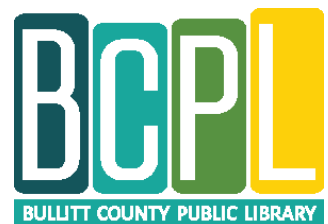




BRILLIANT AMBITION

Strategic Agenda 2019 - 2024





THIS IS FOR YOU.

The Bullitt County Public Library exists as it does today thanks to the generosity and dedication of its employees and supporters, past and present. Our history is filled with the hard work of community organizers and volunteers, locations in donated spaces, and more than a few flooded buildings. We hope that this story is one that continues forever and that all of our patrons know that the Library offers everyone the chance to explore, learn, and enjoy.

OUR CORE IDEOLOGY

Our Mission

We empower our community through free and open access to relevant, informative, and engaging resources and services.

Our Vision

We envision an interconnected community in which every person experiences an enriched quality of life.

Our Core Values

Adaptability

We are outwardly focused, service-oriented, and staffed by continuous learners.

Accountability

We are an interdependent team holding ourselves mutually accountable for delivering results that are relevant to our community's needs.

Equality

We welcome all with the same measure of respect, warmth, and acceptance.

Integrity

We embody these values in every aspect of our operation, building personal and institutional bridges which facilitate productive, trusting relationships.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Bullitt County Public Library System has developed a strategic plan by analyzing economic and demographic data to illuminate the library's trajectory.

Inspired by opportunities at the intersection of the library's unique capabilities and significant community need, we explored where our services could have an impact on the needs of a growing, changing community – and where we might build new capacities making that possible.

The following outlines a vision of our library system, its place in the lives of Bullitt County citizens, and our plan to invest in the future of our community. The Library plans to use this sort of outward focused orientation for listening to community needs as we aim to be a more impactful agency for the people of Bullitt County.





STARTING WITH OURSELVES

We first began the process by collecting data through many different channels to ensure a broad mix of input about the Library's performance and national trends.

Source 1

analyzing **economic and demographic data** to illuminate the county's trajectory

Source 2

examining **library service statistics** to identify potential growth areas

Source 3

engaging local leaders in dialogue around the library's community role

Source 4

exploring **respected public library models** around the country and the trends they've inspired

Source 5

securing **community resident input** to inform a newly relevant service vision



Among the challenges framing the community's future, change was a recurring theme — all too familiar for public library systems operating in a digital economy.

Challenge 1

high growth rates projected for the next twenty years

Challenge 2

an **antiquated community infrastructure** ill prepared for escalating growth

Challenge 3

extreme demographic and economic **disparity** among multiple small communities

Challenge 4

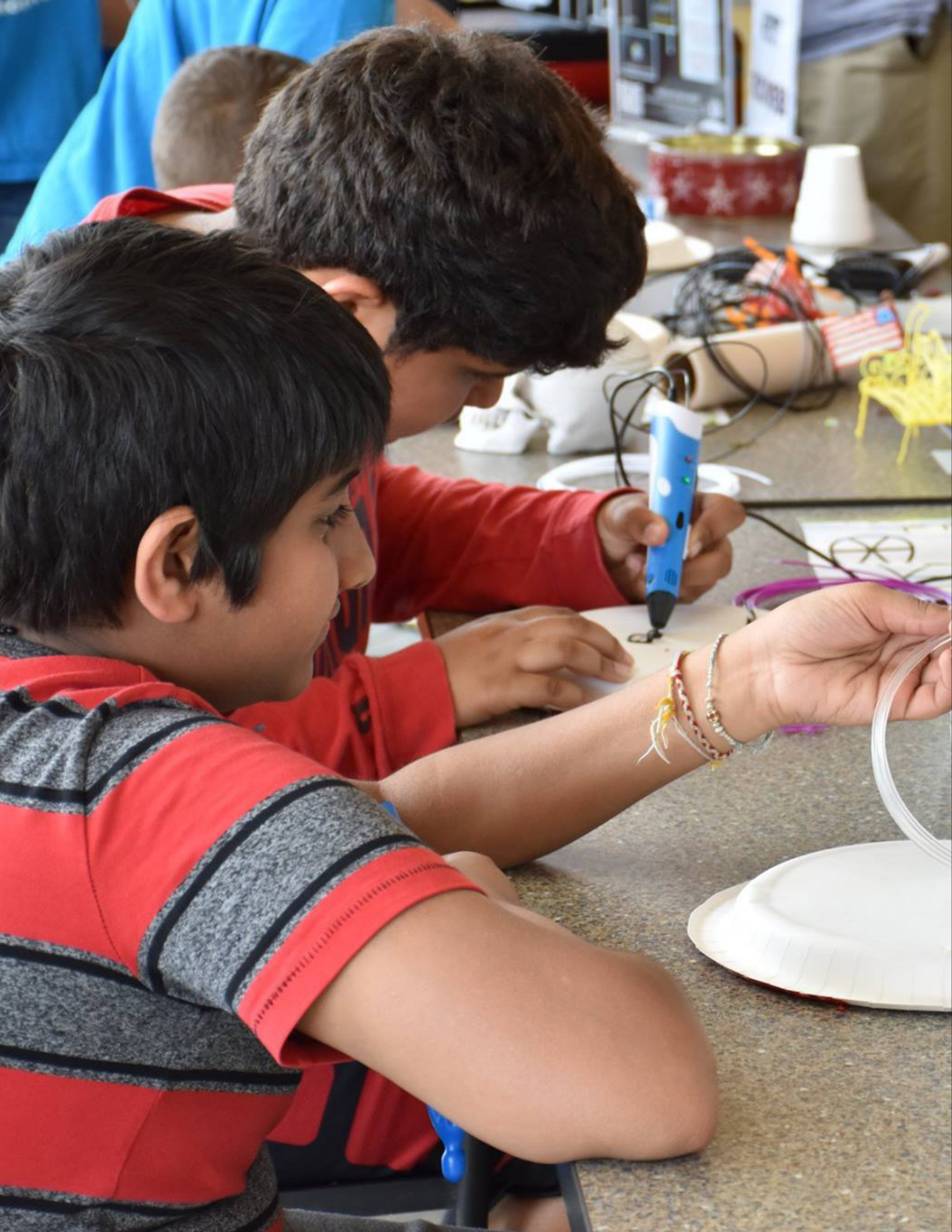
educational attainment lagging behind much of Kentucky from preschoolers ready for kindergarten to the adult population having a bachelor's degree

Challenge 5

the correlation between local economic **opportunity**, a competitive technological **infrastructure**, and a technically skilled **workforce**

Challenge 6

the potential impact of **new residents** and **younger leaders** on the development of a more unified, less divisive, and more future-oriented Bullitt County





REALIZING A VISION

Over the next five years, we aspire to reshape our public image — achieving a reputation for five individual, necessary qualities.

Quality 1

a model of adaptive change
and responsive to contemporary life; relevant to community needs; open to new ideas, new people, and new experiences

Quality 2

a respected community partner
in efforts to prepare young children for educational success

Quality 3

visibly connected through an active, purposeful network of people, organizations, and neighborhoods

Quality 4

skilled in emerging technologies supporting the development of a technologically agile population

Quality 5

motivated by measurable results and focused on the effective use of all resources to make a quantifiable difference in the lives of Bullitt County residents

OUR COURSE OF ACTION

These strategic steps map changes necessary to move us along the path toward our vision by establishing system-wide priorities for the first three years of our five-year destination.

Step 1

a focus on **early childhood literacy** to improve kindergarten readiness

Step 2

a community model for the purposeful use of **new technologies**

Step 3

multi-generational programs designed for relevance and impact

Step 4

an **exceptional network** of individual and community connections

Step 5

a physical network of accessible, **up-to-date service locations**

Step 6

an organizational infrastructure **aligned with strategic priorities**





Step 1

Focus on early childhood literacy to improve kindergarten readiness.

Assessment data shows a significant percentage of Bullitt County children are unprepared to enter kindergarten – lower than Kentucky as a whole, as low as 30% in some areas. These children are at risk for falling behind in the critical elementary grades, a well researched predictor of later behavioral issues and the perpetuation of generational, cyclical poverty. The long-term social and economic consequences are significant for the entire community.



Measurable Objectives

- 1.1 **institutional partnerships** which sharpen our focus and develop system capacity
- 1.2 **continuous learning activities** which build system competence in early childhood literacy
- 1.3 innovative and culturally appropriate strategies to **establish trusting relationships** with the target families
- 1.4 a robust network of **community connections** and **family referrals**
- 1.5 **program scheduling and participation incentives** that attract and engage working families
- 1.6 **multi-year plans and annual evaluation processes** which ensure staff alignment around specialized program content, leadership responsibilities, outreach efforts, and communications strategies

Performance Metrics

Community

- 1. BCPS assessment data
- 2. BCPS feedback

BCPL

- 1. program participation trends
- 2. cost-effectiveness of programs and outreach activities
- 3. user survey results

Step 2

A community model for the purposeful use of new technologies.

Technology increasingly drives everything – including economic opportunity for individuals seeking jobs as well as the businesses who would employ them. Our research also shows an increasing demand for mobile technologies in the busy lives of contemporary families and a large commuting population.



Measurable Objectives

- 2.1 a fresh, contemporary **library brand** to attract a new generation to technologically sophisticated library services
- 2.2 the aggressive promotion of a **tech leader image**, including but not limited to:
 - automation and easily accessible self-service
 - a constantly expanding collection of digital products for consumer downloading
 - a website easily accessed by multiple devices
- 2.3 creative **demonstrations of digital products** in high traffic community settings
- 2.4 **special events** at each branch which feature entertaining demonstrations, “how-to classes,” and the library’s technological offerings
- 2.5 **multi-generational training programs**, offered both in-house and near residential areas, which close the gap between tech users and non-tech users
- 2.6 **alignment with BCPS technological goals**, including active relationships between branches and nearby schools

- 2.7 **partnerships with community agencies** to advocate for the adoption of valuable technological tools such as GIS mapping
- 2.8 **regular informational sessions with community leaders** which keep them abreast of new technologies and their impact on economic opportunity for Bullitt County families
- 2.9 advocacy for a **competitive technological infrastructure** and high speed broadband coverage in every area of the county
- 2.10 a **multi-year technology development plan**, informed by annual evaluation processes, which targets service initiatives and operating efficiencies, specifies leadership roles and responsibilities, and includes a continuous learning component to ensure a broadly knowledgeable staff

Performance Metrics

- 1. expanded use of tech products
- 2. increased website traffic
- 3. increased participation in training databases
- 4. number of program participants
- 5. top-of-mind awareness
- 6. schools’ feedback
- 7. community feedback

Step 3

Multi-generational programs designed for relevance and impact.

Once simply the purview of children's services, demands for educational programs have grown exponentially as public libraries become lively, high-traffic community centers of learning for all ages. The effective management of such growth requires regular research on community interests and priorities, strategies to develop specific audiences, staffing for maximum productivity, the cultivation of strong project management skills, and clear evaluation criteria.



Measurable Objectives

3.1 a creative mix of **programs** to:

- spotlight documented community trends, issues, and interests;
- include interactive, social experiences for families and newcomers; and
- systematically build new audiences

3.2 the **efficient replication of programs** which can be tailored for each branch location

3.3 use of the library's physical infrastructure as a **platform for other organizations' programs**

3.4 **active partnerships** which bring ready-made audiences

3.5 program scheduling which is coordinated with other competing community activities

3.6 **weekly, multi-channel promotions**, including text alerts, that cut through distractions and remind people of upcoming programs

3.7 **promotional activities** geared specifically to the cultivation of new audiences

3.8 **multi-year plans** designed to produce new audiences, stimulate participation growth, and maximize staff efficiency – informed by the annual evaluation of current year data and multi-year trends on audience types, participation numbers, and functional area costs

Performance Metrics

1. program participant growth
2. new library card holders
3. program scheduling efficiency
4. increase of active partnerships
5. program participant feedback
6. partner and community feedback

Step 4

An exceptional network of individual and community connections.

Community leaders and focus group participants consistently reported a clear need to boost the library's public image. What is less clear: the library's capacity to refurbish and manage its image, expand its reach to build new audiences, and align communications and technological capabilities. Although access to online services is increasing at a steady clip, the data suggests that too few people are aware of the digital collection, streaming services, or other technological innovations that distinguish contemporary libraries.



Measurable Objectives

- 4.1 significant elevation of the **library's visibility**
- 4.2 **a brand-building presence** both in-house and at community events, reinforced by consistent messages across positions, branches, and departments
- 4.3 **effective communications** regularly deployed through multiple channels: a contemporary tempo reflecting best practices in today's marketplace
- 4.4 a clear strategy for developing, packaging, and promoting a product mix that **appeals to busy contemporary lifestyles**
- 4.5 strategically promoted digital products which **stimulate cardholder growth**
- 4.6 **streamlined and automated processes** that free up staff for personalized services
- 4.7 **advocacy for the mission of public libraries** that helps build political capital in the face of government budget constraints and anti-tax attitudes
- 4.8 **a marketing infrastructure** sufficient to managing the brand, increasing visibility, and stimulating growth
- 4.9 **a multi-year, data-driven marketing plan** which integrates (a) ongoing market research, (b) community feedback, and (c) best industry practices and is adjusted as a result of annual evaluation processes

Performance Metrics

- 1. new library card holders
- 2. program participant growth
- 3. increased number of digital product users
- 4. high profile visibility
- 5. top of mind awareness
- 6. increased community organization participation

Step 5

A physical network of accessible, up-to-date service locations.

During the coming five-year period, the library system will complete the development of a physical infrastructure ensuring equitable access to library resources all across Bullitt County. Design objectives reflect a commitment to flexible, friendly, adaptable, and technology-rich environments – each location an important place in the community, a place where people want to spend time.



Measurable Objectives

- 5.1 **facilities which eliminate barriers to use** and reflect an open, accessible library culture
- 5.2 open, flexible, **technologically sophisticated spaces** and an extended area of wifi coverage which allow for self-directed experiences
- 5.3 **way-finding signage** that facilitates customer self-direction
- 5.4 adaptable, comfortable **modular furnishings** with easily accessible power for a variety of devices

- 5.5 public and staff areas which anticipate an **evolving technological infrastructure**
- 5.6 exploration of opportunities for the meaningful long-term **community use of the Ridgway building**
- 5.7 **multi-year facilities plans**, regularly updated based on annual evaluation processes, guided by a design philosophy that ensures sound investments and the judicious use of financial resources

Performance Metrics

- 1. results from user experience testing
- 2. success rate for new users in unassisted wayfinding
- 3. audits for accessibility

Step 6

An organizational infrastructure aligned with strategic priorities.

Starting with the premise that “every organization is perfectly aligned to get the results it’s getting,” we will rebuild our service infrastructure in order to realize a new vision. We understand that aligning structure and function stimulates the need for new operating models and a team-oriented, results-driven culture rewarding new behaviors. It also extends to system governance and an active, strategically-oriented board committed to continuous improvement.



Measurable Objectives

6.1 **a realigned staffing structure**
correlating functional areas
with strategic aspirations

6.2 **new initiatives for acting as
one cohesive system** while also
being responsive to individual
community needs

6.3 strategies to hire, train,
re-assign, and/or outsource
**in order to match talent
with tasks**

6.4 **project management skills**
sufficient to design and
launch new initiatives

6.5 **data-driven decision-
making processes** which
elevate the importance of
clear performance goals
and distributed points of
accountability

6.6 **results-oriented leadership
development** for multiple teams
at multiple levels, including:

- the board
- directors
- the management team
- departments
- branches

6.7 **an aspirational culture** that
positively reinforces and
rewards adaptability, equality,
and accountability

6.8 **an effective internal
communications network** that
reinforces the value of a strong,
interdependent system team

6.9 **multi-year budgeting
and a tiered approach to
performance management**
that reinforces teamwork and
accountability at all levels of
the organization

Performance Metrics

1. efficiency
2. impact on strategic priorities
(see Steps 1–5)
3. ROI
4. rubrics which address
competencies in multiple
disciplines for all organization
members

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Survey and Focus Group Participants

Bullitt County Public Library Staff



We want to hear from our patrons!
If you have questions or suggestions,
please reach out to us at plan@bcplib.org.