



**2020
PROGRESS
REPORT**

January 2021

Anchorage Public Library Strategic Plan 2019-2021

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

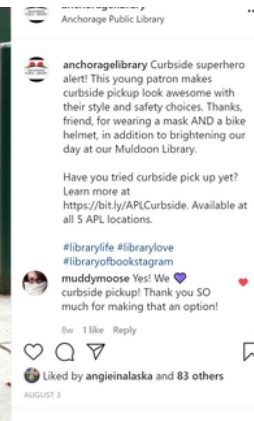
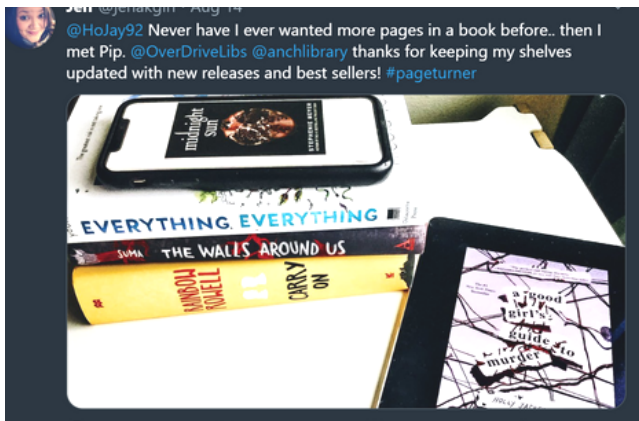
The 2019-21 Strategic Plan focuses APL on core services and three community focus areas – **education & skills for life, a bridge to information and resources, and building community**. After a strong year of foundation-building and internal development, the Library began to focus outward in 2020 on outreach and community-building. While many projects were sidetracked due to the pandemic, we used the strategic plan to help guide our "COVID pivot," and while the way we delivered programs and services changed, our attention to the three focus areas did not waiver.

2020 Highlights

- We responded quickly in the COVID shutdown to launch many new services
- We supported educators, students and families to navigate the new and quickly-changing education system, and also helped families with opportunities for fun and learning away from books and screens
- Our commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion has become infused in more aspects of our work
- We upped our game in Reader's Advisory, providing a host of new services and behind-the-scenes work to help patrons connect with exactly the materials they are looking for
- We increased community support and engagement – passed a bond, added hundreds of new donors, and secured new sources of funding

2021 Goals

- Be mindful and intentional as we reintroduce programs and services, and provide meaningful opportunities for staff input and engagement
- Meet the community where they are at and respond to their educational and economic needs during pandemic recovery
- Respond to technology needs of the unconnected - expand digital-access resources and investigate a community-wide connectivity initiative
- Continue the innovation and flexibility that we learned through COVID to continue to make it easier to get a card and use the library
- Create an Equity, Diversity, Inclusion plan that includes improving our hiring and development practices for BIPOC staff, and engagement with communities to develop programs and services that meet their needs



MEASUREMENTS OF SUCCESS

Metric

Results as of December 2020



Majority of staff, volunteers & partners can name our community priorities

70% of staff named the priority areas correctly on Fall 2020 staff survey; 43% of board members (LAB, ALF, FOL) in Feb 2020 pop quiz.



Our programming is developed with intentionality to meet this plan's goals

- Departments pivoted to online programming with focus on economic recovery, information literacy and civic engagement in adults, and focus on homeschool and distance learning for youth
- 7,142 Program to go packets were delivered in the second half of 2020



Core services are maintained

Pivoted during pandemic to ensure access – added curbside pick-up, doorbell services, Personal Librarian, and MiFis, and enhanced discovery and access to materials and databases.



Staff and infrastructure levels are maintained or increased

- 4 FTE additional staff positions in 2021 budget + Early Literacy Outreach Librarian in alcohol tax
- Passed a library bond for new elevators at Loussac and Mountain View landscape/safety upgrades
- Upgraded two positions



Our collection is dynamic and responsive to community need

- Increased access to digital materials (including online resources and MiFis), added distance learning and homeschool resources, and increased selection of resources on current events, health, and equity
- 2020 circulation of digital items increased 36.5% over 2019



An improvement in scores on staff culture surveys

- 65 staff took the survey in 2020 over 63 in 2019 and 54 in 2018
- Improved in 17 categories, 3 stayed the same, 7 had slight declines
- Biggest changes: resources provided during times of change ↑11%, opportunities for staff training ↑17%, being completely focused while on the job ↓8%



An increase in the community's ranking of the value of the Library in our patron surveys

No update in 2020 - did not conduct survey. In 2018, 85% of users and 67% of non-users believed that the Library provides good value for the tax dollar invested; will resurvey in 2021.



We are able to demonstrate to the community that we focused in the areas that are most important to them

Responded to community demand for digital materials during the pandemic by increasing Hoopla borrowing limits, increased digital materials spending by 188% over prior year; increased resources for distance learning; added MiFis; amplified public health and economic messages.



Even if faced with external challenges, we are able to operate efficiently and make a difference because this plan focuses us on what is most important

This plan helped us get through a major pandemic and adapt to an entirely new business model, as well as wisely deploy resources during a time of stress and change.



Communications with the public are developed with intentionality to meet this plan's goals

- Honed COVID-19 messaging, especially around Library openings/closings/service model changes
- Amplified partner messages around pandemic, such as public health and economic assistance
- Deliberate matching of channel to audience to meet diverse populations

HIGHLIGHTS

COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

Education & Skills for Life

- Supported educators and students – promoted homeschool and early literacy resources, created program-to-go kits, expanded STEM Kits, launched new online educational tools, and provided resources and COVID safety guidelines to teachers and librarians
- Created Fact or Fake and Library how-to video series
- Helped plan a citywide Career Fair and hosted career workshops

Building Community

- Hosted popular online programs – discussions with a Maine Library on earthquakes, Alaska Common Ground ballot measure debates, Community Connects dialogs, Writer's Guild workshop, Poetry Socials
- Hosted online book clubs and expanded Book Club Bags with new titles on current topics
- Hosted an online Civic Engagement Challenge and Books Get Our Vote campaign, and created a Scout library patch
- Delivered library book donations to people in quarantine

A Bridge to Information and Resources

- Resource fairs and events – School Fair, United Way affordable health care registration, Grow with Google business event, and job readiness with the VA Domiciliary and YWCA
- Launched portable wireless devices (MiFis) for check-out
- Increased staff knowledge of designing communications for visually impaired readers
- Amplified pandemic public health and economic recovery messages
- Expanded Community Resource Coordinator program

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS

Be a Great Place to Work

- Staff completed over 1,700 hours of training during the hunker down and quarantines
- Created a Land Acknowledgment Plan and all staff participated in monthly Equity Diversity and Inclusion small group discussions
- Created staff orientation checklist and staff intranet
- Updated position descriptions to reduce barriers for entry for several positions

Expand and Engage the Library Community

- Helped launch a community group to discuss community equity issues; worked with the Municipality on advancing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion initiatives citywide; hired a Community Engagement Librarian
- 400+ new donors joined the Anchorage Library Foundation
- Supporters successfully passed a bond and advocated for an increased library budget and new positions through the alcohol tax

Strengthen our Operations

- Adopted Teams video meetings and chats to increase staff access to meetings, committees and projects
- Developed operations emergency procedures for each location and cross-trained staff in many areas for more flexibility in operations
- Created new reports and metrics for measuring success, including launch of Savannah to improve tracking of patron experience and usage

CORE SERVICES

- Amid a pandemic, pivoted to provide core library services in completely new ways, including new service points, shifting to online programs, putting magazines into circulation, increasing the budget for digital and homeschooling materials, and selecting materials tied to current events
- Increased Reader's Advisory – virtual browsing videos, Personal Librarian, staff recommendation videos, posts and book lists, teen book reviews
- Cleaned up shelves to make room for face-out books and better browsing; reorganized and promoted databases to make them more accessible