



Cedar Falls Public Library Tactical & Strategic Initiatives *Executive Summary* 2016-2018 (28 month plan)

Mission: *The mission of the Cedar Falls Public Library is to promote literacy and to provide open access to resources which facilitate lifelong learning.*

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Planning Context: This executive summary of the planning process and recommendations for the Cedar Falls Public Library (CFPL) are somewhat unique in that they are a product of the many, readily recognized and recommended tools utilized in such planning efforts, while at the same time producing recommended strategies for only 28 months, the remaining tenure of the library's current director. It is noted here that the director's successor should have the opportunity to reevaluate and prioritize these and other strategic initiatives at the time he/she assumes leadership at the time of the current director's retirement.

Background and Methodology: As stated in the previous long range planning document (2014-2016), the CFPL's role continues to be focused on providing intellectual, educational, and recreational opportunities across a variety of delivery platforms. The library continues to use a variety of measures to determine their services, collections, and programming. Comparable benchmark libraries for this particular study and report included those in Kent and Massillon, Ohio, Glenshaw, PA, and Vestavia Hills, AL. In addition, the CFPL routinely adheres to Library Services of Iowa accreditation standards, community input, and staff expertise as a means of determining goals, services, the collection, and programming.

It should be noted here, the library will continue to rely on its current funding-channels, as reviewed by their finance committee. Those fund-streams include city tax appropriations, funding from The Friends of the Library, the Cedar Falls Civic Foundation, the Kathryn Ray Fund, and the Robert and Shirley Berg Fund. The library has also received support from Black Hawk County to provide some services to rural county residents. State funds are received to support the Open Access program, Interlibrary Loan, 3rd Age, and Infrastructure.

In addition to the staff's review of current public library trends and information from comparable benchmark institutions, a wide variety of stakeholder groups were engaged from May through July as part of this planning process. The current CFPL staff was heavily involved in a review of the previous long range plan (both successfully completed and remaining works-in-progress), then members of the Board of Trustees, the Friends Board, the city, and select community members (regular CFPL users ranging in age from eight to 80) were invited to facilitated focus group sessions. This wide variety of stakeholders gathered in groups on May 31st, June 13th, June 14th, July 6th, and July 22nd.

Stakeholder input was solicited in areas that routinely drive tactical and strategic plan initiatives, including changes to markets or service areas, role and relevancy of public libraries, changing and/or emerging library patrons, and changing and/or emerging library programming, services, and technologies.

In addition to the raw data reports from each focus group session already in the director's possession, and the more detailed summary session notes involving the entire CFLP staff, what follows are ***general areas of consensus across all stakeholder groups as to which programs, initiatives, or strategies should be focused on over the next 28 months. They are represented below as "themes."*** Again, there are additional and more detailed programmatic elements in the planning wrap-up notes dated July 22, 2016. The items are not listed in rank-order, as they should be properly vetted by the director and boards relative to their full definition, support, and funding capacities. The following tactical and strategic initiatives should also be routinely reviewed internally, with more detailed goal-sets and progress reports shared quarterly across the appropriate board structures until the retirement of the current CFPL director.

Tactical and/or Strategic Themes for Consideration, 2016-2018:

1. In review of the prior long range plan, three general areas needing continued focus, improvements, and/or completion include:
 - The **Makerspace**
 - New/improved **staff training**
 - New/improved efforts in **community outreach**
2. The following areas have been identified and have consensus as newer initiatives that can be developed:
 - **Programming**, with emphasis on efforts **outside the current CFPL space** (community)
 - **Improvements to current space** with attention to **décor and ambiance**
 - **Focused programming and services for underserved populations (especially the community's minority groups)**
3. The following are CFPL patron groups, new and renewed, that should be the subject of specific programming and service focus:
 - **Teens/Tweens** (youth often characterized as 9-14 in age)
 - **New Adults** (categorized here as 18-30 year olds, aka Generations Y and Z)
 - **Ageing Populations**, particularly those who experience barriers in getting to the library or using services, often referred to as the Post-War, WWII, and Depression-Era Cohorts. Ages may range from 59-100
4. The following are programming areas that CFPL can reasonably grow or develop (new) over the next two years:
 - **Community Partner Programming**, programming in various places across the community (including the community center)
 - **Makerspace programming both in the CFPL and elsewhere** across the community
 - All inclusive, **multigenerational programming**