

LTLS Strategic Plan Comments
6/16/2006

MISSION: Lincoln Trail Libraries System connects the people of East Central Illinois to information through cooperation.

Total Respondents 11
(skipped this question) 15

- Seems appropriate and adequate
- Simply stated and to the point the word cooperation is the key to the success of Lincoln Trails.
- I agree.
- Working together for the patrons' best interest.
- I like it.
- I like this!
- sounds good
- As much as possible, information should be made available to people on-line. This is the easiest and probably the most cost-effective means of communication. Paper should be made available for technophobes to retrieve info in the absence of on-line capabilities.
- fine
- It sounds appropriate. However isn't the system's job to connect libraries through cooperation and the libraries then provide to the individual people?
- I really like the information through cooperation

Vision: Lincoln Trail Libraries System envisions a future where collaboration between libraries and organizations results in easy access to information anytime, anywhere.

Total Respondents 10
(skipped this question) 16

- Seems appropriate
- In a perfect world access to information anywhere anytime would be possible. Our long-term goals should always work towards this vision. The term 'collaboration between libraries' is key to the success of Lincoln Trails Library System. It is the foundation for the future of libraries in the system.
- Concur
- A worthy goal to integrate between libraries.
- Really like it.
- Sounds very clear to me, and I agree with it.
- good
- fine
- That is already happening, in my opinion.
- I believe this states very succinctly a common vision.

Values: The following are the core values for Lincoln Trail Libraries System.

Democracy: We value every individual's right to explore, learn and question.

Collaboration: We value collaboration between libraries, cultural organizations, and information agencies.

Confidentiality/Privacy: We value confidentiality and privacy

for all individuals. Intellectual Freedom: We value freedom of access to information for all individuals. Diversity of Community: We value the diversity of our members and their communities.

Total Respondents 9
(skipped this question) 17

- Seems appropriate and adequate
- I agree that these are the key values, which our system should maintain. I feel that the programs and standards that Lincoln Trails promotes reflect these values. I proud of Lincoln Trails for maintaining these values.
- Concur
- All of the above are very important in today's world.
- I agree strongly with this.
- fine
- No one disagrees with these principles, they are universal in the USA.
- I like the values especially like the collaboration piece.
- The issue of Intellectual Freedom while crucial also approaches the issue of access to obscene or pornographic material. We need to have it clear in our minds and outline how we address this. Do we consider those materials intellectual information? The laws address this issue and we must be sure we are in compliance with Local, State & Federal Law as well. This is especially true in the case of computers where other patrons might be affected by the questionable choices of others.

Guiding Principles: These guiding principles and our values direct the interactions of Lincoln Trail Libraries System staff with others. Good of the whole - The collective needs of the whole remain at the forefront of all interactions.

Technology/Innovation - Technology and innovation are the foundations for collaborative information service. Partnerships - The basis for future innovation and collaboration begins with strong partnerships. Respect - Respect for individual contributions of all members creates a positive environment for collaboration. Customer Service - Exceptional customer service is vital to quality information services.

Total Respondents 10
(skipped this question) 16

- These make sense and seem appropriate
- I like that 'collective needs of the whole' is stated as the first guiding principle. Without that the system cannot survive. Of course technology is the future of our libraries. Information service must be on the cutting edge. I value Lincoln Trails so much for the respect that you show to all members. Lincoln Trails practices respect for all contributions and sets an example for its members.
- Concur
- While I know this is LTLS's strategic plan, I would like for members to understand that they also have a responsibility for the 'good of the whole'. Disagreement with LTLS or another library is not a good reason to stop cooperating.

- I agree with the Good of the whole statement, but don't forget the small libraries such as ours.
- Addressing the recent decision to test a 'local holds' policy without input, discussion, or putting a matter to a vote of the LINC Directors as a group leads me to question that the needs of the whole are at the forefront of all interactions. When we find out about this policy the day before its implementation, it does not appear that our opinion is of any value.
- fine
- Unfortunately, we have agencies who do not value the contributions of all the members. It sounds nice on paper, but how do we achieve it in reality?
- I am glad you included a customer service piece.
- Who decides what are the collective needs of the whole: an intellectual elite or the whole? All too often in a case such as this, there are those who feel they know what is best for others when that is not the case. Rarely do those type of people truly listen to the needs of the whole. Not an easy statement to make. In regards to technology, while we whole-heartedly support advances, it is essential not to lose the foundation of what libraries are about, books. There are still MANY who use technology daily but will never willingly give up printed text as a means of pleasure & research.

In order to accomplish the vision for LTLS, the following needs are identified: Education; Marketing and Communication; Partnerships; Information Discovery and Delivery; and Management and Development. Need 1 (Education) Librarians and library staff people must remain informed and up-to-date on the latest information available in the profession. An informed and knowledgeable board and user population are equally integral to the success of libraries. Need 2 (Marketing and Communication) Open channels of communication are fundamental to the success of a library system. Communication between members, advocates, the public, and the library system must foster a positive image of all types of libraries within the community. The information services being offered as well as the concept of working in collaboration need to be marketed at all levels. Need 3 (Partnerships) Partnerships are important and potentially productive avenues for Library Systems. The most productive partnerships position two or more parties to fulfill a need. Need 4 (Information Discovery and Delivery) A stable technological infrastructure must be in place in libraries to make information available anytime, anywhere; to preserve our rich heritage, and to establish the framework for continuing to develop rich collections. Information and materials must be delivered to clients by utilizing innovative and effective delivery mechanisms. Need 5 (Management and Development) In order to meet the needs and accomplish the vision LTLS needs an efficient management infrastructure that supports the programs as well as sufficient funds to achieve the vision.

Total Respondents 7
 (skipped this question) 19

- I agree with the needs.
- The committee identified the needs very well. I think that Lincoln Trails can make a self-evaluation based upon how well these needs are being met.
- Agree

- This looks good to me. It would help those of us in the smaller libraries.
- These are sound needs and well thought out.
- Okay
- It is important to understand the financial limitations of some communities, both small & large when determining requirements and timetables for meeting technological advances. Most libraries want to get there but some will be limited by the financial constraints of their communities. DO NOT let the Management system become heavy. The idea of efficiency in management is almost an oxymoron! It is all too easy to establish a cumbersome cooking staff that costs too much and spoils the broth.

"Strategic Direction 1: Lincoln Trail Libraries System will serve as an educational conduit for improving people's discovery and delivery of information. Achieving the vision set forth in this plan requires that the customers of LTLS - governing officials, librarians, library users, and residents of the area - have a variety of opportunities to learn and develop. LTLS is well suited to take a primary role in that learning and development. Goals: A. Create opportunities for high quality educational programs. B. Support opportunities for networking with other information professionals. C. Provide opportunities for one-on-one consultation. "

Total Respondents 7
(skipped this question) 19

- I would feel more confident these could be achieved if the audience was specified. I believe the audience is the member agencies/libraries and their staffs and boards. Left unsaid, it might be construed that you would offer everything to everyone, which I don't believe, is your role.
- Lincoln Trails does serve as an educational conduit. I feel that it is correctly stated because the staff at Lincoln Trails are tireless in their effort to provide information and consultation and help professionals network with one another.
- agree
- Great!
- I believe LTLS does a great job of this already. Keep up the good work!
- I hope that this particular strategic direction reaches more and more. I believe it to be essential.
- In creating opportunities, reach out. Don't always expect that libraries (especially small ones) will be able to come to you. All too often, the smaller outlying communities feel stressed in this regard. It costs us time and money to get to the System. Once in a while, it would be nice if the System came to us. Of course, this costs money too but it becomes an issue of getting everyone involved. This document shows that is important so, here is one way to reach out. Same thing with consultation. I suspect that most small library boards do not realize you will come to their meetings and help! I'm not sure how best to convey that but it would be useful. We are mostly just regular citizens who love books. We often feel lost or overwhelmed by the task.

"Strategic Direction 2: Lincoln Trail Libraries System seeks to increase awareness of information services through marketing and communication. In order to fulfill the vision of LTLS, we must vigilantly ensure that all communication is honored and respected by creating channels that encourage and foster two-way communication with our clients. We must continually market our services and champion the benefits

of working in a collaborative environment. Goals: A. Increase awareness of the information landscape by library staffs, advocates, and users. B. Create a clear message for library advocacy. C. Increase usage of information services and resources. D. Market the power of collaboration and its impact on user services. "

Total Respondents 8
(skipped this question) 18

- I agree wholeheartedly with A, B and C. I think D. is too loose. I would rather see your organization collaborate and make that goal more explicit and omit the marketing of the collaboration.
- This is an important goal because without it some member libraries would not have the information about cutting edge technology. Lincoln trails provides this information to its members and to the public as a whole. As a trustee of a small library I have learned of many new forms of technology through Lincoln Trails.
- concur
- I think this is one of the most critical pieces for libraries today, regardless of type or size. The 2005 OCLC study said people think of books when they think of libraries. We need to ensure they know how much more we have to offer.
- Great!
- A very worthwhile set of goals.
- okay
- AMEN!! Local workshops? B. Be careful not to always talk about this in terms of money. While money is obviously needed, there are so many other ways people can be advocates for libraries that will ultimately help bring in the dollars.

"Strategic Direction 3: Lincoln Trail Libraries System will form strategic partnerships to achieve our vision. Our surrounding environment informs our work. We recognize that we do not work in a vacuum nor can we realize our vision alone. Partnerships infuse our work with new ideas and leverage our work with the work of organizations and agencies that share common goals. Creating partnerships positions LTLS as a key organization in the community we serve and allows us to both impact and benefit from our involvement in the community. Goals: A. Expand LTLS participation in regional, state, national, and international partnerships. B. Expand the scope of partnerships beyond libraries to include cultural, educational, museum and other organizations and agencies. C. Educate staff and governing officials of libraries on the potential benefits of partnerships and encourage cooperative ventures."

Total Respondents 8
(skipped this question) 18

- For what purpose? B. Why? I would rather see you successfully meet the needs of your basic constituency before you branch out to other organizations and dilute your resources. c. I agree with encouraging cooperative ventures and suggest making this more specific through objectives related to the goal. I don't believe you should be charged with educating staff and officials about the benefits of partnerships: that is your role with your own board and it the individual library's roles with there own boards and staffs.

- This is an innovative and pro-active view, which I applaud.
- Concur
- Good idea!
- I think the sentence 'our surrounding environment informs our work' sounds awkward. I think it would sound better with a different verb.
- This would further enhance the library's standing in the community as well.
- A very important direction. I am anxious to see how this will be done.
- add local to the list B. businesses too?

"Strategic Direction 4: Lincoln Trail Libraries System will foster discovery and delivery of information resources. In order to achieve our vision, LTLS must seek out the most innovative methods available for ensuring the discovery and delivery of information. Goals: A. Provide easy discovery of information resources through support of an online, integrated environment. B. Maximize access to and delivery of information resources. C. Provide leadership on new technologies that connect people and information."

Total Respondents 7
(skipped this question) 19

- Personally I think this is the single most important set of goals you have.
- Without Lincoln Trails many member libraries (particularly small rural libraries) would have great difficulty discovering new resources and accessing certain forms of information. I believe Lincoln Trails plays a very important role in bringing this to its members.
- concur
- I think this is very important or libraries run the risk of being marginalized or considered 'only books'. I loved OCLC's ideas for openworldcat.org.
- This is very important, especially B.
- As long as we don't let technology dictate how we serve our patrons. It's our tool, we are not its servants.
- okay

"Strategic Direction 5: Lincoln Trail Libraries System will support a management structure to meet its vision and direction. To make our vision a reality, LTLS must have well-informed staff that are passionate about providing exemplary service to system customers while adhering to our common values and following the guiding principles. Goals: A. Employ dedicated and well-trained personnel and expand staff development initiatives. B. Continually evaluate service programs and policies. C. Seek funds from a variety of sources to support cooperative endeavors. D. Maintain a stable infrastructure. "

Total Respondents 7
(skipped this question) 19

- These make sense and seem appropriate and comprehensive.

- Well stated. Lincoln Trails has always had a well-informed staff of individuals who clearly love what they do and believe in the work that they do. Lincoln Trails has maintained these goals for a very long time and I think it is appropriate to state them here.
- concur
- I'm glad this was included. These are the backbone of the System. Without all of these, the mission isn't doable. I would like to see what alternative funding sources are available using the Foundation. Systems need an alternative and stable income stream.
- This is one of the major areas to keep LTLS running smoothly. Good goals.
- Support the staff you currently have. You have an excellent staff and they are to be commended on their efforts to assist.
- I believe staff is currently at that level and hope it continues.

Do you have any final or overall comments regarding the LTLS strategic plan?

Total Respondents 20
(skipped this question) 6

- It is clear that a great deal of work went into the creation of this document. I think it will be valuable to listen to the feedback you receive as you move from draft to final version. I would urge you to consider specifying explicitly your audience(s) to the end that the goals become more clearly designed for those organizations and less broadly based.
- Looks great!
- I think the committee did a great job of stating the plan in a clear and concise manner. I also think that the committee captured the spirit of what Lincoln Trails is really about and I am very proud of the work that the committee did on the strategic plan. Well done!!
- I feel that the plan is comprehensive, well written and maintains the values and expectations that we ourselves strive for at our facility.
- Cooperation should be paramount among the libraries in Eastern Illinois.
- Great job! Of course, I am a little biased.
- I think this is a great strategic plan. Just keep in mind that some of the smaller libraries, though, cannot afford the computer/technological equipment because of a low tax base and lack of Internet connections.
- Looks good to me
- looks good to me
- An organization is only as strong as its membership. Some time and effort should be expended on strengthening relationships with member libraries and in assisting them in long-term viability. This could be in not only encouraging but directing in finding financing to automate small libraries in the system, and in locating sources to keep member libraries financially solvent. All but a few large libraries in the region do not have the resources or the staff to spend a major portion of their time in securing their position in the community. Assisting in keeping member libraries strong validates the system as a vital link in the region, a true conduit of good for communities and not just a separate entity competing for limited resources.
- Fine with me
- no
- It sounds good, but most plans do sound good on paper. It's when they are implemented that the flaws become evident. I believe we have some issues in the system that will need to be resolved before this plan is able to be implemented and followed.
- It all sounds fine to me.
- I believe the committee did an excellent job putting this together.
- I have reviewed the LTLS. I have no comment other than to say it looks fine to me.

- LTLS is a well-developed organization that works well in achieving their vision for quality information services. This strategic plan-draft is very detailed and well stated.
- Thank you for the opportunity to make comments. Overall, it sounds great. As always, implementation is the tough part. I think my main comment has already been made, remember us little guys out here. We want to be part of the system but have greater limitations in several respects. We try hard but have much farther to climb in tough terrain!
- This all looks good to me, no comments necessary.
- I am satisfied with the strategic plan you have in place.