

Virginia Public Library 2009 – 2014 Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Library Commission:
September ____, 2009

*Prepared by:
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THE PLANNING PROCESS:

The Virginia Public Library completed a comprehensive strategic planning process between April and August 2009. This process was made possible through financial support from the Arrowhead Library System. Composition of the Planning Team included representatives from the City Council, Friends of the Library, Virginia Foundation, and library staff.

A community-based process was utilized, which centered on answering the questions: 1) *What are the pressing needs in our community?* and, 2) *What is the library's role in helping to address those needs?* Major steps included conducting focus groups with community leaders and with staff, reviewing community demographic data and library statistics, discussing organizational mission, identifying service priorities, and developing detailed action plans for the first year of implementation. In addition, indicators were established to track progress toward achieving the library's new goals.

The resulting strategic plan is intended to guide the library for the next five years, with action plans to be revised annually.

WHAT WE FOUND:

A number of themes emerged through our environmental scan process. Foremost on the community's mind are its young people. Out-migration over the past two decades and a recent economic downturn has resulted in a community of predominantly low to moderate income households. Nearly all parents are working and a large number of children are spending their time in child care settings. Although there is a strong local education infrastructure, community members identified as top priorities both early literacy efforts and homework help/youth engagement to support continued learning success. There is also growing demand for home-schooling support.

Community leaders went on to identify the importance of learning as a *lifelong* activity, along with arts and cultural experiences, as part of their vision. Concern was also expressed about social connectedness and cultural sensitivity, especially with regard to an increasing number of community members who may feel marginalized because of their income or race.

Communication was another theme. There is a general lack of awareness of what is happening in the community, including what the library has to offer. Community members feel there is a need for more diverse avenues of communicating about news and local events.

Historically, the Virginia Library has been out in front in utilizing technology and making these resources available to the public. Use of the library's public access computers has increased dramatically in the past three years. Demand is rising especially for employment-related

activities (e.g. job searching, resume writing, online filing for unemployment), and online tax filing.

Finally, community members recognize that the City of Virginia, including its library, serve a greater area and function as a regional center. They want to see the Quad Cities working cooperatively on a new vision for the future. (Please see Appendices B, C & D for complete environmental scan reports).

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

Commitment to Customer Service –

The Library’s knowledgeable staff provide friendly, individualized assistance to patrons in a confidential manner.

Accessibility –

The Library provides free and open access to everyone, and maintains a barrier-free facility.

Reliability –

The Library is a reliable source of accurate information.

Community Awareness –

The Library aligns its materials and services to match the needs of the community.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Virginia Public Library is the area’s go-to source, providing materials and programming to stimulate imaginations and nurture current and future generations of engaged lifelong learners.

LIBRARY GOALS (In order of priority):

- 1. Children of all ages are supported in learning and recreational pursuits that empower them to succeed in school and contribute to a zestful community.**
- 2. Everyone in the community will have resources that broaden their world view, inspire creativity, and lead to healthy, full and active lives.**
- 3. Interested citizens will access, learn to use, and engage current technological resources to find reliable information leading to a connected and informed community.**

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Goal 1 (Children)

- ✓ Total annual juvenile circulation and percentage of total circulation.

- ✓ Number of visits to Learning Express via Virginia Library website.
- ✓ Number of children who are resident card holders.
- ✓ Number of outreach programs / activities.
- ✓ Number of Summer Reading Program participants.
- ✓ Parent report of benefits to children who participated in the Summer Reading Program (end of program survey).
- ✓ Number of preschool story time participants on-site and off-site.
- ✓ Parent / teacher report of benefits to children who participated in story time (end of session surveys).
- ✓ Number of new after-school programs and total participation.

Goal 2 (Stimulate Imagination / Lifelong Learning)

- ✓ Survey of adult program participants regarding whether they learned something new or were creatively inspired.
- ✓ Number of participants in brown bag series and other adult programming.
- ✓ Number of participants in the online book club.
- ✓ Number of patron book reviews/recommendations contributed to Library's blog.
- ✓ Circulation in areas set as priorities for collection development.

Goal 3 (Connect to the Online World / Information Literacy)

- ✓ Number of new links to the Library's website.
- ✓ Number of hits on the Library website.
- ✓ Number of participants in database training.
- ✓ Survey of participant comfort level using databases after receiving training.
- ✓ Utilization of databases via Virginia Library website.
- ✓ Number of hours of staff training on technology topics.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

<i>Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
1. Present strategic plan to Library Commission and City Council for adoption.	September 2009
2. Communicate the new plan to stakeholders and the public.	September - October 2009
3. Review strategic plan progress as a regular agenda item at staff meetings; make mid-course corrections.	Monthly
4. Discuss strategic plan progress as regular agenda item at Library Commission meetings.	Monthly
5. Compile progress indicator data for annual review.	Annually 2010 - 2014 (September)
6. Board/staff annual 'retreat' to review implementation successes and challenges (including indicator data), review goals, revise strategies, and project budget needs.	Annually 2010 - 2013 (September)
7. Staff develop action plans for the next year.	Annually 2010 - 2013

	(October - December)
8. Full round of strategic planning.	Fall 2014 (New plan in place by January 2015)

Appendix A:

YEAR 1 Action Plans September 2009 – December 2010

GOAL # 1: Children of all ages are supported in learning and recreational pursuits that empower them to succeed in school and contribute to a zestful community.

Strategy A: Outreach & Collaboration		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Assist ALS in applying for LSTA grant to do outreach with child care providers.	Dawn	February 2010
2. Outreach story times at early childhood facilities at least twice per year (Y Wee Care, ECFE, Head Start, Chicagami Too, etc).	Dawn	September 2009 – May 2010
3. Develop link with teen groups (Teen Center, IRYA, church youth groups) to promote teen reading programs. [Future: Teen Advisory Group]	Dawn	December 2010
4. Participate in Week of the Young Child event: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Booth with Library materials. ▪ Conduct story time. 	Outreach Volunteers (Friends ?)	April 2010
5. Booth at Land of the Loon Festival.	Friends of the Library	TBD
6. Conduct library card drive / contest with elementary schools.	Dawn	September 2010

Strategy B: Homework Help		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Train staff to become familiar with Learning Express database: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Participate in full training. ▪ Present to rest of employees at staff meeting. 	Dawn & Susan H. Dawn & Susan H.	August 2009 September 2009
2. Promote Learning Express: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E-mail information to teachers (all appropriate grade levels), home school organizations, Indian Education, and Key Club. 	Dawn (Susan H.)	September 2009
3. Research Rochester Library homework help model.	Dawn	September 2009
4. Meet with school personnel to explore the need and potential for more consistent tutoring program in the community (e.g. encourage a survey of parents to determine volume of need for additional tutoring).	Dawn	October 2010

Strategy C: Children's Programming *		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. After-school Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Apply to Rotary for funds to purchase popcorn machine. ▪ Develop and promote low-staff/low-expense after-school activities (including utilization of movie license) at least quarterly. 	Dawn Dawn	August 2009 Quarterly (September 2009 – May 2010)
2. Preschool Story Time: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue on-site with two 10-week sessions annually. ▪ Train another staff person to fill-in as a substitute. 	Dawn Dawn (Susan H.)	October 2009 – May 2010 November 2009
3. Summer Reading Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a simplified process to manage the summer program. ▪ Continue promotional visits to all elementary classrooms. ▪ Conduct summer program with 8 special weekly events. 	Dawn Dawn Dawn (All Staff)	April 2010 May 2010 June – July 2010

* Integrate the celebration of diversity within children's programming.

Strategy D: Children's Resources		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Children's Computers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Designate two computers in children's area. ▪ Select, purchase, and install children's software. 	Dawn Dawn (Sarah)	December 2009 December 2009
2. Identify appropriate sources and apply for funding to develop Books to Go / Story Kits.	Dawn	May 2010

Strategy E: Parent Education		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Give presentations annually through events organized by ECFE and PTSA.	Dawn	May 2010
2. Publish literacy tips in City utility newsletter.	Dawn	Each Issue (Quarterly)

GOAL # 2: Everyone in the community will have resources that broaden their world view, inspire creativity, and lead to healthy, full and active lives.

Strategy F: Adult Programming		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Develop 2010 Brown Bag series plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Goal of at least six events per year. ▪ Seek appropriate local co-sponsors to jointly organize and promote specific events. ▪ Integrate the celebration of diversity within the event series. 	Susan H. & Dawn	September 2009
2. Organize Winter Reading Program	Dawn	January 2010
3. Organize One Book-One Community Program	Dawn	April 2010
4. Friends of the Library capacity-building: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Encourage membership drive and plan for ongoing recruitment of next generation to ensure longevity of the Friends organization. ▪ Request additional fundraising activity to support growth of Library programming. ▪ Request participation in outreach activities (see Strategy A). 	Nancy	December 2010

Strategy G: Readers Advisory		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Promotion of online resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a plan to promote the online book club, Novelist, etc. ▪ Carry out awareness activities as per plan. 	Susan H. Susan H.	October 2009 TBD
2. Hard copy resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate or develop bookmarks and pamphlets for different genres. ▪ Locate or develop read-alike lists. 	Susan H. Susan H. (Dawn)	March 2010 March 2010

3. Promote the Library's blog as a place for individual patrons and local book clubs to make book recommendations and post reader reviews.	Susan H.	March 2010
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Strategy H: Collection Development		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Develop and implement an alternating weeding schedule, following the "Two Cart Rule": <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Nonfiction ▪ Fiction ▪ Children's ▪ Media 	Susan H. (Nancy) Nancy (Dawn) Dawn Susan K.	February, May, September December, April, August January, March, October, November June, July
2. Set annual priority areas for collection development.	Nancy (Collection Development Committee)	January 2010

GOAL # 3: Interested citizens will access, learn to use, and engage current technological resources to find reliable information leading to a connected and informed community.

Strategy I: Promotion of Technological Resources		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Databases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop a plan for ongoing promotion of databases. ▪ Carry out awareness activities as per plan. 	Susan H. Susan H.	September 2009 TBD
2. Write a series of articles about specific technology topics (and other library resource/event promotion) for publication in Hometown Focus and the DPU newsletter.	Susan H. (Dawn)	Monthly (beginning September 2009)
3. Links to Library website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Generate a list of local websites we would like the Library website to be linked FROM. ▪ Approach those entities to establish said links. 	Susan H. Susan H.	November 2009 January 2010
4. Wireless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Indicate “Wireless Hot Spot” on the front sign. ▪ Add the word “wireless” to Library directional signs and add more signs. 	Loren Nancy	September 2009 November 2009

Strategy J: Hardware & Software		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Replace three computers with upgraded equipment annually.	Nancy (Sarah)	October 2009 & October 2010
2. Software: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Annually upgrade virus protection software. ▪ Upgrade as many machines as possible with Windows 7. 	Nancy (Sarah) Nancy (Sarah)	October 2009 & October 2010 October 2009
3. Add wireless booster for complete building coverage.	Nancy (Sarah)	October 2009

Strategy K: Designated Computer Areas		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Explore potential for re-configuring media department space to add a computer lab. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Select a space-planning professional. ▪ Analyze physical space and current/future functions (including staff input). ▪ Provide written recommendations for developing computer lab. 	Nancy Space Planning Consultant Space Planning Consultant	June 2010 September – October 2010 December 2010

Strategy L: Computer Training		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Promote one-to-one tutorials for patrons to learn how to use databases.	Susan H.	October 2009
2. Staff training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consult with ALS Application Support Librarian to determine areas of training needed (and sources of said training) to ensure staff can provide adequate in-house IT support. ▪ Participate in training as per above consultation. 	Sarah Sarah	September 2009 December 2010

Appendix B:

Community Focus Groups – Summary

April/May 2009

Appendix C:

Library Staff SWOT Analysis

April 2009

Appendix D:

Library & Community Profile

May 2009