



# **Anytown City Library**

**Strategic Planning 2019-2022**

**123 NE street  
Anytown FL 55555  
954-555-5555  
[www.anytowncitylibrary.org](http://www.anytowncitylibrary.org)**





# Content

Message from the Director

Anytown City Library

Strategic Planning Process

- Internal review

- External review

- SWOT Analysis

- Focus areas

Goals and Objectives

Action Plan

- Activities

- Implementation and Timelines

References





## Message from the Director

On behalf of the staff of the Anytown City Library, I'm proud to present our 3-Year Strategic Planning 2019 - 2021. During 2018, a Committee consisting of library's employees, school representatives, community members and administrators was convened to gather and review data. We collected surveys and performed a comprehensive environmental scan. The process allowed us to evaluate our current position and to establish our next goals. The road map is drawn in this strategic planning that we present today.

The purpose of this plan is to strengthen our presence in the community and become a beacon for current and future residents for a diverse, inclusive, and modern information center.

Change is the norm. We live in an era of continuous advances and, consequently, expectations. Anytown City Library understands that and is willing to accept the challenge in order to accommodate to the new ways our patrons expect to use the library. Our purpose is to offer the products and services they need, when they need them. Libraries are not only about books. Although a major effort is, and it will continue to be, devoted to promote literacy for all ages by keeping a comprehensive catalog of resources, Anytown City Library is seeking to enrich our communities with events and activities that go beyond reading. Workshops, tutoring, technology access, job counseling, wellness programs are all part of our strategy for years to come.

We thank all the people that collaborated in creating this plan and we are very excited in working for a City Library that counts with the an extraordinary support of the community and with passionate librarians.

**Edward Johnson**  
**Director**



## Anytown City Library

Located in Athens County, Anytown City Library serves a diverse community of 300,000 residents. The library offers a collection of 200,000 books -in print and digital format- and works in conjunction with local schools to provide reading challenges and summer camp activities. We count with 10 computers for patrons, and 4 special ones in the youngsters area with special software for children learning. We have 3 tutoring areas, and a room for special events and activities booked all year long with programs that vary from quilting, language learning, financial literacy, to storytimes. We foster the Teens Advisory Board and promote young adults volunteer work in the community.

Our most recent environmental scan shows that Anytown's population is changing. 15 years ago, the majority of our patrons were individuals 50 and older. Currently, we notice an influx of young families with small children, many of them from foreign countries for whom English is a second language. This shift in our demographics has pushed the need for a revision of our goals and strategies, hence the development of this new strategic plan and the rethinking of our mission and vision for the future.





# Mission, Vision, and Values

## Mission

Anytown City Library supports its community by offering resources and an innovative environment to learn and to connect.

## Vision

As stewards of information, we foster lifelong learning by providing access to resources and an environment of discovery that facilitates creativity, innovation, and connection in an inclusive manner

## Values

### **Respect and Dignity:**

All patrons are treated with the utmost respect and empathy

### **Equity and accessibility:**

We provide services for a diverse community in a user-friendly manner.

### **Collaboration and facilitation:**

Anytown City Library purpose is to facilitate access to information and resources in an efficient and effective way.

### **Creativity and learning:**

The library empowers the community by allowing the flow of ideas and supporting creative activities for our patrons.



# The Process

In order to visualize our next 3 years forecast we performed internal and external reviews of our current situation. We gathered and compiled the input from our community to discriminate the immediate and long term needs that should be covered to respond to the new challenges.

## External Reviews

We researched local, state, and federal reports to identify issues in our surrounding area. We also did a thorough search in the local news, read editorials, and meet with local journalists.

Additionally, 2 meetings were held which included local authorities, schools' representatives, and business owners to learn their ideas, fears, and hopes.

We performed patrons' surveys while at the library and reached out to schools to provide students with those surveys as well.

## Internal Reviews

We conducted 3 meetings with all staff to understand their difficulties and achievements. During these meetings, the environmental scan was shared with them as well as the external reviews. The staff voiced their concerns and suggestions as to what needs to be done in order to serve the new population that is arriving to our library.



# SWOT Analysis

After we collected all the information, we arrive to the following SWOT analysis summary

## **Anytown City Library Strengths**

Our patrons see us a reliable, trustworthy institution.

Our digital collection grew 5% for the last 5 years and it keeps growing at a steady pace.

Patrons are satisfied with our Storytimes programs, readers' advisory, and our book clubs.

## **Anytown City Library Weaknesses**

The library is not prepared to deal with non-english speaking patrons.

Staff is not prepared to deal efficiently with the increasing number of homeless individuals using the library

Anytown Library lacks an effective marketing plan to promote services to new members of our community

## **Anytown City Library Opportunities**

There is a large young population that we are not serving efficiently yet: teenagers

There is a niche in the young and middle age people between 25 - 45 that are not using what the library has to offer.

## **Anytown City Library Threats**

Technology is expensive and it needs continuous upgrades.

In the meantime, our budgets are always constrained and under attack

The shift in population is forcing us to review our programs and services.

We have to be aware, though, that changes create reluctance from some members of the community used to have them in certain particular ways. There are affective dimensions that we should take into consideration to avoid alienating our current faithful patrons.

The SWOT analysis allowed us to identify our 4 main focus areas which are being addressed in this Strategic Planning

# Focus

## Focus Area #1

### Staff Training

Anytown City Library must put in place a training program for all staff members to help them deal with cultural differences and gain skills in managing patrons that experience homelessness. Staff training should also include helping employees gain a basic understanding on current technology concepts and how get the most out of them

## Focus Area #2

### Pursue creative inexpensive solutions for technology upgrades.

Our patrons expect we keep up with technology and help them take advantage of it. At Anytown Library, we should keep a constant research on how to use open source software that might help us reach our goals while keeping costs low

## Focus Area # 3

### New programs to attract teenagers

We need to ideate a space to foster teenagers' socialization and creativity development. It must be conditioned to give them access to resources meaningful in the context of their everyday lives. They must be resources that give them ownership of their own agendas for -as Ito (21) affirms- "learning happens in informal settings"

## Focus Area # 4

### Marketing efforts to engage the young and middle age patrons that are not using the library resources.

There is a large part of our population that we are not attending. Those are the young and middle aged professionals. We have to broad our vision. If we are servicing their young children at storytimes events, it means they are already at the library. It is necessary to plan activities accordingly to keep them engaged, even after their sons and daughters are old enough to come to the library by themselves.

# Goals

Anytown City Library has developed 4 strategic goals

## **Goal: Increase awareness of the library's services and programs in the community to reach a larger population**

**Objective:** Keep the library alive in the minds of our patrons by using offline as well as social marketing media consistently and methodically.

**Objective:** Attract a larger number of teenagers to "hang out" at the library by announcing events and services in their schools and preferred places.

**Objective:** Strengthen relationships with other organizations and groups in the community that may attract professionals to interact with the library. The interaction will bring a two-fold benefit. Young professionals may become users and also volunteers as trainers and mentors or adolescents.

## **Goal: Create a safe space for teenagers to engage them in activities with their peers on a context of peer-based learning and exchange**

**Objective:** Foster a lifelong love for learning

**Objective:** Provide teenagers access to new media technology to develop ideas with the help of peers and mentors.

**Objective:** Transform the library from an institution that delivers to one that creates content by allowing teenagers explore creative venues to express themselves in their own terms with their own agenda.

## **Goal: Strengthen bonds between all community groups**

**Objective:** Anytown City Library will embrace cultural diversity.

**Objective:** Our librarians, as civility leaders, will help the community find solutions to pressing situations, like homelessness, by promoting forums and discussions.

**Objective:** Prepare personalized training plans for all staff members to help them get the tools needed for servicing a culturally diverse community

## **Goal: Increase library users' satisfaction by allowing patrons access to expanded digital services with user-friendly technology.**

**Objective:** Create a New Media lab for teenagers by using open source software to reduce costs.

**Objective:** Improve access to digital books collection through Anytown City Library website.

**Objective:** Strive to protect patrons' privacy in all library transactions

# Actions

## Increase awareness

Meet with other organizations and gather information about events in the Anytown community

Timeline: Monthly

Establish a bulletin board inside the library announcing community and library events and keep an online calendar of events in the website

Timeline: Monthly

Lay out and execute a social marketing plan

timeline : Monthly

Partner with schools librarians in the area to promote events and activities

Timeline: Quarterly

Write press releases for local newspapers and radio stations about special events at the library

Timeline: As needed

Organize a job fair by partnering with local businesses

Timeline: Annually

Collaborate with local commissioners to have an open forum inside the library to discuss patrons' needs

Timeline: Annually

Have a suggestion box to encourage patrons to give their ideas

Timeline: Ongoing

Hold a dinner night by inviting patrons and small restaurants for a journey of culinary diversity at the library

Timeline: Annually

# Actions

## Teenagers Space

Reach to patrons and business in the area to find mentors to help in the teenagers' area

Timeline: Ongoing

Work partnerships with technological companies to reach deals on equipment loans and training for new media activities. Use the partnerships to open the possibility of summer internships for teens.

Timeline: Ongoing

Contact other libraries with teens' programs in place to share their experiences with staff

Timeline: Annually

Establish a designated area for teenagers and purchase the furniture and equipment necessary for the new media lab

Timeline: to be ready in 8 months

Meet with teachers in the area to gather their ideas, topics of interest, and suggestions for the teen area that would work in parallel to the school curricula

Timeline: Biannually

Train staff on new media to help when necessary inside the teen area

Timeline: Ongoing

# Actions

## Strengthen bonds between all community groups

Train staff on cultural diversity  
Timeline: Ongoing

Invite social workers to have a night of discussion with patrons about social issues in the library and in the community  
Timeline: Annually

Hold a dinner night by inviting patrons and small restaurants for a journey of culinary diversity at the library  
Timeline: Annually

Invite digital artist to showcase their work  
Timeline: Quarterly

## Increase library users' satisfaction by allowing patrons access to expanded digital services with user-friendly technology

Discuss with providers how to make it easier for our current patrons to gain access to digital books collection through Anytown City Library website.  
Timeline: Ongoing

Hold meetings, workshops, and training days for staff to better help our patrons  
Timeline: Ongoing during the three years



## References

Dubicki, E. (2011). Strategic planning in college libraries. [Chicago] : College Library Information Packet Committee, College Libraries Section, Association of College and Research Libraries, 2011.

Itō, M. (2010). Hanging out, messing around, and geeking out : kids living and learning with new media. Cambridge, Mass. : MIT Press, 2010.

Nelson, S. S., & Nelson, S. S. (2008). Strategic planning for results. Chicago : American Library Association, 2008.

