Burlington Public Library
2024 - 2028 Strategic Plan

210 Court St. Burlington, IA 52601

Table of Contents

Introduction

This strategic plan will serve as an action plan that will guide the Burlington Public Library director, staff, and Board of Trustees to carry out the mission and value statements of the Burlington Public Library during 2024 - 2028. Community data and feedback were used to help identify the goals and activities outlined in this plan.

A public survey paired with an interactive mural in the library lobby was conducted to hear directly from patrons regarding how they use the library, what their wish was for the library, and what success looks like for the library. A similar survey was given to identified community partners and leaders.

The library staff worked together during All Staff Day 2023 to examine library use data for FY22-FY23, discuss perceived areas of need, and opportunities for growth. The Board of Trustees spent 2023 researching community data, community needs, library trends, and theory to better prepare them for executing this next strategic plan.

This plan includes the following components:

- **Goals** - Identified areas of focus that will enhance the employee's and community members' experience with the Burlington Public Library.
- **Objectives** - Measurable steps to determine progress in achieving the plan's goals.
- **Projects/Activities** - Specific actions library staff will implement in achieving the plan's goals and objectives.

Mission

The Burlington Public Library creates opportunities for all people to connect with others, to learn about the world around them, and to imagine the futures before them.

Values

Connect / Learn / Imagine

Connect: People, Community, Democracy

Learn: Education, Edification

Imagine: Innovation, Progress, Creation, Ideation, Dream

The Burlington Public Library Board of Trustees, library staff, and volunteers are committed to supporting the following values:

Community - We value the community and as a municipal public library we ensure free access to our space, events, resources, and services so that everyday democracy, and collective enrichment, and engagement of the community as a whole can take place.

Learning - We value literacy, life-long learning, and ensuring that the library is a springboard for curiosity for learners of all ages.

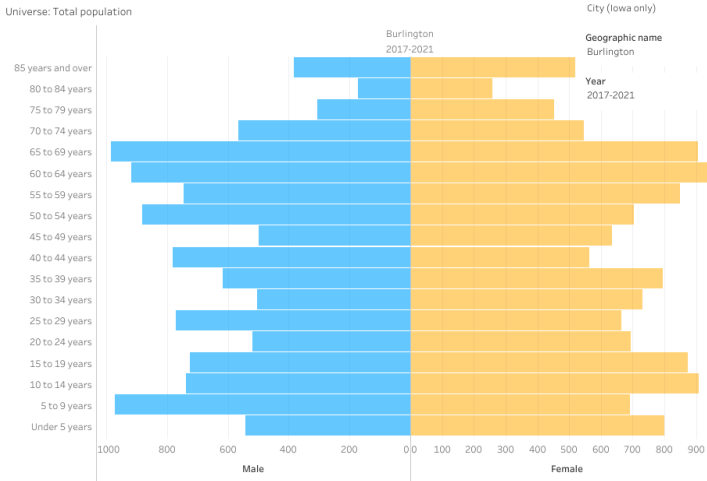**Innovation** - We value innovation as libraries must remain flexible and adaptable in order to meet the community's needs in a fast-changing world.

Service - We value high quality customer service and teamwork, ensuring kind, equitable, and appropriate service to all patrons, volunteers, and employees alike.
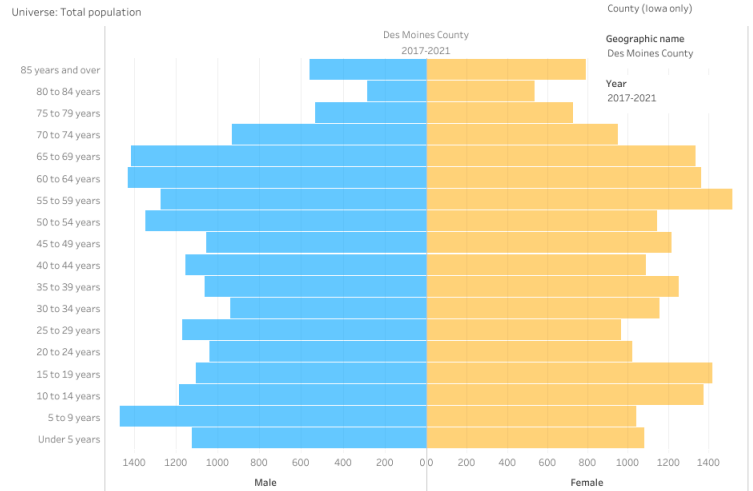
Community Data

Burlington Data

Age by Sex (5-year period estimates)

Universe: Total population

Burlington
2017-2021

Male — Female

Des Moines County Data

Age by Sex (5-year period estimates)

Universe: Total population

Des Moines County
2017-2021

Male — Female

Race (5-year period estimates)

NOTE: Data for some geographic areas and/or race groups cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small. An 'N/A' entry in the estimate column indicates that either no sample observations or too few sample observations were available to compute an estimate. For that reason it is not possible to add the components to reach the total shown.

The Census Bureau discourages direct comparisons between estimates for overlapping periods. Instead, compare nonoverlapping estimates. This means we discourage you from comparing the 2005-2009 ACS estimates to the 2007-2011 ACS estimates.

Universe: Total population

Burlington
2017-2021

Race (5-year period estimates)

NOTE: Data for some geographic areas and/or race groups cannot be displayed because the number of sample cases is too small. An 'N/A' entry in the estimate column indicates that either no sample observations or too few sample observations were available to compute an estimate. For that reason it is not possible to add the components to reach the total shown.

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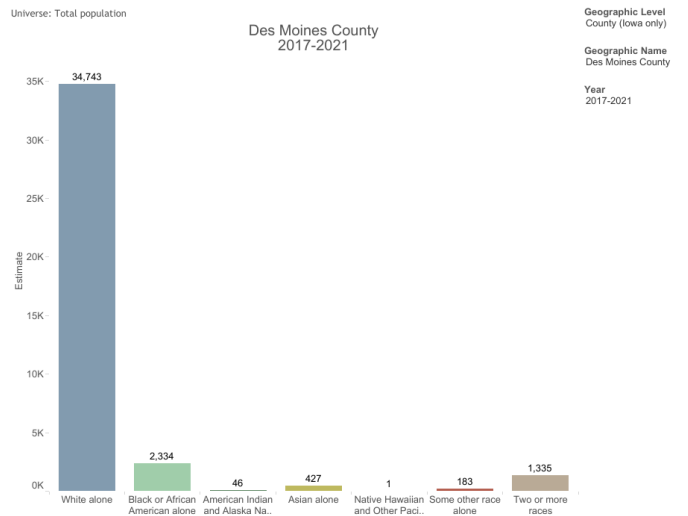
Universe: Total population

Des Moines County
2017-2021

Types of Computers and Internet Subscriptions

(5-year period estimates)

Geographic level
City (Iowa only)

Geographic name
Burlington

Year
2018-2022
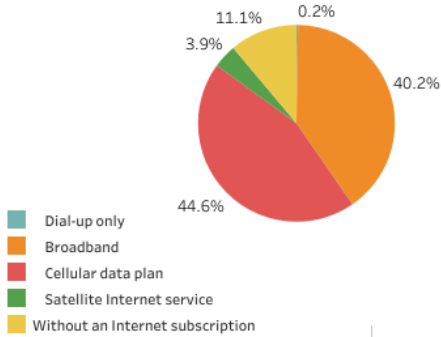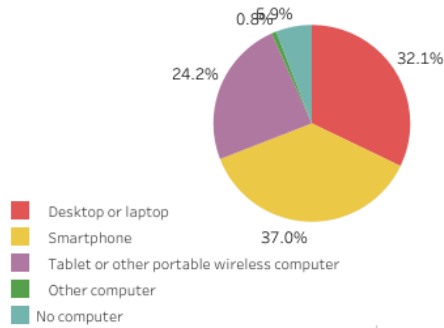
Legend (left pie):
- Desktop or laptop
- Smartphone
- Tablet or other portable wireless computer
- Other computer
- No computer

Legend (right pie):
- Dial-up only
- Broadband
- Cellular data plan
- Satellite Internet service
- Without an Internet subscription

	2018-2022	
	Estimate	Margin of Error (+/-)
Total households	11,207	291
Desktop or laptop	7,548	408
Smartphone	8,684	310
Tablet or other portable wireless computer	5,681	345
Other computer	192	104
No computer	1,381	261

	2018-2022	
	Estimate	Margin of Error (+/-)
Total households	11,207	291
With an Internet subscription	9,140	422
Dial-up only	43	38
Broadband	7,472	438
Cellular data plan	8,302	419
Satellite Internet service	723	221
Without an Internet subscription	2,067	340

Household income by type of internet subscription

Burlington

		2018-2022	
		Estimate	Margin of Error
Less than $20,000	Total	2,048	293
	Dial-up subscription only	5	9
	Broadband subscript..	1,116	209
	Without an Internet ..	927	239
$20,000 to $74,999	Total	5,371	489
	Dial-up subscription ..	38	36
	Broadband subscript..	4,320	456
	Without an Internet subscription	1,013	234
$75,000 or more	Total	3,788	301
	Dial-up subscription ..	0	19
	Broadband subscription	3,661	308
	Without an Internet ..	127	62

Types of Computers and Internet Subscriptions

(5-year period estimates)

Geographic level
County (Iowa only)
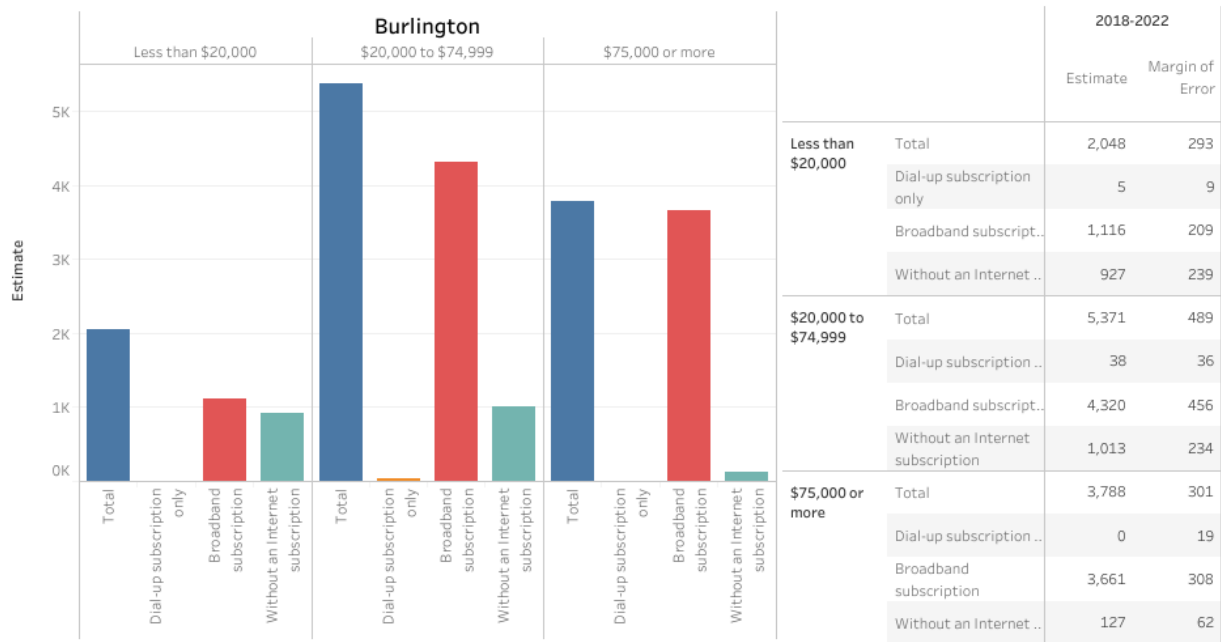
Geographic name
Des Moines County

Year
2018-2022
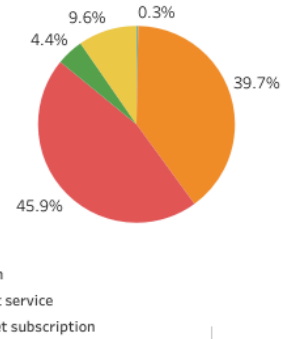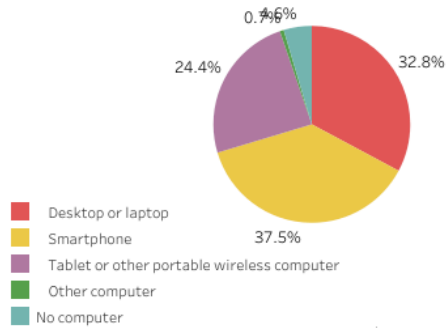
Pie chart (Types of Computers):
- Desktop or laptop: 32.8%
- Smartphone: 37.5%
- Tablet or other portable wireless computer: 24.4%
- Other computer: 0.7%
- No computer: 4.6%

Pie chart (Internet Subscriptions):
- Dial-up only
- Broadband: 39.7%
- Cellular data plan: 45.9%
- Satellite Internet service: 4.4%
- Without an Internet subscription: 9.6%
- 0.3%

	2018-2022	
	Estimate	Margin of Error (+/-)
Total households	17,251	303
Desktop or laptop	12,234	478
Smartphone	13,993	362
Tablet or other portable wireless computer	9,084	432
Other computer	250	105
No computer	1,710	276

	2018-2022	
	Estimate	Margin of Error (+/-)
Total households	17,251	303
With an Internet subscription	14,487	441
Dial-up only	79	47
Broadband	11,398	467
Cellular data plan	13,181	452
Satellite Internet service	1,271	234
Without an Internet subscription	2,764	346

Household income by type of internet subscription

Bar chart: Des Moines County — Less than $20,000, $20,000 to $74,999, $75,000 or more

		2018-2022	
		Estimate	Margin of Error
Less than $20,000	Total	2,760	364
	Dial-up subscription only	13	12
	Broadband subscript..	1,577	270
	Without an Internet ..	1,170	269
$20,000 to $74,999	Total	7,848	516
	Dial-up subscription ..	66	44
	Broadband subscript..	6,417	493
	Without an Internet subscription	1,365	233
$75,000 or more	Total	6,643	328
	Dial-up subscription ..	0	22
	Broadband subscription	6,414	328
	Without an Internet ..	229	79

The following chart displays the area population, those in poverty (100% of the federal poverty level, FPL), and those served by our agency. Agency programs and services focus on persons who have low incomes.

Report Area	Total Population, 2020 Census	All Ages # of Persons in Poverty	All Ages Poverty Rate	Population Served by the Agency in FY 2021	% of Population served by the Agency
Report Location	103,784	11,579	11.69%	13,363	12.87%
Des Moines County, IA	40,325	4,953	13%	5,995	14.87%
Henry County, IA	20,145	1,948	10.8%	1,947	9.7%
Lee County, IA	35,862	3,689	11.5%	4,570	12.74%
Louisa County, IA	11,387	989	9.1%	1,008	8.85%
Iowa	3,046,357	313,752	10.2%	13,363	0.44%
United States	312,471,161	38,371,394	11.9%	-	-

US Census Bureau, Decennial Census. 2020 & NIFCAP FY2021 Data

Library Services

The Burlington Public Library meets the needs of the community in four key areas:

1. **Library Facility** - Our building located at 210 Court St. in downtown Burlington is a safe place for the community to gather where access to restrooms, meeting rooms, informal gathering spaces, computer and WiFi access, a kids' play area, and genealogy room are available to all. Our space is maintained by library staff, volunteers, and the City of Burlington Public Works Department.
2. **Library Resources** - Our physical collection including books, magazines, newspapers, DVDs, CDs, Blu Rays, historical records, video games, sensory kits, memory kits, and more create a rich and diverse catalog of resources for community members to use. Digital resources range in scope from ebooks, to audiobooks, streaming services, archive access, self-publishing tools, and genealogy resources.
3. **Library Programs** - Opportunities to connect, learn, and imagine with fellow community members are hosted for people of all ages both on and off-site. Our outreach events bring the library staff and resources out into the community to meet people where they're at, while our in-house events are curated with our community in mind. Programs are always free at the Burlington Public Library,

thanks to funding provided by our Friends of the Library and the Burlington Public Library Friends Foundation.

4. **Library Services** - Library staff and volunteers provide assistance navigating our physical space and collection, computers and technology, answer reference questions, host programs and maintain a safe and welcoming environment.

Planning Process

Research for strategic planning at the Burlington Public Library incorporated monthly community demographic and data reports for the Board of Trustees and staff to review throughout FY23 and the first half of FY24. By continuously reviewing data about our community and trends that are prevalent we are better equipped to serve and respond to the Greater Burlington area.

The BPL Leadership Team, Lois Blythe (Collections & IT Manager), Sam Watson (Patron Services Manager), Becky Nelson (Programs & Outreach Manager), and Brittany Jacobs (Library Director) gathered in the fall of 2023 to begin discussing library and staff trends, potential value statements, and survey questions for public input in this planning process.

The Board of Trustees began initial discussions of the value driven plan at their September 27, 2023 meeting. The public survey was launched in November of 2023 as both an online survey that was linked to our website, as well as an interactive mural in the lobby of the library.

How do you use the library? (circle as many as needed)

Check out materials   Attend events   Use technology (computers, printer, etc.)

Connect to WiFi   Meet with other people   Remotely (Libby, Hoopla, etc.)

Read in the library   Technology help   Other:_____

What is your favorite thing about the library?

What is your wish for the library?
Share what your idea of our future success looks like.

BURLINGTON
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Thank you for participating in our 2023 survey

152 patrons participated in the survey, as well as roughly 50 who added their wish to the starry night mural in the library lobby. A similar survey was sent to 40 community leaders identified by the Library Director and Board of Trustees, 5 of whom responded.

Of the 152 public participants, 82% said that they use the library to check out materials and 57% attend library events. The full report of results can be viewed in the appendix of this report. The Board of Trustees was given an overview of the survey results at their December 21, 2023 meeting, followed by an email containing the full report.

Taking the patron survey results, staff input, trustee input, and collaboration with the leadership team into consideration, library director Brittany Jacobs wrote out this strategic plan. It was presented to the Board of Trustees at their January 2024 meeting for a final review, vote, and approval.

Areas of Strategic Focus/Goals

1. **Efficiency** - To create efficiencies for community members, library staff, and partnering entities ensuring positive interactions with the library and ease of use of library resources.
2. **Sustainability** - Plans and work to ensure the long term success of the Burlington Public Library as a beacon for our community.
3. **Human-Centeredness** - Implementing a human-centered approach to all decisions and functions of the Burlington Public Library to champion a sense of belonging and community for all.
4. **Access** - Promoting and maintaining equitable access to information, resources, spaces, events and outreach.

Efficiency

To create efficiencies for community members, library staff, and partnering entities ensuring positive interactions with the library and ease of use of library resources.

Objective 1: Staff efficiencies - Review workflows and processes for BPL staff to ensure efficiency and a positive and supportive work environment.

Project 1: Create staff teams/committees to tackle specific goals (All Staff, FY24 - FY29)

Project 2: Create programming rubric and program proposal process that aligns with our values and mission in order to ensure that programs created and hosted by BPL align with our mission. This rubric will also help assess programs to measure impact and success. (Programming & Outreach Team, FY24)

Objective 2: Patron efficiencies - Examine the patron experience as well as information seeking behavior to ensure efficient and successful interactions with a reduction of barriers to information and resources.

Project 3: Incorporate space consultant's report (FY23) to create and implement wayfinding signs in the building as well as tools to empower patrons to have autonomy in our space (Patron Services Team & Graphic Design, FY25)

Project 4: Host a virtual tour of the building (partnership with MidWest Pano) on the BPL website and Google landing page (Leadership, FY24)

Project 5: Update website - reorganize for a more user-friendly experience (Patron Services Team, Leadership & Graphic Design, FY24-29)

Project 6: ILS fine tuning - OPAC (Online Public Access Catalog) refinement (FY24) Research Mobile App for ILS (FY25) (Collections & IT Team & Leadership)

Sustainability

Plans and work to ensure the long term success of the Burlington Public Library as a beacon for our community.

Objective 1: Building - Research and make an action plan for renewable energy and long-term facility sustainability.

Project 1: Energy Audit (Leadership, Alliant & City of Burlington, FY24)

Project 2: Research Renewable Energy Options (Leadership & Renewable Energy Commission, FY24-29)

Project 3: [Sustainable Libraries Initiative membership (FY24) & certification (FY25)](#) (Leadership)

Objective 2: Staff Sustainability - Implement training and facility updates to support the mental health and wellbeing of the BPL staff.

Project 1: Mental Health Support - Research the possibility of a social worker in the library to aid with patrons who need assistance that goes beyond the capabilities of BPL staff. (Leadership, FY25-29)

Project 2: North Side Garden for staff break area (Leadership & City of Burlington, FY25)

Project 3: Implement mental health awareness training on a bi-annual basis (Leadership, FY24, FY26, & FY28)

Objective 3: Financial Sustainability - With the loss of the Library Levy via HF718, ensuring financial sustainability now will directly impact the success of BPL into the future.

Project 1: Grant focus - Create team to focus on grant opportunities & grant-writing staff development. Create a schedule and tracker for grant applications (Leadership & Staff, FY25)

Project 2: Secure tax support to fill gap from removal of Library Levy. (Leadership & City of Burlington, FY24-FY28)

Human-Centeredness

Implementing a human-centered approach to all decisions and functions of the Burlington Public Library to champion a sense of belonging and community for all.

Objective 1: Customer Service - Ensure kind & respectful attitudes and services are being carried out so that patrons and staff alike have positive interactions while at BPL.

Project 1: Implement March all-staff training day with customer service focus (Leadership & Staff, annually beginning in FY24)

Project 2: Review library policies and practice for human-centered focus (Leadership, FY24-28)

Objective 1: Gathering Spaces - Ensure a balanced use of the facility with additional gathering spaces for people both inside and outside of the building.

Project 1: Internal space reorganization to create more gathering spaces for the public (Patron Services Team, FY24-26)

Project 2: Equip the Genealogy Room to become a usable meeting room space (install blinds, projectors, sound absorbing tiles, etc.) (Leadership & Staff, FY25)

Project 3: Research building expansion possibilities for a bump out on the East side for additional meeting room space, and outdoor patio (Leadership, FY25-26)

Project 4: Install [solar charging covered seating at the top of driveway](#) \\ [Victoria Seating](#) (Leadership & City of Burlington, FY25)

Objective 3: Art - Inspire curiosity and creativity with additional art installations.

Project 1: Permanent mural on outside retaining wall (to replace wheat paste mural) - (Leadership & Staff, FY25)

Project 2: Parking lot retaining walls mural (Leadership & Staff, FY25-27)

Project 3: Digitizing space in partnership with Fortepan (Leadership & Staff, FY25)

Access

Promoting and maintaining equitable access to information, resources, spaces, events and outreach.

Objective 1: ADA Access - Review and implement ADA audit to bring the BPL facility closer to compliance and to be a more welcoming environment for all.

Project 1: Use ADA audit (FY22) to work on compliance of facility for ADA measures (Leadership & City of Burlington, FY24-28)

Project 2: Enrich the collection with materials that are accessible for the visually impaired (Collections & IT, Leadership & Iowa Library for the Blind, FY25)

Objective 2: Access to Information - **Ensure access to information of all kinds with fewer barriers with creative problem-solving and intentional processes for the curation and maintenance of resource collections.**

Project 1: Expand create collections (power tools, radon kits, blood pressure monitor, etc.) (Collections & IT & Leadership, FY25-27)

Project 2: Investigate internet lending options outside the realm of wireless hotspots to cast a wider net of digital access while maintaining workflows that fit within library staff capacity (Patron Services Team, Collections & IT, FY25-28)

Project 3: Purchase a vehicle for a bookmobile and begin running test routes. These test routes will help to develop a comprehensive plan of action for further investment into a larger or more library vehicles (Programs & Outreach Team & Leadership, FY24-28)

Project 4: Perform an audit of the collection and create an action plan for ensuring a balanced and accessible collection of resources for the community (Leadership, FY25-28)

> FY24 - Collection Inventory
>
> FY25 - Collection Audit & Review
>
> FY26 - Action Plan & implementation

Review Process

This plan will be an active tool in guiding library services from 2024 through 2028, with monthly reviews for progress by the leadership team and bi-yearly reviews by the Board of Trustees. A timeline and spreadsheet has been created with all objectives and projects listed for efficient management and review by the leadership team. A bi-yearly report will be presented to the Board of Trustees by the Library Director in January and July.

Approved January 17, 2024