



# STRATEGIC PLAN / 2018-2022



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# Message from the Director

On behalf of the talented and dedicated women and men of the Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS), I am pleased to present our new Five-Year Strategic Plan. Over the past year, we have engaged in an inclusive and thorough process of input and feedback from residents of all ages and backgrounds throughout Miami-Dade County, library staff at all levels, non-profit and institutional partners from a wide range of subject areas and interests, and stakeholders that included various elected and community leaders. In taking on this process, our primary goals were to evaluate where we are now as an organization, chart our direction for the next five years, and most importantly, establish the roadmap for how to get there. I believe this Strategic Plan accomplishes these goals and will result in a stronger and more vital public library for our residents as we implement this plan.

While narratives regarding the need for and relevance of public libraries persist throughout the country, libraries, including our own Miami-Dade Public Library System, continue to thrive. Without a doubt, the way in which people use the library is changing. Checkout of physical library materials (books, audiobooks, movies, etc.) has slowly decreased over the past several years, and use of digital content (in the form of e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, downloadable music and movies, etc.) has been on the rise. More importantly, the demand for use of the library as a destination for community events and activities, services, and programs continue to play a more prominent role in shaping our strategic priorities. Examples of these services and programs include: citizenship workshops, tutoring and homework assistance, internet access, digital literacy training, use of new technology, coding and STEM classes, job and career counseling, health and wellness activities, financial literacy, author and artist events, and learning, language and training opportunities. Notwithstanding the above, books, reading, and literacy, in all their forms and formats, remain front and center in our mission of playing an impactful role in Miami-Dade County in promoting and celebrating literacy from early childhood through adulthood.

There are many people to thank. Most importantly, I would like to thank the many residents of our community who provided us with valuable feedback in our surveys, community forums, and continue to let us know on a daily basis how and what we can do better. I would also like to thank the entire MDPLS team for their openness to this process and willingness to speak frankly about their views of our organization. Additionally, we extend our gratitude to the Knight Foundation who partnered with us to bring together a strategic planning forum with some of the outstanding non-profit and academic institutions in Miami-Dade County which provided us with important insights into their views of our library. Last, but not least, thank you to our Mayor, Carlos A. Gimenez, our Board of County Commissioners, the Library Advisory Board, and the Friends of the Miami-Dade Public Library for your support during this process and the ongoing leadership that you provide. We are excited about moving forward together and implementing this plan to make our library system one of the most effective, inspiring and innovative in the nation.



Ray Baker, Director  
Miami-Dade Public Library System

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# Introduction

The Miami-Dade Public Library System (MDPLS) serves one of the most dynamic and diverse geographic areas in the United States. With a service area that includes over 2.5 million residents, MDPLS delivers public library services via 50 library locations throughout the majority of Miami-Dade County's municipalities and unincorporated areas. Additionally, two bookmobiles, the Technobus digital training lab, and MDPLS's 24/7 online library serve to provide library services directly to the customer at public parks and recreation facilities, community events, childcare facilities, retirement homes and senior centers, and brings library services to those who prefer to access the library from their homes, offices, or other locations using their own devices.

In FY 2016-17, approximately 5 million customers visited an MDPLS library location and 4 million visited the MDPLS website and online catalog.

Customers enjoy a large and diverse collection of print and digital content, a high-speed computer network that provides free Wi-Fi, public computers and tablets, and a variety of software and hardware that ensure technology is available to the public for learning, personal growth, and recreational use.

Even as MDPLS enjoys a high user and satisfaction rate, it continues to build on its strengths. Over the last three years, MDPLS has been increasing staffing levels, days of service and operating hours, improving the print and digital collection, improving facilities and spaces through infrastructure improvements and renovations, and improving technology infrastructure and hardware for the benefit of the public.

While these improvements are all resulting in positive outcomes, MDPLS recognizes the importance of anticipating and responding to environmental and social change, demographic shifts, evolving user needs and technological advancements to remain resilient, relevant, vital, and sustainable moving forward. To that end, MDPLS has developed this Strategic Plan.

Over the course of one year, extensive consultation with library staff and senior management, advisory and governing board members, stakeholders, non-profit partners and local institutions, and the community-at-large was conducted. This consultation, together with analysis of comparable libraries, library trends, and a technological assessment, yielded a set of Key Challenges facing MDPLS.

These Key Challenges served as the basis for development of the Strategic Goals and Action Items included in this document that the MDPLS team will strive to implement during the next five years.



# Strategic Planning Process

The strategic planning process was comprised of three phases. The first phase involved research, assessment and extensive consultation with MDPLS management and staff, key stakeholders and Miami-Dade residents. Information was gleaned through surveys, one-on-one interviews, meetings and workshops.

Research included benchmarking with other similarly sized urban public libraries as well as other library systems across the State and an overview of public library trends with respect to service delivery, customer experience, programming and many other factors. Additionally, a library Edge Assessment was conducted which evaluated MDPLS's current technology capabilities, resources and services.

This extensive research together with the findings from the consultations resulted in the identification of key challenges – challenges that currently face the MDPLS.

During the second phase, the key challenges identified in the first phase were presented to MDPLS senior management, resulting in the development of a series of five strategic goals – goals intended to address the key challenges. These strategic goals form the basis of the Strategic Plan and a framework to guide the Library over the next years. Renewed mission and vision statements were developed as part of this phase as well.

During the final phase, the MDPLS team developed a set of key objectives and tasks that will serve as the basis for a continuously evolving Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan will ensure that the Strategic Goals and Action Items are addressed, realistic timelines are established, resources are identified and provided, and ownership of items is assigned to the individuals and/or groups required to carry out the Strategic Plan.





**The Strategic Planning process is illustrated below.**



# Key Challenges Facing MDPLS

## Challenge 1

Meeting and exceeding the expectations of the Library customer in facilities, services, collections, and technology.

## Challenge 2

Increasing awareness of Library services and programs to ensure that the public continues to appreciate the importance and benefits of the Library to our community and is well informed about the Library's offerings.

## Challenge 3

Building sustainable and impactful partnerships with public and private sector organizations and institutions.

## Challenge 4

Building stronger community engagement strategies with supporters, donors, and volunteers to advance the mission of the Library.

## Challenge 5

Developing structured and relevant staff training and leadership development opportunities throughout the organization.



# Strategic Goals

These 5 Strategic Goals were developed with senior Library management to address the key challenges.

1

Provide extraordinary services and customer experiences with great spaces, collections that exceed expectations, technology that is convenient and intuitive and programs and events that are easily accessible and desired by the public.

2

Increase communications, marketing and awareness efforts with respect to the Library's services and programs and significance of the Library in our community.

3

Explore and develop new and greater partnership opportunities with educational, cultural and social services organizations as well as private sector individuals, corporations and foundations to support, enhance and expand the library's programs, services, and spaces, bridge gaps in services, and maximize the potential for reaching new audiences.

4

Increase advocacy efforts through direct interaction with Library users, community groups, advocacy partners, donors and elected and appointed officials to ensure the ongoing success and vitality of the Library in our community.

5

Become the national model for libraries by creating and conducting ongoing staff and leadership development programs that strengthen the organization at all levels to better serve the public and prepare our workforce for future growth.





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## Institutional Statements

As a result of the strategic planning process, renewed mission, vision, and values were developed.

### MISSION

*To provide extraordinary services, spaces and experiences that promote literacy and learning, personal growth and limitless opportunities.*

### VISION

Enrich and inspire our community through knowledge, creativity and innovation.

### VALUES

- Respect, Honesty, and Fairness
- Equity
- Diversity
- Collaboration
- Knowledge
- Access





# ACTION ITEMS

To begin to address the five strategic goals, the MDPLS team developed a series of Action Items for each Strategic Goal. These Action Items draw from the significant amount of feedback and input received throughout the strategic planning process and serve as actionable steps which the MDPLS team will further formulate into specific tasks and objectives that will constitute the Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan will include timelines, resources required, performance measures, and will task owners responsible for ensuring progress, and ultimate completion of each task.





# Goal 1

**Provide extraordinary services and customer experiences with great spaces, collections that exceed expectations, technology that is convenient and intuitive and programs and events that are easily accessible and desired by the public.**

## Action Plan/Tasks

1	Provide the services, programs, and amenities that are most frequently identified as desired by our customers in the <i>Miami-Dade Public Library System December 2017 External Assessment: Key Findings</i> and other appropriate sources.	4	Develop methodologies and processes that effectively communicate the programs and services of each branch to its customers.
2	Offer prototype testing of new products, services, and technology to evaluate customer interest and feasibility for application in a library setting.	5	Undertake a Facilities and Spaces Master Plan that includes an assessment of demographic issues and trends, current and projected library usage, as well as short and long-term infrastructure, renovation, and future service point needs and priorities.
3	Review all aspects of collection management and maintenance to assure that the Library is meeting the needs of the entire community, including ease of access and availability and timeliness of print and digital content for the public.	6	Conduct a review of Library service hours and days of service at all locations to determine if access is being provided when most needed and convenient for the public.
		7	Deliver new technology as an essential component of Library service.





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## Goal 2

**Increase communications, marketing and awareness efforts with respect to the library's services and programs and significance of the library in our community.**

### Action Plan/Tasks

1	Develop an updated marketing and communications plan that explores new communication, marketing, and messaging strategies to better promote Library programs and services to our customers.
2	Create targeted awareness campaigns to introduce the Library to non-library users and populations that may lack familiarity with the Library due to language, technology, special needs, or other limitations.
3	Develop innovative customer feedback methods to solicit input on programs and services.



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## Goal 3

**Explore and develop new and greater partnership opportunities with educational, cultural and social services organizations as well as private sector individuals, corporations and foundations to support, enhance and expand the library's programs, services, and spaces, bridge gaps in services, and maximize the potential for reaching new audiences.**

### Action Plan/Tasks

1	Establish partnership criteria and a partnership plan utilizing the <i>Miami-Dade Public Library System December 2017 External Assessment: Key Findings</i> and other appropriate sources for identifying educational, social service, cultural, and technology partners for collaboration opportunities.
2	Develop a fundraising strategy that includes hiring a Development Officer and establishing a Foundation that focuses on private fundraising and maximizing grant opportunities.
3	Assess existing partners and partnerships to determine if there is a need to re-establish desired shared outcomes and goals.





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## Goal 4

**Increase advocacy efforts through direct interaction with library users, community groups, advocacy partners, donors and elected and appointed officials to ensure the ongoing success and vitality of the library in our community.**

### Action Plan/Tasks

1	Develop an advocacy strategy that clearly defines areas in most need of advocacy or support, as well as current areas of strength upon which to build an advocacy network.
2	Identify known internal and external advocates and leaders, including the Friends of the Library and Library Advisory Board, who will help promote and facilitate opportunities for deepening public understanding of how the Library enriches the community.
3	Develop an advocacy toolkit, including advocacy training for staff and external advocates.





## Goal 5

**Become the national model for libraries by creating and conducting ongoing staff and leadership development programs that strengthen the organization at all levels to better serve the public and prepare our workforce for future growth.**

### Action Plan/Tasks

1	Identify professional development opportunities that provide meaningful training for staff to develop their skills and to advance their career in the Library system.
2	Establish an orientation program for all existing and new staff that serves to communicate the strategic direction and organizational values of the Miami-Dade Public Library System and Miami-Dade County.
3	Perform an updated staffing study to evaluate staffing levels and utilization, and to ensure job requirements and skill sets are aligned with the needs of Library users.
4	Utilize the findings of the EDGE Assessment to provide technology training opportunities.

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# Implementation Plan

Concurrent with the development of this Strategic Plan, the Library will be finalizing the Implementation Plan that will serve as both the blueprint for the specific tasks, action items, and objectives that will be carried out. The Implementation Plan will also serve as a means of monitoring and measuring our success in progressing towards, and reaching, the established Goals over the next five years. Once again, we are excited about moving forward together and implementing this plan to make our library system one of the most effective, inspiring and innovative in the nation.









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