

ELYRIA PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN 2023 - 2026



Over the last several years, Elyria Public Library has strategically focused on building and developing our physical spaces. EPL relocated and designed two branch locations: the South Branch Library in 2019 and Keystone Branch Library in 2020, renovated the interior space at our West River Branch Library in 2020, and opened the newly built Central Library downtown in 2021. It has been a time of great excitement and transition, and we have loved seeing community members enjoy and embrace the enhanced new spaces.

EPL is enthusiastic to enter a new phase as we seek to meet evolving and newly identified community needs and interests. This year we revamped our mission, vision and values statements to refresh our purpose and direction. EPL is here to **CONNECT**, to **ENGAGE** and to **INSPIRE** our community members to grow and achieve together, and to experience joy in learning and in cultural and creative exploration.

The strategic planning process started with a community survey that garnered hundreds of responses, followed by community, staff, and board focus groups. The planning team, which represented a wide range of staff and board members, worked closely together and consulted with expert external colleagues. This plan that grew out of our work provides the scaffolding for EPL to shape our actions to support and empower our community.



ELYRIA PUBLIC
LIBRARY SYSTEM

MISSION

To connect, engage, and inspire all with intellectual and creative opportunities.

VISION

An empowered community that embraces unlimited learning and knowledge, creative endeavors, and cultural exploration.

VALUES

Inclusion | Provide a welcoming environment that serves all people equitably.

Inspiration | Inspire personal growth and the ability to reach one's potential.

Intellectual Freedom | Champion the rights of our communities to access diverse points of view.

Integrity | Uphold the highest standards of fiscal responsibility and stewardship of public resources.

STRATEGIC INITIATIVES



Connect

Goal: Design opportunities for human connection by optimizing library spaces.

- Continuously conduct space needs analyses to maximize the effectiveness of library space usage to meet the needs of the community.
- Conduct a furniture review to ensure each branch has sufficient seating that accommodates all people.

Goal: Provide paths for the community to expand access to digital information and technologies.

- Advance community efforts to increase community-wide residential access to broadband connectivity.
- Promote community awareness and use of available library digital resources.
- Improve the availability of high-need technologies for community access.
- Create community partnerships with technology experts to expand and enrich training programs on how to use basic and advanced technologies.

Goal: Expand and deepen partnerships with community agencies.

- Enhance partnerships to improve community health and wellness.
- Pursue community agency partnerships to provide adult literacy assistance.
- Expand initiatives and programs with area schools.



Engage

Goal: Increase the library's presence by offering high-demand events and programs that engage existing and new attendees.

- Organize two or more large community events per year.
- Provide a regular series of informal pop-up and drop-in programs at each branch that do not require prescheduling by attendees.
- Provide multiple series of life skill programs that address the needs of different age groups.

Goal: Encourage young people to learn and grow in libraries that families love to visit.

- Create incentives for reading year-round.
- Improve imaginative play areas.
- Develop inclusive and adaptive programs for youth with special needs.

Goal: Reach new patrons by providing services beyond our walls.

- Implement initiatives that focus on career support, social and community services, digital literacy, and technology training.
- Seek opportunities to provide services at business and other community locations.
- Provide customized reading recommendations using digital tools.



Inspire

Goal: Develop and brand technology-based services for personal creative expression.

- Define essential technology-based services needed by the community and that the library is able to provide.
- Provide vibrant technologies, services, and programs, with drop in access to equipment and support.
- Engage in partnerships to expand arts and creative media education, spaces, and equipment.
- Provide instruction on media and tools for artistic and creative expression.

Goal: Advance diversity, equity, and inclusion by creating welcoming and inclusive environments.

- Improve the library's in-person reference model to make the services as approachable and effective as possible.
- Create friendly and exciting introductions to the library for people of all ages.
- Enrich services for community members experiencing physical disabilities, mental health concerns, or caregiver needs.

THANK YOU!

The process of completing a strategic plan was made possible due to the collaboration of many thoughts and ideas by the EPL Board of Trustees, EPL staff, and a Planning Committee along with you, our community.

To our community, thank you for your time and input on EPL and its future. The library's place in our community is to continue to grow and evolve to best serve you.

Elyria Public Library Board of Trustees

Debbie Kroupa | President
Rhonda Smith | Vice President
Dr. Chad Vickers | Secretary
Ray Armstrong, Jr. | Trustee
Sam Battle | Trustee
Jessica Schneider | Trustee
Dr. Patricia Schrull | Trustee

Elyria Public Library Leadership

Jennifer Starkey | Director
Kathy Runser | Deputy Director
Rob Schirhart | Chief Fiscal Officer
Jason Weimer | Human Resources Director
Frank Szuch | Facilities & Information Technology Director
Jennifer Harmon | Community Engagement Director
Ginette Laraway | Branch Manager, EPL West River
Rondra Davis | Executive Administrative Assistant

Planning Committee

Jennifer Starkey | Director, Elyria Public Library
Kathy Runser | Deputy Director, Elyria Public Library
Rob Schirhart | Chief Fiscal Officer, Elyria Public Library
Rondra Davis | Executive Administrative Assistant, Elyria Public Library
Debbie Kroupa | President, Elyria Public Library Board of Trustees
Sam Battle | Trustee, Elyria Public Library Board of Trustees
Tanya White | Patron Services Manager, Elyria Public Library - Central
Jennifer Sallay | Librarian, Elyria Public Library - Keystone

Consultants

Mandy R. Simon | Library Consultant, Library Programs and Development, State Library of Ohio
Arnold Hirshon | Vice Provost and Lindseth Family University, Librarian Emeritus, Case Western Reserve University



ELYRIA PUBLIC
LIBRARY SYSTEM