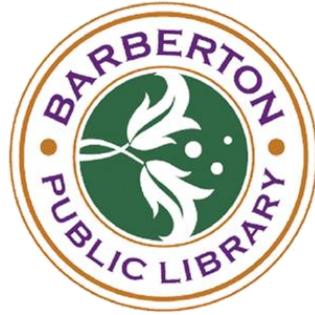




Strategic Plan

January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2025

Approved by the Board of Trustees on
August 25, 2022



Our Mission

Barberton Public Library promotes independent and diverse thought by providing innovative programming, services, and resources necessary for community members to pursue educational, creative, cultural, personal, and professional interests.

Our Vision

Barberton Public Library is the pride of the community, an essential and ever-evolving asset that enhances every chapter of life.

Our Values

Equity

We hold our patrons in high regard and treat them with fairness and justness so that all may thrive.

Service

We provide quality service to all with respect, integrity, flexibility, and pride.

Community Support

We support the community through collaborative partnerships, relationship building, and the stewardship of our intellectual resources.

Caring

We value a welcoming and inclusive environment that is safe for all, and staff that are approachable, kind, and empathetic.

Innovative

We value the expression of creative and resourceful thinking in our development of new programming, services, and resources to serve our community.

Lifelong Learning

We are committed to providing the resources necessary for the continued growth of all members of our community.

Our Future: Strategic Goals

Goal 1. Be an innovative outreach leader.

Goal 2. Serve the community with creative, up-to-date and accessible spaces.

Goal 3. Champion staff excellence.

Introduction

The Barberton Public Library began a new strategic planning process in January 2022 in order to prepare for its future after completing its last strategic plan in 2015 and implementing aspects of a plan created in 2017. The Library is committed to serving its community and was equally committed to involving the community in the strategic planning process through a Focus Group and a Community Survey. The new strategic plan seeks to serve the community with relevant and innovative outreach initiatives as well as creative, current and accessible spaces. The plan also builds upon the Library's strong history of staff excellence.

The strategic plan is organized around three strategic goals, each supported by strategic objectives and action items. The plan serves as a guide for decision-making and effective resource allocation. Above all, the plan reinforces Barberton Public Library's commitment to its values, vision, and mission and positions it as an essential and ever-evolving asset, enhancing every chapter of the lives of community members.

The Process

The Barberton Public Library gathered input from the community through an online and print survey yielding 200 responses. In addition, a focus group was held on January 20, 2022 with 12 participants. An All-Staff Planning Session was held on February 21, 2022 during the Library's Staff Day to elicit input from the entire Library staff.

The information acquired from the survey and focus group was shared with the Board of Trustees and the management team of the Library. Responses from the surveys and focus group indicated that the Barberton Public Library enjoys a high level of satisfaction from the community and respondents shared their gratitude for the hard working and welcoming staff, for the well-rounded offerings, and creativity during the pandemic. Respondents see the

Library as the place that promotes lifelong learning and community enrichment. The fact that materials, services, and programs are provided for free with no socio-economic barriers was emphasized. The Focus Group participants discussed the Library as a community resource center and gathering place that provides access to technology, programming and volunteer opportunities. There were specific programming suggestions including more technology classes, children's activities after 5:00 PM, and life skills programs for young adults. Other participants suggested a dedicated space for teens, outdoor programming, and a larger drive-thru area. Some respondents requested a larger selection of both print and digital books as well as extended hours. Lastly, there were multiple requests for mobile library services.

The Board of Trustees reviewed and revised the current mission, and created a new vision, and set of core values during a four-hour retreat on February 17, 2022. The Board of Trustees also utilized the knowledge gained from the survey and focus group in the context of a SWOTA (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats, and Aspirations) analysis which was essential to the formation of new strategic goals.

The Board of Trustee's retreat was followed by an All-Staff Planning Sessions in which the staff worked in small groups to brainstorm ideas around the themes of relevancy, healthy solutions, diversity and inclusion, failure and innovation, and partnerships. Ideas were compiled and provided to the Management Team. A four-hour Management Team retreat was held in March 2022 to consider the strategic goals through five Library-specific perspectives (Customer, Staff, Internal Processes, Financial Resources, and Organizational Resources), resulting in objectives to be employed in achieving the stated goals.

The themes from the survey are carried throughout the plan and are supported by objectives and action steps that will propel the Barberton Public Library on its course for the future.

Planning Team

Board of Trustees

- Caroline Brindo, *President*
- Jennifer Doll, *Vice President*
- Holly Miller, *Secretary*
- Kenneth Cheatham
- C. Racyne Leskanic
- Terri Masich
- Heather McMullen

Administration

- Ann Hutchison, *Director*
- Mike DeSan, *Fiscal Officer*

Management Team

- Melissa Futrell
- Alison Huey
- Jennifer O’Neill
- Gretchen Quinn
- Maggie Rose
- Will Swigart
- Melissa Walker



Strategic Planning Facilitator: Northeast Ohio Regional Library System

Goal 1

Be an innovative outreach leader.

Outcome: The Library has a clear and concise vision for outreach that is informed by continuous and consistent assessment. The Library is included in community initiatives, and partnerships with community organizations are leveraged to enhance outreach. Community members are aware of the Library's outreach programs and services due to the implementation of creative and effective marketing strategies.

Objectives and Action Items:

1. Develop a comprehensive outreach vision.

- Create an Outreach Mission Statement that clearly defines expectations
- Assess community needs and identify areas for targeted outreach
- Design a relationship management plan for collaborating with community organizations on outreach
- Form an Outreach Committee comprised of staff from multiple departments
- Explore the viability of creating a dedicated Outreach Department

2. Foster a Library culture of continual assessment.

- Establish a set of criteria for measuring the success of programs
- Develop and implement an evaluation tool to individually measure the value and impact of all programs and services
- Establish a procedure to evaluate all programs and services every 1-2 years
- Create and distribute an annual patron/public survey to assess wants and needs

3. Build an intentional presence with community organizations.

- Partner effectively with community organizations by strengthening knowledge of organizational missions
- Prioritize Library involvement on city and community committees and initiatives
- Provide an infrastructure and criteria for involving all staff in strengthening the role of the Library within the community
- Investigate the viability of materials return locations at community businesses
- Emphasize Library meeting room availability on website

4. Enhance communication and energize marketing strategies.

- Develop a comprehensive Marketing Plan
- Create a Social Media Team
- Identify new marketing strategies to increase visits, attract new users, and amplify community awareness of Library services and offerings

- Design a marketing campaign focused on the value of the Library in preparation for a successful tax levy

Goal 2

Serve the community with creative, up-to-date and accessible spaces.

Outcome: The Library has a carefully considered and deliberate space utilization and remodeling plan which supports the evolving and expanding needs of the community. The Library's presence within the community enables increased access to materials, services, and programming. Alternative sources of funding have been established to support sustained growth.

Objectives and Action Items:

1. Design a space utilization and remodeling plan.

- Develop a Facility and Maintenance Plan
- Conduct a space utilization study of current work and public spaces to anticipate and accommodate future community needs
- Create a multi-year Technology Plan

2. Expand the Library's physical footprint within the community.

- Explore expansion opportunities and purpose
- Collaborate with community agencies to optimize growth opportunities

3. Pursue new and diverse financial resources.

- Create a three-year development plan
- Enhance relationships with new and current donors
- Work with local businesses for sponsorship opportunities
- Explore viability of hiring a Grants Writer or Development Coordinator
- Initiate a variety of fundraisers
- Investigate the benefits of growing the Barberton Public Library Now & Forever Fund held by the Barberton Community Foundation

Goal 3

Champion staff excellence.

Outcome: Patrons are greeted by well-trained, knowledgeable, kind, and open-minded staff. The Library is able to serve the community effectively and efficiently with up-to-date policies and procedures. There is adequate staff to meet the needs of the community inside and outside the Library. The staff feel valued by administration and excited to go to work every day.

Objectives and Action Items:

1. Cultivate an environment of continuous staff support and success.

- Recruit and retain a diverse staff and Board of Trustees
- Create a comprehensive staff onboarding and training program
- Establish core competencies for each position
- Develop a formal recognition program for employees
- Design a staff only publication of employee achievements
- Form a staff association

2. Evaluate policies and procedures to optimize organizational effectiveness.

- Establish standards for operational excellence and customer service
- Review and update operations policies and procedures annually
- Identify barriers to effective service
- Utilize UX (User Experience) guidelines and ADA best practices to reorganize Library website for ease of use
- Enhance staff communication through the use of tools such as CLEVNET and Microsoft Office software

3. Increase staff to expand service potential.

- Perform an assessment of staff capacity and capability
- Evaluate and evolve staffing structure to align with current needs and planned growth path
- Develop an expanded volunteer program
- Investigate collaborations with professional service agencies to expand services to the community