

Melbourne Public Library Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021



Approved by the Board of Trustees (February 28, 2016)

Community



Melbourne is located in Marshall County in central Iowa. The population of Melbourne has increased slightly from 2000; the population is 846 as of 2014. The median age is 36.2 years and the population comprises 53% males & 47% females. Residents of Melbourne are nearly all white with a minute percentage of Hispanic, Latino, Asian, or African Americans. English is the predominate language.

The children of Melbourne attend school in the West Marshall and Marshalltown districts. Approximately 21% of the population is school age and 6% are preschoolers.

There are several daycares in town and a small percentage of citizens homeschool their children. Residents participate in two local churches and several community clubs and groups.

Melbourne is primarily a bedroom community with a small number of local businesses & employers. Such businesses include a hair salon, a dance studio, a post office, a bar, apartments, and various car, salvage, and farm services. A co-op is available for the rural community and a fertilizer business is being expanded at the time of writing. Median income is below state averages and unemployment is below the national average, with cost of living 19% lower than the U.S. average.

Citizens have access to information in a variety of formats including an area newspaper, cable access channel and Internet provider.

The library staff and trustees wish to extend their gratitude to the community members that took the time to participate in the Community Committee portion of this planning process.

Library

The Melbourne Public Library building is in good condition and complies with all codes and ADA standards. The library has an inviting façade, and is in a desirable location, sharing a parking lot with a public park and recreation center. Parking is adequate. There is no meeting room but space is provided for small gatherings and coffee is available.



Two employees keep the doors of the library open 26 hours each week with morning, afternoon, and evening hours throughout the week, and Sunday hours. The library provides books, periodicals, visual and audio materials, crafts, games, and more. Also provided are online databases, downloadable audio books, eBooks, programs including a summer reading program, copy services as well as four public access computers.



The library's staff is pleased to provide a comfortable space for all ages to enjoy as well as creative programming such as Story Time. Melbourne Public Library offers events and programs based on the needs and schedule of community members. The library is accredited

at Tier 3, the highest level possible, by Iowa Library Services. The staff appreciates the financial support provided by the city and county governments and the diligent work of the library's trustees.

Staff

Sara Mechtel
Library Director

Carol Dean
Library Assistant

Trustees

Cynthia Mansager
President

Shon Smith
Vice President

Sarah Cakerice
Secretary

Julie Pickard
Trustee

Judy Monroe
Trustee

Strategic Plan Mission

The Melbourne Public Library provides a comfortable space with resources for patrons of all ages, and facilitates life improvement and creative activities.

Selected Service Responses

Make Informed Decisions: Health, Wealth, and Other Life Choices

Residents will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.

Express Creativity: Create and Share Content

Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment.

Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services

Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.

Succeed in School: Homework Help

Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.

Goals

Goal #1 Space Maintenance

Residents of all ages can visit a comfortable place in order to interact with others or sit quietly and read/browse at their leisure.

Objective A. Evaluate the space and building regularly to determine if changes are necessary.

- a. Staff will maintain the furniture and building as designated in job descriptions, and report to the board any damages annually within the fiscal year.
- b. The director will evaluate the layout of furniture and catalog, and organize plans for changing as needed annually within the fiscal year.
- c. Staff will organize “problem areas” such as the kitchen and basement storage by 2018.

Objective B. Update technology and equipment.

- a. The board and director will evaluate and replace library computers and other technology as needed. These shall be evaluated annually within the fiscal year, with anticipated replacements targeted for 2018.
- b. The director will evaluate the state of equipment in the library and bring to the board’s attention any in need of repair or replacement annually within the fiscal year.

Objective C. Evaluate the collection and policies as needed.

- a. Staff will consider patron requests for materials.
- b. Staff will add to and weed the collection on a regular basis.
- c. Staff will remove outdated formats and titles as needed, but with at least 9% weeded by FY2019.
- d. The director and board will monthly either evaluate one policy or review one Iowa Library Services standard. Policies will be added, removed, or changed to reflect the library’s growth and needs. To be completed by FY2020.

Goal #2 Health, Wealth, and Other Decisions

Residents will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.

Objective A. Seek and make available speakers and other resources.

- a. The director will book speakers relevant to the town's needs/interests quarterly.
- b. Staff will add and advertise resources online such as articles, links, or databases annually in the fiscal year.
- c. Staff will promote these events to increase attendance at such events by 5% annually. Measurements may be taken via headcount, survey, or another appropriate format.

Objective B. Facilitate groups for life-improvement activities.

- a. Staff will help patrons form clubs, groups, or other gatherings upon request (e.g. a biking club).
- b. Staff shall provide a meeting space for public groups or gatherings to support each other.

Objective C. Encourage community involvement in large-scale improvement initiatives, movements and activities.

- a. Examples of initiatives/activities could include various "health month" observances, Money Smart Week, "healthiest state," etc. One such observance will be promoted quarterly beginning in 2017, with increased observances added each year until a monthly schedule is incorporated by 2019.
 - i. Promotion of these monthly observances will be done through website and other online notices, posters, flyers, and special displays. At least two programming elements will be incorporated each year to highlight specific observances.
- b. Staff will promote activities, groups, and events in order to see an annual 2% increase in attendance and participation. Measurements may be taken via headcount, survey, or another appropriate format.

Goal #3 Express Creativity

Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment.

Objective A. Provide creative or expressive outlets for all ages, including adults and seniors.

- a. Staff will continue the Make and Story Times series, on monthly and weekly bases (minimum) respectively.
- b. Staff will structure and advertise creative events to specified age ranges monthly.
- c. The director will seek out organizations and guest instructors that can provide guidance in creativity beyond the library staff's abilities quarterly.
- d. Staff will make a space and time for patrons to share their stories, skills, or talents four times per year.
- e. Staff will promote the programs to increase attendance by 2% annually.

Objective B. Maker materials available as self-paced and self-directed projects for patrons.

- a. Staff will provide a craft cart, to be made available at least once per week, if not daily, to be placed where space is available.
- b. Staff will maintain and add to the items available on the cart to provide a range of changing possible crafts.

Objective C. STEM events and projects.

- a. The director will book at least one speaker/instructor in various STEM fields annually as a part of the summer reading program.
- b. Staff will advertise such events and guests online and in the library to increase attendance by 2% annually.

Goal #4 Community Resources and Services

Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.

Objective A. Contact and visit community daycares and homebound residents monthly.

- a. The director and staff will enlist at least 2 daycares for this service annually.
- b. The director and staff will work with the patrons to discover what best interests them and how to provide related materials at each visit.
- c. Staff will put together crafts and book deliveries for the visits monthly.
- d. The director will drop off and pick up materials, as well as provide a Story Time to interested daycares monthly.

Objective B. Provide an annual summer reading program (SRP) to help students maintain reading levels throughout the summer.

- a. The director and staff will plan weekly activities, kickoff, and ending events for SRP.
- b. The director and staff will order materials for each year's summer reading program during the winter and spring months.
- c. The director will evaluate and book performers and speakers for SRP.
- d. The director and staff will work with area educators to include requested books and topics during the school year.
- e. The director will train volunteers or seek additional employees as needed for SRP.
- f. The director, staff, and board will advertise SRP beginning no later than May to increase attendance by 2% annually.

Objective C. Maintain regular communication with our contracting city and rural residents.

- a. Staff will post event notices in Rhodes and other locations that allow wider coverage.
- b. Staff will find and complete ways to reach rural residents effectively.
 - i. This may be done by expanding online presence, using alternate media (such as newsletters, newspapers, or TV/radio announcements), or by directly contacting individuals via phone and email.

Goal #5 Homework Help

Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.

Objective A. Add and advertise databases and resources dedicated to helping students succeed.

- a. The director will review, add, and renew databases for research and learning annually or as needed.
- b. Staff will advertise the available assistance online and in library via postings and word of mouth monthly. A different resource will be featured on the library's website at least quarterly.
- c. Staff will introduce students to resources and methods of learning on and off line (e.g. use of reference books) when needed.
- d. The staff will attempt to help with homework where able and when not interfering with primary duties.

Objective B. Provide material support for homework completion.

- a. Staff will provide scratch paper and writing utensils for in-library use.
- b. Staff will maintain a quiet and orderly library with an area designated for schoolwork.
- c. Patrons in need of computers for schoolwork are granted priority for public computer use.

Objective C. Develop life and math skills.

- a. Staff will introduce basic skills during Story Time programs each month to jumpstart education (e.g. counting week, spelling week). Educational topics will be added to at least one Story Time each month by FY2016 with increasing frequency until every other Story Time includes educational topics by FY2017.
- b. Staff will make resources, on and off line, that help with life skills available and known (e.g. tax services, math help, Microsoft Office tutorials).