



Our Communities Read Together

An Initiative of the St. Charles Pubic Library

Strategic Planning with Madison County Heart & Soul Findings

Project Title and Mission	Our Communities Read Together Reading together broadens our understanding of our world, our communities, and ourselves through the joy of sharing a good book.
Project Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unite Madison County area community libraries, their patrons, and area residents • Showcase a diverse range of titles that reflect many different voices and perspectives • Inspire conversation, discovery, and common ground • Build working relationships among community libraries
County Heart & Soul Statement	Community Conversations and Connections We recognize the independent spirit and individuality of each community and understand the need for improved two-way communication and cooperation among all the governing bodies and residents to improve the quality of life across the county.
Strategy:	We will bring the people of the area together to read and discuss critically acclaimed books to promote connections and build mutual understanding.
Opportunities:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area libraries have well-established boards, directors, and volunteers who serve the residents of the communities. • St. Charles library is willing to spearhead this project. • There are opportunities for grants through library endowment programs and local service organizations, as well as local, state and national entities. • Showcase area libraries through a rotating meeting schedule.
Constraints:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independent and autonomous traditions in each community library • Distance between communities • Resources to develop organizational and outreach materials • COVID restrictions delay face-to-face gatherings

Action	Lead Solution Partner(s)	Supporting Partner(s)	Existing Resources	Cost & Funding Sources	Timeframe (years)				Milestones
					0 < 1	1<2	2<5	5+	
Gather leaders from community libraries to share the project and invite their participation	St. Charles Public Library Board	None at this time.	Heart & Soul Findings; Iowa Library Association; State Librarian; National and state existing models, i.e., All Urbandale Reads, All Iowa Reads, NEA Big Read	Possible grant requests	√				Steering committee established with representatives from each community library
Action	Lead Solution Partner(s)	Supporting Partner(s)	Existing Resources	Cost & Funding Sources	Timeframe (years)				Milestones
					0 < 1	1<2	2<5	5+	
Organize a steering committee to design the project format, establish a timeframe, and create book lists.	St. Charles Public Library Board	Representatives from community libraries	Heart & Soul Findings; Iowa Library Association; State Librarian; National and state existing models, i.e., All Urbandale Reads, All Iowa Reads, NEA Big Read	Friends of the Library, library budgets, local, state, and national grant funds		√			Program plan includes established leadership, selected book, timeframe, and multi-community promotion.