

PERU PUBLIC LIBRARY

Strategic Plan

2025-2028



Mission Statement:

The Peru Public Library is a public library that serves the citizens of Peru, Indiana. Our mission is to preserve, maintain, and develop a cultural storehouse of knowledge and ideas, and enrich the lives of our patrons through the use of various media and technologies.

Vision Statement: The Peru Public Library, its trustees, staff, materials, and facility, will strive to create a welcoming, friendly, open, and accessible resource destination for the City of Peru and Miami County communities that encourages imagination, discovery, and personal growth.

Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Community needs and goals:

The Peru Public Library is located approximately 75 minutes north of Indianapolis. The library serves the City of Peru, an area composed of 10,828 individuals (according to the 2020 U.S. Census estimates 2023). Of those residents 49.7% are women with 22.4% children under the age of 18. 17.9% of the population are Senior Citizens. The City of Peru has 4,751 housing units with 70.0% being owner occupied. The median value of an owner-occupied home is \$78,500 with a monthly mortgage payment of \$844. Median household income is \$44,665 as the per capita income for the past 12 months equals \$23,913. Persons living in poverty is 25.5%. 52% of Peru Community School students receive a free or reduced lunch. During the 2020-2021 school year, due to a grant received ALL students enrolled Peru Community Schools received free breakfast and lunch. Due to widespread poverty within our service district, there is a need for internet access, reliable Wi-Fi, both print and E-materials, as well as, a comfortable, safe, quiet environment for both personal and professional growth.

COVID-19 Impact Statement:

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we do not know yet of the impact for our library, our city, county, state, or nation. We anticipate feeling the repercussions of this pandemic for many years to come. Rebuilding of traditional library services may take time and financial resources. Continuing traditional library services while also promoting E-materials, virtual programming, and providing services to those in the digital divide will be of utmost importance. The proactive precautions of our facility and collection will hopefully prevent the transmission of the COVID-19 virus. Keeping our facility, staff, and patrons healthy by listening to health and safety experts will provide the basis for our organization to fully return to our pre-COVID operations.

Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats

Strengths: serving 2/3 of our County without funding, increased local circulation of all materials, friendly staff, exceptional programming, good financial stewardship, and a renovated and accessible building

Weaknesses: insufficient and unreliable funding sources, library desert, high poverty, limits lack of qualified staff, and constraints of having a historical landmark

Opportunities: conduct focus groups on service, hours, programs, facilities, and funding sources. Create community partnerships to help promote literacy, as well as, services, program, and funding.

Threats: serving 2/3 of our County without funding, economic impact of our budget, property tax caps, public perception, unserved county area, and insufficient and unreliable funding sources, and health and safety of our community

Goals:

The Library has identified five (5) main goals that support the community and their immediate and future needs.

- 1. Awareness**-engaging the people in the library and in the community by providing exceptional services and expanding accessibility and awareness of information and ideas.
- 2. Adaptability**-prepare and adapt the collection and delivery methods for the future while continuing the love of reading and encouraging personal growth and learning.
- 3. Community Center**-become the physical space providing flexible and accommodating meeting room services to our community members.

4. **Staff**-build on our excellent customer service legacy with continual training and creating an organizational culture of innovation and shift with the times and community trends.
5. **Library Trustees**-should be an avid library user who represents our community without imparting their own bias or onto the organization. A trustees' responsibility is creating policy and providing fiscal oversight to the organization.

We want the library to be a relevant and essential resource within our community. We recognize that a national trend of decreased circulation is the new normal within most library communities; however, our library is currently experiencing an increase in both circulation of physical materials and electronic (E) materials. Our library is also experiencing an increase in non-traditional library services such as programming, business services, and meeting room usage.

We want our community and its leaders to recognize that libraries are no longer just a place to check out books, but a rich community resource.

We will continue to promote and provide all the wonderful services and materials that the public library has to offer: information, programs, movies, gathering spaces, Internet access, help, notary service, hotspots, small business services, patron and community outreach, and so much more. We will work to break the barriers of traditional perceptions of libraries and look toward the future to show our community and its leaders the rich possibilities their library can provide. We will continually market all of our services, survey our community, and talk to individuals in pursuit of reinventing ourselves as a 21st century public library.

Measurable objectives and service responses

Awareness: engaging the people in the library and in the community by providing exceptional services and expanding accessibility and awareness of information and ideas.

Services are not confined to the physical building and can be easily delivered within the community. Technology creates new opportunities for the library to extend our services and accessibility. We want to ensure that staff time is being used efficiently and toward a service that is valued within the community. We will monitor usage and adjust our workflow or services to accommodate any changes that improve efficiency and encourage use of the services.

Increased circulation both in physical materials, as well as, e materials locally versed national trends. The states acknowledgement that libraries are changing.

- Be an accurate one-stop source for all information needs
 - Ensure that the people of our community have the skills needed to access, evaluate, and use information
 - Enable patrons to interact with the staff in a variety of methods
 - Be knowledgeable in advances in the world of information services

Measure the bibliographic instruction interactions and usage of delivery methods by patrons.

Visionary-Explore offering chat-Facebook, Facebook messaging, and Instagram reference service.

- Engage residents to become members and encourage usage
 - Re-invent ways to motivate library cardholders to stay current and use the library services and collections
 - Create a newcomers program to integrate all residents in our community by proactively reaching out to them and introducing them to our resources.

Measure the valid cardholders, new cardholders, and circulation of materials, physical and virtual.

Visionary-Engage 20% of the residents as valid cardholders, expand service to mobile devices and explore virtual checkout

- Encourage patrons to request materials regardless of status or availability
 - Engage patrons in person and online to fulfill their information needs
 - Promote the accessibility services to provide no hassle and/or no wait materials
 - Strive for prompt delivery of requested materials
 - Make requests a budget priority

Measure the satisfied delivery of requests, use of requesting materials on the shelf, Evergreen Resource Share requests, interlibrary loan requests, SCRCs requests, and purchase of materials requested

Visionary-explore new avenues, as they become available to provide optimum resource sharing service to our cardholders.

Adaptability: prepare and adapt the collection for the future while continuing to encourage the love of reading, and encourage personal growth and learning.

As our library continues to see minimal growth of tax revenue, it is extremely important to ensure that we are purchasing materials that are relevant to our patron's needs, but also needs to follow compliance guidelines from Indiana State Library Standards that require a percentage of materials be purchased each year. We want to ensure that we are purchasing appropriate materials in a timely fashion that is used by our community. In addition to making smart purchases, we need to ensure easy access to those materials, by continuing to ensure best practices to help cardholders locate and browse items more readily. Collection development will adjust according to the need based on community trends.

- Deliver a physical collection of materials that is valued by the public
 - Strive to be the best source of physical resources for people to acquire quality information
 - Continue to respond to demand and format changes
 - Continue seeking our cardholders input on books they would like to see in the collection

Measure the collection and corresponding circulation for print, movies, and audio and respond to trend changes

Visionary-explore methods to display, organize, and deliver the collection

- Build a comprehensive digital collection for convenient access
 - Be a place of digital content discovery and learning
 - Evaluate the various options offered for multimedia content and select products that meet our cardholders' interest and fit into our budget

Measure the collection and corresponding circulation for eBooks, audio downloads and music and adjust to necessary changes

Visionary-ensure our participation in the E Indiana Consortium through budgeting enough resources to pay for increased cost

- Provide online resources for anytime, anywhere information
 - Continuously evaluate both current and potential online products and services to ensure we have the best product at the best cost for our cardholders
 - Explore collaborating with local agencies and organizations to provide online resources

Measure the online resource cost per search and use consortium purchasing

Visionary- Continue working with E Indiana Consortium to provide greater access to additional resources.

- Be intentional about marketing and sharing who our organization is and how we can be a part of our community's life.
 - Use social media to the fullest extent allowed
 - Establish effective channels for staff and the public to communicate insights into improving services

Measure the plan by execution, evaluation, revision, and increase partners

Visionary-be able to directly connect a marketing component with patron interaction

Community Center: become the physical and virtual space for our community. Create a welcoming and productive physical space and personalized experience. Create an online presence that is meeting the needs of each community member.

The physical and virtual space is critical to fulfilling our mission of providing a friendly, open destination. We want patrons to find the building and grounds clean, attractive, useful, and full of architectural integrity. We must balance the existing space for conducting library business and providing space for groups and individual needs. Changes to space should make it more functional and user friendly. In addition, we want the community to find the library attractive and be proud to show it off to friends and family members. We will inventory our current facility, plan for the future needs, and prepare financially to ensure growth and comfort. The virtual space is our web site, catalog, and social media sites and the desire to make the library the first place that patrons come for information.

- Encourage groups to use library space for group or individual needs and promote community engagement
 - Promote the space availability and partner with other organizations to share
 - Develop spaces for informal gatherings and connections between patrons
 - Survey the needs of the groups and respond appropriately

Measure the overall utilization of the meeting rooms and monitor common spaces

Visionary-become a venue for local businesses, meeting room utilization annually and expand when possible

- Be the primary convenient free source of computer, internet, WiFi, and Hot Spot access
 - Be flexible and adjust to the changing delivery and bandwidth needs
 - Continually seek formal and informal opportunities to educate the public and staff on library equipment and software

Measure the overall computer usage per the Technology Plan and provide training to public and staff on relevant topics

Visionary-become the local venue for personal and local business technology needs

- Maximize the accessibility to the library and its service with capital needs and improvements
 - Employ creative space planning to make the library flexible and responsive to service priorities through such things as Teen Space and Genealogy/Indiana History area
 - Enhance the patron experience or improve the library efficiency with Capital Improvements
 - Address the capital needs in a timely fashion and plan for financially

Measure the timeline of Capital Needs and Improvements and plan accordingly

Visionary-the library becomes a place to meet for all occasions, more space is needed and the infrastructure is expanded through adding an addition to the existing building or through the acquisition of additional facilities.

- Create a vibrant, personal online presence that serves each patron individually
 - Establish the library as a civic focal point and resource center by creating opportunities for people to become informed and to encourage engagement
 - Implement improvements and revise the website and social media
 - Staff will become involved in Evergreen Indiana Consortium round tables and help in deciding the direction of the current ILS (Integrated Library System).
 - Harness social media to create interactive dialogue about the library and neighborhood services

Measure the changes and opportunities created online for connections to the public.

Visionary-the library website and social media is the first point of contact for the community's informational needs

Staff: Build on our excellent customer service legacy with continual training and by creating an organizational culture of innovation and change to shift with the times and community

Library staff is our number one expense and is the backbone of our organization. They provide services, develop collections, and ensure that the library, grounds, and virtual presence is friendly and open. We will ensure that the staff is qualified, trained, and evaluated to provide exceptional service; however, we want our staff to go beyond just doing business by creating relationships and positive experiences with our patrons to generate positive word-of-mouth and repeat customers. To assure this success, administrators and future staff leaders, will model and coach the behavior and attitude that every staff member will exhibit. We want our community to think of us first not only for information and exceptional services, but for genuine real people who care. We want to make sure the library staff are equipped and have the educational opportunities to attain this goal.

- Build library staff to embrace creativity and change through learning opportunities
 - Encourage and reward ideas that enhance the patron experience and can be repeated
 - Seek opportunities for training in customer service, library skills, and professionalism
 - Encourage a culture of sharing and celebrating the library's success

Measure the training opportunities, the customer feedback, and new ideas implemented that enhance the patron experience.

Visionary-Embrace a culture of professionalism and provide staff with tools help with communication and creativity.

- Train all staff to be effective promoters and advocates of library resources and services
 - Charge staff to participate in the life of the communities and neighborhoods we serve
 - Provide communication methods to keep staff current on library resources and services

Measure the Community Promotion activities and feedback; the communication effectiveness; and the comfort level of staff to promote services, collections, and the library

Visionary-library staff knows all the services, the collection, and library facility offering and should be able to share at any given moment regardless of the location or time.

Library Trustees:

Trustees will champion local efforts to create a reading culture and literate society as well as facilitate intergenerational and family learning. Trustees will work with library partners and stakeholders to advocate for community literacy.

The roles and responsibilities of each library trustees is to advocate for the library, as follows:

- recruit members with the skills to serve on a public board, respect the practices and procedures of board governance, and serve the library's annual evaluation and long-range plans
- communicate with patrons, community members, and other stakeholders about the library's mission, vision, and long-range plan
- identify opportunities to expand the library's reach in underserved townships and in the county
- ensure the library's solvency through sound fiscal management practices which may include exploring new revenue streams and expanding the library district
- support opportunities for board development and training
 - Submit the library's annual report on matters of governance and fiscal transparency as well as other performance statistics of public interest on the library's website
 - Abide by Robert's Rules of Order and follow the assigned responsibilities for governance as described in state statute and library bylaws for trustees
 - Govern with the Bylaws and respect their purpose vis-à-vis other standard operating procedures
 - Recruit Officers and Committee Members for effective governance and succession planning
 - Attend trainings for board development and best practices in governance

Visionary-Trustees will work individually and collectively to represent the library board in

- developing positive relationships with partners and stakeholders in order to facilitate intergenerational and family learning at the library
- creating local opportunities for community literacy in order to support a reading culture and literate society
- representing the library's good standing with the Indiana State Library in order to model best or promising practices in library board governance for communities of similar size to the City of Peru and Miami County

Assessment of facilities, services, technology, and operations

We are a single site location in a residential area located on the north side of State Road 19 two blocks east of the Miami County Court house, 102 East Main Street, Peru. Our building was built in 1902 as a gift from Andrew Carnegie to the citizens of Peru, Indiana. The library was given the Miami County Museum building which was attached to the library. This addition to the building was completed in the 1990's. In 2016, a million dollar renovation was completed on the building.

The staff provides reference services, programming, collection management, customer service, hardware and software maintenance and assistance, planning, budgeting, marketing, and various other services required to operate a single site library with a community of 10,772 and a budget of \$566,247.

The library provides a fiber connection for internet with desktops and wireless access throughout the building. We contract our domain server, email server, and website via INConnect services provided by the Indiana State Library. Evergreen Indiana Consortium provides our card catalog, circulation software, and OPAC services. EIndiana Consortium provides our online database of Ebooks, streamed movies and audio, as well as, magazines. Our library also uses the INSPIRE database as our main source when looking for EResources. Our technology vision is to anticipate the needs of our customer requests prior to the customer visiting the library and have quality hardware, software, and staff assistance available with little or no barriers.

We currently do not employ an IT systems technician on site. The director employs other companies such as ENA Services, INConnect Services, Evergreen Indiana Services to provide the IT needs of the library for web-based service.

The Director of the Library currently oversees the informational services of the library. The staff of the library consists of the Director (MLS, ALA Accredited, State of Indiana Librarian

Certified Certificate 1), Assistant Director (MLS, ALA Accredited, State of Indiana Librarian Certified Certificate 2), five (5) part-time clerks with advanced duties, five (5) clerk part-time employees. The seven (7) member Library Board works with the Director to provide planning for the future.

Ongoing annual evaluation process

The library staff will monitor the plan set by giving ongoing feedback and evaluation to the director on an annual basis. The staff will adjust for trends, new information and products. Annually the director will report to the Library Board a status of the goals and any recommendations for changes, deletions, or additions to the plan. The Library Board will publish its annual report by March 1.

Financial resources and sustainability

The library is supported by property taxes collected from the City of Peru, Indiana residents. In addition, we received income tax and miscellaneous revenues that support the operating budget. Although, the circuit breakers/tax caps have affected our property tax income, we still are able to support our mission and strategic plan and anticipate doing so for the years to come. Operating revenue and budget will be the primary resource for supporting the strategic plan needs. The library does have private funds available for emergency and/or building needs. It should be noted that LIRF and Rainy Day Funds may be used for projects but must be budgeted a year in advance for usage or an additional appropriation may be requested through the City of Peru City Council.

The library currently does not have any debt.

The library may fund capital needs and improvements through a variety of sources:

- Library Improvement Reserve Fund (LIRF)
- Rainy Day Fund
- Pay-as-you-go from the Operating Fund
- Donations

- Grants
- General Obligation Bonds

Collaboration with other public libraries and community partners

Collaboration and networking is vital to our services. Community partners help foster a love of the library, promote our services, collections, facility and staff, and support the library's needs. Within our goals are several markers for connection and outreach, as we understand the importance of sharing what we offer in support of their objectives whether professionally or personally. We have identified several groups that we still strive to connect with throughout the year and in the future Peru Community Schools

- Backpack Festival Churches
- Chamber of Commerce
- City of Peru, Indiana
- Department of Child Services
- Dukes Foundation
- Indiana Humanities
- Indiana Department of Revenue
- Indiana State Library
- Indiana University Environmental Resilience Institute
- Internal Revenue Service
- IVY Tech Community College
- Local area daycares/nursery schools
- Miami County Indiana Worth Remembering
- Miami County YMCA Kids Fair
- Northern Indiana Community Foundation
- Maconaquah School Corporation
- North Miami Community Schools
- Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA)

- Peru Civic Center
- Peru Community Schools
Peru Parks Department
- Purdue Extension Services
- ReDiscover Downtown Peru
- Various political organizations
- Various religious organizations
- Various small business
- Various sororities
- Workforce One
- U.S. Census
- United way of Miami County