

Decatur Public Library

Long Range Plan

2004-2009

Introduction

The Decatur Public Library's mission and its long range plan create the standard by which we must guide the library as we move forward. As libraries evolve from being stand-alone storehouses of information to electronic networking service outlets by which patrons have an increasingly better opportunity to acquire their informational needs, we must adhere to a plan of action that can hold us accountable and direct us as we progress into the future.

Using this plan as a guide, we believe that we are able to commit ourselves to serving Decatur residents better. As no plan can be "all inclusive", this plan looks at five major areas of concern where the library needs to concentrate its attention and breaks those goals down into manageable pieces. Although the plan may be modified, with time, its end will remain the same, providing outstanding service and a quality library to our patrons.

A long range plan such as this is really just a snapshot of the "Big Picture," a road map, if you will, of where are we going and how we get there. I think that by utilizing this plan we really will be going places. I invite you to come along for the ride.

Lee Ann Fisher
City Librarian

Mission Statement

The purpose of the Decatur Public Library is to provide access to information to help meet the educational, recreational, and professional needs of every member of the community. The library is dedicated to selecting, acquiring, and maintaining quality materials in a variety of formats; providing the programs, services and technologies to support this purpose; and recognizing and responding to the diverse and ever-changing needs of the population we serve.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees, February 20, 2003.

Roles Statement

The Decatur Public Library has chosen the following roles as priorities for the provision of library service for the 2004-2009 period. The roles are listed in priority order.

1. **Current Topics and Titles:** A library that provides Current Topics and Titles helps to fulfill community residents' appetites for information about popular cultural and social trends and their desire for satisfying recreational experiences.
2. **General Information:** A library that offers General Information helps meet the need for information and answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school and personal life.
3. **Local History and Genealogy:** A library that offers Local History and Genealogy service addresses the desire of community residents to know and better understand personal or community heritage.
4. **Government Information:** A library that provides Government Information helps satisfy the need for information about elected officials and governmental agencies that enables people to participate in the democratic process.

Planning and Evaluation

The Decatur Public Library is committed to the identification of services needed by its residents. Systematic analysis will be applied to ensure that the quality of library service in Decatur is at the highest possible level and rendered in the most economic and advantageous manner. One of our core requirements mandated by the State is a citizen survey. Our last survey was done in 96/97, so we will be developing and conducting another one in 06/07. Through effective planning and research, a course of action based on the needs of the community can be implemented. This plan, accompanied by consultation, guidance, effective communication, public awareness and adherence to State standards, will be evaluated yearly and revised as needed to meet the constantly evolving environment of patron service.

AREA I: LIBRARY FACILITIES AND PROPERTY

Building & Grounds - The library will endeavor to keep all library property in optimum physical condition.

General Maintenance The goal is to keep the building in top working order.

The Head of the Building Division will develop a maintenance plan and schedule for the upkeep of the building and establish a "to do" list that will be reevaluated each year. Included will be everything from the non-public areas to the public areas. Both are

needed to be in top working condition in order to create a pleasant and comfortable environment.

Building Layout The goal is to provide a user-friendly environment.

The library will look at the building plan to create efficient utilization of space, considering workflow and usage as its guidelines. Every area will be looked at to provide a safe and secure environment for patrons and staff for its type of use. Not all areas of the library need overhauling or modification; those listed below are areas that currently need reassessing. All areas of the library will be evaluated periodically as use and need change with time. Another thing that needs to be considered is signage. Currently, we have very little directional signage. As soon as layout decisions are made, a signage design and plan need to be implemented, providing patrons with clear directions.

Reference Area – As one of the library's roles is to provide **General Information**, a current and up-to-date reference department will be maintained. It will include both print and electronic resources to assist our patrons with their informational needs. The usage of the reference area needs to be studied so that the layout can accommodate both books and computers in a compatible fashion.

Government Documents, Business Information Center, Illinois Center, and the Decatur Center all need to be reconsidered. As one of the library's roles is to provide **Government Information**, we need to further develop its own individual space and identity in its current location. The Business Information Center has outlived its usefulness, with the advent of this type of information being readily available on the Internet, and will be incorporated into the Reference or Circulating Collections. The Illinois Center and the Decatur Center need to become part of the Local History Room when space becomes available to include them.

Collection - As one of the library's roles is to provide **Current Topics and Titles**, our collection will reflect the ever-evolving space needs of our materials, accommodating growth where it is needed and trimming when necessary. We are now at maximum capacity for our collections. We can make some minor changes, but should there be a growth spurt in some area, we would be hard pressed to expand the collection. Depending on the space need, one option for growth would be to remove the local history wall and expand into that area. If greater space were needed, we could remove the walls to both the Local History Room and the Adult Division staff room, expanding the usable ground floor space substantially. This option means that both the Local History Room and the Adult Division staff room would need to be relocated. The back issues of periodicals along with the current issues could be relocated easily to this area. This would free their current location for expansion of the book collection or shifting the non-fiction shelving into the current area for back issues of periodicals. This would also create more space for the growing audio-visual collection at the other end of the library. Both would entail the purchase of additional shelving.

Local History Room - As one of the library's roles is to provide **Local History and Genealogy**, our Local History Room is woefully inadequate for our current needs. We

can no longer grow in the space we have and many items we would like to share with the public are in storage awaiting the day when we can properly display them. We could greatly expand our collection and services by moving the Local History Room into the large unused lease space on the second floor. This would provide nearly 30,000 square feet of space dedicated to local history. This option would require substantial capital outlay, increased staffing and more volunteers. The lease space requires build-out as it is currently gutted, but we could develop the area to meet the specialized conditions required to preserve the local history collection that we currently do not have the ability to do. Climate control and security are too costly to install in its current location. This would also allow the Local History Room to become more of a “library within a library,” with its own hours and a separate entrance on Main Street and/or Franklin Street.

Gates Computer Lab – The lab setup is perfect where it is. The space easily accommodates the computers and the students with room left over for the peripherals. However, there are ventilation and lighting issues that need to be resolved to make the space more comfortable. With that many computers in a room, it heats up rapidly and our current ventilation system is unable to cope with the temperature spike. We have done what we can to reduce the heat without a great financial outlay, but the solution to rectifying the situation will require some capital expense. The HVAC needs to be reworked for the room’s new use and at least two ceiling fans need to be added. As it is a teaching and training lab, the lighting system needs to be modified to work with a dimmer switch to support both functions.

Staff Workspace – The Technical Services Division and the Building Division need increased space to operate efficiently. Technical Services is really three departments in one: acquisitions, cataloging, and processing. It has outgrown its current space, due to a healthy materials budget, the active weeding and collection management program the library has implemented. By creating a new TS Division in the smallest lease space, we could create a workflow plan that meets their current needs. This would require capital outlay as the space is undeveloped and would require build-out. The Building Division could then move into the old TS area. This would give the Head of the Building Division a private office, which he does not currently have, but all the other division heads do. It would extend their workspace to be near the loading dock closer to an outside entrance. Their old space could become storage space for shelving and equipment.

Richland Classrooms – When the Project Read Office replaced the original Long-Distance Learning Lab upstairs, the need for a permanent Project Read classroom became apparent. In July 2004, the Board voted to approve relocating the classes from the Staley Conference Room to the Nims Computer Lab. The Nims Lab had become obsolete with the addition of the Gates Lab and the equipment had not been updated in some time. This relocation will solve two problems at once: giving Project Read classes their own space conveniently located next to the PR office and freeing the Staley Room for library rental.

Meeting Rooms – The current Madden Auditorium, Staley Conference Room, ADM Children’s Meeting Room, and Board Room are very popular and in high demand. With the relocation of the Local History Room, we have the possibility of providing an additional meeting room to our public. The LHR would convert fairly well into a public

meeting room. An outside door would need to be cut in the wall facing the Village Mall and with the addition of a screen, additional chairs and tables, it would be ready to go.

Parking Lot The goal is to provide a safe parking environment for our patrons and staff.

The library will maintain the parking lot with regular checks for holes, cracks and other safety hazards. It will be patched, paved and relined as necessary. The whole lot needs to be redone in the near future, as we are currently patching the patches, and it will only get worse with time. Also more directional signage needs to be added.

Grounds The goal is to make the library grounds as attractive as possible.

The library will continue its partnership with Master Gardeners to make the best of the “green” areas.

Capital Improvements The library will survey its needs every few years to see if the facility needs updating.

Possible projects requiring capital expenditures will be the relocation of the Local History Room. The priority of the projects would be established by the board and expenses identified in order for the Foundation to run a capital campaign. Other projects such as repaving the entire parking lot may fall under the City’s capital needs funding. Also grant funding from the state and other sources would be actively pursued.

Vehicles The library will keep its fleet of vehicles in good working order.

The only vehicle needing replacement at this time is the 1993 Ford delivery van. It has a lot of mileage on it and is experiencing mechanical problems. The best plan would be to make our current 1995 Ford passenger van the delivery van and get a newer passenger van.

Lease Space The goal is to provide the library with income earning space.

The Village Mall is working as planned to provide income to offset library expenses and it will continue to do so in the future. The second floor lease space in the library, on the other hand, has had no viable tenants for the past three years. It is time to consider other options, such as utilizing the space for library use as proposed above.

Accessibility The library will comply with all accessibility laws.

There are two areas that currently need addressing. One would be an upstairs entrance on Prairie Street. It would take nothing in the way of construction to implement, as an outside door already exists in the Children’s Department. However, there would be considerable expense for the 3M theft detection system. The other issue is a handicapped access ramp from Prairie Street for those patrons who need assistance. Currently, those using a wheelchair and coming from the downtown area must go all the way to the vehicle entrance and then come back up to the library entrance. This is due to the layout

of the property where the library and its parking area are much lower than the street, creating steep banks. We do have stairs for those patrons on foot. The Prairie Street side would be the preeminent location for a ramp to be built. It is closer to the main library entrance and most foot traffic seems to come from that side of the building. The best spot would be the area where the trash receptacle used to be. The stairs are located there and the space is currently used for parking. This project might qualify for a "Live & Learn Construction Grant" available from the State Library. This problem would also be solved by creating an upstairs entrance.

AREA II: LIBRARY MATERIALS & SERVICES

A. Collection Development - The library will keep current on all material trends as they affect the patrons' needs.

The primary goal of the collection is to support the Library's mission. The Head of the Adult Division is chairing the Collection Development Committee. This committee is comprised of staff from all divisions of the library and is currently working on a new collection development policy. The old policy has not been updated since 1995 and does not take into consideration advances in technology, material types, weeding and collection maintenance.

B. Programming - The library will look for a variety of programs that reflect the patrons' interest. All programs will be free and available to the general public.

Children's

Participate in **The Illinois Reading Enrichment and Development** summer reading program. IREAD is a coordinated, self-supporting effort between Illinois librarians and the Illinois Library Association (ILA) to develop and provide high quality, low cost resources and products to enable local library staff to motivate children to read. IREAD and Illinois librarians have shared their talents and creativity to create a statewide summer reading program for over 20 years.

Continue our partnership with **Baby TALK** to provide Library Lapsits that offer thematic activities for parents and children ages 1-3, and Baby TALK Times that are informal and a conversational way for parents and children (0-3) to receive child development information and provide for parent/child interaction within a support group.

Create our own in-house programming, displays and story times that go along with themes, seasons or "hot topics" in children's literature and publishing.

Invite children's authors, illustrators and storytellers to Decatur to expand, enhance and complement the programs we are already providing.

Young Adult

Participate in the **YALSA** “Teen Read Week” held each October. Teen Read Week is the national adolescent literacy initiative of the Young Adult Library Services Association, a division of the American Library Association.

Continue our partnership with **Project Next Generation** offering a safe environment, creating multi-generational talent pools, integrating technology and advancing social values for teens. PNG provides a hands-on interactive setting that greatly enhances the communication between the kids and the library.

Create our own in-house programming, displays and activities that go along with themes, seasons or “hot topics” in young adult literature and publishing.

Invite YA authors, illustrators and artists to Decatur to expand, enhance and complement the programs we are already providing.

Adult

The Head of the Adult Division and the City Librarian will develop a plan for adult programming. Adult programming will run from September until May and include a wide variety of topics and issues. All programs will present information in a non-biased manner. Programs will also be provided at various times, not only during the weekdays but at night and on weekends to give as many people as possible the opportunity to attend. Programs will be presented in diverse formats, entertaining as well as informative. Computer classes will continue to be developed that meet the technological needs of the patrons.

Continue partnering with various local organizations to provide programs for DPL patrons that complement both groups’ goals.

Seek out additional museum quality exhibits that will bring local, state and national attention to the DPL and expand, enhance and complement the programs we are already providing.

Seniors

The Head of the Extension Division currently teaches special computer classes with the older library patron in mind. We have also offered programs with seniors as the target audience and will continue to do so in the future. In recognition of National Senior Citizens month (May) plan special events with other organizations serving seniors. Expand our current services to the homebound and the elderly. Also continue to cultivate our relationship with assisted living and nursing home facilities. We will be submitting a proposal to the Whinnery Trust in the near future to expand our current “Homebound” service.

C. Services- The library will provide services to meet the patrons’ needs.

Bookmobiles

The library will continue to provide bookmobile service to the citizens of Decatur. Wireless networking for the bookmobiles is a must, if we wish to provide "live" service to our patrons. We are currently exploring, satellite and broadband service to see which is more feasible for our use.

Adding a third bookmobile route or a "senior-mobile" would provide additional needed services, but would require hiring two additional staff positions. Grant money would possibly be available to purchase a vehicle, but not to hire the personnel. Considering the enormity of the Local History Room project adding an additional bookmobile should wait until that project is finished in order not to stretch our resources too thin.

Book Drops

The library will continue to provide book drops in convenient locations throughout the city. Book drop sites need to be periodically evaluated as to condition and location.

A drive-up video drop box in addition to our drive-up book drop at the library would help eliminate some of the traffic congestion at the library entrance, plus be very beneficial to patrons during bad weather.

Hours

Library hours will be reviewed and set to meet the service needs of the public, taking into consideration the hours of service by population as recommended in "Serving Our Public: Standards for Illinois Public Libraries," which states that a library our size needs to have Sunday hours year round. One option would be to close at 5:30 on Friday, as we do on Saturday, and be open on Sunday from 1-5 as part of the regular work week. This would only add 30 minutes to the total amount of hours the library is open to the public.

D. Technology- The library will strive to stay on the cutting edge of technology.

Automation System

The library recently migrated to Dynix in April 2004. It is unlikely that the library will have to consider a new system for many years. When the need for a new automation system arises, it is the responsibility of the Rolling Prairie Library System Users Group to evaluate and select the system. Decatur Public Library staff will be heavily involved in the selection process by serving on committees and providing input on every level where it is appropriate, to insure that the library's concerns are met.

However, a self-check system that works with Dynix may be more viable at this time. I have talked to several vendors about this possibility and most are willing to take our old machine as a trade-in, so that we can upgrade to something compatible with Dynix.

Internet

The library will provide free Internet service to its patrons.

Library Web Page

The library's web page should serve as a primary information portal and access point to many library services and resources. It will strive to provide all the information that a patron needs at their fingertips. It should be clearly designed, easily navigable and present a positive image of the library. The library will keep its homepage current and update it at least monthly, if not weekly.

Computers

The library will provide computers for patron and staff use. They will be updated and upgraded as the need arises. A *Technology Plan* will be developed by the Systems Administrator to systematically upgrade, replace and recondition computers for library service based on need and usage.

AREA III: HUMAN RESOURCES

A. Departmental Development -The library will distribute the workflow in a manner that is ergonomically and financially reasonable.

There are currently two positions, supervisory in nature but filled by non-management staff, that create an unfair work situation for the employees. One is the Head Page position in the Adult Division. The other is the Library Clerk II in Circulation, who is in charge when the Head of the Division is out of the office. Both of these problems could be solved by transferring the Page Department out of the Adult Division and into the Circulation Division and creating an Assistant Head of the Circulation Division or a Circulation Supervisor. This position would oversee the Pages and be in charge of the Circulation Division when the Circ Head is away. The Head Page's work space is already located in the Circulation area; this would also combine all the pages into one department. There are two Library Page positions in the Technical Service Division that would need to be renamed.

Another staffing issue concerns the Local History Room. If it is expanded in any manner, it will need a full-time librarian to be in charge of its development. The work is too time-consuming to be handled by the current staff; hence the reason it is staffed by volunteers.

I still like the concept of a "greeter" desk between the doors and the fence. This position could handle all the directional questions that people have, plus schedule the meeting rooms and maybe sign them up for a library card. We could develop a core of volunteer greeters and possibly utilize the Friends also. I think this would give first time visitors a very positive image of the library, instead of being shuffled from place to place.

To expedite patrons' interlibrary loan requests, a workflow consideration is needed. The Interlibrary Loan Clerk located in the Technical Services area needs to be relocated to the Adult

Division, to increase communication and efficiency between those taking the requests and the one filling them. This position could also do the clerical work necessary for the division, as it is a Clerk II position. Acquisitions would need a Library Clerk I to help process orders and receive materials, as the ILL Clerk performs some of these functions.

Also, if Sundays year-round become part of the workweek, additional half-time staff may be needed to cover service points. It would be hard to estimate the need, until the impact is studied.

B. Staff Development - The library will provide appropriate training to its staff members.

Hiring - The City Librarian is responsible for hiring, promoting or transferring staff in a manner that best serves the needs of the library. Job descriptions are to be reviewed and updated as necessary to meet evolving job duties and changes in technology.

Orientation - Each Division Head will provide an orientation of the library, its policies, programs, services, and its staff to each newly appointed staff member. Each Division will develop a "departmental manual" that covers the functions and procedures of the department.

Training - Staff will receive on-the-job training necessary to perform their jobs. A cross-training program needs to be developed, so that all staff is knowledgeable about library positions. Reinstate "staff development day." With a staff this size, it is impossible to get everyone together unless the library is closed. Staff development is important enough to warrant closing in order to insure all staff is current on library policies and services. It also gives the staff time without the patrons and with staff from other divisions with whom they may not interact with on a daily basis.

Continuing Education - Staff will be encouraged to attend workshops and conferences that will expand and enhance their job knowledge.

C. Trustee Development - The library will supply appropriate documentation to Board Members so they can make informed decisions on issues concerning the library.

Orientation - The City Librarian will provide an orientation of library programs, services, the facility and its staff to each newly appointed board member.

Policy Review - The Board President will annually place board members on the Personnel, Policy & Public Relations Committee to review and establish library policy.

Funding Issues - The Board President will annually place board members on the Finance & Properties Committee to establish library funding sources and review the library finances.

Local/State Involvement – Each board member will serve on one of the above mentioned committees. Each board member will be an active advocate of the library and promote the DPL on local and state levels when possible.

Training – Board members will take advantage of special training opportunities offered to trustees through library organizations.

AREA IV: PUBLIC AWARENESS

A. Public Relations – The library will promote all library services and programs.

With the recent development of the Marketing Committee, chaired by the Head of the Extension Division, the library has made the commitment to promoting library services and programs in an organized manner. The Marketing Committee will work closely with the Head of the Adult Division and the Head of the Children’s Division to ensure that all library programs are promoted in a timely fashion.

B. Community Interaction - The library will make every effort to create partnerships with other organizations.

The library will strive to create networks and affiliations with schools, civic groups and the business community that will best serve the dual purposes of both agencies, keeping in mind that the library is non-discriminatory and promotes all ideas equally and without judgment.

C. Library Interaction - The library will participate in library related organizations.

The Friends of the Library

Friends are the “grassroots” of library advocacy and work within the library and community developing library support. All library staff and board members will be encouraged to become members of the “Friends.”

Macon County

All staff will be expected to be knowledgeable on all local library options available in Macon County and how the public can access them.

Rolling Prairie Library System

All staff will be encouraged to participate on a local level by being knowledgeable and actively involved in RPLS and its consortium of which DPL is a member. Its mission is to enable its member libraries to maximize the scope and quality of their services.

Illinois Library Association

Professional and paraprofessional staff will be encouraged to participate on a state level by becoming members of ILA. Its mission is to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services in Illinois and for the library community, in order to enhance learning and ensure access for all.

American Library Association

All librarians will be encouraged to participate on a national level by becoming members of ALA, which is the oldest and largest library association in the world. Its mission is to promote the highest quality library and information services and public access to information.

AREA V: FUNDING

The library will seek out funding opportunities from traditional and nontraditional sources.

Local - The library board will actively pursue all local funding options and request further funding as necessary to support library services.

State – The library staff will continue to seek state funding as optional grants become available to provide additional services or programs.

Foundation – The Foundation board will send letters seeking financial support from past donors annually. Should there be a need for a major fund-raising effort, the Foundation will be in charge of the capital campaign drive.

Grants – The library will explore all outside grant opportunities, seeking supplementary funding to enhance library services. A Division Head will receive training to become a certified grant writer increasing the library's opportunities for funding.

Approved September 16, 2004