



Brillion Public Library

Strategic Plan

2020-2024



Introduction & Background

Brillion Public Library developed a five-year strategic plan focused on how the library may best serve the community. The role of libraries has evolved with changes in technology, demographic shifts, and the needs of their communities. The strategic planning process serves as a valuable means of aligning library services with community needs and was identified by the library board as a means of establishing priorities in a climate where municipal, county, and state budgets are tight. Finally, the library facility has not undergone any significant structural or cosmetic changes since the main floor was expanded in 1991 and the elevator was added in 2006, and the library board recognized that any renovations should be driven by library services and the needs of the community.

Brillion Public Library is dedicated to bringing literacy, a love of reading, and community connections to our community and would like to build upon our current foundation.



CARDHOLDERS

2,858 cardholders
in 2018



CIRCULATION

57,429 checkouts
in 2018



E-CIRCULATION

3,921 checkouts
in 2018
2,735 e-books
1,180 e-audiobooks



PROGRAMS

Brillion Public Library provided 197 programs that drew 3,617 attendees in 2018.



SUMMER LIBRARY PROGRAM

In 2019, Brillion Public Library provided 63 programs that drew 757 attendees, and over 300 readers of all ages registered for the summer reading program. Our regular slate of programs drew in nearly 600 people in June and July.



SCHOOL VISITS

21 presentations at eight schools in three communities reached nearly 1,000 students in May and June 2019.

One of the common themes that emerged from our Community Conversations was the perception that Brillion is a safe, tight-knit town with a strong sense of community and a great place to live and raise kids. We view Brillion Public Library as a key asset that enriches the lives of those who live, work, and recreate in Brillion. As such, we seek to enhance library services in order to meet the 21st century needs of our community. The strategic plan guides the library in the following roles:

- a hub for literacy and lifelong learning
- an access point for technologies
- a trusted source of information
- a place to gather

The library is committed to utilizing the strategic plan as a framework for thoughtful and informed decisions that will further its mission of service to the community.

Strategic Planning Process

A strategic planning committee was formed that included the library director, a representative from the library board, and citizens of Brillion and neighboring communities. The strategic planning committee participated in a pilot program with WiLS (Wisconsin Library Service), which provided direction and guidance throughout the planning process. The strategic planning committee developed the goals and objectives of the strategic plan based on the following data and information that was gathered during the planning process.

- Community Survey (184 respondents - 75% library users, 25% non-users)
- Teen Survey (157 respondents)
- DPI Annual Report data
- American Community Survey data (U.S. Census Bureau)
- Integrated Library System data (patron demographics & circulation data)
- A facilitated Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results Analysis (SOAR) discussion with library staff
- A facilitated Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results Analysis (SOAR) discussion with the library board
- Six community conversations
 - Community leaders & stakeholders (7 attendees)
 - Educators (2 attendees)
 - Parents (4 attendees)
 - Hispanic Community (11 attendees)
 - Teens (3 attendees)
 - City Council (7 attendees)

Mission Statement

The Brillion Public Library enriches, educates, and inspires our community by providing opportunities to gather, participate, and engage.

Strategic Plan Goals

Strategic Goal—Space

Provide library spaces that meet the desires and evolving needs of our community for resources, services, and programming to increase their knowledge, expand their skills, and provide a “third space” for them to gather.

Objectives
A. Develop a communication and advocacy strategy to build an understanding that the library’s footprint needs to change in order to meet the needs of the community
B. Assess the current space and identify potential solutions with input from experts and the community
C. Implement achievable improvements that will enhance patron and staff experience
D. Develop partnerships with community stakeholders

Measures for Success
● Creation of a communication and advocacy plan
● Experts provide an assessment of the space and options
● Potential options are presented to the community to solicit feedback
● Improvements/alterations are made to the library space
● Increased use of library spaces
● Increase in partnerships

Input from the community and teen surveys and community conversations referenced the need for a welcoming space that does not require paying for goods or services where members of the community can meet, study (private and group study), and access the internet. Our current space, including the décor, is a reflection of the era in which it was constructed rather than present-day libraries, which are designed to be inviting spaces for the community to gather and linger. The outdated decor was noted by four of the community conversations (teens, parents, civic stakeholders, and the Hispanic community), as well as the staff and library board discussions. It also generated comments in the community survey. Two comments from library users in their mid-twenties to mid-thirties capture recurring themes regarding the library space. “Update the interior a bit...the kids area looks the way it did when I was little. Add a little coffee area, as well.” Another noted, “It would be nice to have a more updated feel. A more homey feel that would be welcoming.” One teen expressed the desire for the library to be “the place where kids go after school to do homework, hangout, [and] read.” Teens and adults expressed the desire for library spaces that serve different functions and noise levels, and the current space does not allow this.

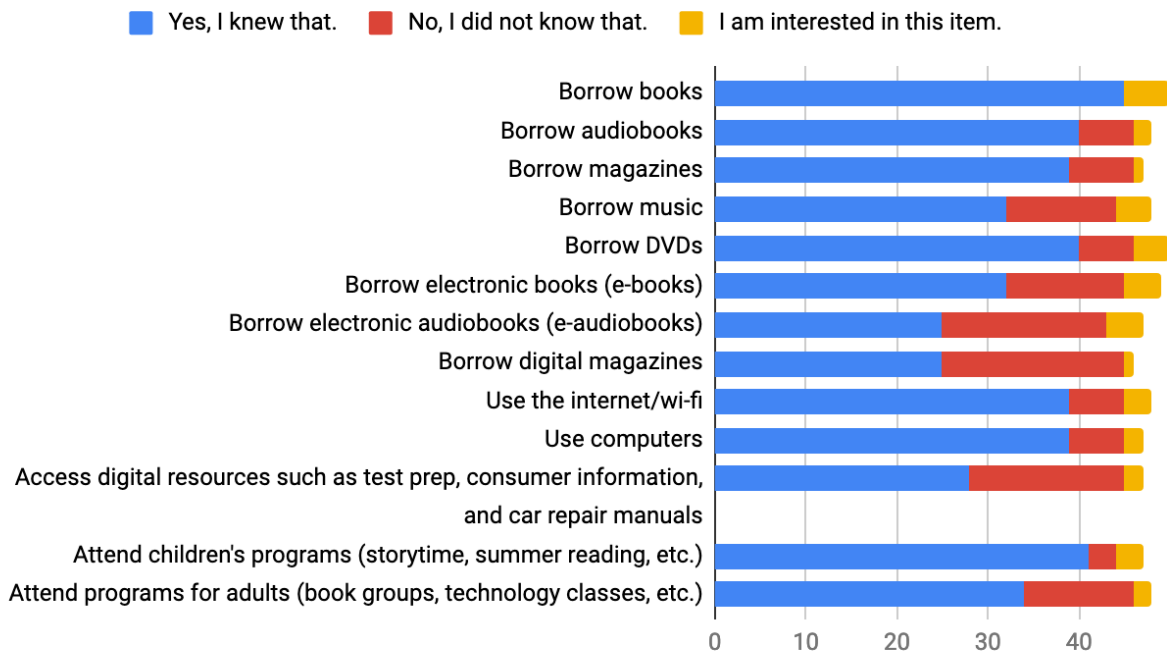
Strategic Goal—Outreach and Community Engagement

Increase community awareness of the library's resources, services, and policies through clear, consistent, and engaging communications designed to reach all community members.

Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Increase visibility of the library and awareness of what the library offers to infrequent or non-library users B. Increase outreach efforts to schools and seek partnerships with youth organizations such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and 4-H C. Develop new and existing community partnerships D. Build community involvement in the library
Measures for Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of a marketing action plan • Increased cardholders • Increased programming attendance • Increase in partnerships

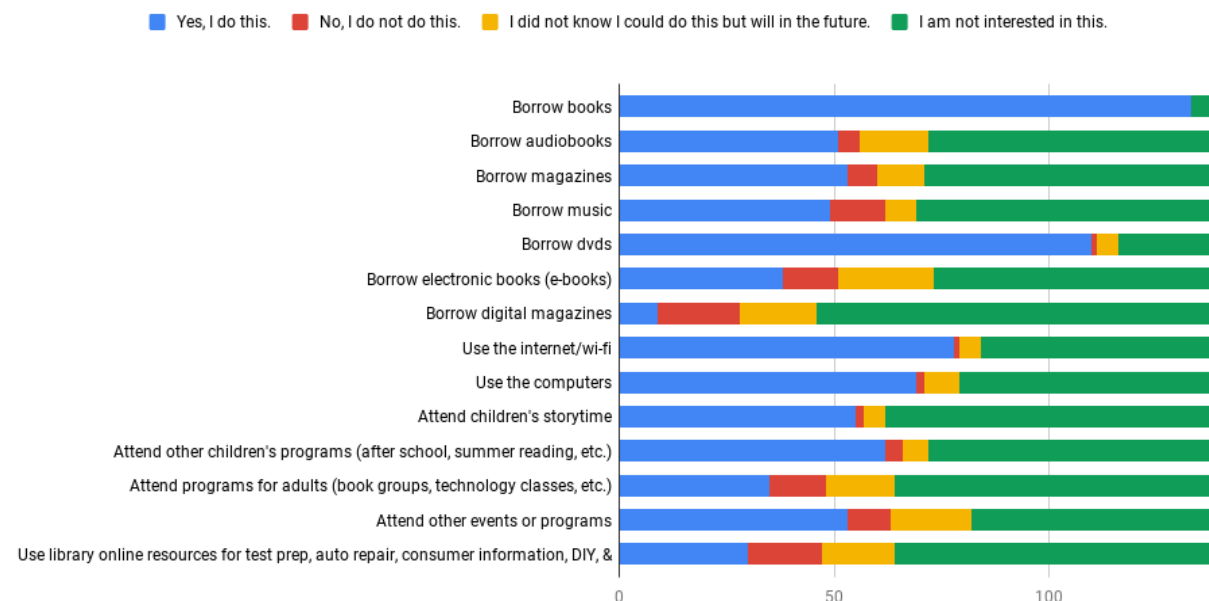
The community and teen surveys and community conversations highlighted the gap in knowledge regarding library services between library users and non-users. Non-users associated the library with print books and were less likely to be aware of digital materials and resources that were available.

Non-Users: Did you know that it is free to (check all that apply):



Even library users are not always aware of all of the programs and services the library provides, particularly when it comes to digital resources.

Library Users: When I am at the library, I:



One alderperson noted that members of her social circle were unaware of the escape room programs offered this summer despite our marketing efforts, which included materials distributed during school visits. Questions raised during the civic stakeholders and city council community conversations regarding library services (Can you check out e-books?), programs (Do you have technology classes?), and funding further highlighted this gap. It is reasonable to conclude that people who may benefit from library services are not being reached, and we strive to serve the entire community.

Strategic Goal—Improving services, programming, and resource use

Ensure that our collections, services, programs, and space reflect, serve, and share the diversity of our community.

Objectives
A. Evaluate service model and staffing levels throughout the library with the goal of balancing community needs with more staffing capacity B. Increase overall library use by developing service strategies that are responsive to our community C. Increase usage of underutilized resources
Measures for Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase in programming attendance ● Increase in new attendees to programming ● Staff satisfaction ● Increase in usage of underutilized resources

The role of libraries continues to evolve with technological advances and the communities we serve. Libraries are far more than providers of physical materials and youth programming, and the library seeks to serve our entire community. The community survey and community conversations revealed potential opportunities for the library to expand its reach. For example, school libraries do not necessarily have full-time librarians or library aides, and teachers may not have time to prepare book talks or to provide instruction in database use, citation managers, or search strategies. There may be opportunities to partner with local scouting groups and other youth organizations. These are opportunities for the library to increase awareness and use of the library, but we need to be mindful of budgetary constraints, including staffing levels. Our current staffing model presumes patrons come to the library for library services and does not support additional outreach activities. Furthermore, it presumes that the library director is primarily onsite during library hours. Additional outreach and programming will require additional staff time for preparation and implementation.

Strategic Goal—Organizational Structural Support

Ensure short and long-term fiscal sustainability through continuous exploration of funding opportunities and sources to meet and support the ever-evolving service needs of our community.

Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Identify new opportunities for funding, including grants, to support library services B. Establish fundraising initiatives to support library services and facility needs C. Develop and implement advocacy efforts with city leaders and civic stakeholders D. Equip the Library Board to be advocates E. Revise the library mission statement F. Establish a library foundation
Measures for Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Number of partnerships ● Increased awareness of the library and its role in the community ● Financial stability ● A revised mission statement

The library is an important asset that needs to be updated to meet the needs of the community and make Brillion a more attractive place to live, work, and visit. Maintaining and updating the facility to meet the evolving needs of the community requires securing additional sources of funding. The library recognizes the importance of being good stewards of public funds and the public trust and strives to use these funds wisely. At the same time, the resources and services we provide must continue to meet the evolving needs of the community. The library does not meet the minimum Wisconsin Public Library Standards (6th edition) as dictated by Brillion Public Library's service population in terms of staffing, materials expenditures per capita, and hours open per week. Once the removal of outdated materials is complete, it will no longer meet the standard for collection size or volumes held per capita. Identifying and capitalizing upon new opportunities for funding will allow the library to be better equipped to serve the community and meet their 21st century needs.

Strategic Goal—Culture of Planning

Continuously develop and implement plans to strengthen our staffing, buildings and grounds, and finances.

Objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Develop and implement a plan for ongoing maintenance, preventative maintenance, and capital improvement strategiesB. Develop a building and grounds planC. Develop a technology planD. Develop strong relationships with organizations, groups, and city departments that will help the library accomplish its mission to serve the community
Measures for Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Improved decision making and financial planning● Increased efficiency● Increased staff satisfaction● Plan for future building needs

Creating and implementing plans will improve efficiency and promote informed fiscal planning that will enhance our services. An aging facility requires a systematic approach to maintenance and replacement in order for the library to be proactive rather than reactive. For example, in the future we would like to avoid finding ourselves in a situation like we are in now--running a nearly unsupported version of Windows on our computers. It is difficult to predict the future, but working to institute processes that respond to changes, trends, and other factors influencing the nature of library operations will help provide seamless service, evenly distribute expenditures, and meet our community's needs. An emphasis on planning will reduce the likelihood of unexpected expenditures and enhance the library's ability to cope with unanticipated expenditures.

Ongoing Planning

The Brillion Public Library director and staff will work in conjunction with the Library Board of Trustees to prioritize and coordinate activities from this plan. A complete activity and implementation plan will be created by the Brillion Public Library director and will serve as an implementation guide during the life of this plan. The library will consider available resources, including funding and staff time; changing conditions locally, regionally, and statewide; and opportunities that arise to innovate during the implementation of the plan. The library board and library director will review progress on a quarterly basis.

Acknowledgements

We thank the community of Brillion for your ongoing support. We appreciate the time and thoughtfulness of those who responded to our community and teen surveys and participated in Community Conversations. Your input informed our strategic plan and helped ensure that the library will serve the needs of our community.

The library director is grateful for the dedication and time of the strategic planning committee. Their commitment and thoughtfulness throughout the development of this plan were invaluable. The strategic planning committee members extend their appreciation to the library board for their support of the strategic planning process.

2018-19 Strategic Planning Committee

- Jeanne Axelrod
- Mona Cox
- Melissa Nickel
- Amy Riemer
- Rachel Hitt, Library Director

2018-19 Library Board of Trustees

- Marc Axelrod, President
- Mona Cox
- Linda Dieter
- Tammy Fischer
- Dominick Madison
- Sarah Pielhop
- Marilyn Schuh
- Brittany Smith
- Nancy Zimpel

The library would also like to thank Rebecca Schadrie and Margie Verhelst, Manitowoc-Calumet County Library System staff, Melissa McLimans and Bruce Smith from WiLS (Wisconsin Library Services) for providing planning process management and other support, and Daniel Veroff and Rozalynn Klass of UW-Madison for the demographic mapping services they provided.

Adopted November 20, 2019 by the Brillion Public Library Board of Trustees. The plan was revised and adopted on February 19, 2020 to include the new library mission statement.