



EAST BATON ROUGE PARISH
LIBRARY

**East Baton Rouge Parish Library
Strategic Plan Update
2022 to 2024**

Introduction

East Baton Rouge Parish Library is an essential contributor to the community's quality of life and is widely recognized as a key service organization. The libraries are heavily used and responsive to community needs. People know they are welcome, and their interests and needs will be respected. The Library strives to provide equitable and free access to library services, engaging experiences, and programs for all residents of our diverse parish.

The Library has made significant progress on the goals in the last Strategic Plan but the urgency of responding to the Covid-19 pandemic that began in 2020 delayed the development of a new, updated plan. Instead, the Library focused on effectively responding to the crisis by pivoting its services and operations to meet the immediate needs of the community and safely providing access to information and assistance.

The Library's staff has been resilient, dedicated, and creative in helping bring the goals in the previous strategic plan to fruition. They demonstrated flexibility and adaptability in the face of Covid-19 and weather emergencies.

As a result of the last strategic plan and a specific capital improvement plan, great progress has been made to improve many Library buildings. The attractive facilities provide access throughout the parish to collections, technology, and programming space for people of all ages. New buildings, renovations, and expansions of existing facilities, as well as major repairs are underway, being planned, or have been completed. The capital improvement program will continue to be a part of the updated strategic plan.

Technology remains an essential part of this strategic plan. The Library will continue to upgrade equipment and software to assist, instruct, and provide access to equipment and online resources. The Library's role as a valued and essential partner in the most important initiatives and programs being undertaken in the parish is growing and will become even stronger.

This Strategic Plan Update is built on the strengths of the Library. It responds to changes in the community and in public library services and will continue the progress made in previous years.

Celebrating Recent Major Accomplishments

The Library was able to make continued progress toward achieving the Strategic Plan's goals even though the Covid-19 response was a primary focus during 2020 and much of 2021. Some of the major accomplishments during that time are provided below.

Customer Experience during Covid-19

- Provided library materials in various ways, including curbside, drive-thru, walk-up, and lobby pick up. Library staff continued to provide telephone and online reference services throughout the Stay-at-Home period.
- Provided digital e-cards online so new customers could access services and collections remotely. Created e-cards for all students attending local school systems.
- Developed video instructions on how to use online library resources and virtual platforms.
- Implemented a phased reopening; all facilities are now open seven days per week.

Outreach and Partnerships

- Library staff developed relationships with government agencies, serving on the Data Governance Committee, Open Data Initiative, All Hazards Recovery Initiative, Mayor's Task Force for Literacy, Mayor's Task Force for Litter, Mayor's Task Force for Homelessness, Summer of Hope, and other campaigns designed to strengthen the community.
- The Library formed partnerships with new community organizations such as the LA Stem Council, the Center for Literacy and Learning, and the BR Area Youth Network; maintained productive relationships with Volunteers of America, Capital Area United Way, BR Area Chamber, BR Area Foundation, LA Public Broadcasting, Capital Area Human Services, and Healthy City, among others.
- The Library's Small Business Service created an alliance with the new Metropolitan Black Chamber, hosting the inaugural Black Business Marketplace in 2022.
- Provided special assistance during the pandemic to promote the arts community.

Programs, Services and Collections

- Provided robust Career and Small Business Services.
- Added additional online information and learning resources.
- Streamed virtual programming for children, teens, and adults with anytime access to recorded programs.
- Restarted programming and meeting room use in Libraries.

Technology

- Upgraded Wi-Fi at all facilities and expanded access into adjacent outdoor space and parking lots.
- Provided staff with a variety of virtual meeting and programming platforms including Zoom, WebEx, Teams and Facebook Live.
- Initiated a Wi-Fi hot spot lending program.
- Opened River Center Library Makerspace, Technology Lab, and Digital Recording Studio, and launched Innovation Spaces at Greenwell Springs Road Regional and Jones Creek Regional Branch Libraries.

Facilities and Operations

- Opened River Center Library in 2020.
- Completed renovations of Greenwell Springs Road Regional Branch Library 2020.
- Completed Jones Creek Regional Branch Library addition and renovation in 2021.
- Replaced Outreach Service Building roof and HVAC.
- Completed designs for the new South Branch Library as well as the renovated and expanded Scotlandville Branch Library; construction should commence for both projects in 2023.
- Began design development for the Baker Branch renovation project in 2022.

Organizational Development

- Deployed a Community Assessment Survey that received nearly 1,800 responses. The survey identified respondents' priorities for library services, technology, collections and indicated respondents' very high satisfaction with the Library's staff and services.
- Provided training for library managers on Inclusive Leadership.
- Offered staff training on a variety of topics ranging from Coping with Compassion Fatigue to Serving the Homeless to Safe Driving.
- Completed an organizational assessment in 2021 with surveys and focus groups conducted by a consultant.

Strategic Plan Update

The following mission, vision, values, goals and strategies were developed with input from the Library's customer survey, a staff survey, and staff focus groups from 2021 to 2022.

Mission and Vision

Mission: *The Library is a community service organization that provides access and connects people to information, resources, materials, technology, and experiences to make a positive difference in their lives.*

Vision: *The Library strengthens its role as an essential partner in the success of the community as a center of learning, knowledge, literacy, communication, culture, creativity, discovery, and enjoyment for all people.*

Values

Community, Opportunity, Inclusion, Learning, and Service

Goals and Strategies

Goal 1. Patron Experience: Create a customer experience that is inclusive, positive, responsive, and consistent.

- 1.1 Provide memorable and positive experiences for all patrons.
- 1.2 Improve the Library's customer engagement processes and create new methods for gathering constructive customer feedback.
- 1.3 Promote services and programs through a variety of methods, platforms, and channels with an emphasis on reaching underserved segments of the population.
- 1.4 Provide free and equitable access to Library programs and services for all residents of our diverse parish.

Goal 2. Outreach and Partnerships: Continue to fulfill an essential leadership role in major community initiatives and programs related to the Library's mission, and align resources with other partners to better serve the parish.

- 2.1 Strengthen existing and cultivate new working relationships to expand partnerships and strategic alliances.
- 2.2 Promote the Library's existing Community Information Database, the Baton Rouge City Key, and other resources to local agencies and organizations.
- 2.3 Leverage current Library staff to serve as liaisons with community organizations.
- 2.4 Invest in additional staff and other resources to support new and existing partnerships.
- 2.5 Use the investment provided by the taxpayers to improve the Library's ability to deliver services wherever people are.

Goal 3. Programs, Services, and Collections: Provide programs, services, and collections to address the changing needs and diverse interests of our community.

- 3.1 Develop and expand programs, services, and collections through a diversity, equity and inclusion framework.
- 3.2 Provide robust early literacy programs and collections, to support parents, caregivers and teachers with specialized resources.
- 3.3 Remaining responsive to emerging and expressed community needs, the Library will create and expand programs, services and resources that inspire and support workforce development, lifelong learning, and success for patrons of all ages.
- 3.4 Expand programs, services, and collections to support STEM and STEAM.
- 3.5 Create and provide access to original local content.
- 3.6 Increase opportunities to introduce people to varied perspectives, ideas, community concerns, and social challenges.

Goal 4. Technology: Provide equitable access and support for current and emerging technology to meet community needs.

- 4.1 Continually assess, maintain, and upgrade the Library's digital infrastructure to improve the user experience.
- 4.2 Improve and expand the Library's technology and support systems.
- 4.3 Provide training for Library patrons and staff in the use of digital tools, resources, and equipment.
- 4.4 Provide opportunities for patrons to gain experience with new consumer technology and equipment to support lifelong learning and workforce development.
- 4.5 Update the Technology Strategic Plan on an ongoing basis in response to continuous evaluation of emerging technology needs.

Goal 5. Facilities and Operations: Create and maintain welcoming, safe, and stimulating spaces that serve our community. Continue sound financial planning and prudent fiscal practices as good stewards of the taxpayers' money.

- 5.1 Update current Facilities Maintenance Plan to refresh, repurpose, renew, and modernize Library facilities and building systems.
- 5.2 Update the Capital Improvements Plan to include new types of specialized service facilities and community access points, as well as major improvements to existing facilities.
- 5.3 Continue to improve facilities maintenance, safety, and operations procedures, incorporating sustainable building features and practices.
- 5.4 Create a user-friendly experience and environment.
- 5.5 Continue to improve the building infrastructure to support high-speed broadband and any other technologies that improve library efficiencies and the patron experience.

Goal 6. Organizational Development: Foster employee engagement through continuing development, open communication, and opportunities to thrive, within the context of a customer-focused culture.

- 6.1 Create a welcoming, safe, and inclusive team environment.
- 6.2 Actively seek to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.
- 6.3 Develop the skills of Library personnel to benefit both employees and patrons.
- 6.4 Mentor staff and grow leaders to ensure a vibrant and sustainable workforce.
- 6.5 Devise strategies and specific approaches to foster job satisfaction, including rewarding and recognizing staff performance.
- 6.6 Use performance management and succession planning processes to support employee development and advancement.
- 6.7 Develop a communications plan to improve internal communications and collaboration within the Library's workforce.

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