

Oshkosh Public Library

Strategic Planning

Vision 2025:

A library in every life

This vision:

- Calls upon the library to have a more profound and pervasive impact on the lives of the people who live in the Oshkosh area;
- Challenges the library organization to more effectively draw people in to the library and its services, and also to reach out into the community; and
- Uses language that staff and trustees will find easy to remember.

Preliminary Goals / Performance Measures:

1. A library card in every hand.
2. A recognized downtown anchor destination.
3. A provider of trusted “go-to” online resources.
4. Increase public and private support for the library.

1. A library card in every hand.

Card registration is the first step to the privilege of borrowing materials from the library's collections of books, movies and more. It is also required to gain access to the shared collections of eBooks and eAudiobooks, as well as to a variety of high quality subscription-based online resources. Our goal should be to get more people past that first step and ready to benefit from the many library services tied to card use.

Quantitative Goal: Increase active library card holders (i.e., those who have used their card at least once in the past year) by 25% by the end of 2025.

Strategies:

- **Redefine the library as a neighbor who helps energize and inspire you to explore and discover.**

Tactics:

- **A catalyst for creativity and entrepreneurship.** - Our culture and our economy are driven by new ideas. The public library has always been a quiet sanctuary for discovery, a resource for exploration, a storehouse of data. We see potential for the library to be more active in connecting creators (writers, musicians, visual artists) and entrepreneurs with shared resources, experiences and networks to help them develop their ideas and put them into action. Our goal should be to discover new ways that shared community resources may assist creatives and entrepreneurs in bringing their ideas to fruition.

Milestone Measures: By 2025, at least two programs will be established that allow community members to access space, equipment and/or expertise needed to create and innovate new creative content, or potential products/services.

- Conduct an outreach campaign to first-grade students.
 - Crowd-source ideas from the staff and develop active, integrated programming on a single theme that focuses attention on web, collections, services and programs for a month.
 - Develop an 'on-boarding' process for new library card-holders to help familiarize them with the range of library services and resources available and to allow them to opt-in to receive additional information about the library.
- **Conduct demographic analysis to determine which groups are underrepresented as cardholders. Target marketing, outreach and service development to these populations.**

Tactics:

- Determine data available, then analyze card-holder demographics to determine which user groups are underrepresented. Use this information to develop targeted marketing initiatives.
 - Develop a dashboard that can be shared with the staff to raise awareness of retention and recruitment goals and progress toward achieving the vision.
- **Conduct a brand campaign to change perceptions of the library.**

Tactics:

- Meaningfully engage staff in development of a brand campaign, targeting 25-45 year-olds who see the library as a place for books, not literacy. In particular, expand methods for reaching this group via mobile devices (text, social, etc.). Determine how to provide 'value-added' literacy services, e.g.: opt-in recommendation engines for books, programs and events.
- Focus outreach activities on card registration and use.
- Enhance the culture 'of knowledge sharing' to provide value-added services to library users.

2. A recognized downtown anchor destination.

Downtown Oshkosh is becoming a vibrant, diverse, culturally rich place for residents and non-residents alike. The Library building is already a daily hub of activity, seeing more than 1,000 people visit on a typical day. Our goal should be to provide experiences at the library that enrich the lives of visitors and that contribute to the cultural and economic vitality of Downtown Oshkosh.

Quantitative Goal: Welcome 25% more people to the library building in 2025 than in 2015.

Strategies:

- **Identify and piggyback on the reasons people are already coming downtown to bring them into the library.** Downtown Oshkosh is evolving into a dining, shopping and entertainment district. The Oshkosh Public Library seeks to make itself another 'stop' during those downtown visits.

Tactics:

- **Determine the strategy for new and existing events vs. programs vs. services.** Library programming has a long tradition of sharing new ideas, teaching the use of new technologies, bringing families and communities together, introducing children to literacy, supporting the community's arts and cultural resources and more. High-quality programs require an investment of time and resources. The library seeks to create a filter through which to evaluate new and existing programs, answering the questions: What are the roles in these efforts for bringing library users and non-users into the building? Is the event/program/service attracting a one-time or repeat audience?

Tactics:

- **Target people who live and work downtown to make a visit a part of their lifestyles.** As the number of people who live and work downtown grows, the Oshkosh Public Library seeks to connect with those who call downtown their home.

Tactics:

- **Enhance the appeal of making regular visits by making them convenient, welcoming, comfortable experiences.** To enhance the library's reputation as a destination, the library seeks to create mini-environments within the building that are convenient, welcoming and comfortable, inviting library users and guests to linger, enjoying a cup of coffee, a good read, the conversation of a friend, a stimulating program, local history or other library resources.

Tactics:

3. A provider of trusted “go-to” online resources.

As a content contributor to the Web, the library strives to offer timely, accurate, and attractive digital tools that are popular and convenient (i.e. usable on a wide range of devices, especially smart phones). Our goal should be to seize upon our role as trusted custodian of local governmental and historical knowledge to develop digital resources (e.g., apps) that will be useful to residents and visitors to Oshkosh.

Quantitative Goal: Aggregate “visits” or “uses” of library-created digital resources will be 25% greater in 2025 than in 2015.

Strategies:

- **Identify, create and promote areas for local online content and expertise.**
Put another way, this means finding the fit between library capacity and community need.

Tactics:

- **Optimize existing resources for search engines.**
In order to make the Oshkosh Public Library’s significant resources more discoverable to users in the community, we must optimize our resources for search engines.

Tactics:

- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)
- Resource maintenance

4. Increase public and private support for the library.

The annual Oshkosh Citizen Survey consistently shows a high regard in the community for the importance and the quality of library services. The Friends of the Library recently celebrated fifty years of support. We recognize that the library is held in high regard in the community, but it would be unwise to “rest on our laurels.” Our goal should be to engage more citizens in supporting the library: as volunteers in meaningful community service and as advocates for the value the library provides to the community.

Quantitative Goals: Double the number of people engaged with the library as Friends, volunteers, donors and advocates by 2025.

Strategies:

- **Redefine the roles of and opportunities for Friends, volunteers, donors and advocates.**

Tactics:

- Inform supporters of advocacy opportunities.

- **Create and sustain meaningful engagement opportunities for Friends, volunteers and donors.**

To engage a new generation of Friends, volunteers and donors, the Oshkosh Public Library must identify engagement opportunities that are meaningful to those who wish to become involved.

Tactics:

- **Be an active partner in building community capacity.**

We believe that the Oshkosh Public Library organization has established a reputation as a good partner for collaborative efforts on community needs. However, there is potential for significantly greater achievements through increased emphasis on outcomes, with more focus on assets than needs, and using emerging models of collective impact through collaboration. Our goal should be to sharpen the focus of our partnerships on demonstrable outcomes that benefit the lives of area residents.

Success measure: By 2025, all collaborative library partnerships will operate under written agreements with clearly stated outcome-based goals.

Tactics: