

East Troy Lions Public Library Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027



Where East Troy Reads, Where East Troy Meets,
Where East Troy Learns

Introduction & Background

The East Troy Lions Public Library is an asset of the Village of East Troy with strong ties to the Towns of East Troy and Troy to the point that the three communities are in discussion regarding the formation of a joint library.

The three communities and the surrounding area are located in Walworth County in Southeastern Wisconsin with a service area population of 4,701. In order to effectively provide services and resources to these communities, the library began the process of creating a strategic plan with the help of the Small Library Strategic Planning Cohort through WILS (Wisconsin Library Services). The Library Director and her strategic planning team began this process on November 17, 2024.

Strategic Planning Process

As part of the strategic planning process, the team assessed the various means of obtaining community data so that our strategic plan effectively reflects the needs of our area. After evaluation of the various options, we directed our efforts to an online/written community-wide survey created and administered by WILS and personalized to meet our needs. In addition, the strategic planning team obtained community census information, registered user demographics, and comparative Annual Report data.

The Community Survey was completed by over 100 people, both regular users and non-users providing a variety of voices mainly from the three Troy communities with the highest number of respondents actually from the Town of East Troy. The majority are regular users with 54% using the library at least on a monthly basis. We are pleased to have 12% of respondents indicating they never use the library giving us a wider variety of viewpoints.

Analysis of the questions regarding value of the library services was highly favorable with 95% agreeing the library is important to the community. Frequent users also highly rated getting help from staff including personalized timely tech assistance.

In creating the goals, objectives, and activities for the plan the committee identified goals related to communication, programming and facilities. The information collected from the Community Survey was then compared to patron and population demographics as well as Annual Report cohort comparison data provided by WILS.

Mission Statement

The East Troy Lions Public Library is a gateway to the world of information and discovery which inspires a life-long love of reading and learning. The Library offers free access to varied collections, stimulating programs, leading-edge technology, and a responsive staff in a welcoming environment.

Strategic Plan Goals

Strategic Goal 1

Expand communication with area residents and organizations in order to strengthen relationships and promote library service.

Measurable Objectives

- A. Increase social media presence and engagement
 - B. Broaden marketing of library programs
 - C. Vary communication channels to align with demographic preferences
 - D. Promote collaboration with community organizations
 - E. Modify website to be ADA Compliant
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Sample Activities

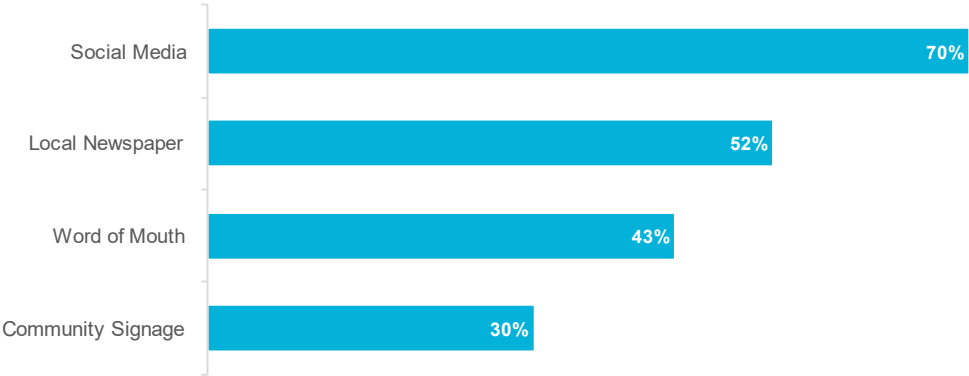
- Create an Instagram account
 - Post a minimum of once a week on Facebook and Instagram
 - Create a quarterly calendar with library programs
 - Create a community calendar for nonprofit organizations to post their events
 - Transfer Director's Column to a blog that allows view of previous articles and tracking of views
 - Educate community regarding misunderstood or little-known library services
 - Call self-registered patrons to invite them to complete registration in person
 - Add Alt Text to images on website
 - Evaluate and make other necessary changes as needed
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Communication Delivery

The charts below taken from our Community Survey results illustrate the inverse relationship between the preferred communication channels of infrequent and regular library users. Of the former, 70% prefer social media while the latter learn of library events through signs at the library with only 32% doing so via social media.

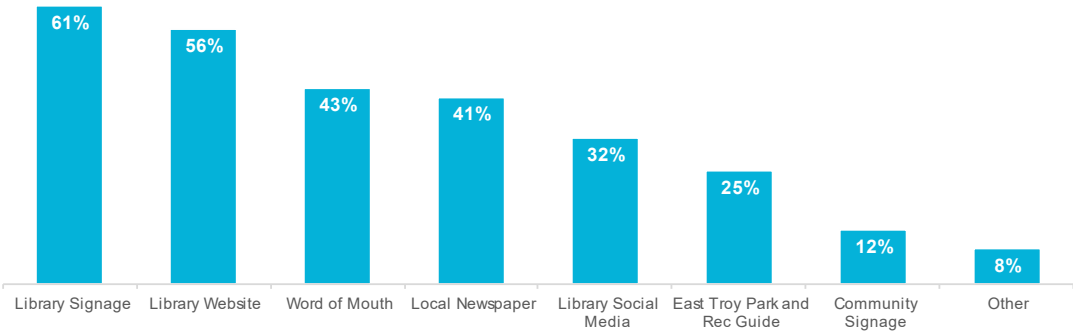
Infrequent and Never Library Users find out about community events and activities through a variety of channels, with social media being the most common.

How do you learn about events and activities happening in and around the community? (Check all that apply.)



Regular Users of East Troy Lions Public Library find out about events and activities at the library most frequently through the library’s signage and website.

Which of the following are ways that you learn about activities, programs, or news about the ETLPL? (Check all that apply.)



The ETLPL has maintained a Facebook account since 2014. For the first several years, postings were largely pictures of new books, program posters, and program participants.

With the recent redesign of our website which includes more graphics, it is easy to share those digital graphics on social media. Meta Business Suite allows for scheduling posts in advance that appear on both Facebook and Instagram. This will expand our reach with a minimum increase in staff time.

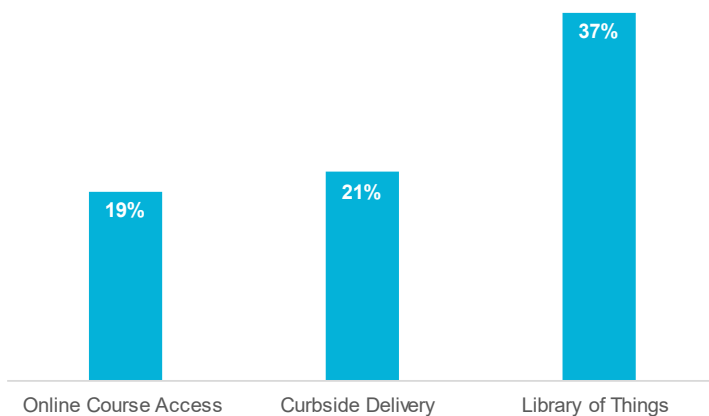
The local newspapers run a weekly library column written by the library director. This has also been copied onto the website in the past; however, each week the article is replaced with the newest one. This does not allow readers without a newspaper subscription to go back to later articles. Converting delivery to a blog site linked to the website does provide that option as well as the ability to share via Facebook and add tags, again with minimum increase in staff time. In addition, the blog provides easily accessible feedback on views and provides patrons the ability to comment.

Changes to our website are required due to an April 2024 Department of Justice/Office of Civil Rights ruling regarding accessibility requirements as they pertain to government related websites. ETLPL has three years in which to become 100% compliant.

Communication Content

Several questions on the Community Survey revealed misunderstandings or lack of awareness of library services even among regular library users. The graph below is one example in this case indicated which services are least well known. All of these topics suggest content for the weekly column/blog and other forms of communication.

Regular Library Users indicated the least awareness of online course access and curbside delivery.



East Troy is a small community with a number of diverse organizations working to make it thrive. However, there is no easy way to find times and locations of their events. Many of the organizations maintain websites that can be individually checked, but some do not. This can obviously be frustrating. It has also resulted in scheduling conflicts. There has been talk in the community about creating a calendar to bring all of these schedules together; however, nobody has taken the lead. The library has the resources to house it on our website. Reaching out to the relevant organizations provides the library opportunities to make and strengthen relationships with them.

Strategic Goal 2

Develop programming that appeals to a wide range of audiences.

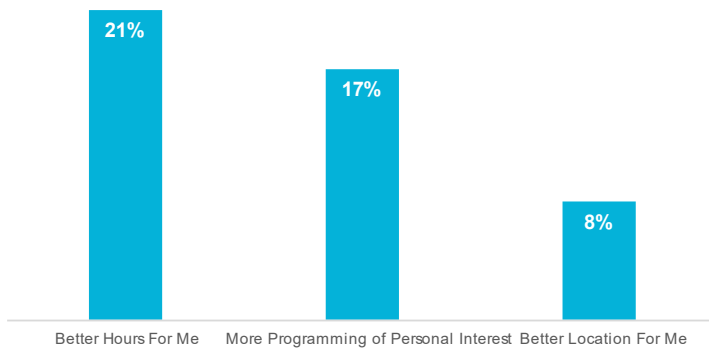
Measurable Objectives

- A. Increase programming options
- B. Explore expansion of library hours to accommodate evening programming

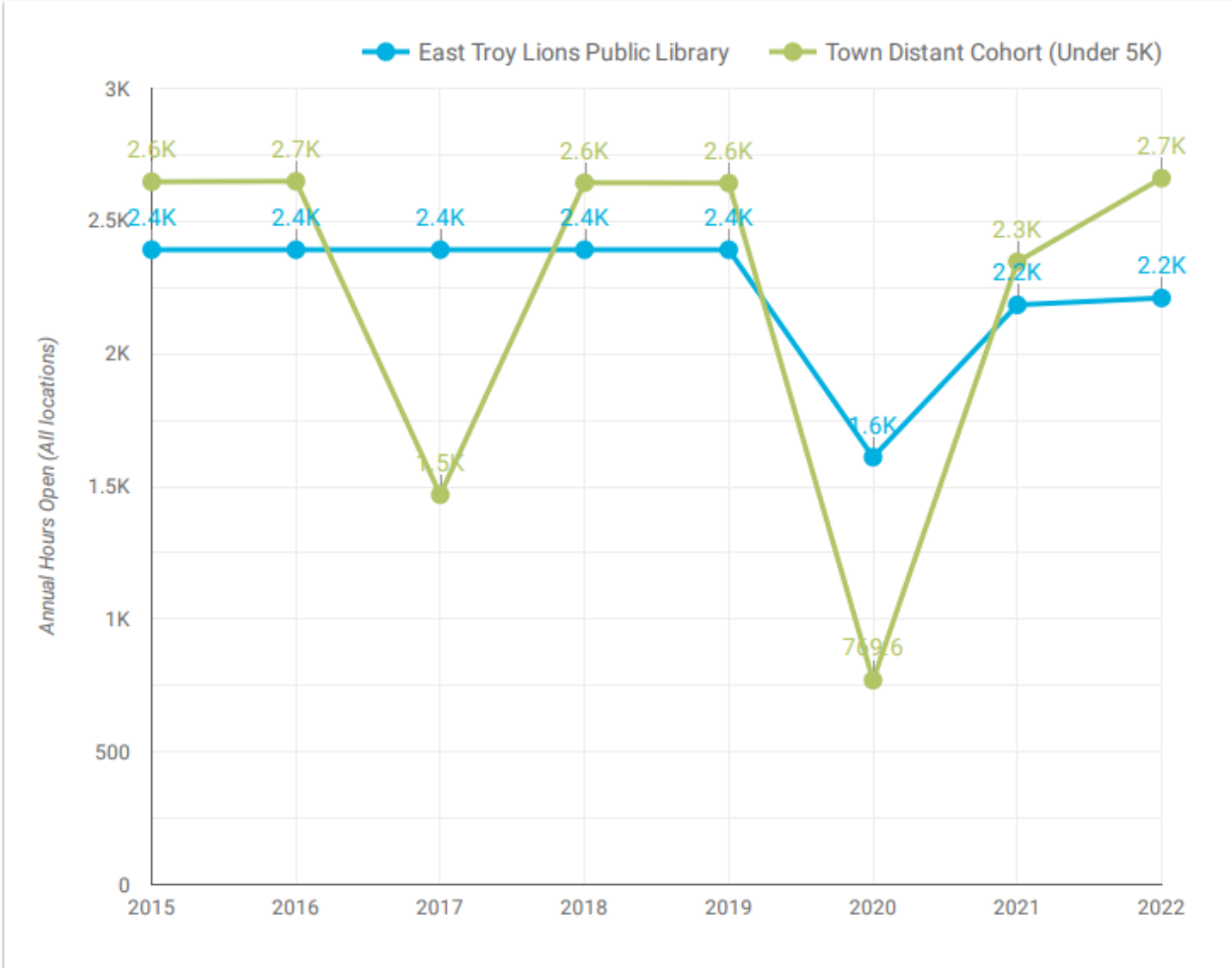
Sample Activities

- Provide regular adult programming appealing to a variety of interests.
- Schedule family and adult programming for evenings and weekends.
- Survey patrons for programming preferences and times.

Both infrequent library visitors and people who have never visited reported that better hours for them and more programming of personal interest might motivate them to visit the library.



The above graphic isn't a surprise. Adult programming has been inconsistent since the library opened post-COVID. Below is another graph that show our hours have also not returned to pre-shut down times.



Implementation of Goal 1's targeted communication will provide some support with this goal as well as we gain a broader perspective on community organizations and events. The connections formed along with the interactive abilities of social media provide opportunities to solicit ideas.

Expanding the library's hours can only take place as part of a larger conversation during the budget process. At the very least a return to pre-COVID hours is appropriate at the time. Increasing the hours further has already been a consideration in the joint library discussions. This information gives the Library Board additional data in support of such changes.

Strategic Goal 3

Create solutions to minimize facility shortcomings.

Measurable Objectives

- A. Develop partnerships with other community organizations with ADA compliant spaces.
 - B. Provide access to materials and programs to patrons unable to physically navigate the facility.
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Sample Activities

- Institute book delivery services to homebound patrons and individuals who have access challenges with our space.
 - Hold programming in ADA compliant spaces.
 - Promote curbside delivery.
 - Utilize outdoor space.
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Originally built by the East Troy Lions Club, the building began as a youth center. Just inside the door, patrons are presented with a split staircase: ½ flight down leading to our programming and fiction overflow level which is locked when not in use or ½ flight up to our main level. The main level can also be accessed via a gently sloping walkway to a side door with a doorbell.

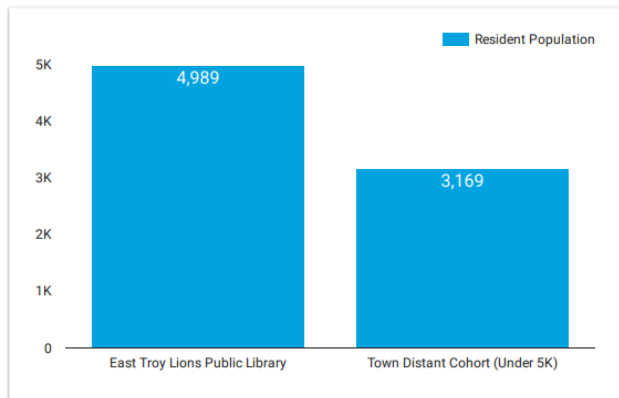
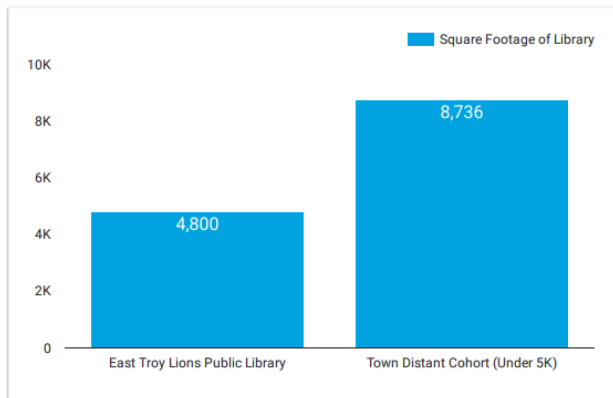
Graphics from the Community Survey highlight the perceived shortcomings of our space while the Annual Report cohort comparison illustrates the disparity between our square footage and that of libraries of a similar size. The second graph includes both a comparison of our size and our population showing ETLPL serves more people in roughly half the space.

By a significant margin, community members' top priority for potential space changes at East Troy Lions is for a library expansion or new building.

Ranking	Potential Space Change
#1	Consider a library expansion or new building to meet community needs.
#2	Have more comfortable spaces for reading, working, and relaxing at the library.
#3	Add more private work/study rooms.
#4	Provide outdoor seating area.
#5	Provide dedicated collaborative work/creation space(s).



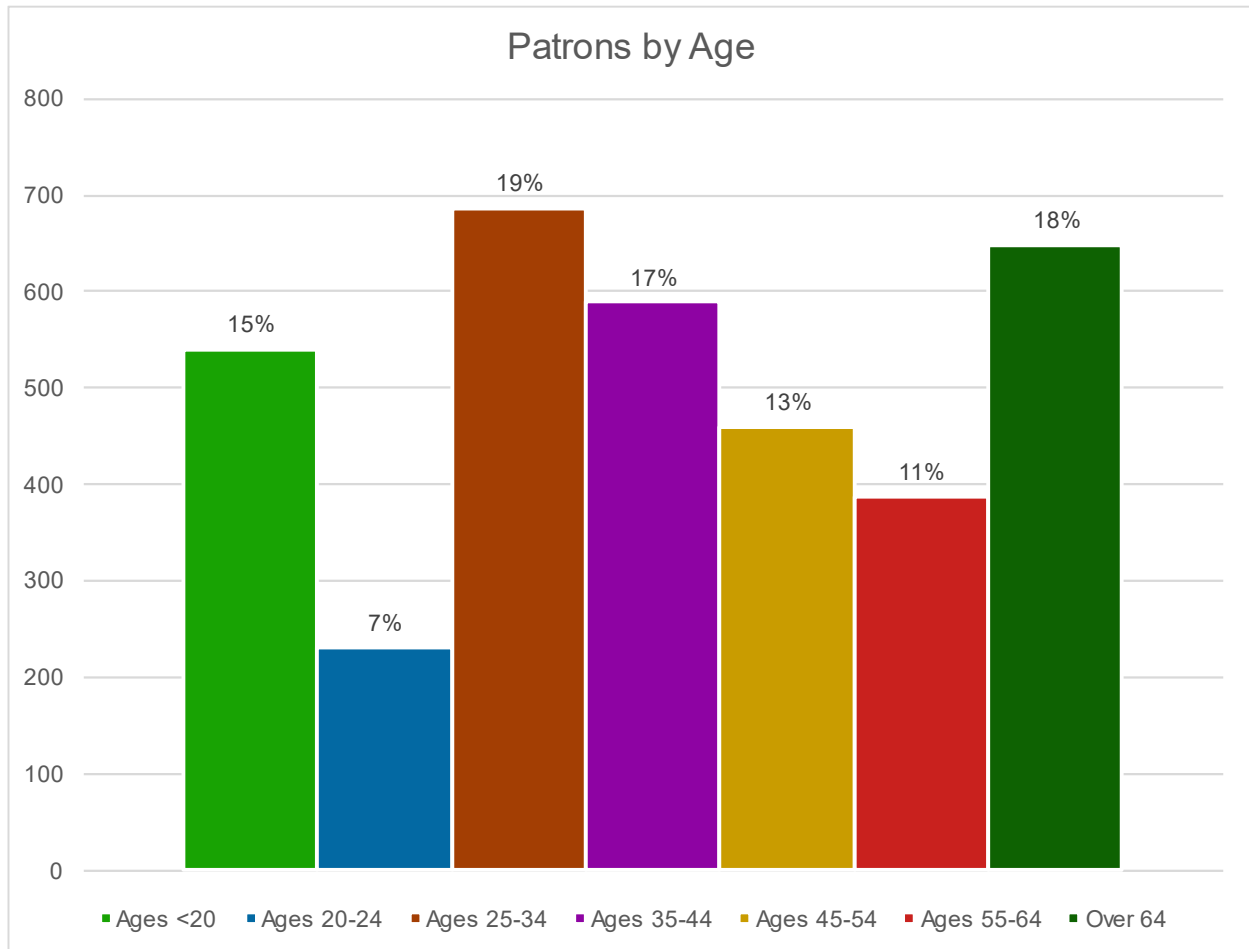
Scale: Ranked Items From 1
5



The programming space at the East Troy Lions Public Library is in the Lower Level requiring patrons to navigate 10 steps to get to the programming area. While the Library has always been aware of this accessibility issue, it became even more apparent after patrons had issue participating in a Fall 2022 program.

This prompted the Library to solicit bids for the installation of a chairlift. A bid was approved by the Library Board, but the installation was later shelved when the State of Wisconsin denied the permit citing the need to provide access for wheelchairs. The limitations of our space did not allow us to pursue this option.

In recent months, the Library has made strides in making this space more organized and aesthetically pleasing; however, the accessibility limitations remain. Due to these limitations and the age of a fair portion of our patrons (see below), we need to investigate and establish partnerships with other groups whose facilities would be more accessible.



The age of our patrons (above) aligns with the age demographics of our community. Of the 4,701 community members 716 or 15% are senior citizens. These numbers and recent inquiries indicate there is a strong need for outreach services for our homebound patrons as well as for establishing the partnerships discussed above for adult programming.

Ongoing Planning

The complete activity and implementation plan is being created by the staff management team and will serve as an implementation guide during the life of this plan. The ongoing planning process for the library will include project management, assessment, communication and ongoing prioritization of activities to ensure the goals of the plan are realized with flexibility to adapt as needed. The library will follow the following annual process and schedule to implement the strategic plan.

The Library Director and staff will work with the Library Board of Trustees to prioritize, and coordinate activities from this plan. The library will consider available resources, including funding and staff time; changing conditions locally, regionally and statewide; and opportunities that arise to innovate during the implementation of the plan.

Evaluation of the plan will take place yearly at the Library Board's Annual Meeting in July. A table for the addition of updates and evaluation can be found in the Appendix.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the following community members for assisting in the developing of this plan and serving on our Library Board.

Strategic Planning Committee

- Molly McCormack Moody, VOTE for East Troy
- Lloyd Sineni, East Troy Intergenerational Community Center
- Lisa Gitz, Librarian
- Tami Bartoli, Library Director

Library Board of Trustees

- Kristina Murphy, President
- Leslie Thomas, Vice-President
- Kathryn Brobst, Treasurer
- Jackie Gotz, Secretary
- Santa Consiglio
- Erin Friemoth, East Troy Community School Board Representative
- Mary Hubbard Nugent, Village Board member
- Nancy Manschot

System staff, WiLS

Approval of the plan took place at the Annual Meeting on July 9, 2024.

Appendices

Plan Evaluation

Progress toward meeting goals. To be presented to the Library Board at their Annual Meeting in July

Year 1
Goal 1: Expand communication with area residents and organizations in order to strengthen relationships and promote library service.
Goal 2: Develop programming that appeals to a wide range of audiences.
Goal 3: Create solutions to minimize facility shortcomings.
Year 2
Goal 1: Expand communication with area residents and organizations in order to strengthen relationships and promote library service.
Goal 2: Develop programming that appeals to a wide range of audiences.
Goal 3: Create solutions to minimize facility shortcomings.
Year 3
Goal 1: Expand communication with area residents and organizations in order to strengthen relationships and promote library service.
Goal 2: Develop programming that appeals to a wide range of audiences.
Goal 3: Create solutions to minimize facility shortcomings.