

Indian Trails Public Library District

Strategic Plan

2018-2020



Introduction

After the completion of a successful renovation project in spring 2017, the Indian Trails Public Library District (ITPLD) initiated a strategic planning process. The library saw the opportunity to capture the current momentum and excitement of the opening in a plan with focus and direction.

This plan represents the overall strategy for ITPLD over the next three years and is presented to the board of Trustees for questions, discussion, and revisions in January 2018. Upon approval in February 2018, ITPLD administration and staff will finalize an Activity Plan that will support the overall strategy. Library administration will regularly review progress toward plan goals and report to the board via a dashboard.

Background

While we face challenges similar to public libraries around the country, we are fortunate that our building renovation is complete and we can turn our focus to the future. This planning process allowed us to assess our progress in the new facility and examine possible directions brought forward by members, staff, and board. We spent significant time gathering and reviewing data so we could learn more about our community and how to best respond to their concerns while staying within our budget and scope of influence. We entered the strategic planning process with open minds, while adhering to the public library values of access, inclusion, and freedom of information.

Amanda E. Standerfer, a strategic planning consultant and librarian, helped guide us through the planning process. ITPLD's Planning Team included Louise Barnett, Board President; Brian Shepard, Executive Director; Ryann Uden, Deputy Director; Susan Dennison, Communications Manager; and Matt Teske, Material Services Manager. The Planning Team met regularly starting in August 2017 to design, manage, and execute the planning process.

Planning Process & Data

In order to create a data-informed, actionable plan, we talked to wide array of stakeholders using various tools. Initial board and staff input guided development of a community survey that was executed in October 2017. As patterns emerged in the data, we narrowed our focus areas to Culture, Connector, and Curiosity, and tested how these areas resonated with members and the board through a series of focus groups and individual interviews.

After the board developed a vision and draft goals for the three focus areas, staff contributed to potential activities and plan execution during their annual Staff Institute Day held on November 17, 2017. The board finalized the mission statement in December and the Planning Team got to work putting together final plan documents, including graphical versions for community communications and the action plan.

Data Highlights

Demographics of Community Survey Respondents	
Total respondents	933
Respondents with ITPLD Card	893
Female	511
Male	176

Top 5 Reasons for using the library:

- To borrow books and other materials (68%)
- To use the library website or remote services (e-books, literacy services, catalog, etc.) (27%)
- To use the children’s area (25%)
- To use meeting rooms or study rooms (21%)
- To use computers or Wi-Fi (16%)

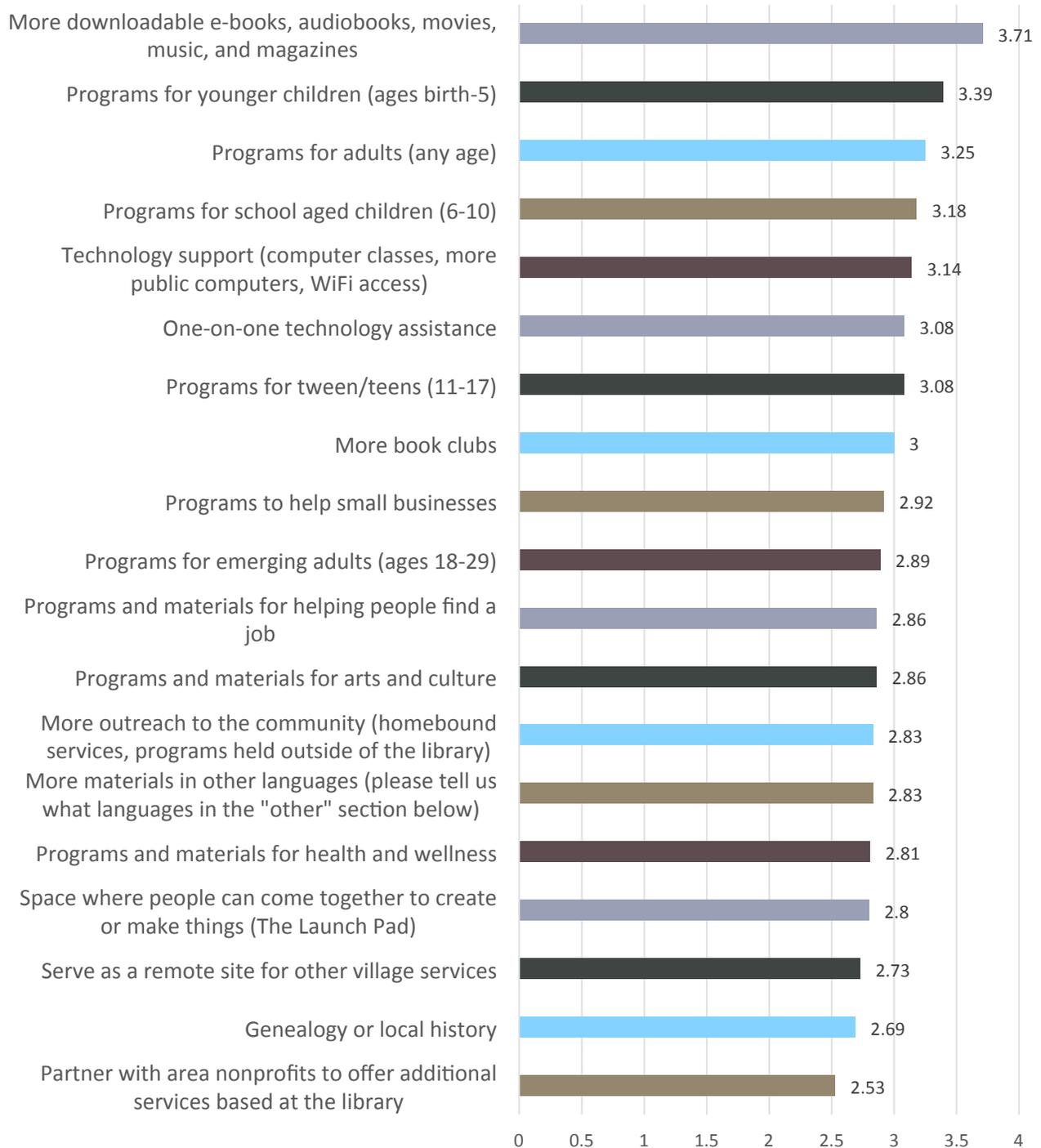
*community survey responses

Value of library services and programs to respondent and their family:	Value of library services and programs to the community:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bestsellers and popular books on a variety of subjects in print, audio, and e-book formats 2. Large room that can be used for business and organization meetings 3. DVDs and Blu-rays of the latest movies and old favorites 4. Knowledgeable library staff 5. Launch Pad makerspace 6. Foreign language material 7. Weekly after-school hangout for middle school students 8. Weekly storytimes for preschoolers 9. Popular and educational material for youth pre-school through high school 10. Small study rooms for private or small group use 11. Resume writing and interviewing skills classes for job seekers 12. Internet computers with access to Microsoft Office, Wi-Fi, and hotspots 13. Variety of hands on learning options in Youth Services area 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledgeable library staff 2. Popular books and education materials for youth preschool through high school 3. Bestsellers and popular books on a variety of subjects in print, audio, and e-book formats 4. Internet computers with access to Microsoft Office, free Wi-Fi, and hotspots 5. Weekly storytimes for preschoolers 6. Variety of hands-on learning options in Youth Services area 7. Resume writing and interviewing skills classes for job seekers 8. Weekly after-school hangout for middle grade students 9. Small study rooms for private or small group use 10. DVDs and Blu-rays of the latest movies and old favorites. 11. Foreign language materials 12. Launch Pad makerspace 13. Large rooms that can be used for business and organization meetings

*community survey responses

90% of community survey respondents are satisfied with the library overall

Where should the library focus its resources over the next several years in order to increase its value to you and the community?



*Respondents ranked focus areas from 1-5 with 5 being the most important focus area for the library. The ranking above is based on the weighted average of the responses.

What comes to mind when you think about how the library promotes culture in the community?

Diversity in our foreign language collection.	We need more arts and literature in the community.
Respecting other cultures.	Exploring the ESL Lab.
One Book, One Community	Library provides materials to educate people.
Theme nights to learn about different cultures.	Build culture of respect and unity.
Culture of learning, information, knowledge.	Programs to bring different age groups together. <small>*focus group and SID responses</small>

What comes to mind when you think about how the library makes connections in the community?

Friendly interactions at every level.	Making the library a place to meet people.
Bring together other government groups and nonprofits.	Offer experiences of worth.
Outreach to the schools and the community.	Partnering with schools and park districts.
Attending community events.	Library helps pick out books for teachers, need new teacher outreach.
Have a "Did you know" section of the newsletter/brochure.	Clubs so people can connect. <small>*focus group and SID responses</small>

What comes to mind when you think about how the library responds to curiosity in the community?

Helpful staff.	Provide resources and the space to use them.
Learning new things in the Launch Pad!	Programs to teach people new things.
The variety of digital and other resources offered.	Offer new programs, staff learns new things to satisfy the curiosity.
Members wanting to learn new skills.	Buddy/mentor program for older and younger kids.
Need patron suggestion forms.	Displays coming into the library featuring different topics that might inspire curiosity. <small>*focus group and SID responses</small>

In 5 years, the three words I want people to use to describe the library are...



*Staff Institute Day responses

Vision

Embracing Culture. Connecting Community. Igniting Curiosity.

Our vision is what we hope to see in the community if we successfully carry out our mission. Our three focus areas are front and center in our vision, which increases adoption and recognition internally and externally.

Mission

We enhance the community and create opportunities through services, programs, and materials.

We updated our mission so it is clear and concise. This mission simply states our intended audience and how they are impacted by what we offer. Our mission is the core of what we do and is our promise to the community.

Values and Culture

Our values remain the same as they reflect how we work together and serve our members. The plan is rooted in these values and our board and staff share and embody them as they carry out their work at the library.

- **Service**—We provide helpful, reliable, and consistent service in a positive and welcoming environment.
- **Respect**—Every person we serve receives equal access to information and materials provided professionally and promptly.
- **Trust**—All library staff members serve with honesty, transparency, and accountability for their actions.
- **Compassion**—We strive to understand the needs of those we serve, to appreciate their challenges, and to respond with kindness.
- **Innovation**—We investigate, explore, and experiment to provide the best and timeliest services that our members need and request.
- **Curiosity**—We encourage our staff and those we serve to learn and to grow as individuals and as citizens.

In 2017, the library initiated a process to develop and codify our staff culture. We wanted to create a shared understanding of how we will work together as a team and provide a common language for connection. We had 100% staff participation in the dialogue that resulted in our Culture Code. This framework serves as a companion to the Strategic Plan.

Culture Code: The ITPLD Way



How We Work

- We are collaborative, enthusiastic and curious.
- We assume positive intent and find ways to say “yes” to the seemingly impossible.
- We tackle our fast-paced environment with focus, humor, and positive solutions.
- We strive to communicate with transparency.

Who We Are

- We’re a diverse bunch who recognize our differences as strengths.
- We’re an engaged and driven group that values kindness and flexibility.
- We recognize one another for a job well done and always have time for a smile.
- We strive to treat everyone with empathy and respect.

Staff Perks

- We converse well with each other.
- We value good humor and fun.
- Our workplace is an open, friendly space where we feel valued and appreciated.
- We’re human - we laugh, throw parties, sing (loudly) with the Tone Defs, sport our sweet branded clothing, and love a good potluck.

Focus Areas

This plan is divided into three areas of focus: Culture, Connector, and Curiosity. These areas were validated by our focus groups/interviews, a board review, and our staff during Staff Institute Day (SID). SID attendees gave input into potential activities for each focus area, which became key input for the Planning Team as we brought together the plan components, planned for implementation, and developed measures of success. This graphic is a snapshot of what we want our members to see in us if we are successful.



Outcomes

What's right: We hit a home run with our building renovation and the adjacent reading garden and park. Our members are inspired by our new space and services. Our Youth Services area is welcoming and creates a third place for young people in our community. Our meeting rooms and study rooms, along with other spaces designed for group gathering and private study, provide us with the foundation to encourage more connection and learning. In short, the building has positioned us as the place to be in our community.

What else is needed: Our members say we need more of everything. However, doing more of everything comes with a price, not only to our budget, but the potential burden to our human resources. We know that it's time to step back and think about how the new building has changed how we work and where we need to work smarter, not harder.

Our knowledgeable, dedicated staff is our strength and we need to continue to foster our culture of growth and caring for each other. While staff loves the renovated space as much as our members, they have taken on significant challenges. This plan will provide a framework for us to consider adjustments needed to increase staff engagement.

What needs to be better: Our members have a lot to say about the library and we need to design better ways to systematically gather this feedback, especially the stories, and then use this feedback to make course corrections when needed. Each of us has a story of a member that we've helped or has experienced a significant life change because of the library. We need to collect and spread these stories, so we can show our impact and success.

Measuring satisfaction and progress is key to learning and growth, but we need to integrate data and feedback into other processes. We're good at statistics and reviewing reports (quantitative analysis), but we need to incorporate qualitative data (stories) and then *use* this data in meaningful ways to inform our work. And we need to be creative about how we gather the qualitative data.

Goals, Activities, Measures

The following page is a one-page summary of the strategic plan. It includes the focus area statements and details the goals in each area. Following the one-page summary presents additional detail for each focus area, including potential activities for each goal and possible metrics. The complete Activity Plan is being drafted by the Planning Team with staff assistance and will serve as an implementation guide during the life of this plan. Progress toward meeting plan goals will be regularly reported at future board and staff meetings.

Culture

We embrace all aspects of our community’s culture. *We are vibrant.*

Within our geographic service area, the spectrum of diversity is wide and deep. During the planning process, cultural diversity rose to the top as an area the library could cultivate and celebrate.

Cultural diversity means different things to different people, so our goals in this focus area reflect that range of understanding. We hope to deepen our connection to the community by providing services and resources that welcome and respect the needs of our diverse population.

Over the course of this plan, activities in this focus area will support intercultural understanding between members.

Goal	Possible Activities
1) <i>We are responsive to our community’s rich, multifaceted diversity through our high-quality programs, events, and displays.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual multicultural fair • Tie programs to cultural events/holidays • Foreign films series • Spanish language book club
2) <i>We create a welcoming atmosphere that results in high satisfaction.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop customer service core competencies • Establish Community Advisory Board • Update list of bi-lingual staff
3) <i>We strive to build collections in all formats that reflect our community and satisfy their information, education, and entertainment needs.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess collection holdings and usage in relation to languages represented • Develop a plan for ongoing foreign language collection development • Review flow/navigation on website for ease of access for electronic collections
<i>Internal Goal: We work to embed our Culture Code at all levels of the library.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop Culture Committee to work on Culture Code integration plan • Review and update values • Increase recruitment diversity

Measures of Success

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member stories and feedback • Program attendance • Member satisfaction • Meeting room use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection diversity reports • Foreign language resources usage • Employee satisfaction survey • Employee census
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Connector

We connect our community by being a neutral, safe space for all. We unite people.

Since our geography spans three distinct communities, our challenge is bringing people together and uniting them in meaningful ways. We see this happening on different levels – with institutions and organizations, outside of the library, and by bringing people together at the library.

Our goals in this area will help us formalize our outreach and role as a connector in the community. Our activities will help us create successful and beneficial partnerships. We’ll also create new partnerships, especially with our business community.

Most importantly, the feedback we received about the library being a safe space for all is something we are proud of and take seriously. This role will help us advance connections with our members and library services and between members as they engage at the library.

Goal	Possible Activities
1) <i>We collaborate and partner with a wide variety of community schools, organizations, groups, and governmental entities to further weave the library’s presence in the community.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create outreach plan • Embed a librarian at key community events • Develop written partnership development plans with key partners
2) <i>We strengthen our business community by providing resources for entrepreneurs, small businesses, home office workers, and job seekers.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold programs about starting a business • Develop networking opportunities for home office workers • Hold job/internship fair, include high school juniors and seniors
3) <i>We are a trusted, safe space for diverse groups to meet and we facilitate their coming together for information, networking, sharing, and dialogue.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a discussion group series • Consider youth volunteer opportunities (especially HS students) • Position the library as host for community philanthropy (coat drive, food drive, etc.)
<i>Internal Goal: We maximize staff collaboration.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster communication between departments by sharing meeting notes • Cross training plan

Measures of Success

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member stories and feedback • Contacts with partner groups • Community groups using library meeting space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program attendance • Program pre- and post-assessments/feedback • Employee satisfaction survey
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Curiosity

We ignite curiosity by providing unique programs, services, and collections. We encourage growth.

During the planning process, brainstorming ways to ignite curiosity generated the most enthusiasm and range of possibilities from staff. The goals of this theme are member-focused and allow us to develop actionable steps to enhance our relationships with members.

In addition, igniting curiosity means we'll be responsive to our members and the world around us. We'll develop ways to get more real-time feedback and implement processes that will help us respond through our collections, displays, and programs.

Goal	Possible Activities
1) <i>We provide collections with the breadth and depth to satisfy our members.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update collection development policy/plan • Conduct regular collection analysis for discussion with selectors
2) <i>We anticipate member expectations and create exceptional experiences at the point of service.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create customer service philosophies and service guidelines • Develop customer service core competencies • Create point-of-service feedback opportunities in multiple languages
3) <i>We expand the community's collective experience by offering unique services and tackling bold topics.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilize "did you know" information bites as a way to expand knowledge about the library • Expand Launch Pad hours and training opportunities • Create a youth writing/essay competition related to One Book theme
<i>Internal Goal: We strive to be a learning organization that takes risks and embraces failure, engages in feedback, celebrates success, and regularly measures progress.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide staff with individual learning plans • Include learning component in every board and staff meeting • Create annual manager/supervisor learning curriculum

Measures of Success

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member stories and feedback • Launch Pad usage • E-resources statistics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website hits • Point-of-service feedback • Patron-driven initiatives
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