

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Geneva Public Library is located 40 miles west of downtown Chicago on the Fox River in Kane County, Illinois and serves a population of 30,500. Currently, two-thirds of the population live within the City limits of Geneva, while the other one-third live southeast and southwest of the downtown Geneva area. While Geneva started out as a rural community, over the last 50 years, the area has acquired a more suburban character. The community is known for excellent schools, a thriving small business community with unique historic storefronts, and a friendly, neighborly character and charm. Community members are well-educated and mostly affluent.

In June 2014, the Library embarked upon a process of self-evaluation, including: an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats; collection of demographic information; facilitation of community conversations; and use of an online and in-library community survey. Data was used from the self-evaluation tools to develop a strategic plan covering a three-year period. Strategic initiatives identified in the plan include: Flexible Space, Innovation, Convenience, and Connections. The Strategic Plan was officially adopted by the Board of Trustees on July 23, 2015, and is available to the public at www.gpld.org/press-room.

In April 2017, the Library had a successful referendum and is working with architects from StudioGC to design a new facility at 210 S. Sixth St. with a prospective opening date of mid-2019. This facility will be twice the size of the present building and offer additional resources, programs, and opportunities for our community – many of them new to our members. These include:

- Creation spaces
- More collaborative and individual work/study spaces
- Increased digital media for use in the Library and at home
- Play spaces for infants, toddlers, and elementary school-aged children
- Increased space and amenities for middle and high school students
- Parent networking opportunities
- Teacher support spaces and resources
- Large and small meeting room spaces for Library programs and public use
- Drive-through service
- On-site parking
- And more

The new building and features will require a coherent marketing strategy to assist with wayfinding and customer experience, and we can prepare for this change in the current library facility. We have approximately two years remaining in our present building and must not overlook any opportunities to improve customer experience, market the Library, and strengthen our brand.

LIBRARY MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

During the strategic planning process, the Library defined its mission (why we exist), vision (what we aspire to be), and values (what we believe in) as presented below:

Mission: Connecting our community to discover, inspire, and grow.

Vision: A valued and innovative community resource empowering residents to seek knowledge, create ideas, and achieve dreams.

Values: Service, Relevancy, Equal Access, Fiscal Responsibility

DEVELOPMENT OF MARKETING PLAN

This marketing plan continues the progress outlined in the 2015-2017 Marketing Plan and also addresses ongoing needs and challenges, such as moving to a new building, keeping our community apprised of the process, and educating our community about the increased benefits they will experience in the new library.

The Marketing Plan is conceived as a two-year plan covering the current (2017/18) and next (2018/19) fiscal year. The Plan will be re-evaluated and updated as needed biannually. The intent of the Plan is to provide staff guidance on how to share information with community members about Library goals and objectives previously identified in the Library's Strategic Plan.

The Marketing Plan was officially adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on December 21, 2017.

LIBRARY MARKETING GOALS FOR 2017-2019

1. Develop community awareness about plans for the new library – from schematic plans to opening day and beyond
2. Create wayfinding and a user-friendly experience in the current facility and the new library
3. Promote the Library in the community and raise awareness of Library services and resources
4. Use data-driven analysis to identify channels and methods to market the Library to our community
5. Manage the Library brand

GOAL 1: DEVELOP COMMUNITY AWARENESS ABOUT NEW LIBRARY PLANS/PROGRESS

Strategies:

- A. Train staff to respond to Frequently Asked Questions about the status of plans/construction progress/opening day
 - a. Develop handouts with FAQs
 - b. Set up displays in the Library when we have final plans and share this information on our marketing channels (eNews, print newsletter, social media)
 - c. Use construction site to announce new library and features/benefits to community

- B. Town Hall-style meetings/face-to-face in the community
 - a. Develop excitement for the new library
 - b. Seek buy-in from community partners and help them understand the benefits of the new library (parks, schools, parents, teachers, businesses, non-profits, etc.)
 - c. Help community understand the benefits/amenities the new library will provide

- C. Share updates on new building progress on our marketing channels (print, online)
 - a. Maintain www.gpldnewbuilding.org to keep community informed
 - b. Communicate with members of the new building email list
 - c. Send out press releases to local media to ensure coverage to wider community

- D. Develop marketing materials for new library and opportunities for supporting fundraising
 - a. Collector's edition for grand opening
 - b. Promotional strategy/materials for creation spaces materials and other amenities of the new library (how-to's, signage, etc.)
 - c. Review and update all Library marketing materials, print and digital, to reflect new building
 - d. Provide support/marketing materials for Capital Campaign for new building

- E. Develop plans for a Grand Opening
 - a. Board/staff preview
 - b. VIP preview
 - c. General public welcome and overview

Desired Outcome:

Community will have current information on new library plans, anticipate its opening, and understand the benefits of a new library. Staff will be knowledgeable and able to respond to community questions. Community partners will anticipate the ways the new library can help them.

Benchmarks:

- Ongoing dialogue with community members
- Information transparency
- Strengthened community partnerships
- Excitement about the new library and its relevance for the community

GOAL 2: CREATE WAYFINDING AND USER-FRIENDLY EXPERIENCE IN CURRENT AND NEW LIBRARY

Strategies:

- A. Review signage in current building and find ways to improve the community's experience
 - a. Where does the community seek help because signage doesn't exist?
 - b. What is written in library jargon and unclear to the public?
 - c. Unify appearance of current and new signage to align with the Library's brand
- B. Experiment with new signage and displays in the current Library to prepare for move to new facility
 - a. Create endcap displays
 - b. Use digital signage
 - c. Develop how-to materials to help community find and use our resources
- C. Plan for how to create a positive community experience in the new library
 - a. Focus on function, not labels
 - b. Create a welcoming feel inside and outside the library
 - c. Develop interactive features that engage the community
 - d. Create digital and print signage
- D. Update branding/identity in current and new library to create unified look and feel throughout the Library, including:
 - a. Develop signage and materials for the Digital media lab
 - b. Determine name and develop materials for the Creation space
 - c. Update and unify signage, logos for STEAM station
 - d. Select name and develop branding, materials for Teen space

Desired Outcome:

Community members will have a more enjoyable experience in the current library, find what they need with ease, and discover Library services and resources they didn't know about previously. The Library will have an updated and unified appearance. The Library will be prepared to move to a larger building and assured that the community feels welcomed and comfortable when they visit.

Benchmarks:

- Clear, easy to understand signage
- A user-friendly library
- Increased use of Library services and resources
- Increased checkouts of Library materials

- A blueprint for orienting our community to the new library

GOAL 3: PROMOTE THE LIBRARY IN THE COMMUNITY AND RAISE AWARENESS OF LIBRARY SERVICES, RESOURCES, AND PROGRAMS

Strategies:

- A. Promote Library offerings to in-house audience
 - a. Train staff on word-of-mouth marketing, including talking points (enhance the one-sheet at desks)
 - b. Use strategically placed posters, flyers, bookmarks, cards, etc. in the building (slatwalls)
 - c. Promote upcoming programs, resources, and services to program attendees

- B. Create dynamic displays to encourage learning and exploration in the Library
 - a. Continue to implement recommendations from Visual Marketing Guidelines
 - b. Take advantage of opportunities presented by unused spaces (endcaps, elevators, etc.)
 - c. Develop multi-media and interactive displays

- C. Educate community on how to use the Library and its resources through multiple channels
 - a. Video how-to's
 - b. User cards
 - c. Programming ("Intro to...", drop-in)
 - d. Unified "campaigns" for promotion that include print materials, eNews, website, digital signage, etc.

Desired outcome:

Community members will know what the Library offers that meets their needs, and they will look to the Library as a trusted community partner.

Benchmarks:

- Increased use of Library resources
- Greater awareness of the Library and how it can benefit the community
- Increased community partnerships

GOAL 4: IDENTIFY AND USE APPROPRIATE CHANNELS AND METHODS TO MARKET THE LIBRARY

Strategies:

A. The Library will stay up-to-date on marketing methods/metrics to ensure a relevant and results-oriented approach

- a. Email continues to have our greatest impact;
 1. grow segmented lists beyond current campaigns: all-library eNews, welcome to new cardholders, we miss you to expired cardholders, and 20s & 30s email lists
 2. explore whether email and Facebook integration allows us to reach more of our community
- b. Enhance print newsletter beyond a program guide to share community perspectives and more Library resources and services
- c. Continue to enhance/update website to ensure it is dynamic and regularly updated; use Google Analytics to understand the community's needs
- d. Use social media strategically to share our message and acknowledging that the algorithms of each site limit our reach and impact in the community

B. Create informative and user-friendly marketing materials that target specific groups/users/members of the community

- a. Create an all-library welcome packet
- b. Develop marketing toolkits for outreach
- c. Create marketing materials that target specific audiences to address their needs: parents, book clubs, seniors, etc.

C. Use community ambassadors to reach additional groups in our community

- a. Build new relationships in the community by meeting with these stakeholders to talk about how the Library can serve them
- b. Develop ongoing communication with community partners to keep them apprised of Library services, resources, and programs that can help them reach their goals
- c. Take the initiative to help our partners in the community by co-promoting their causes, events, etc.

Desired outcome:

Community members will receive a unified and consistent message from the Library. The Library will have more support in the community covering a wide range of demographics.

Benchmarks:

- The Library will reach a larger segment of the community with its message
- Increased outreach opportunities

- The community will receive information from the Library that is relevant to them

GOAL 5: MANAGE THE LIBRARY BRAND

Strategies:

- A. Ensure consistent branding throughout the Library
 - a. Review use of Library logo on signage, collections, etc.
 - b. Establish uniform standards for promotional materials in design and language
 - c. Use uniform branding in all communications from the Library (business cards, renewal notices, email signatures, voicemail, etc.)

- B. Library will implement and adhere to Library style guides
 - a. Refer to the graphics style guide which governs use of Library logos, fonts, colors, and typography
 - b. Use GPLD style guide for editorial copy

- C. Unify Friends/Foundation and Library brand
 - a. Redo logos to indicate relationship between these groups and the Library
 - b. Create new marketing materials
 - c. Find cross-promotional opportunities

- D. Develop display opportunities in current and new library
 - a. Identify areas for Library displays highlighting programs, services, resources
 - b. Find areas to support Library partners
 - c. Ensure displays are focused, strategic, and serve our community

Desired outcome:

Community members will have positive feelings about the Library, and receive consistent, professional, and targeted promotions.

Benchmarks:

- The Library and its materials/promotions/communications are recognizable in the community.