

Bloomfield Public Library

# THE NEXT CHAPTER

Strategic Plan 2019-2021

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## From the Director

I am pleased to present the Bloomfield Public Library Strategic Plan for the years 2019-2021. This plan will serve as a blueprint to guide the library in its quest to provide exemplary services that enrich and improve the lives of the citizens of the Township of Bloomfield,

From 2016-2018, the library saw tremendous growth in registrations, circulation of materials, and program participation. These successes have reaffirmed our standing in the community and raised awareness of our role as an invaluable resource to the Township. It is upon this strong base that our Strategic Plan was built with an eye toward the future's ever-evolving environment, driven by innovations in technology and shifting demographics in the community we serve. This plan will also help us to respond to the growing needs and expectations of our patrons.

The Library took a comprehensive approach to the development of the Strategic Plan, including: assessment of the facilities and collections; a comprehensive questionnaire for both residents and staff; a Community Leaders/Stakeholders meeting, and a Library Open House for the community; all of which informed the final version of the Plan.

I would like to thank The Library Board of Trustees, the Strategic Planning Committee, and the Bloomfield Library Staff, all of whom contributed a tremendous amount of time and effort toward the development of this plan. We all look forward to working closely with our community partners to create a Library that will serve our community for the next three years and beyond.

Holly Martin Belli  
Library Director

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## **From the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is pleased to present the 2019-2021 Bloomfield Public Library Plan to the Community. The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to guide our Board's decision making as the Library moves forward into the 21st century. This document was constructed with an eye toward the future as we seek to preserve the great traditions of the Bloomfield Public Library.

This plan was built with input from Bloomfield community leaders, library patrons, and staff. It was crafted around the enduring values that our stakeholders expressed as integral to the purpose of the Library. Our planning was informed by the needs and priorities identified in current data and usage statistics.

This plan is meant to provide guidance for the Board of Trustees to build upon and enhance the existing level of service to the community. It will help guide the Board of Trustees in setting priorities within the available financial resources and as new opportunities present themselves.

We look forward to moving into 2019 with a strong strategic foundation that will allow the Bloomfield Public Library to grow and prosper in the future.

Tabitha Rice  
President, Board of Trustees

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## MISSION STATEMENT

*The Bloomfield Library strives to be the center of information and discovery for the Township. Our mission reflects the commitment we are making to the community.*

***The Bloomfield Public Library...***  
*changes lives through the power of ideas, information, and imagination.*



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## VISION

*Our vision articulates what success will look like in the future.*

### ***The Bloomfield Public Library...***

- Provides an environment and materials to support education, self-directed learning, and literacy
- Is a welcoming community gathering place and a cornerstone of family, cultural, and civic life
- Represents, through its collections, the diversity of the community
- Bases decisions on patron needs and preferences
- Anticipates challenges and responds with creativity and innovation
- Maximizes the potential of its employees

## VALUES

*To fulfill our mission and realize our vision, the following ideas shall guide us in service to our community and interaction with one another:*

- ACCESSIBILITY- *Championing fair and open access to diverse materials*
- SERVICE - *Giving prompt, accurate, and courteous assistance*
- COMMUNITY - *Providing opportunities for people to meet, share, and collaborate*
- ACCOUNTABILITY - *Serving as responsible stewards of the public's resources*
- TEAMWORK - *Working with partners to achieve common goals*
- RESPECT - *Honoring diversity, individual perspectives, and the right to privacy*
- LEARNING - *Promoting literacy and learning in as many ways as possible*

## Getting there

We listened to the stakeholders, the community, and our staff

*Online and paper surveys, meetings with stakeholders and residents, and staff input all informed our data gathering and decision-making process.*

## DEMOGRAPHICS IN BLOOM



### 30% Latino

25% foreign born.  
Almost 40% speak a language other than English at home -most of those speak Spanish



### Young & Diverse

Bloomfield's youngest residents are minorities, and the majority of residents under 40 are Latino



### Rapid Growth

Population growth of 7.5% between 2010-2017. With new housing coming, it will grow even more, particularly near train line



### Taken Root

Bloomfield residents move here and stay here

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## AREAS OF STRATEGIC FOCUS: STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

### 1. Strengthen the role of the Library as a center for information and discovery in the Township.

- Provide an environment where all feel welcomed to enable us to:
  - Increase library membership and usage
  - Provide services to all ages and demographics
  - Address barriers to usage
- Maintain and enhance the collection and promote public awareness of materials and programs:
  - Develop the collection with an eye toward community needs and interests
  - Promote our theater space for public engagements and displays of local talent
  - Offer more arts and cultural programs
  - Increase both adult and teen programming and outreach
- Better integrate the Library into Bloomfield's diverse community:
  - Co-sponsor events with other township departments
  - Form closer relationships with schools to support students and teachers
  - Offer programs and services to support local businesses and organizations
  - Grow our volunteer programs for all ages and abilities
  - Increase outreach and initiate offsite programming
  - Assist with citizenship and ESL information
- Preserve and share the history of Bloomfield
  - Continue to preserve and digitize the Local History collection
  - Cooperate and collaborate with the Historical Society to provide lectures, book talks, and other programs
  - Provide easier access to Local History materials

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## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, cont.

### 2. Support Education and Learning Opportunities

- Create an environment to support lifelong learning:
  - Create young readers by developing literacy from birth
  - Develop teen programming
  - Expand our homework support and tutoring programs
  - Educate for online readiness, emphasizing basic skills for job searches, applications, resumes, document management and email
  - Increase user literacy in emerging technologies, finance, health, and other contemporary life issues
  - Grow programming for the special needs community
  - Integrate library programs within the multi-cultural community
  - Provide users with consulting tailored to individual needs and reflecting the changing ways information is made available and consumed.
- Provide opportunities for self-directed and remote learning:
  - Promote online databases and e-learning resources
  - Increase access to online education, including foreign languages, eBooks, and other digital sources
  - Investigate opportunities to create new spaces, such as for MakerSpace, Computer Labs, Whiteboards, and other digital content creation.

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## STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, cont.

### 3. Foster community connections

- Maintain and enhance the collection, ensure ease of access to media, and promote public awareness of available materials
  - Ensure the collection meets the needs of an ever-changing community
  - Expand our digital collections and explore opportunities to offer additional databases and services
  - Provide better access to the latest publications by increasing both digital and physical holdings
  - Grow our foreign language collections to better serve all patron needs
- Find new ways to connect with patrons via current technology:
  - Develop and refresh our social media presence and use it, along with email and text, to alert patrons to library offerings
  - Explore ways to use chat to answer reference questions remotely in real time
  - Explore ways to integrate more self-service options for patrons
- Improve both physical and virtual access:
  - Promote the Library as a 24/7 resource
  - Evaluate open hours to ensure that community needs are met
  - Investigate best practices for off-site, vehicular and kiosk service delivery i.e. Pop-Up at the train stations
  - Seek relevant locations to deliver library services offsite
- Deliver excellent customer service:
  - Develop friendly library policies and encourage patron feedback
  - Promote staff commitment to mission, values and vision
  - Foster inter-departmental collaboration
  - Encourage and support experiential, programmatic and on-the-job professional development for all staff.

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## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, cont.**

### **4. Build strong community relationships to ensure sustainable Library service**

- Increase and diversify sources of public and private funding for the Library:
  - Secure funding for necessary investments in construction and renovation projects
  - Prepare for strategic investments in technology and innovation
  - With the Foundation, pursue supplementary funding sources to assure long-term sustainability and growth
  - With the Foundation, establish an ongoing capital campaign and identify donors to support Library programs and initiatives
  - Collaborate with other departments to decrease costs and increase efficiency and resource-sharing

### **5. Develop a clear and consistent marketing plan**

- Develop a marketing plan and strategies that increase library use and communicate the library's vision, mission, and values:
  - Promote the new BPL mission, vision and values among staff
  - Develop a consistent and identifiable Library “brand” - logo, graphics standards, signage - all equally usable in Spanish and English
  - Coordinate with other Township departments to better distribute promotional information
  - Redesign a navigable, visually appealing website that supports mobile access, social media and other interactivity
  - Incorporate English- and Spanish-language mobile services

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## **STRATEGIC INITIATIVES, cont.**

### **6. Revitalize and rebuild physical spaces that are engaging, welcoming, and inspiring**

- Maintain clean, well-lit, comfortable spaces within both buildings
- Evaluate current space to optimize usage
- Conceive a flexible and adaptable future space that can evolve with the community to meet its needs
- Optimize the use of physical space, reexamining the opportunities to adapt both the interior and exterior to support a full range of activities sought by the community, including better maintained restrooms, more classroom and meeting space, more quiet study space, more comfortable workstations and more easily accessible power/charging outlets, and more soft seating
- Improve existing physical features: lighting, carpeting, furnishings, signage
- Assure accessibility for disabled and special needs patrons by meeting and exceeding ADA minimums
- Improve our teen space to make it more inviting
- Make restrooms more “family-friendly” with changing tables and/or gender non-specificity

### **7. Improve our technology infrastructure and services**

- Upgrade desktop PC systems for staff and public
- Upgrade our telephone and voicemail systems to VOIP
- Investigate technology products and services that enable staff to increase efficiency, productivity, and better support patron needs
- Ensure staff is trained in the use and troubleshooting of basic technology
- Investigate security camera networks for both buildings
- Explore feasibility of self-checkout and RFID

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## Bloomfield Public Library - Next Steps

The best plans are dynamic, flexible tools for continuous improvement.

To build on the momentum generated by Bloomfield Public Library's Strategic Plan, the Library will inaugurate an ongoing program of oversight, resource development, assessment, and adjustment. With the Library's mission as primary rationale, its vision as the ideal, and its core values as guides to decision making, the Library is setting in motion a process that ensures accountability, versatility, and informed choices.



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