



SCHREINER MEMORIAL  
**LIBRARY**

# Strategic Plan 2017-2021

# Introduction

## Library History

Schreiner Memorial Library, formerly Lancaster Public Library, was started in 1902 by the Lancaster Women's Club. It has existed and grown since then, moving first from an upstairs apartment in the downtown area to George Ryland's house in 1911, then into its own library facility in 1958. The most recent expansion of the Schreiner Memorial Library brings all of the best parts of the previous iterations and creates a true community center for the City of Lancaster and its neighbors. The library also maintains a Potosi Branch that was established in 2007. This branch has become an essential service to many Potosi residents. Today's library is quite different from the historic, and sometimes nostalgic, version of a public library. While the physical collections remain an essential core for library services, the library has expanded to include digital resources, programming, community gathering space, flexible space for learning and exploration, computers and internet, and outreach services.

## Purpose of the Plan

The community of Lancaster has been working on the Schreiner Memorial Library building project for over ten years. The facility has now been completed and it is time to focus on the future of the Library and its services in order to continue to serve its patrons effectively. Libraries are in the midst of great transformation- people access and use information differently than they did 10 years ago. They interact with one another and with the tools at their disposal differently than they have in the past. The Library needs to evolve in order to keep track of these changes and ensure that all members of the Lancaster community have equal access to the world of ideas that are available. The Strategic Plan is the result of numerous surveys, conversations, and analyses which will guide the Schreiner Memorial Library through this period of transition into a new era of technological and societal expectations. This plan is intended to provide direction to the staff, board, and volunteers of the Library as they adapt boldly and thoughtfully to emerging opportunities.

## Major Themes of the Plan

The library plays an important role in the Lancaster community and it is the community at large that is central to every goal of this plan. The goals of the plan all revolve around the desire to create equal and better access to the facility, to information and materials, and to inspiration and ideas. The Library's ability to actively enrich the lives of those in our communities requires a great deal of adaptability, innovation, and experimentation in order to find new ways to reach out to citizens and connect them to the resources that they need.

# Guiding Statements

## Our Vision for Lancaster and Potosi

Schreiner Memorial Library is Lancaster's Center for Lifelong Learning. We are proud to serve residents in Lancaster, Potosi, and the surrounding areas.

## Our Mission

Schreiner Memorial Library brings together people, information, and ideas in an effort to build a stronger community.

## Our Guiding Principles

**Support Intellectual Freedom:** Schreiner Memorial Library supports and defends the ALA position on intellectual freedom and the Freedom to Read statement. All Library users have uncensored access to constitutionally protected information.

**Promote literacy and a passion for reading:** Schreiner Memorial Library recognizes the importance of literacy in our nation. It strives to provide access and supports every patron, no matter their age or background, in becoming a lifelong reader.

**Protect patron privacy:** Schreiner Memorial Library takes patron privacy seriously and respects the confidentiality of patrons' requests for information, their library use patterns, and their borrowing histories.

**Respect and embrace the entire community:** Schreiner Memorial Library celebrates the growing diversity in our communities and strives to be inclusive of all people.

**Support children and youth:** Schreiner Memorial Library endeavors to join parents and educators in the important task of raising thoughtful readers and informed citizens. We work with the schools to supplement learning opportunities and close achievement gaps.

**Form strong relationships:** Schreiner Memorial Library extends its impact on its communities through partnerships with individuals, public and nonprofit agencies, community groups, educators and businesses.

**Adapt and innovate:** Schreiner Memorial Library invests in its staff in order to grow and evolve as the needs and wants of its patrons change. It is a learning organization with flexibility and innovation at its core.

**Provide equal access and accessibility to all:** Schreiner Memorial Library believes in removing barriers. It strives to find new ways to reach patrons and provide the resources they need in the ways they need them.

# Goal #1: Fuel Lancaster's and Potosi's passion for reading, personal growth, and learning

## A. Build current and complete collections to meet our patrons' needs

- Find new and better ways to hear what the community wants in the collection
- Continue to collect unpublished, self-published, and other items of local interest or significance
- Improve cataloging and/or indexing of local materials for better usability

## B. Become Lancaster's source for free, high quality instruction and literacy-based programming

- Provide opportunities for people to get the skills they need to find, evaluate, and use information
- Create learning opportunities with public, private, and nonprofit partners to promote library and community resources
- Expand adult instruction and programming to engage the area's adult and senior populations

## C. Offer opportunities to integrate learning into everyday life

- Provide space and resources for people of all ages to discover and experiment with new technologies
- Establish the Library as the community's first source for practical information
- Create an inviting environment for children to learn and explore with STEM equipment and activities

## D. Work with the schools to provide our area youth opportunities for growth.

- Ensure that every educator and school administrator is aware of the Library's ability to provide students and educators with access to technology, collections, resources, and research assistance.
- Develop relationships with educators in order to provide supplemental collections which support classroom curriculums
- Lead the community in providing early literacy experiences and opportunities

## Goal #2: Expand our patrons' access to information, ideas, and experiences

A. Support and take part in the Wisconsin Digital Library to expand our digital offerings

- Continue paying into the Digital Media Buying Pool and support efforts to expand and improve digital offerings
- Support WPLC efforts to negotiate with e-publishers

B. Develop relevant and inspiring programs and events to educate and inspire our community

- Provide programs for all ages at a variety of times including weekends and evenings
- Pursue feedback about programs and events to improve user experience
- Encourage fresh ideas and innovative programs

C. Watch for new methods of information access and be at the forefront of change within SWLS and libraries in Southwest WI

- Be champions for improvements to the ILS and other online resources
- Deliver innovative services such as homebound delivery, free book stations in targeted community locations, and a business services center
- Provide full access to materials, resources, and facilities for those with disabilities

## Goal #3: Build partnerships to make a difference in people's lives

A. Create alliances with governmental agencies, nonprofit groups, and organizations working to benefit area residents.

- Collaborate with partners to provide important public services such as job search help, unemployment assistance, healthcare navigation, health services, and more
- Be at the table during community brainstorming meetings, civic improvement forums, and community/cultural engagement meetings
- Make County, City, and Village administrations aware of the services and support offered by the Library on an ongoing basis

B. Work with area businesses to inform and support their leaders and their employees

- Develop a partnership plan to meet with business owners and organizational leaders in order to inform them of Library services and opportunities
- Reach out for events and programs that may be a good fit for library support.

## Goal #4: Become Lancaster's community gathering place

A. Provide space and resources that draw people from the area to use the library facility for meetings, events, programs, and get-togethers.

- Become the first choice location for area meetings and events
- Maintain a no-barriers philosophy to meeting space usage
- Improve procedures to reduce inconveniences involving paperwork and training

B. Coordinate cultural events and public events that take place at the library facility.

- Maintain a comprehensive calendar of events so patrons can see opportunities which are available to them
- Update technologies, equipment, and resources available for those using the spaces

# Goal #5: Foster an organizational culture of innovation

## A. Foster library staff and institutional capacity to innovate

- Encourage staff to take advantage of continuing education opportunities
- Actively experiment to better serve patrons by implementing and analyzing pilot projects
- Train staff to be effective promoters of Library resources and services; promote customer service as a first priority
- Create a tech-savvy environment where all staff keep pace with advances in technology and information access

## B. Use ongoing analysis to measure patron experience and program effectiveness

- Find and use new tools to collect, analyze, and share statistics and feedback
- Use statistics and feedback to inform decision making and programming
- Establish an effective channel for staff and the public to communicate insights and experiences that could help improve service

## C. Manage change with flexibility and patience

- Adapt service models to better serve patrons through excellent customer service
- Assess staffing strategies and services regularly to ensure that staff time is being spent effectively and efficiently; work toward a staffing model based on public need and staff safety

## D. Communicate and celebrate progress; discuss missteps and needed improvements with openness

- Institute regular staff meetings in which this plan is discussed
- Provide progress updates about implementation of this plan to Board of Trustees, civic leaders, and the public
- Celebrate accomplishments with staff and community members
- Continue annual staff reviews and consider a structure for merit raises