

Long Range Plan



Parke County
Public Library

2020-2023

Introduction

The Parke County Public Library (PCPL) is in Rockville, IN. The PCPL was built in 1916 and is a Carnegie Library. There is only one library in our district, a single location and building. The library was added onto, doubling its size in 1999, but no major updates have been made since then. In 2018, the library, formerly Rockville Public Library, changed its name to Parke County Public Library to better represent the service area served.

The long range plan presented is a plan developed to begin to see our community for who they are and actually consider what the community wants. The Parke County Public Library has always been present but not always changing or growing in response to change and growth in the community it serves. This will help to evaluate what we currently offer and see how we can meet the community better.

Many people were involved in the development and oversight of this plan, including; educators, families, homeschool families, social and service organizations, business leaders, and other government agencies.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Parke County Public Library is to provide quality resources and innovative services to stimulate creativity, intellectual curiosity, and to facilitate lifelong learning and research within the communities we serve. By providing these resources, we strive to inform the community and transform lives, every day.

About our Community

The population served is currently a little over 15,500 people, having expanded to serving 12 of the 13 townships in Parke County in 2012. PCPL is a public library funded by the taxpayers of the townships of Parke County, in which the library serves. Aside from Adams Township, which is mostly the town of Rockville where the library resides, PCPL's remaining service district is largely rural with much of the county being farmland, wooded area, and single family dwellings.

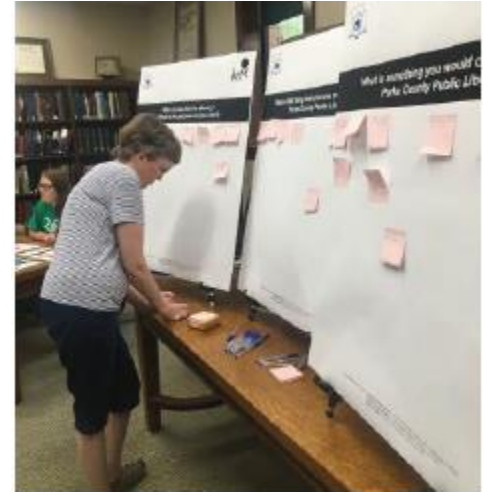
The population is comprised largely of white people, as of 2017 it was 98.8% white alone. Everyone in Parke County speaks English, therefore racial and lingual diversity is minimal. However, it does have a large population of Amish, ranking 6th in the State by percentage of total population. In 2010, Amish adherents in Parke County were 1,105, making up 6.4% of the total county's population.

The median Household income in Parke County is \$48,537 as of 2017 as compared to the State of Indiana at \$54,134. With a poverty rate of 14.3% and 635 households receiving SNAP benefits (Oct. 2019), our community does struggle somewhat financially. Parke County also has a large percentage of people who rent their residence versus those who own; 22.8% of homes are rented. The median age in Parke County is 44.2.

The community also has many homeschool families. Though not represented statistically, there are quite a few who use the library on a regular basis. We also have many supervised visits, mediations, teens using the facility for studying/homework, and so much more.

Needs of our Community

Community needs were gathered using various methods. The staff of the library as well as the library board were asked questions and gave feedback. In May of 2018, the library held an open house and asked questions of the community as they passed through our building. The library hosted 3 to 4 meetings inviting library patrons, community stakeholders, and government leaders to participate in interactive activities and discussions. We left these boards up within the library to continue to gather data. In addition, we did surveys throughout the community, sent mailers to homes, and had a link on our website to gather data from a variety of places.



Items that many people appreciated about the library was the internet service and public computers, book variety offered, that we serve the whole county, that materials can be obtained quickly though state offered services and Evergreen consortium. People were also appreciative of the increase in programming and kids activities, the growth of the Audio/visual collection, and that everyone is helpful.

Mentioned needs were growth in all programming, including things for adults and teens. They requested longer hours and Sunday hours. Many asked for wireless hot spots for checkout and the ability to accept credit and debit cards as payment. A bigger space for kids and moving the children's section downstairs. The community also said they would like to see the library continue to grow as a gathering space and could stand to have more storage and more meeting rooms. Larger spaces for bigger programs and a place to host community events. We heard they were interested in other updates too, like a water fountain, larger historic archives area, and brighter colors for the kid's space. It was also largely important to people for the library to remain a safe place and provide something for everyone.

Part of the reason for our name change was to better represent the service area of the library and to increase awareness that library cards are now attainable by anyone in Parke County. We heard over and over again that patrons didn't know they could have a library card now. The library also learned many people aren't aware of what we offer and that our website isn't very helpful.

Library Goals

Based on the feedback and input we gathered, these goals have been established for the Parke County Public Library:

Goal 1. The Parke County Public Library will increase programming for patrons of all ages to create an environment where people can grow with recreational and educational opportunities. The library will be a space for gathering and expression.

Goal 2. The Parke County Public Library will develop a marketing plan to create community awareness of what the library has to offer both in programs and services.

Goal 3. The Parke County Public Library will work toward an expansion project by means of fundraising and gathering library support in order to better serve the community and meet its needs.

Stated Goals and Service Responses

Goal 1. In a small community, it is hard to find activities to do as a family. Though Rockville has much to offer, the library should be a guaranteed place to find things to do for any age. As PCPL already partners with many organizations to offer opportunities and programs, more of these partnerships will be sought to grow programming and services for all ages of patrons. As these relationships grow, other opportunities may present themselves further growing the library.

Objective 1.1: By the end of 2020, the Parke County Public Library will offer a minimum of one program per month for the following age groups: elementary students, young adults and adults.

Activity 1.1.a: All library staff will come up with ideas for programs through reading, research, webinars and other offerings.

Activity 1.1.b: Library staff will work to make new relationships with service organizations to partner with and engage the community in new ways.

Activity 1.1.c: The staff will communicate and brainstorm ideas in bi-monthly staff meetings in order to collaborate. In addition, new programs will be explained and everyone will understand the event, the schedule, and more to answer questions and promote.

Objective 1.2: Overall attendance for programming will increase by 15% by the end of 2020 and by 12% each year for 2021-2023.

Activity 1.2.a: With use of our comprehensive marketing plan in goal 2, we will advertise better for programs and services. These will reach people we may not have been reaching before.

Activity 1.2.b: Program outreach will take at least 6 programs out of the building a year to increase knowledge and meet people where they are if they have no transportation or way to travel.

Activity 1.2.c: Offer certain programs regularly to encourage awareness and attendance such as book clubs, gaming clubs, etc.

Goal 2. The Parke County Public Library will develop a marketing plan to create community awareness of what the library has to offer both in programs and services. With the many years of only Adams Township having library service, it's been difficult to inform the community that they now have service. Changing the library's name has improved created more awareness but a marketing plan would create a greater impact.

Objective 2.1: A strategic marketing plan will be set in place to help grow awareness of library offerings, services, hours, and programs.

Activity 2.1.a: Staff will discuss skill sets they have that benefit a marketing campaign and begin to collaborate on ideas.

Activity 2.1.b: Staff willing to help will work to seek out other organizations or partners who may have additional skill sets that could be of assistance marketing.

Activity 2.1.c: Staff will attend webinars, networking and other events to learn and develop marketing skills.

Objective 2.2: Program attendance and reservations will supply data for discovering most effective marketing strategies.

Activity 2.2.a: Implement reservation software for online program registration.

Activity 2.2.b: Staff will be diligent about asking patrons attending a program how they heard about the program and track the information.

Activity 2.2.c: Use more data tracking software within Facebook and other marketing software.

Objective 2.3: Be more present in the community and represent the library outside the building.

Activity 2.3.a: Attend all school fairs, open house functions, and other events where the library can be seen and recognized.

Goal 3. The Parke County Public Library will work toward an expansion project by means of fundraising and gathering library support in order to better serve the community and meet its needs. The discussion of another library expansion project was started prior to Parke County Public Library's newest director. It is clear through community feedback that we aren't meeting all of their needs and as a Library, we are running out of storage.

Objective 3.1: Gathering additional support for a library expansion and/or renovation project.

Activity 3.1.a: Bring more people into the building and through programs or other events. Patrons that find our services beneficial will realize how limited the space is.

Activity 3.1.b: Through staff and board advocating within the community, patrons will realize how an expansion would benefit the community.

Activity 3.1.c: Continue to speak with and survey the community to build excitement and interest in the possibility.

Objective 3.2: Begin to fundraise.

Activity 3.2.a: Have staff and board look for opportunities for grants and additional funding sources.

Activity 3.2.b: Have library Staff and board come up with fundraising ideas or names of families that are philanthropic in our community who would like to help.

Activity 3.2.c: Partner with the Community Foundation to collect the funds and do additional marketing work to support raising library funds. Work with grant writers to complete applications discovered in activity 3.2.a.

Annual Evaluation Process

The plan describes the direction of the Parke County Public Library for the years 2020-2023. Library staff, administration, and board of trustees will formally review this plan annually, in December of each year. As goals are met or activities are completed, the board will evaluate if changes to the long range plan need to be made.

Financial Resources and Sustainability

In order to maintain financial stability, the library will meet these guidelines:

- Parke County Public Library's operating fund budget will be based on available sources of public funding. It will not exceed the assessed valuation growth quotient for that budget year.
- The budget may be augmented by grants and by other available funds in our Gift Fund and Rainy Day funds.
- For major repairs, funds in our L.I.R.F. as authorized by the County Council will help cover expenses without accessing our Operating Fund.
- We will continue to accept donations and small grants for extra support of special programs such as summer reading in order to provide amazing opportunities for learning and fun.
- PCPL will continue to collaborate with other libraries and organizations for programing and staff training opportunities. These partnerships reduce costs.

Assessment of Facilities, Operations, Services, and Technology

Facilities: The Parke County Public Library is one building. The original building is a Carnegie facility with the addition on the back being completed in 1999. Though the building has been well maintained, we are looking into some issues that need addressed and what facilities projects may be coming forward in the next 3 years. These are:

- Water infiltration and mitigation needs in the board room of the original library building.
- Repairs to guttering system and tile drains from guttering.
- A much needed expansion project to increase size, storage, and meeting/community space, though fundraising may take longer than the projected 3 years of this plan.
 - With a building project, we hope to add a water fountain and more public restrooms.

Operations: The library has a long- term service staff who are very comfortable with the interworking of the library. This is a positive thong, however staff will be trained continuously to be brought up to date with modern library offerings and trends. Recent technology additions have proven a challenge but the staff is quick to adapt and the staff work together and rely on one another to best meet patron needs and requests.

With updated security cameras, recently added first aid center, new AED machine, and staff CPR training, the library is more confident in its safety and security and comfortable in handling emergency situations. Drugs are prevalent in our area and though not seen in the library, staff are prepared to handle emergency situations. Keeping the library and its staff safe is very important to PCPL. Training will be a continued practice.

Services: The Parke County Public Library offers a variety of services to the community. The databases available make it easy to find many resources in the class room, on a mobile device, or in the library. Special training with teachers and whole classrooms have educated teachers on resources for them, as well as great resources for their students; research, test prep, and more.

With the use of the Evergreen Consortium as our ILS, which is also shared by other libraries within our area, as well as SRCS and SHARE, more resources are available to our patrons through InfoExpress deliveries two days each week. The use of the Evergreen system has also opened a lot of opportunities for teachers to obtain multiple copies of materials for a whole classroom to read meeting additional needs and supporting our school media staff.

PCPL prides itself on its local history and genealogy collections. There are a lot of resources within the building but much is being digitized and made available to those outside the library walls. In addition to local materials and history, we have databases for worldwide newspapers, military records, genealogy resources and more.

Technology: In PCPL’s community, connectivity is hard to come by. Internet is not accessible to everyone in their homes, in fact many don’t have it. PCPL strives to maintain high speed internet and high function computers to meet patron needs. Of course, technology is a bit deeper than that. PCPL has had to work hard to keep servers functioning to support our ILS, firewalls working to provide safe searches and virus protection as well as other software to protect our computers.

Computers are up and coming on the replacement schedule. We offer 9 public access computers and hope to grow that number with more space. We have 6 gaming laptops for teens and adults which offer opportunities for them to work together and collaborate, these laptops can double as public access computers but without printing capacity. We also have 6 iPads in the children and teen area for gaming, audiobooks, learning games, and more. A few of them are equipped with Augmented Reality capability which we have used for programs. All of them can be dismantled and used for a variety of programs which proves very versatile.

PCPL offers color printing upstairs and black and white printing downstairs. Printing from devices is possible with cloud based printing, to our upstairs printer. PCPL offers scanning and faxing as well.

Digitizing our local history collection has become more urgent in recent months. We've improved our equipment to make digitizing possible and our server space to help save another form of the information, whether that be photographs or other documents. The director will remain current on emerging technologies through networking, ListServes, and continuing education events and bring what is learned to staff and library board. As it fits our community's needs, PCPL will add and adapt to best serve as technology grows and changes.

Equipment Replacement Schedule

Below will be the schedule for future technology upgrades and improvements.

In 2018, the library added new switches and a new firewall. 2019 brought a lot of technology upgrades; replacement of the main server, installing new security cameras (including exterior cameras), and a new UPS back up battery. A new computer was also purchased for digitizing genealogy records.

2020: Replace 16 public access computers due to Microsoft no longer supporting the version of Windows.

2 new access points for wireless internet access will provide heightened security

2021: 7 public access computers

4 new staff computers

2022: Replace/Renew Firewall

2023: Rewiring of facility and wall mounted technology stack in server room/

2 new staff computers

Professional Development Strategy

Currently, the Parke County Public Library is staffed as follows:

- Director (working on LC2 Certification)
- Cataloging Librarian (LC5)
- IT Staff Member (will begin working toward LC5 for Children's Librarian position)
- Circulation Service Staff (full-time and part-time)

The Parke County Public Library staff works hard to remain up-to-date and relevant with the growing and changing technology and information. The library values and supports the staff's efforts to continue education and obtain library education credits. The library will offer in-house training, time for webinars, opportunity for conference and meeting trainings, and more.

The PCPL does and will continue to cover the financial cost of most professional development opportunities so that staff are able to take advantage and grow. Participation in these opportunities are encouraged and are considered part of the staff work week. Mileage to and from these functions will also be paid by PCPL.

Community Partnerships and Collaboration

As of the Spring of 2018, the Parke County Public Library joined the Evergreen Indiana Consortium. This has been a great improvement for our patrons both in accessibility and convenience to resources at neighboring Evergreen Libraries due to our rural community, but also because we can share resources with and from all 120+ libraries within the consortium. PCPL is also a member of SRCS and Indiana SHARE programs, opening up even more material resources for our patrons and patrons around the state. PCPL is also a member of OverDrive to offer digital eBooks and audiobooks with other library partners in our OverDrive Consortium.

The Parke County Public Library often partners with Purdue Extension Parke County for programs to educate on health and human services as well as educational and fun programs with the 4H division. PCPL partners with Wabash Valley United Way to offer a mobile food market for those with less access to a grocery. Versiti Blood Centers work with the library to host blood, drives 4 – 6 times a year. Though the strongest relationship for programming is Purdue Extension Parke County, PCPL is always looking for organizations to partner with and in this way, are constantly building trust and growing in our community.

Communication Plan

The Parke County Public Library will provide a written copy of this plan to the stakeholders and organizations which helped us in the process of making this plan. These will be the Parke County Council, the Parke County Commissioners, the Parke County Community Foundation, Partnership Parke County, and the Town of Rockville. A copy will be made available in the library as well as on our website. Staff and board will also have a copy.