the community wants from the library and work hard to make the community proud.

Having fun isn't hard when you've got a library card. –Marc Brown

Acknowledgments

Patrick Heath Public Library Advisory Board Members

Susan Nelson, Chair

Ann Meyer, Vice-Chair

Martha Schaefer, Secretary

Laura Bray

Karen Hill

Ashlee Pfeiffer

Richele Poston

Susan Whipple

Greg "Woody" Woodard

With Gratitude

Boerne Public Library Foundation

Friends of the Boerne Public Library

Patrick Heath Public Library Staff

Boerne City Council

Boerne City Administration

Community Members

Approved by the Patrick Heath Public Library Advisory Board, September 12, 2019.