

Explore Ideas, Engage Minds, Excite Imagination

... at the Astoria Library. ”

Our mission statement, along with the three premises described below, guided the strategic planning efforts for the Astoria Public Library.

- Excellence is possible for both large and small libraries. It rests more on commitment than on unlimited resources.
- Excellence must be defined locally. Excellence results when services match community needs, interests, and priorities.
- Excellence is a moving target. Once achieved, it needs to be maintained.

Why does the library need a strategic plan?

Today's libraries are an active and responsive part of their communities. Astoria Public Library's strategic plan is a living and flexible blueprint that speaks to broad community needs. The plan, approved by the Astoria City Council on May 21, 2007, gives the Library focus and direction.

How was the strategic plan developed?

The library staff and board gathered data and conducted analysis toward the development of a strategic plan for several years. In the fall of 2006, the library was awarded a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust in order to complete the plan. Fourteen members of the community, representing various stakeholders and constituencies, identified community needs and recommended ways in which the library might best help the community meet those needs. Their belief, that the Astoria Library should be “a reflection of a healthy, vibrant community,” helped guide the planning sessions.

The Astoria Public Library has completed an inclusive strategic planning process with an eye on its important role as a proactive and collaborative partner in building community. The plan was designed from the outside in—library patrons and community leaders, as well as the Library Board and staff, all contributed to the planning effort. The overarching belief of the community members involved is that the library should be a “reflection of a healthy, vibrant community.”

Acknowledgments

We want to acknowledge and express our appreciation to all those who contributed to this process, especially library patrons, the community leaders group, the Library Board, and the Astoria City Council, who recognize, value and support the Library's mission and goals.

Astoria City Council: Mayor Willis Van Dusen,
Joyce Compere; Peter Roscoe;
Blair Henningsgaard; Russ Warr
Astoria City Manager Paul Benoit

Library Board: Jeff Smith, Chair; Cindee Matyas;
Anne Marie; Bob Brown; Deb Pyle

Community Leaders Group: Jim Flint; Pat Corcoran;
Skip Hauke; Mac Burrs; Marge Bloomfield; McLaren Innes; Alice Beck; Genevieve Butenshon; Jordan Martin; Michelle Morgan; Eileen Purcell; Ruby Leo;
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Astoria Public Library Strategic Plan 2007-2011



Explore
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No longer a passive repository of books and information, the modern library is an active and responsive part of the community. In this era of economic transformation, the business of public libraries is being recast. A recent, comprehensive study funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation finds that the return on investment in public libraries not only benefits individuals, but also strengthens community capacity to address urgent issues related to economic development.

What are the plan's goals and strategies?

Goal 1: Create Young Readers

Babies and preschoolers will have access to a wide variety of early literacy programs and materials. School-age children will have access to reading motivation programs and materials. To achieve this goal, the library will:

- Present regularly scheduled story programs divided by age of intended audience.
- Teach parents and caregivers ways of reading and interacting with children to prepare babies and preschoolers for reading.
- In cooperation with community partners, support Summer Reading and other outreach programs to develop and maintain reading skills.
- Offer high-interest books and engaging programs to improve reading skills of young people.

Goal 2: Visit Comfortable Spaces

Residents of all ages and backgrounds will find a welcoming and inviting physical place where they can interact with others or sit quietly and read. They will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support social networking. To achieve this goal, the library will:

- Complete a cost-to-benefit analysis of upgrading the current library facility vs. building a new library.
- Maintain and develop the library as a community destination space.
- Provide comfortable seating and good lighting throughout the library.
- Create inviting environments for programs, activities, and community meetings.
- Provide comment open hours.
- Enhance the library web page to include links to a variety of social networks, resources and databases.

Goal 3: Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning

Residents of all ages and backgrounds will have the non-fiction resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives. To achieve this goal, the library will:

- Offer a well-maintained collection of non-fiction materials on a variety of topics of interest to various age groups in the community.
- Partner with local organizations to co-sponsor programs and activities on topics of interest to various age groups.
- Increase the number of bilingual materials and resources.
- Assume a leadership role in the community in promoting lifelong learning.
- Make presentations and employ other marketing strategies to increase the community's awareness of library programs and services available to them.

Goal 4: Connect to the Online World & Information Literacy

Residents of all ages and backgrounds will have high-speed access to the digital world. They will have the tools and skills to find, evaluate and use information resources that best meet their needs. To achieve this goal, the library will:

- Provide public access computers and printers in comfortable workstations.
- Provide high speed, wirelless access to the Internet.
- Develop classes and presentations in cooperation with community partners to help older adults, immigrants and others improve their skills and capabilities in using electronic resources.
- Develop and implement online tutorials in using electronic resources.
- Extend staff skills in providing informal information literacy training.

Goal 5: Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing and Listening for Pleasure

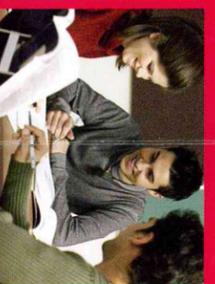
Residents of all ages and backgrounds will find a wide variety of current and popular materials to satisfy their personal interests and enhance their leisure time. They will have the help they need to make choices from among the options. To achieve this goal, the library will:

- Build collection of high-demand popular materials in a range of formats.
- Invest in efficient systems to connect people with the materials they request, such as improved holds processes and inter-library loan.
- Provide reader's advisory services.
- Offer book discussion groups, reading programs and other opportunities for exploring and learning.

Goal 6: Secure Adequate Funding

People in Astoria will have a public library system supported by funding adequate to meet the above goals. To achieve this goal, the library will work with supporters to:

- Maintain public financial support for Astoria Public Library.
- Continue exploring the feasibility of creating and funding a library district.
- Support stakeholder groups (such as the Astor Library Friends Association) that seek to enhance basic funding for expanded programs and services.
- Identify and make application to grant sources for expanded programs and services and capital expenditures.
- Build Endowment fund to \$1,000,000 by year 5 of the plan.



The six goals listed on this page will guide decisions about developing the Library's annual budget requests and implementing specific projects and initiatives. During the years of the plan, the library will monitor the needs and the priorities of the community and adjust its services to meet changing needs.