



THIS STRATEGIC PLAN is a departure. It is unique in voice and vision. It is built around goals for the people we serve, the Worthington community and our organization. While it serves the purpose of a traditional plan, providing the framework for the library's future, it also celebrates our collective *raison d'être*: **we are here to help, to serve our patrons and to make our community stronger.**

This plan was developed by library staff over the last 18 months and was informed by community feedback and extensive research done in partnership with OCLC.

We conducted surveys, one-on-one interviews, and asked the community to tell us not only about their library experiences, but also about their own hopes and dreams. We got real. It got personal.

We talked to a teacher trying to find resources for a transgender student, a woman striving to help children in her community and a man nervous about how fatherhood would change his life. People also shared their future plans, from retirement and running for political office to getting in shape and buying a new house. These real-world situations illustrate that everyone who walks through our doors is at a different point in writing their own unique story. From beginning to end, the Library plays a valuable role - be it large or small - in helping people craft these stories.

Our research was affirming of our place in the world and effectively calls poppycock on all those who, since the advent of the Internet, have written articles sounding the death knell for libraries. Our community told us, both in person and as evidenced by the volume of items checked out on an annual basis (more than four million in 2019), what they value most is access to physical books, being in

our brick-and-mortar buildings and the reliability of our staff.

Our patrons were also very specific about what they want the Library to provide. They want everything to be convenient, easy to access and use. They want warm and welcoming spaces and spoke of comfy chairs, fireplaces and coffee. They want to be seen and heard in their lives and to find themselves reflected in the items on our shelves and our staff. Finally, they want to hang out all afternoon (or be in and out with their reserves in five minutes), meet with others (or enjoy some solo quiet time) and try all the things (or stick with what's familiar).

The Library is the place to be for all this and more.

In preparing this strategic plan, we thought it would be fun to put together a collection of songs we are inspired by.

Here's our list of
2020 Strategic Plan Jams:

Move on Up by Curtis Mayfield

Soy Yo by Bomba Estéreo

Feeling Good by Nina Simone

Lean on Me by Bill Withers

Born this Way by Lady Gaga

Everyday People by Sly and the Family Stone

Treat People with Kindness by Harry Styles

Respect by Aretha Franklin

Stronger by Kelly Clarkson

Run the World (Girls) by Beyoncé

Organizing Principles

INDIVIDUAL EMPOWERMENT

Our libraries house millions of stories. Stories about people. People who are different than us. People just like us. Not all of these stories are in books. They are carried in the hearts of everyone around us. Your heart. Your story. ***We are here to help people write their own stories and achieve their dreams.***

Goals

- Craft a **user-centered** library experience
- **Empower people** with the information they need to **improve their lives**
- Promote the Library as a place of **individual transformation**
- **Expand access** to library buildings and resources
- Enhance the **convenience and ease** of using the Library
- **Champion** our unparalleled access to **books**
- **Build relationships** with people who are underserved

COMMUNITY BUILDING

We warmly welcome everyone - all ages, genders, orientations, abilities and backgrounds - in space that is comfortable and safe. ***We represent the diverse community we serve with materials, resources and activities that encourage understanding, inspire kindness and improve life in Worthington.***

- Make the **experience** of visiting our libraries **warm and welcoming** for everyone
- **Increase** organizational **diversity**, both in the collection and staff, to better **represent** our community
- **Celebrate the history and people** of our community
- Develop and grow **partnerships** that strengthen our community
- **Create spaces** and develop **programs** that bring **people together**

ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH

We serve the best community in the world and work with imaginative and inspirational people whose intelligence is outshone only by their kindness. It's pretty great. To keep it that way, ***we will make our library stronger through bold innovation, transparent management and inspirational leadership.***

- **Use data** to align our services with the **needs of our patrons**
- Determine **funding** needed to meet immediate and future goals
- Improve internal and external **communication**
- **Invest in talent** and provide staff with opportunities to be **challenged and grow**
- **Refine our mission**, vision and core values to reflect who we are and **who we want to be**
- Serve as a model for **resilience and sustainability** in the face of a rapidly-changing world