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Tulsa City-County Library system approves three-year strategic plan

■ It emphasizes more user-friendly technologies in all of its branches.

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Posted: Friday, April 17, 2015 12:00 am

By NOUR HABIB World Staff Writer | 0 comments

Tulsa City-County Library commissioners on Thursday approved a three-year strategic plan with a heavy emphasis on implementing new technologies at all branches.

"The strategic plan represents the objectives TCCL (Tulsa City-County Library) leadership has determined will continue to enhance library services and move forward the library in the 21st century," Commissioner La Verne Ford Wimberly, a member of the long-range planning committee, said while presenting the plan at Thursday's meeting.

Wimberly said the objectives outlined in the plan align with the library's "overarching goals."

The library's five goals are to help Tulsa County children grow up able to compete globally; to be financially sound and serve as an engine of economic growth for the region; to conduct business using innovation and best practices; to have a reputation as a best place to work; and to be a center for community, reading, lifelong learning and access to information for all.

Library CEO Gary Shaffer said the strategic plan simply outlines tactical methods to meet these goals. The strategic plan covers fiscal years 2015-16 through 2017-18.

Among the biggest tasks for the upcoming year is the re-opening of Central Library in June 2016, which Shaffer called exciting.

"We're really delivering this Central Library for the 21st-century customer," he said.

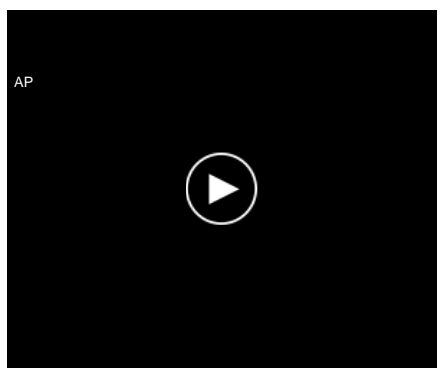
The renovated library will have a special focus on STEM-related spaces and "Makerspaces," to expose children to more science, technology, engineering and math concepts. TCCL also plans to implement centralized STEM programming for youth and measure outcomes of STEM tools provided to the library.

"Our No. 1 goal is that the children of Tulsa to grow up to be able to compete globally," Shaffer said.

A variety of apps are also part of the strategic plan, some to be tested and some to be rolled out to customers.

Shaffer said the new service model that has been implemented at some branches already — making the library more user-friendly through a variety of signs and self checkout machines,

Video



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as well as library staff that is more accessible on the floor rather than behind the desk — will spread to all branches.

And new equipment — including copiers, fax machines and payment systems — will also help make each branch a 21st-century space, Shaffer said.

Other planned expansions include the after-school homework service, which the library seeks to expand from eight to 12 branches this year, with the ultimate goal of the service being offered at 95 percent of the library's facilities within three years.

The strategic plan also lists the acquisition of land at some sites, including Bixby and Owasso.

Another item on the strategic plan that Shaffer said he is excited about is a pilot program the library hopes to launch in partnership with Tulsa Public Schools next school year, in which schools' book catalogs are linked to the library's catalog, allowing students to request books not at their sites.

"Our hope is to actually be able to deliver the books to the school," Shaffer said.

Details of the pilot — which he expects to start at about five sites — are still being worked out and depend on funding. If the pilot succeeds, the plan is to roll it out to additional TPS sites, followed by other districts in the area.

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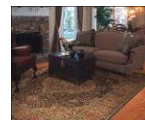
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The image shows the front page of the Tulsa World newspaper. The masthead reads "TULSA WORLD" with the tagline "SERVING THE NORTHWEST OKLAHOMA SINCE 1890". The date is Friday, May 8, 2015, and the price is \$1.00. The main headline is "Official: Part of training possibly waived". Other headlines include "20 YEARS LATER" with a photo of a man, "Teen convicted of mother's murder", and "Councilor proposes hike on city public safety tax". At the bottom, there is a large advertisement for Bill Engvall at the River Spirit Event Center on Saturday, May 9, 7 PM, with tickets priced at \$60, \$75, and \$90.

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