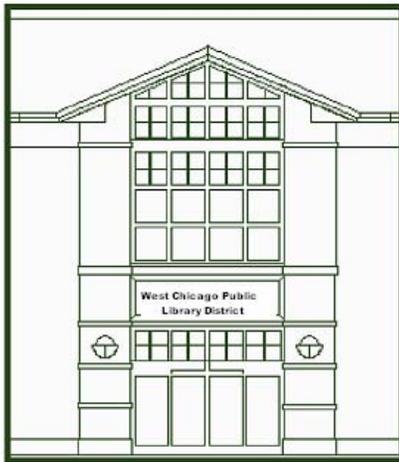


# West Chicago Public Library District Strategic Plan 2012-2017

*Enriching Lives*



## STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

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## WEST CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY DISTRICT

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## Our Mission

The West Chicago Public Library District promotes lifelong learning by providing materials, programs, and services that are inspiring, enriching, and engaging to individuals of every age, economic status, and cultural background to meet the recreational and informational needs of the residents of the District.



## Our Vision

The West Chicago Public Library District Board of Trustees will be a leader in building, maintaining, and transforming Library services to enrich the lives of our patrons so:

- The Library will serve as a community asset and active partner in community building through services, programs, and resources.
- Every West Chicago Public Library District patron has the opportunity to enjoy an intellectually and culturally rich life through an abundance of printed and electronic materials, new technologies, and as a gathering place for the exchange of information.
- Everyone has access to high interest materials and services that reflect the cultural diversity of the community, to stimulate their imaginations and encourage them to read for pleasure.
- Every child has the opportunity to experience the pleasures of reading and the joy of learning as they develop from early readers to thoughtful leaders of our community.
- As an organization the Library cultivates staff that are knowledgeable, passionate, and positive about the central role libraries play in individual lives and community growth.



## Our Community

The City of West Chicago is the first Illinois community created by the debut of the railroads, and in 1849 the town began to form when the Galena & Chicago Union Railroad (predecessor to today's Union Pacific) arrived from Chicago. Its connection with the St. Charles and the Aurora Branch lines formed the first railroad junction in Illinois and gave West Chicago its first name, platted in 1855 as the Town of Junction. In 1857, a second portion of town just north of Junction was platted the Town of Turner in honor of railroad president John B. Turner. These two towns, informally known as Turner Junction, were incorporated in 1873 as the Village of Turner. The original settlers were primarily English and Irish, with Germans arriving in the 1860s and Mexican immigrants by the 1910s. By the late 1800s, the Elgin, Joliet & Eastern Railroad built a freight line through town and, in an effort to attract new industry, gave away free factory sites along its right-of-way. By 1910, the population of the City of West Chicago was 2,378. Today the City's population has grown to 27,086. The West Chicago Public Library District boundaries are slightly beyond the City of West Chicago, with a population of 29,924 extending over a land area of 36 square miles.

U.S. Census data shows that the City of West Chicago has become more diverse over the last ten years with a wide range of ethnicities settling into the City. Demographics also indicate significant increases in both young (0-14) and older (over 55) populations.

### City of West Chicago

**Population - 27,086**

**Area - 14.8 square miles**

**Households - 7,609**

**Average home value - \$260,500**

**Median Income - \$70,247**

**Per capita income - \$24,498**

**Median resident age - 30**

**Residents with high school diplomas - 6,860**

**Residents with college degrees - 4,144**

**Number of businesses - 2,133**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010  
City of West Chicago, Illinois



## Our Past

Library services in West Chicago date back to 1856, when the Congregational Church included a library. In 1894, a reading room was established in the Bolles Opera House which was open two nights a week. The library began to organize and, by 1895, was open seven days a week. A volunteer library opened in 1929 on the second floor of the old City Hall, and in 1934 the Library became a municipal library. The original building, located on East Washington Street, opened in February 1954, and a wing was added to the building in 1958. The West Chicago Public Library District was formed on May 1, 1986 as the result of a successful referendum converting the Library from a municipal to a district library. The Library District celebrated the opening of its current 27,052 square foot facility located on West Washington Street in August, 1993.



## Our Present

Through strong strategic planning, the Board of Library Trustees, Library staff, and Library stakeholders have consistently defined strategic direction that facilitates the delivery of 21st century services to the community. As we prepare to celebrate the 20th anniversary of our facility in 2013, we reflect proudly on the Library's role as a community hub for providing the materials, programs, and services that inspire, enrich, and engage the residents of the District. The West Chicago Public Library District remains committed to serve as a vibrant community gathering place where individuals can connect with ideas and information to enrich their lives and ensure that everyone has the necessary resources to navigate our changing world.

### Growth with Pride

Items circulated	291,382	Five year increase	55.8%
Registered patrons	10,282	Five year increase	5.6%
Total collection	105,775	Five year increase	4.1%
Total patron references	39,284	Five year increase	27.9%



## Our Process

The *West Chicago Public Library District Strategic Plan 2012-2017* is the result of the combined efforts of the Board of Library Trustees, Library staff, and community. As a five-year planning document, it was created to ensure that we continue providing for community needs as they grow and change, and it reflects a thorough review of both community demographics and statistics and library industry trends for the foreseeable future.

Under the auspices of the Board of Library Trustees, a strategic plan committee was appointed. This committee comprised representatives of the Board of Library Trustees, Library administration, staff and community. A consulting firm was engaged to conduct community workshops and focus groups with stakeholders, Board members, library managers and staff. Using the findings, the strategic plan committee was to develop a set of directional goals and objectives designed to inform the Library initiatives and annual action plans to be developed throughout the next five years.

The next steps following adoption of the Strategic Plan by the Board of Library Trustees will be critical. Implementation is key. The management team will identify initiatives to translate the goals and objectives into action and, working with the Board, will establish priorities. Each year, as part of our annual planning and budgeting process, we will review—and revise as appropriate—those initiatives and priorities, determine specific programs and services during the upcoming year to implement those, and make sure funds are allocated to align with and support them. The final ingredient that rounds out the process focuses on accountability. We will establish a way to monitor our progress, and to evaluate whether the programs and services developed to address the strategic goals and objectives are successful in doing so.



## Our Findings

The Strategic Planning Committee relied on three primary sources of information to inform its decision making. The demographic data gathered relevant to the community we serve indicates a growingly diverse community in which the youngest population is growing simultaneous to experiencing a graying trend. An examination of the trends in public library service reveals that while the major themes of library service are timeless, the tools with which libraries address these themes are constantly changing. Of particular significance is the digitization and virtual delivery of information. Finally, the consultants summary of the focus groups and workshops conducted to identify the roles of the library which are of utmost importance to the community it serves.

The most common theme that surfaced from the focus groups and the board and staff workshop was a need for outreach to the underserved population in the community. Other themes that surfaced were staff mobility, space flexibility, and leading the way in technology. We view these as interrelated priorities. For instance, if you have mobile staff you reduce the need for stationary desks and create opportunity for flexible spaces.

Current literature informs us that these are changes that we will see in public libraries in the 21st century. To address community needs, changing demographics, as well as digital and technology skills that will create our future value, the Strategic Planning Committee used these priorities to inform the creation of goals and objectives for the next five years. We believe that through these focused and deliberate actions the West Chicago Public Library District will position itself in community engagement of social technologies; provider of digital as well as traditional literacy; and provider of patron access anywhere, anytime, getting information to a diverse population of users instantly.



## Our Goals & Values

The Strategic Plan is meant to be a dynamic document that can evolve and grow over time. While some goals will be more easily achieved, others will require significant time, planning, and resources. The Board, the Administrative Librarian, and Library staff will work together to prioritize objectives and initiatives to fulfill the strategic direction adopted by the Board of Library Trustees.

A successful Strategic Plan will enable the West Chicago Public Library District to provide responsive and innovative 21st century library service to West Chicago Public Library District patrons. Based on a review of demographic data and outcomes from workshops and focus groups, the Board of Library Trustees has endorsed the following strategic goals:

### Goal I: Engagement

Deliver Library resources and services that will increase community engagement both inside and outside the Library.

### Goal II: Space

Provide flexible space to enable multiple uses and accommodate change.

### Goal III: Technology

Make the benefits of technology available both inside and outside the Library.

These goals will be addressed within the context of the following overarching values embraced by the West Chicago Public Library District.

### Values

- Provide staff with the tools and capabilities to deliver 21st century services.
- Engage in continuous staff training in new technologies.
- Celebrate the cultures that comprise the community.
- Monitor and measure patron satisfaction/engagement.
- Generate additional revenue to support enhanced materials, programs, and services.
- Strive to protect the safety and security of the Library's environment.

## West Chicago Public Library District Strategic Plan 2012-2017

*"I am super enthused by the services available to me through the WCPL. I have often taken advantage of the library's special offerings. They have enriched my life because some activities keep me informed, others keep me entertained. Bottom line, the library gives a clear message that it cares about the patrons and the community it serves."* ~ K. DuVal

*"The West Chicago Library has really enriched my life with their numerous cultural offerings. From free tango lessons taught by the skilled Tango Argentina Club instructors to the latest concert, Avalon String Quartet, my family has really benefited from their programs."* ~ H. Cabael

*"I love our library! I don't know what I would do without it."* ~ N. Turner

*"I love the wide variety of events, presentations, and materials made available to residents of West Chicago by our library. You can find something engaging for almost anyone because of the quality of your programming."* ~ D. Wemple

*"Libraries Link Us!" My library puts style in my life with its lovely design and attractive spaces. It calms me in the midst of a busy schedule. I like to see the generations share a space that blends the much-esteemed tradition of books with the newest technology."* ~ J. Joyce



## Our Leaders

### ADMINISTRATIVE LIBRARIAN

**Melody E. Coleman**

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Adult Services Manager

**Joslyn Jones**  
Youth Services Manager

**Ursula Salvesen**  
Technical Services Manager

**Maureen Bajor**  
Facilities & Human Resource Manager

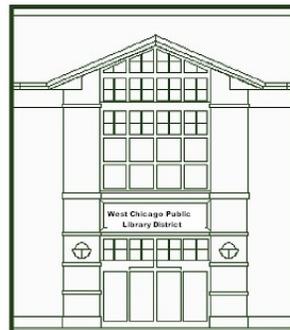
**Cindy Stone**  
Circulation Manager

**Shelley S. Campbell**  
Public Relations Specialist





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October 30, 2012