



STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2026





Portage Public Library

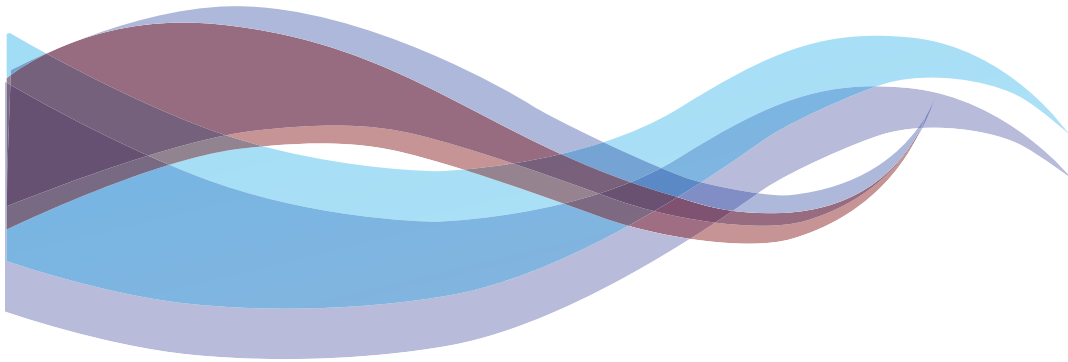
253 West Edgewater Street
Portage, WI 53901

Planning Committee

Tracy Carbonara, WorkSmart Network
Amy Cole, School Psychologist
Laurie Considine, Teacher
Jon Crawford, Library Foundation Board Treasurer
Amy Eppinger, Library Board Trustee, School Representative
Krista Escobedo, Facilitator, Community Advocate
Judy Eulberg, Library Board Trustee
Julie Goldthorpe, Community Advocate
Mary Grimm, Library Friends Board
Elizabeth Walker Hansen, Teacher
Jerry Indermark, Community Advocate
Doug Iverson, Community Advocate
Ali Kahl, Community Advocate
Carol Kraucyk Community Advocate
Sheril Lannoye, Former Library Staff, Historian
Nancy Long, Columbia County Library System Board President
Eileen Marshall, Library Friends Board, Membership Chair
Shawn Murphy, City Administrator
Shane Schmidt, Library Foundation Board
Carol Sjoblom, Columbia County Health and Human Services
Ellen Swan, Yoga Instructor for Library Program, Community Advocate

Contributing Staff Members

Debbie Bird, Director
Dawn Foster, Children's Services Librarian
Chris Baker, Adult Services Librarian and Technology Coordinator
Autumn Baumann, Circulation Services Supervisor

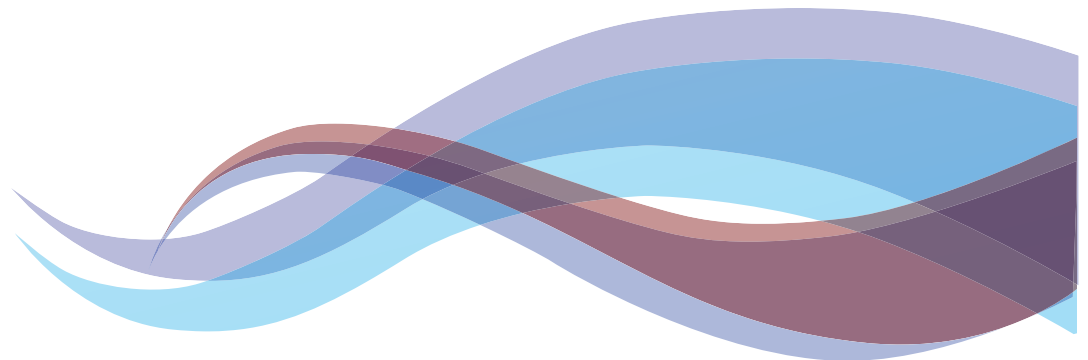


MISSION STATEMENT

The Portage Public Library serves and supports the community through open access to resources, partnerships and technology.

VISION STATEMENT

The Portage Public Library aspires to be the community's social and learning hub, improving the quality of life for everyone.



BACKGROUND

The Portage Public Library has a rich history dating back to 1901, having been located in various places throughout Portage. In 1994, the Library acquired land and constructed an 18,400 square foot building on West Edgewater Street. This building was expanded in 2013 with the addition of a unique and separate children's department. Renovations to the existing space included adding two study rooms, a quiet reading room for adults and an expanded teen space and program room. Today the Library occupies 24,500 square feet and serves almost 11,000 residents.

The Portage Public Library is governed by a nine member Board of Trustees appointed by the Mayor of the City of Portage. Trustee responsibilities primarily include: selection of the Library Director, approval of the budget and bill paying, maintenance oversight of the building, compensation for employees, participation in updating policies, supporting intellectual freedom, and implementing an active Strategic Plan.

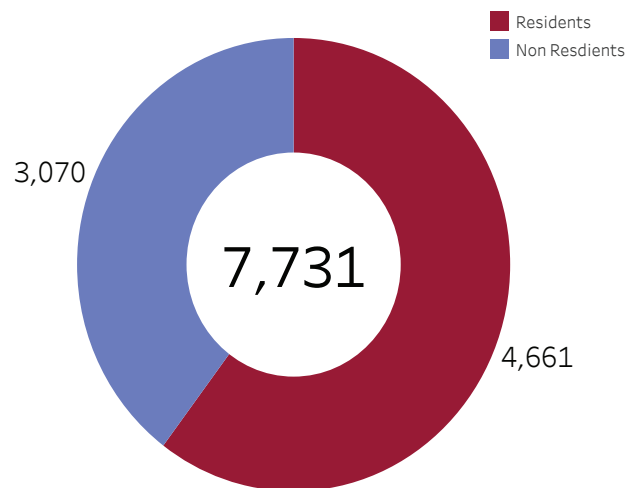
The Portage Public Library is the Resource Library for Columbia County. It is one of ten libraries in the county. As a member of the South Central Library System, Portage Public Library cards can be used at any public library in Adams, Columbia, Dane, Green, Portage, Sauk and Wood counties. It may also be used at public libraries in other library systems through reciprocal borrowing agreements.



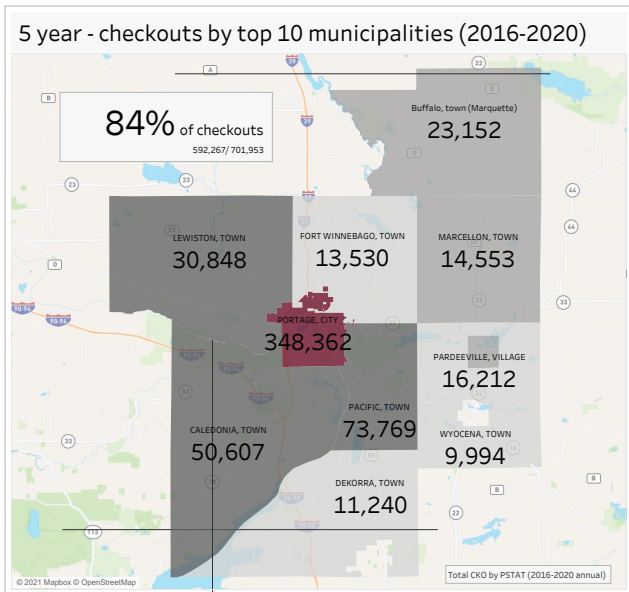
SERVICE DATA

Portage has 7,731 registered card holders, serving a population of both residents and nonresidents. The Library circulates 60,711 physical items, along with offering 111 subscriptions and 218,458 downloadable books, audiobooks and videos.

POR Cardholders

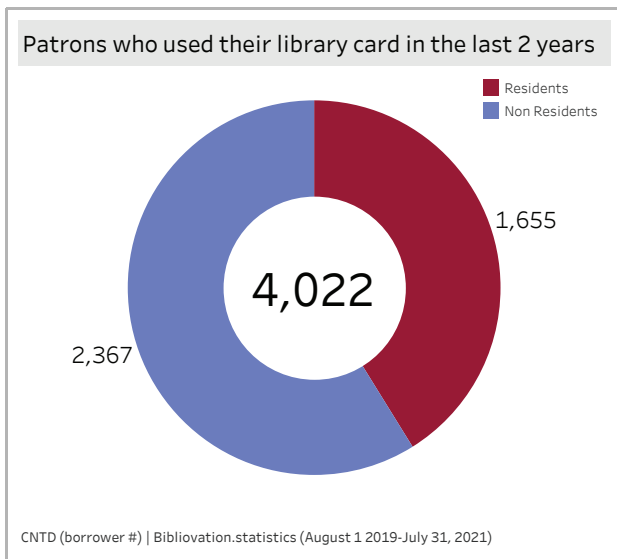
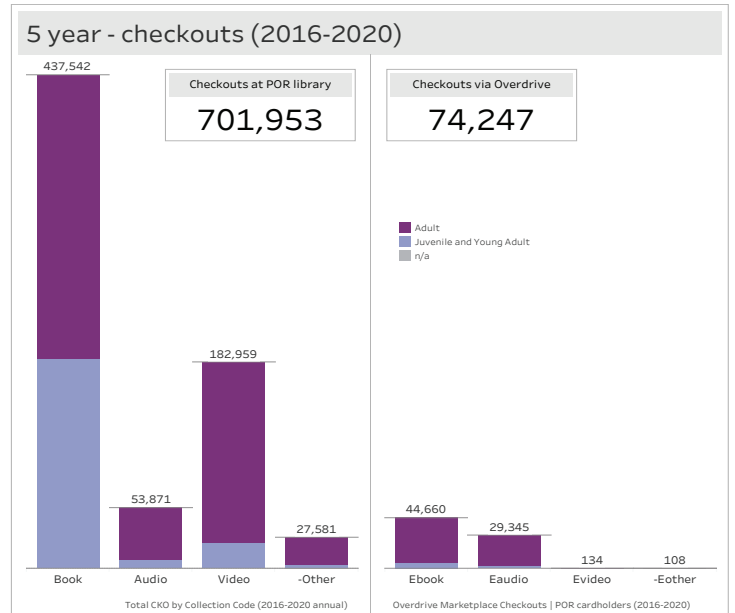


DOA 2020 Portage Population = 10,132
CNTD (borrower #) | Bibliovation.borrowers (August 16, 2021)



The primary users are within ten municipalities: the City of Portage, towns of Pacific, Lewiston, Buffalo, Marcellon, Fort Winnebago, Caledonia and the villages of Pardeeville and Wyocena.

Physical collection circulation has been decreasing at the Portage Public, while digital materials use is on the rise. Funding, in part, is based on physical checkouts of items.



Portage residents make up less than 40% of Portage Library cardholders. More nonresidents use their library cards to check out materials at Portage than residents.

More users means improved circulation, additional funding, and increased opportunities for service, such as: expanded technology/ computer offerings, more robust programming, and staff assistance.



5 year- users of public internet computers

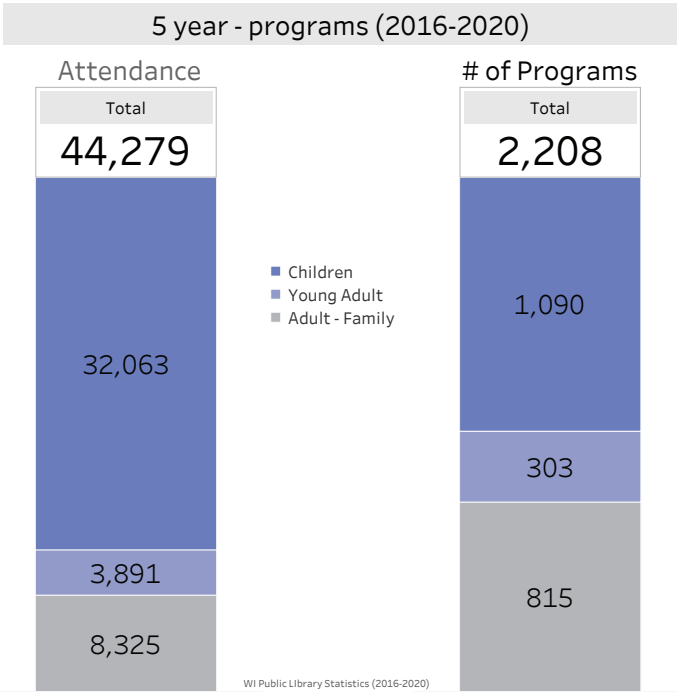
61,200



5 year - wireless internet uses

617,896

Historically, the Children’s Department has held a significant majority of programs. Similarly, the number of attendants for children’s programs are consistently more than double most adult, teen and family programs.



The importance of programming for all ages and the transition to more adult and teen programming may move the focus from silos of programming measured and categorized strictly by age groups to more open, library-wide programming, intended to appeal to multiple generations and provide a connection across barriers of age, diversity and gender.

LIBRARY SERVICE RESPONSES

Library service responses are the links between the community’s needs, interests, and priorities, and the programs and services that the library offers. Specifically, a service response is what a library does for, or offers to, the public in an effort to meet a set of well-defined community needs. The Planning Committee, through two meetings, directed the library to prioritize the following service responses in equal measure.

Literacy: To provide materials, programs, technologies, and services that facilitate a continuum of learning; to empower our users to meet their goals, satisfy their curiosity, and develop functional skills, so that they may thrive both in our community and beyond.

Technology: To offer a modern, convenient, and accessible collection of emerging technologies, and to educate our community in safely navigating and evaluating reliable digital and technological resources to meet their needs.

Connection: To be both a welcome center and resource hub; a physical and virtual space with informed staff, that foster a sense of belonging while creating sustained relationships to elevate the quality of life for all community members.





GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The following goals are the priorities to be accomplished over the next five years. They will be used by the Library Director to prepare the annual budget, oversee operations and steer the library in the direction that the Planning Committee feels is most important.

The following objectives are the measureable ways of gauging success in reaching our goals. Every year these objectives will be updated, changed or extended to the consecutive year. These metrics will be reviewed annually by the library staff and the Library Board to measure the success or failure in achieving the goals set forth, with the intent of fulfilling the service responses designed for the library and our community.

LITERACY

Goal 1: Increase literacy in our community.

Objective: Craft, advertise and carry out two ESL programs each year for different age groups.

Objective: Promote reading literacy through providing space for routine tutor programs.

Objective: Generate learning toys, computer programs and incentives for children to use inside the library.

Goal 2: Reach more diverse community members and increase bilingual literacy efforts for the community.

Objective: Offer a bilingual story time twice a year.

Objective: Select and add new collection materials to the library that encourage development, appreciation and participation for diverse populations and underserved populations, particularly focused in the Hispanic and Latino communities.

Objective: Create library displays that showcase and champion diverse cultures.

Goal 3: Extend literacy development to the most fundamental level that helps people successfully function in their daily lives.

Objective: Offer training for basic computer skills.

Objective: Assist patrons in completing their tax forms.

Objective: Keep people informed about elections and voting.

Goal 4: Educate and inform the community on the importance of circulation for funding.

Objective: Encourage library card sign-up and create value with card ownership.

Objective: Share metrics regarding how circulation is improving/declining and create incentives for checking collection items out.

TECHNOLOGY

Goal 1: Lessen the digital divide.

Objective: Investigate the ability to improve Wi-Fi, by extending connectivity further into the parking lot.

Objective: Offer hotspots for checkout at the library.

Objective: Petition and explore ways to improve broadband services for the city of Portage and surrounding communities.

Goal 2: Invest in technologies that open more pathways for users.

Objective: Connect patrons with state and local agencies and provide a space for that interaction at the library.

Objective: Continue to reach out to social services in the community and add them to our pool of participating agencies.

Goal 3: Educate adults and teens on learning basic technology skills and safety and security measures.

Objective: Offer classes on how to protect your identity, your privacy and reduce cyber-attacks.

Objective: Offer annual training for basic computer skills.

CONNECTION

Goal 1: Effectively partner with area agencies and organizations to meet the needs of our users.

Objective: Create a checklist to train library staff to be more informed on connections made within the community.

Objective: Collect and create handouts, brochures and infographics in the lobby of the library, establishing this area as an information center for community services.

Objective: Concentrate on establishing Portage Area Workforce & Service Connection (PAWSC) as a viable approach to connect patrons in need with the service organization that can assist and support them.

Goal 2: Partner with the other Columbia County libraries.

Objective: Explore and initiate at least one collaborative programming idea that benefits all libraries in the county every year.

Objective: Encourage and initiate at least one resource sharing opportunity with the libraries every year.

Objective: Petition and explore ways to improve broadband services for Columbia County, particularly in the rural areas.

Goal 3: Promote the cultural and historical heritage of Portage.

Objective: Promote the digitized collection of Portage newspapers and develop short how to workshops.

Objective: Offer one program each year on genealogy.

Goal 4: Encourage partnerships within the community, using outreach to benefit the library and the residents in new ways.

Objective: Ask Friends of the Portage Library (FoL) to partner with one community organization each year.

Objective: Ask the Foundation of the Portage Library to collaborate with organizations or publicize their purpose each year, in order to raise awareness and grow.

CONCLUSION

This five-year strategic plan provides a framework for the Board of Trustees and library staff to operate a library of excellence for the Portage community. The strategic plan serves to both guide our institution and assist the director in focusing on primary goals throughout the plan's five year life-span. Our mission and vision statements reflect our fundamental values, which we expect will endure long into the future and will form the basis for subsequent strategic plans. The goals and objectives are measureable priorities. Objectives should be updated annually.

