

**HOMEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
LONG RANGE PLAN**

2011-2016

**PREPARED BY
HOMEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE**

**ADOPTED BY
HOMEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
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**HOMEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY
LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE
FOR THE
2011-2016 LONG RANGE PLAN**

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HOMEWOOD PUBLIC LIBRARY---THE BASICS

The Homewood Public Library celebrated its 70th birthday this year. In its humble beginnings in a room at the old City Hall, the only purpose for the Library was to provide a small collection of books for use by the citizens of Homewood. Books are still an important part of the Library, but it has evolved into so much more. It is now a cultural center for the citizens of Homewood.

The Library has been an innovative leader among libraries in the State of Alabama, consistently ranked in the top 5% of Libraries in the State of Alabama. With annual circulation at over 500,000 and library visits of over 40,000 per month, Homewood Public Library is one of the busiest in the State of Alabama.

Homewood Public Library also ranks very high nationally. It is ranked in the 96th percentile in the *Hennen's American Public Library Ratings 2006*. It was ranked in *Library Journal's Index of Public Library Service* with a three star rating in 2008 and a four star rating in 2009 for library service based on circulation per capita, visits per capita, program attendance per capita, and public internet use per capita. Homewood was one of only three in 2008 and one of only five libraries in 2009 in the State of Alabama to receive this prestigious recognition.

As a member of the Jefferson County Library Cooperative (JCLC), the Homewood Public Library serves not only Homewood residents, but also all Jefferson County residents. Always on the cutting edge, the Library currently checks out over ninety-five percent of materials on self check machines. In 2010 and 2011 the Library received LSTA grants to install RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology which works in conjunction with the self check machines. The RFID technology benefits both the patrons and the staff members to streamline the checkout process. RFID also aids the staff in inventory control and turnaround time.

The Library houses a wonderful collection of books in addition to other media required by the community to meet their entertainment and information needs. DVDs, Blu-Rays, Video Games, Playaways and CDs are circulated along with the wonderful print collection. As a member of JCLC, the Homewood Public Library not only offers online databases, but also has access to a collection of downloadable audio books and eBooks. Patrons can reserve materials, sign up for programs and pay fines online.

The Homewood Public Library is unique among libraries in Jefferson County in that there are six conference rooms, two auditoriums and a Board Room that can be used for meetings. In 2010 the Library hosted 1,337 community meetings. The Departments of the City of Homewood, the Homewood Chamber of Commerce and the Homewood Rotary regularly use the facility.

The management of the Homewood Public Library realizes the need for a well-trained staff to meet the needs of the community. An emphasis is placed on customer service. Patrons of the Homewood Public Library, just as in all of today's society, want their needs met quickly and efficiently. Library management requires staff members to attend training sessions and provides the necessary funding.

Masters-degreed librarians and well-trained staff members are available to help patrons needing assistance with homework, research, technology, or book selection. Patrons doing research have access to books, periodicals, and on-line resources. A wireless network "hotspot" helps provide computer access for those who wish to use their laptops in locations all over the library proper including the vending area. Additional laptops are available for check out to use within the library to prevent patrons having to wait for one of the desktop computers to be vacated. Adequate comfortable seating is provided throughout the library with numerous study carrels and tables for use by patrons. Two large aquariums form the focal point for the Adult Department and provide a fascinating point of interest for patrons of all ages.

The Temerson Children's Library houses a wonderful collection of materials for children. Books, puzzles, DVDs, and CD Roms can be found in the Children's Department along with a bank of computers for educational games and Internet use. Online catalogs are available to search the collection and trained staff members are available to help patrons locate needed materials. A large parenting collection is located in the Children's Department for parents to peruse while children are in the department.

A number of animal friends reside in the Children's Department including parakeets, two chinchillas, frogs, and a spider. A smaller aquarium located in the Children's Department delights children visiting that area of the library.

Computers are located throughout the Library. An **Internet Café** has four computers for patron use. Located just outside the **Internet Café**, the **Virginia Hicks Sutter Courtyard** is also a computer hotspot and provides a tranquil outdoor setting in which to work on a laptop, read or have a snack.

A very popular space, the **Family Computer Center**, is located in the room adjacent to the Ellenburg Art Gallery and has been created for use by parents with small children. The Family Computer Center houses six computer stations. The adjoining room has been designed to be child friendly and includes a flat screen television to entertain children while their parents are using the computers.

The Homewood Public Library offers the **Don E. Hatcher Technology Center** on the lower level of the facility that is available for public use the entire time the library is open. Sixteen computers are available for public use and a trained staff member is always available to provide any necessary assistance to patrons. The Internet is available on these computers along with a variety of software including word processing, spread sheets and publishing software.

A computer training center is also located on the lower level. There are nine stations for conducting free computer classes for the public, as well as training for library staff. The curriculum varies during the year covering a wide range of software and computer skills. Classes are geared toward different levels of expertise by patrons, from basic to advanced. This year, on-line computer training tutorials are available on the website www.homewood.lib.al.us. These tutorials provide on-line training classes so that patrons can work at their own pace.

The Library offers regular programming for its patrons. The signature event for Adults is the October annual ***Dinner Theater*** which has grown from one night to two nights because of its popularity. A Spring event is held in May each year. The Homewood Library hosts an adult book club that meets once per month between September and May.

The Samurai Animanga Club and a program called ***Game On*** are popular programs with the Teens. Our Teen Librarian also regularly does book talks at the schools.

The Children's signature event is the ***Summer Reading Program***. With a different theme each year, children of all ages are encouraged to read with daily programming and storytelling events throughout June and July. A shaved ice machine was purchased in 2010 to be used with Children's programming. Throughout the year, the Children's Department offers a variety of programs for children.

COMMUNITY CONDITIONS

Located just south of Birmingham, Homewood is a mixture of bedroom community and home office location to a variety of businesses including Southern Progress, Progressive Farmer, Brookwood Hospital, Buffalo Rock/Pepsi Cola, and Barber's Dairy. The City of Homewood government resides in the center of SoHo Square, an upscale shopping area bordered by residential in the form of loft-type condominiums. The city building is state of the art and includes meeting space occupying the entire first floor which is available for use by the public.

The latest census which is the census taken in 2010 is not available yet. The 2006 census shows Homewood's population at 23,780. Population by race is 80 percent white, 15 percent black, 3 percent Asian/Pacific Islander, and 2 percent other races. Homewood's residents have a median age of 30.5 and 20.3 percent of the population is under 18 while 12.9 percent is over 60. The estimated average household income exceeds \$46,000.00 and 44 percent earn these salaries in a professional or managerial capacity.

Education level is high with 42 percent holding college degrees. Altogether, 90 percent have some higher education beyond high school. Education is a high priority for the community with high parental involvement in all phases of their children's education.

The public school system consists of three elementary schools (Edgewood, Hall-Kent, and Shades Cahaba), Homewood Middle School and Homewood High School. The elementary schools have been nationally recognized as "Blue Ribbon Schools" and both the middle school and the high school have been selected as "Outstanding Schools" by the U.S. Department of Education.

In addition to the public schools, Homewood has three private elementary schools, many private and church-sponsored daycare centers, and several technical schools. Samford University is located in the community. Other institutions of higher learning include the University of Alabama in Birmingham, Birmingham-Southern College, Jefferson State Community College, Lawson State Community College, Southeastern Bible College, Herzing College and Virginia College, all within easy driving distance. Homewood's recreational facilities have something for everyone. Both the Homewood Community Center and the Lee Community Center offer space and equipment for indoor and outdoor sports. In addition, there are four area parks which provide outdoor play equipment and sports fields. Homewood is also the home of the Shades Valley branch of the YMCA. The Exceptional Foundation located next to Homewood's Central Park offers programs for Homewood's special needs citizens.

West Homewood is home to the very popular Senior Center. There senior citizens are offered a variety of programs, computer classes, exercise classes, one dollar lunches and opportunities for inexpensive group travel. Located adjacent to Patriot Park, city wide events are held at the Senior Center including the “We Love Homewood Day” festivities.

The city government of Homewood consists of a mayor and city council. The city is divided into five wards with two council members elected from each ward. The council president is elected from the city at large. One of the council members serves as liaison to the Library.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Homewood Public Library is to bring people, information and ideas together to enrich lives, build community and inspire lifelong learning.

SERVICE RESPONSES

The following service responses were selected by the Long Range Planning Committee for the Homewood Public Library:

CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD

Patrons will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

ENCOURAGE LITERACY

The Library will offer age-appropriate programs, materials and services designed to promote success.

MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

The Library will offer the resources patrons need to identify and analyze risks, benefits and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.

ENRICH LIVES

The Library will provide materials and services to help fulfill the desire of patrons for satisfying recreational experiences.

VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE

The Library will provide a well-maintained, inviting facility that will serve as a community hub.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FOR SERVICE RESPONSES

CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD

Patrons will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

GOAL I

The Homewood Public Library will strive to keep current with changing technology trends in software, hardware and e-materials.

Objective 1.1

Staff will update/revise/review the Technology Plan on an annual basis to ensure that the products and services offered online are up to date.

Specific Task 1.1.1

Staff will annually review the budget to include hardware and software updates, upgrades and maintenance.

Specific Task 1.1.2

Staff will keep abreast of new technologies and products by attending meetings/classes and reading extensively in these areas.

Specific Task 1.1.3

Staff will conduct an annual audit of all equipment to determine future replacement needs.

Specific Task 1.1.4

Staff will determine other areas/spaces in the building where service can be expanded.

Specific Task 1.1.5

The Library will provide funding and opportunities for staff training.

GOAL II

The Library will strive to be on the cutting edge as new services, products and technologies become available.

Objective 2.1

The Library will request capital funds earmarked for new technologies or products.

Specific Task 2.1.1

The staff will determine the need for each new technology or product.

Specific Task 2.1.2

When appropriate, the Library will seek grants to fund new services or products.

GOAL III

The Library will increase the awareness and train the public in the use of available online resources and products.

Objective 3.1

The Library will develop marketing strategies that will promote new and existing products and services.

Specific Task 3.1.1

The Library will investigate new opportunities for training the public in library services.

Specific Task 3.1.2

The Library will use signage with clear, brief descriptions or directions.

Specific Task 3.1.3

The Library will create flyers and print materials that can be handed to the patron.

Specific Task 3.1.4

The Library will develop interactive screens with simple instructions and directions for using Library services.

Specific Task 3.1.5

The Library will explore new opportunities for library services to the senior citizens of Homewood.

Specific Task 3.1.6

The Library will provide short and simple training modules for use by patrons.

Specific Task 3.1.7

The Library will offer computer training classes at a variety of times, particularly classes at night, and evaluate their success based on attendance and interest in specific classes.

ENCOURAGE LITERACY

The Library will offer age-appropriate programs, materials and services designed to promote success.

GOAL IV

The Library will develop programs for specific age levels that will encourage literacy and the love of reading.

Objective 4.1

The Library will create additional children's (birth through 5th grade) programming and offer it at varied times in order to reach new audiences.

Specific Task 4.1.1

The Library will investigate the possibility of offering instruction in Spanish as a second language.

Specific Task 4.1.2

The Library will offer and evaluate programming at a variety of times.

Specific Task 4.1.3

The Library will continue to fund materials, services and programming that promote literacy.

Specific Task 4.1.4

The staff will work with parents to develop a *Friends of the Library* committee that focuses on raising additional money for children's programming.

Objective 4.2

The Library will introduce K-5th grade students to library services and promote literacy.

Specific Task 4.2.1

The Library will continue to budget for non-book materials and educational software.

Specific Task 4.2.2

Staff will offer online database training for students and classes.

Specific Task 4.2.3

The Library will offer and evaluate programming at a variety of times.

Specific Task 4.2.4

The Library will offer age appropriate programming that promotes reading and literacy.

Specific Task 4.2.5

The Library will maintain or increase funding for materials and programming.

Objective 4.3

The Library will introduce 6th-12th grade students to library services and promote literacy.

Specific Task 4.3.1

The Library will continue to budget for non-book and digital materials.

Specific Task 4.3.2

Staff will offer online database training for students and classes.

Specific Task 4.3.3

The Library will offer and evaluate programming at a variety of times.

Specific Task 4.3.4

The Library will offer age appropriate programming that promotes reading and literacy.

Specific Task 4.3.5

The Library will maintain or increase funding for materials and programming.

Objective 4.4

The Library will provide materials and programming to encourage adult reading.

Specific Task 4.4.1

The Library will continue to budget for popular materials, multiple copies, and non-book materials.

Specific Task 4.4.2

The Library will continue to organize and host meetings for an adult book group.

Specific Task 4.4.3

The Library will partner with the Homewood Senior Center to support a book club for seniors.

Specific Task 4.4.4

The Library will offer and evaluate programming at a variety of times.

Specific Task 4.4.5

The Library will seek other community partnerships for adult programming.

Specific Task 4.4.6

The Library will maintain or increase funding for materials and programming.

Objective 4.5

The Library will seek new ways to promote materials, services and programming.

Specific Task 4.5.1

The Library will emphasize use of the website and social media to promote library materials, services and programming.

Specific Task 4.5.2

The Library will try a variety of methods to keep the public informed including using email blasts, online newsletters, signage, and hands-on demonstrations.

Specific Task 4.5.3

The Library will use available tools to determine if it is meeting the needs of its patrons.

Specific Task 4.5.4

The Library will hire and train a part-time employee whose specific focus is to provide on-site outreach services to local facilities by 2016.

Objective 4.6

The Library will work cooperatively with local public and private schools to increase the awareness of Library programs and services.

Specific Task 4.6.1

Staff will promote programs and services to the public and private schools by offering class tours, speaking to classes and sending flyers for students to take home.

Specific Task 4.6.2

Staff will investigate partnering with the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) at each school and using the PTO's email list to promote the Library's programs and services.

Specific Task 4.6.3

Staff will work to develop a contact in each PTO who will provide programming information to the parents and children in the schools.

Specific Task 4.6.4

Staff will utilize evaluations, surveys, and other appropriate techniques to measure the effectiveness of promotion efforts.

MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS

The Library will offer the resources patrons need to identify and analyze risks, benefits and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.

GOAL V

Patrons will have access to a variety of information and/or answers to meet their individual needs.

Objective 5.1

Library staff will continue to provide helpful and timely service to all patrons.

Specific Task 5.1.1

The Library will provide highest level of public service possible by hiring staff members who are diverse and well qualified to assist patrons.

Specific Task 5.1.2

Full-time staff members will continue to attend a minimum of two workshops annually.

Specific Task 5.1.3

Library staff will stay abreast of current topics on all levels by regularly reviewing professional literature, newspapers and the Internet.

Specific Task 5.1.4

At least one Library staff member from each department will regularly attend the JCLC round table meetings.

Specific Task 5.1.5

Staff will attend training sessions on current or new databases and on developing programs of interest to Library patrons.

Specific Task 5.1.6

The Library will maintain or increase funding for staff training.

Objective 5.2

The Library will maintain an up-to-date non-fiction collection using the established collection development guidelines.

Specific Task 5.2.1

The Library will evaluate new databases as they become available.

Specific Task 5.2.2

The Library will regularly use Millennium tools to evaluate the use of its collection and make changes as needed.

Specific Task 5.2.3

The Library will maintain or increase funding for the non-fiction collection.

Objective 5.3

The Library will increase public awareness of the non-fiction collection.

Specific Task 5.3.1

The Library will use online tools and resources to survey the public as to programming and material preferences.

Specific Task 5.3.2

The Library will identify areas for displays of materials.

Specific Task 5.3.3

The Library will offer annotated bibliographies on available resources including online and in-house materials.

Specific Task 5.3.4

The Library will provide and distribute surveys and evaluations to evaluate the effectiveness of the public awareness campaign.

ENRICH LIVES

The Library will provide materials and services to help fulfill the desire of patrons for satisfying recreational experiences.

GOAL VI

The Library will provide materials and services to enrich the lives of Library patrons.

Objective 6.1

The Library will provide age appropriate materials in a variety of formats to meet patrons' recreational, cultural and popular reading interests.

Specific Task 6.1.1

The Library will maintain or increase funding levels to support these efforts.

Specific Task 6.1.2

The Library will regularly use Millennium tools to evaluate the use of its collection and make changes as needed.

Objective 6.2

The Library will offer a venue for cultural, artistic, educational, and entertaining programs.

Specific Task 6.2.1

The Library will partner with local organizations to bring in notable authors, speakers, educators, and performers.

Specific Task 6.2.2

The Library will offer adult patrons at least three dramatic presentations annually.

Specific Task 6.2.3

The Library will offer families at least three professional performances annually.

Specific Task 6.2.4

The Library will offer teenagers (grades 6-12) at least three professionally-led programs annually.

Specific Task 6.2.5

The Library will maintain or increase funding for programming.

Specific Task 6.2.6

The Library will seek additional funding and grants to increase the number of programs for all ages.

Objective 6.3

The Library will present revolving local and regional art and exhibits in the Ellenburg Art Gallery.

Specific Task 6.3.1

The Library will send out press releases and utilize web calendars and social media tools to promote art exhibits.

Specific Task 6.3.2

The Library will utilize staff members from all departments of the library to ensure that exhibits are rotated.

Specific Task 6.3.3

The staff will continue to work with local schools and teachers to display and promote children's artwork.

VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE

The Library will provide a well-maintained, inviting facility that will serve as a community hub.

GOAL VII

Patrons will have safe and welcoming spaces to meet and interact with others and areas in which to sit quietly and read.

Objective 7.1

The Library will reallocate space to meet the current needs of patrons.

Specific Task 7.1.1

Staff will evaluate the use of space in the Library for changing formats, study rooms, quiet space and to meet changing public needs.

Specific Task 7.1.2

Investigate possible locations and funding for additional displays and display units.

Specific Task 7.1.3

Improve lighting in the Library.

Objective 7.2

Continue to offer meeting space for use by the public.

Specific Task 7.2.1

Continue offering space at a nominal charge to patrons in accordance with established policies.

Specific Task 7.2.2

Using the Library's meeting space, the Library will partner other agencies and/or city departments to offer programming for the public.

Specific Task 7.2.3

Continue to offer space at no charge to other departments within the City of Homewood in accordance with established policies.

Specific Task 7.2.4

Continue to offer space for Library training and mini-conferences at the county and state level in accordance with established policies.

Specific Task 7.2.5

Continue to schedule meeting space for Library-sponsored events.

Objective 7.3

Maintain the facility for use by the public.

Specific Task 7.3.1

Provide a clean, healthy environment.

Specific Task 7.3.2

Inspect the facility for maintenance issues to insure safety.

Specific Task 7.3.3

Budget for painting and/or carpeting of the facility as necessary.

Specific Task 7.3.4

Purchase new meeting room chairs to replace existing seating.

Specific Task 7.3.5

The Library will annually revise and adjust the policies to meet the ever-changing social and environmental challenges.

Goal VIII

The Library will be an example for the community and other libraries as good stewards of energy resources.

Objective 8.1

The Library will strive to have an energy efficient building to reduce operational costs.

Specific Task 8.1.1

Whenever possible the Library will make use of energy efficient products and implement energy saving devices such as occupancy sensors.

Specific Task 8.1.2

The Library will explore grant opportunities that will enable us to implement more energy-saving equipment and measures.

MONITORING ACTIVITIES

The director and department heads will be responsible for identifying and selecting activities to accomplish each objective. Department heads will oversee the implementation process by assigning tasks and monitoring accomplishments. The status of tasks and/or degree to which objectives are accomplished will be reported to the director and the board in the following ways:

- Informal discussion with the director at weekly department head meetings as necessary.
- Director presents informal reports periodically at board meetings.
- Annual written report submitted to the board for review.

ASSESSING ACHIEVEMENT

Annually the long range plan will be reviewed and updated eliminating specific goals that have been accomplished or determined to be unattainable or otherwise are no longer relevant. The Director and Department Heads will meet annually to evaluate the library's long range plan. Recommendations will be made for the revision of the plan and will be given to the Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee. The chair will then incorporate the changes into the plan and provide a copy to the director and department heads. The group will schedule a time to review the revised plan, and, upon approval, copies will be made for the chair to present to the members of the Board of Trustees for their discussion and approval at their next scheduled board meeting.