



## LONG RANGE PLAN 2022 – 2027

ADOPTED BY THE BREMEN PUBLIC LIBRARY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES, DECEMBER 27, 2021

### INTRODUCTION

BPL's Long Range Plan (LRP) for 2022-2027 was created with the input of staff, board members, and residents. The core of this plan is multifaceted: 1) identify current needs, 2) anticipate future demands, 3) establish service priorities, 4) create strategies for reaching objectives. The library fills an invaluable role in society by serving as a welcoming space where everyone can access knowledge and that fosters learning. Our purpose is to connect members of this diverse community to resources, culture, and each other.

One has to look back more than a few years to remember the environment of hushed tones and shushing. Today's library, in contrast, carries with it an energetic vibe of action. To that end, the Bremen Public Library is in the midst of its first large-scale renovation since 1992. The Marshall County Council approved plans for the library to acquire a bond in the spring of 2021 for a project that took several years of forethought. The project consists of selective demolition and interior renovation of the existing two-story building, a two-story addition, as well as site and parking improvements. Groundbreaking took place in August with expected completion in June of 2022.

The vision has been to create a destination place. To draw people from all walks of life, near and far, to a special place that I firmly believe is the cornerstone of communities. Libraries, by origination, are one of the most vital institutions in our society. A place to visit where, free of charge, you can completely reinvent yourself. Choose your own adventure by identifying with the role of a character in a book, improve your skill set by attending programs, or prepare for a new job through classes. At your fingertips, limitless windows of opportunity are ready to be opened.

The culmination is a blend of the "old" library and the new. The concept is simple: balance additional quiet spaces, those critical areas of solitude, with social areas that match the vibrancy of the world we live in today. This LRP puts into writing the guide that administration will use to evaluate services that are largely tied into this project. Libraries are changing. Libraries are life changing. At Bremen Public Library, let us be your guide into the future.

Christopher Scandling – Library Director

## MISSION STATEMENT

*"Discover a world reimagined."*

## ABOUT THE LIBRARY

The Bremen Public Library is located in Bremen, Indiana, and serves the patrons of German Township in Marshall County, Indiana. As of 2018, the population of German Township was 8,873 (US Census Bureau). The library has more than 4,800 registered library cardholders and circulates in excess of 82,000 materials a year. The library's collection comprises beyond 52,000 physical materials and a collection of over 50,000 digitally accessible books through the library's e-book consortium (Indiana Digital Download Center).

The aforementioned building renovation affects approximately 13,000 square feet of the existing 14,700 total square feet. The expansion is roughly 3,600 square feet total. In addition to the replacement of flooring, ceilings, and cabinetry throughout, various improvements include (but are not limited to):

- Dedicated area for young adults
- Children's department programming room
- Children's department arts & crafts room
- Expanded media lab / makerspace
- Multiple study rooms
- ADA accessible restrooms
- Large and small meeting rooms
- Staff offices and work areas
- IT and security upgrades
- HVAC replacement
- Increased storage
- Fireplace and interior aesthetics (furniture, painting, signage)
- Parking lot redesign
- Outdoor seating, sidewalk, and landscaping refurbishment

## THE PLANNING PROCESS

Materials used to guide Indiana libraries through the planning process can be found online through the Indiana State Library at:

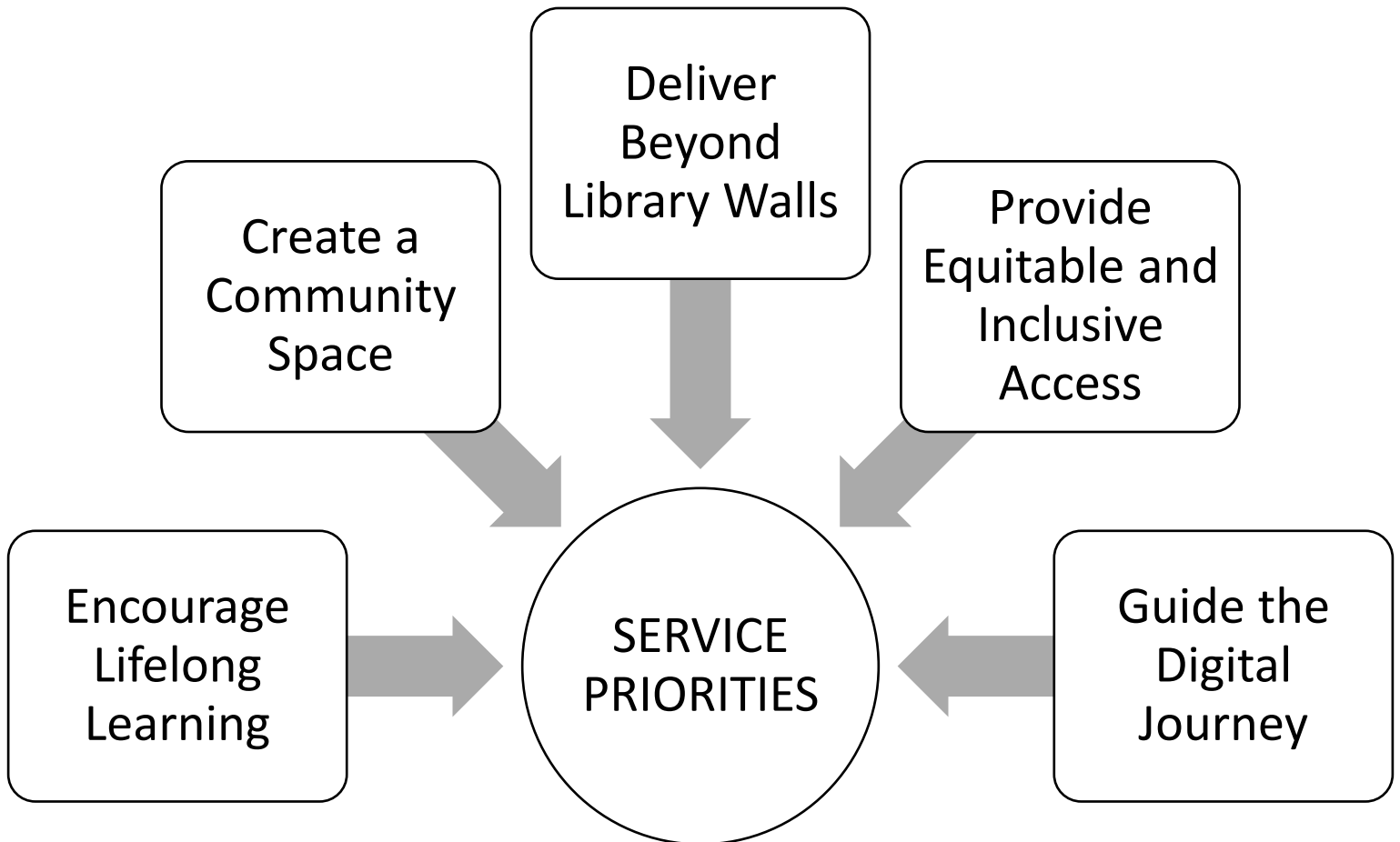
[www.in.gov/library/services-for-libraries/ldoresources/templates/](http://www.in.gov/library/services-for-libraries/ldoresources/templates/)

In order to ensure compliance with Indiana State Library Standards, library personnel adhered to the prescribed method of planning by taking the following steps:

1. The Bremen Public Library convened a LRP committee comprised of library staff and trustees in order to help define service priorities.
2. The LRP committee met, developed a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats (SWOT) analysis of library services, discussed library and community needs, and developed a course of action for improvement.
3. The library conducted three Town Hall Forums (July 2018, April 2019, November 2020) and distributed three surveys (April 2017, January 2018, February 2020) designed to generate input from the community.
4. Feedback was analyzed, the results being used to highlight five service priorities to build upon.
5. The committee developed a set of ten goals to supplement the recommended service priorities, strategies to achieve these goals, and measurable objectives to help evaluate the library's progress toward achievement.
6. The committee conducted an assessment of the library's financial resources necessary to meet expressed service priorities.
7. The library director drafted the first version of the LRP.
8. The library board reviewed and approved the final plan.

## SERVICE PRIORITIES, GOALS, STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES

The following five service priorities were determined. Each service priority is featured on its own page over the course of the next five pages.



## *Service Priority #1: Encourage Lifelong Learning*

Libraries are still places people go for information; books are just the beginning. Along with print, audiobooks, and e-resources, BPL has computers and laptops to navigate the world and find what you're searching for. Programs are an integral part of the rich array of library services. Here you'll find storytimes, movie showings, chess tournaments, tea parties, trivia nights, and a host of other activities. As we move outside our walls and into the community, you'll identify more ways than ever to engage with us.

**a. Goal 1:** Impart tools for members to achieve their educational aspirations.

**i. Strategies:**

1. Assist students with homework help using volunteer networks.
2. Collaborate with homeschooling families and Amish residents to strengthen material collection.
3. Promote online courses and databases.
4. Ensure that collection development remains a key focus.
5. Initiate author visits and guest presenters to grow a culture of library users.

**ii. Objective:**

- Grow the means to explore topics of personal interest for our residents and continue their learning throughout their lives.

**b. Goal 2:** Engage new audiences in using library resources.

**i. Strategies:**

1. Employ a variety of strategies to make non-users aware of library offerings and seek to develop a broader base of repeat users.
2. Increase the number of unique users accessing digital materials.
3. Promote programs and services through new channels.
4. Aid the Friends of the Library in attracting additional members.
5. Review and rewrite policies to ensure a seamless experience in obtaining and using library services.

**ii. Objective:**

- Remove barriers and enhance the library's service culture to increase the number of users.

## *Service Priority #2: Create a Community Space*

While the digital world continues to make its mark, we still believe our community needs spaces to come together. In addition to meeting rooms that accommodate a variety of occasions, BPL provides quiet areas for study, individual reading, or dreaming. Libraries are a place to put aside the concerns of the world and simply hang out for the purposes of company and conversation. Our spaces are there for you to delve into and enjoy.

- c. **Goal 1:** Effectively utilize the entire Bremen Public Library campus.
  - i. **Strategies:**
    1. Designate footprint for ready access to Arts & Crafts.
    2. Designate footprint for children’s department Programming room.
    3. Designate footprint for Young Adult services.
    4. Designate footprint for expanded Media Lab / Makerspace.
    5. Designate footprint for Large Meeting Room and Small Meeting Room.
  - ii. **Objective:**
    - Redefine the library blueprint to improve flexibility and responsiveness to the community.
- d. **Goal 2:** Safe and welcoming surroundings = Library destination points.
  - i. **Strategies:**
    1. Arrange for comfortable seating throughout the building.
    2. Implement courtyard and outdoor seating.
    3. Reconfigure parking lot and replace sidewalk.
    4. Install irrigation system and add landscaping.
    5. Repaint walls and invest in modern light fixtures.
  - ii. **Objective:**
    - Ensure safe and well-maintained spaces to gather, reflect, and linger.

### *Service Priority #3: Deliver Beyond Library Walls*

BPL places an emphasis on collaboration with other community organizations. In addition, staff members individually participate in outreach and serve on various roundtables and committees. Advocacy will continue to drive a significant portion of our activities, and we'll conscientiously seek new ways to contribute to the community's well-being.

**e. Goal 1:** Develop and maintain cooperatives designed to strengthen our community.

**i. Strategies:**

1. Tax Assistance – H&R Block.
2. Food Bank – Grace Food Pantry.
3. Health and Wellness – Signature Healthcare of Bremen.
4. Homebound Delivery – The Whitlock.
5. Financial Literacy – Lake City Bank.

**ii. Objective:**

- Develop and sustain opportunities to access information and resources related to neighboring social services for our patrons.

**f. Goal 2:** Establish, coordinate, and continue a library presence at local and special events.

**i. Strategies:**

1. National Library Week – School and business visits.
2. Firemen's Festival – Parade.
3. Bremen Chamber of Commerce – Newsletter publication, support of town functions.
4. Boys & Girls Clubs of Marshall County – Programming and grant writing opportunities.
5. Bremen Public Schools – Library card sign-ups.

**ii. Objective:**

- Ensure library staff is involved in community-based projects.

## ***Service Priority #4: Provide Equitable and Inclusive Access***

Libraries are places that level the playing field. We seek to represent all people in our collections, events, and services. We are committed to ensuring that the diversity of our entire community is reflected. We care about each other, our patrons, and the work we do.

- g. Goal 1:** Organizational culture is driven by equity, inclusion, diversity, and access for all. Staff training should include, but is not limited to, the strategies listed below.

**i. Strategies:**

1. Collect current information for homeless, mental health, substance abuse, re-entry populations, and veterans.
2. Build knowledge of current database & web resources for government agencies and services.
3. Study recommendations for working with difficult and special-needs patrons.
4. Incorporate adult learning opportunities – English language instruction, technology training, and online courses and certification.
5. Achieve effective partnerships: counselors, shelters, housing authority, and charities.

**ii. Objective:**

- Raise library competencies in the field of citizen welfare.

- h. Goal 2:** Encourage the library as a third place. In community building, the third place is the social surroundings separate from the two usual environments of home (first place) and work (second place). We view the third place of a library as an anchor, essential to a civil society and democracy.

**i. Strategies:**

1. Honor intellectual freedom.
2. Embody a culture of respect and recognition.
3. Listen to all voices.
4. Strive for diverse collections, programs, events, and activities.
5. Commit to providing exceptional library service.

**ii. Objective:**

- Convey a sense of belonging in the third place, where our needs are met outside of our home, which bestows safety and shelter, and work, which offers consistency and a sense of satisfaction.



## *Service Priority #5: Guide the Digital Journey*

Ever-expanding patron expectations and interests all add up to the need for libraries to stay relevant. In a world driven by technology, we can be a leader by providing tools that educate, entertain, and help citizens adjust in an evolving landscape. We are designed to be flexible and adaptable, to innovate and grow as times change.

- i. **Goal 1:** Introduce residents to new technology.
  - i. **Strategies:**
    1. Evaluate and update Media Lab (Makerspace) offerings to anticipate trends and identify potential services.
    2. Offer programs such as littleBits and Prenda Code Club to facilitate hands-on learning.
    3. Expand STEAM opportunities to include young adults and adults.
    4. Form a robotics club; join with area school(s).
    5. Seek grant funding (LSTA, Marshall County Community Foundation) to supplement beyond the library budget.
  - ii. **Objective:**
    - Cultivate the mindset of limitless learning.
- j. **Goal 2:** Incorporate lessons learned during the pandemic as part of “we don’t library like we used to.”
  - i. **Strategies:**
    1. Allocate a greater portion of monies for digital distributors OverDrive and hoopla.
    2. Implement a new server into the existing network environment.
    3. Overhaul wiring and cabling building-wide as part of Wi-Fi enhancement.
    4. Establish competency levels along with training to ensure that staff is well-versed in using digital services.
    5. Bolster virtual and live content, including more content-based information via BPL’s YouTube channel.
  - ii. **Objective:**
    - Remake the library when the world is turned upside down.

## Technology Plan (2022 – 2025)

As the technological needs of the community grow, patron expectations of library services become more advanced. In addition to the goals outlined below, Bremen Public Library is committed to ongoing staff training, monthly IT maintenance (on-site, remote) by a managed service provider, appropriate planning through the operating budget, grant writing, and seeking federal funding through E-Rate.

- k. **Goal 1:** Investigate and incorporate the latest technology appropriate for our community.
  - i. **Strategies:**
    1. Consult with IT company on infrastructure improvements.
    2. Upgrade network wiring to support Category 6 cables.
    3. Furnish additional data drops within existing building and expansion.
    4. Install HVAC unit for cooling the utility room.
    5. Implement a new server.
  - ii. **Objective:**
    - Stronger and more integrated networks and connections.
- l. **Goal 2:** The library will offer the sufficient space and technology requisite to support content creation, including audio recording, video production, web publishing, and meeting daily computing needs.
  - i. **Strategies:**
    1. Repurpose former Quiet Study as a Makerspace.
    2. Produce instructional programming on the usage of Media Lab equipment.
    3. Upgrade staff and patron computers to all-in-one models.
    4. Consider equipment for people with disabilities.
    5. Poll libraries within the state to determine high demand items for future purchases.
  - ii. **Objective:**
    - Imagine, design, and create. Learn a new skill. Explore interests on your own or in a group. Make use of our tools to turn your ideas into reality.

## STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS

As identified by the BPL LRP Committee

### **Strengths**

Customer service – patron relationships  
Engagement – variety of offerings  
Children’s Department – imagination stations  
Library collection – physical and online formats  
Building – clean and organized

### **Weaknesses**

Limited space  
Lack of parking  
Dated technology  
Environment is less than inviting – sterile physical atmosphere, behavior (loudness) of youth

### **Opportunities**

Expanded programming for all ages  
Bettering representation of cultures and diversity  
Additional lounge and study areas  
Usage of Media Lab  
Growth of Young Adult services  
Outreach

### **Threats**

Societal perception of libraries – relevancy  
Budget limitations

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### *Bremen Public Library Board of Trustees*

Brad Yoder	President
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Lisa Scott	Treasurer
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Rhonda McIntyre	Member
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Christopher Scandling	Director
Terrie Bickel	Head of Library Services
Shelli Kauffman	Head of Adult Services
Kate Blakely	Head of Children's Services
Claire Bickel	Adult Services Assistant
Sonia Hernandez	Adult Services Assistant
Courtney Dobrzykowski	Adult Services Assistant
Ryan Calhoun	Young Adult Librarian
Cynthia Hartman	Children's Services Assistant
Violet Gunter	Children's Services Assistant
Alex Stealy	Children's Services Assistant
Darla Kiefer	Library Services Assistant (Page)
Ann Hochstetler	Support Services
Thad Hochstetler	Support Services
Brooke Lacher	Support Services

### *Organizations*

The Bremen Public Library would also like to thank the **Bremen Public School Corporation**, the **Bremen Chamber of Commerce**, and the **Boys & Girls Club of Marshall County** for collaborating on projects to grow our community.