

# East Lansing Public Library

*Fostering Community Connectivity*

COMMUNITY – LEARN – COLLABORATE – DEVELOP – DISCOVER



Strategic Plan  
Fiscal years 2015-2017

## **Purpose**

In January 2011, the East Lansing Public Library Board of Trustees (Board) hired a new library director. As part of the goals set by the Board, the director was tasked with developing a strategic direction for the East Lansing Public Library (ELPL). This is the first strategic plan developed by the new director, Kristin Shelley. Kristin's vision for ELPL is that it is a place for the community to learn, share, gather and create. Through this plan the Board and staff will create an environment for discovery; housed in a forward-looking library that is in tune with industry trends.

This plan was developed at a time when our community, state and country experienced the worst economic recession since the Great Depression. The nation and the State of Michigan are just, mid-2014, beginning to see very slight inclines to property values, decreases in unemployment rates and upticks in consumer spending. In addition, this plan was formulated when the country remains influx and divided on issues of healthcare, the economy, immigration, gun control, climate change and global conflict.

ELPL has been affected by the economy and has experienced several years of a declining budget (fiscal years 2012 and 2013). As a library that was mostly funded by the City of East Lansing's (COEL) general revenue fund, ELPL saw reductions in staff, materials, computer resources and programs. In June 2012, the East Lansing City Council (Council) voted unanimously to partially fund the library through a levy of one millage under Public Act 164, as well as, through a reduced amount from the general revenue fund. At the same time, Council voted to propose an additional one-mil levy that required a vote of East Lansing residents. In November 2012, the voters approved the additional one-mil levy by a 70% approval rate. Beginning July 1, 2013, ELPL was funded by property tax levies, not transfers from the COEL's general revenue fund. The budget, while secure from additional COEL cuts, continues to waiver due to property taxes not climbing as quickly as forecasted, reduced penal fines and increased costs for staff, equipment and supplies.

In addition, the fast pace of new technology and changing focus in how people read and get their information has greatly impacted the library. The increased use of e-readers, tablets and smart phones continues to alter how libraries build collections, train staff and disseminate information. While circulation of print books, music cds and audio-books has declined, circulation of digital materials has increased by 1,400 percent since January 2011. This focus has meant ELPL has had to stretch the materials collection dollars in several directions to accommodate physical book, cd and dvd collections and digital collections. ELPL offers two e-book platforms (3M and Overdrive), digital magazines (Zinio) and streaming TV shows, movies, music and audio-books (Hoopla). Digital content continues to be more difficult and expensive for libraries to acquire. ELPL added three self checkout stations in 2012. Since its induction, self checkout usage has been between 93 and 97 percent each month.



ELPL, also, is creating a digital lab/makerspace which will include 3-D printers; scanners; professional-grade publishing software; and desktop, laptop and mobile computers capable of content creation and digital discovery. This space will allow patrons to create, innovate and collaborate.

As ELPL evolves, reorganizes and grows, so does the City of East Lansing. New economic development is happening in the Ann Street Plaza, Trowbridge Plaza and in the northern tier area. New restaurants, a grocery store, a hotel, student housing and a senior housing facility have opened or are in the development stages. The Park District area development plans continue to be discussed. That district has new owners, DTN Management. Michigan State University (MSU), the largest employer in East Lansing, has seen its highest number of incoming freshman over the past few years. The MSU's international population has grown tremendously, with the majority of students coming from Asian countries.

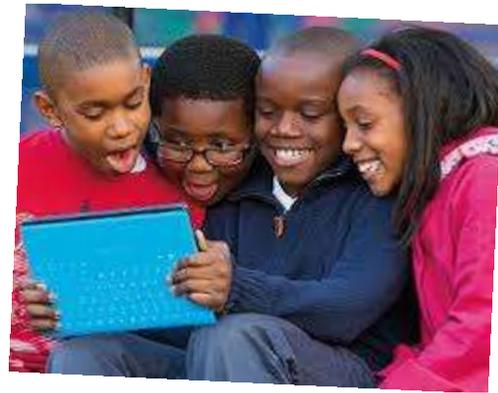
### **Strategic Planning Team**

The ELPL administrative team (Team) worked closely with the library management; staff; the Board; the Friends of the East Lansing Public Library; the Community Advisory Committee; and community support groups and advisors in the development of this strategic plan. ELPL administration worked with the Community Advisory Committee to develop both an internal scan and an external scan. The surveys were conducted in the fall/winter of 2012 and the results were shared with the Board and staff in July 2013. In addition to community and staff surveys, the Team drew from a variety of qualitative and quantitative research, including analysis of peer libraries, stakeholder interviews, a community/Board planning retreat (held in November 2013) and public input. The Team used Business Decision and Demographics Now to conduct a market segmentation analysis to understand the preferences of the Library's current and future users.

Through this process the mission, vision, focus areas and goals emerged to guide development of the strategic plan. Workgroups, committees and task forces are charged with developing strategies and action plans for the areas.

The East Lansing Public Library is often called the "jewel of the community." The Library plays a central role in the East Lansing community. Looking at the focus areas, it

is evident that ELPL must collaborate with public, community, university and business organizations to expand its reach. We must continue to provide programs, space and resources that produce civic engagement and a learning environment. We must actively reach out to people and connect them with the Library—in their own places and on their own time. By doing this and working with an engaged, creative and innovative staff, we will serve our patrons and community far into the future.



## **Mission**

The East Lansing Public Library provides a place and resources where people gather to share information and ideas to enrich lives and foster community.

## **Vision**

The East Lansing Public Library fosters community connectivity.

## **Focus Areas**

- Community  
Providing opportunities for people to meet, share ideas and participate in the development of their community
- Learn  
Promoting learning and literacy in all forms to all ages
- Collaborate  
Working with partners toward a common goal
- Develop  
Creating an environment that is future-oriented, serves as good stewards of public resources and innovates the staff and community
- Discover  
Providing a space and the resources that spark creativity and an organization that is in step with industry trends

## **Goals**

- Provide access to materials, programs and technology that showcase the diversity of our community
- Expand the East Lansing community's access to information and ideas
- Build partnerships to enrich lives and enhance economic development
- Foster an organizational culture of innovation
- Make the Library a community gathering place
- Develop the ELPL as a forward-thinking technology library
- Provide for a financially stable library



## **Acknowledgements**

### **Library Board of Trustees**

Paul Cervenak, President  
Lance Wilkinson, Vice President  
Martha Smith, Secretary  
Carole Dodgson  
Beth Prince

### **Library Leadership Team**

Kristin Shelley, Director  
Jill Abood, Head of Programs and Outreach Services  
Lauren Douglass, Head of Technology Services  
Shannon Lake, Lead Librarian/Teen Services  
Amber Laude, Collection Development Librarian  
Robert Chartrand, Circulation Supervisor  
Jen Amormino, Executive Assistant

### **Strategic Planning Group**

All library staff, Friends of the Library, Community Advisory Committee

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