

**Frankfort Public Library District  
Strategic Plan Mid-Plan Review  
May 2023—March 2025**

## Background

In May of 2023, the Frankfort Public Library District Library Board of Trustees approved a new Strategic Plan to guide the Library from 2023 through 2026. We have now reached the halfway point of the Strategic Plan, which is an excellent time to reflect on progress and plan for the future.

The Strategic Plan is a living document designed to guide Library progress in line with the Library's Mission and Vision. Staff at all levels are encouraged to utilize the Strategic Plan as a measurement tool for evaluating existing or potential Library programs, services, and initiatives.

The Strategic Plan identified four areas of focus: Space, Communication, Experience, and Access. A Strategic Planning Committee made up of Library Trustees, administrators, and staff meets quarterly to assess progress towards Strategic Plan Goals

## Space



**Goal 1:** Evaluate existing space, in order to make intentional and meaningful changes that align with Library and community need, delight our patrons, and encourage more engagement with Library services and programs.

**Goal 2:** Optimize indoor space and outdoor public land, as well as Library procedures to foster environmental sustainability and stewardship.

**Objective 1:** Complete a professional assessment of existing space to develop a capital improvement plan.

**Objective 2:** Conduct an audit of Library procedures and spaces to find opportunities for improving sustainability.

### **Assessment:**

The Library has made significant progress in this area of focus. Objective 1, a professional assessment of existing space, was completed, and that document has been utilized to guide capital improvement projects. Of particular highlight include the development of an ongoing building maintenance checklist, the replacement of the Library's courtyard wall, aesthetic improvements to the East End restrooms, upgrading to more sustainable LED parking lot lights, and many more building and safety improvements.

Progress has also been made on Goal 2, to improve the Library's environmental sustainability and stewardship. The Library has held a number of "Swap" events, such as a Puzzle Swap, Craft Swap, and Costume Swap, to encourage the community to reuse and recycle items, instead of discarding them. A new Green Committee has been established to work towards Objective 2, and to continue to suggest improved sustainability opportunities.

Looking ahead, there are a number of Space projects that the Library will continue working on throughout the length of the Strategic Plan and beyond. Sustainability will continue to be an area of focus when guiding building improvements and procedures.

## Communication



**Goal 1:** Utilize all communication tools to improve engagement with established, former, and potential new library users, and to promote Library services and programs.

**Goal 2:** Create and deepen partnerships with local organizations to enhance the Library's presence in the community.

**Objective 1:** Develop a comprehensive strategic marketing plan.

**Objective 2:** Facilitate regular roundtables and communication opportunities for local community organizations.

### Assessment:

Of all of the Strategic Priority areas, the Library has made most progress in Communication. Each successive quarterly assessment demonstrates more progress towards Goal 2, to develop community partnerships. Partnerships have been created and developed with various local government organizations, schools, local businesses, non-profits, and service organizations. The Library has even established an intergovernmental agreement with a local school district and developed storywalks with both the local park district and Village. The Library has established a presence throughout the community at various events and programs, and outreach is a continued priority.

The Library has also made significant progress towards Goal 1, to develop communication tools. Some highlighted progress includes the return of the print newsletter, the development of a new website, utilizing a new platform for automated Library notices, the creation of a Library TikTok, and new welcome brochures and guides to Library resources. We continue to assess new ways to connect with current and potential Library users.

Looking ahead, the Library has not yet completed the two established Objectives for this focus area. These objectives should be prioritized as the Library moves into the second half of the Strategic Plan.

## Experience



**Goal 1:** Provide excellent services and experiences for patrons.

**Goal 2:** Create and develop library experiences which align with community interest.

**Objective 1:** Create a cyclical assessment to evaluate Library resources.

**Objective 2:** Develop a staff culture statement and service philosophy.

## Assessment:

These two goals should be considered evergreen goals for the Library, as they require continuous assessment and response to community changes. Internally, staff continuing education goals were created, a new Employee Handbook was developed, and the onboarding process continues to be refined. Externally, staff have developed a variety of new program ideas, including community fairs, technology programs, and visits from community groups like the IL DMV. Of particular focus have been events and programs that promote community togetherness. The Library has seen excellent success in these community-connecting events, such as the Community Puzzle Swap, the annual Day of Service, and the community crochet program.

Looking ahead, staff will continue to develop experiences based on feedback, in order to meet the demands of the Library community. Objective 2, to develop a staff culture statement, has not yet been accomplished, and should be a priority heading into the second half of the Strategic Plan.

## Access



**Goal 1:** Expand access to all Library services and collections to ensure the Library is meeting all community needs.

**Goal 2:** Provide Library services and resources that engage and retain active library users through all stages of life.

**Goal 3:** Identify and engage with unserved and underserved populations in the Library District.

**Objective 1:** Analyze cardholder and census data to identify unserved and underserved populations.

**Objective 2:** Find opportunities to implement universal design in the Library.

## Assessment:

The Library has made good progress on the three goals outlined in the Access focus area. Particular highlights include the creation of new surveys to assess program interest and efficacy, and changing circulation rules to reflect community demand. The Library also developed a Library of Things collection, in order to provide non-traditional items for circulation to community members.

New collections and programs were developed to meet the needs of community members that staff assessed were being underserved. This included the development of Memory Care Kits and programming to help community members stay mentally fit, and the development of sensory-friendly programming for families.

When the Strategic Plan was being developed, the library system was discussing potential tools that would allow for better cardholder analysis to identify service gaps within the Library service area. Staff had planned on utilizing that data for Objective 2. Although those tools never materialized, the Committee gathered some Library use data in November 2024, and that data can be utilized to increase promotion to less-active parts of the Library District.

Looking ahead, Staff will be assessing the Library's internet communication and website to make sure it meets the new Web Accessibility Standards. They will continue to identify unserved and underserved populations and find ways to engage with them, and administration and trustees will prioritize universal design best practices as opportunities develop.

## Action Plan

With 18 months left on the current Strategic Plan, the following target items have been identified to prioritize for completion:

- Conduct an audit of Library procedures and spaces to find opportunities for improving sustainability. (Space)
- Develop a comprehensive strategic marketing plan. (Communication)
- Facilitate regular roundtables and communication opportunities for local community organizations. (Communication)
- Communicate Library resources to the local Chamber of Commerce. (Communication)
- Develop a staff culture statement and service philosophy. (Experience)
- Institute a public comment box, and evaluate program feedback forms to generate more feedback from attendees. (Experience)
- Develop comprehensive resources for staff, for quick reference to Library information that is requested infrequently. (Experience)
- Evaluate the Library's online offerings to ensure compliance with the new Web Accessibility Standards. (Access)
- Bring The Lab to a wider audience. (Access)
- Expand and advertise the Library of Things. (Access)

Although this Action Plan reflects items currently at highest priority for the remainder of the current Strategic Plan, there may be additional opportunities that develop that could not be anticipated at this time.