



2023 to 2027
High-Level Strategic Plan

Developed: Fall 2022

Mission-Vision-Values

MISSION

We ignite curiosity, fuel discovery, and encourage creativity through access to trusted information, resources, and community connections.

VISION

A dynamic community connecting ideas, information, and creation.

VALUES

- **Community-Focus**: We provide resources, services, and gathering spaces aligned with the needs of the local community.
- **Diversity**: We embrace all abilities and differences by removing barriers, supporting literacy, and reflecting the community.
- **Accessibility**: We meet people where they are with easy access to resources and services within and beyond the building.
- **Forward-Thinking**: We anticipate and adapt to evolving needs through investments in technology, facilities, collections, and training.
- **Welcoming**: We offer an inclusive, safe, and supportive environment where all feel welcome.
- **Learning**: We support life-long learning through opportunities for discovery, enrichment, and growth.

Four Strategic Focus Areas

**Enhanced and
Reprioritized
Services and
Programs**

**Community
Activation and
Fundraising**



**Community
Awareness and
Visibility**

**Resource and Facility
Upkeep and
Improvements**

Enhanced & Reprioritized Services and Programs

Expand, broaden, and optimize services, programming, and resources to meet the current and evolving needs of the community for not only those who can get to the library but also for those who cannot make it to the Library's physical location easily.

- Seek out connections with users who are likely to have transportation challenges in reaching the library.
- Develop approaches to supporting their access or delivery of services to them where they are.
- Look for ways to reach the underserved more directly and through other local partners.

Desired Outcomes Spanning five years:

- More residents are positively and consistently impacted by library services.
- Services are more easily accessed by users that cannot as easily access the current location.
- Services utilization across all categories and across a broader user base increases but especially higher-need users that aren't regularly assessing the Library today.
- Community attends and rates library programs as successful, impactful, and innovative.
- Program attendees indicate Increased confidence in personal learning, skills, and abilities.
- Community has Increased satisfaction.
- Increase/maintain a high level of community members believing the Library helps make Delray Beach a better place to live.

Potential initiatives spanning five years reliant upon funding:

- Improve transportation options to the Library.
- More non-traditional events at the Library.
- Do more to assess current and future user/resident needs.
- More Focus on Diversity Equity Inclusion internally and through programs.
- Elevate adult/senior programming.
- Expanded social services and community-based resources at the Library.
- Leverage school relationships to raise awareness and services to families.
- Shift/evolve outreach strategies to increase/broaden impact.
- Enhance youth and family programs.

Community Activation and Fundraising

Expand efforts by the library and through grassroots activation to raise civic leadership and general community awareness of the role and importance of the Library in the Delray Beach community and through that recognition increase both civic funding and private donations to the Library.

- Look for ways to increase dialogue, build deeper connections, and raise overall awareness with city leadership and other key stakeholders.
- Explore more ways to improve both civic and private funding of the library
- Increase local organizational collaboration related to awareness and funding
- Look for new and alternate mechanisms for revenue generation that do not create equity and access issues

Desired Outcomes Spanning five years:

- Increase awareness of the Library's value and contribution to the community with city and other key stakeholders.
- Library recognition within the broader community is increased.
- Residents and leaders have an Increase in engagement with the Library.
- The City and local funding support for the Library is increased.
- Fundraising results are enhanced
- Partnerships with local organizations and the schools are expanded and enhanced in a way that increases impact and awareness of the Library and its partners.
- Increase/maintain high level of community members attesting to the fact that the Library makes Delray Beach a better place to live.

Potential initiatives spanning five years reliant upon funding:

- Enhance relationships and collaborations with the City & CRA.
- Increase grassroots fundraising efforts.
- Further elevate major fundraising.
- More collaboration with other non-profits on fundraising and grant seeking.
- Consider alternate space uses of the library.
- Partnering with outside groups to enhance funding awareness and fundraising efforts.
- Expand Board Member recruiting and responsibilities.
- Create and activate a Library Friends group to raise money and volunteer support.

Resource and Facility Upkeep and Improvements

Elevate the Library's facilities indoors and out to better align the spaces to meet evolving community needs and continue the Library's position as a vital public space for the Delray Beach community.

- Identify and prioritize facility needs and develop options for addressing those needs
- Develop a phased approach to facility improvements and identify projects that could also be tied to capital funding campaigns.
- Develop a final plan of approach to the possible building acquisition from the city and execute what is needed to support that plan.

Desired Outcomes Spanning five years:

- Visits to the Library increase and those that come, stay longer and utilize more physical and digital resources.
- Satisfaction with the Library's spaces improves.
- Visits to the Library increase.
- Users experience a larger array of library services and resources on each visit.
- Needs of patrons with disabilities or physical mobility issues are better met.
- The average stay of users is longer.
- Users attest to the Library's building being a key physical cornerstone of the community's infrastructure.
- Increased utilization of youth areas especially by tweens (8–12-year-olds) and teens (13+).

Potential initiatives spanning five years reliant upon funding:

- Aesthetic improvements to the library.
- Increases and shift in staffing to best align people resources with service need.
- Improve the library's technology offerings.
- Realign and reallocate spaces to meet evolving needs of users.
- Shift collections to best serve actual library materials usage.

Community Awareness & Visibility

Raise the profile of the library and its services across the breadth of the community such that the Library is seen as a central and indispensable part of the Delray Beach community worthy of additional funding and financial support.

- Determine ways that marketing can be more targeted and effective in reaching the community overall.
- Develop approaches to reach the currently under-served and other non-users.
- Ensure that efforts also factor in the need for community and financial support even from those who might never utilize the library but whose awareness and community support are critical.

Desired Outcomes Spanning five years:

- The Library's resources, programs, and spaces are more heavily utilized and positive impact on the community is expanded.
- Overall awareness and the desire to utilize library resources and services is increased.
- Residents and organizations of the community see the Library as a key component of the educational, social, and cultural ecosystem of the region.
- Increase in community engagement with the Library.
- Increase/maintain high level of community members attesting to the fact that the Library helps make Delray Beach a better place to live.

Potential initiatives spanning five years reliant upon funding:

- Increases emphasis on marketing and community awareness of the library.
- Work with partner organizations on marketing and awareness efforts.
- Improve exterior signage to make library more visible to community.
- Plan bigger efforts and events around "National Library Card Week."

Delray Beach Public Library – Process Overview



Beginning in the early Spring of 2022 and completed in the Fall of 2022 under the guidance of the Delray Beach Public Library's (DBPL) Library Director and Board of Trustees, a strategic planning process was completed for the Delray Beach Public Library for years 2023 thru 2027. Library consultants, Rob Cullin and Janet Nelson, of ReThinking Libraries, LLC (RTL) facilitated the process, fact finding, and analysis, but the Library and its community made all choices and decisions in the process.

The Process

DBPL's strategic planning process and review included the following key areas.

Gathering and analyzing community input and data, which involved benchmarking, demographic analysis, and collection analysis. In addition, DBPL staff and Board of Trustees were involved in exploring ideas and possibilities for the Library as a thriving 21st century library. Stakeholder sessions were conducted by RTL in the Spring of 2022. Participants included community members, community leaders, library donors, DBPL staff members, and library trustees.

The Engagement Sessions covered topics of current and future library operations, seeking both aspirational and pragmatic input from the staff and board about the Library, staffing, services, facilities, marketing, community participation, and programs. These sessions facilitated by RTL sought candid input from the stakeholders about all these areas in addition to more open-ended input related to the community itself. Library facilities (both building and mobile) were discussed at length with participants to review the appropriateness of current spaces and help determine any needs or shifts that should be considered.

Developing the high-level plan during a Strategic Planning Retreat held in November of 2022. During the Retreat, all data and input was reviewed by eighteen people, consisting of the community members and leaders, library leadership, staff members, and library board members. Using the data and stakeholder input, the group reviewed and discussed as a large group and in smaller breakout groups all aspects of library services and facilities. The group worked through a variety of exercises to surface the potential ideas and approaches that could make up the plan. Through a series of voting exercises, the group then identified the most essential strategic areas, specific goals, and related investments required to implement the goals to help the library thrive over the next five years and beyond. Those elements are captured here in this high-level plan document. This plan was reviewed with library staff and board and then approved by the Board of Trustees.

A detailed 12-month plan will be built each year based on the guidance of this high-level plan. This plan details the relevant activities that are to be completed in the time period to further the large goals highlighted in the high-level plan. This process of developing a twelve-month detailed action plan will be repeated each year by staff and reviewed by the Board of Trustees.

Delray Beach Public Library – Process Overview



What We Heard

The stakeholder sessions explored several topics including customer service, youth services, adult services, outreach services, programming, technology and digital services, the facility/building, collections and resources, and overall 21st century public library best practices. Detailed summaries of all stakeholder feedback and online survey results were provided in separate documents to the community and DBPL's leadership and reviewed in depth during *the Strategic Planning Retreat*. All stakeholder input, data analysis, and follow-up exploration work led to the strategic focuses, goals, and investments outlined in this document.

Further Plan Development

With the goal of achieving all outlined goals over the next five years, DBPL administration, staff, and board of trustees will regularly evaluate their progress and achievements. Objectives set forth in this plan will be further detailed each year in a 12-month detailed work plan which will be developed by the library staff. These annual 12-month plans will address the specific actions, objectives, and goals in addition to specifying required staff and financial commitments.

Ongoing Evaluation

In addition, the high-level plan contained in this document will be re-evaluated each year by the board to ensure that the high-level goals still align with the needs and goals of the community, ahead of the staff's development of that year's 12-month plan. This balanced and systematic process also emphasizes that the resulting plan will produce a cumulative strength over the coming years.

Collaboration and Communications

The keys to DBPL's implementation, evaluation and, ultimately, the success of its strategic plan will be:

- A thorough understanding of the plan as well as active involvement in implementing the plan by staff and the Board.
- Frequent and ongoing communication between administration and staff.
- Frequent and ongoing communication between DBPL's staff and its community.
- Active collaboration between DBPL's Board of Trustees, administration, staff, outside organizations, and the community.