

# WARREN-NEWPORT PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

224 N. O'Plaine Rd., Gurnee, IL 60031 / (847) 244-5150 / [www.wnpl.info](http://www.wnpl.info)

# Strategic Plan

## 2016





# Strategic Plan 2016

The WNPL board of trustees formally adopted this strategic plan in March 2016. I want you to know how seriously we took the process and how much effort the board, staff, and, most importantly, all of you, our great community, put into it. It took nine months, a community survey, two community cafes, a user experience study, and interviews with leaders from schools, municipalities and community organizations. Most importantly, it took the willingness of the people we serve, our patrons, to participate in the process. And participate you did! 1,368 surveys were completed, over 50 people attended community cafes, and over 400 responses were collected from interactive displays within the library. Your investment in the process was tremendous, and I think the final result speaks to how much you care about WNPL.

Both the board and staff are excited to share the plan get started on it. Over the next three years, our challenge will be to accomplish action items to satisfy themes that emerged:

1. WNPL must continuously innovate in order to thrive and to deliver to the community what it wants and needs;
2. WNPL is committed to providing the highest level of service to our constantly evolving and diverse community;
3. We will take WNPL out to the community.

Our vision is to be locally recognized as a focal point of our communities, delivering innovative learning experiences, excellent programs, and the highest level of service. As we implement this plan, we hope to make great strides towards achieving our vision. Once again, thank you so much for the huge role you played in crafting this robust strategic plan for WNPL!

Ryan Livergood

Executive Director, Warren-Newport Public Library District

*Library Board of Trustees: Jo Beckwith, president; Tom Colwell, vice president; Nancy Sheldon, secretary; Andrea Farr Capizzi, treasurer; Robert Diehl Sr.; George Kotsinis; Sue Niemi*



# **WNPL Strategic Plan 2016–2018**

**Adopted March 15, 2016**

## **Who We Are**

WNPL consists of a dedicated group of library staff, trustees, and volunteers. Each of us has a unique role in providing programs and services at our physical location (224 N. O'Plaine Road, Gurnee), online, on the bookmobile, and through other outreach programs that bring library services to our diverse community.

## **Mission**

The Warren-Newport Public Library District provides the community with access to information, kindles the imagination of children and adults, and supports lifelong learning.

## **Core Services**

- Physical and digital collections
- Readers advisory
- Assistance with library resources and research
- Programs for children, teens, and adults
- Spaces for study, leisure, and meetings
- Computers and Internet access
- Outreach

## **Staff Values**

These are the values that guide us.

- **Service:** We are committed to the highest level of service. Everyone who walks through our doors, enters the bookmobile, or visits us online gets excellent service from us. We give more than is expected.
- **Excellence:** We strive for excellence every day in everything we do.
- **Growth:** We are committed to improving, innovating, and growing WNPL to better serve the evolving needs of our community.
- **Family:** We believe in treating each other like family, that is, in creating a comfortable and welcoming atmosphere where everyone feels they are a vital part of the team and supported in their work. We help each other, unite together to deal with adversity, and celebrate our combined successes as a group.
- **Fun:** We recognize that having fun is vital for the success of WNPL, as it helps us attract and retain the best talent, increases productivity, and enhances our level of service.

## **Vision**

Our vision is to be locally recognized as a focal point of our communities, delivering innovative learning experiences, excellent programs, and the highest level of service to our patrons.

## **Board Philosophy**

The WNPL Board of Trustees is committed to governance that provides a foundation for the success of WNPL's mission and strategic plan. In keeping with that commitment, the Board will consider the interests of WNPL residents and stakeholders, make fiscally responsible budgetary decisions, and set thoughtful policies that are supportive of the goals set forth here.

## **Strategic Themes**

1. WNPL must continuously innovate in order to thrive and to deliver to the community what it wants and needs.
2. WNPL is committed to providing the highest level of service to our constantly evolving and diverse community.

3. We will take WNPL out to the community.

## Action Plan

1) WNPL needs to continuously innovate in order to thrive and to deliver to the community what it wants and needs.

a. Fundraising/revenue

- i. Create a fundraising board with a nominating committee
  - Target completion date: 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, 2016
  - Assessment: Formation of fundraising board completed
- ii. Establish projects with amounts for fundraising priorities
  - Target completion date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2016
  - Assessment: Executive Director reviews with Development Officer and Management Team
- iii. Benchmark the current giving and set realistic giving goals for the next three years
  - Target completion date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2016
  - Assessment: Benchmark document completed by Development Officer; with Executive Director, Fundraising Board sets goals for the next three years
- iv. Revamp the memorial and tribute giving program and include the dedication of books in the collection
  - Target completion date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2016
  - Assessment: Procedures are established for these programs; brochure explaining these programs is available for the public
- v. Create a planned giving program
  - Target completion date: 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2016
  - Assessment: Planning giving program is created and brochure explaining program is available for the public
- vi. Research alternative revenue options
  - Target completion date: ongoing
  - Assessment: Executive Director examines and discusses viability of alternative revenue options quarterly with Management Team

b. Organizational development

- i. Data-driven planning: make better use of data to plan programs and services; redesign program evaluation form
  - Target completion date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter 2016; Ongoing
  - Assessment: Annual review during budget process; redesign of program evaluation form completed and approved by the Deputy Director and Executive Director
- ii. Outcome-based assessment: conduct a trial of Project Outcome in Youth Services Department followed by an evaluation of its effectiveness and its applicability to the entire library
  - Target Completion Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter, 2017
  - Assessment: Head of Youth Services presents project report to Management Team with recommendations
- iii. Succession planning and staff retention: cultivate leaders from within by identifying potential leaders and giving those individuals an opportunity to grow and to develop skills; examine reasons for staff turnover and develop a strategy for retaining staff
  - Target Completion Date: ongoing; 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, 2016
  - Assessment: completion of succession plan by Executive Director in collaboration with the Management Team; completion and analysis of staff engagement survey
- iv. Staff development : invest in staff by encouraging and providing opportunities for staff development (e.g., training, conferences)
  - Target Completion Date: ongoing
  - Assessment: managers collect feedback from staff regarding staff development opportunities during annual review process; annually analyze the budget to ensure staff development is supported at adequate levels
- v. Long-range staffing plan: analyze the library's existing and future staffing needs to determine whether staffing is balanced across departments and if any changes or additions are needed
  - Target Completion Date: ongoing
  - Assessment: Management Team conducts annual planning session during budget preparation process
- c. Volunteer development
  - i. Explore creating new volunteer opportunities or programs at WNPL
    - Target Completion Date: ongoing
    - Assessment: Executive Director will consult with Volunteer Coordinator and Management Team annually to discuss new

volunteer opportunities; the Volunteer Coordinator will work with library departments to implement new volunteer opportunities and coordinate with the Head of Communications to promote these opportunities to the public

- ii. Increase awareness of volunteer opportunities at WNPL
  - Target Completion Date: ongoing
  - Assessment: review number of applications quarterly

## 2) WNPL is committed to providing the highest level of service to our constantly evolving and diverse community.

- a. Engage potentially underrepresented and underserved groups to encourage all communities to feel welcome
  - i. Conduct focus groups with Latinos, African-Americans, and residents with limited or no English
    - Target Completion Date: 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, 2017
    - Assessment: review information collected at focus groups with Management Team and create recommendation in response to needs
  - ii. Use community partnerships to reach out to Latinos, African-Americans, and residents with limited or no English
    - Target Completion Date: ongoing
    - Assessment: document and evaluate outreach to and feedback from groups (e.g., schools, churches, sororities, Latino Coalition)
- b. Create new patron orientation experience
  - i. Conduct periodic walking tours for new residents
    - Target Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2016
    - Assessment: Begin offering walking tours at the start of the next fiscal year; explore use of volunteers in this role
  - ii. Explore production of a virtual tour of the library
    - Target Completion Date: 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2017
    - Assessment: Management Team will make recommendation regarding the production of a virtual tour of the library
  - iii. Update our new resident kit, which includes a list of services we offer, a floorplan of the library, and a current newsletter, and distribute one every new cardholder
    - Target Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2017

- Assessment: New resident kits will be available for distribution to every new cardholder
- c. Reimagine library space and create innovative learning experiences
  - i. Provide users with more access to charging stations for electronic devices, starting with a portable charger pilot project
    - Project Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2016
    - Assessment: Review the portable charger pilot project in early 2017 to assess its effectiveness; if the pilot project is a failure, install more electrical outlets (budget permitting)
  - ii. Computer lab re-imagination: for a multi-use room, investigate adaptation of computer lab into more flexible user space, including addition of technologies/training space
    - Project Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2018
    - Assessment: Implement change to the computer lab to optimize its use
  - iii. Explore the possibility of adding interactive displays, experiences, and spaces
    - Project Completion Date: ongoing
    - Assessment: Executive Director will consult with Management Team twice a year to discuss the feasibility of additional interactive displays and spaces
- d. Increase brand awareness
  - i. Complete an audit of signage across building and property to ensure that service area labeling is also user friendly (e.g., Despite the new mural, staff continues to be asked, “Where is the Youth Services department?”)
    - Project Completion Date: 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2017
    - Assessment: Conduct an internal study of our signage; use the study to develop user-friendly signage/labeling and test the new signage with the public; create visual cues using paint, carpet, signage, etc.
  - ii. Establish user-friendly terminology that can be clearly communicated (e.g., Is it the circulation desk or checkout desk?)
    - Project Completion Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2017



- Assessment: Conduct an internal study of the terminology commonly used by WNPL; use the study to develop user-friendly terminology and test the new terminology with the public
- iii. Develop branding guidelines and communicate to staff
  - Project Completion Date: 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter 2017
  - Assessment: create a style guide including graphics guidelines

### 3) We will take WNPL out to the community.

- a. Increase awareness and engagement where library users are
  - i. Add remote book drop in the densely populated western part of the district
    - Project Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2016
    - Assessment: Have a remote book drop established in the western part of the library district
  - ii. Analyze the cost and staffing needs of establishing a WNPL “Pop-up library”
    - Project Completion Date: 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2018
    - Assessment: Completed analysis of “Pop-up library” and recommendation for action
  - iii. Work with our community partners to explore the possibility of community wi-fi spots
    - Project Completion Date: 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2018
    - Assessment: Complete analysis of this project and a recommendation for action
- b. Engage non-users
  - i. Conduct non-user surveys at community locations (e.g., Jewel-Osco, FitNation, Hunt Club Community Center)
    - Project Completion Date: ongoing
    - Assessment: Engage non-users twice a year at locations throughout the community and implement their feedback to attract new users in a cost-effective manner
  - ii. Explore the possibility of adding new signage or other promotional opportunities throughout the library district
    - Project Completion Date: ongoing
    - Assessment: Executive Director will consult with Management Team twice a year to discuss the new signage and other promotional opportunities throughout the library district

- c. Enhance partnerships
  - i. Explore the feasibility of hosting intergovernmental roundtables to discuss community issues and foster intergovernmental sharing
    - Project Completion Date: 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, 2016
    - Assessment: Contact intergovernmental partners to gauge their interest in this project; if interest is adequate, annually host intergovernmental roundtable events
  - ii. Explore the feasibility of collaborating with schools to launch an experimental trial hotspot lending program
    - Project Completion Date: 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2017
    - Assessment: Complete analysis of this project and a recommendation for action
  - iii. Partner with local schools to ensure every student has a library card through efforts such as library card sign-up during school registration and library cards being included on school supply lists
    - Project Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2017
    - Assessment: Annually review percentage of students in each school district we serve to assess how well we are doing getting students registered with library cards; annually review the percentage of active student library card users
- d. Coordinate advocacy efforts
  - i. Conduct public awareness campaign to position WNPL in the minds of residents as the destination for transformation (align with themes such as Libraries Transform and #MTJB – more than just books)
    - Project Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2016
    - Assessment: During quarterly engagement of non-users, ask both self-identified library users and non-users if they had heard or were aware of our public awareness campaign
  - ii. Recruit, train, and deploy patron ambassadors to spread library messages (through word of mouth, social media, etc.)
    - Project Completion Date: 1<sup>st</sup> quarter, 2017
    - Assessment: The Head of Communications working in conjunction with the Volunteer Coordinator will have completed the recruiting, training, and deployment of the first class of patron ambassadors
  - iii. Collaborate with existing partners and local businesses to mount a major library card sign-up drive and increase users

- Project Completion Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter, 2017
- Assessment: Analyze the number of new users versus the number of current users when the campaign started

## How We Will Use This Plan

We will use this plan to help us focus our time, efforts, and resources to make meaningful, positive impacts on the communities and the people we serve. This plan will help us:

1. To inspire new creative solutions and inventive approaches;
2. To drive teamwork and collaboration;
3. To engage with partners; and
4. To build excitement, interest, and awareness in the communities we serve.



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