

Strategic Plan 2006

Service Goals:

The library board voted to accept the recommendations of the strategic planning community group.

The library's new roles, in order of importance, are:

Lifelong learning
Information Literacy (emphasis on technology)
Current topics and titles

And, the library must maintain its current "commons" role and environment

An additional overwhelming consensus statement from the community group was that the library needed to market itself effectively, that this was key to achieving success in everything else, and that development of a strong Friends group was very important.

Things to know to help understand the timeframes chosen:

The library is on a calendar year. The budget process begins in June of each year for the following year.

The library has \$14,000 budgeted in 2006 for new computers in the lab—we want to spend it well.

The library is hosting the Smithsonian exhibit "Key Ingredients: America by Food" in fall of 2007 for 6 weeks. The library will be developing a local exhibit to complement the national exhibit as a condition of getting the (free except for some shipping!) exhibit.

We will need to do a lot of staff training to accomplish this plan. We will also need to "find" lots of staff time by redefining job descriptions, outsourcing when possible, and changing how some things are done. One possible outcome of looking at hours open to the public is both increased public service and more training opportunities.

Goal 3 Objective 1 -- redesigning the way the library organizes the materials so they are easier for the public to find by browsing---will be very time-intensive. (But I believe it will have a huge payoff in improved service to the public and increased numbers of users).

Vision statement:

The Austin Public Library is a stimulating learning environment that is used by many Austin and Mower County residents. It has interesting, current collections and resources, and up-to-date technology. It is fast, easy, and pleasant to use, and knowledgeable staff is available to help. Library programs promote reading and computer literacy.

Goal 1: The library will be familiar and utilized by significant numbers of Austin and Mower County residents.

Objective 1: Increase total active card holders (those who have borrowed something in the past 12 months) by 10% annually for 3 years.

- Activities:
- a. Annual yearly marketing plan developed Hokanson 11/06
 - b. Collection development policy review Board/staff 12/06
 - c. Collection location redesign See Goal 3 Obj. 1

Objective 2: Decrease the total number of borrowers with fines by 30% by 2010.

- Activities:
- a. Institute an annual “Reading for Fines” program
Maureen 5/07
 - b. Informational letter home to parents Hokanson co-ordinate with new bill collecting procedures
 - c. Train staff on communicating policies effectively when cards are issued Hokanson 8/06
 - d. Develop Spanish language communications Steinbrink/Hok 8/06
 - e. Evaluate status annually and develop new strategies as needed
Maureen/Hokanson
 - f. Accept credit and debit cards 11/06 city hall/Hokanson

Objective 3: Decrease the number of materials that become long overdue each year by 30% by 2010

- Activities:
- a. Test 3rd party collections company (Unique Management Service) Hokanson 10/06 2006
 - b. Identify and implement best solution Board/Hok 11/06
 - c. Update fines and fees policy as needed Board 11/06
 - d. Investigate automation of bill collecting Hok/Selco 05/07
 - e. Possible implementation of automated bill processing
Staff/Selco 2008

Objective 4: Develop new partnerships with three agencies serving special groups (ie Senior Center or The Cedars) to facilitate and increase use of the library by their constituents by 2009.

- a. Identify potential agencies Staff 01/08
- b. Develop low-staff involvement service plans Staff/agencies 04/08
- c. Promote “homebound” card privileges staff 01/08
- d. Promote and facilitate agency field trip visits to the library staff 08/08

Goal 2: The Friends of the Austin Public Library, the Ladies Floral Club and the Board of Trustees will be informed and active advocates for the library.

Objective 1: Increase membership in the Friends by 20% annually.

- Activities:
- a. Invite staff, board and current volunteers to join Friends Hokanson/Friends president annually 10/06
 - b. Promote Friends membership in library newsletters quarterly 06/06
 - c. Create suite of benefits for Friends Hokanson/Friends 06/07

Objective 2: Increase visibility and volunteer opportunities for Friends and Floral Club members

- Activities:
- a. Develop speaking and outreach opportunities for volunteers Hokanson/Anita 6/07
 - b. Explore “Popcorn Cart” concept for merchandising Hokanson/Steinbrink/Anita/Friends 06/07
 - c. More visible promotion of Friends sponsorship of events and materials Hokanson/Steinbrink/Anita 07/06
 - d. Develop “Dewey Lectures” series with Friends and Floral Club support Hokanson/Friends/Floral Club annually 10/06

Objective 3: Increase knowledge of library among Friends, and Floral Club—all ongoing beginning immediately

- Activities:
- a. 2x annual letter from director on a selected topic Hokanson
 - b. Postcards about special events Hokanson/Anita
 - c. Demonstrations to membership on technology available Hokanson

Objective 3: Increase Board’s knowledge of library activities and issues---all Hokanson/Board

- A. Develop ongoing schedule for policy review 08/06

- a. First in line: major gifts policy, collection development
- B. Develop schedule and method for director review 11/06
- C. Monthly demonstration or profile of library service 08/06

Goal 3: Austin Public Library will be fast, easy, and pleasant to use, with special emphasis on first-time or occasional visitors.

Objective 1: Collections and services will be arranged to promote fast and efficient browsing and use

- Activities:
- a. Form a board/staff work group to guide process 09/06
 - b. Develop plan for comprehensive customer-driven library layout redesign 3/07
 - c. Implement plan—timeline to be determined

Objective 2: Systems will be intuitive and user-friendly

- Activities:
- a. Web-site overhaul—first draft Gayle/Ann/Don 08/06
 - b. Trial new web technologies Gayle/staff 11/06
 - c. Impement some new technologies Gayle/staff 6/07
 - d. credit card/ debit card payment (also fits under reducing long overdues and patrons with fines) Ann/Denny Maschka/Jim Hurm/Tom Dankert 11/06
 - e. Comprehensive web-site redesign Ann/staff 6/08
 - f. Web-site revision 6/09

Objective 3: Hours and locations will meet the needs of most users

- A. Evaluate hours open Board/Hokanson 08/06
- B. Explore feasibility of an off-site mini location, such as in Sterling Mall area Board/ Hokanson 11/09

Objective 4: Staff will be readily available and capable of helping the public

- A. Develop appropriate staffing structure (begin after goal 3, obj 1b) Board/Hokanson/City Hall 06/07
- B. See Goal 6 Objective 7 and 8
- C. Review and revise job descriptions Hokanson/staff/human resources 09/07
- D. On-going staff training
 - a. Develop plan and timeline for specifics Hok/staff 09/06

Objective 5: Investigate outsourcing opportunities

- Activites:
- A. Form staff work group Hokanson 09/06
 - B. Learn options 12/06
 - C. Recommend and implement changes 08/07
 - D. Review annually

Goal 4: The library has interesting, current collections of materials and resources to meet the life-long learning and recreational needs of our community and county.

Objective 1: At least 95% of circulation will be from Austin-owned materials, and circulation statistics will increase at least at the rate of growth of the city.

- Activities:
- a. Collection development policy revised Board/staff 11/06
 - b. Statistics will be monitored quarterly Hokanson/staff

Objective 2. The library will support adult and child self-directed basic skills learning with print and non-print resources.

- A. Maintain subscriptions to and promote Live Homework Help, Learning Express, Rosetta Stone 2007, review annually
- b. Collection development policy revised Board/staff 11/06

Objective 3: Austin Public Library resources will be available to county residents via the Grand Meadow, Brownsdale, and LeRoy public libraries, as well as via schools participating in SELCO on the same basis as they are available to City of Austin residents

- Activities:
- a. Participate in state and regional decision-making affecting area libraries and systems
Hokanson/staff ongoing
 - b. Maintain policy of loaning all circulating items to other libraries
 - c. Use county-wide and remote access as criteria in evaluating online database purchases

Objective 4: Austin Public Library will co-operate with all other area libraries to build complementary collections, particularly with other libraries in Mower County

- Activities:
- a. Collections for children will complement and supplement public school library collections Maureen 11/08
 - B. Austin Public Library will actively cooperate with other Mower County public libraries in collection development all purchasing staff 11/08

Goal 5: The library promotes literacy and “the book”

Objective 1: Develop a comprehensive, focused approach to all library sponsored programming, using a unified marketing campaign

Activity: a. Launch Dewey Lecture Series Hokanson/staff 1/07
b. Use Smithsonian exhibit “Key Ingredients” as
cornerstone of programming 2007

Objective 2: Encourage book clubs

Activities: a. Revise meeting room policy to allow standing meeting
times for non-library sponsored book and writing groups open to the public.

03/07

b. Great Book Club choices category in collection 07/07

c. Teach “Starting a Book Club” classes 2008

d. Develop on-line local library-sponsored book club 2008

Objective 3: Increase author appearances and book signings 2008

Objective 4: Participate in Austin’s Early Childhood Initiative

Activities: a. Attend meetings Maureen/Ann 2006-2007

b. Integrate Pre-K and parent education library
programming into ECI objectives

Objective 5: Co-operate with school literacy initiatives and events

Activities: a. build on school author visits (appearance at library)

b. support school summer reading assignments

Objective 6: Incorporate a book focus into SRP programming whenever possible

Objective 7: Market books and reading to all ages

Goal 6: The library will provide access to state-of-the-art technology and will assist customers in learning to use it –DETAILS AND TIMELINES FOR OBJECTIVES TO BE DEVELOPED IN THE TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Objective 1: A two-year technology plan will be written, implemented and revised annually, Gayle/Ann 11/06, and thereafter by June (for budget planning)

Objective 2: Equipment will have a minimum of down-time

1. If it cannot be fixed in 2 days, it is removed from public view

2. Replacement or repairs will be timely

Objective 3: Equipment that looks similar will operate similarly (ie all lab computers the same)

Objective 4: Existing equipment will be fully functioning

1. Up-to-date downloads like Adobe and Shockwave
2. No broken parts (ie no Drive A: doesn't work on this machine)

Objective 5: Equipment will be up to date and offer common, in-demand features

1. Replacement schedules for public computers will be 4 years or less
2. Thin-client options will incorporate needed in-demand features like read/write drive and USB ports

Objective 6: Enough equipment (computers, audiovisual, and microfilm readers) will be available in the library to view or listen to materials owned by the library, so that users will not have to wait for more than 30 minutes for access to machinery.

Objective 7: All library circulation staff working 10 or more hours per week will be familiar with the basic functions of all public equipment and with the key benefits and services offered by the library online. This staff will also have extensive familiarity with the online catalog.

Objective 8: All library pages will receive an in-depth orientation to the library's resources and services by the time they have worked at the library 3 months, so that they are aware of what the library offers, and can therefore be informed word-of-mouth advocates for the library among their peers.

Objective 9: All professional librarian level staff working 10 hours or more per week will be able to assist the public with common computing needs, and will be able to explain and teach basic computer skills one on one and in a classroom setting.

Objective 10: Classes on using the library's online resources will be on-going and offered at a variety of times and places.

Objective 11: Classes on beginner level computer skills (using a mouse, finding a web page, using a web site) will be offered continuously and to meet demand.

Objective 12: Introductory classes on emerging information technologies will be offered regularly and to meet demand

Objective 13: The library will work cooperatively with the Workforce Development Center, Senior Center, Riverland, and Community Ed to develop comprehensive affordable local computer training for non-student adults to acquire intermediate and advanced skills in computer applications.

Objective 14: The library will work cooperatively with continuing education to develop and present Internet safety classes for parents both in the library and off-site.