

Saugatuck-Douglas District Library

Strategic Plan

2024-2026



SAUGATUCK-DOUGLAS
DISTRICT LIBRARY

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Introduction

In 2023, under guidance of the Saugatuck-Douglas District Library's strategic planning committee, the Library began strategic planning for years 2024 - 2026. Our previous plan focused on the funding and building of the new Library.

With the opening of the new building and the limitations of running during a pandemic behind us, we are looking to the new opportunities the physical expansion affords us. Our evaluation methods revealed foremost that the library has strong community support for the building, the staff, and the programming we provided. The process also helped us identify areas in which we can improve.

The Process

Gathering Community Input

The Saugatuck-Douglas District Library solicited input from stakeholders. Staff created a survey to gauge usage of the library and to determine the areas where the public would like to see improvements. 336 community members completed the survey. Nine focus groups, including the staff, the board, the Friends of the Library as well as 6 groups made up of members of the public met to determine further what our stakeholders believed we were doing well, and where we could improve.

Developing solutions

The data was compiled and then analyzed by a committee of staff, the director, and the director of the Lakeland Library Cooperative in order to establish specific goals and strategic areas for expansion to keep the Library an integral and valued asset to our community.

Providing a Path to Results

We have created a future-facing plan to provide the community with resources and programming that propels us through the next four years. This includes discussion and approval by the Library board and the development of action plans. Upon completion, the plan will be distributed to the public.

What We Heard

- Users value the daily impact the library has on each member of the community and want this to be preserved and expanded upon.
- The physical collection is still the most used aspect of the library. Respondents asked for a larger collection, with more diversity of genre, authors, and stories.
- Survey respondents praised the staff and the building, expressing appreciation for the new meeting and study rooms and the expanded programming that they can accommodate.
- Participants requested increased programming and diversity of offerings for both adults and children.
- Respondents also expressed interest in further defining our new outdoor space.
- Suggestions to improve community awareness of the Library and its offerings through marketing and outreach were also discussed.

Vision

The Library is an indispensable resource and valued leader, partner and advocate for our community.

Mission

The Library strives to be a welcoming place that supports lifelong learning, inspires the exploration of ideas and culture, and enriches the lives of all our users through diverse materials, programs and services.

Goals

1. Ensure Stability and Growth
2. Enhance Community Engagement
3. Expand Access to Resources

1

Ensure Stability and Growth

Set the foundation needed for long term success

Objective: Transparent financial stewardship

- Engage the services of a financial consultant
 - Close out the construction project and budget by exploring possible interior and exterior building improvements
 - Set multi-year operating budget in alignment with strategic priorities and economic trends
 - Set long-term goals for investment and capital development
- Prepare for future millage

Objective: Future-focused leadership

- Staffing
 - Examine and update current job descriptions
 - Create and implement a plan to reprioritize strategic objectives and maximize productivity
- Training
 - Board
 - Create a system for new trustee orientation
 - Scheduled sessions addressing board roles and responsibilities and other issues facing the Library and community at least twice a year
 - Staff
 - Scheduled staff development opportunities based on new initiatives and existing practices
 - Empower the staff to share and implement new skills and information

2

Enhance Community Engagement

Solicit ongoing input and participation to promote community ownership

Objective: Improve patron awareness and understanding of library resources and services

- Communication
 - Solicit ongoing input from patrons
 - Explore new options for reaching patrons (direct mail, bulletin board, text messages)
 - Assess, improve and integrate existing marketing methods with all aspects of library services (newsletters, social media, newspaper coverage)
- Instruction and Training
 - Improve and create print and online tools for instruction on digital resources
 - Create talking points for informal interactions between staff and patrons
 - Offer in-person training sessions on the Library's digital resources

Objective: Create new programming opportunities for enrichment, learning and fun

- Align programs with the mission and vision of our organization
- Ensure that programs are strategic and an effective use of our resources
- Evaluate impact vs. investment of each program

Objective: Strengthen our collaborative community partnerships

- Align our partnerships with the mission and vision of our organization
- Ensure that current and future collaborations are strategic and an effective use of our resources
- Evaluate impact vs. investment for each opportunity

3

Expand Access to Resources

Proactively embrace new opportunities and make regular shifts in our practices in order to meet the needs of our community.

Objective: Analyze current resources and usage

- Work with Lakeland Library Cooperative to provide better collection data and usage statistics
- Maximize and utilize customer feedback for collection development
- Reexamine purchasing models

Objective: Explore new opportunities

- Investigate new products, materials and resources
- Reimagine our use of space to organize and display materials
- Develop new collections such as a Library of Things

Objective: Invest in quality materials

- Examine overall costs and expenditures in order to reallocate funding to enhance physical and digital collections
- Explore new revenue sources such as grants and partnerships

Next Steps

To guide implementation, the Library board and staff will provide input to create annual Action Plans. The Action Plans provide a list of activities designed to help the library achieve its goals and objectives. It itemizes new initiatives and tasks designed to support specific objectives which will be implemented by staff.

The timing of certain activities will be determined by priority and influenced by various factors, such as funding and other resource allocation. Review and adjustment of the Action Plan will happen on a regular basis and board updates will be provided semi-annually. To accommodate internal and external changes, the Action Plan is a “living document.” It is designed to be flexible enough to accommodate revisions as needed to respond to evolving needs, resource fluctuations and most importantly, continued input from the community.

If you are interested in reviewing the focus group and survey response data, you will find them on the Library’s webpage: <https://www.sdlibrary.org/about-us-1/strategic-plan>