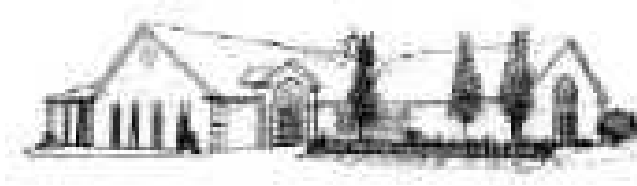


**P|C|P|L**

**The Plain City Public Library**



**Strategic Plan  
2006-08**



## **Overview:**

During the spring and summer of 2005, the staff and trustees of the Plain City Public Library worked together with community leaders to develop this strategic plan. The planning process included numerous meetings that afforded community leaders, library associates, administrators, and trustees an opportunity to develop a vision for ways in which the library can best accommodate the service needs of the residents of Plain City in the next three years.

Several reasons led to the decision to forge a new strategic plan for the library. For six decades the Plain City Public Library has proudly served area residents. By providing for the informational, recreational, and social needs of the community, the library has become a valued asset. This plan will allow the library to carry on the tradition of excellence into the future. With the instability of state funding for Ohio's public libraries, it is critical to have a plan so we may effectively utilize the limited resources available to the library.

Community leaders characterized Plain City as a place with a strong sense of community and tradition. Among the many benefits they cited to living in the village were a safe environment to raise their families, access to many recreational and social activities, and the community's central location to many major urban areas. Challenges noted by community leaders included the possibility of explosive or unmanaged growth, numerous vacant business and commercial property, little in the way of cultural diversity, a generally poor and aging infrastructure, and a general waning of appreciation for Plain City's rich heritage. In view of the strengths and weaknesses of our community, members of the planning committee focused on five key library service responses for the future development of the library.

Those service responses are:

- Commons
- Current Topics and Titles
- Formal Learning Support
- Lifelong Learning
- Local History and Genealogy

The following three-year plan would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of many people. Appreciation is extended to the following individuals for their participation in and support of the strategic planning process:

**Community Representatives**

Elizabeth Beach  
Bruce Bullerman  
Paul Gibson  
Breanne Parcels  
Lisa Yoder

**Library Board of Trustees**

Chris Wurschmidt, *President*  
Jan Thompson, *Vice President*  
Andy Thomas, *Deputy Clerk-Treasurer*  
Barbara George  
Carol Karrer  
Tom Miller  
Mark Randall

Special thanks goes to trustees Carol Karrer, Chair of the Planning Committee, and Jan Thompson for all the extra time they gave to this project.

**Mission:**

The Plain City Public Library exists to serve the citizens of the Plain City area by:

- Supporting learners in their education from childhood through their adult years;
- Enabling people to explore their personal and community heritage;
- Developing residents' ability to find and use information in a variety of formats;
- Serving as an inviting, neutral, and safe location for residents to meet and interact with others in their community;
- Providing relevant materials and programs to satisfy residents' desire for information about popular culture, social trends, and satisfying recreational experiences.

**Core Values:**

The Plain City Public Library values providing the highest level of customer service, resources, and programs to area library users. The library welcomes the input and involvement of all library associates and the community at large in that process.

**Service Response:**

**Commons**

*A library that provides a Commons environment helps address the need of people to meet and interact with others in their community and to participate in public discourse about community issues.*

**Goal:**

**Library users will have access to public space for gathering to pursue their educational, recreational, and social needs. The library will focus on implementing programs and services that invite conversation and discussion among community members making the library a center of public discourse.**

- **Objective A** – Over the next three years, the library will continually enhance its existing meeting and gathering spaces used by patrons for educational activities.
  - Enliven the children’s wing by adding comfortable and appealing seating for parents and children that facilitate reading together.
  - Publicize and promote the library as a safe and comfortable place to gather and learn.
  - Provide ongoing evaluation of the library’s physical set-up to ensure it adequately reflects the community needs.
  - Research ways to develop the library’s website to be the “Electronic Gathering Place” for social, recreational, and educational activities.
  
- **Objective B** – Each year for the next three years, the library will host at least eight programs/meetings that facilitate discussion about local or national issues.
  - Continue and strengthen the library’s partnership with local government and organizations. Find out the various needs of local government and organizations and the ways we can help these groups facilitate community discussion of the issues they represent.
  - Develop a mechanism to determine the topics and issues library users desire to have as a community dialog. An effective method will be developed to ensure the library continuously provides topics and issues of interest to area residents in the future.
  - Publicize and promote the library as the focal point for community discussion.
  - Explore the possibilities of, and costs associated with, expanding the library’s outreach services and implement the initiative if found to be practical.

**Service Response:**

**Current Topics and Titles**

*A library that provides Current Topics and Titles helps to fulfill community residents' appetite for information about popular cultural and social trends and their desire for satisfying recreational experiences.*

**Goal 1:**

**The library will serve as the foremost source for current and popular materials for area residents.**

- **Objective** – The library's circulation will increase by 2% each year.
  - Explore ways to make popular titles available in the library the same day they appear in bookstores. Ensure quantities ordered of popular titles are adequate to meet user needs.
  - Promote new, topical, and timely library materials to the public through a variety of methods including, but not limited to, the library newsletter and publications, library web page, displays, special promotions and programs, and the media.
  - Enhance the reading experience at the library through improved merchandising of new and popular titles.
  - Develop and offer a "Book Look" night where families are invited to look through and checkout items from our newest materials and preview soon to be released titles.
  - Research and develop a method for the library to effectively ascertain materials of interest to area residents of all ages.
  - Involve the library more in events such as voting for the Buckeye Children's Book Award and other similar activities designed for children, young adults, and adults.

**Goal 2:**

**The library will provide residents with popular and useful programs, book discussions, and workshops that address topics of current interest both in the community and in society at large. Special emphasis will be placed on serving children in the community in grades 4 to 6.**

- **Objective** – The library will examine, expand, and enhance library programs. Each year for the next three years, the number of unique adults, young adults (grades 7-12), and children (through grade 6) attending library programs will increase by 10%.
  - Evaluate current programming practices and develop a criteria that helps determine how popular topics for programs are selected and what constitutes a successful program.
  - Solicit recommended topics for programs from area educators that can be used to support their curriculums.

- Solicit recommendations for programs from library users via a prominent suggestion box, or similar display, as a way to ascertain potential topics of interest.
- Utilize grant writing and other alternative sources of funding to support an increase in author visits, presentations, and book signings.
- Discover ways to better utilize the library's website to support programming efforts. Activities might include online registration and links to helpful online resources related to programs.
- Develop ways to better advertise library programs to area young adults including, but not limited to, utilizing local schools.
- Increase and define the involvement of the Teen Advisory Board in designing young adult programming.

**Service Response:**

**Formal Learning Support**

*A library that offers Formal Learning Support helps students who are enrolled in a formal program of education or who are pursuing their education through a program of Homeschooling to attain their educational goals.*

**Goal:**

**The library will serve as the community's nucleus for the educational resources required by residents enrolled in formal educational endeavors.**

- **Objective A** – Within three years a formal communication network will be established with the education community to ensure that library associates are aware of and prepared for student and teacher needs.
  - Contact each school system prior to the beginning of the school year requesting pertinent information to possibly include a schedule of homework topics and special reading assignments and reading lists.
  - Develop a list of contact people for each school facility.
  - Develop a list of, and collaborate with, interested homeschoolers who would like to work with the library.
  - Research the possibility of creating, and if needed implement, a committee comprised of library associates, teachers, and homeschoolers to enhance communication, share information, and discuss topics of mutual interest.
  
- **Objective B** – Within three years 85% of area residents who use the library in support of their formal educational endeavors will respond that the library provides access to the resources they require.
  - Enhance the library's website by adding links to curriculum and other educational sites.
  - Publicize and promote the library as an available site for test proctoring
  - Research potential partnerships with other organizations to provide tutors and/or homework assistance to area students.
  - Provide ongoing internal evaluation of the library's collections to ensure access is provided to useful and wanted educational resources.

**Service Response:**

**Lifelong Learning**

*A Library that provides Lifelong Learning service helps address the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.*

**Goal:**

**The library will strengthen its commitment to provide all library users with the programs and technology needed for a lifetime of learning and personal growth.**

- **Objective A** – Over the next three years, the library will actively work to maintain the finest in technology for area residents.
  - Develop and implement a comprehensive technology plan for the library.
  - Seek alternative sources of funding to assist in technology needs.
  - Develop and implement training for staff on how to utilize library technology and assist library patrons with using it.
  - Research the possibility of bringing wireless Internet access to the library. Implement if possible.
  - Increase the number of educational software programs parents can use with their children at the library.
  
- **Objective B** – Each year, for the next three years, the library will present four programs for each of the adult, young adult, and children age groups that focus on aspects of lifelong learning.
  - Develop a more comprehensive series of professional programs for adults, focusing on such issues as tax preparation, healthcare, or social security.
  - Partner with other local organizations to present lifelong learning programs.

**Service Response:**

**Local History and Genealogy**

*A library that offers Local History and Genealogy service addresses the desire of community residents to know and better understand personal or community heritage.*

**Goal:**

**The library will support area residents in their quest to better understand the community's and their own heritage.**

- **Objective A** – Over the next three years the library will continually enhance its genealogy resources.
  - Develop a series of classes that outline the methods used in genealogical research
  - Enhance the library's genealogical resources available electronically via the library's website.
  - Publicize and promote the library's genealogical and local history section with a "Local History Drive." Ask community residents to donate historical photos and yearbooks, family histories, genealogies, and historical newspapers.
  - Research collaborative ways for the library to obtain a microfilm reader/printer.
  - Strengthen the collaboration between the library and the Plain City Historical Society. Explore ways to work together to develop projects which enhance the library's local history section.
  - Determine any gaps in resources that may need to be filled.
  - Research the possibility of working with the Friends of the Library to utilize local volunteers to help with local genealogical research.
  
- **Objective B** – Each year, for the next three years, the library will host at least 8 programs designed to foster a better understanding of the community's heritage.
  - Develop programs for teachers and students that enhance their study of local history.
  - Grow our current offerings to include programs for all age groups.