

Carter Memorial Library OMRO

2025-2029 STRATEGIC PLAN

Prepared By:

Carter Memorial Library
Strategic Planning Committee



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Introduction & Background

A strategic plan is essential for an organization to understand where they have been, where they are going, and what goals they need to accomplish in order to get there. The intent of this new plan was to build off of the work that had previously been completed in the 2020-2024 strategic plan as a collaboration between WiLS, a Wisconsin-based non-profit that assists in advancing Wisconsin library services, the Omro Public Library Strategic Planning Committee, and the Carter Memorial Library Board of the Trustees. The committee felt that updating the current plan was the best course of action, as many of the strategic planning goals from the previous plan were still relevant and actionable for the next five years. The committee was formed utilizing a mix of current library users and important stakeholders in the future of the library. In the formation of this plan, there was also an updated survey that went out into the community for completion. Over 130 responses were captured, and have helped inform the updates to this survey. Through these methods, we have made updates to the goals of the strategic plan in hopes to improve the library's overall services, space, and function.

Carter Memorial Library Mission Statement

Carter Memorial Library promotes lifelong learning for our Omro community and surrounding areas by connecting people of all ages, providing education, information, and technology in an atmosphere of respect, safety and accessibility.

Adopted June 2018

"I love our library and the staff working there! I am known by name and truly appreciate the services offered at our library! My children love reading. The library has increased that love for myself as well."

2024 Carter Memorial Library Strategic Planning Survey Data



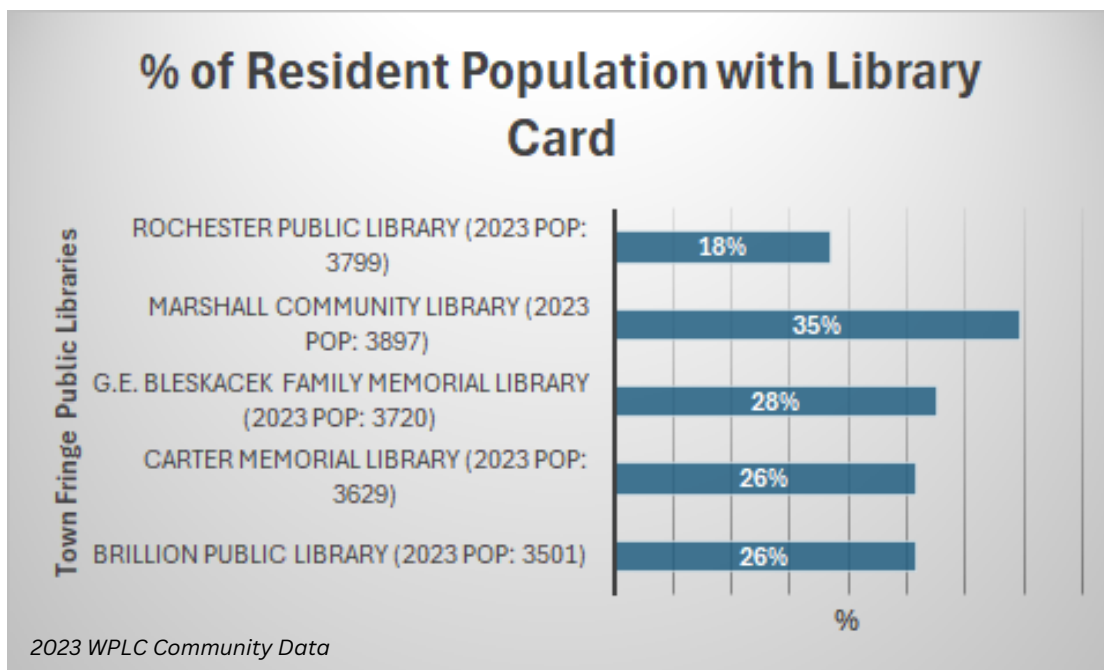
Community Background

The Carter Memorial Library is located in Omro, Wisconsin, a community of a little over 3,600 residents. It is located in Winnebago county. The city is located on the Fox River, and 10 minutes west of the city of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. It is a 4th Class city under Wisconsin State Statutes. The city governance includes seven elected officials, including a mayor. Residents of the community are 95% White, 6% White/Hispanic, and 2.7% other race, .98% Asian alone, .6% Black/African American alone, and .6% American Indian/Alaska Native alone. The median household income sits at \$65,150, and 83% of the residents in Omro were born in the community.

Carter Memorial Library Background

The Carter Memorial Library in Omro received its name from the memorial fund set up by the Grace Carter estate in 1966. The current facility, located at 405 E Huron Street, was built in 1986. The library is approximately 3,900 square feet. The library is located steps off of main street, and borders South Scott Park. The library is open 2,444 hours per year and has 24,544 physical items in the collection. It has over 1,800 registered users, and 2.75 FTE library staff, including a library director and full-time library assistant. The library is overseen by a board of seven local trustees, and (up to) two county appointees.

The service area includes the City of Omro and the surrounding townships and communities. The service area population of the library is approximately 6,300. The library is a part of the Winnefox Library System.



Strategic Plan Goals & Objectives



98% of survey respondents agreed that the library is important to them and/or their family.

2024 Carter Memorial Library Strategic Planning Survey Data

98% of survey respondents agreed that the library is important to the community.

2024 Carter Memorial Library Strategic Planning Survey Data

Goal 1: Marketing and Community Engagement

Create clear and consistent messaging that conveys the library's vision and goals and promotes library resources, services, and programs through communications designed to reach all community members.

Objectives

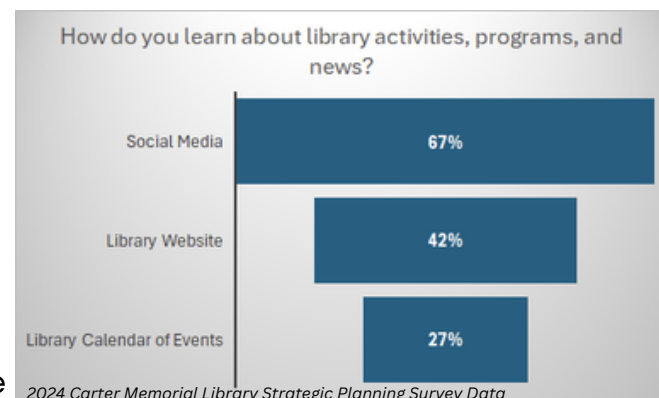
- Increase library visibility within the community
- Support the other goals of the library by improving communications about services, events, and opportunities
- Strengthening and enhancing community partnerships

Operational Strategies

- Implement brand kit
 - Ensure that library marketing materials are branded and are following brand kit guidelines
- Capitalize on top three avenues of communication with our patrons through:
 - Social Media (Facebook and Instagram)
 - Library Website
 - Library Calendar of events (located on website)
- Continue to strengthen partnership with Omro School District
- Increase community presence by exploring new partnerships with local businesses and citizens to supplement programming
- Engage more volunteers to help further the library's reach into the community

Measures for Success

- Maintain digital engagement and growth in online presence by increase our reach and engagement
- Maintain and grow new community partnerships
 - Employees are a recognizable face in the community
- Grow the volunteer base for the library



Goal 2: Serve As a Community Hub

We will provide a welcoming and accessible space that makes it easy for all patrons to find what they need, in person and online. We will also establish the library as the community hub that connects information, ideas, people and partners to opportunities, resources, services, and spaces that are accessible and inclusive.

Objectives

- Implement library hours that align with the needs of the community and are in balance with library resources
- Expand our role as an access point and learning hub for technology and its integrations in library services
- Increase reach to underserved populations and target audiences by developing new partnerships and programs
- Increase awareness about library services

Operational Strategies

- Yearly library budget review to identify capacity and resources to support staffing, technology initiatives, and programming
 - Consideration of a summer/winter hours schedule to increase summer hours and support for families in programming
- Create a long-term maintenance and technology plan to make sure the library is equipped to handle the physical and digital needs of the 21st century
- Maintain current and grow new community partners and connections to support underserved populations
 - Increase technology support for senior citizens
 - Expand programs for families and adult-learners
 - Expand connection with Omro School District students

Measures for Success

- Increase in new patrons
- Increase in patrons at newly designated open times (if feasible)
- Implementation of technology and maintenance plans
- Growth in technology programs and intentional resources set aside to bolster our non-traditional library services
- Increase in patron education about digital resources (measured through word of mouth by employees)

“For a small community, the Carter Memorial Library offers a lot to the community. Through the local library, patrons have access to all the Winnefox System has to offer.”
2024 Carter Memorial Library Strategic Planning Survey Data



Goal 3: Creating a Sustainable Future for the Library

Ensure short and long-term sustainability through continuous exploration of funding opportunities and sources to meet and support the ever-evolving service needs of our community.

Objectives

- Ensure the Library Board of Trustees and the Friends of the Library Board are aware of one another and their roles and responsibilities
- Increase monetary resources to support the current needs and growth of the library

Operational Strategies

- Ensure that the Trustees are aware of the fundraising and goals of the Friends of the Library Board
- Encourage members of the Library Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library Board, community members, and patrons to serve on library committees as leaders, and engage as library supporters within the community
- Develop a plan to engage the community and generate resources to support the library
 - Inviting patrons to sponsor the library through planned giving (as an independent library campaign or as a Friends campaign)
 - Implement a marketing campaign that increases community understanding about the value, importance, and the role that the library plays as a community resource and its shared social responsibility for its success
- Identify new grant opportunities for expanding services as available

Measures for Success

- Launch and execute a donation campaign over the next five years that develops a sustained-giving approach to gradual fundraising
- Implement a marketing plan that increases community understanding about the public library being a valuable community resource and technology hub
- Increase in grant revenue as available
- Engagement of board members to assist in growth and awareness of the library as a community resource



Goal 4: Address Current and Future Space Needs

Provide library spaces that meet the desire and demand of our resources, services, and programming.

Objectives

- Maintain current facilities to be an inviting and comfortable space for residents in anticipation of a future expansion
- Balance current space restrictions with community requests for adequate space for young children and teens, community groups, and workspace for patrons to read, work, and create
- Revisit a library re-design to meet future space needs, that would integrate modern library services

Operational Strategies

- Create long-term maintenance and technology plans to make sure the library is equipped to handle the physical and digital needs of the 21st century
- Maintain current spaces and market them within the community
- Identify and collaborate with community partners to create pop-up library locations for activities and services outside of the physical library space
- Encourage members of the Library Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library Board, community members, and patrons to be library champions. Library champions should understand:
 - Why more library space is needed
 - What services the library already offers within our time and space constraints
 - What improvements the library has already made
 - The role, value, and community impact of the library
- Strategize uses for current library properties
- Finalize initial improvements that need to happen before a modernized building is realized
 - New flooring
 - Updated service desk
 - Wayfinding signs

“The Omro Library does so much with a limited budget. It’s obvious that the staff and various committees really care about fostering and nurturing our community.”
2024 Carter Memorial Library Strategic Planning Survey Data

Measures for Success

- Increase in number of pop-up locations and attendance and pop-up events
- Engagement of board members to assist in growth and awareness of the library as a community resource
- Complete initial improvements in library space



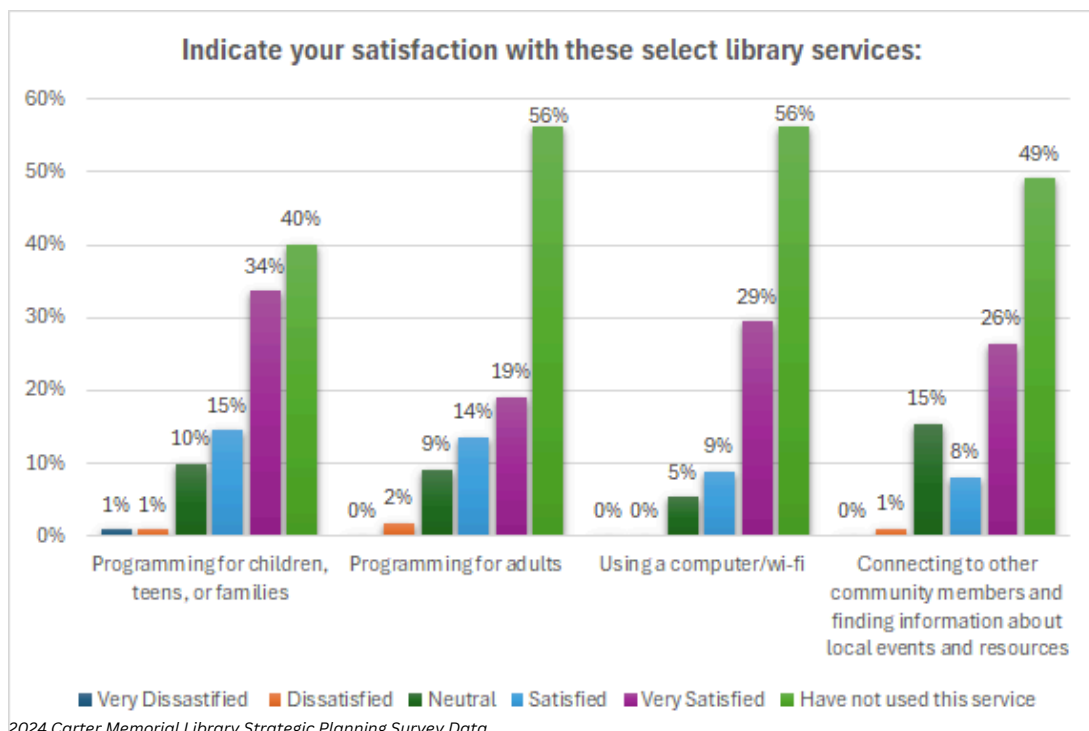
Ongoing Planning

The Strategic Plan was created by the strategic planning committee and will serve as an implementation guide during its lifetime. The ongoing process for the library will include project management, assessment, communication and prioritization of activities to ensure the goals of the Strategic Plan are realized, with flexibility to adapt as needed. The library will follow the annual process and schedule to implement the Strategic Plan as follows: The Library Director and staff will work in conjunction 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.

Strategic Planning Process

The Carter Memorial Library formed a Strategic Planning Committee composed of library staff, a Library Board trustee and community members. The following sources of data and information were gathered and analyzed:

- Carter Memorial Library 2018 User Study Survey Data
- Carter Memorial Library 2020-2024 Strategic Plan
- Carter Memorial Library 2024 Strategic Planning Survey Data
- Hustisford Public Library Strategic Planning Community Survey
- Waupaca Public Library Strategic Planning Survey
- WPLC Public Library Service Data Dashboard
- DPI Annual Report Data for Carter Memorial Library
- City of Omro Strategic Plan 2024-2029



Acknowledgements

We want to thank the more than 130 community members who responded to our community survey. The focus of our strategic planning process has been to engage residents to ensure our services, programs, and resources continue to align with the needs of those we serve. The information we gathered from the community has been invaluable. The library staff played an essential role in our strategic planning process and we thankfully acknowledge their efforts. The library director is grateful for the time and passion of the Strategic Planning Committee. Their commitment and thoughtfulness were instrumental in the development of this plan.

Strategic Planning Committee

- Janet Abalan, Library Trustee
- Amy Gee, Community member
- Tracy Mrochek, Community member
- Anna Dinkel, Library Director

Library Board of Trustees

- Travis Shafer, Library Board President
- Stacey Wright, Library Board Vice President
- Barbara Hodgen, Secretary
- Nicole Bahn, Treasurer
- Cindy Ostrander, City Council Liaison
- Eileen Cimermanic, County Board Representative
- Tracey Miller
- Janet Abalan

