



# Strategic Plan 2010-2015



**LIBRARY HEADQUARTERS, SALISBURY, NC  
EAST BRANCH, ROCKWELL, NC  
FRANK T. TADLOCK SOUTH ROWAN REGIONAL,  
CHINA GROVE / LANDIS, NC  
[www.rowanpubliclibrary.org](http://www.rowanpubliclibrary.org)**

**ADOPTED FEBRUARY 24, 2010  
BY ROWAN PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**ROWAN PUBLIC LIBRARY--  
VISION / MISSION / AREAS OF EMPHASIS:**

Responding to its **Vision** of “A knowledgeable, progressive, diverse, and economically vibrant Rowan County,” the Rowan Public Library has identified its **Mission** as:

**“Inspiring the spirit of exploration and the power of imagination, promoting the joy of reading, and supporting the life long pursuit of knowledge for all people.”**

Accordingly, the Library must respond to a diverse client base by providing a complex mix of information services in a variety of formats. Clearly, the Library will continue to build its collections and deliver its services to respond to that wide-ranging demand.

In so doing, the Library will focus on seven areas of emphasis in developing special efforts and concentrating its resources.

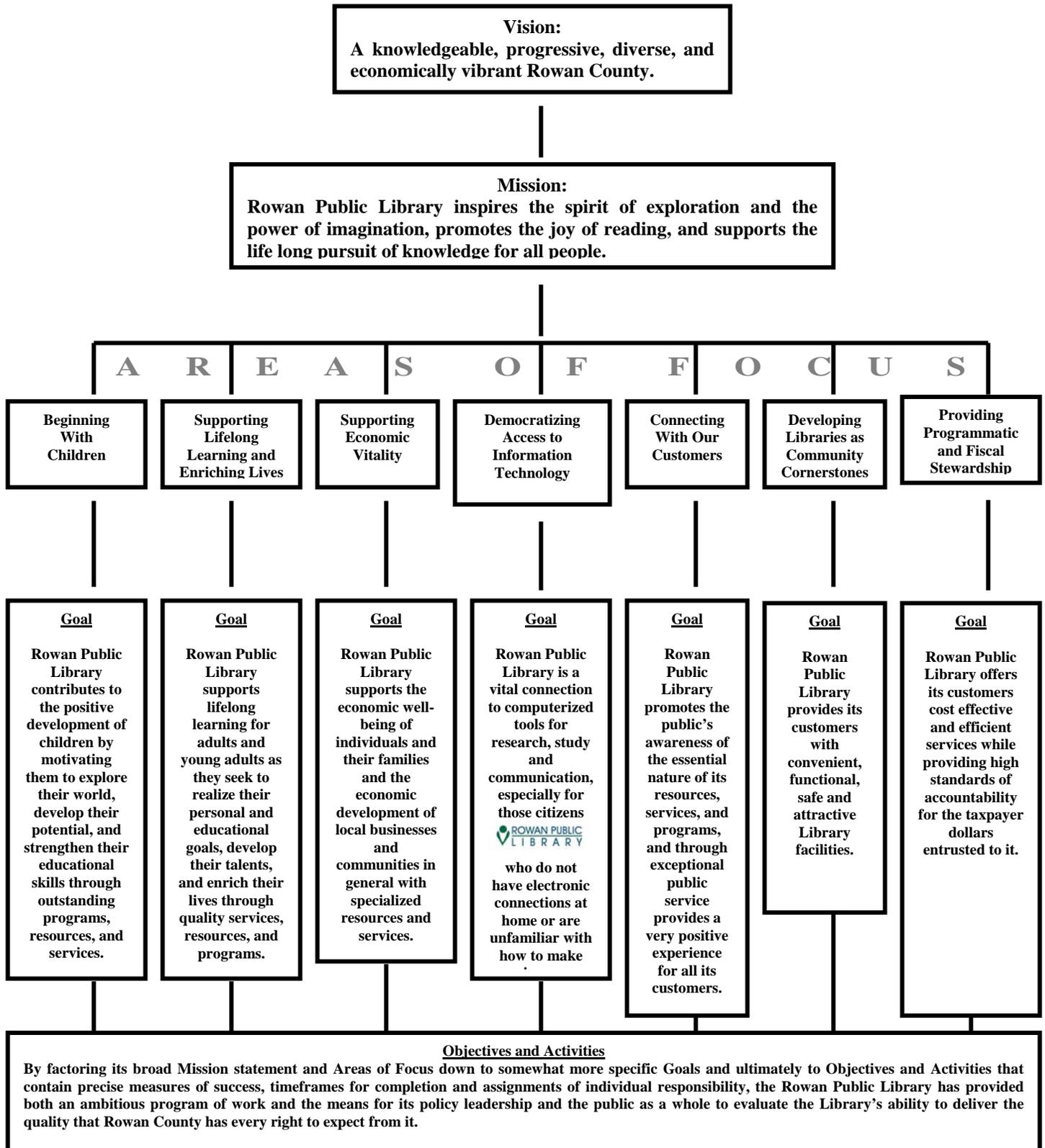
- **Beginning with Children.**
- **Supporting Lifelong Learning and Enriching Lives.**
- **Supporting Economic Vitality.**
- **Democratizing Access to Information Technology.**
- **Connecting with Our Customers.**
- **Developing Libraries as Community Cornerstones.**
- **Providing Programmatic and Fiscal Stewardship.**

The pages that follow cover these areas in detail, listing a general goal for each and the specific objectives and the actions needed to realize their attainment. Also identified is the individual on the Library staff with lead responsibility for making each objective is successfully addressed as well as the criteria that will determine whether or not that success has been achieved.

As a public agency, the Rowan Public Library has an attendant responsibility to define its program of work in a manner that allows an evaluation of its effectiveness not only by its policy and staff leadership, but by the public in general. This strategic plan does, we are convinced, provide such a means.

Along with the ability to measure the effectiveness of the library’s program of work, it is the hope of the library staff, Library Board of Trustees, and Rowan County Board of Commissioners that this document help guide the library system in the development of loyal customers who are library advocates and promoters.

## FRAMEWORK FOR ACCOUNTABILITY



## BEGINNING WITH CHILDREN

### Program Summary

- ▶ *Contributing to the positive development of the child.*
- ▶ *Promoting the joy of reading through story telling.*
- ▶ *Providing year-round reading activities, such as the summer reading program, to strengthen children's reading skills.*
- ▶ *Providing homework help.*
- ▶ *Encouraging lifelong learning.*
- ▶ *Partnering with schools and preschool programs to strengthen learning skills.*
- ▶ *Developing collections and programs especially geared for children.*
- ▶ *Modeling teaching and story telling techniques for caregivers.*

**Goal: Rowan Public Library contributes to the positive development of children by motivating them to explore their world, develop their potential and strengthen their educational skills through outstanding programs, resources, and services.**

**Objective 1: Create unique, attractive spaces especially designed for children and parents**

Desired outcome: Children and parents will seek out children's services areas as a comfortable desirable destination.

Activity A: Further develop the headquarters' children's area with the addition of children's themed design.

Activity B: Replace worn furnishing in the children's area at library headquarters which will encourage children and parents to read together.

Activity C: Plan a children's area at a new West Rowan Branch Library which will include lots of child appeal and will be seen as a desirable destination.

Responsibility: Children's Services Supervisor  
Management Team

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 2: Provide computer services to children that are educational and entertaining**

Desired outcome: Children will come to the library to use library computers for entertainment and learning

Activity A: Evaluate existing software programs and services discarding those which are out of date.

Activity B: Find and evaluate new and innovative programs and services which have significant child appeal and implement those found to be of value.

Responsibility: Children's Services Supervisor  
Information Technology Staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 3: Work to market the summer reading program especially to at risk students.**

Desired outcome: At risk students will improve their reading skills

Activity A: Develop and implement a plan to make the program reoccurring

Activity B: Partner with local community groups and the Rowan-Salisbury school system to identify and serve at risk students.

Responsibility: Children's Services Supervisor  
Library Management Team

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 4: Expand regular story time programs to incorporate rhythm and music**

Desired Outcome: Children throughout Rowan County will learn basic listening and rhythm skills that will impact their learning of language, literacy, social and emotional development, mathematics and pattern recognitions.

Activity A: Provide children with the opportunity to listen to and create music using various instruments

Activity B: Incorporate rhythms found in books and music to develop pattern recognitions using various tools

Responsibility: Children's Services Supervisor

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 5: Design and implement programs targeting the elementary school age**

Desired Outcome: Children will view the library as a place for learning and entertainment in a fun, safe environment

Activity A: Expand the Book Chat program to all branches

Activity B: Develop a Lego Club for school age students

Activity C: Research and develop other school age programs of interest

Activity D: Develop a partnership with the Children's Theatre

Activity E: Develop and implement a plan to make the program reoccurring

Responsibility: Children's Services Supervisor

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 6: Design and Market Programming kits to Parents**

Desired Outcome: Parents will learn how to recreate a story time at home with their child, creating an opportunity for families to read and learn together

Activity A: Develop theme based packets with activities and flannel boards

Activity B: Provide storytelling scripts and costumes for children to act out

Responsibility: Children's Services Supervisor

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 7: Expand Stories to Go Program to include workshops for parents**

Desired Outcome: Parents will learn how to engage in "read-aloud" strategies and develop a routine of reading to their children on a regular bases.

Activity A: Develop and distribute literacy materials to parents

Activity B: Select and provide incentives for parents who attend workshop

Activity C: Develop procedure to distribute take home books for children in family child care homes

Activity D: Develop and implement plan for reoccurring service to both Family Home Child Care and Centers served by Stories to Go Program.

Responsibility: Children's Outreach Program Supervisor

Cost: Smart Start Rowan Funding

**Objective 8: Continue to develop and expand the Books To Grow Program**

Desired Outcome: At risk children and their parents will be provided with quality programming and materials that encourage "Read Aloud" sessions at home on a routine basis.

Activity A: Increase number of classrooms served as public schools include additional More at Four classes

Activity B: Add an additional parent workshop to the schedule midway through the year

Activity C: Create an extra activity and incentive for children midway through the year

Activity D: Increase the Books To Grow Coordinator's hours from 20 to 24 hours per week.

Responsibility: Children's Outreach Program Supervisor  
Books to Grow Coordinator

Cost: Smart Start Rowan Funding

**Objective 9: Expand Stories to Go to include a second bookmobile**

Desired Outcome: Centers that are currently on the waitlist will be able to take part in the Stories to Go program and centers already on list will be able to have more frequent visits

Activity A: Find and acquire additional vehicle for bookmobile

Activity B: Acquire additional staff for expanded services

Activity C: Develop rotation for the two bookmobiles to provide service to child care centers on a 3-4 week rotation.

Responsibility: Children's Outreach Program Supervisor  
Stories to Go Staff

Cost: Not determined

## SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING AND ENRICHING LIVES

### Program Summary

- ▶ *Developing collections for recreational, informational and educational interest.*
- ▶ *Providing homework help for students of all ages.*
- ▶ *Creating programs of interest to adults and young adults.*
- ▶ *Answering questions from the very simple to the very complex.*
- ▶ *Connecting Library users with computers and online resources.*
- ▶ *Teaching basic computer skills.*
- ▶ *Supporting adult literacy programs.*
- ▶ *Valuing our rich heritage by collecting local history and genealogy materials and providing research assistance.*

**Goal: Rowan Public Library supports lifelong learning for adults and young adults as they seek to realize their personal and educational goals, develop their talents, and enrich their lives by providing quality resources, services, and programs.**

### **Objective 1: Expand program activities for adults and young adults.**

Desired outcome: Offer customers a greater variety of programming; increased program attendance.

Activity A: Assume the responsibility for and expansion of the SummerReading challenge.

Activity B: Develop a program to incorporate the use of both books and movies in the library collection

Activity C: Develop, in partnership with other agencies, businesses, and the Gates Foundation, programs that will enhance job seeking and retention skills.

Activity D: Develop programming kits to include those for seniors and book clubs.

Activity F: Presentation/workshop on how to preserve documents and artifacts partnering with Rowan Museum; possibly film for later use.

Activity G: Develop a program similar in nature to the previous 'Quiz Bowl'.

Responsibility: Local History/Genealogy Supervisor  
Information Services staff  
Information Technology staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 2:** Further engage teens in art and literature.

Desired outcome: Attractive teen oriented spaces that allow for sharing and creation of literature, music and art.

Activity A: Design teen space in cooperation with the teen advisory board.

Activity B: Develop and produce a Butterfly garden video with the teens and the Master Gardener's

Activity C: Research and create an Animation and music studio allowing teens to explore the growing media of digital technologies

Activity D: Actively participate in YALSA sponsored Teens Read Week and Teen Tech Week on a regular basis

Activity E: Research and Obtain grant funding for teen space

Responsibility: Children's Services Supervisor

Cost: Annual operating budget, grant and other funding.

**Objective 3: Continue to improve and expand the digital archives of local historical documents available through the library's web site.**

Desired outcome: The library's web site will be richer and attract more visitors. as a result of visits to the web site.

Activity A: Revise/Restructure the History Room web pages to be more 'user' friendly.

Activity B: Select, digitize, and publish to RPL's web site additional historical documents annually.

Activity C: Develop and publish to the web, finding aids for current and newly acquired collections.

Activity D: Microfilm and digitize the McCubbins/Linn/Auxiliary Collection – professionally outsource this activity.

Cost: Annual operating budget along with grant and other funding.

**Objective 4: Improve and expand readers' advisory services for adults and young adults.**

Desired outcome: Staff will be able to better assist customers in fulfilling their reading/listening/viewing needs.

Activity A: Provide staff with at least two readers advisory programs annually.

Activity B: Evaluate usage of Dear Reader, Children's Comprehensive Database and other reader advisory tools.

Activity C: Create a venue with staff suggestions for reading (i.e. Facebook, Blog, Staff picks on display screens, links to "Good Reads")

Responsibility: Information Services staff  
Information Technology staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 5: Expand homework help for students of all ages.**

Desired outcome: Students seeking assistance for homework will receive top quality individualized services.

Activity A: Seek funding for Tutor.com/Brain fuse

Responsibility: Information Services staff  
Information Technology staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

## SUPPORTING ECONOMIC VITALITY

### Program Summary

- ▶ *Developing specialized collections for small businesses.*
- ▶ *Contributing to the quality of life in our communities.*
- ▶ *Supporting economic development.*
- ▶ *Helping those in search of employment.*
- ▶ *Supporting adult literacy programs.*
- ▶ *Supporting communities with meeting spaces.*
- ▶ *Providing research and resources for Rowan County Government.*
- ▶ *Working with others to promote Rowan County.*

**Goal: Rowan Public Library supports the economic well being of individuals and their families and the economic development of local businesses and communities in general with specialized resources and services.**

**Objective 1: Promote the library as a quality of life resource to potential citizens and business relocating to Rowan County.**

Desired outcome: Local business and economic leaders will recognize the library as a significant part of the quality of life in Rowan County.

Activity A: Partner with local agencies including Rowan County Convention and Visitor's Bureau and Economic Development Council to promote the value of library services and materials to quality of life in Rowan County.

Responsibility: Information Services Staff  
Information Technology Staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 2: Provide assistance and resources to the community searching for employment and developing job, career, and life skills.**

Desired outcome: Rowan County citizens will be better prepared for success in finding jobs and enhancing quality of life and skill development.

Activity A: Offer classes in topics like: computer literacy, resume creation, job searching, etc.

Activity B: Work with Gates Foundation and State Library to create a Job Seeker Center.

Activity C: Train reference staff to be better prepared to assist in using tools for patrons seeking employment.

Activity D: Work with local agencies and JobLink to provide resources for job seekers.

Activity E: Develop web resource center for employment and skills and career development.

Responsibility: Information Services Staff  
Library Director

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

**Objective 3: Develop a genealogy conference in coordination with the Tourism Development Authority.**

Desired outcome: Rowan County and Rowan Public Library will be better known as a valuable source for genealogy materials and research.

Activity A: Study other similar programs.

Activity B: Create a task force to help guide the creation of the conference.

Responsibility: Management Team

Cost: Not yet known

**Objective 4: Promote the development of small businesses in Rowan County.**

Desired Outcome: Those wishing to start businesses in Rowan County will receive support in developing those businesses including guidance, information and services.

Activity A: Target small businesses collection for enhancement.

Activity B: Work with RCCC to provide programming at the library on how to start and/or operate a business.

Activity C: Provide training on office application and productivity software and online resources.

Responsibility: Information Services Staff

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

## DEMOCRATIZING ACCESS TO INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

**Program Summary**

- ▶ *Conducting relevant training programs on computer uses.*
- ▶ *Emphasizing the distinction between raw information and valid intelligence.*
- ▶ *Incorporating current technology applications throughout the Library.*
- ▶ *Maintaining a comprehensive and easily accessible and useable website.*

**Goal: Rowan Public Library is a vital connection to computerized tools for research, study and communication, especially for those citizens who do not have electronic connections at home or are unfamiliar with how to make maximum use of them.**

**Objective 1: Use information technology to make library resources universally available to the community twenty-four hours a day.**

Desired outcome: Library customers will be able to use library resources and services from their homes and offices.

Activity A: Further develop the library’s digital archives for those who are interested in local history and genealogy.

Activity B: Develop web access portals to statewide and national digital resources.

Activity C: Develop a plan for providing easier access to NC-Live and other resources through the use of a proxy server or other type pass through control.

Activity D: Redesign library website to increase visibility of major library services and access to library resources and information.

Activity E: Develop a library Facebook presence to publicize library programs and events and invite participants.

Responsibility: Management Team  
Information Technology Staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 2: Expand access to streaming technologies such as video and audio resources on demand.**

Desired outcome: Library customers will receive the media through the easiest available means.

Activity A: Develop a pilot program to provide access to e-book readers, such as the Kindle and/or Nook

Activity B: Participate in statewide consortium to provide expanded access to electronic audiovisual material

Activity C: Increase holdings of digital audiovisual materials while phasing out analog.

Activity D: Convert analog oral history materials to digital format

Responsibility: Information Technology Staff  
Information Services Staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 3: Effectively use the Internet to best provide information about and access to library services and programs.**

Desired Outcome: The community will enjoy convenient online access to library resources and information about library services and programs.

Activity A: Redesign library website to increase visibility of major library services and access to library resources and information.

Activity B: Develop a library Facebook presence to publicize library programs and events and invite participants.

Activity C: Train additional staff in the use of the web site content management application.

Activity D: Acquire additional storage space for digital media.

Activity E: Digitize McCubbins and other fragile or rare documents

Responsibility: Information Technology Staff  
Information Services Staff

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 4: Expand computer literacy programs with a variety of public classes**

Desired Outcome: Citizens will acquire basic and advanced computer literacy skills.

Activity A: Provide classes in basic computer skills, job seeking, audiovisual technologies, productivity applications.

Activity B: Work with Information Systems department to allow customization of staff and public service computers with work specific applications.

Responsibility: Librarians  
Library Management Team

Cost: Annual operating budget

## CONNECTING WITH OUR CUSTOMERS

### Program Summary

- ▶ *Dedicating ourselves and our staff to outstanding customer service.*
- ▶ *Responding to and anticipating customer requests*
- ▶ *Recruiting and hiring a diverse, professional, friendly workforce.*
- ▶ *Promoting effective communication.*
- ▶ *Training staff continually.*
- ▶ *Promoting the Library, its services, and collections to the public.*

**Goal:** Rowan Public Library promotes the public's awareness of the essential nature of its resources, services, and programs, and through exceptional public service provides a very positive experience for all its customers.

**Objective 1:** Develop and implement marketing efforts that will focus on the reliable information, services and program opportunities at the library.

Desired outcome: Current and potential library customers will be aware of the quality and variety of library services provided.

Activity A: Promote library programs and services through existing and new media outlets, including radio, newspaper, local publications, websites, and Internet.

Activity B: Develop, purchase, and place additional advertising in local media outlets to promote library programs and services.

Activity C: Prepare library promotional video for channels 16 and 22.

Activity D: Install video bulletin boards at branch locations to provide updated information about library programming and services.

Activity E: Use surveys to collect information from customers and as a tool to improve and educate the community about our services and programs.

Activity F: Develop a Pass it On program to place paperbacks (with information about the library) in high traffic community locations (such as hospitals, doctor's offices), for individuals to read and pass on to others.

Activity G: Develop and enhance partnerships with local organizations and groups, such as the community public art committee, the Tourism agency, and the school system, to further promote the connection between these agencies and the library.

Responsibility: Librarians  
Library Management Team

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 2: Provide customer service and library advocacy training to staff and board that reinforces the connection between our service and the community.**

Desired Outcome: Our community will feel positive about their library experience and the library as a whole.

Activity A: Provide staff customer service training quarterly that reinforces communicating a spirit of helpfulness and engaging the customer.

Activity B: Provide advocacy training for library staff and board members.

Activity C: Designate a spokesperson for library board and administration for crisis management.

Responsibility: Library Management Team

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 3: Effectively use the Internet as an educational, informational, and communications tool.**

Desired Outcome: The community will enjoy convenient online access to library resources and information about library services and programs.

Activity A: Redesign library website to increase visibility of major library services and access to library resources and information, and provide timely updates about library programs and events.

Activity B: Develop a library Facebook presence to publicize library programs and events and to invite participants.

Responsibility: Library Management Team  
Librarians

Cost: Annual operating budget

## DEVELOPING LIBRARIES AS COMMUNITY CORNERSTONES

**Program Summary**

- ▶ *Enhancing our neighborhoods through attractive and inviting facilities.*
- ▶ *Maintaining comfortable, safe, and secure facilities.*
- ▶ *Planning for the future growth.*
- ▶ *Evaluating services, programs, and staffing.*

**Goal: Rowan Public Library provides its customers with convenient, functional, safe and attractive library facilities.**

**Objective 1: Begin evaluation for the addition of a new library facility in the West Rowan area.**

Desired outcome: Planning for expanded services to the citizens of West Rowan will begin.

Activity A: Begin collecting demographic and statistical data for the area.

Activity B: Determine factors to be considered for library expansion in the area.

Activity C: Seek funding partners and co-location possibilities for West Branch.

Responsibility: Library Director  
Management Team

Cost: Not yet known

**Objective 2: Begin evaluation for the addition of a new library facility or significant addition to the East Branch Library.**

Desired outcome: Planning for expanded services to the citizens of East Rowan will begin.

Activity A: Begin collecting demographic and statistical data for the area.

Activity B: Determine factors to be considered for library expansion in the area.

Responsibility: Library Director  
Management Team

Cost: Not yet known

**Objective 3: Begin evaluation for the addition of a new library facility for Local History and Genealogy.**

Desired outcome: Planning for expanded genealogy services.

Activity A: Explore opportunities for a downtown location to allow for growth

Responsibility: Library Director  
Management Team

**Objective 4: Partner with local organizations and agencies to improve and enhance landscaping opportunities in the area.**

Desired outcome: Enhanced landscaping in the community and surrounding libraries.

Activity A: Partner on local projects including the Town Well project, sculpture and public art projects, demonstrations gardens at the library headquarters, rain garden at South Rowan Regional library, Spruce McCay Law Office interpretation project.

Responsibility: Library Director  
Management Team

Cost: To be determined

**Objective 5: Partner with community theater and arts organizations to enhance these services in the community.**

Desired Outcome: Enhance community opportunities for arts in Rowan County.

Activity A: Pursue developing a storytelling amphitheatre at South Rowan Regional Library.

Activity B: Partner with agencies such as Piedmont Players, Lee Street Theater, the Arts Council, and the YMCA on community theater and art projects.

Responsibility: Management Team  
Librarians

## PROVIDING PROGRAMMATIC AND FISCAL STEWARDSHIP

**Program Summary**

- ▶ *Securing adequate funding for quality, cost-effective services.*
- ▶ *Evaluating services, programs, and staffing.*
- ▶ *Planning for the future.*
- ▶ *Using the latest technology to achieve greater efficiency.*

**Goal:** Rowan Public Library offers its customers cost effective and efficient services while providing high standards of accountability for the taxpayer dollars entrusted to it.

### **Objective 1: Improve and expand staff training**

Desired outcome: Staff will be better trained to best serve our customers.

Activity A: Update staff orientation program.

Activity B: Create new online training manuals that are division specific.

Activity C: Create new and make use of existing web based training modules for efficient staff training

Responsibility: Management Team  
Supervisors

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

### **Objective 2: Increase Library Endowment**

Desired outcome: Library collections will be improved through increased funding.

Activity A: Develop and implement signature fundraising event.

Activity B: Develop new promotional brochure for the Foundation.

Responsibility: Management Team  
Supervisors  
Foundation Board

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

**Objective 3: Improve library operations through reorganization of staff as needed.**

Desired outcome: The library will be more responsive to the needs of its customers.

Activity A: Explore reorganization when a position is vacated.

Responsibility: Director  
Management Team  
Supervisors

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

**Objective 4: Seek additional means for improving operational efficiency.**

Desired outcome: The library will reduce costs of operations.

Activity A: Evaluate current collection practices and seek effective means of collecting overdues.

Activity B: Pursue self checkout and RFID for all library locations

Activity C: Pursue additional outsourcing of operations, such as mowing and av

Activity D: Pursue system-wide booking software for meeting room use

Responsibility: Director  
Management Team  
Supervisors

Cost:

**Objective 5: Develop integrated program for library energy efficiency and recycling**

Desired outcome: The library will be a good steward of natural resources.

Activity A: Incorporate containers for recycling into the public and meeting spaces.

Activity B: Adopt policy for using low VOC paints and finishes in library facilities.

Activity C: Replace incandescent fixtures with fluorescent or LED fixtures as funding permits.

Activity D: Seek ways to reduce energy use and costs systemwide.

Activity E: Incorporate green building tech in expansion, renovation, and new construction.

Activity F: Use more recycled and renewable resourced and products in the selection of janitorial products.

Responsibility: Director  
Management Team  
Supervisors

Cost: Annual operating budget

**Objective 6: Work with Friends to develop further fund raising possibilities and advocacy programs.**

Desired Outcome: Increase support for library programs and activities.

Activity A: Seek ways to increase friends membership.

Activity B: Explore new fundraising activities and events, including coffee bars at each location.

Activity C: Increase booksale and basket sale revenues.

Activity D: Explore additional opportunities such as trips.