



Stone County Library Strategic Plan

2017-2021



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LIBRARY MISSION:

To promote literacy among the people of Stone County and to facilitate lifelong learning and the appreciation of literature for all members of the Stone County community.

LIBRARY VALUES:

Good Stewardship

The library is committed to responsible stewardship of all the resources with which we have been entrusted. We are accountable for ensuring the proper use of funds to deliver quality library services to the county.

Excellent Service

The library is committed to our patrons and is responsive to their service needs. The community’s opinion and input are welcome in all areas of library service. We consider the impact on the patron in all decisions and strive for fair and equitable treatment of all in the community.

Literacy and Learning

The library is committed to being the focal point of learning and literacy in the community by providing a wide variety of materials, resources, and services to meet the educational, informational, and recreational needs in our community.

Growth and Innovation

The library is committed to continuous learning and innovations in the pursuit of excellence. We respond to present situations and anticipate future needs.

Intellectual Freedom

The library is committed to the right of its community to information representing all points of view, even when this information is controversial or offensive by others. The library endorses the American Library Associations’ Bill of Rights.

THE PROCESS

In 2016, the Library Board of Trustees and the staff of the Stone County Library embarked upon the process of strategic planning. The planning model that was used for the strategic plan was the Public Library Association's *Strategic Planning for Results*. Tailored for public library institutions, *Strategic Planning for Results* is built on a basic assumption: excellence must be defined locally – it results when library services match community needs, interests and priorities. *Strategic Planning for Results* recognizes that successful, relevant, and vibrant public libraries operate by recognizing community needs and fully assisting the community to realize their goals. The process also recognizes that in today's reality, public libraries must fully operate in a team manner with governmental, social, educational, and other public agencies within the same local service area.

The Stone County Library held several focus groups of local community members, including key community stake holders who represent distinct groups within the service area of the public library system. These focus groups helped the staff to identify community needs that the library can meet in order to move the community forward to realize excellence. *Strategic Planning for Results* model takes advantage of the strengths of each integral group within the planning process. The library's administration and staff use their training skills and experience to translate these groups' recommendations into programs and services that will lead to the outcomes that are important to the community. The Library Board's overview of the library's policies, services, and effectiveness in the community allow citizens to review the strategic plan as part of the larger picture within the community.

The focus group worked to identify a vision for Stone County and the needs that must be met for the citizens to realize their community goals. Through this process, the group worked to determine the community's goals, needs and how the Library can make a contribution toward achieving Stone County's vision. This, in turn, helped library staff answer the question, "What difference does the Library make and what difference could the Library make in the lives of Stone County citizens?" The group then worked to identify the service priorities for the library that will most effectively meet identified community needs.

The recommended service priorities were then passed on to library staff. The library staff worked to develop goals, objectives and activities for each service priority. There is a strong emphasis in *Strategic Planning for Results* on measurement and evaluation. Each strategic goal must identify the benefit that the community will receive from the plan. Each objective must contain valid measures and time frames in which the staff and Library Board of Trustees can determine the objective as being met. All actions are to be logical steps taken with close analysis of the available resources that exist or are required in order to achieve the objective.

The service roles, the goals, and the objectives have been discussed and finalized. The strategic plan was presented to the Stone County Library System Board of Trustees for approval. The identification of community needs and the Stone County Library's ability to meet those needs were identified by community members and staff. These community stake holders and library staff took the many steps to complete the detailed work in order to develop the strategic plan for Library Board approval. The role of the Library Board, in this planning process, was to review the strategic plan from their perspective – the big picture. They read through each service priority, evaluated each goal, and tested the objectives under each goal in the strategic plan. As executives to the Stone County Library, Board Members reviewed the work and adopt it as the future road map for the Library to follow in the next three years to serve the informational, educational and recreational needs of the citizens of Stone County.

COUNTY PROFILE

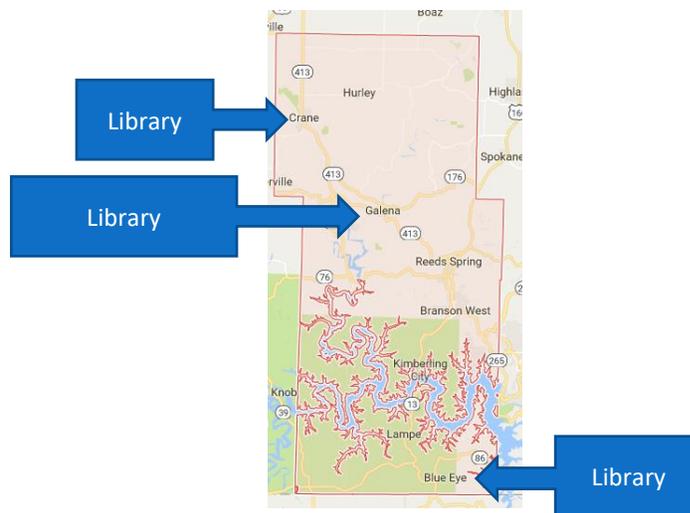
The Stone County Library serves a population of 30,943 residents. The county has experienced a 4% decrease in population over the last 5 years. 27.9% of the population is over the age of 65; this is much greater than the Missouri average of 15.7%, and the number of residents over the age of 65 is increasing. 17.3% of the population is under the age of 18; this is lower than the Missouri average of 22.9%, and this percentage is decreasing. 16.2% of the population falls below the poverty line, a greater than average percentage for Missouri. (Statistics from the US Census Bureau)

According to Missouri KIDS Count 2016, the county has a composite rank of 51 of 115 counties in Missouri on the indicators of children well-being. The county has a low ranking (85th of 115) in child abuse/neglect and in children entering or re-entering state custody (76th of 115), however, the county does have a good ranking on teen pregnancy (10th of 115).

Stone County unemployment in October of 2016 was 6.2% and trending downward; this is higher than the Missouri average of 5.1%. However, the rate only tells part of the story. As illustrated by the graph below, Stone County is an area of seasonal employment, where the unemployment spikes during the winter months. (FREDs Economic Data)



Stone County also has geographical challenges. In the heart of the Ozarks, Stone County is a rural area with a lake, rivers, and mountains. While beautiful and giving great character to the area and the people, the terrain makes getting to remote locations more difficult.



LIBRARY PROFILE

The Stone County Library began offering services to the county in 1948 through the Galena Library. The Crane Area Library was incorporated into the Stone County Library in 1997 in order to better serve the community. To serve the southern end of the county, the Blue Eye Library was added in 2015.

The Galena Library building, which houses the headquarters, was completed in 2008. The 10,000 square foot library features 6 public computers, wireless internet access, meeting spaces, a presentation system in the meeting room, and wonderful architecture and natural light. Its current physical collection is 33,235 volumes.

The Crane Library in the historic bank building was completed in 2012. The 3,300 square foot library features 5 public computers, wireless access, a meeting space, and a blend of old world architecture and modern design. Its current physical collection is 12,645 volumes.

The 2,000 square foot Blue Eye Library opened in 2015. It features 4 public computers, wireless internet access, and shares a building with the Lions Community Center. The current physical collection is 6,989 volumes. It is centrally located within walking distance of the Blue Eye Schools.

There are several major challenges facing the Stone County Library in the upcoming years.

FACILITIES CHALLENGES

Stone County is a rural county with many small communities that are difficult to reach. The Galena Library is located in the county seat of Galena, pop. 440. The town is hard to reach for some residents and other than the county government has little commercial activity to draw visitors.

The Blue Eye Library is located in the very southern end of the county, 45 minutes away from the Galena library. The Blue Eye Library has no program room so all programs are held in the main area of the library which can cause noise bleed-over.

The Crane Library is better situated in a town of 1,410 and closer to shopping districts. However, the Crane Library faces its own challenges in the design of the building. Because it is a long, narrow space, there is not adequate spacing between the shelving units, nor the computer area. The program room is located upstairs without an elevator which limits the attendees to programs.

CIRCULATION CHALLENGES

The Stone County Library circulation of materials, 1.29 per capita, falls well below Missouri average of 5.34 per capita of similar size libraries. The reasons for this are many and varied including the location of facilities, years of below average dollars spent on collection, a competing library within Stone County (Kimberling Area Library), and low percentage of citizens with library cards. The average library of similar population size has 55% of residents with library cards; Stone County Library has only 11% of residents with library cards. However, all is not gloomy in circulation; from July 2014 to July 2016, the library has seen an increase of 100% in circulation.

COLLECTION CHALLENGES

The collection of the Stone County Library is an aging collection. During the past 2 years, the collection has been weeded--older, obsolete, and/or non-circulating material has been removed. At the same time, the collection budget has been increased to purchase more material. This should make the collection more relevant, more

attractive, and more current thus leading to better circulation. However as of November 2016, 50% of the library's non-fiction books are outdated. A cost of \$212,500 has been estimated to bring the non-fiction collection up to date while still keeping the collection at the current size.

TECHNOLOGY CHALLENGES

In a rapidly changing environment, it is a struggle to keep up with technology demands. While still having low computer usage to other comparable libraries, the library has seen an increase of 62% in computer use in 2015. The library averages 34 computer users a day, not including wireless internet use which is not tracked.

This increase has put a strain on the bandwidth limits that the library can afford. In June 2016, Galena increased its bandwidth from 5 mbps (megabytes per second) to 10 mbps. Crane Library received for same increase in September 2016. Blue Eye has 3 mbps. To give some context, Netflix recommends a connection of at least 6 mbps for video streaming. So a single person streaming a video will consume most of the bandwidth for the branch.

The library is replacing old and outdated computer equipment. Blue Eye and Crane have received new public computers in the last year, and Galena has received new staff computers and a new server. A new mobile computer lab of 8 laptops was also added in 2015. Galena's public computers are slated to be replaced in early 2017. Because no one on staff has expertise in computer networking, the library outsources some of its Information Technology functions to a third party.

PROGRAMMING CHALLENGES

The library has begun to add a wide array of programs and activities for all of our patrons. Each library branch offers a storytime, a monthly school age program, and Summer Reading program for children. The library also offers programs and activities for adults. Programs include dominoes, murder mystery theater, book discussions, Author Fair, Master Gardener programs and much more.

In 2014, the library only offered 39 programs; however in 2015, the library offered 299 programs. That is an increase of 766%. Attendance at library programs increased 937% in the same time frame. The library has also made it easier for community groups to use our meeting space and has seen similar increases.

However, this growth does place a strain on meeting room space. The largest community room is in Galena but is too small for some of the programs. Crane's meeting space is smaller, is upstairs, and does not have a presentation system, and Blue Eye must either hold programs in the main area of the library or borrow space from the adjacent Lions Club Community Room.

BENCHMARK COMPARISON

*Data compiled from the FY15 Public Library Survey of Missouri Libraries and Stone County FY15 Annual Report

The library chose 4 single county libraries that were of similar population to compare statistics.

Library	Population	Total Income	Staff FTE	Hours Open (per year)
Stone County Library	32,202	\$628,015	8.02	8,100
Webster County Library	35,252	\$491,757	8.95	5,252
Dunklin County Library	31,953	\$888,787	11.05	11,648
Polk County Library	31,137	\$359,482	10.25	4,632
Texas County Library	26,008	\$317,279	6.41	7,852

Library	Registered Borrowers	Annual Library Visits	Children's Programs Attendance	Uses of Public Internet Computers
Stone County Library	6,863	27,514	3,820	11,093
Webster County Library	20,213	114,146	2,672	24,164
Dunklin County Library	26,212	73,100	1,450	45,360
Polk County Library	21,645	143,502	2,535	20,827
Texas County Library	12,146	54,080	1,831	30,565

Library	Collection Expense	Total Collection	Total Circulation	Circ per Capita
Stone County Library	\$67,309	88,209	41,677	1.29
Webster County Library	\$60,617	97,246	150,101	4.26
Dunklin County Library	\$82,323	226,037	286,400	8.96
Polk County Library	\$46,667	95,121	168,748	5.42
Texas County Library	\$9,709	89,731	82,184	3.16

In the benchmark comparisons, Stone County Library ranks towards the top or middle in total income, staff, children's program attendance, and money spent on materials. However, the Library lags behind in library visits, registered borrowers, computer use, and circulation.

SELECTED LIBRARY SERVICES RESPONSES

SATISFY CURIOSITY-----LIFELONG LEARNING

- ▶ Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interests and continue to learn throughout their lives.

STIMULATE IMAGINATION: READING, VIEWING, AND LISTENING FOR PLEASURE

- ▶ Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them and will have the help they need to make choices among the options.

VISIT A COMFORTABLE SPACE—PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL SPACES

- ▶ Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.

SATISFY CURIOSITY-----LIFELONG LEARNING

Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interests and continue to learn throughout their lives

GOAL 1: THE STONE COUNTY LIBRARY WILL BECOME THE LEADING COMMUNITY CENTER FOR EARLY LEARNING, WHERE FAMILIES READ, PLAY, AND LEARN TOGETHER.

Objective 1: Increase children and family programs by 5% annually

Objective 2: Increase outreach programs to children by 10% annually

Objective 3: Increase children and family program participation by 10% annually

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct family game nights monthly
- Increase homeschooling programs and outreach
- Conduct movie night monthly at Crane and Galena
- Investigate e-card for all Stone County Students
- Increase number of educational dvd's
- Collaborate more with schools, preschools,
- Promote and incorporate Tumblebooks into programs
- Add more early literacy games and tablets and/or computers for children

GOAL 2: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WILL HAVE ACCESS TO RESOURCES, SERVICES, AND PROGRAMS THAT WILL ENABLE THEM TO LEARN NEW SKILLS AND ENHANCE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE.

Objective 1: Increase circulation of Non-Fiction materials by 10% annually

Objective 2: Increase number of electronic resources by 5% annually

Objective 3: Increase the number of programs by 10% annually

Objective 4: Increase computer use by 10% annually

ACTION PLAN

- Increase the size of the collection in strategic areas (e.g. homeschooling, workforce development, business)
- Weed collection annually to ensure current, relevant collection
- Increase the number of senior focused programs
- Conduct programs on workforce skills
- Increase the variety of programs (e.g. crafting, computer skills, life skills)
- Add databases that are focused on lifelong learning or new skills (e.g. Ancestry, Legal Forms, Job Center)

GOAL 3: ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY WILL HAVE AWARENESS OF RESOURCES, SERVICES, AND PROGRAMS THAT ENABLE LIFELONG LEARNING.

Objective 1: Increase library card holders by 10% annually

Objective 2: Increase use of library electronic resources by 10% annually

ACTION PLAN

- Increase visibility at local fairs and festivals
- Find new places to distribute library promotional materials
- Increase the number of press releases
- Increase the number of social media posts
- Investigate the feasibility of mass mailing
- Promote library services with local community organizations
- Investigate email marketing
- Library card drives with schools, preschools and daycares

STIMULATE IMAGINATION: READING, VIEWING, AND LISTENING FOR PLEASURE

Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them and will have the help they need to make choices among the options.

GOAL 1: CHILDREN WILL DISCOVER THE JOY OF READING AND BECOME LIFELONG READERS.

Objective 1: Increase circulation of children's material by 15% annually

Objective 2: Increase children's collection by 10% annually

ACTION PLAN

- Investigate new shelving categories and shelving units for children
- Add kits that combine audio and book
- Add more educational DVD's
- Collaborate with schools for co-operative programming
- Increase children displays

GOAL 2: TEENS WILL HAVE MATERIALS, PROGRAMS, AND INTERACTIVE EXPERIENCES THAT FOCUS ON THEIR CURRENT INTERESTS AND PROVIDE SATISFYING RECREATIONAL EXPERIENCES.

Objective 1: Increase Young Adult Collection by 10% annually

Objective 2: Increase circulation of Young Adult by 15% annually

Objective 3: Increase Teen Program engagement by 15% annually

ACTION PLAN

- Set up a Freegal listening station
- Conduct programming that is interesting and current to teens (e.g. fashion show, gaming, magic the gathering card game)
- Conduct online book discussions
- Organize a Teen Advisory Board
- Dedicated Teen Areas
- Add Maker-Spaces
- Add gaming machine and games for programs

GOAL 3: ADULTS WILL ENJOY A WIDE VARIETY OF NEW AND POPULAR MATERIALS AVAILABLE WHEN AND WHERE THEY WANT THEM IN THE FORMATS THAT THEY PREFER.

Objective 1: Increase circulation of adult material by 15% annually

Objective 2: Increase circulation of DVD's by 15% annually

ACTION PLAN

- Increase materials budget
- Increase popular authors
- Increase number of formats purchased for popular authors
- Set up relevant, constantly changing book displays
- Conduct outreach “Book Talks”
- Train staff to be more proactive in reader’s advisory
- Update reader’s advisory webpage regularly
- Promote online readers advisory
- Investigate monthly book review article or blog posted to Facebook

VISIT A COMFORTABLE SPACE—PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL SPACES

Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking

GOAL 1: ALL RESIDENTS OF STONE COUNTY WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A MODERN, COMFORTABLE AND INVITING LIBRARY THAT OFFERS A CHOICE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SPACES FOR READING, STUDYING, WORKING, PLAYING, TALKING AND ENGAGING WITH ONE ANOTHER.

Objective 1: Increase library foot traffic by 20% annually

Objective 2: By 2021, Stone County residents will have library access within 20 minutes of home

ACTION PLAN

- Reorganize Crane Library for a Teen Center
- Promote virtual library branch
- Promote books by mail services
- Investigate reorganization and remodel of Galena Library to create teen center, expanded children's area, and maker space.
- Revisit policies and facility organization to create zoned quiet spaces
- More comfortable, modern furniture
- Establish Art shows and gallery
- Conduct community needs assessment on future branch needs and locations

GOAL 2: RESIDENTS WILL BE ABLE TO CONNECT WITH THE LIBRARY 24/7 TO OBTAIN INFORMATION AND MATERIALS THROUGH UP-TO-DATE, USER-FRIENDLY VIRTUAL SERVICES THAT ARE ACCESSIBLE VIA COMPUTERS AND MOBILE DEVICES.

Objective 1: increase use of library website by 10% annually

Objective 2: increase use of library electronic resources by 10% annually

Objective 3: Implement the Action Plan recommended by Edge for Stone County Library (see Appendix A)

ACTION PLAN--OTHER THAN EDGE ACTION PLAN

- Investigate circulation of hotspots
- Investigate library e-cards with schools
- Promote awareness website and library resources in the community
- Keep library website up to date and refresh lists and links monthly