

**MEMORIAL LIBRARY OF NAZARETH & VICINITY**

**REVISED STRATEGIC PLAN**

**2011-13**



## **Introduction:**

The Library recently assessed its current strategic plan, examined the environment in which we are now operating, reviewed our strengths and the challenges within that environment and adapted key existing initiatives for the next two years.

While the revised Plan builds on the achievements of the 2005-2010 Plan and the many accomplishments of the past five years, readers should know that implementing the 2005-2010 Plan was stymied immediately by huge losses in state funding. Nevertheless the past five years have been a period of growth and progress for MLNV and has included the following:

- Agreement on a model for equitable and predictable local funding
- Installation of an updated integrated library system (ILS)
- Increase in the professional part-time reference staff
- Completion of a facility master plan to be implemented by the Nazareth Borough
- Establishment of a grant-funded mobile staff technology lab for ongoing trustee/staff instruction

Additional information on the achievements of the 2005-2010 plan is found in the 2010 Executive Summary.

The revised plan presented here has been developed to chart a course for the next two years and includes a set of initiatives which take into consideration the following realities:

- A national economic recession which hampers the maximization of our investment decisions
- The prospect of continued draconian cuts in state aid
- Increased competition for municipal funding

We are living in an era of rapid change, driven by technology and social change. In this context, the Library envisions itself as a center for knowledge for the communities it serves. Recognizing that our staff is our most valuable asset and the key component in realizing all of our plans, we are committed to providing a well- trained, customer-oriented and competitively paid staff.

No one can predict with accuracy what our world will be like in 2012, but this plan attempts to prepare us to be “financially strong, champions of books, patrons of knowledge and most importantly a major access point of the benefits of the digital age.”<sup>1</sup>

In 2012 our success will be evaluated by using the following strategic perspectives:

- Adherence to the agreed upon equitable and predictable local funding formula
- An endowment principal that is protected as much as possible from the economic climate
- Enhanced alliances with the business, social and educational organizations
- Providing more digital content, tools and services
- Enhancing library spaces in coordination with the needs of the community
- Improving the user experience by understanding library customer’s needs and using that information to shape our collections, spaces and services

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<sup>1</sup>Source: William Gates, 2009.

To evaluate the Library's success in achieving its initiatives, key performance indicators will include the following:

Public Service Performance Indicators:

1. Circulation & online resources use
2. Library visits
3. Program attendance & registration
4. Customer satisfaction rates
5. Collection turnover rates
6. Hours open

Operational Service Performance Indicators:

1. Network & integrated library system reliability (ILS)
2. Item turnaround time (receipt to shelf ready)
3. Training hours per staff/trustee
4. Library budget per capita & per circulation

Achieving this vision will require extraordinary leadership, calculated risk-taking and a firm commitment by all who want to help. Staff, supporters and the public must be assured that we will remain foremost an independent and vibrant institution. Our core purpose will continue to be to collect, organize and make accessible recorded knowledge. But our future includes the use of new knowledge sources and the use of technology to increase accessibility and distribution of information to those who need it anytime, anywhere.

Technology demands that we develop a professional staff which is paramount to our quality of service. However, we will continue to create opportunities to engage volunteers in service to the Library, not to supplant the work of our employees, but to supplement our efforts. All human resources, paid or volunteer, will be engaged to promote customer-oriented, quality library service.

Any success in soliciting private support for our services will not jeopardize the public trust that has been given us. Private donations will not be used as a substitute for predictable and equitable public funding of our core library operations. Instead, private donations and grants will be used to increase and enhance the variety of services we offer.

**Plan Implementation:**

This plan is a commitment to excellence. During the next two years, annual library operational plans that are based on the plan will be developed as funds permit. At that time, performance indicators with more specific target levels and measures will be identified as library operational plans are put into place.

Lynn Snodgrass-Pilla, Director

**Mission:**

The Memorial Library of Nazareth & Vicinity provides free and open access to the universe of ideas and information without distinction as to income, religion, nationality, or other human condition. The mission of the Library is to use its available resources to provide a balanced collection of library materials and information services in a wide range of traditional and non-traditional formats. The purpose of this mission is to protect intellectual freedom, promote literacy, and encourage lifelong learning among the citizens of our service area, which includes *Nazareth Borough, Lower Nazareth Township, Upper Nazareth Township and Bushkill Township.*

## **Vision:**

Recognizing that the world is ever-changing, the Library intends to continue to be a vital community center of knowledge and information for all. It will be accessible 24/7 via the library webpage. The Library will be a leader in traditional and innovative library services that support lifelong learning and reflect the diverse and changing needs of the communities it serves.

## **Strategic Initiatives**

The initiatives and strategies outlined below provide guidelines for future developments. Items referred to in the strategic planning process included: state requirements and mandated levels of service, a Community Assessment Survey, the current Technology plan, and a Facilities Needs Report. Six initiatives were identified as being of particular importance to the public, staff, management and the Board.<sup>2 3 4</sup> These initiatives strive to maintain a balanced approach to ensuring the continuation and improvement of the library's current services, coupled with the enhancement and addition of new services and functions.

The initiatives and strategies outlined in the plan are not static and are meant to be dynamic. Because the library has limited staff, it is assumed that the person/s responsible for implementing the plan are the Director and staff as designated by the Director. All initiatives are under the direction of the Board. The plan will be monitored and reviewed, and progress reports will be submitted periodically to the Board.

### **Initiative #1: Sound Financial Management and Community Partnership**

Maximize available resources through cooperative financial planning and management by:

- Obtaining adequate resources to ensure quality public library services;
- Managing financial resources effectively;
- Allocating financial resources equitably;
- Continuing to offer Tatamy and Stockertown the opportunity to become a local funding municipality subject to the same equitable and predictable funding method as our current supporting municipalities.
- Adhering to the agreed upon permanent equitable and predictable local funding formula.

### **Initiative #2: Customer Services**

Provide quality customer library services for more service area residents by:

- Continuing to meet the needs of core library service for library constituencies;
- Meeting the needs of two emerging audiences, teens and the unemployed;
- Providing 24/7 library services through the use of enhanced online technology including the library web-site to reflect relevant community information;
- Increasing collection expenditures as funds allow;
- Providing educational program opportunities for all ages and groups on identified topics of interest;

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<sup>2</sup> Appendix A. Ivy Group Inc., Community Assessment Survey, 2004.

<sup>3</sup> Appendix B Library Technology Plan 2008-2011

<sup>4</sup> Appendix C Facilities Needs Report 2009

- Providing opportunities for people to develop information literacy and knowledge management skills;
- Promoting the library as a center for knowledge;
- Developing programs for parents to encourage recreational reading with their children and strengthening library orientation for parents;
- Increasing programming, collection development and outreach services for youth;
- Developing marketing materials that target teens as users of electronic resources;
- Continuing collaborative efforts with teen education providers to introduce and assist educators in the use of library services, materials and programs;
- Continuing collaborative efforts with educational institutions in the Library's service area for children and pre-school children.

### **Initiative # 3: Facilities Management**

Embrace efficient processes, effective internal communications and ongoing evaluation by providing customers with a quality facility by:

- Exploring options for increasing the physical size of the library to accommodate events and the collection;
- Improving facility structures, maintenance and accessibility to reflect the highest standards and to meet standards for state mandated levels of support;
- Promoting effective staff and board communications with the Borough of Nazareth about the needs of the facility;
- Evaluating and adopting efficient, cost-effective library processes.

### **Initiative #4: New Technologies**

Continue to offer new technologies that enhance the delivery of traditional services and to provide access to new technology-based library services in order to become a major access point of the benefits of the digital age by:

- Being guided by the current technology plan which will be updated on a regular basis;
- Monitoring and evaluating new technologies that will broaden electronic access and offer new services;
- Increasing the use of electronic resources in-house and remotely, including the OPEN SOURCE products that can be used as an integrated library system and for management of public access computers (e.g. USERFUL);
- Continuing to develop, design and promote a comprehensive virtual library via the Library's website;
- Establish public information literacy programs and computer skills programs that will help all patrons develop the skills to use, find and evaluate reliable electronic information;
- Aggressively market the Library's technological services to all users.

### **Initiative #5: Library Advocacy and Innovation**

Raise the Library's profile and visibility to position the Library as the unique and essential institution it is by:

- Developing staff and trustee learning opportunities to enable the Library to better serve its customers;
- Increasing the Library's ability to respond to economic, social and technology trends;
- Continuing to forge partnerships with educational institutions, community agencies and organizations;
- Regularly surveying customers and non-users to evaluate their awareness of our programs and services and our effectiveness in meeting their needs.

### **Initiative#6: Organizational Effectiveness**

Review organizational policies and procedures that support the efficient operation of the library by staff members and develop the role of the Library Board in gaining support from elected officials and strengthening the image of the library throughout its service area by:

- Hiring a fulltime reference librarian;
- Hiring a program/community development staff member;
- Continuing to actively attract and retain quality staff;
- Seeking increases in compensation to replace and retain quality staff;
- Supporting and encouraging staff ideas and suggestions that promote the goals of the organization;
- Providing staff training and professional development using continuing educational opportunities as well as WebJunction online opportunities;
- Continuing to develop and adapt a standard of core competencies for all staff positions;
- Expanding the advocacy role of the Board to improve the image of the Library as an essential community resource;
- Continuing to offer a Board orientation program which provides an introduction to state standards of library service through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, WebJunction and the Pennsylvania Library Association.