

PLAN OF SERVICE

2022-2026



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Adopted by the Ogden Farmers' Library
Board of Trustees on Oct 21, 2021

INTRODUCTION

In 2021 Ogden Farmers' Library worked to develop a new long-range plan, as their previous long range plan expired in 2020. The library used a collaborative process that involved input from the public, town leadership, library staff, and library board members to identify library service priorities.

Reflecting the library's commitment to the community, this strategic plan signifies the library's efforts to anticipate the changing needs of our community over the next five years and how best to meet those needs.

On October 21, 2021, the Ogden Farmers' Library Board of Trustees approved the following four service priorities:

- *Lifelong learning*
- *Informed decision-making*
- *Stimulate imagination and curiosity*
- *Connecting to humanity.*

The Director developed a list of goals and objectives for library services. Specific activities to support each goal and its related objectives were written for this plan, which covers a five-year period. The plan will be reviewed by the Director and the Board of Trustees yearly to assure that progress is being made toward the accomplishment of the goals and objectives. Objectives and activities will also be reviewed annually and modified as needed to keep the plan vibrant and responsive to changes that occur over the five-year period of the plan.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ogden Farmers' Library creates daily opportunities for lifelong learning by providing quality materials, services, and information-seeking tools. We intend the library to be a place for personal interactions that enrich the lives of patrons and reflect the values of the Ogden community.

In support of this, the Ogden Farmers' Library is committed to:

- Lifelong learning
- Informed decision-making
- Stimulate imagination and curiosity
- Connecting to humanity

FINDINGS

At this point in time, no five-year plan can be adopted without acknowledging that 2020 and 2021 were atypical years. Those years contained numerous disruptions to service, including periods of closure, periods of curbside-only pickup, periods of limited hours, and periods of normal hours with limited operations and programming. Even as of this writing, not all services are available (limited mostly to our study rooms being unavailable), programming is still limited, and door count is just beginning to pick back up again after being severely limited during the Covid pandemic. Similarly, the Covid pandemic is not over as of this writing, with the Delta variant and possible further variants still a risk. It is impossible to think of at least the first year of this plan as anything other than a “rebuilding” year.

The risks to the library include a severe lack of space within our current facility, ensuring continued adequate funding to not just maintain services but expand them, ongoing concerns over Covid preparedness, and outreach to not just our user community but to the community at large in order to create new users of the library. The library must take steps to counteract these difficulties.

However, there is good news. The fundamentals of service in this library are strong, as indicated by responses from the staff, board, town, and public (in both a local survey administered by the Library and a county-wide survey administered by the library system). We are especially recognized for our strong customer service skills, with 92.51% of our respondents rating our customer service as “above average” or “far above average.” Our communications about happenings in the library were also highly rated, with 95.24% of our respondents rating our communications as “good” or “excellent”. We have a highly trained and motivated staff, a supportive town, a trust fund, and a facility from which to operate which is both free from rent and where maintenance is the responsibility of the town.

The Ogden Farmers’ Library could continue on its current course and be an outstanding example of a small-town library. However, looking to the future, we want to tackle the service priorities and achieve the goals outlined over the next few pages.

LIFELONG LEARNING

Residents of all ages will have materials, programs, and services designed to ensure they can learn about things they are interested in. A special focus is placed on early literacy, to help children become lifelong learners.

Goal 1: Preschoolers and early readers will have materials, programs, and services designed to foster the skills needed to create lifelong learners.

Objective 1: Each year of the plan at least 1000 children under the age of 3 will attend library programs.

Activities:

- The library will continue to provide story times for babies and toddlers, within safety limits from Covid. Toddler storytimes are now intergrated in to our other storytimes, as independent toddler activities proved difficult.
- The children's staff will attend continuing education workshops.
- The library will hold at least six early literacy programs throughout the year.

Objective 2: Each year of the plan at least 1350 children ages 3-5 will attend library programs.

Activities:

- The library will use our ongoing media efforts to ensure events are advertised in both print and digital media.
- The children's librarian will work with the schools to ensure that our events help achieve educational standards.
- The library will support the efforts of home-schooling parents by purchasing material relevant to their needs and encouraging usage of the library by home-schooling parents.

Objective 3: The library will evaluate and, if warranted, acquire early literacy technology for children from ages birth to five years.

Activities:

- The library will purchase materials and technology that supports this objective such as ebooks, streaming media, and creative play materials.
- The children's librarian will keep informed about new materials that may be appropriate for library acquisition. Steve evaluated our ebook materials and changed them to Wonderbooks due to the community needs.
- The computer in the children's room will continue to be updated as necessary, and new software obtained as needed. We put a catalog computer back in the kids room, but determined a games computer was not needed.

Goal 2: School-age children and teens will have the resources they need to succeed in school and to learn about any topics they desire beyond that schooling.

Objective 1: Each year of the plan at least 800 children of ages 6-11 will attend library programs.

Activities:

- The children's librarian will coordinate school visits when possible to present the resources and activities available at the library.
- We will advertise events on social media, in our newsletter, and in the library, as well as other media as needed.
- The children's librarian will keep abreast of trends in programming to determine the best events to hold at the library.

Objective 2: Each year of the plan at least 500 teens (ages 12-18) will attend library programs.

Activities:

- The teen librarian (YA librarian) will visit the schools when possible, especially at the end of the school year, to present the resources and activities available at the library.
- The teen librarian will operate a Teen Advisory Board (TAB) that will advise the teen librarian and the director on issues, programs, and materials relevant to the teen age group.
- The teen librarian will maintain a teen section that is attractive to teens and will pique their interest in the library as much as possible.

Objective 3: The children's and teen librarians shall collaborate on programs and material purchasing to ensure a smooth transition from "pre-teen" to "teen" years.

Activities:

- The library will maintain a strict guideline separating children's and teens' activities – children are the responsibility of the children's librarian; teens are any student entering 6th grade. Lee and Sophia are collaborating on more programs such as Pokemon club. However, we are keeping strict separation on summer reading games.
- The children's librarian will maintain materials and run programs of interest to tweens.
- The children's librarian and teen librarian will coordinate when programs can blend in to each other, such as finishing the children's birthday club and starting the teen birthday club. We now have a teen birthday club.

Goal 3: Residents will have the resources they need, including materials and programs, to answer their questions on a wide array of topics and personal interest.

Objective 1: Each year the adult librarian will hold at least two programs a month, a book club and a program of another kind.

Activities:

- The adult librarian will have a book club monthly, making the next month's book available as the book club meeting occurs to ensure the maximum reading time possible. *The non-fiction book club is going strong, but with low numbers.*
- The adult librarian will coordinate with the other librarians and the library assistant in brainstorming ideas for programs and adapting programs from other age groups to adult programs (i.e. coloring pages for adults, etc.) *We now have a dedicated library assistant for this and adult programming in general.*
- The library will regularly seek feedback on the success of programs and solicit suggestions for future programs. *Surveys are returned sporadically, but they are generally positive.*

Objective 2: The librarians and library assistant will work together to ensure high-quality programs, including holding at least four all-ages programs a year.

Activities:

- The library will develop theme-based programs or weeks such as superhero, pirate, etc., and develop experiences around the theme. *We've had some but it turns out to be less helpful than we thought when we developed this goal. This goal should be rewritten in the next long-range plan.*
- For all programs (not just all-ages), the library will develop ways to gather feedback about the success of programs and gauge what programs may be of interest in the future.
- The library assistant, in coordination with all the other librarians, will take point on all-ages programming. *All ages programming tends to come together more naturally as needed rather than driven by one person.*

Objective 3: The library will both proactively and reactively purchase materials that are relevant to our residents.

Activities:

- The library will maintain both a physical and a digital suggestion box and respond to suggestions monthly.
- The teen librarian will coordinate with the schools to provide enhanced learning opportunities such as class visits, summer reading books, etc.
- Library staff will use library publications to anticipate new and popular books that need to be purchased and processed in a timely fashion to be used by our patrons.

INFORMED DECISION-MAKING

Residents of all ages will have access to information, both in digital and print formats, that will allow them to answer questions and develop the skills to locate and effectively use information in decision-making.

Goal 1: Residents will have access to the digital world with limited restrictions to ensure everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources, content, and services available online.

Objective 1: The library will spend at least 11% of the materials budget on digital items. With Hoopla this number is actually greater than 11%.

Activities:

- The library will partner with MCLS to ensure that digital offerings are available to our patrons from around the library system.
- The library will purchase titles in a variety of formats such as text, audio, and video.
- The library will explore offering additional digital formats such as Hoopla, Mango Languages, and Kanopy. The library added Hoopla and Kanopy. Mango has been explored and deemed not cost effective.

Objective 2: The library will maintain at least eight up-to-date computers with high-speed broadband internet for patron usage.

Activities:

- The library will maintain a four-year upgrade cycle for computers. While we did replace public computers last year, this has proven budgetarily difficult.
- The library will ensure regular software updates, patches, and protection are installed and running.
- The library will maintain the highest reasonable level of internet security on public and staff computers and our server.

Objective 3: The library will provide technology training and support for patrons who need help navigating the digital world.

Activities:

- Library staff will provide technology tutoring on devices for patrons, including laptops and ereaders. Peter maintains an ongoing tech tutoring program twice a week. In addition, he will be running a course about Udemy.
- The library will maintain a collection of instructions on how to use our digital offerings on different devices.
- Library staff will offer assistance in using our computers and instruction on how to use our computers effectively to patrons as needed. Some library staff are not able to train on technology, but our tech training staff has proven sufficient so far.

Goal 2: Residents will have access to materials and resources they need to identify and analyze risk, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives, including career, money management, health, and other life choices.

Objective 1: The librarians will purchase materials that support informed decision-making.

Activities:

- The library will maintain a robust non-fiction section containing relevant, current information.
- The library will purchase materials suggested by patrons as topics they are interested in.
- The librarians will regularly weed the library's collections for content relevance in addition to last check-out date.

Objective 2: The library will host at least four programs a year that focus on life-choices and decision making.

Activities:

- The library will maintain good relationships with organizations that provide such programs such as, but not limited to, Cornell Cooperative Extension and the Hearing Loss Prevention Society.
- The library will solicit feedback on what topics are needed the most.
- The library will track attendance and success of programs to determine popularity of topics.

Objective 3: The library will provide resources for the local community to present relevant opportunities to achieve this goal for the community.

Activities:

- The library will maintain a job board for members of the community who may need a job. This turned out to be unneeded and impractical.
- The library will explore providing digital solutions for these needs such as Jobs Now.
- The library will maintain memberships in local organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce that may give us insight in to local opportunities.

Goal 3: Residents will have access to information experts who will help them locate, evaluate, and use information relevant to their needs. These experts will also train residents to develop their own skills in this area.

Objective 1: The library will employ librarians who are able to assist patrons in information acquisition. The library will also train staff to do so within the confines of what is appropriate for their job.

Activities:

- Librarians will participate in continuing education as required by their NYS public librarian certification.
- The library will regularly review job descriptions to ensure relevance and standards of excellence.
- Librarians and the director will train staff who require it on how to serve patrons who inquire about topics while not at the reference desk, and when to escalate an item to a librarian.

Objective 2: The library will offer training in the evaluation and use of information.

Activities:

- Librarians will offer age-appropriate programming in evaluating information. We probably don't do this enough, but Peter and Bridget have both offered such training.
- Displays will be presented that offer information on determining the quality of information.
- The library will maintain lists of relevant and fact-checked sources for patron use. This is especially prevalent in the teen area, but we have some for the various areas.

Objective 3: The library will provide at least four programs a year that focus on experts providing information to the community about their fields of expertise.

Activities:

- The library will maintain good relationships with local experts in their fields who may be willing to present at the library.
- The library will, as the budget allows, pay for presentations from experts outside the Ogden area, some of which may be virtual presentations.
- The library will explore and if appropriate and within budgetary possibility acquire resources that contain relevant expertise for use by our patrons.

STIMULATING IMAGINATION AND CURIOSITY

Residents of all ages will have access to materials and programs that excite their imaginations, provide pleasurable experiences, and explore topics of interest.

Goal 1: The library will provide materials of public interest, including new items, older items, and classics that residents will enjoy reading, listening to, or viewing.

Objective 1: The library will spend at least 10% of the budget on materials for our patrons.

Activities:

- Current materials will be purchased in a variety of formats when possible, such as print, digital, graphic novels, and others as needed or as requested.
- The library will pay special attention to patron requests for materials.
- Library staff will create displays and use social media to promote items of current interests and items that they feel patrons would be interested in.

Objective 2: The library will use relevant library publications to inform decision-making regarding the purchases of material.

Activities:

- Library staff will keep informed of current trends by reading review journals, using online sources, media publicity, and other resources to inform purchasing decisions.
- The library will maintain the subscriptions to these publications on behalf of our librarians.
- The library will use the suggested reading lists from our bookseller (Baker and Taylor) to enhance our purchasing and provide a more diverse collection. Baker and Taylor is going out of business in January (and is all but defunct now) so we are switching entirely to Ingram.

Objective 3: The librarians will weed and otherwise manage their collections in such a way that the entire library collection is re-evaluated every year.

Activities:

- Library staff will assess the collection to ensure currency of materials and whether new materials are needed.
- Library staff will use information from MCLS to indicate which items are no longer used and can be removed from our collection.
- The library will purchase up-to-date new versions of books that are subject to updates, and will purge older volumes.

Goal 2: Residents will have access to resources they need to explore topics of personal interest.

Objective 1: The library will provide an ongoing book sale of expired library material and donated material to ensure low-cost resources are available to our residents.

Activities:

- The library will place all weeded material in sellable condition in this book sale.
- The library will put these items out at minimal pricing to ensure their sale, and offer 2-for-1 or even free materials as needed for space considerations or to other organizations to support literacy.
- This collection of books will also be integrated in to the Friends annual book sale.

Objective 2: The library will provide materials including but not limited to periodicals, books, and videos that provide information to hobbyists of a variety of types.

Activities:

- The library will maintain information about a variety of interests that are both current and of historical record.
- The library will have indicators of major categories for quick and easy reference by our patrons.
- The library will maintain eresources that offer relevant information to patrons about topics of interest.

Objective 3: The library will partner with local institutions to insure that residents have access to them.

Activities:

- The library will maintain all the museum passes offered by MCLS so that our patrons may visit local institutions.
- The library will use outreach programs from other local institutions (such as the Zoomobile) to arrange visits to our location.
- The library will partner with town departments such as Parks and Rec and the Senior Center to provide materials where and when they are needed.

Goal 3: Residents will have access to a learning environment where all ages can design and create together or individually.

Objective 1: The library will maintain a 3D printer for the use of the residents at a minimal cost to our patrons. The 3d printer broke and replacement was deemed unnecessary. Usage was low, and the seed library more popular.

Activities:

- The library will maintain a price structure on our 3D printer to ensure that printouts are maintained at or near cost.
- The library will continually evaluate and assess the need to update this rapidly changing technology.
- The library will offer training on things such as CAD programs and 3D digital files so that more patrons can use this resource.

Objective 2: The library will hold at least four "maker" events a year for all ages.

Activities:

- The librarians will coordinate to ensure that maker events of a variety of types are offered for different age groups over the course of each year.
- The library will borrow from other libraries and partner organizations technology that is normally unavailable to our patrons for use in these programs as appropriate.
- The library will evaluate the need for and acquire as appropriate useful maker-space items for our own maker events.

Objective 3: The children's librarian will provide at least one craft session a month for youth and parents to work on crafts together.

Activities:

- The children's librarian will brainstorm with their peers about current relevant maker programs that educate and entertain children.
- The children's librarian will maintain "make and take" (aka grab and go) items as appropriate. This activity has been delegated to clerk Julie, who is doing a great job at it. Sophia has also added Teen make and takes and Bridget adult ones.
- The library will evaluate the need for and appropriateness of virtual maker programs and offer them to our patrons if viable.

CONNECTING TO HUMANITY

Residents of all ages will have access to information that creates a shared experience between people of differing backgrounds, as well as exploring their own history and the world they live in.

Goal 1: Residents will have a central source for information about their community, including programs, services, and activities in and around the Ogden area.

Objective 1: The library will have monthly outreach efforts that get the librarians in to the town and village to provide information about the library and the community. We've actually had to end this activity, such as walking club, due to issues with it and some budgetary limitations.

Activities:

- The library will partner with local businesses to offer incentives to patrons such as discounts for showing your library card, etc. We've proven unsuccessful at this but we will keep trying.
- The library will work with local leaders to see if an "at the library" sign could be placed in the village. This has proven impossible.
- The library will participate in large local events such as Canal Days, the German Festival, and more. We are participating in the parade, Canal Days, the town Christmas celebration, and this years 250th celebration.

Objective 2: The library will maintain a central posting spot for community members to advertise their local events.

Activities:

- The library will maintain its community bulletin board, with a staff member assigned to post and remove items as they become relevant or have expired.
- The library will partner with local organizations to promote their events as appropriate for our audience.
- The library will offer meeting space free of charge for local organizations to use, within the confines of the library schedule and need for the room.

Objective 3: The library will partner with local organizations to hold and advertise events for both the library and surrounding communities.

Activities:

- The library will continue to work with the schools to provide information about library activities within the schools and school activities within the library.
- The library will partner with other town departments such as Parks and Rec and the Senior Center as appropriate.

- The library will partner with the Spencerport Depot and Canal Museum and other local organizations to facilitate cross-interest events.

Goal 2: Residents and visitors will have resources they need to connect the past and the present, as well as connecting to other backgrounds, communities, and experiences other than their own.

Objective 1: The library will provide genealogical resources to the residents and visitors.

Activities:

- The library will provide access to digital genealogical resources to our residents and visitors such as Ancestry.com
- The library will purchase top quality local history and genealogy books, movies, and other materials.
- The library will recruit interesting and high-quality local history and genealogy speakers and presentations.

Objective 2: The library will provide monthly displays of materials that will highlight audiences that have a minority presence in Ogden and/or the nation.

Activities:

- The library will find out which months or dates celebrate which audiences and coordinate displays with those months or dates.
- Library social media will highlight important dates on a diverse variety of subjects and attempt to generate interest in these topics.
- The library director will vigorously defend the need for such programs in the face of any concerns about their appropriateness.

Objective 3: The library will spend 10% of its materials budget on materials by diverse authors.

Activities:

- The library will update its collection development policy to reflect this new priority.
- The librarians will use resources including publications, information from our book sellers, and relationships with other librarians to maintain this purchasing model.
- The director will regularly review purchases to ensure that diverse material is being purchased. While I am sure this is happening, I need to be more pro-active about my checks.

Goal 3: Residents will have access to information that supports their knowledge of local, state, and national events to fully participate in civic responsibilities and community decision-making.

Objective 1: The library shall purchase materials that provide up-to-date information to our residents, such as periodicals and digital databases.

Activities:

- The library will maintain its periodical collection, including local newspapers and magazines.
- The library will provide a comfortable and safe space for the perusal of such resources.
- Digital resources will be made available via our patron computers for further exploration of topics of interest.

Objective 2: The library staff shall keep informed of events of local interest that our residents may ask questions about.

Activities:

- The library staff will monitor news sources regularly for subjects of interest to local residents.
- The library staff will share that information with each other by means such as the library staff blog.
- The library staff will offer to research and provide more information when the patrons ask for further details on subjects of interest.

Objective 3: The library will provide information on civic matters such as voter registration info and names and contact information for local, state, and national officials.

Activities:

- The library will maintain and provide a listing of local officials for the public in case they need contact information.
- The library will offer space to local politicians for non-campaigning events, such as “open office” type sessions.
- The library will provide notary services to the public. Our notary left employ and no one is interested in becoming a notary. Notary services have also had some legal issues in recent years. The town provides notary when they are open.

BEYOND THE 5 YEAR PLAN

At this time, we see no immediate way to address the space concerns the library faces within the years outlined by this five-year plan. However, a future five-year plan must include either an expansion in the current location or a new facility for the library. The library space, while adequate to all New York State library standards, suffers from a lack of space and the fact that library priorities nationwide are shifting. A facility built in 1992, even with a renovation in late 2009, lacks a modern technology infrastructure and a space distribution in line with modern needs.

Additionally, the national trend towards removing fines from libraries must be monitored. If implemented at our neighboring libraries, we must consider implementing it as well, lest we lose business to those other libraries, as we have before when our fees were higher than neighboring libraries. We did this and its working out fine!

ANNUAL REVIEW PROCESS

The Board of Trustees and the Director of the Ogden Farmers' Library will review and evaluate this Long-Range Plan at the completion of each year of the plan, starting in October of 2022.

Review activities will consist of:

- Assessing the progress in achieving the stated goals and objectives
- Developing or changing activities as necessary to meet the goals and objectives
- Developing and approving a budget that will allow continued progress in achieving the goals and objectives

Ogden Farmers' Library

Plan of Service, 2022-2026

Adopted by Ogden Farmers' Library Board of Trustees October 2021.