

## **City of Fort Dodge Vision Statement**

The City of Fort Dodge is a top-ranked municipal government in Iowa that consistently delivers user-friendly, high quality services:

- Within budget constraints,
- To pleasantly surprised citizens,
- By a team of proud employees working in a great environment.

## **Fort Dodge Public Library Mission Statement**

Our Library provides a welcoming space to get connected, satisfy your curiosity, and learn more about your place within the global community.

## **History of Our Strategic Plan Process**

The Fort Dodge Public Library prepared this strategic plan with the assistance and oversight of the State Library of Iowa and their District Consultant, Maryann Mori.

The Library Board of Trustees met with Maryann Mori several times in 2018 to learn about the planning process, to review the resources listed below, to discuss the needs of the community, decide what service responses they felt should be the library's focus for the next five years and to draft and write a new plan.

In their efforts, the Board utilized the extensive demographic information available through the State Data Center of Iowa as well as the City of Fort Dodge Comprehensive Plan Existing Conditions Report (April 2015 - prepared by Houseal Lavigne Associates) and the Main Street Fort Dodge Downtown Public Survey (December 2017) to craft this plan.

## **Update**

After thoughtful discussion and review, the Library Board of Trustees has voted to extend Fort Dodge Public Library's current strategic plan by one year. This extension allows us to celebrate our completed goals, refresh remaining objectives, and align our work with a revised timeline. Key reasons for the extension include:

- **Adaptation to Past Challenges:** The COVID-19 pandemic created unanticipated obstacles that impacted progress toward several goals, especially those involving partnerships and public programming. Extending this plan allows us to regain momentum, adapt strategies as needed, and continue advancing our objectives effectively.
- **Alignment with City Plans:** Changes to state tax laws in FY25 affected municipal funding, prompting adjustments to the City of Fort Dodge's strategic and capital improvements plans. Extending our plan ensures the Library's upcoming renovation and future objectives remain coordinated with changes to the City's plans.
- **Leadership Transition:** In early 2025, the Library updated the job descriptions and responsibilities for its two department heads and welcomed new members to the management team. A one year extension gives these leaders time to learn more about our organization and community before helping shape our next plan.
- **Stronger Planning Process:** The Board intends to incorporate focus groups and updated demographic data into the next strategic planning phase, creating a more comprehensive and informed approach.

## **Evaluation and Continuous Improvement**

The Library Board of Trustees will review progress on this plan quarterly, assessing accomplishments, challenges, and any necessary adjustments to goals or activities. Staff will supply regular updates to support these evaluations. Community feedback will be gathered periodically to ensure the plan remains responsive to patron needs and community priorities. Insights gained from these evaluations will guide ongoing improvements and help shape future strategic planning efforts.

## **Fort Dodge Public Library – Strategic Plan 2026-2027**

### **Service Area 1: Digital Learning**

**Goal 1: *Ensure patrons can rely on staff who are well-versed in the Library's digital resources.***

**Objective:** All staff will maintain a working knowledge of the Library's online resources and apps, enabling them to confidently use, explain, and recommend these resources to patrons.

**Activity 1:** By January 31, 2026 staff will complete a self-assessment of current skills to establish a baseline for future assessment.

**Activity 2:** Starting in 2026, staff members will demonstrate basic proficiency through a brief skills assessment or practical demonstration as part of their annual performance review.

**Success Measures**

- 100% of staff complete self-assessment by January 31, 2026.
- At least 90% of staff demonstrate proficiency in digital resources during annual review.

**Goal 2: *Adults will learn the value of the library's online resources and apps and how to utilize them effectively.***

**Objective:** Increase public awareness of and improve patrons' ability to use the Library's digital resources confidently.

**Activity 1:** Promote the Library's online resources and apps through monthly posts on social media, the Library's website, and in-library signage.

**Activity 2:** Provide one-on-one assistance sessions for patrons needing support.

**Activity 3:** Create and maintain step-by-step instructions, digital tutorials, and FAQs on the Library's website.

**Activity 4:** Encourage staff to recommend online resources and apps during library card registration and other patron interactions.

**Success Measures:**

- At least 12 social media posts or website updates per year highlighting digital resources.
- 80% of patrons receiving one-on-one assistance report increased confidence using digital tools.
- Online instructions available by September 30, 2026.

### **Service Area 2: Education/Lifelong Learning**

**Goal 1: *Adults will have access to a consistent variety of educational and entertaining programs offered on a regular basis.***

**Objective:** Offer at least one adult program each month.

**Activity 1:** Develop a year-long programming calendar by May 31, 2026.

**Activity 2:** Alternate programs between learning-based and recreational topics.

**Activity 3:** Partner with local organizations, businesses, and experts to broaden program offerings.

**Activity 4:** Incorporate community feedback to guide program selection.

**Success Measures:**

- Minimum of 12 adult programs offered annually.

**Objective:** Increase adult participation in library programs.

**Activity 1:** Promote programs through multiple channels.

**Activity 2:** Offer programs on varying days and at different times to maximize accessibility.

**Activity 3:** Track attendance and collect feedback after each event.

**Success Measures:**

- 10% increase in average attendance compared to prior year.
- Post-program feedback shows at least 80% of attendees rated programs “satisfactory” or higher.

**Goal 2: Teens will have access to engaging, age-appropriate programs designed to support their interests, creativity and social connection.**

**Objective:** Provide at least one teen-focused program each month.

**Activity 1:** Develop an annual teen programming calendar by May 31, 2026 with input from staff and teens.

**Activity 2:** Offer a balance of recreational and educational activities.

**Activity 3:** Track attendance and collect feedback after each event.

**Success Measures:**

- Minimum of 12 teen focused programs offered annually.
- 75% of teen program attendees report increased engagement or learning.

**Objective:** Involve teens in the programming process.

**Activity 1:** Re-establish a teen advisory board to help select and promote programs.

**Activity 2:** Invite teens to co-lead or assist with events.

**Activity 3:** Survey teens twice a year to gather feedback on program interests.

**Success Measures:**

- Teen advisory board meets at least quarterly.
- At least 50% of teen events include teen leadership or input.
- Survey response rate of at least 40% with 80% satisfaction on relevance of programs.

**Objective:** Build community connections that enhance teen programming.

**Activity 1:** Partner with schools, youth organizations and local businesses to co-host or sponsor programs.

**Success Measures:**

- At least 2 community partnerships established annually for teen programs.

**Goal 3: Patrons of all ages will be able to connect, share experiences, and learn from one another through intergenerational and family-centered programs.**

**Objective:** The Library will host at least two intergenerational or family-focused programs that encourage participation across multiple age groups.

**Activity 1:** Choose and schedule two programs by May 31, 2026 with input from all staff.

**Activity 2:** Partner with other local organizations and businesses to co-host or sponsor at least one program.

**Activity 4:** Track attendance and gather feedback after the event to aid in planning of future programs.

**Success Measures:**

- Minimum of 2 intergenerational/family programs offered annually.
- Programs achieve at least 70% of projected attendance.
- Post-program feedback shows at least 80% of participants report a positive experience.

## **Service Area 3: Spaces/Places**

**Goal 1: Library users will benefit from a more welcoming, functional, and updated interior space that enhances their overall library experience.**

**Objective:** The library will begin phased improvements to its interior space in January 2026, engaging staff, community members, and professional partners throughout the planning and implementation process.

**Activity 1:** The Library Director and Board will establish an Interior Improvements committee by March 2026 to guided planning and decision-making.

**Activity 2:** Library staff will evaluate current workflows and rethink the use of existing spaces to improve efficiency and service delivery.

**Activity 3:** Library staff will visit other libraries to assess layouts, spaces, and workflows for inspiration and best practices.

**Activity 4:** The Library Director and Board will hire an architect, and if needed a project manager, to assist with design, layout, and cost planning.

**Activity 5:** The Library will host public input sessions to gather community feedback on priorities for space improvements.

**Activity 6:** The committee will evaluate options for new carpet, furniture, and potential layout changes.

**Activity 7:** The committee will make final recommendations to the Library Board regarding the interior improvement plan, including furniture, carpet, layout and budget.

**Success Measures:**

- Interior Improvements Committee formed by March 2026.
- Staff complete workflow and space assessment by April 2026.
- At least 2 site visits to other libraries completed by May 2026.
- Public input sessions held with at least 25 participants providing feedback.
- Final interior improvement plan approved by Library Board by December 2026.
- Phased improvements completed according to timeline with at least 80% of planned updates implemented.

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