Saline District Library

2022 to 2026 Strategic Plan
High-Level

Adopted: October 20, 2021

ReThinking Libraries

Process Facilitated by
Rob Cullin & Janet Nelson

OVERVIEW OF METHODOLOGY:
Beginning in January 2020, under the guidance of Saline District Library's (SDL) Library Director and Board of Trustees, the strategic planning process was completed in October 2021 for the Saline District Library for years 2022 – 2026. Library consultants Rob Cullin and Janet Nelson of ReThinking Libraries (RTL) facilitated the process and analyses, but the library and their community made all of choices and decisions in the process.

The Process
SDL's strategic planning process included the following key areas.

Gathering and analyzing community input and data, which involved benchmarking, demographic analysis, and collection analysis. In addition, SDL staff and Saline area residents were involved in exploring ideas and possibilities for the library as a thriving 21st century library. Stakeholder sessions were conducted by RTL February 5-7th, 2020. Participants included the general public, Saline City Council, educators, Coalition for a Quality Community, business leaders, the arts community, senior citizens, Friends of the Library, SDL staff members, and library trustees. Participants included frequent library users and infrequent and non-users and ranged in ages and backgrounds. Overall, one hundred three (103) stakeholders participated in the discussions regarding SDLL's services and strategic future. Since our process was interrupted due to the COVID-19 pandemic we conducted an additional staff session on August 27,2021. In addition to the stakeholder sessions, an online survey was conducted between February 6th and March 5th, 2020. Four hundred twenty-eight (428) surveys were completed. Survey participants included frequent library users (81%) as well as infrequent and non-users (19%). Survey takers ranged from under 19 to over 75 years of age. About 77% of survey takers were between the ages of 26 and 65 years of age, 17% were over 65 and 4% were under 25 years of age.

Developing solutions during a one-day Strategic Planning Retreat held on August 28, 2021. During the Retreat, all data and community input was reviewed with a planning team of fifteen (15) people, consisting of the library director, staff members, library board members, community leaders, and the general public. From the data, the group worked to establish essential strategic areas, specific goals, and related investments required to implement the goals to help the library thrive over the next five years and beyond.

What We Heard
The stakeholder sessions and online survey explored several topics including customer service, youth services, adult services, local history and genealogy, outreach services, programming, technology and digital services, the facility/building, collections and resources, collaboration and partnerships, community awareness, and overall 21st century public library best practices. Detailed summaries of all stakeholder feedback and online survey results were provided in separate documents to SDL's leadership and reviewed in depth during *the Strategic Planning Retreat*. All stakeholder input, data analysis, and follow-up exploration work led to the strategic focuses, goals, and investments outlined on pages six- ten of this document.

Evaluation & Collaboration
With the goal of achieving all outlined goals over the next five years, SDL administration, staff, and board of trustees will regularly evaluate their progress and achievements. Objectives set forth in this plan will be further detailed each year in a 12-month detailed work plan developed by the library staff. These annual 12-month plans will address specific actions, objectives, and goals in addition to specifying timing, required staff and financial commitments. In addition, the high-level plan contained in this document will be re-evaluated each year by the board prior to the development of the next 12-month plan to ensure the high-level goals still align with the needs and goals of the community. This balanced and systematic process also emphasizes that the resulting plan will be iterative and evolve substantially over the next several years.

The keys to SDL's implementation, evaluation and, ultimately, the success of its strategic plan will be:
- A thorough understanding of the plan as well as active involvement in implementing the plan by staff and the Board of Trustees
- Frequent and ongoing communication between administration and staff
- Frequent and ongoing communication between SDL's staff and its community
- Active collaboration between SDL's Board of Trustees, City Council, administration, staff, outside organizations, and the community

Mission, Vision & Values

SDL's Revised Mission, Vision, & Values

MISSION

Saline District Library ignites a joy of discovery and builds community through resources, opportunities, and new ideas.

VISION

Our vision is a community empowered to discover, connect, and grow.

VALUES

The Saline District Library values:

1. Welcoming – Offering an inclusive and respectful environment where everyone feels welcome

2. Accessibility – Ensuring spaces, resources, and services for all within and beyond the walls of the library

3. Community – Creating meaningful, user-focused experiences that engage, reflect, and enhance the community

4. Learning – Encouraging enrichment and lifelong learning through diverse resources and programs

5. Discovery – Sparking imagination and a sense of wonder that enriches lives

Strategic Plan and Focuses

SDL: Strategic Focus Areas

SDL will optimize indoor and outdoor library spaces to evolve as a destination within the community, providing experiential and interactive environments that delight users and improve quality of life.
- Ensure a variety of universally accessible spaces for all types of needs.
- Create more experiential and interactive learning environment.
- Make indoor and outdoor spaces as inspiring, inviting, and functional as possible.
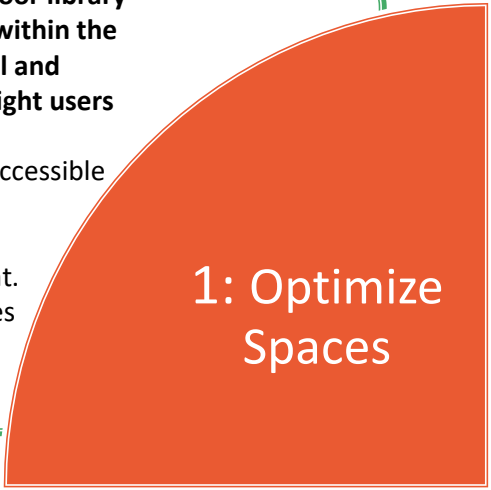
SDL will increase connections and services beyond the walls of the library.

- Provide resources and services to users throughout the community.
- Play a key role within the community through engagement, example setting, and exchanging best practices.
- Increase and deepen relationships and partnerships with organizations throughout the area.

1: Optimize Spaces

2: Increase Connections

4: Enhance Resources

3: Expand Awareness
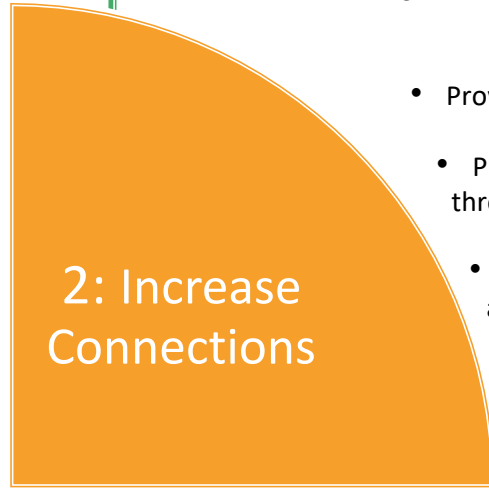
SDL will continue to adapt and optimize resources and services to meet the community's needs.

- Ensure resources, programs, and services are relevant, useful, and seen by the community as vital.
- Strive to make Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion an integrated part of organizational culture.
- Positively impact arts, culture, education, and other organizations within the community through the library's services and resources.

SDL will further build the library brand in the community and drive increased awareness

- Expand physical and digital marketing efforts to create connections and awareness within the community.
- Leverage relationships and partnerships to deepen library connections with the community.
- Continue to build the library's brand throughout the broader Saline area.

ReThinking Libraries

1: Optimize Spaces

SDL will optimize indoor and outdoor library spaces to evolve as a destination within the community, providing experiential and interactive environments that delight users and improve quality of life.

- **Ensure a variety of universally accessible spaces for all types of needs.**
- **Become a more experiential and interactive learning environment for users of all ages.**
- **Make indoor and outdoor spaces as inspiring, inviting, and functional as possible**

Priority Initiatives:

- Take a deep look at the current layout and space utilization of the library. Look at how those spaces need to be adjusted/updated and evolved to meet the current and future needs of the community and library users of all types and needs.
- Evaluate the current usage and availability of outdoor space surrounding the library. Look for innovative ways to better utilize and activate green space(s), look for ways to support usage and programming in these outdoor spaces.

Outcomes:

- Library is seen as a top destination for lifelong learning, leisure, and as a key 3rd place within the Saline area.
- Library is seen as an experiential and engaging destination for all ages.
- The library's outdoor spaces set a leading example for community spaces throughout the area.
- The library's spaces, services, and resources meet a high level of accessibility.

2: Increase Connections

SDL will increase connections and services beyond the walls of the library.

- **Provide resources and services to users throughout the community.**
- **Play a key role within the community through engagement, example setting, and exchanging best practices.**
- **Increase and deepen relationships and partnerships with organizations throughout the area.**

Priority Initiatives:

- Further invest in and expand the library's outreach services and capabilities focusing on constituents with the highest needs and lowest access in terms of materials, programs, and technology.
- Continue to build a strong staff and leadership focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, making these key elements of the library's culture and everyday work, services, programming, staffing, and actions.
- Invigorate relationship with Friends of Saline District Library, including promoting volunteer opportunities.

Outcomes:.

- Outreach services reach a higher percentage of underserved and more remote residents throughout the district.
- Community partnerships are expanded and/or strengthened to drive both awareness and accessibility.
- Library is seen positively as shearing information and engaging the community around issues where the library is playing a leading role: e.g., Education, DEI, and Community Engagement.
- Community organizations and agencies see the library as a critical partner to engage with on community related issues and initiatives.
- Community organizations seek the library as a first stop in launching new community initiatives or when they want to convene a larger audience around a specific concern or community focused issue.
- The library is a key player or even organizer in efforts to develop contingency plans around future community crises, such as pandemics, that may affect the broader area.

3: Expand Awareness

SDL will further build the library brand in the community and drive increased awareness.

- **Expand physical and digital marketing efforts to create connections and awareness within the community.**
- **Leverage relationships and partnerships to deepen library connections with the community.**
- **Continue to build the library's brand throughout the broader Saline area.**

Priority Initiatives:

- Evaluate current marketing approaches for effectiveness and seek to better target marketing going forward.
- Consider more print promotional materials, e.g., newsletters, postcards, mailings.
- Upgrade the library's social media presence (depth and channels) and develop more digital content to engage more users and highlight content and issues important to the community.
- Expand the use of and library investment in community partnerships to further the marketing outreach capabilities of the library.
- Upgrade the SDL sign near the road.

Outcomes:

- Awareness of library services and resources are high among district residents, particularly within underserved and higher need segments of the community.
- Most residents of the district have a strong sense of what the library has to offer in terms of spaces, services, resources, etc.
- Saline area residents and organizations have enhanced engagement with the library.
- The library is considered the place to go for information about the local area.
- The library is an often-considered option when area residents are looking for something to do or somewhere to go.

4: Enhance Resources

SDL will continue to adapt and optimize resources and services to meet the community's needs.

- **Ensure resources, programs, and services are relevant, useful, and seen by the community as vital.**
- **Strive to make Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion an integrated part of organizational culture and approaches to all services.**
- **Positively impact arts, culture, education, and other organizations throughout the community through the library's services and resources.**

Priority Initiatives:

- Ensure that DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion) are key components in the growth and evaluation of resources and services offered by the library.
- Look for new ways to engage users and the community in programming. Seek more input on programs and additional community participation in programming. Look at programming as more of a community collaboration instead of "classes being offered by the library."
- Reevaluate material usage and collection development policies, looking to best align community/user needs and wants with collection management approaches and policies.
- Examine all library usage and approaches for how well they serve user access needs, stand up to scrutiny related to DEI, and provide a focus on serving user needs over staff convenience.

Outcomes:
- Library is known for offering the top learning leisure programming within the area.
- Library's physical and digital resources and materials meet or exceed community needs and desires.
- The library's programming is highly attended, and users share their good experiences with fellow residents.