



Marion County
Public Library System

STRATEGIC PLAN: RIDING THE CURRENT A Bright Future of Learning, Enrichment and Access



libraryIQ

PREPARED FOR

Marion County Public Library System
August, 2024

CONTENTS

3	INTRODUCTION
4	STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS
4	KEY CHALLENGES
5	GUIDING STATEMENTS
6	STRATEGIC GOALS
	Community Gathering
	Welcoming Spaces
	Library Visibility
	Digital Literacy
	Embrace Innovation
6	ACTION PLAN
22	APPENDIX I
26	APPENDIX II

Introduction

The Marion County Public Library System serves a vibrant community with a strong sense of local pride and cultural heritage. A lively arts scene, numerous festivals, and endless opportunities to enjoy the outdoors combine with a stable economy and friendly spirit to make Marion County a dynamic and welcoming place.

The Library stands at the intersection of a rich legacy and a future filled with adaptability and innovation. This strategic plan provides a step-by-step process to build a future that celebrates inclusivity, accessibility, and forward-thinking initiatives. By embracing change and fostering innovation, the Library will grow in value to the entire community.

In a fast-changing, increasingly digital world, the time for Library strategy is now. With strategy comes a shift in focus to the most useful and impactful services. Through this plan, the Library will strengthen its foundational core—integrating operations, collections, programs, physical spaces, and technologies—to support a thriving population in Marion County.

The plan supports the Library's unwavering commitment to lifelong learning, literacy promotion, and bridging the digital divide. It ensures Library leaders have the flexibility to adapt to new challenges and opportunities. The journey to a strong and vibrant Library starts here.



Strategic Planning Process

When the strategic planning process began in January 2024, the team set out to answer three key questions:

1. What will Marion County look like in 2028? What community needs and wants are within the Library's mission to provide?

Research focused on demographics, interests, and evolving needs. Surveys, focus groups, individual interviews, demographic research, and consumer segmentation analysis were conducted.

2. How can Library resources and services evolve to meet the identified community needs?

Research focused on existing programs, collections, technology, and services to assess their alignment with the needs and wants of local residents.

3. What strategic goals should the Library pursue to address community needs effectively, and what are the actionable objectives associated with these goals?

Analysis and synthesis of information and data resulted in a clear set of strategic goals and objectives.

RIDING THE CURRENT is rooted in public input and data. From collection performance to Library use to customer and resident segmentation and mapping, the strategic plan is based on facts. National best practices, local demographics, growth projections, economic and social climate, facility use, and program engagement were also part of the analysis. Through a dedicated public engagement website, survey, focus groups, individual interviews, and direct staff participation, **ideas and feedback were gathered from nearly 400 residents.** Data sources include:

- LibraryIQ collection data analytics
- LibraryIQ consumer and Library customer segmentation recommendations
- Marion County Public Library System strategic planning website
- United States Census
- Institute of Museum and Library Services data

Key Challenges

A few key needs emerged from the research process:

1. ADA compliance at Fairmont building.
2. Places where residents can conduct meetings and meet neighbors to strengthen connections and build relationships.
3. Enhanced marketing and communication about Library services.
4. Support for efforts to expand broadband access.
5. Transportation to the Library, especially in rural areas.
6. Updated spaces and opportunities to engage with literacy and cultural activities.
7. Support and resources for job seeking and career development.
8. Need for quality services outside Library building walls.
9. Access to and training in technology (including digital literacy) for work, school, and life enrichment.

Guiding Statements



MISSION

The Marion County Public Library System provides the best possible library service to the citizens of the region. It is the system's function to serve the educational, cultural, informational, and recreational needs of both children and adults. The library system explores all methods of communication and technology to accomplish this purpose.

Strategic Goals



COMMUNITY GATHERING

The Marion County Public Library System will foster civic engagement, support lifelong learning and well-being for residents, and strengthen community bonds by increasing community program attendance by 20% during the planning period.



WELCOMING SPACES

The Marion County Public Library System will provide modern, welcoming services and spaces that bring the community together by removing barriers to building access and modernizing facilities.



LIBRARY VISIBILITY

The Marion County Public Library System will raise its visibility and public awareness by increasing newsletter, social media, and outreach engagement by 25% during the planning period.



DIGITAL LITERACY

The Marion County Public Library System will empower the community with essential digital literacy skills by increasing the number of participants in digital literacy workshops by 30% during the planning period.



EMBRACE INNOVATION

The Marion County Public Library System will seek and embrace opportunities to serve as a true community gathering place and hub for information, entertainment, and life enrichment by increasing visits by 10%, website visits by 10%, and digital downloads by 15% during the planning period.

Action Plan

The tables below provide detailed priorities, objectives, and timelines for achieving the Library's organizational priorities.

TIMELINE KEY	PARTNER	FUNDING
Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
Fiscal Year 26	Local Government	Local Government Support
Fiscal Year 27	Community Organization	Dedicated Capital (Levy, Grants, etc.)
Fiscal Year 28	Health Organization	
Throughout the Planning Period	Schools	
	Local Business Community	

COMMUNITY GATHERING



The Marion County Public Library System will foster civic engagement, support lifelong learning and well-being for residents, and strengthen community bonds by increasing community program attendance by 20% during the planning period.

TABLE 1: COMMUNITY GATHERING ACTIONS

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Encourage residents to gather and connect	Create a passive STEM space for coding, robotics, etc. for elementary and middle grades students	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Partner with community organizations on community-wide events	Fiscal Year 25	Community Organization	Library Budget
Support family gathering	Increase options for families to engage in STEM activities together (for example: after school initiatives such as a STEM area for elementary and middle grade students)	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organization	Library Budget
	Provide concurrent activities for children and parents (for example: adult book club concurrent with children's story time). Make activities complementary as possible to spark family discussion	Fiscal Year 27	Library Only	Library Budget
	Provide multigenerational programs or events (Family Fun) at least three times per year	Throughout the Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
	Host pop-up library services at one large family friendly event in the community annually. This could include library card registration, bringing physical books to check out, QR codes to access the electronic collection, and simple STEM activities	Throughout the Planning Period	Local Government	Library Budget

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Engage caregivers in early literacy activities	Distribute welcome to the Library brochure to home daycare providers and daycare centers	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Provide reading to your child guides to home daycare providers and daycare centers	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Create book bundles for parents/caregivers including parenting information and picture books	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Market book bundles to parents/caregivers at daycares and community events	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Library Budget
Enhance an inclusive Marion County Public Library System	Communicate to residents about plans to increase accessibility at Fairmont building	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Local Government Support
	Seek regular patron input regarding accessibility of Library technology, buildings, and outreach programs	Throughout the Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
	Use consumer segmentation data to design and provide events that appeal to specific segments of the population	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Continue staff training to enhance the culture of excellent customer service. Focus training on removing barriers to inclusion and "soft skills" such as empathy, interpersonal competence, and open-mindedness	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Enhance staff training in DEI topics	Fiscal Year 27	Library Only	Library Budget

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
	Conduct staff training in community development library skills including incorporating outreach into most services	Fiscal Year 27	Library Only	Library Budget
	Collaborate with user groups that regularly meet in the Library to ask opinions about potential new programs and programs that have run their course	Fiscal Year 27	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Enhance programming that incorporates DEI principles and reflects all members of the community	Fiscal Year 27	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Explore options for more community-led programming in which County residents offer programs at the Library with staff guidance	Fiscal Year 27	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Expand materials delivery for customers with limited mobility and populations with transit challenges	Fiscal Year 27-28	Community Organizations	Library Budget

WELCOMING SPACES



The Marion County Public Library System will provide modern, welcoming services and spaces that bring the community together by removing barriers to building access and modernizing facilities.

TABLE 2: WELCOMING SPACES ACTIONS

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Determine appropriate investment for Library locations	Conduct two one-week facility usage reviews at each location. Count each branch visit and survey visitors to determine the reason for the visit (check out a book, attend a program, use Wi-Fi, etc.)	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Use data to determine average foot traffic by hour/day and peak times of Library use. Use this data to determine best hours of operation	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Map data to digital downloads and website visits during the same two-week time period	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Research funding options for renovation of Fairmont Library	Fiscal Year 25	Local Government	Dedicated Capital
	Enhance coffee service and hours for “coffee and conversation” at Fairview	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Use data to understand collection use and appropriate necessary shelf space by collection	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Identify resources and support for designing Fairmont Library renovation	Fiscal Year 26	Local Government	Dedicated Capital
	Explore grants to foster sustainability of buildings, including solar and other energy-saving features	Fiscal Year 26	Local Government	Dedicated Capital

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Provide modern, efficient library facilities	Engage with external resource to explore possibilities for high-quality coffee shop at Fairmont	Fiscal Year 27	Local Government	Local Government Support
	Explore possibilities for expanded outdoor space at all branches for reading, relaxing, and picnics	Fiscal Year 27	Local Government	Local Government Support

LIBRARY VISIBILITY



The Marion County Public Library System will raise its visibility and public awareness by increasing newsletter, social media, and outreach engagement by 25% during the planning period.

TABLE 3: LIBRARY VISIBILITY ACTIONS

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Educate residents about modern library services	Create a broader email database by collecting email addresses at parks and other community events, Library programs, etc.	Fiscal Year 25	Local Government	Library Budget
	Conduct communication campaign to boost understanding among residents that libraries are places to connect with the community, access exciting technology, have fun, and learn	Throughout Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
Create awareness of the value of Library services	Calculate and communicate dollar value of total quarterly print/electronic book checkouts, literacy/other programs, and technology access. Calculate totals and communicate on website	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Collect and post on website and social media two to three customer testimonials telling the story of the Library as an essential community resource	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
Raise awareness of the Library and its services in Marion County	Explore Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) or other marketing avenues to promote specific Library services to all residents in selected zip codes, as funding allows	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
	Continue LibPost communication with new Marion County residents to invite engagement with the Library	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Conduct one targeted marketing campaign to each of the top three customer segmentation cohorts identified in data analytics platform to engage new users	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Enhance use of school communication channels to market Library services to students and families	Fiscal Year 26	Schools	Library Budget
	Bundle outreach services under one brand. Promote through consistent marketing activities	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Create a simple slide presentation and encourage Library staff/representatives to share at community events	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Conduct targeted, branded campaigns for early literacy, reading challenges, and services for seniors. Create one campaign for each service each year	Throughout the Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
	Create and post four short videos each year promoting specific programs/ services on Instagram or other social platform	Throughout the Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
	Raise awareness of services available on the website (virtual library)	Strongly market electronic collection. Stress value and convenience in messaging	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Amplify early literacy services through partnership	Enhance partnerships with educational organizations such as museums, historic sites, parks, etc.	Fiscal Year 25	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Enhance communication with teachers and media specialists to promote use of Teacher Cards and the Library	Fiscal Year 25	Schools	Library Budget
	Engage in school and community educational events	Fiscal Year 26	Schools	Library Budget

DIGITAL LITERACY



The Marion County Public Library System will empower the community with essential digital literacy skills by increasing the number of participants in digital literacy workshops by 30% during the planning period.

TABLE 4 - DIGITAL LITERACY ACTIONS

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Ensure a comprehensive understanding of customer-facing technology among Library leaders and staff	Offer one or more all-staff trainings per year on existing and potential customer-facing technology (including artificial intelligence) and its applications in everyday life	Throughout the Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
	Enhance offerings about consumer-facing AI tools (ChatGPT, Bard, Sora) and instruction in use	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Create a process for which suggestions from the public and staff for new customer-facing technology are reviewed. Communicate results to the person who made the suggestion	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
Help close the "tech-fluency" gap for residents, particularly in emerging technologies	Transition desktop computers to laptops and provide lounge-style seating for laptop use	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Dedicated Capital

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Dedicate time for Library leaders and staff to research and explore new, tech-inspired ideas	Continue to offer at least one information literacy program each year for adults and children	Throughout the Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
	Create a process to empower all staff to provide technology programs and support	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Continue to collaborate with and learn from other libraries and organizations about technology and applications	Throughout the Planning Period	Community Organizations	Library Budget
Position the Library as a place for technology access and support	Offer training to the public on creating useful outputs like a budget, newsletter, or sign rather than specific tools like Excel or Powerpoint. Consider integrating AI training	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Host "bring your device" hours during which staff (digital navigators) provide one-on-one tech help. Market to targeted audiences and maintain an informal approach	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
Provide focused, limited, high-value customer-facing technology	Bundle scanner, VHS converter, and other equipment to create a Memory Lab where patrons can digitize print photos, VHS tapes, 8mm home movies, etc.	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
	Provide Adobe Creative Suite or other graphic design software	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Provide appropriate smart tools throughout all Library locations such as videoconferencing screens, adjustable height desks, built-in charging ports, etc.	Fiscal Year 27	Local Government	Local Government Support
Improve electronic collection access and ease of use	Increase engagement among electronic-only users via targeted marketing	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Adjust collection budget to align with demand for physical and electronic materials. Consider expanding electronic materials budget to support increased circulation	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Provide electronic library card registration via QR code at coffee shops, health care facilities, laundromats, etc. Encourage electronic collection use	Fiscal Year 26	Local Business Community	Library Budget

EMBRACE INNOVATION



The Marion County Public Library System will seek and embrace opportunities to serve as a true community gathering place and hub for information, entertainment, and life enrichment by increasing visits by 10%, website visits by 10%, and digital downloads by 15% during the planning period.

TABLE 5 - EMBRACE INNOVATION ACTIONS

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
Make accessing Library services easy for all County residents	Use consumer segmentation data to design and provide events that appeal to targeted segments of the population	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Explore less structured programs for teens and adults. This could include informal book discussions, gaming, etc.	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Explore grant funding for a pop-up library, Library programs, or pick-up lockers for remote regions of the County	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Dedicated Capital
	Revise staffing times and programs to accommodate customers' schedules as possible in planning services and events	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Dedicated Capital
	Explore enhancing STEAM Room makerspace, to include DIY, recording/podcasting equipment, etc.	Fiscal Year 27	Local Government	Dedicated Capital
	Explore partnership with County agencies and organizations to create transportation options to Library buildings, especially for teens and rural customers	Fiscal Year 27	Local Government	Local Government Support
Provide arts, culture, and literacy opportunities	Enhance offerings of arts events such as storytelling, poetry, local history, and music open mic nights	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Library Budget

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
	Expand opportunities for local artists and authors to showcase their work, including possible art space at branches	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Provide personalized reading suggestion lists by request on the website	Fiscal Year 27	Library Only	Library Budget
Continue transparent and fiscally responsible operations	Establish key performance measurements for Library processes and workflows	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Use analytics platform data to establish and monitor key performance indicators, while maintaining appropriate attention to DEI for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer engagement • Collection code size balanced with circulation • Collection weeding • Collection selection (minimizing items that never circulate) • Budget allocations for physical and electronic materials 	Fiscal Year 25	Library Only	Library Budget
	Streamline program planning and delivery by offering programs at multiple times and locations. Use data analytics to plan programs based on resident interests	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget
	Schedule staff meetings on a regular cadence to discuss community input. Review performance indicators with staff teams	Throughout the Planning Period	Library Only	Library Budget
Support life skills and healthy living	Continue to partner with Parks and Recreation and other agencies to offer at least four events each year such as yoga and meditation	Throughout the Planning Period	Local Government	Local Government Support
	Continue to provide opportunities for career readiness. Use Library resources such as Udemy and partner with workforce readiness organizations	Fiscal Year 25	Community Organizations	Library Budget

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
	Continue to provide college and job readiness programs for teens in topics like job/college app assistance and FAFSA preparation	Fiscal Year 26	Schools	Library Budget
	Provide two life skills programs (financial literacy, sewing and mending, etc.) or affordable living classes (coupons, etc.)	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Library Budget
Support economic development	Offer workforce development and business development events such as career upskilling, resume review, and interview coaching, business plans, etc.	Fiscal Year 25	Local Business Community	Library Budget
	Provide timely workshops and resources (using AI or prospect databases) to assist in growing small businesses	Fiscal Year 27	Local Business Community	Library Budget
	Foster and maintain relationships with local business owners. Seek input regularly about needs for Library technology and services	Throughout the Planning Period	Local Business Community	Library Budget
Align with County and State goals for community health and economic growth	Support efforts to increase access to broadband Internet connection	Fiscal Year 25	Local Government	Library Budget
	Provide meeting and coworking areas (including Zoom- and Teams-ready spaces) in all branches, providing an open area for conversations and collaboration	Fiscal Year 26	Local Government	Dedicated Capital
Emphasize sustainability in Library operations and services	Encourage staff to notice and implement ways to reduce waste throughout the system to improve each year, including in purchasing	Fiscal Year 26	Library Only	Library Budget

Strategy	Objective	Timeline	Partner	Funding
	Provide programs in a variety of spaces throughout the service area (parks and recreation spaces, etc.) to increase convenience, shorten travel distance, and reach a larger audience	Fiscal Year 26	Community Organizations	Library Budget
	Enhance sustainability programs, with at least two programs in cooking, food preservation, gardening, and other sustainable lifestyle topics	Fiscal Year 26	Health Organization	Library Budget
	Educate residents about responsible consumption through library programs	Fiscal Year 27	Library Only	Library Budget
	Enhance resources for home gardening, including seed library and programs on organic gardening, composting, etc. every year	Throughout the Planning Period	Community Organizations	Library Budget

APPENDIX I

Demographics

Marion County has a total population of 56,233 with 28,367 (50%) females and 27,866 (49%) males. The median age is 41 years.

An estimated 20% of the population is under 18 years, 35% is 18 to 44 years, 26% is 45 to 64 years, and 20% is 65 years and older. There are 23,033 households in Marion County. The average household size is 2.4 people.¹

Primary Languages



Approximately 1% of Marion County residents are foreign-born. 78% of the County's population was born in West Virginia.

64% of foreign-born are naturalized US citizens and an estimated 85% entered the US before the year 2010.²

¹ US Census American Community Survey. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2020/report.php?geotype=county&state=54&county=049>

² US Census American Community Survey. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2020/report.php?geotype=county&state=54&county=049>

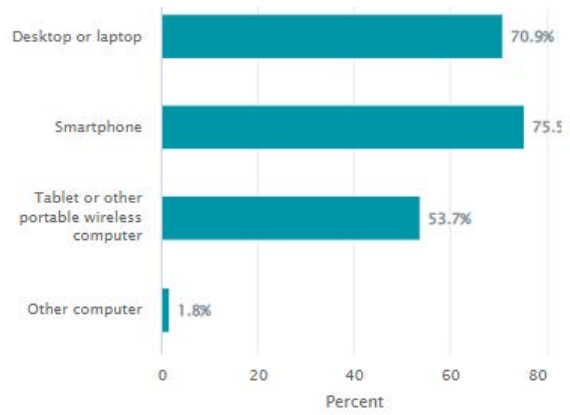
Economics

The median income of households in Marion County is \$52,856. An estimated 6% of households have income below \$10,000 a year and 3% have income over \$200,000 or more.³

Household Income



Technology



Among all households, 69% have a cellular data plan; 68% have a broadband subscription such as cable, fiber optic, or DSL; 5% have a satellite internet subscription; .2% have dial-up alone and .1% have some other service alone.⁴

³ US Census American Community Survey. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2020/report.php?geotype=county&state=54&county=049>

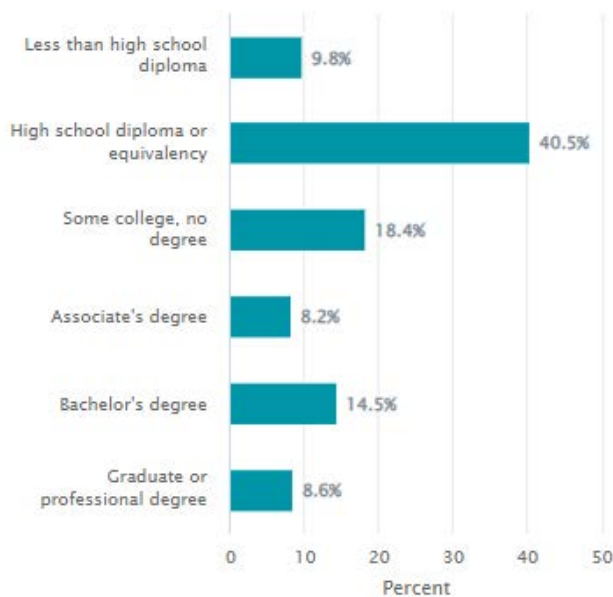
⁴ US Census American Community Survey. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2020/report.php?geotype=county&state=54&county=049>

Education

90% of people 25 years and over have at least graduated from high school, and 23% have a bachelor's degree or higher. An estimated 10% did not complete high school.

The total school enrollment is 12,410. Nursery school enrollment is 644 and kindergarten through 12th grade enrollment is 8,014. College or graduate school enrollment is 3,752.⁵

Educational Attainment



Occupations for Civilian-Employed Population 16 Years+

Civilian employed population 16 years and over	Number	Percent
Management, business, sciences, and arts occupations	8,878	35.0
Service occupations	4,399	17.3
Sales and office occupations	5,747	22.6
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	3,238	12.7
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	3,138	12.4

⁵ US Census American Community Survey. <https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/narrative-profiles/2020/report.php?geotype=county&state=54&county=049>

APPENDIX II

Implementation Timeline

FISCAL YEAR 2025

Strategy	Objective
Encourage residents to gather and connect	Create a passive STEM space for coding, robotics, etc. for elementary and middle grades students
	Partner with community organizations on community-wide events
Determine appropriate investment for Library locations	Conduct two one-week facility usage reviews at each location. Count each branch visit and survey visitors to determine the reason for the visit (check out a book, attend a program, use Wi-Fi, etc.)
	Use data to determine average foot traffic by hour/day and peak times of Library use. Use this data to determine best hours of operation
	Map data to digital downloads and website visits during the same two-week time period
	Research funding options for renovation of Fairmont Library
	Enhance coffee service and hours for “coffee and conversation” at Fairview
Educate residents about modern library services	Create a broader email database by collecting email addresses at parks and other community events, Library programs, etc.
Create awareness of the value of Library services	Calculate and communicate dollar value of total quarterly print/electronic book checkouts, literacy/other programs, and technology access. Calculate totals and communicate on website
Raise awareness of the Library and its services in Marion County	Explore Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) or other marketing avenues to promote specific Library services to all residents in selected zip codes, as funding allows
	Continue LibPost communication with new Marion County residents to invite engagement with the Library
	Conduct one targeted marketing campaign to each of the top three customer segmentation cohorts identified in data analytics platform to engage new users
Raise awareness of services available on the website (virtual library)	Strongly market electronic collection. Stress value and convenience in messaging
Amplify early literacy services through partnership	Enhance partnerships with educational organizations such as museums, historic sites, parks, etc.
	Enhance communication with teachers and media specialists to promote use of Teacher Cards and the Library

Strategy	Objective
Help close the “tech-fluency” gap for residents, particularly in emerging technologies	Enhance offerings about consumer-facing AI tools (ChatGPT, Bard, Sora) and instruction in use
Dedicate time for Library leaders and staff to research and explore new, tech-inspired ideas	Create a process to empower all staff to provide technology programs and support
Position the Library as a place for technology access and support	Offer training to the public on creating useful outputs like a budget, newsletter, or sign rather than specific tools like Excel or Powerpoint. Consider integrating AI training
Improve electronic collection access and ease of use	Increase engagement among electronic-only users via targeted marketing
Make accessing Library services easy for all County residents	Use consumer segmentation data to design and provide events that appeal to targeted segments of the population
	Explore less structured programs for teens and adults. This could include informal book discussions, gaming, etc.
Continue transparent and fiscally responsible operations	Establish key performance measurements for Library processes and workflows
	<p>Use analytics platform data to establish and monitor key performance indicators, while maintaining appropriate attention to DEI for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer engagement • Collection code size balanced with circulation • Collection weeding • Collection selection (minimizing items that never circulate) • Budget allocations for physical and electronic materials
Support life skills and healthy living	Continue to provide opportunities for career readiness. Use Library resources such as Udemy and partner with workforce readiness organizations
Support economic development	Offer workforce development and business development events such as career upskilling, resume review, and interview coaching, business plans, etc.
Align with County and State goals for community health and economic growth	Support efforts to increase access to broadband Internet connection

FISCAL YEAR 2026

Strategy	Objective
Support family gathering	Increase options for families to engage in STEM activities together (for example: after school initiatives such as a STEM area for elementary and middle grade students)
Engage caregivers in early literacy activities	Distribute welcome to the Library brochure to home daycare providers and daycare centers
	Provide reading to your child guides to home daycare providers and daycare centers
	Create book bundles for parents/caregivers including parenting information and picture books
	Market book bundles to parents/caregivers at daycares and community events
Enhance an inclusive Marion County Library	Communicate to residents about plans to increase accessibility at Fairmont building
	Use consumer segmentation data to design and provide events that appeal to specific segments of the population
	Continue staff training to enhance the culture of excellent customer service. Focus training on removing barriers to inclusion and "soft skills" such as empathy, interpersonal competence, and open-mindedness
Determine appropriate investment for Library locations	Use data to understand collection use and appropriate necessary shelf space by collection
	Identify resources and support for designing Fairmont Library renovation
	Explore grants to foster sustainability of buildings, including solar and other energy-saving features
Create awareness of the value of Library service	Collect and post on website and social media two to three customer testimonials telling the story of the Library as an essential community resource
Raise awareness of the Library and its services in Marion County	Enhance use of school communication channels to market Library services to students and families
	Bundle outreach services under one brand. Promote through consistent marketing activities
	Create a simple slide presentation and encourage Library staff/representatives to share at community events

Strategy	Objective
Amplify early literacy services through partnership	Engage in school and community educational events
Help close the “tech-fluency” gap for residents, particularly in emerging technologies	Create a process for which suggestions from the public and staff for new customer-facing technology are reviewed. Communicate results to the person who made the suggestion
	Transition desktop computers to laptops and provide lounge-style seating for laptop use
Position the Library as a place for technology access and support	Host “bring your device” hours during which staff (digital navigators) provide one-on-one tech help. Market to targeted audiences and maintain an informal approach
Provide focused, limited, high-value customer-facing technology	Bundle scanner, VHS converter, and other equipment to create a Memory Lab where patrons can digitize print photos, VHS tapes, 8mm home movies, etc.
	Provide Adobe Creative Suite or other graphic design software
Improve electronic collection access and ease of use	Adjust collection budget to align with demand for physical and electronic materials. Consider expanding electronic materials budget to support increased circulation
	Provide electronic library card registration via QR code at coffee shops, health care facilities, laundromats, etc. Encourage electronic collection use
Make accessing Library services easy for all County residents	Explore grant funding for a pop-up library, Library programs, or pick-up lockers for remote regions of the County
	Revise staffing times and programs to accommodate customers’ schedules as possible in planning services and events
Provide arts, culture, and literacy opportunities	Enhance offerings of arts events such as storytelling, poetry, local history, and music open mic nights
	Expand opportunities for local artists and authors to showcase their work, including possible art space at branches
Continue transparent and fiscally responsible operations	Streamline program planning and delivery by offering programs at multiple times and locations. Use data analytics to plan programs based on resident interests
Support life skills and healthy living	Continue to provide college and job readiness programs for teens in topics like job/college app assistance and FAFSA preparation
	Provide two life skills programs (financial literacy, sewing and mending, etc.) or affordable living classes (coupons, etc.)

Strategy	Objective
Align with County and State goals for community health and economic growth	Provide meeting and coworking areas (including Zoom- and Teams-ready spaces) in all branches, providing an open area for conversations and collaboration
Emphasize sustainability in Library operations and services	Encourage staff to notice and implement ways to reduce waste throughout the system to improve each year, including in purchasing
	Provide programs in a variety of spaces throughout the service area (parks and recreation spaces, etc.) to increase convenience, shorten travel distance, and reach a larger audience
	Enhance sustainability programs, with at least two programs in cooking, food preservation, gardening, and other sustainable lifestyle topics

FISCAL YEAR 2027

Strategy	Objective
Support family gathering	Provide concurrent activities for children and parents (for example: adult book club concurrent with children’s story time). Make activities complementary as possible to spark family discussion
Enhance an inclusive Marion County Library	Enhance staff training in DEI topics
	Conduct staff training in community development library skills including incorporating outreach into most services
	Collaborate with user groups that regularly meet in the Library to ask opinions about potential new programs and programs that have run their course
	Enhance programming that incorporates DEI principles and reflects all members of the community
	Explore options for more community-led programming in which County residents offer programs at the Library with staff guidance
	Expand materials delivery for customers with limited mobility and populations with transit challenges (Fiscal Year 27-28)
Provide modern, efficient library facilities	Engage with external resource to explore possibilities for high-quality coffee shop at Fairmont
	Explore possibilities for expanded outdoor space at all branches for reading, relaxing, and picnics
Provide focused, limited, high-value customer-facing technology	Provide appropriate smart tools throughout all Library locations such as videoconferencing screens, adjustable height desks, built-in charging ports, etc.
Make accessing Library services easy for all County residents	Explore enhancing STEAM Room makerspace, to include DIY, recording/podcasting equipment, etc.
	Explore partnership with County agencies and organizations to create transportation options to Library buildings, especially for teens and rural customers
Provide arts, culture, and literacy opportunities	Provide personalized reading suggestion lists by request on the website
Support economic development	Provide timely workshops and resources (using AI or prospect databases) to assist in growing small businesses
Emphasize sustainability in Library operations and services	Educate residents about responsible consumption through library programs

THROUGHOUT PLANNING PERIOD

Strategy	Objective
Support family gathering	Provide multigenerational programs or events (Family Fun) at least three times per year
	Host pop-up library services at one large family friendly event in the community annually. This could include library card registration, bringing physical books to check out, QR codes to access the electronic collection, and simple STEM activities
Enhance an inclusive Marion County Library	Seek regular patron input regarding accessibility of Library technology, buildings, and outreach programs
Educate residents about modern library services	Conduct communication campaign to boost understanding among residents that libraries are places to connect with the community, access exciting technology, have fun, and learn
Raise awareness of the Library and its services in Marion County	Conduct targeted, branded campaigns for early literacy, reading challenges, and services for seniors. Create one campaign for each service each year
	Create and post four short videos each year promoting specific programs/ services on Instagram or other social platform
Ensure a comprehensive understanding of customer-facing technology among Library leaders and staff	Offer one or more all-staff trainings per year on existing and potential customer-facing technology (including artificial intelligence) and its applications in everyday life
Help close the "tech-fluency" gap for residents, particularly in emerging technologies	Continue to offer at least one information literacy program each year for adults and children
Dedicate time for Library leaders and staff to research and explore new, tech-inspired ideas	Continue to collaborate with and learn from other libraries and organizations about technology and applications
Continue transparent and fiscally responsible operations	Schedule staff meetings on a regular cadence to discuss community input. Review performance indicators with staff teams
Support life skills and healthy living	Continue to partner with Parks and Recreation and other agencies to offer at least four events each year such as yoga and meditation
Support economic development	Foster and maintain relationships with local business owners. Seek input regularly about needs for Library technology and services
Emphasize sustainability in Library operations and services	Enhance resources for home gardening, including seed library and programs on organic gardening, composting, etc. every year