



**A COMMUNITY-CENTERED STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

**2019-2022**

**Parkland Community Library**

**Strategic Plan**

**Adopted: June 24, 2019**

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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

This Strategic Plan coincides with a new era for the Parkland Community Library (PCL), in two very significant ways.

This year, we joined the newly-formed Lehigh Carbon Library Cooperative, greatly expanding the collection of books, periodicals, and movies readily available to PCL users. The cooperative's 11 participating libraries share all library materials through a daily delivery system, allowing residents throughout the service area to specify the library where they will pick up their items, and to return items at any of the member libraries. In addition to the 61,000 items housed in our library, Parkland users now have easy access to an additional 440,000. We're very excited and pleased that several years of planning have resulted in a higher level of service which is being thoroughly embraced by our users.

Equally as exciting is the opportunity we are now exploring which will result in a larger library at our current site on the South Whitehall Township campus. We serve all Parkland School District residents from babies to senior citizens and, when opened in 1981, our 5,400 square foot building was already undersized for the population served. Population growth over the past 38 years means we now serve nearly 60,000 people, greatly increasing demand for story hours, cultural and educational programs for all ages, and space where the community can connect. While a 2015 renovation resulted in a bright and modern redesign of the existing library, we are currently working on an expansion plan that will provide much needed community meeting space, a quiet study area, expanded adult and children's collections, and a children's area that better meets the needs of our smallest users.

## **CORE BELIEFS AND PURPOSE**

### ***Mission***

*The library connects people to each other and the world, serving as the cornerstone of our community by providing access to information, technology and cultural enrichment for a lifetime of learning and enjoyment.*

### ***Vision***

*To be a thriving community where all residents are empowered to connect, discover, and grow.*

We are committed to meeting the needs of our growing community and to being the place where our residents can pursue lifelong learning opportunities.

### ***Who We Serve***

The Parkland Community Library serves the residents of South Whitehall Township, North Whitehall Township, Upper Macungie Township, and residents of Allentown Wards 17 and 18.

### ***Core Values***

The core values listed below represent the beliefs and behaviors by which all members of the Parkland Community Library as an organization commit to conduct themselves. These values provide a baseline for making and evaluating all library decisions:

- **Patron-Focused Service** – We focus on supporting the needs of our community members by always providing a high level of service.
- **Integrity** – We conduct ourselves in a manner that is ethical, legal and professional, with the highest degree of honesty, respect and fairness.
- **Forward Thinking** - The Library keeps up to date with current trends when serving the community.

- **Stewardship** – The Board of Directors serves as trusted stewards of the Parkland community financial resources and is responsible for spending while conserving for future generations of library users.
- **Professional Ethics** - We are guided by the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association (ALA) , the Library Bill of Rights, and ALA’s Freedom to Read Statement. We adhere to ALA policies on freedom of expression and free access to ideas. We endorse equity, intellectual freedom, privacy, net neutrality, diversity and inclusion, and reject censorship or any abridgement of a user’s rights based on their origin, age, background, or views.

## **STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS**

The library's Executive Director and Board of Directors decided upon a community-based process to guide the development of this Strategic Plan and thus the course of the library over the next three years.

Internally, the process involved several steps which included receiving feedback from library staff, volunteers, board of directors and Friends of Parkland Community Library. In all cases, they were asked the same questions:

1. What are the biggest challenges to the Parkland community?
2. What should ten years in the future look like for our community? What would change?
3. How can the library contribute to that better future?

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### ***Community Participation***

To begin, a survey about services, physical environment, staff, communication, and the collection was placed on the library's Web site, with input primarily from library users.

We then engaged the services of a professional facilitator for two large community meetings. The community as a whole was invited, as were leaders in the community, including school board members, elected officials, and township commissioners and managers. They were asked the same three questions above.

## COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS

Responses from all focus groups and surveys were combined and the top five items identified by participants were chosen as goals for this strategic plan.

1. **SUPPORT DIVERSITY** with classes, collections, and community collaborations, and provide a welcoming environment for non-English speaking (or “English as a second language”) residents.
2. **MEET THE NEEDS OF JOB SEEKERS** by offering programs and technology to increase skills and assist with career planning.
3. **CREATE A LIBRARY WITHOUT WALLS** by providing programs, events and resources throughout the Parkland service area.
4. **ENCOURAGE INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNICATION AND LEARNING** by hosting programs and projects in a safe and supervised environment.
5. **SUPPORT INCREASED COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS, EDUCATION, AND ENRICHMENT** by providing additional meeting room space.

## NEXT STEPS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

As with any plan, the success of this strategic plan hinges on accountability, action, and follow-through. Therefore, for each goal listed above we have created action items with specific owners, teams and projected completion dates.

To ensure this stays a viable, living document, the library’s Executive Director will make these action items a part of applicable meeting agendas with staff and the management team. “Process Owners” will also assume responsibility for overseeing and meeting the stated objectives and deadlines with full participation from their affiliated team members. The Board will conduct an annual Strategic Plan assessment, and input will be sought from residents in 2022 in the form of a community-wide survey to measure satisfaction with our progress in meeting the goals of this Strategic Plan.