BOWMAN REGIONAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Strategic Plan
2009

Mission

The mission of the Bowman Regional Public Library is to provide library services to Bowman and area residents

Vision

The Bowman Regional Public Library will maintain its reputation for quality public service. The library will be known in the community and in the surrounding area as the place to go for knowledgeable, friendly assistance, whether you are looking for information, exploring your cultural heritage, pursuing a hobby or other interest, wish to stimulate your child’s interest in reading and literature, access the internet, advance your studies, improve your literacy, find a good book, or use the many other library resources and services. In short, over the next five years the library will become the best small library in the country.
The Strategic Planning Process
The Bowman Regional Public Library entered into a contract with the Strom Center of Dickinson, ND to assist with the development of a strategic plan for the library. The Strom Center in turn hired the Roosevelt-Custer Regional Council to facilitate the planning process.

An organizational meeting was held on April 16, 2009. Participants in this and subsequent planning meetings included:

Lyn James, mayor of Bowman
Les Snavely, Bowman City Council
Ashley Alderson, Bowman County Development Director
Marie Snavely
Margaret Ahlness
Steve Mutschelknaus
Ryan Moser
Grace Rea
Syneva Arithson
Scott Hardy
Sarah Snavely, Library Director

Subsequent planning meetings were held on May 12 and June 9, 2009. The library conducted an in-house survey of the wants and needs of library patrons. The information gained from the survey (the results of which are attached to this plan) and discussions at the meetings resulted in the preparation of a draft of a strategic plan. The final draft was adopted by the library board on August 13, 2009.
Values

Public Service

- Provide friendly and accessible service.
- Create a comfortable environment.
- Offer excellent collections and resources.
- Treat patrons with dignity and respect.
- Be responsive to the needs of the community.

Intellectual Freedom

- Provide access to a full range of information.
- Offer materials that provide different points of view, allowing for full and open presentation of issues in our democratic society.

Human Resources

- Treat each other with dignity, respect, fairness, and courtesy.
- Provide information, delegate authority, and support staff.
- Value employees’ experience, skills, knowledge, and commitment to the library’s mission.

Professionalism

- Commit to excellence.
- Encourage creativity and flexibility.
- Promote ethical practices.
- Provide ongoing education and development for all staff.

Accountability

- Make the most effective use of public and private funds.
- Be accountable at all levels to the mission, values, and goals of the Bowman Regional Public Library.
SWOT Identification PROCESS

Internal Influences

Internal Strengths:
- Local-State-National library experience.
- Offer 29+ services.
- Efficient use of funding.
- High proficiency and comfort with technology.
- Community and Regional support for the library.
- Great expectations for the future.
- The library relies on volunteers.

Internal Weaknesses:
- No long range plan for building/equipment upgrades.
- Lack of staff to accommodate further public demand for services.
- Sometimes reactive rather than proactive.
- Sometimes rules are more important than users. (should have the flexibility to “bend the rules”).
- Lack of adequate financing.
- The library relies on volunteers.

External Influences

External Opportunities:
- A willing public support.
- Strong donation base.
- Cultural opportunities in the community and region.
- Enthusiastic support and outreach from Dickinson State University and Bismarck State College.
- Official “Friends of the Library” with national affiliation.

External Threats:
- Limited public expectations.
- The library relies on private donations.
- Limited pool of elected officials.
- Competition from electronic uses.
Goals

To achieve the mission of the Bowman Regional Public Library the following goals have been established:

**Goal #1**
Develop a sustainable funding plan.

**Goal #2**
Develop a long-term technology plan.

**Goal #3**
Develop a community support system.

**Goal #4**
Participate in state and national library catalog.

**Goal #5**
Develop an outreach program to other partners.

**Goal #6**
Maintain the library as an arts and cultural center in the community.

**Goal #7**
Become the “Best Small Library” in America.
**Action Plan**

**Goal #1:** Develop a sustainable funding plan.

**Strategy #1:** Support efforts to establish a community foundation.

**Action:** Meet with city officials, Chamber of Commerce and others interested in establishing a community foundation and take steps necessary to establish the foundation.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Strategy #2:** To actively solicit grant funds from state, federal and technology access funds.

**Action:** Apply for grants from diverse sources to include private foundations and state, local, and federal government sources.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Strategy #3:** Pursue new sources of tax revenue.

**Action:** Work with city and county government to establish a line of tax revenue.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Strategy #4:** Establish a private fund raising campaign.

**Action:** Focus fundraising efforts on donors, establishing trusts, and an annual campaign.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Goal #2:** Develop a long-term technology plan.

**Strategy #1:** Develop an effective balance between electronic resources and traditional print and non-print materials.

**Action:** Provide a wide range of print and non-print materials for patron use.
**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Action:** Establish a committee or designate persons responsible to assess technological change and to make technological advances available to patrons.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Strategy #2:** Plan funding for periodic replacement of hardware and software products.

**Action:** Develop a technological equipment replacement plan.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Strategy #3:** Provide technological training to the public.

**Action:** Conduct classes in the library to teach patrons how to make best use of the computers and other digital equipment located within the library.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Action:** Conduct classes at the library to those interested in improving skills or learning to use computers for enjoyment activities.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Goal #3: Develop a community support system.**

**Strategy #1:** Establish a “Friends of the Library” chapter to support and assist the library in various projects.

**Action:** Schedule an organizational meeting and invite public to attend to determine interest in forming the organization.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Strategy #2:** Work with city and county governments in the region to obtain assistance to maintain and improve the library facilities.

**Action:** Attend city and county government meetings to solicit support for city and county library growth.
**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Goal #4:** Participate in state and national library catalogs.

**Strategy #1:** Enter into any subscriptions necessary to achieve the goal.

**Action:** Designate a person responsible to ensure necessary subscriptions completed.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Strategy #2:** Apply for State Library grant funds to enter holdings onto the appropriate database.

**Action:** Work with the State Library to make application for grant funds for this purpose.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Strategy #3:** Train staff in the use of catalogs in order to enhance patrons’ experience and improve accessibility to materials.

**Action:** Schedule periodic staff training sessions to familiarize them with the benefits of participation in the state and federal catalogs as well as operation of the systems.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Strategy #4:** Abandon the Dewey Decimal System.

**Action:** Determine the feasibility of abandoning the system.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Action:** Evaluate whether a switch from the Dewey Decimal System will affect the excellent level of service to patrons and whether it would affect the accessibility of materials.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Action:** Replace the Dewey Decimal System by alphabetizing materials within categories.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.
Goal #5: Develop an outreach program to potential partners.

Strategy #1: Maintain current relationship with Dickinson State University and Bismarck State College.

Action: Designate a person responsible for maintaining contact with and developing relationships with personnel from both institutions to ensure a continuing partnership with the institutions.

Time Frame: Long-term.

Strategy #2: Develop relationships with the State Historical Society and other organizations whose philosophies match those of the library and can be of mutual assistance to each other.

Action: Designate a person responsible for making such contacts and invite representatives of the organizations to the library so both parties can determine the benefits of a partnership.

Time Frame: Long-term.

Goal #6: Maintain the library as an arts and cultural center in the community.

Strategy #1: Strive to recognize the cultural diversity within the community.

Action: Make available materials in the Spanish language to accommodate the growing Latino community.

Time Frame: Short-term.

Strategy #2: Make the library more accessible and user friendly.

Action: Increase the number of hours of operation.

Time Frame: Short-term.

Action: Continue efforts to maintain the inviting and welcoming atmosphere

Time Frame: Long-term.

Strategy #3: Evaluate services extended to teens and seniors and propose a plan to address the needs of those groups to encourage continued use of the library.

Action: Establish a focus group or groups consisting of library personnel and seniors and teens to develop a plan for services to those groups.
**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Strategy #4:** Enhance collections of materials complementing the arts component.

**Action:** Designate a portion of the yearly fiscal budget to arts related materials.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**Strategy #5:** Encourage the public to engage in art-related activities in the library.

**Action:** Hold art classes and demonstrations at the library.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Action:** Encourage local artist to display artwork in the library.

**Time Frame:** Long-term.

**GOAL #7:** BECOME THE “BEST SMALL LIBRARY” IN AMERICA.

**Strategy #1:** Determine the criteria for eligibility for the designation.

**Action:** Contact program directors to determine the criteria for judging the Best Small Library in America competition.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

**Strategy #2:** Submit contest application for 2010 to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

**Time Frame:** Short-term.

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**Short-term** – One Year  
**Long-term** – Two-five Years