

DANBURY LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN 2019-2024

INTRODUCTION

The Danbury Library's Strategic Plan is a roadmap for the future that will guide the library's goals as an institution for the next five years.

Strategic goals, alongside the library's mission and vision, provide focus and a framework for day-to-day decision making and special initiatives. These goals are rooted in the library's foundational values and feedback from the community.

Some of the library's notable accomplishments from the preceding strategic plan include the implementation of RFID, expanding downloadable collections, redesigning a mobile-friendly website, circulating digital devices like wireless hotspots, and hosting a multitude of programs and events for patrons of all ages.

The Danbury Library's 2019-2024 Strategic Plan was approved by the Library Board of Directors on December 13, 2018.

MISSION STATEMENT

As an essential city asset, the Danbury Library is committed to being:

- ▶ A welcoming destination
- ▶ Responsive to the varied needs of our city's diverse community
- ▶ A source of inspiration through words and ideas

VISION STATEMENT

Danbury Library will build lasting community connections by fostering creativity, discovery, and personal growth.



THE PROCESS

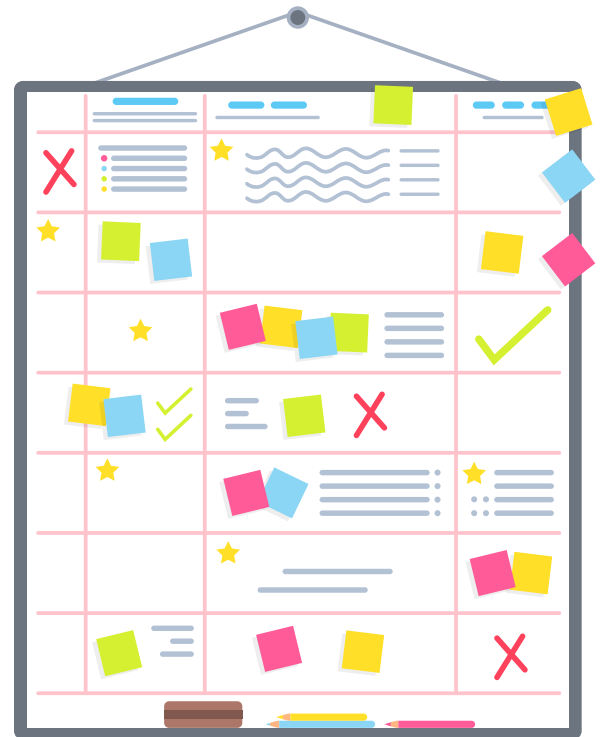
In May 2016, the Danbury Library elected to participate in the “CT Rising to the Challenge: Path Forward” pilot, a 14-week self-paced initiative designed by the Aspen Institute for libraries to assess the alignment of their programs and services with the needs of the community.

In the weeks that followed, library administrators met with key staff members to complete each set of “action steps” provided in the Aspen Institute’s “Action Guide for Re-Envisioning Your Public Library.” The final action item, “Next Steps,” included suggestions to form an advisory group or steering committee and consider outreach to key stakeholders.

The Strategic Planning Committee was formed in August 2017. The team consisted of five library staff members and library administration.

As a starting point, the staff handed out surveys to the community at a weekly summer food truck event, in the lobby of city hall, and at the Library's Craft Fair. The Planning Committee created a script for the focus groups based on the results of the surveys and from the techniques they learned through the Innovation Builders' "Excite Transformations for Libraries" program.

Over the course of seven months, the Planning Committee conducted sixteen focus groups. These community conversations were held at multiple locations throughout the city including the library, Danbury High School, EdAdvance, a local coffee shop, and Western Connecticut State University. Close to 200 members of the community participated including



library patrons, staff, stakeholders, nonprofit leaders, local corporations, teens, parents, and educators.

The Planning Committee divided the feedback from these groups into categories. The following strategic goals were determined by the committee based on this feedback along with the completed steps from the Action Guide.



STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Tara Carvalho, Program and Outreach Coordinator
Christina Davis, Innovation and Sustainability Librarian
Maryellen DeJong, Community Relations Coordinator
Amanda Gilbertie, Digital Services Librarian
Cecelia Lefurgy, Access and User Experience Librarian
Katharine Chung, Assistant Director
Katie Pearson, Director

LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Edward Moore, Sr., President
Mr. Robert Feinson, Vice-President
Mrs. Ugo Damia, Secretary
Mr. Randolph Summ, Treasurer
Ms. Dimples Armstrong
Mr. Gary Falkenthal
Ms. Jimmetta Samana

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY

Goal: Create an active network of local partnerships to support common goals and achieve greater impact within the Danbury community.

Danbury is home to many thriving nonprofits, organizations, and businesses. While their missions may differ, all are united in their vision of a strong and vibrant city. The library will help realize this common vision by creating connections between community stakeholders and identifying opportunities for collaboration.



- Educate and empower staff to make community connections and bring in new opportunities to partner on projects and events
- Build partnerships with local businesses for grant funding and other opportunities
- Cooperate closely with the FRIENDS of the Library to maximize fundraising
- Expand the library's presence at citywide events and local activities
- Outline library offerings and services available to partnering organizations
- Act as an information hub for other organizations to work together
- Collaborate with area libraries, museums, and schools to cross-promote and share programming
- Participate in Chamber of Commerce and City Center networking opportunities

THE LIBRARY IS FOR EVERYONE

Goal: Extend library services to ensure that all City residents are able to use and enjoy library resources.

The Danbury Library is an important community asset that should be accessible to all members of our diverse city. The library is dedicated to providing residents with the services and information they need regardless of age, education, ethnicity, language, income, physical limitations, or geographic barriers.



- Expand programming and services beyond library walls into the community
- Identify locations for satellite book drops, little free libraries, and shared collections
- Explore methods to deliver materials to the homebound
- Provide classes or online tutorials for digital services offered by the library
- Create a curbside location to pick up holds for library materials
- Offer information and programs in languages other than English
- Determine processes for online card renewals, text alerts, and creating a library app
- Schedule events at times that are convenient for working families and individuals

LIFELONG LEARNING

Goal: Offer diverse programs and events that spark imagination, unite the community, and promote lifelong learning.

Danbury residents are creative and enterprising. Our patrons are committed to enriching and improving their lives, whether they are increasing earning potential through taking a computer or language course or expressing themselves through the written word at one of our writing workshops. Our programming reflects the varied interests of the community and we will continue to offer opportunities for learning and growth.



- Foster a creative environment for staff to work together to deliver programs
- Offer more civic, multicultural, and intergenerational experiences
- Survey patrons to determine interests and best times to provide learning opportunities
- Advance the timeline by which programs are selected, published, and promoted
- Expand on our commitment to literacy in all its forms
- Develop a toolkit for staff that includes a programming checklist and updated evaluation
- Streamline the process for fielding outside requests for programming
- Provide additional professional development offerings and explore skill-sharing programs

A WELCOMING PLACE

Goal: Optimize the design of our current library space to ensure an inviting and accommodating environment for visitors.

Located in the heart of downtown Danbury, the library is a place where people can find a quiet room for study or a venue for the spirited exchange of ideas. Open and available to everyone, the library building continues to provide a space to foster human connection in an increasingly virtual world.



- Establish areas for quiet study and areas that facilitate conversation and community gathering
- Improve collection organization to encourage discovery
- Make spaces easy to navigate with signage and clear pathways
- Find ways to host activities more frequently on the library's plaza
- Reconfigure the Junior Floor to differentiate the children and teen areas
- Beautify library entrances and common points of access
- Create opportunities for human interaction lost by the self-check process
- Use human-centered design to assess and adapt library spaces

DANBURY'S BEST KEPT SECRET

Goal: Promote the library and the services that it offers through strategic marketing efforts to increase circulation, visitation, and attendance at our programs.

A participant in one of our focus groups called the library "Danbury's Best Kept Secret." We don't want to be a secret; we want to be the talk of the town. The library is one of our most dynamic and beneficial community institutions and our goal is to make sure that all of Danbury's 80,000+ residents know and take advantage of the the library's valuable resources.



- Increase awareness that the library is free and open to everyone
- Take steps to ensure that the library retains current patrons and invites back infrequent users
- Host a monthly open house with refreshments to give tours and introduce people to new services
- Measure the library's outcomes and impacts to demonstrate the library's value to the community
- Advertise library services within meaningful contexts
- Create a marketing plan that outlines specific strategies and timelines for promotion
- Implement a marketing budget and determine best avenues for advertisement
- Continue to explore new methods for library promotion through the marketing group

ENRICHING LIVES

Goal: Provide exemplary patron experiences and adapt to changing community expectations.

From learning the alphabet to planning for retirement, the library offers many opportunities for personal growth. As the needs of our community evolve, the library and its staff will adapt to continue to connect people with the tools and information necessary to navigate and flourish in all phases of life.



- Deliver a robust, well-rounded print and digital collection to enrich, entertain, and inform
- Ensure that services and collections cater to the diverse needs of our community in both topic and language
- Promote democracy and encourage civic engagement
- Offer trainings for staff for new services, library activities, and customer service
- Provide resources that support success for individuals at all stages of their lives
- Stay on the forefront of emerging technology
- Curate specialized resource collections to support curricula for educators
- Determine opportunities for ongoing community feedback and create pathways for action

A special thank you to all of the community members who took the time to meet with us and provide their valuable feedback.

An additional thank you to the many organizations whose representatives participated in our stakeholder focus groups:

Ability Beyond, Action Early Learning Center, Boy Scouts of America, City Council, CT Department of Labor, CT Institute for Communities, Danbury Area Refugee Assistance, Danbury Garden Club, Danbury Hackerspace, Danbury Library Board of Trustees, Danbury Library Staff, Danbury Library Teen Council, Danbury Museum, Danbury Public Schools, Danbury Public Schools, Danbury School Readiness Program, Danbury Schools and Business Collaborative (DSABC), Early Childhood Consultation Partnership (ECC) – Connecticut, EdAdvance, Family Resource Center, Federal Correctional Institution, FRIENDS of the Danbury Library, Get Downtown & City Center Danbury, Grassroots Tennis Academy, Greater Danbury Area Men's Club, Headstart, Hudson Montessori, Jericho Partnership, The Jewish Federation of Western CT, Kiwanis Club, Knit & Knosh Knitting Group, Literacy Volunteers on the Green, Little People Learning Center, Macaroni Kid, Microsoft Store Danbury Fair Mall, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Naugatuck Valley Community College – Danbury Campus, New Hope Baptist Church, Pathways Danbury Youth Ministries, Regional Y of Western CT, Savings Bank of Danbury, Salvation Army, St. James AME Church, Talk Time English Conversation Group, United Way of Western Connecticut, Wells Fargo, Western Connecticut Regional Adult & Continuing Education (WERACE), Western Connecticut Association for Human Rights (WeCAHR), Western Connecticut SCORE, Western Connecticut State University, Women's Center, and Women's Club of Danbury/New Fairfield.

If you were unable to attend one of our conversations, we would like to encourage all members of our community to share their ideas and suggestions about the future of the Danbury Library by e-mailing comments@danburylibrary.org.

The logo for Danbury Library features a white top hat icon positioned above the word "Danbury". The word "Danbury" is in a large, white, serif font. Below "Danbury" is the word "Library" in a smaller, white, serif font.

Danbury Library

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