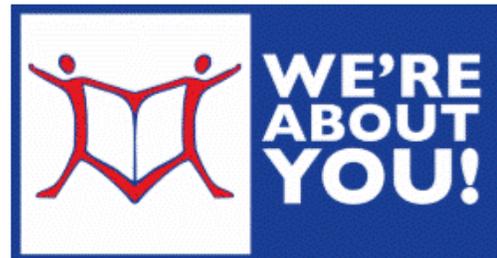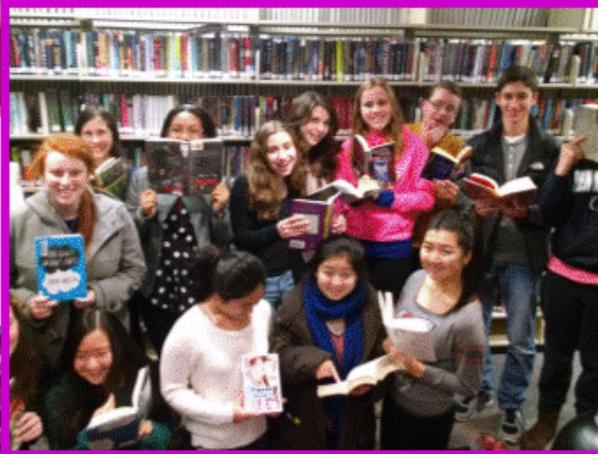# UDPL Reimagined

2015-2017

A Strategic Plan for the

- Upper Dublin Public Library -

Developed by the Upper Dublin Public Library

Library Board and Staff

February 2015

WE'RE ABOUT YOU!

Cover art adapted from a design by Kevin Wang

A Message from the President of the Upper Dublin Public Library Board of Directors

Dear Upper Dublin Community:

I am very pleased to share with you the strategic plan that will guide our library for the next few years, *UDPL Reimagined 2015 – 2017*.

The strategic planning process began for the UDPL with a five year plan *Future Focus 2004* and continued with a comprehensive facilities study completed in 2009 and *Future Focus Extended 2010-2013: An Interim Plan for the Upper Dublin Public Library. UDPL—ReNEWed!* was the name given to the library's renovations project, which launched in 2012 and was completed in 2013 with the support of the Upper Dublin Board of Commissioners, the Friends of Upper Dublin Public Library and the community at large. Through the renovations, the library was reconfigured to better meet the community needs identified through the planning process.

With *UDPL Reimagined*, the library will take another big step forward in addressing these community needs in the renovated space. Building on the success of programs such as Family Place and author events, UDPL will become the "community university."   The plan reflects the library's commitment to the delivery of resources, assistance and programming to all segments of the community.

In addition, the plan is an ambitious response to the challenges of current and future developments in library technology. The plan identifies the role UDPL will play in supporting digital and e-book resources as their importance to the community increases. *UDPL Reimagined* emphasizes the acquisition and marketing of these resources as well as a commitment to finding and acquiring useful software and technology. UDPL will make these resources available and educate the community in their use.

As technology advances, the role of the UDPL will continue to change and evolve to best meet the changing needs of our community. I hope all of you will continue to support the UDPL and help us to meet the goals and objectives set forth in *UDPL Reimagined 2015 – 2017*.

Barbara Wasserman

President, Board of Trustees

Upper Dublin Public Library

Executive Summary

Planning History

In 2003, the Upper Dublin Public Library began a long range planning process to develop near and long term strategies for delivering and improving library services to residents. The Library Board established a Planning Committee made up of Board members, one staff person and one community member to work with consultants in developing the plan. The consultants gathered community data through focus groups, a town meeting and a paper survey. From an analysis of the survey data, Upper Dublin demographics, and library usage statistics, *Future Focus 2004-2009* was developed. Over the next five years, the UDPL made significant progress in library services by achieving many of the strategies defined.

While many of *Future Focus*'s strategies for improving the existing main facility were accomplished during the early years of the plan, by 2006, it became clear that space issues had to be more carefully explored, not only to prepare for future library services, but to satisfy the remainder of the goals identified.

Himmel & Wilson Consultants, of Milton, Wisconsin, were hired in 2008 to develop a study, and were charged with recommending up to a 30-year solution for the UDPL, offering a full range of alternatives, from modifying and/or expanding the current facilities to building a new facility.

After extensive surveying, including web, interview, and focus group surveys, the consultants in conjunction with Casaccio Architects and the Library Facilities Planning Committee determined that the facility was grossly undersized to serve the population of the Upper Dublin community and demand of its residents. Space needs that would serve the community well for the next 30 years were calculated at approximately 40,000 gross square feet (GSF).

Himmel & Wilson Consultants presented their findings and recommendations in *Inventing the Future of the Upper Dublin Public Library*, which was presented at the Commissioners' Stated Meeting in April 2009. They offered three schemes for onsite expansion and an option for building a new facility. Reprogramming the UDPL's current space was not recommended. When no decisions about the library facility had been determined by the end of 2009, *Future Focus Extended 2010-2013: An Interim Plan for the Upper Dublin Public Library* was developed by the UDPL Board and staff "to ensure the library's continued progress in providing valued library services to the community."

The Interim Plan was intended to focus on other priorities besides capital improvements while the facility study was considered. It was not long, however, before it became clear that several factors had come together, making an expanded or new facility unforeseeable in the near future, including the struggling economy and other new building priorities, including the Upper Dublin High School and Fort Washington Firehouse. Nevertheless, the UDPL's usage and services continued to grow. Faced with the combination of all of these factors, the Library Board and staff developed a plan for minor renovations to the current facility with the following goals in mind:

- To stretch the life of the current facility by 5-10 years

- To meet new (and old) user demands
- To respond to the current trends in library services, and, as much as space allows, design for the future
- To maximize the use of the UDPL's current space
- To keep costs to a minimum

With the support of the Upper Dublin Township Commissioners and the Friends of Upper Dublin Public Library's successful capital campaign, the UDPL staff and Board launched UDPL—ReNEWed! in 2012, a renovations project that would last a year and half. What began as an idea for carving out a larger teen area became a full-blown redesign proposal with something for everyone. Among the changes made were: (1) a larger teen room to help accommodate the high volume of high school students who visit the UDPL on weekday afternoons; (2) a preschool play area to help build and strengthen reading skills so Upper Dublin children can be ready to read before kindergarten; (3) a quiet reading lounge dedicated to silent reading or study; (4) and a mini daytime computer lab for use by individuals or classes in the teen room during the school day. The renovations also included a reconfigured "browsing" area for new books and audio-visual collections, a conference room, and a new single point-of-service desk facing the library entrance.

While these renovations certainly created opportunities for improving services to the community (as well as providing an improved aesthetic appearance), more space is still required to fully achieve the goals of the next strategic plan *UDPL Reimagined 2015-2017*, and the topic continues to be discussed amongst library and township administrators.

The Planning Process for *UDPL REIMAGINED 2015-2017*

Although *Future Focus Extended's* timeline ended in 2013, the priority at that time for the Library Board and staff was completing the UDPL—ReNEWed! renovations. Even once the project was finished in June 2013, the decision was made to forgo immediately developing the next strategic plan while the staff and community acclimated to the UDPL's new configuration.

Planning for the development of *UDPL Reimagined 2015-2017* began officially in the fall of 2014, a little more than a year after the renovations were completed. The plan was created, once again, by the Library Board and staff, but it would be the most imaginative and ambitious UDPL plan to date. The goals, objectives and strategies all have been newly conceived. Evidence to support the goals comes from analysis of library statistics and observations about library usage, but even more so than in the past from an evaluation of library trends and "future of libraries" research.

UDPL Reimagined 2015-2017

As its name suggests, this latest strategic plan reimagines the UDPL, what it means to be a library in the digital age, for the next generation, and the role of library staff as their responsibilities shift more and more from navigating print to digital. Additionally, the plan considers the role of the UDPL as the "community's university." The UDPL delivers equal opportunity education for all; resources for self-directed education; research assistance & instruction presented by knowledgeable librarians; and instructive and enlightening experiences through a diverse curriculum of classes, workshops and events. *UDPL Reimagined 2015-2017* aims to build

upon the UDPL's past successes and to continue to make advancements that respond to the changing world around us.

Goal 1: Commit to the development and marketing of the UDPL's digital collections and eBooks by educating staff and residents as existing and emerging formats become mainstream.

Objectives:

1.1: Evaluate, expand and maintain up-to-date digital resources, such as database subscriptions, software, programs and apps, in support of the UDPL's digital literacy education curriculum.

Strategies:

- Annually evaluate the content and usefulness of existing database subscriptions and investigate and subscribe to or purchase new ones if they reflect the community's needs/interests in support of the UDPL's curriculum.

- Stay on top of the latest trends in digital information and resources. Create, maintain and promote recommended websites, programs and apps that meet the needs and/or interests of residents of all ages.

- Identify and execute methods for promoting digital resources to inform residents and boost usage.
    - Task: Maximize the use of new website features to promote and highlight digital resources.
    - Task: Continue to highlight digital resources in enews, paper newsletters, and other promotional materials or with complementary programs.

- Develop and execute a training program that enables staff to identify, recommend and search databases and other digital tools owned by the UDPL, the district, and the state.
    - Task: Update job descriptions to reflect new technology requirements.
    - Task: Once available, train and actively make use of the Polaris Leap responsive web client, which makes MCLINC's ILS available through a web browser "freeing staff to connect with patrons and complete tasks wherever it is most convenient - even outside the library walls."
    - Task: Consider stationing staff with Polaris Leap on tablets in the children's area before and after programs (like storytimes) to provide assistance to families.

- Seek to develop a committee of UD educators whose purpose is to investigate and recommend electronic resources that cooperatively support the Upper Dublin School District and UDPL curriculums.
    - Task: Consider how the committee can share expenses, like requesting funds from township fundraisers, which currently support both the UDPL's and UD Ed Foundation's organizations.

        o   Task: Promote student usage by sharing information about resources with librarians, students, teachers, specialists and PTOs.

1.2: Increase title offerings in the eBook format, and improve the ease with which residents can find and download eBooks to various devices.

  Strategies:

- Create a Digital Media line item in the UDPL budget, earmarking funds to be used specifically for developing digital collections.

- Annually evaluate budgeted funds needed to support and advance this growing collection.

- Ensure that adequate staff time is allotted for eBook selection and purchasing.

- Identify and/or support efforts that improve eBook searching and borrowing directly through the MCLINC catalog.

- Develop and execute a training program that enables staff to search and retrieve eBook titles across all popular platforms (Apple, Android, Kindle, etc).
  - o Task: Update job descriptions to reflect new technology requirements.

- Make marketing and promotion of eBooks a priority among staff interactions with residents and throughout all PR tools.
  - o Task: Develop something like a simple stepped process for all platforms—Get Started with eBooks (include the need to log in to see UDPL's titles!)

- Consider implementing online library card registrations to encourage the use of eBooks and other digital resources.

- Participate in and support the 2014-2019 Montgomery County District Library Center 5-Year Plan and the Montgomery County Library District Collection Development Statement for the District Shared Digital Content Collection.

- Advocate for all libraries in Montgomery County to contribute to the selection and funding of the county's shared eBook collections.

Goal 2: Continue developing the role of the UDPL as the community's university, offering equal opportunity lifelong education for all ages.

Objectives:

2.1: Thoughtfully craft a diverse curriculum of instructive and enlightening experiences that builds upon the UDPL's existing educational offerings.

Strategies:

- With the reduction of Upper Dublin Adult Evening School offerings, for the first time, seek to identify, develop and schedule multi-part classes while considering space constraints (ie. Foreign language lessons, financial/business classes, etc)

- Continue to evaluate promotional tools and develop new approaches for sharing information about the UDPL's events and ongoing programs with the community generally or to a targeted audience.
  - o Task: Market the UDPL's program lineup, cohesively, within a seasonal newsletter (Fall & Winter/Spring) that includes staff-written articles and the program catalog (ex. Middle Country Public Library). Replace the monthly printed enews with this.
  - o Task: Replace printed flyers/brochures with digital slideshows displayed on the UDPL's website and on screens in the lobby and/or elsewhere in the building.

- Build upon the success of past author events with an emphasis on creating "community conversations" surrounding stories no matter the medium in which they're presented (books, movies, music, plays…)
  - o Task: Plan future Let's Discuss It programs with community partners (WVPL, Act II Playhouse, UD Parks & Rec, other district libraries, Ambler Theater).

- Expand Family Place to incorporate new features in the program, always looking to create something new and exciting for discovery.
  - o Task: Design (and staff, if necessary) seasonal/themed after-storytime activities in the Family Place Play Area.

- Improve efforts to educate the Upper Dublin community about what a Family Place Library is and its importance in helping to build reading skills and prepare children for kindergarten.
  - o Task: Brand all children's programming for kids up to age 6 under the name of Family Place (storytimes, especially).
  - o Task: Make use of new communication tools (enews, new website, newsletters, etc) to educate residents about what the UDPL has to offer parents and their children.

- With the Friends of UDPL, seek new funding streams of support (from individuals, businesses and grants) by developing desirable sponsorship opportunities for existing and new programs.

2.2: Enhance opportunities for residents of all ages to access, learn about and experiment with the latest technology in an effort to improve the role of the UDPL as a "lab" conducive to both group learning and self-directed education.

Strategies:

- Improve the UDPL's wifi throughput to ensure that speed and connectivity are as fast and seamless as possible, and can accommodate anticipated use from residents and the UDPL.

- Fund and make available to UDPL staff a variety of devices and software programs as determined to be necessary to support staff technology training.

- Facilitate customer training and experimentation with the UDPL's digital collections by providing direct access to the latest technology (computers, tablets, etc) for onsite use.

    o Task: Evaluate the existing touchscreen all-in-one computer for catalog and digital collections promotion and training. Add additional touchscreens if successful.
    o Task: Install tablets in Kids Place and the Reading Room to provide access to UDPL's recommended resources (Zinio for online magazines in the Reading Room, Tumblebooks, Power Library and educational apps in the children's area).
    o Task: Investigate funding and feasibility for installing a tablet vending machine for onsite public usage. Will they take over some of the wired public workstations over time?

- Plan structured classes around experimentation with hardware and software or weave in the use of tablets or other digital tools to enhance programs for children through adults, from storytimes to "maker" programs.

- Embrace the "make" movement in libraries. Continue to investigate and plan "maker" programs for teens and consider expansion into programs for children and adults. Seek funding to support a Makerspace program at UDPL.

- Improve the configuration of the main bank of computers to provide more space and greater privacy.

APPENDIX

UPPER DUBLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY

Technology Replacement Plan

Each year the UDPL replaces and/or rotates equipment to best serve the needs of the Upper Dublin community. This is illustrated in the UDPL's equipment replacement schedule. Whenever possible, equipment replacement will align with the UDPL's goals and strategies, but still be flexible enough to meet evolving needs.

Trends are moving toward a shorter replacement cycle for computer hardware as prices drop and are viewed as disposable items. Computer hardware is more reliable these days, and replacing a computer every two to three years according to current trends does not represent a wise use of public money. Therefore, this replacement plan represents a more reasonable and responsible approach to technology replacement that is based on a five year cycle.

Network, printer, and copier hardware replacement cycles are generally longer. Since we purchase business class hardware, we can expect a minimum lifespan of five years for most of this type of equipment. Upper Dublin Township or the Montgomery County Library and Information Network Consortium (MCLINC) will advise when this type of equipment is provided by them. However, we will never allow equipment to go beyond its end of service date.

The UDPL maintains an up-to-date inventory of all technology related hardware. The inventory document or software will list the proposed replacement dates for each piece of hardware and the cost of the item. These numbers will provide us with the basis to prepare a technology replacement budget for any given year.

Hardware Specifications

To ensure that hardware will last for our intended usable lifespan, we will purchase the best business class hardware that we can afford within the limits of our budget.

Desktop and laptop computers will be purchased with the best processor that is available (at this time an i7 processor for Intel--based computers), at least 8GB of memory and 500GB hard drives. The operating system will be current and supportable by our staff. If monitors require replacement, 20" monitors will be the minimum size.

Wi-Fi protocols are evolving to handle more bandwidth and provide better speeds. We need to stay current with these protocols since our residents will connect to our network with devices that are able to take advantage of newer technologies.

Hardware Replacement Cycles

These goals are based on best practices. There will be times where these cycles may not be warranted or the budget may not allow.

• Replace desktop and laptop computers every 3-4 years.

• Replace onsite servers every five years

• Replace network equipment every five to seven years (firewall, switches, routers, access points) or as recommended by MCLINC or Upper Dublin Township.

• Replace printers and copiers every five years– this timeframe may be more fluid. We will monitor usage and repair records to determine the best replacement cycle, but five years is a good starting point.

• Smartphones and tablets should be replaced every 2 – 4 years. This means that the device will generally be no more than 1 generation behind the newest device

Software Upgrade Cycles

Software will be updated on a regular basis and upgraded as necessary.

Many software updates include security patches that help protect the hardware it is running on, the stored data or the network. Running updates on a monthly schedule will help protect us from malware, data breaches and hacking attempts.

Upgrading software is not always necessary, but is advisable. Software companies will generally support multiple versions of their software for a period of time, which will provide us with the ability to test the new software before deployment. Software will never continue to be used beyond its end-of--life date.

Hardware Disposal

All replaced hardware will be disposed of in a manner that is responsible and meets local, state or federal laws. We will either recycle the hardware at our local waste management facility or contract with a computer/electronics recycling company. In some cases, the manufacturer of the hardware will recycle the hardware for a nominal fee.

If we dispose of PCs, laptops or servers on our own, we will reformat the hard drives to remove any library or personal data.

Software will be uninstalled and discarded according to the licensing agreement.