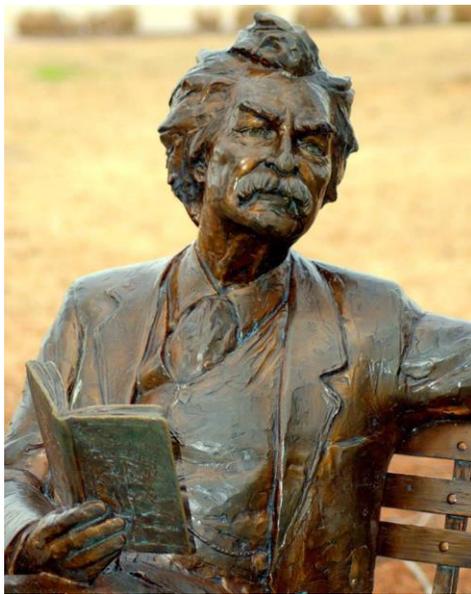


ROWLETT PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN

August 11, 2016



Enriching, Enlightening & Entertaining

Library Advisory Board

Pat Harris, Chair

Kathy Freiheit, Director of Library Services

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Introduction

Providing support in the planning and development of library resources and services is one of the most important functions of the Library Advisory Board. Rowlett Public Library's strategic plan provides a blueprint for future growth and development. In addition to creating an infrastructure for allocation of existing resources, justification for new funding, and identification of resource and service priorities, the plan provides a framework for accomplishment of goals and objectives, and documenting outcomes.

As an accreditation requirement, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) mandates that all members of the state library system must have a strategic plan in place that is reviewed and updated every five years. TSLAC accreditation standards support professionalism and also ensure accountability through proven ability and effectiveness. Therefore, in June 2016, members of the Library Advisory Board met with administrative library staff to review and update the plan approved in 2011.

Contributors in the review and update included:

- Rowlett Public Library Advisory Board Members
- Director of Library Services
- Library Services Manager
- Information Systems Administrator
- Youth Services Librarian

In May 2014, the Rowlett City Council formally approved an agreement with Catalyst Urban Development for a \$30M downtown development project. The project called for razing of the existing 15,600 s.f. library facility at 3900 Main Street, moving the library to a temporary location, then returning it to newly constructed, leased space on the ground floor of the most prominent Main Street address in the Downtown area.

During the entire month of May 2015, the library was closed to the public so that the facility could be relocated to a 10,125 s.f. temporary facility at 5702 Rowlett Road. The move prompted downsizing of the physical collection, reference and circulation services desks were combined into one, and staff shifted from individual offices to shared workspaces. Many library programs, including GED and ESL classes, were moved to the Rowlett Community Centre or City Hall.

In July 2015, Council approved a resolution creating a Library Visioning Task Force, charged with making recommendations for interior design and prioritization of space within the Downtown leased space facility. Task force appointees included two members of the Library Advisory Board, as well as a third Board member who serves as alternate in representing the Friends of the Rowlett Public Library.

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With the library in transition and operating from a temporary location with significant space constraints, the scope for update of the strategic plan was limited to review and revision of the existing 2011 plan. A more comprehensive approach to building a new plan is anticipated with return of the library to Downtown, where it is anticipated to remain for the next 5-7 years.

Armed with the results of an October 2015 Visioning Task Force customer survey and input from its representatives, the Advisory Board and staff reviewed and affirmed the library's vision and mission statements, and considered its values and service roles. Goals and objectives from the 2011 plan were discussed in their entirety, with staff offering current status and Board members providing feedback and input.

Dialog included the renewed challenge of parking and meeting space when the library returns to Downtown, and the continuing impact of digital media and technology on library services in the 21st Century.

With final review of the goals, objectives and strategies for implementation created by staff, the revised plan will be approved by the Library Advisory Board and recommended to the City Council for adoption and resolution.

Rowlett Public Library Timeline

- Date Uncertain – The library begins as a project of the Rowlett Home Demonstration Club. A small collection of donated books are housed in a corner of a classroom in the Rowlett Public School (currently City Hall).
- March 1950 – The library becomes a Dallas County Library branch.
- March 1952 – The City of Rowlett becomes incorporated by the vote of 84 citizens.
- Collection growth prompts move of the library to a portable building on school grounds and later, into the old firehouse.
- 1970 – The library moves to a room in City Hall.
- April 1983 – The library moves to remodeled space in the former school cafeteria at 4006 Main Street.
- 1985 – The library ceases to be a branch of the Dallas County Library System and is fully funded and managed by the City of Rowlett.
- November 1986 - The City of Rowlett establishes the Rowlett Public Library and its Advisory Board via Ordinance 111876B.
- August 1993 - A bond election is passed by Rowlett voters to build a new library. A site was selected three doors down from the old library.
- July 1995 – Library groundbreaking takes place.
- October 1996 – The library opens at 3900 Main Street, with (then) First Lady of Texas, Laura Bush, as guest speaker.
- May 2015 – The library relocates to a temporary location at 5702 Rowlett Road, in anticipation of relocating to newly constructed space within the Village of Rowlett. The former library facility is demolished in March 2016.

The library now circulates over 325,000 items and accommodates 144,000 visitors annually.

Community Background

Rowlett is a city of over 58,000 people straddling northeastern Dallas County and western Rockwall County on the western shores of Lake Ray Hubbard. The City is divided by a county line and also by the lake. Rowlett children attend public schools in either the Garland or Rockwall Independent School District, depending on their county of residence.

The City was incorporated in 1952 and became a city governed by home-rule charter in 1979. Growth increased rapidly with the opening of Lake Ray Hubbard in 1971, with the population almost doubling between 1990 and 2000, and increasing another 20 percent between 2000 and 2010. Build-out is expected around the year 2030 with approximately 75,000 residents.

Rowlett's citizens are predominantly young (median age 37.5), affluent (median family income over \$83,000), and educated (32% of adult population having obtained a bachelor's degree or higher). Many young residents are raising families, as 42% of households have children. The community has also become increasingly accessible with completion of the eastern extension of the President George Bush Turnpike in December 2011, and completion of the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Authority Blue Line light rail route in 2012. Convenient transit within the Dallas Metroplex and surrounding cities, coupled with modest home prices (median home values in the \$200,000s) make Rowlett a desirable place to live. Housing is 84% owner-occupied. (City of Rowlett Economic Development Department, 2014)

For recreation, in addition to the library, the City has a recently remodeled community center and family water park; a municipal golf course; an extensive parks system including athletic fields, and trails; and Lake Ray Hubbard. The City sponsors annual events in summer and fall that feature music, food, crafts, and other opportunities for family recreation and community building.

Rowlett Public Library serves the citizens of Rowlett and, to a lesser degree, residents of the neighboring communities of Garland, Rockwall, Dallas, Wylie, Sachse, Mesquite, and others. Rockwall and Dallas public libraries impose non-resident fees, but are accessible (with certain restrictions) through use of a TexShare card. All Rowlett library cardholders can access digital media using several platforms, and additional online resources are also available 24/7. Interlibrary loan borrowing services are limited to cardholders who are residents of Rowlett.

Library Department Values

- We treat each individual with dignity and respect their privacy, access to information, and intellectual freedom.
- We work together in a team environment to provide knowledgeable, welcoming service.

- We encourage learning to empower people in their search for knowledge and growth, and in finding ways to enhance their quality of life.
- We support the City to serve the community.
- We manage our resources responsibly, ethically, and honestly, and strive to continuously improve our services.

Library Vision

Rowlett Public Library will provide a communal environment for cultural exchange, recreational pursuits, and information access to stimulate learning and readership.

Library Mission Statement

The mission of the Rowlett Public Library is to promote activities and ideas which will encourage, enrich and expand interests of library users; stimulate the awareness and usage of libraries to promote individual enlightenment, community enrichment, and economic vitality throughout the City; and to inform, entertain, enrich, and foster the self-learning process by facilitating access to its collections, services, and technology.

Library Service Roles

- Current topics and titles
Resources which meet current and timely demands for popular materials.
- General information resources
Information in a variety of formats on topics related to educational, occupational, recreational, and personal needs and interests.
- Early literacy
Programs, services, and spaces which foster discovery and ensure that children will enter school ready to read and write, and continue to develop a love of learning throughout their lives.
- Digital literacy
High-speed Internet access and assistance in the use of software, hardware, and social media to empower information seekers and link people to the online world.
- Lifelong learning

Resources and activities which stimulate, enrich, and expand the personal interests of people of all ages throughout their lives.

- Information literacy
Training and assistance in developing the skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively utilize information to satisfy curiosity, resolve issues, answer questions, and stimulate imagination.
- Community meeting place
Welcoming and accessible physical spaces for people to meet, socialize, network, relax, and interact with their neighbors.

Goals and Objectives

Provide programs and services to support the Library's mission and service roles:

- Offer materials on a wide variety of topics related to current social and cultural trends.
- Maintain a collection of popular and best-selling books in a variety of formats for recreational and educational reading.
- Deliver accurate and timely reference assistance and reader's advisory services, in person, electronically, and by telephone.
- Develop and promote programs to encourage lifelong reading and learning for all:
 - Reflect the diversity of the community in the library's collections and programming
 - Identify underserved segments of the community and develop programs and services to meet their needs
 - Strive to connect with citizens, regardless of their abilities
 - Consider intergenerational programs to facilitate connections between age groups

Enhance customer services:

- Equip staff with resources and ongoing training to foster professional development and teamwork.
- Cultivate an environment where the City's values are embraced and the highest standards are expected.
- Provide staff with the necessary tools and equipment to provide exceptional customer service.
- Actively seek ways to improve Library services based on customer feedback and develop ongoing opportunities for customers to have a voice in the delivery of services.
- Enhance overall communication with customers by utilizing new technologies.

Encourage a lifelong love of reading and learning in children:

- Provide developmentally appropriate programs that support early literacy.

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- Expand children's participation in the summer reading program through enriching activities, marketing, and visibility within the community.
- Develop programs which encourage interaction and ongoing learning exchanges between children and caregivers.
- Maintain a collection of resources supporting the child-rearing information needs of parents, grandparents, and caregivers.

Encourage young adults to use and value the Library:

- Plan and conduct regularly scheduled programs that engage and inspire young adults.
- Expand participation of middle school and high school students in the summer reading program through enriching activities, marketing, and visibility within the community.
- Explore new ways to actively engage young adults through programs and services of interest.

Encourage lifelong reading and learning for adults:

- Provide adult reading programs throughout the year that nurture education, culture, and entertainment.
- Encourage reading and use of the Library and its resources through various means of advertising both inside and outside of the Library.
- Consider possibilities for author and discussion programs involving local sponsorships and community partners.

Foster adult literacy and continuing education:

- Provide resources and support for General Education Development (GED).
- Provide resources and support for English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction.
- Offer instructional study resources for standardized tests in a variety of formats.
- Develop and promote programs and resources to help library customers learn more about using technology.

Support efforts to maintain the library facility as a comfortable and accessible gathering place for customers and staff:

- Verify compliance with ADA requirements regularly.
- Explore options for additional meeting space.
- Monitor impact of parking availability on customers and staff.
- Evaluate efficacy of space assignments within relocated facility and assess their suitability for programming needs, quiet study, group interaction, support of technology needs, and other individual and group uses.

Library Technology Plan

Technology is an essential element in a library's strategic plan. The plan is important not only in describing what the library offers citizens, but also in terms of identifying the tools needed by staff to do an effective job. The library currently has needs which need to be met in both areas, so many of these goals target areas for improvement. The ultimate goal is to be able to provide excellent service and resources for customers and staff.

Current State of Technology

Tools and applications available for providing service to the public include:

- Apollo Integrated Library System from Biblionix, LLC
 - Cloud-based software, accessed through Firefox web browser
 - Online catalog hosted by vendor
 - Customers can access accounts remotely and receive both email & text message notifications regarding overdue items and the availability of reserved items
- 3M Electromagnetic theft detection system
- Public computing hardware including 8 thin clients tied into a central terminal server running Microsoft Server 2012
- Public Computer software includes Microsoft Office 2013 and Firefox
- Public Computer use, including authentication, printing and time management is provided through EnvisionWare software
- Mobile printing for computers and mobile devices not on the public network is provided through EnvisionWare software
- Filtering software from WebTitan works in conjunction with EnvisionWare software and offers customers a choice in filtering options
- Open wireless access
- 3 Computers serving as Online Public Access Catalogs (OPACs or PACs) run on Microsoft Windows XP and kiosk mode software
- 1 Photocopier for public use
- 4 AWE Early Literacy Stations for children's use
- Public website, separate from the catalog that is part of the main City website, is powered by CivicPlus
- Digital platforms include OverDrive and Hoopla
- Subscription databases provide access to a variety of other digital content
- Technology training appointments can be made with a staff member for one-on-one instruction

Staff tools include:

- 17 Staff workstations running Microsoft Windows 7 Professional

- 1 Copier/scanner/black & white printer, networked for staff use
- 6 Regular barcode scanners, 1 2D barcode scanner, and 4 pen scanners
- 2 Color printers
- 4 Desktop printers (2 in use, 2 in storage)
- Staff have access to Microsoft Office 365 through a City subscription
- Staff intranet is set up through the City's SharePoint system
- Participation in the TSLAC Navigator interlibrary loan system, through which the library has access to OCLC catalog records
- 6 Laptops (donated by Atmos Energy) used for program support and one-on-one training
- Various tools, including 3D printer pens, robotics kits, and LittleBits circuit building kits support STEAM and youth programming
- Munis software for budget management & Tyler Cashiering for fine and fee collection
- Kronos software for staff timekeeping and payroll use
- Spiceworks software for reporting and tracking of computer problems and projects
- Canon point-and-shoot digital camera for publicity uses
- RTI Eco-Master disc cleaning and repair system for DVDs, CDs, and Blu Ray media

Problems with Current Technology

- Public computers are unacceptably slow, have limited functionality, and present frequent problems for staff and customers
- Staff computers are dated and often require a long time to perform simple tasks
- Laptops and public computers are insufficient in number for class instruction
- 3M security system generates frequent false positives alarms, annoying staff and customers and undermining trust in the system

Technology Goals

Public Services:

- Migrate to Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) security system
- Implement customer self-checkout
- Consider using Apollo's "Gabbie" messaging service, allowing customers to renew materials and communicate with staff via text messages
- Assess technology needs for relocated library facility
- Research lending options for Wi-fi hotspots, programmed children's tablets, etc.
- Incorporate additional early digital literacy elements in children's programming
- Resume regular technology education programming, expanding scope to include more than basic tech help, as meeting space permits

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- Review plan for website content maintenance and update as necessary
- Create plan for website overhaul, pending larger city plans for changes or upgrades to current website software
- Replace current Public Access Catalogs (PACs) with wall-mounted tablets
- Create system for better use of online resources, including publicity, staff and customer engagement, and assessment of resource effectiveness

Staff:

- Purchase new digital camera
- Assess need for projection equipment
- Acquire staff tablet computers for implementation in new service models
- Continue participation in the city IT User's Group to keep staff informed of citywide technology plans and to facilitate computer upgrades
- Establish staff core technology competencies, train staff to meet them, and establish a system for review
- Create a program for training select employees beyond basic core technology competencies
- Monitor library technology trends in support of best practices and new offerings for customers
- Explore additional staff software, such as Adobe design, scheduling and productivity software, etc.
- Create a system for assessing staff technology needs and implement on a regular basis
- Establish a formal technology maintenance and cleaning schedule
- Maximize use of statistical reporting data, such as physical and virtual library visits, website hits, materials checkout, and use of online resources
- Pursue possibility of additional staff to support technology education

Programming:

- Acquire mobile cart with monitor and video gaming equipment for young adult programming
- Purchase a 3D printer for program use
- Research other peripherals for program enhancement
- Pursue grants or other funding for the purchase of laptops to improve tech education programs

Public Computers:

- As a stopgap measure to remedy issues with existing public computers, replace thin client setup using computers previously used by staff
- Replace stopgap equipment with new computers, or seek grants or other funding if budget requests are not realized
- Assess feasibility of equipping designated public computer workstations with assistive and adaptive technology

- Investigate feasibility of adding other types of technology for public use, including 3D printers, tablets, and more sophisticated software for public computers