



# Pioneer Library System

## STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR MEMBER LIBRARIES

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# 1 | LIBRARY PLANNING OUTLINE

## **Intro to Library Planning**

This is a strategic conversation between the project manager, board, and library director that focuses on deciding what activities will contribute to the plan, who will be the lead on specific tasks, and what the timeline will look like.

## **Planning Survey**

This step focuses on developing a simple, 5-10 question survey that addresses a specific scope or research question that will influence the final plan. This can be one survey sent out to the community or a suite of surveys that are released at different points throughout a designated timeline. A timeline and distribution plan for the survey also needs to be set during this phase.

## **Focus Groups**

Holding 2-3 community focus groups can give a great deal of insight on the perspectives of your community. Each focus group should include 8-15 community members and run for 60-90 minutes. An outside facilitator is recommended for this phase.

## **Interviewing Community Leaders**

It is important to talk with community leaders to see how the library fits into their plans. To help start these conversations you can ask questions pertaining to the decisions, challenges, and aspirations the leaders will be thinking about over the next two to three years. These conversations are led by the library director.

## **Board Priorities/Board Retreat**

Library boards have ideas too! In order to help your board think through their goals, ideas, and needs, we recommend a facilitated conversation that helps boards think about what they would like to see the library accomplish and what changes are needed to get there.

## **Making Sense of all the Data**

After compiling all of the data from the activities above it's time to set priorities. We recommend reviewing all of the data collected and setting 3-5 main priorities.

## **Plan Template**

Once you have your priorities it's time for another strategic conversation with the board/planning committee. This time the board will finalize priorities and develop goals that will help move the library forward.

## 2 | SAMPLE PLANNING SURVEY

**1. On average, how often do you visit the [LIBRARY] in a typical month?**

- Less than one visit per month
- 1-2 visits per month
- 3-4 visits per month
- 5 or more visits per month

**2. In general, how well does the [LIBRARY] meet your needs?**

- Extremely well
- Very well
- Somewhat well
- Not so well
- Not at all well

**3. In general, what is the main reason you visit the [LIBRARY] (select one)?**

- Books/Audiobooks (browse, checkout, pickup holds, etc.)
- DVDs (browse, checkout, pickup holds, etc.)
- Computers/WiFi (use library computers and/or wifi)
- Programs (attend adult, teen, or children's programs)
- Space (use of tables/chairs and workspaces)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service(s) you selected in the previous question?**

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

**5. Overall, how would you rate the quality of your customer service experiences at the [LIBRARY]?**

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

**6. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the [LIBRARY]?**

- Very Satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied
- Somewhat Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

**7. What one word would you use to describe the [LIBRARY]? \_\_\_\_\_**

**8. In general, when are the most convenient times for you to visit the [LIBRARY] (select all that apply)?**

	9:00am-11:59am	12:00pm-2:59pm	3:00pm-5:59pm	6:00pm-8:00pm
<b>Sunday</b>				
<b>Monday</b>				
<b>Tuesday</b>				
<b>Wednesday</b>				
<b>Thursday</b>				
<b>Friday</b>				
<b>Saturday</b>				

**9. In your opinion, what one change would you make to improve the [LIBRARY]?**

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**10. Do you have any additional comments in regards to the [LIBRARY]?**

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**Focus Group Opportunity**

The [LIBRARY] is also holding several community focus groups to gather opinions from community members. If you are interested in receiving more information about these focus groups, please select “yes” to the question below.

The focus groups will be approximately 60-90 minutes long and take place at the [LIBRARY].

**Are you be interested in participating in a focus group?**

- Yes, Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- No

## 3 | SAMPLE FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

### Community Focus Group Questions

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*Goal:* To discover the aspirations and challenges of the community as well as the services, resources, and atmosphere that focus group attendants desire in their library.

1. In your opinion, what are the main priorities or aspirations of the community?
2. What are the biggest challenges that the community is currently or will be facing over the next 12-24 months?
3. Thinking about your goals, aspirations, hobbies, and interests, what do you feel is the most important service that the library currently offers?
4. What are your main frustrations when using the library?
5. What is one new service or program you would like to see offered by the library?

### Staff Focus Group Questions

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*Goal:* To review the internal successes and struggles of the library through the staff's perception.

1. What is one thing your library did extraordinarily well in the last 12 months? What circumstance(s) allowed this to happen?
2. What is one thing your library did very poorly in the last 12 months? What circumstance(s) would need to change to allow success?
3. If tomorrow was your first day as the new director, what would be your first priority in preparing the library for the next 2-3 years?

### Board or Committee Questions

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*Goal:* To aid in the development of attainable goals by ensuring realistic expectations when evaluating priorities, measures of success, and timelines.

1. What are 2-3 aspirations you have for your library?
2. What upcoming challenges will we be facing in the next 2-3 years?
3. What goals would we like to accomplish as an organization?
4. What does success look like for each goal?
5. What concerns do you have about these goals?
6. What circumstances, if any, need to change in order to successfully complete these goals?

### Community Leaders

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*Goal:* To discover the goals, aspirations, and challenges faced by community leaders.

1. What challenges will your organization face in the next 2-3 years?
2. What major decisions will you need to make in the next 2-3 years?
3. What aspirations would you like to see come to fruition over the next 2-3 years?

## 4 | PLAN TEMPLATE

# [LIBRARY] PLAN

[DATES OF PLAN]

### SECTION ONE: PLANNING SUMMARY

[THIS SECTION IS A BRIEF (ONE PARAGRAPH OR LESS) SUMMARY OF WHAT THIS PLAN CONTAINS. THE SUMMARY SHOULD EXPLAIN WHERE YOU COLLECTED YOUR DATA, HOW LONG THE PLAN WILL BE IN PLACE, AND WHO IS THE PRIMARY CONTACT FOR ISSUES REGARDING THE PLAN.]

### SECTION TWO: MISSION STATEMENT

[INSERT YOUR LIBRARY'S MISSION STATEMENT.]

### SECTION THREE: GOALS

[THIS SECTION SHOULD INCLUDE THREE TO FIVE GOALS THAT YOU HAVE IDENTIFIED AS ESSENTIAL AREAS OF FOCUS OVER THE TIME PERIOD OF THIS PLAN. THESE PRIORITIES SHOULD BE BROAD AND FOCUSED ON ACHIEVING THE MISSION OF THE LIBRARY. EACH GOAL WILL HAVE ACCOMPANYING ACTION STEPS. ACTION STEPS ARE THE SPECIFIC ACTIONS THAT WILL YOU ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS. THEY ARE BEST WHEN THEY ARE SPECIFIC AND REALISTIC.]

#### 1) GOAL/PROJECT/PRIORITY

*PROJECT LEADER:* [WHO IS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THIS GOAL?]

*PURPOSE:* [WHY IS THE LIBRARY FOCUSED ON THIS GOAL? WHAT WILL THIS GOAL LOOK LIKE WHEN IT IS COMPLETE?]

*MEASUREMENT:* [HOW WILL YOU KNOW WHEN THIS GOAL/PROJECT IS COMPLETE?]

*ACTION STEPS:* [WHAT ACTIONS OR ACTIVITIES WILL ACCOMPLISH THIS GOAL?]

- ACTION STEP ONE-
  - [WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THIS ACTIVITY?]
  - [WHAT IS THE DEADLINE/TIMELINE?]
- ACTION STEP TWO-
  - [WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THIS ACTIVITY?]
  - [WHAT IS THE DEADLINE/TIMELINE?]
- ACTION STEP THREE-
  - [WHO IS IN CHARGE OF THIS ACTIVITY?]
  - [WHAT IS THE DEADLINE/TIMELINE?]

ADD 3-4 "GOAL/PROJECT/PRIORITY" SECTIONS ALONG WITH THEIR LEADERS, PURPOSE, MEASUREMENTS, AND ACTION STEPS.