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Cedar Rapids Public Library Strategic Plan, 2008—2011

Mission Statement

The mission of the Cedar Rapids Public Library is to provide a complete spectrum of information to the community through a variety of materials, programs, appropriate technology, and a well-trained staff.

Vision

The Cedar Rapids Public Library will be a stimulating destination that people will visit and use to enhance their leisure time through its programs, services, and collections.

Values

The board of the Cedar Rapids Public Library has a strong commitment to supply the materials and services needed by its constituents and to meet the foregoing mission of the library on a free and continuing basis.

The board believes that full and free access to information is a basic right of all citizens in a democracy, and such access must never be dependent upon the economic status of any individual.

The board of trustees believes that intellectual freedom in the acquisition and use of library materials is of prime importance and hereby affirms the Library Bill of Rights, the Freedom to Read Statement, the Freedom to View Statement, Statement on Labeling, and the Labels and Rating Systems as adopted and interpreted by the American Library Association.

The board of the Cedar Rapids Public Library values each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.

The board believes that a public library provides a central public service and should be funded primarily by the city council, county supervisors, the state of Iowa, and other public funding sources. The support received from the Library Foundation and the Friends of the Cedar Rapids Library is for program enhancement and not for support of basic library services.

Library Advocacy

Advocate the library as an important resource.

1. Annually identify advocacy priorities
2. Working with the Metro Library System, advocate for a strong library
3. Support the State Library to advocate as appropriate for support for library services

Facilities

Ensure that library facilities respond to changing demands of library patrons, and allow, through re-use, adaptation, or expansion, the ability to meet future library needs into 2010.

1. Change the layout of the downtown library facility to promote browsing, conversation, and the leisurely pursuit of personal interests and enable limited public programming
2. Newly refurbish the main library by 2010 to honor the 25th anniversary
3. Recognize and promote the library as an architectural asset to downtown Cedar Rapids
4. Develop a plan to identify and address ongoing building maintenance issues
5. Develop a plan to better utilize the design of the facility for new and existing services, programming, and staff interaction with the public in response to the needs assessment
6. Continue to evaluate the feasibility of a Westside facility

Services and Programs

Design and implement library services and programs that engage the community and promote literacy, personal information gathering and entertainment, and encourage library use.

1. Regularly assess the library's approach towards existing public services
2. Expand children and adult public programming and exhibits in library facilities and elsewhere encourage visits to the library and carry the role of the library into the community
3. Develop service partnerships with regional library affiliates and more community organizations
4. Identify and use additional access points to provide new services that fill patron needs
5. Identify and use new technologies, where possible, to deliver services
6. Make promotion of library programs and services a primary emphasis, particularly in ways that reach out to non-users
7. Establish and develop the library's role as a destination for activities and the use of leisure time

Materials and Collections

Adjust the size of the library's material collection according to the demand and usage within subject areas and special collections to have a premier library for Cedar Rapids. The library will respond to community interests with a balanced, up-to-date collection in a variety of formats.

1. Benchmark the Cedar Rapids Library's collection to comparable programs
2. Be at the forefront for introduction of new material formats to provide better patron access to materials
3. Develop new strategies for the selection and retention of materials and collections and the allocation of resources to develop them based on community needs and requests

Funding

Develop a comprehensive funding plan that provides quality library resources for the community.

1. Increase financial and in-kind support of the library from governmental and non-governmental sources
2. Develop a 3-year operating budget and a 10-year capital budget each year and communicate this to the public
3. Seek new public/private partnerships that bring financial advantage to the library
4. Research grant opportunities to fund new services and programs, to support current library services and programs, to develop the materials collection and the Iowa Substance Abuse Information Center
5. As needed, work with consultants to maximize resources

Human Resources

Provide a well-trained competent staff to work effectively toward the mission of the library.

1. Provide access to opportunities for staff development through workshops and computer training using a variety of providers
2. Reinstate appropriate staffing to fulfill the mission of the library
3. Leverage technology and operating efficiencies to enable staff to engage in high customer value activities
4. Investigate the feasibility and use of a library volunteer program

Marketing and Promotions

Develop a comprehensive plan that markets and promotes the mission of the library.

1. Establish a budget and a staffing plan for marketing the library
2. Integrate the results of the patron library survey into the marketing plan
3. Research and implement new and better ways to communicate with the public
4. Enhance the value of the website for sharing information regarding library services

The Library Board of Trustees will periodically review the annual goals related to the strategic plan each October in preparation of the budget proposal and in response to community challenges.

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