

Des Plaines Public Library Strategic Plan 2026–2028

INTRODUCTION

The Des Plaines Public Library has always been more than a building filled with books — it is a dynamic space where ideas take shape, relationships are built, and lives are enriched. As our city continues to grow and diversify, the Library remains a trusted and transformative part of daily life, offering connection. This Strategic Plan for 2026–2028 charts a path forward that honors our heritage of service while embracing innovation, equity, and financial stewardship as essential to our community’s future.



Grounded in our belief that learning and creativity are lifelong pursuits, this plan aligns the Library’s mission with the evolving needs of Des Plaines residents. It reflects our commitment to removing barriers to access, expanding opportunities for discovery, and providing experiences that mirror the diversity and vibrancy of our city. We aim to meet people where they are — and help them imagine what’s next.

Developed collaboratively by Library staff, trustees, and community feedback, this plan outlines goals that connect directly to the heart of our mission. Together, these priorities affirm that the Des Plaines Public Library will continue to be a place where everyone can explore, learn, and thrive — today and for generations to come.

VISION

The Des Plaines Public Library is the trusted heart of an informed, connected, and creative community — where everyone can learn, discover, and participate in an inclusive and evolving world.

MISSION

Our mission is to be a catalyst, advocate and place to advance the vision and ideals of our community. We've been working hard for over 100 years to be an essential resource for Des Plaines. Whether it's through the items we buy for the collections, the programs we run for enrichment or fun, or the partnerships we foster within the community, we want to be a valuable part of your daily life.

VALUES

Access: We provide free and equitable access to information, technology, and learning opportunities for all.

Innovation: We embrace change, creativity, and emerging technologies to serve a modern community.

Inclusion: We welcome and reflect the diversity of Des Plaines in our services, collections, and programs.

Stewardship: We manage our public resources responsibly, transparently, and sustainably.

Collaboration: We build partnerships that strengthen community connections and impact.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND STRATEGIES

GOAL 1: Access & Innovation

Provide residents with equitable access to information, technology, and digital literacy resources — both in-person and online — while positioning DPPL as a leader in responsible, innovative public technology use.

1. **Expand Digital Equity and Connectivity**
 2. **Strengthen Digital Literacy and AI Readiness**
 3. **Modernize Online Access and Communication**
 4. **Champion Digital Privacy and Security**
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GOAL 2: Lifelong Learning & Cultural Enrichment

Create opportunities for residents of all ages to explore ideas, creativity, and culture through programs, collections, and experiences that reflect and celebrate Des Plaines' diversity.

1. **Foster Early Literacy and Family Engagement**
 2. **Empower Youth and Teens**
 3. **Enrich the Lives of Adults and Seniors**
 4. **Celebrate Cultural Diversity and Inclusion**
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GOAL 3: Community Engagement & Partnerships

Deepen relationships with residents, patrons, local organizations, and civic partners to make DPPL a visible, trusted hub for community connection and shared problem-solving.

1. **Strengthen Civic Partnerships**
 2. **Expand Outreach and Visibility**
 3. **Advocate for Patron Wellbeing**
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GOAL 4: Operational Excellence & Organizational Development

Operate DPPL as a safe, efficient, and adaptive organization that values professional growth, internal collaboration, and continuous improvement.

1. **Optimize Staff Development and Retention**
2. **Advance Data-Driven Decision Making**

3. **Maintain an Environmentally Sustainable Facility**
 4. **Enhance Internal Communication and Efficiency**
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GOAL 5: Financial Sustainability & Stewardship

Maintain long-term financial stability and transparency by aligning resources with community priorities and practicing responsible fiscal management.

1. **Integrate Financial Planning with Strategic Goals**
 2. **Expand Opportunities for Giving**
 3. **Ensure Transparency and Accountability**
 4. **Plan for Capital and Infrastructure Sustainability**
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IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

- Departmental action plans will be developed annually to support each strategic goal.
- The Library Board Planning Committee will receive progress reports twice per year.
- Staff, board and community feedback along with emerging trends will inform mid-cycle plan adjustments to ensure continued relevance and impact.

Adopted November 20, 2025