

STRATEGIC PLAN

2026-2030

Generating Change.
Transforming Lives.



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WELCOME

Generating Change. Transforming Lives. These are words you will see throughout the Vigo County Public Library — whether on signage within our buildings, in social media posts announcing upcoming programs, or on the back of a staff member’s T-shirt at an outreach event. These words represent the library’s vision for the many communities we serve: Terre Haute, Vigo County, the Wabash Valley, and beyond.

This newly developed Strategic Plan, spanning 2026–2030, reaffirms VCPL’s commitment to creating meaningful change and positively impacting lives every day. Just as importantly, this plan reflects our core values of inclusiveness, community, collaboration, innovation, and accountability.

VCPL began developing this plan in the fall of 2025, a year marked by new leadership and emerging perspectives within the library. The planning process began when VCPL partnered with Indiana-based firm Stratavize Consulting, recognizing that their values surrounding growth, transformation, and community engagement aligned closely with our own. A core strategic planning team made up of VCPL staff members was assembled to help lay the foundation for this work.

Using regional metrics alongside nearly 2,000 survey responses from community members and library staff, we began building a framework for the future. Those insights were further strengthened through multiple visioning sessions that brought together feedback and perspectives from VCPL staff across all levels of the organization. The result is a strategy designed to create positive change not only for those who already call VCPL home, but also for those who have yet to discover everything the library has to offer.

As this strategic plan unfolds over the next five years — which includes celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Main Library opening in its current location — we will continue developing new ways to meet the evolving needs of our community. Whether embracing emerging technologies or upholding the timeless principles that define public libraries, VCPL remains committed to serving our community with purpose and innovation.

We will continue partnering with local service organizations, elected officials, businesses, artists, educators, and community members, all of whom played an important role in shaping this plan. VCPL is uniquely positioned to meet a wide variety of community needs by connecting families with engaging programs, supporting job seekers and entrepreneurs through print and digital resources, and providing community groups with gathering spaces, high-speed internet, and other essential services.

While this strategic plan focuses on expanding the impact we make every day, it also takes an inward look at how we support and invest in the VCPL staff members who make our mission possible. Their dedication, expertise, and passion are the foundation of everything we accomplish.

On behalf of the Vigo County Public Library, thank you for being part of our mission and vision of Generating Change and Transforming Lives.



JORDAN ORWIG
Executive Director



JAMES YOUNG
President of the VCPL
Board of Trustees

ABOUT US

About the Vigo County Public Library

Vigo County Public Library has served the residents of Terre Haute and Vigo County Indiana since 1882 when local school trustees purchased the existing public library from the Terre Haute Library Association.

Our Vision

Generating Change. Transforming Lives.

Our Mission

Vigo County Public Library generates positive change in the community by creating an environment of opportunity in which people can explore, expand their perspectives, and transform their own lives and the lives of future generations.

Our Core Values



Inclusiveness

We respect individual perspectives and diverse backgrounds and make cultural and intellectual resources available to all.



Community

We are committed to and invested in the betterment of the community.



Collaboration

We work in concert with strategic partners to help the community flourish.



Innovation

We invigorate our community and stimulate a creative economy through inventive ideas and services.



Accountability

We manage our resources responsibly to maintain public trust.

LISTENING BEFORE LEADING

Every strategic plan begins with a choice.
We can assume we know what our community needs,
or we can listen to what our community tells us.

At the Vigo County Public Library, we chose to listen.

Nearly **1,900 community members** participated in our strategic planning survey, sharing their experiences, priorities, and hopes for the future of their library. Participants included both current library cardholders (70.61%) and community members who do not currently have a library card (29.39%), giving us valuable insight from people who regularly use the library as well as those we have an opportunity to serve better.

The results affirmed what many in our community already know: **81.64% of respondents identified the Vigo County Public Library as an essential community resource.** At the same time, the survey challenged us to think beyond maintaining what exists today. It encouraged us to consider how the library can remove barriers, strengthen relationships, adapt services to changing community needs, and continue creating opportunities for every resident.

Community members told us they value welcoming spaces, lifelong learning, meaningful programs, trusted information, and access to resources that improve everyday life. They also reminded us that not everyone experiences the library in the same way. Transportation, work schedules, technology access, awareness, and other life circumstances can all influence whether someone is able to benefit from the services the library provides. Some have had their lives transformed simply by offering the community a safe, clean place to take a shower, do laundry, and apply for jobs and housing.

Those conversations shaped every part of this strategic plan. The priorities that follow are rooted in what we heard from our community and reflect our commitment to ensuring the Vigo County Public Library remains a trusted, relevant, and responsive resource for years to come.

1,895
community survey
responses

71%
of respondents currently
hold a library card

29%
represented perspectives
from non-cardholders

82%
believe VCPL is an essential
community resource

54%
of current users visit
at least monthly

35%
believe early childhood
readiness is important



A COMMUNITY OF POSSIBILITY

Every library program, collection, technology, partnership, and conversation exists for a reason —not simply to provide services, but to expand opportunity. When people discover and fully use everything their library offers, the impact reaches far beyond our walls. Families grow stronger. Businesses innovate. Creativity flourishes. Neighbors connect. Learning becomes lifelong. This is the community we're working to make possible.



VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY'S SERVICES & RESOURCES

Programs for Patrons

Adult Programs



- Legislative Crackerbarrels
- Talk to a Lawyer events
- Tech Savvy Seniors
- Local History Walks
- Creative Writing Programs
- Fall Festival of Writers

Youth Programs



- Lego Lab
- Storytimes
- Curious Kids
- Animals Around the World
- Read to Rover
- Libratory
- Sensory Play

All Ages Programs



- Book Clubs
- Arts & Craft programs
- Fandom programs
- Cooking programs
- Escape Rooms
- Technology classes
- Experience VR events
- Bingo events
- Community Read Programming
- Life-Size Oregon Trail
- Summer Reading Program
- West Summer Celebration
- Family Learning Day
- Halloween Book Giveaway
- Con at the Crossroads
- Christmas with the Grinch
- Friends Book Sales

Services for Patrons

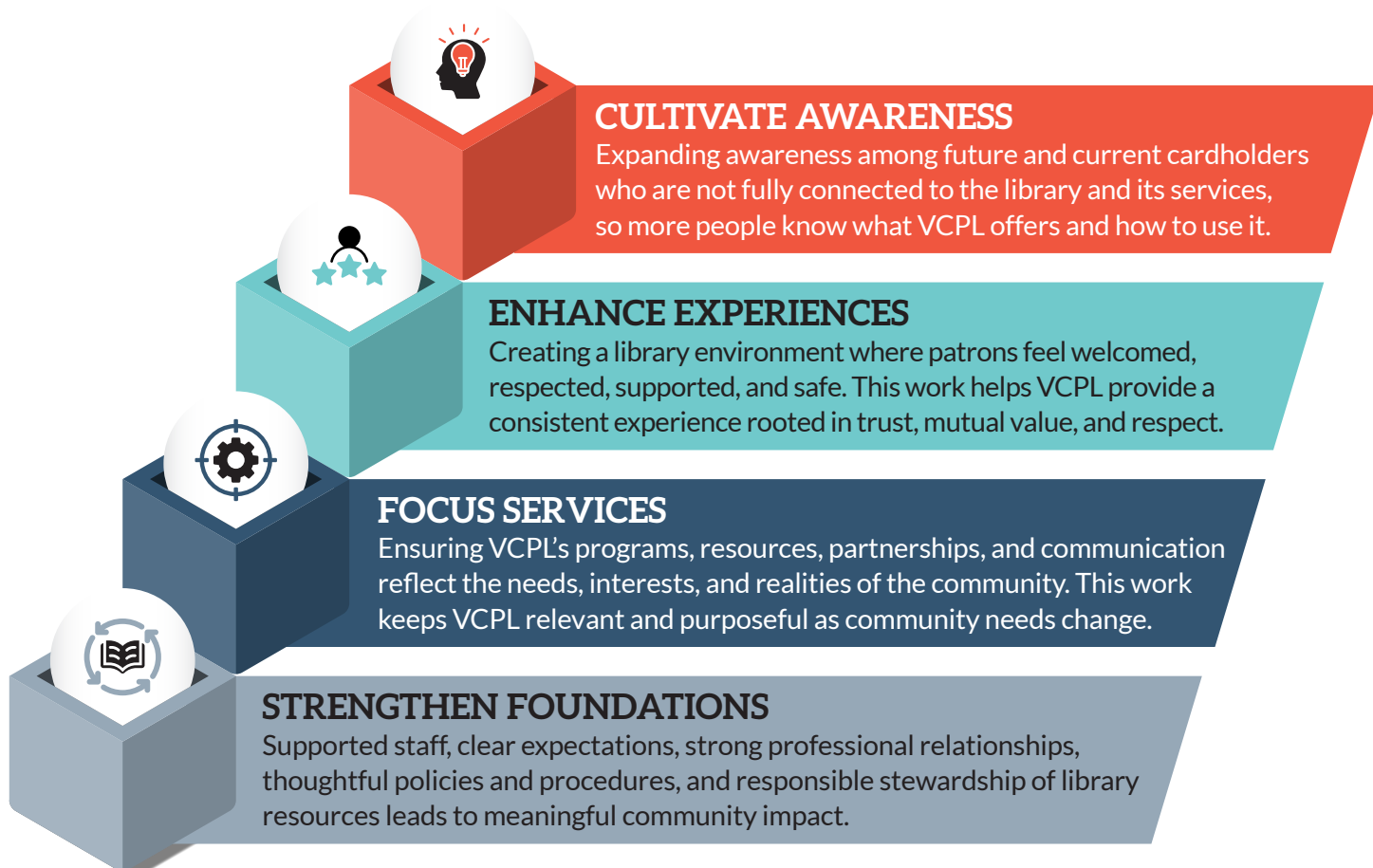


- Delivery Services
- Book-a-Librarian
- Material Request
- Meeting Rooms
- Printing
- Notary
- Faxing
- Research Assistance
- Local History Records
- Haute Create (Makerspace)
- Haute Studio (Sound Booth)
- 3D Printing
- Library of Things
- Tool Library
- Splash Pad
- Clean Up Space

OUR STRATEGIES

The Vigo County Public Library exists to expand opportunity, strengthen connections, and enrich the lives of the people it serves. Achieving that vision doesn't happen through a single program, collection, or service. It requires intentional decisions about how we welcome people, deliver services, support our staff, and respond to the changing needs of our community.

These four strategic priorities represent the areas where we will focus our time, energy, and resources over the next several years. Together, they provide a clear roadmap for ensuring VCPL remains a trusted, relevant, and forward-thinking community resource—one that empowers people to learn, create, connect, and thrive.





PILLAR 1:

CULTIVATE AWARENESS

Expanding awareness among future and current cardholders who are not fully connected to the library and its services, so more people know what VCPL offers and how to use it.



Goal:

Community members can more easily access and use VCPL's spaces, resources, information, and services in ways that reflect their needs and life circumstances.

We will accomplish this goal by:

- Exploring ways to reach community members whose location, schedule, transportation, or life circumstances make traditional library use difficult.
- Reducing barriers that make it harder for community members to use library spaces, resources, information, and services.
- Making library information, displays, signage, and resources easier to understand and navigate.
- Expanding VCPL's marketing and storytelling so that a greater audience recognizes the library's continuing value and relevance.

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**I would not
be the person
I am without
our public
libraries.**

– Survey Respondent

We know this work is successful when we see:

- Future library cardholders take the first step into VCPL, use available resources, and see the library as relevant to their everyday needs.
- Current cardholders move beyond limited or occasional use and begin seeing VCPL as a more complete source of learning, connection, support, and opportunity in their lives.
- Community members who face barriers to traditional library use are better able to access VCPL in ways that increase connection, opportunity, and support.





PILLAR 2:

ENHANCE EXPERIENCES

Creating a library environment where patrons feel welcomed, respected, supported, and safe. This work helps VCPL provide a consistent experience rooted in trust, mutual value, and respect.



Goal:

Patrons experience VCPL as a welcoming, trustworthy, and respectful community space to learn, gather, and connect.

We will accomplish this goal by:

- Creating a consistent, welcoming, and non-partisan environment where every visitor feels valued.
- Equipping staff with customer service practices that reduce conflict, increase cooperation, and foster community trust.
- Ensuring our spaces and interactions empower patrons to learn, gather, explore, and connect with confidence.

“

**Our library,
librarians, and
staff are amazing.
The library is my
happy place.**

– Survey Respondent

We know this work is successful when we see:

- Patrons feel comfortable asking for help, participating in library experiences, and using VCPL spaces without fear of judgment or conflict.
- Staff and patrons are better able to navigate questions, concerns, and difficult interactions with confidence, cooperation, and trust.
- Patrons build a stronger sense of belonging at VCPL, making them more likely to return, engage with others, and view the library as a place where they are known, valued, and supported.





PILLAR 3:

FOCUS SERVICES

Ensuring VCPL's programs, resources, partnerships, and communication reflect the needs, interests, and realities of the community. This work keeps VCPL relevant and purposeful as community needs change.



Goal:

VCPL's programs, resources, partnerships, and communication are relevant, purposeful, and aligned with the needs of a diverse community.

We will accomplish this goal by:

- Designing programs, services, and resources that are purposeful, high-quality, and adaptive to changing community needs.
- Developing and maintaining quality, effective partnerships that reflect the community and amplify our shared impact.
- Evaluating our programs, resources, partnerships, and communication efforts regularly to ensure they align with community needs, mission, and internal capacity.

“

The library's programming was part of the reason we chose to move here.

– Survey Respondent

We know this work is successful when we see:

- More community members use our programs, resources, and services to solve problems, pursue interests, build skills, and participate more fully in community life.
- Strategic partnerships lead to clear, efficient, high-impact community outcomes.
- The library offers a diverse range of services while maintaining sustainable workloads for staff.
- Measurable growth in community goodwill, library usage, and local advocacy.





PILLAR 4:

STRENGTHEN FOUNDATIONS

Supported staff, clear expectations, strong professional relationships, thoughtful policies and procedures, and responsible stewardship of library resources leads to meaningful community impact.



Goal:

VCPL's staff support, internal clarity, infrastructure, and stewardship practices serve the community well and sustain the work over time.

We will accomplish this goal by:

- Supporting staff growth, retention, professional relationships, and knowledge of our resources and services.
- Clarifying expectations, roles, communication, and decision-making so staff feel confident and competent in their work.
- Structuring policies and procedures for consistency, accountability, and professionalism.
- Assessing and directing our infrastructure and financial practices for continued responsible use of taxpayer dollars and to ensure that facilities and computer systems meet modern-day community demands.
- Aligning priorities, capacity, and resources so we can make realistic decisions and avoid overextending staff.
- Developing and strengthening relationships with local public officials, regional public libraries, and community ambassadors to increase awareness of the library's impact and foster informed support for its mission and services.

We know this work is successful when we see:

- Staff at all levels feel more supported, confident, competent, and connected across the organization.
- VCPL benefits from stronger staff morale, retention, and professional growth.
- Staff at all levels have clearer expectations, roles, and decision-making practices.
- Policies, procedures, facilities, and technology systems better support on-going service to the community.
- VCPL balances community expectations, fiscal responsibility, staff capacity, and long-term organizational stability.
- VCPL experiences meaningful support from local public officials and community ambassadors, demonstrated through visible and vocal advocacy and increased awareness of the library's impact in our community.
- Facilities, spaces, systems, and software are maintained and updated regularly to maintain proper functions and align with current technologies.



“

**Thank you for
being invested
in our thriving
community.**

– Survey Respondent

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Vigo County Public Library's primary funding source is local property taxes. The Library also receives local income taxes and miscellaneous revenues that support the operating budget. Available fund balances in the General Fund, and other appropriate funds allow VCPL to meet its cash flow requirements without having to use short-term borrowing instruments.

VCPL pursues grant opportunities when available and appropriate. VCPL also appreciates generous donations from individuals and organizations.

As stewards of taxpayer and donor resources, the VCPL board and staff commit to financial transparency and accountability. Allocation of financial resources is and will continue to be managed responsibly and with due diligence. Additionally, the Library acknowledges that without highly capable staff, the Library's mission will never be achieved. The management and development of staff is essential work carried out by trained professionals and supplemented by formal education, community engagement, and support from the Human Resources department.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to everyone who participated in the process of creating the strategic plan before you. Your voices helped create this vision for the future of VCPL.

Steering Committee (Shaleena Barker, Luke Gentry, Carey LaBella, Jordan Orwig, and Ashley Wadsworth):

Thank you for lending your time, talents, and guidance to this process.

Leadership team (VCPL Board of Trustees, Administration, Management): Your support is invaluable as we shape our next few years.

Visioning Session Participants: We appreciate your engagement and candid feedback, which helped make this a strong plan.

VCPL Staff: Thank you for your strong participation in the strategic planning process. The insights shared through the staff survey helped guide the development of the plan, and staff will continue to play an active role in implementation.

Community Partners: Thank you for advocating for the community survey. Without your help, the survey would not have seen the amount of success it did. We look forward to the positive impact we can continue to make together

Community Members: We appreciate your thoughtful and sincere responses, and we value the opportunity to continue serving you.

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Secretary, George Heubel
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Stacy Killion
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LIBRARY MANAGEMENT TEAM

Senior Leadership

Jordan Orwig, Executive Director

Rob Boyll, Director of Human Resources

Heather Rayl, Director of Technology and Special Services

Dennis Shepard Jr, Director of Support Services

Jeanette Bouchie, Director of Public Services

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Lola Snyder, Youth Services

Curt Huffman, Information Systems
& Technology Systems

Hope Rice, Program & Events

Shaleena Barker, Public Relations

Luke Gentry, West Branch

David Kite, Special Collections

Crystal Ward, 12 Points Branch



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VIGO COUNTY PUBLIC
Library

GENERATING CHANGE. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

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