



2019-2022 Strategic Plan

Approved by ECRL Board 1/14/19

Extended through 2023 by ECRL Board 12/13/21

Mission:

STRENGTHEN. CONNECT. SUPPORT.

Vision:

East Central Regional Library will be an essential community resource inspiring East Central Minnesota to discover and explore possibilities to build and grow community.

Executive Summary:

For 60 years, the residents of Aitkin, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs and Pine counties have relied on East Central Regional Library to provide them with high quality, cost effective library services. East Central Regional Library has a proven history of using tax dollars entrusted to us wisely in order to meet community needs. Our new four-year strategic plan outlines how we will build on our successes to improve and enhance the quality of life of our residents.

The Executive Director and ECRL Board of Directors initiated a process to guide our work for the time period 2019-2022. To this end, we collected responses to a public survey and convened public focus groups in each of our six counties throughout the summer of 2018. A special focus group of all staff was held to gain their insights about services in every location served. The ECRL Board held a special focus group to gather further insights regarding the challenges facing individual counties and communities. A sub-committee of the Board met to review the data, synthesize what was heard and draft a plan to be approved by the full ECRL Board of Directors. The following is a statement of our core values upon which we have developed goals and strategies to fulfill our mission and attain our vision for the future.

Core Values:

We stand for:

Operational Excellence

- We are *sound stewards* of public and private funds.
- We think *regionally*, act *locally*.
- We treat employees with *respect* and *dignity*.

Positive Customer Experience

- We are *knowledgeable* and value the *opportunity to serve*.
- We are *inclusive* and *respectful*, embracing diversity.
- We provide *free and equal access* to information.

Lifelong Learning

- We foster *curiosity* in users, staff and communities.

Community Focus

- We seek *community partnerships* to enhance, promote and provide our services.
- We create *connections* with community resources.

CORE VALUE: Operational Excellence

Goal: Develop a strong, sustainable, essential organization that is valued by residents.

Strategy: Explore sources to ensure stable and sustainable funding for regional library users now and into the future.

Strategy: Engage in ongoing evaluation for continuous improvement.

- Evaluate processes to increase efficiency.
- Evaluate resources, programs and services for relevance and value.
- Evaluate and develop policies for sound management.
- Explore and utilize technology effectively to improve internal processes.

Strategy: Raise profile of the library and increase awareness of services by developing an effective marketing plan and brand.

Goal: Build, support and equip a qualified staff team.

Strategy: Develop competitive compensation plan to attract and retain expertise.

Strategy: Establish staff competencies and tie to performance evaluations.

Strategy: Establish continuing education requirements.

Strategy: Reorganize structure to provide for best service.

Strategy: Provide ongoing training and development opportunities.

CORE VALUE: Positive Customer Experience

Goal: Create positive experiences and interactions with the library through its programs, collections, technology, spaces and staff.

Strategy: Engage community with quality, relevant programs; resources and technology.

- Explore unique collections reflecting specific user/community needs and interests.
- Remove outdated information and formats.
- Provide high quality programming in all communities.
- Explore options and funding opportunities for makerspaces.
- Provide up-to-date technology and the training to access it.
- Increase awareness of programs and services through marketing and advocacy.
- Curate informative content of value to users.

Strategy: Partner with cities and counties to provide welcoming and safe places for library services and to facilitate community building.

- Support local efforts to expand service or program where feasible.
- Expand virtual library presence through the web and social media.
- Explore and offer spaces for people to create.

CORE VALUE: Lifelong Learning

Goal: Foster literate communities.

Literacy Definition – competence or knowledge in a specified area

Strategy: Develop programs to prepare every child to be ready to learn to read.

- Promote 1000 books before kindergarten to encourage reading readiness.
- Offer storytime learning experiences provided by staff with expertise in early literacy.
- Develop spaces to foster best early literacy practices.
- Promote programs to support broader efforts to improve literacy.

Strategy: Provide opportunities for community members to gain literacy skills.

- Partner with area experts to provide educational experiences including but not limited to financial and civic literacy.
- Develop programs utilizing staff expertise that provide information about digital and media literacy.
- Offer assistance or classes with technology.

Strategy: Expose communities to ideas and opportunities that broaden horizons and enrich lives.

Strategy: Offer opportunities for personal development, skill development and workforce development.

CORE VALUE: Community Focus

Goal: Increase access and awareness of library services beyond branch library walls.

Strategy: Partner with schools to reach broader audience.

Strategy: Seek community partnerships to broaden access to library services and programs.

Strategy: Evaluate existing outreach services to increase reach to underserved populations.

Strategy: Deliver library services to the people where they are.

Goal: Expand capacity of communities.

Strategy: Partner with community organizations with similar missions.