

Garner Public Library

Strategic Plan FY2016 - FY2020

416 State Street
Garner, IA 50438
641-923-2850
www.garnerlibrary.com

MISSION STATEMENT

The Garner Public Library promotes an enjoyable learning experience and provides collections of resources to enrich the lives of all members of our community.

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN WAS APPROVED BY

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES ON

January 8, 2016

Michael Meyering, Chairman

Amanda Fritz

Pat Ginapp

Kris Hanson

Carrie Omans

Tony Raw

Dave Stromer

Ellen Petty, Library Director

THE CITY OF GARNER

Garner is a proud county-seat community located in North Iowa, 12 miles west of Interstate 35 and the Avenue of the Saints, in Hancock County. Garner has a long and distinguished history as a progressive and successful community. The town of Garner was platted in the summer of 1870 in conjunction with the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway. Garner was named after Col. W. W. Garner, a civil engineer on the Rock Island Railroad, and was incorporated in 1881. Garner's most famous sons are the Duesenberg brothers who built the famous racing Duesenberg autos. The town's annual celebration is Duesey Days held the 2nd week in July. Garner grew from its original incorporated population of 321 to nearly 2000 people by 1960 and then to its current population of 3,129.

Garner is home to the Garner-Hayfield-Ventura Community School District, a highly regarded district of nearly 1,000 students with K-12 facilities in Garner and Ventura. The city of Garner provides and arranges for a full range of public services including police, fire, ambulance, streets, snow removal, storm water management, water, sewer, parks, recreation, and library. The City contracts for solid waste and recycling services. Electricity is provided by Alliant Energy and Prairie Energy, and natural gas by Alliant Energy. Telecommunication services are provided by Comm1, Century Link, Mediacom, and Winnebago Telecom. The City's aquatic center built in 2006 and Veterans Memorial Recreation Center built in 2008 provide year round recreation activities for Garner residents. In addition, the historic Avery Theater, which was rehabbed and reopened in 2012, and the City's public library, which will be remodeled and expanded in 2016, provide additional activities for Garner residents.

Garner's quaint downtown contains a number of unique specialty shops as well as the traditional downtown services - banks, attorneys, insurance, restaurants, investments, realtors, IT, dentists, chiropractors, beauty shops, optometrists, and traditional retail businesses - hardware, office supplies, apparel, and appliances. Garner has a growing highway commercial district with a 31-room hotel, fast food restaurants, full service grocery store, lumberyard, pharmacy, car dealers, auto parts stores, automated car wash, gas station/convenience stores, and veterinary, vehicle service and repair shops. Garner has two shovel ready industrial parks and is home to over 800 industrial jobs, with over 4,000 industrial jobs available within the county. Hancock County is home to great employers such as American Crane, Iowa Mold Tooling, IMT Transport, Stellar Industries, Winnebago Industries, 3M, and Zinpro Corporation.

Garner has developed into a prime "bedroom community" for the nearby communities of Mason City, Forest City, and Clear Lake with several new residential subdivisions. In 2016, twelve new homes were constructed in Garner, which compares very favorably with nearly all rural communities of its size in the state. Hancock County is also known for its prime agricultural land, and agriculture is still a driving force in the local economy.

THE GARNER PUBLIC LIBRARY

Like the city it is located in, the Garner Public Library has a long and distinguished history as a progressive and successful community library. The Ladies Library Association was organized in 1873 by 15 prominent women of Garner. Starting out with a fund of \$60.00, they accumulated 200 volumes. In 1882, they erected a building to contain the Library and for other purposes at the cost of \$500. On January 14, 1911, the Ladies Library Association closed their account and officially turned the library over to the city of Garner. In 1914, the library board began looking into building a bigger library and it was constructed in 1915 with funds from the Carnegie Corporation. As the town grew, so did the library, adding new materials and formats as they became available. In 1965 a separate children's room was built in the basement. By 1977 the library was running out of room and again the community voted to build a new facility this time including meeting room space.

The present building was finished in 1978. It is a single story, 6,166 square foot, brick and masonry block building. It houses a collection of 23,607 items including books, magazines, movies, audio books, puppets, and cake pans available for check-out. In-house services include free Internet access; local and national newspapers; copying, printing, scanning, and faxing capabilities; two meeting rooms; inter-library loan service; job, employment and career resources; test proctoring; and local history and genealogy collections. The current facility serves 3,653 registered patrons, 3,422 of which are Hancock County residents, 231 from surrounding communities.

NEEDS STATEMENT

The current building is almost 40 years old. The renovation expansion project slated to start this May will replace the aging electrical system, the leaking roof, and the failing HVAC system; install energy efficient lighting, a drive-up book drop, and multi-media and video conferencing equipment; remodel staff areas, bathrooms, and both meeting rooms; turn the community room kitchenette into a full kitchen; and open up the floor plan of the main library area. The 1,834 square foot addition onto the south and east sides of the building will increase the main library area and provide designated areas for children, young adults, adults, public access computers, outside reading area, and space for new library services and programming.

SERVICE

Outstanding customer service is a hallmark of the Garner Public Library, and our greatest strength. Our focus must continue to be on delivering services that meet community need and ensure continued community support. Growth and diversification of Library services depend upon the Library's ability to maintain its focus as a customer-driven organization

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

In recognizing that the Library's most valuable resource is a well-trained and knowledgeable staff, we must continue to provide training and professional development opportunities for all staff. Technology needs change quickly; the demand by patrons for help in using a wide variety of technology requires Library staff to continually upgrade their skills.

TECHNOLOGY

As the digital divide continues to grow, the Library faces increased pressure to serve as the community technology center. For many in our community, the Library's technology is the only technology available. We must continually evaluate, upgrade and add computer and other technology services to meet community needs.

COLLECTION

The Library's collection is popular and well used. Funded mainly by city and county monies, addition funds from a trust account allow for some flexibility in adding new and diverse collections as space allows. The upcoming renovation and expansion project should make this much easier. As the diversity of Garner is changing, it is imperative that the Library's collection reflect the cultural, ethnic, religious, economic, and gender diversity of the community.

BUILDING

A renovated and expanded building will allow us to provide a safer, more comfortable, inviting, and quieter place for staff to assist patrons and patrons to utilize our services. Currently if a program for children is held, or a group of teens is meeting, adult patrons wanting to use the library will leave, as it is too noisy and crowded. The expanded space will allow adults, young adults and children their own space to use our services, be it checking out a book, using a computer, meeting to talk, or just reading the paper, without being disturbed by the other groups.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The 21st Century library is often the heart of the community – a place where diverse groups come together to interact and find the resources they need to live their lives. The Library must look for opportunities to partner with community organizations, including the city, the school, other non-profit service organizations, service and charitable clubs, and business organizations promoting the local economy. Community involvement is a valuable part of sharing the Library's message and mission.

GOALS and OBJECTIVES FY2016 – FY2020

GOAL #1 Facilities: Library users will have a safe, well-maintained, welcoming facility.

OBJECTIVE: Complete the expansion and renovation project

Actions:

Building committee will oversee the project with the director as liaison between the city, the committees, the board, the project manager, and the architect.

Implementation: Library board, director, building committee

Partially ACHIEVED: Principal work was finished December 2016

OBJECTIVE: Routinely evaluate cleanliness of public and staff restrooms

Actions:

Janitorial staff will clean the bathrooms every day

Janitorial staff will report any issues to the director

Director will report any issues to the Board

Implementation: Janitors, Director

OBJECTIVE: Routinely evaluate all new furnishings

Actions:

Janitorial and library staff will report any issues to the director

Director will take steps to fix or replace items as needed – per warranties.

Implementation: Staff, Director

OBJECTIVE: Brick patio finished by Summer 2018
(revised January 7, 2020 to Summer 2020)

Actions:

Director and designated board members will place last order for inscribed bricks

Director will work with Country Landscapes to have bricks placed.

Implementation: Designated board member, Director

OBJECTIVE: New and refinished shelving in place by Summer 2018
(revised January 7, 2020 to Summer 2020)

Actions:

Director will work with Leland Woodworking to replace broken pieces and create additional shelving as per the project.

Implementation: Director

GOAL #2 Technology: Library users will have adequate, up-to-date technology to meet their informational needs

OBJECTIVE: By Fall 2016 develop and launch a new website

Actions:

Director will contact area web designers for bids.

Director and board will select a web designer

Director and staff will work with web designer to create a new website

Implementation: Director, Board, Staff

ACHIEVED: New website launched July 2016

OBJECTIVE: Digitization of newspapers by Summer 2020

Actions:

Director will contact Advantage Preservation for a bid

Director will seek out funding: grants, donations, etc.

Upon approval, Director will work with Advantage Preservation to create the database

Implementation: Director

ACHIEVED: Online newspaper database went live August 2019

OBJECTIVE: Assess annually opportunities for improved social media presence

Actions:

Assess current social media use

Monitor trends

Consider implementation of new social media

Implementation: Director, Staff, Library Board

GOAL #3 Collection: Library users will have materials with content and formats that meet their informational and recreational needs

OBJECTIVE: Annually evaluate the collection to keep up to date with wants and needs of library users and the community.

Actions:

Assess current collection

Assess current community needs

Weed as indicated

Implementation: Director, Staff

OBJECTIVE: Annually staff will evaluate new formats by which materials and information can be accessed

Actions:

Monitor trends

Purchase new formats as indicated

Implementation: Director, Staff, Library Board

OBJECTIVE: By Summer 2020, improve marketing of the GPL collection, particularly the online databases

Actions:

Create brochures outlining procedures for use

Create bookmarks highlighting different resources

Publish a quarterly newsletter

Implementation: Director, Staff

GOAL #4 Programs and Services: Library users will have programs and services that meet their needs at times that are convenient

OBJECTIVE: By Summer 2020, develop a monthly programming plan

Actions:

Determine needs of the community

Explore topic and presenter options

Schedule and advertise events

Continually evaluate events and speakers to hone the plan

Implementation: Staff, Director

OBJECTIVE: By Summer 2020, develop series of classes around technology needs of patrons

Actions:

Determine needs of the community

Determine whether staff or outside teachers/presenters are needed

Determine supplies needed and how they will be obtained (purchased or borrowed)

Schedule sessions and evaluate by numbers of attendees and attendee surveys for future sessions

Implementation: Director, Staff

OBJECTIVE: Staff will be offered development or training opportunities to enhance their skills and ability to serve the community

Actions:

Assess staff training needs/interests

Monitor training opportunities and make staff aware of them

Provide follow-up evaluation and opportunities to use new skills

Ensure staff with state certification are getting CE's to maintain certification

Offer staff without state certification the chance to become state certified

FUTURE OF THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

The Trustees and Staff of the Garner Public Library are dedicated to an ongoing planning, implementation and evaluation effort. A formal planning process, such as Planning for Results, will be used to create the next action plan, with work starting in FY2020 for FY2021 – FY2025.