



Curtis Memorial Library
One Year Plan of Service
March 2024 - March 2025
Approved by Board of Trustees
February 6, 2024

MISSION STATEMENT

THE MISSION OF THE CURTIS MEMORIAL LIBRARY IS TO PROVIDE SERVICES AND MAINTAIN AN UP-TO-DATE COLLECTION, WHICH WILL MEET THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY IT SERVES. THE LIBRARY SUPPORTS AND ENCOURAGES PATRONS IN THEIR LIFE LONG LEARNING ENDEAVORS.

Planning Committee

Library Board of Trustees

Karen Proesch

Jenny Owens

Mark Kalarovich

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Library Staff

Amy Softa

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Thank you to the library board and staff for their work in developing the strategic plan for 2024/2025

In order to better serve our community Curtis Memorial Library developed a plan of action to give us direction over the 2024/2025 year as we work with our district consultant Becky Heil to develop a 3-5 year plan utilizing the Public Library Association's *Planning for Results*. For this plan we will review Census Data and our library's annual reports for the previous three years to determine trends in library usage and needs of the community.

First the planning committee reviewed the 2020 census data to familiarize themselves with the demographics of the community we serve. The population of Wheatland is 775 people divided among 319 households, the 47% of them being single mothers raising their families. The median household income is \$34,141 which is just around half the median income for the State of Iowa. The median age of our residents is 39 years old. We have a 98% enrollment rate for primary school in our community. We characterize it as a bedroom community as the majority of people work outside of our town with an average commute time of 27 minutes. Poverty is 6.6% which is low compared to the 11% for the entire State of Iowa. The majority of the population is white of Germanic heritage. We are located on the Western edge of Clinton County near the Cedar County border along Highway 30.

Next we reviewed the 2021-2023 Iowa Public Library General Information Surveys that were submitted to the State Library. Over all our numbers continue to climb and we see an increase in utilization of our library. Inter-library loan requests for our patrons have climbed from 38 per year up to 106, but we are still loaning over twice that amount to other libraries around the state. Our door count does continue to climb as does our circulation of materials. Late in 2022 we replaced the public computers and usage went from 105 patrons per year to over 500. They continue to be a major draw for the youth in our community. Patron attendance of library programming has decreased dramatically and we struggle greatly each month to garner interest with the community. This is one area we are hoping the upcoming community planning sessions with Becky Heil will help the most.

Lastly we did conduct a community survey that was sent out through the community news flier each month, posted online, and distributed at the library. While we didn't draw the participation that we had hoped we did receive 16 helpful surveys returned to the library. Most of which were satisfied with our current hours and staff. We will draw upon the suggestions for programming which centered around guest speakers and more adult programming.

Need: 3-5 year plan in 2025

Goal: The library board will work with community members, patrons, and businesses to develop a plan of action for the Curtis Memorial Library.

Objective: To better serve the community the library needs to have a strategic plan based upon the needs of the community. By working with Becky Heil we will have solid data to create a plan of action.

- Becky Heil will attend the May 2024 board meeting to discuss with the board the process and brainstorm names of community members we can invite to be part of the strategic planning.
- After the meeting the library director will send out invitations to attend the community meeting at the end of June 2024 or beginning of July 2024.
- In August 2024 we will invite the attendees back to the library to discuss ways that the library can help meet the needs that were compiled at the first meeting
- Before October of 2024 the board will once again meet with Becky Heil to discuss what was learned from the two meetings and select several goals for the library to include in their new Strategic plan for 2025 through 2029.
- The library will have a new five year Strategic plan in place before March of 2025.

Need: Meet the recreational needs of Wheatland

Goal: The citizens of Wheatland live far away from most larger cities. The library will offer ways to relax and have fun in their community without having to travel.

Objective: Develop activities for the residents of Wheatland.

- Revamp the Summer Reading Program starting in 2024.
 - Shorten the program to one month in order to help facilitate more completion of the program and waning interest mid-summer.
 - Hire one big performer or speaker to kick-off the program in May of 2024.
 - In April 2024 speak to community organizations to develop programming for the community.
- Develop one recurring monthly program for every age group of library patrons starting in July 2024.
- Start a walking club at the library in May of 2024.
- Hold a festive Holiday party at the library in December of 2024.
- Encourage community members to offer demonstrations of skills or interests to the community.

Need: Access to and training for current technology

Goal: Help all members of the community have access to the technology they need regardless of their economic standing.

Objective: Evaluation areas of the library that need updating or developing so we can meet the online needs of our patrons.

- Look into adding more computers to the library to meet the increased demand by library patrons. September 2024.
- Offer classes on how to use different devices like cell phones, computers, tablets, and navigate popular websites.
- Replace our fax machine by November 2024.
- Research offering wi-fi hotspots for check out at the library by January 2025.

Need: Community Partnering

Goal: The residents of Wheatland need to see their library and staff are invested in their community.

Objective: Look for ways the library can help and partner with community organizations.

- Speak with the teachers about ways the library can help their classes. Possibly by offering the lending of materials, space for extra curricular activities, or programming. September 2024
- Attend community breakfast twice a year to promote library services to the community. Spring 2024 and Fall 2024.
- Continue to participate in the community Christmas Festival in December 2024
- Speak to the Senior living center to see what services or programming we can provide for their residents. August 2024

Need: Advocating

Goal: While library usage has grown in the community since the director started in 2021 there are still many areas where we can improve.

Objective: Continue to develop strategies to keep the community aware of library programming and services.

- Keep publishing the library schedule of events in the monthly Wheatland Wire.
- Achieve weekly posts to Facebook by August 2024.

- Review and update the library's website by October 2024.
- Achieve daily posts to Facebook by January 2024.
- Reach out to the school to develop a way to promote library services to students September 2024.
- Develop a monthly newsletter about library activities that patrons can subscribe to by January 2024.
- Look into developing a Friend's of the Library group by March 2025.

Need: Third Place

Goal: To provide a clean and welcoming environment for the residents of Wheatland.

Objective: All communities need a space where people can visit where they are not expected to spend money. A place to socialize and meet their neighbors. The library will strive to be such a space for the City of Wheatland.

- Conduct a survey of the library's building and take note of all repairs or areas that need revitalization. April 2024
- Work with the City Works department to see which repairs they are able to undertake. May 2024
- Have the outside of the building power washed. Summer 2024
- Look into having the drop box painted. Summer 2024
- Redesign the meeting room to make it more appealing for patrons.
 - Look into a keurig coffee maker.
 - Offer snacks for patrons using the space.
 - Look into updating the furniture.
 - Organize the Wheatland Memorabilia to make it more accessible to patrons.

Need: Know your Community

Goal: Provide a place where residents old and new can go to discover what their community has to offer.

Objective: Wheatland is a bedroom community with a high turnover of rental property. The library should be a place where residents with questions can go to learn about organizations and services offered in the area.

- Develop a welcome kit to offer to residents moving into the community. Speak to city hall and see if they could hand them out to new residents setting up services with the city. By November 2024
- Speak to community businesses to discover basic information about them that we can compile and keep for patron access at the library.
- Promote and encourage residents to utilize our community bulletin board.
- Offer a space for community organizations to use for meetings and programs for the public. Fall 2024

Need: Accessibility

Goal: Evaluate and update the library and its service to be accessible to all patrons.

Objective: Everyone should be able to access the library and utilize library services regardless of age or ability. The library will evaluate and update as needed the building and policies so everyone in the community is served equally.

- Review the ADA checklists provided by the state library to determine what changes need to be made. Winter 2024.
- Hold a meeting with the city works crew to determine what changes and updates can be easily accomplished and undertake them. Winter 2025.
- Develop strategies for serving patrons that can not make it to the library on their own.
 - Expanding our book delivery service.
 - Arranging drop off and pick up hours for curb service.
 - Research our hours to see if they need to be adjusted for working families.
 - Find new ways to promote and educate the public about our e-books and e-audiobooks offered through Bridges.
- Set up a bicycle rack for patrons to keep our sidewalks clear for patrons with mobility challenges. Spring 2024.