

STEGER-SOUTH CHICAGO HEIGHTS PUBLIC LIBRARY



STRATEGIC PLAN 2017-2021

Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library

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MISSION STATEMENT

The Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library will provide resources for lifelong learning.

LIBRARY VISION STATEMENT

The Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library District will be an essential resource in connecting people with our world through the discovery of knowledge and culture. We will meet this challenge by providing access to information in a welcoming community environment.

LIBRARY CORE VALUES

- * Equal Access
- * Intellectual Freedom
- * Service
- * Diversity
- * Literacy and Lifelong Learning
- * Teamwork
- * Creativity
- * Responsible Stewardship of All Resources

INTRODUCTION

The 2017-2021 Strategic Plan for the Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library was developed by the Strategic Planning Committee Members Janet Fiorenzo, Sandra Joyce, Andrea Holecek-Sherman, Jamie Paicely, Patricia Stroube, and Luanne Thurmond.

The Committee gathered data from focus groups which included staff and board members and community stakeholders. The needs assessment information that was collected has been used to designate the organizational goals for the next five years.

Current State of the Library

Funding:

The tax rate for the Library has remained static during the past thirty years at 0.159 percent despite repeated attempts to have the rate increased through referendums. The failures are mainly due to the inequities in the tax burden for property owners in Cook and Will counties that result in higher taxes for those in Will County. The Library also operates in a tax capped situation that has further eroded its funding base. Although there has been growth in the District's EAV (equalized assessed valuation) during the last ten years, the 2008 recession has stagnated, and even reduced that growth. All aspects of Library operations have been adversely affected by the funding situation, however, the Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library continues to increase its services and materials.

Facilities:

The Library moved to its current location in 1987. The original 5,000 square-foot building was enlarged by 2,500 square-feet in 2002 with the addition of a children's wing. The addition left the Library with an outstanding debt of \$200,000 at an annual cost of about \$17,000. The children's wing includes a multi-purpose media room where the staff is able to host programs. The facility's small parking lot presents another space problem when programs are scheduled. The Library has often dealt with this issue by asking other businesses for the use of their parking lots when larger events are scheduled well in advance. They have always been accommodating and this relationship has worked out well. The current interior space configuration of the Library's adult department has been redesigned for a contemporary use of library services. Rows of shelving, reference materials and old reading tables were removed, opening an area for leisure reading and a laptop bar along the window for patrons. Because of the funding situation the Library is forced to depend on volunteers to help with small repairs, and funding any major repair affects other budget considerations.

Collection:

The Library currently has 33,678 items in its collection including adult, children and young adult: books, magazines and newspapers, fiction and non-fiction DVD's, music CD's, book kits, audio-books and posters. The collection has decreased during the past three years by nearly 2000 items, while circulation has increased by 16 percent. Much of the increase in demand is for the Library's audio-visual materials. The Library is seeing two other important trends. Its reciprocal borrowing statistics indicate that more patrons from other libraries are coming to this library to check out materials, and that fewer of our patrons are traveling to other libraries to check out materials. Statistics show that the number of items checked out to patrons from other libraries at Steger-South Chicago Heights Library is about 375 items per month. Steger-South Chicago Heights materials that are sent to other libraries for their patrons is about 1400 per month!

Many books in the Library's collection are outdated and in poor condition, however the increase weeding of these materials, increased financial resources for the purchase of new materials, and the purchase of high demand materials has increased the Library's circulation of both fiction and non-fiction works. The staff is engaged in a continuous non-fiction weeding project to eliminate all non-essential or non-circulating items, and replace them with current, up-to-date materials if possible.

Programming:

During the past three years the Library has seen a substantial increase in both the number of programs offered by the Library, and in their attendance by community members. The Programming Team at the Library has created something for every demographic group in our community. The team also has reached out into the community and conducts programs at various locales throughout our district. The Library's programming has received very positive feedback from the community, and it is considered a major strength by our users. We now have many regular monthly programs as well as new, current programming every month for Children, Teens, and Adults.

Marketing:

Marketing is one of the most often cited problems for the Library. The Library is located on an interior village street that receives very little foot traffic. The Library did go back to mailing the quarterly newsletter, and this has been a huge asset for the library. We also utilize partnerships with Old Plank Trail Bank to help promote our programs, as well as Village message boards, Facebook, and our own webpage. We have not seen as many articles / listings in the print newspapers as we once did, but our programs are listed online, at the newspapers websites. This is a goal of ours, to receive additional coverage in the print newspapers.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL # 1: AWARENESS

OBJECTIVES:

- * Create “Welcome Coupons” to leave at Steger Village Hall and South Chicago Heights Village Hall for new residents to bring into the library for a “Welcome Pack”.
 - Welcome Pack will include:
 - Newest copy of newsletter
 - Free book for every child in household 16 and under
 - New lanyard for kids 16 and under with card sign up.
 - Information on how to obtain a library card
 - Information packet on library services and policies
 - Highlight library services such as: faxing, laminating, notary service, scanning, meeting space, etc.
 - Reusable Book Bag (if available)

- * Have a SSCHPL sponsored event annually and be present at most (if not all) village and school events.
 - Movie in the Park
 - Steger Parade
 - Back to School nights
 - Kindergarten sign up for SD 194 and SD 170 (Grant Elementary)

- * Get at least 75% of population to have an active card.
 - Currently 7751 of our 13709 residents have a card (57%)

GOAL # 2: TECHNOLOGY

OBJECTIVES:

- * Replace and/or rotate older equipment to maintain Technology stronghold
 - Replace Computers older than 4 years
 - Replace servers with newer ones
 - Replace current “100 Megabit” small network switches with Gigabit switches
 - Replace monitors with bigger and better ones (better resolution and contrast)

- * Continue to update Software on a timely basis moving forward
 - Keep up to date with Wireless Technology
 - Currently:
 - Upgrade servers’ operating system to Windows 2012 release 2

- Upgrade operating system on all computers to Windows 10
- * Patron Services
 - Increase Internet bandwidth from Comcast
 - Implement a chat server to assist patrons while visiting our website
 - Add gaming computers to teen and children's area
- * Security
 - Implement a disaster recovery plan
 - Update Technology Administrative Guide

GOAL # 3: ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH

OBJECTIVES:

- * Manage staffing, retention, and succession
 - Review job titles, job descriptions, roles, responsibilities and organizational structure
 - Train employees for possible vacancies in key positions
 - Promote employee retention and loyalty to Library by acknowledging significant events in staff members' lives
 - Perform onboarding with all new staff members to introduce them to all aspects of Library
- * Promote staff commitment and involvement to the Library
 - Design and maintain monthly newsletter for employees with important and/or new information to know
 - Maintain staff blog and ensure staff's ability to check it daily
 - Conduct periodic surveys to assess effectiveness of internal communication
 - Promote continuing education by sending staff to trainings and giving them time off the desk for webinars
- * Develop comprehensive training and professional development programs to increase employee job satisfaction, performance, and retention
 - Identify and make available training resources
 - Develop and implement an annual training plan
 - Cross train employees to enhance employee skills and address staffing shortfalls
 - Develop and maintain staff recognition program to reward employees who demonstrate exemplary levels of professional service, customer service, and teamwork

GOAL # 4: COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

OBJECTIVES:

- * Design space, services, programs and collections for all
 - Align public services with characteristics and needs of the population to provide superior customer service

- Partner with area businesses, community groups, neighborhood associations and other organizations
- Continue to develop and enhance family-oriented and inter-generational programs and activities
- Provide staffing, resources, and space for the needs of adult learners. Rethink, redefine and expand library services for adults, especially the 50+ age group
- ✦ Anticipate and respond to the evolving needs and expectations of present and future community groups
 - Solicit patron and staff feedback to assess customer satisfaction and quality of customer experience
 - Seek relevant locations to deliver library services to distinct population groups that are not currently getting regular service
 - Digitize information unique to Steger and South Chicago Heights
- ✦ Increase SSCHPL’s ability to respond to community needs by building partnerships and collaborations with organizations and institutes
 - Seek mutually beneficial partnerships based on shared goals and projected outcomes aligned with Library’s mission
 - Foster civic engagement in communities
 - Develop a Disaster Plan for Library
- ✦ Begin and evaluate Home Bound Patron Delivery Service

GOAL #5: OPERATIONS

OBJECTIVES:

- ✦ Connect people to popular books, music, films – whether the materials are new or simply new to them
 - Use webpage/catalog to highlight new acquisitions
 - Develop book discussion groups (preteen, teen, adult, family) and try to coordinate with author visits (with on-line, in person, or locally)
- ✦ Showcase library’s collections through vibrant, interactive exhibits and programs
 - Develop yearly plan for exhibitions and displays
 - Take materials to display at community events
 - Back to School Night
 - School registrations
- ✦ Have a diverse collection with materials patrons want and need
 - Order new, emerging items based on new technology, developments, and/or trends
 - Seek patron suggestions for items and evaluate requests
 - Continue to add to “non-traditional” collection yearly.
 - Currently includes (**available for check-out**): 2 x Kindle Fire, Digital Camera, Flip Camera, 2 x Garmin GPS Units, Ukulele Kit, Record player, Workout Kit with equipment, Learning

Spanish Rosetta Stone software, Learning English Rosetta Stone software, Wilderness Explorers Backpack

- Currently includes (**in-house only**): 3 x iPad minis, ABC Mouse laptop, 3 Laptops

- * Encourage exploration and learning by providing access to stories and ideas.
 - Provide hands-on programs that promote curiosity about STEM and the Arts.
 - Develop family programs to inspire learning and growing as a family.
 - Work with community institutions to promote life-long learning.

The Strategic Plan takes effect upon the acceptance by the Board of Trustees, and the Library Director will make a quarterly report to the Board on the plan's progress. The Library will execute the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan in a fiscally responsible manner.