

Marketing/Public Relations Plan

Rawlins Municipal Library 2024, 2025, 2026

Introduction

Rawlins Municipal Library has a rich history. Rawlins Municipal Library first began as the Pierre Carnegie Library in 1903 when the town received a grant from the Carnegie foundation. The Carnegie Library Building Fund distributed more than \$56 million dollars to libraries worldwide. Only 25 Carnegie libraries were established in South Dakota over a time frame of 16 years. The largest grant awarded in South Dakota went to Sioux Falls for \$30,000 and the smallest grant awarded went to Wessington Springs for \$7,000. Pierre received \$12,500 from the Carnegie foundation to start a library in Pierre. Pierre received the 8th highest amount awarded from the Carnegie foundation in South Dakota.

The Carnegie library thrived within the Pierre community for several years. The Carnegie library began to show signs of age, wear and tear, and was in need of modernization. In April of 1952, the Library Board presented a petition to the city commission for an election to approve a levy not to exceed two mills for a library building fund. On April 15, 1952, the voters unanimously approved the levy, and it went into effect for the budget of September that year.

The library continued to operate within the Carnegie library for another 20 years and the library became more and more overcrowded. In 1972 there was enough money in the library fund to begin construction of a new and more modern library. The total cost of the project was \$475,000 with \$185,000 being financed through bonds.

The library opened at its current location on Church Street on November 6, 1972. The library was renamed R.E. Rawlins Municipal Library in honor of R.E. Rawlins who served as the Superintendent of the Pierre School District from 1918 to 1948. The building was built with over 10,000 square feet and has a capacity for 50,000 books. The building was designed to have a view of Pierre and the capital. This view is something that patrons still enjoy today.

Library visitors and check-outs have continued to increase, and the library is still widely used today. Rawlins Municipal Library remains a vital library in the central South Dakota area and many people will drive for long distances to use the library. There is a clear need and a tradition of library support that is found among both local residents and leaders.

Goals

- That Rawlins Municipal Library will continue to be a vital part of the community and local area to serve as a popular destination for learning and enjoyment.
- That all local residents and leaders be aware of the services available at Rawlins Municipal Library.
- That local leaders support the local library through budgetary needs.

Objectives

- Rawlins Municipal Library will work with The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County to ensure that the library receives any and all funding available to support library services.

- Rawlins Municipal Library will continue to network with the South Dakota State Library and be current on accreditation status. Rawlins Municipal Library will network with the South Dakota State Library when federal grant opportunities become available through the United States Federal Government that are dispersed to the states (i.e., South Dakota State Library).
- Rawlins Municipal Library will continue to apply for local grants and other grant opportunities that become available.
- Encourage all local residents to get a library card with a goal of half the population having library cards by the year 2026.
- The library will develop positive working relationships with three community groups by 2026. This is equivalent to one new connection per year of the marketing plan.

Positioning

Rawlins Municipal Library strives to provide a friendly atmosphere with knowledgeable staff. Rawlins Municipal Library provides modern day services in a small-town library. Rawlins Municipal Library offers books in numerous formats such as large print, audio book, downloadable eBook, and downloadable audiobooks. The online library is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. The online library offers access to electronic books and over 70 databases. Rawlins Municipal Library provides a gathering for the public and offers one free meeting room for non-profit usage.

Key Messages

1. Rawlins Municipal Library provides access to free public library services to enhance literacy for all citizens.
2. Rawlins Municipal Library welcomes all people to participate in all services and programs.
3. Rawlins Municipal Library staff are available to help meet technological, and literacy needs.

Key Audiences

Internal: Staff, Library Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library

External: Local Leaders from The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County

Year One 2024

Objectives

- The number of cardholders will increase by 20% of the gap.
- Awareness of electronic resources will increase as there is an uptick in online database usage.
- Rawlins Municipal Library will host one program with a partner organization from the community.
- Rawlins Municipal Library will promote three library events at The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County (i.e., commission meetings).

Strategies

Begin to make a plan to have the Library known in the community

- Begin a social media campaign advertising the benefits of library cards and online databases.
- Host seminars at the library showing the public how to use online databases.
- Network with local non-profit organizations (i.e., Right Turn, Discovery Center) and invite them to have a joint program at the library.
- Promote the library through publications (i.e., newsletters, bookmarks).
- Invite patron comment through a suggestion box.

- Look into offering some type of coffee shop venue at the library to make the library more appealing to users.

Seek a higher profile in the media and community

- Ask to attend commission meetings for The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County to promote library events.
- Work with the City Communications Director to place at least three featured stories about the library in the newspaper.
- Continue biweekly People in the Neighbor radio segments on DRG radio.
- Offer reporters interviews about the local library.
- Reach out to local leaders and invite them to library events.

Reach out to individuals and families

- Heavily promote library card sign up month.
- Visit schools, preschools, and daycare centers to promote the library.
- Display photos of families using their library cards.
- Host a contest, “Why My Family Uses the Library” and award prizes to the winner.

Evaluation

- A stronger, more consistent message in library publications.
- A stronger working relationship with local users.

Year Two 2025

Objectives

- The number of cardholders will increase by 20% of the gap.
- Statistical reporting will show usage of databases and Gale courses.
- Rawlins Municipal Library will host two programs with a partner organization from the community.
- Rawlins Municipal Library will promote four library events at The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County (i.e., commission meetings).

Strategies

Continue to make the Library known in the community

- Expand upon the social media campaign advertising the benefits of library cards and online databases as well as other library benefits.
- Host seminars at the library showing the public how to use online databases and other library resources.
- Network with local non-profit organizations (i.e., Right Turn, Discovery Center) and invite them to have a joint program at the library.
- Promote the library through publications (i.e., newsletters, bookmarks).
- Invite patron comment through a suggestion box.

Continue to seek a higher profile in the media and community

- Continue to ask to attend commission meetings for The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County to promote library events.
- Continue to work with the City Communications Director to place at least four featured stories about the library in the newspaper.

- Continue biweekly People in the Neighbor radio segments on DRG radio and try to expand to other local media networks.
- Offer reporters interviews about the local library.
- Reach out to local leaders and invite them to library events.

Reach out to elementary schools

- Heavily promote library services, including teacher cards, school drop off of library materials for teachers.
- Visit schools and offer training sessions for teachers on library resources.
- Network with school librarians and collaborate on resources.
- Offer library flyers of upcoming events to students to take home.
- Host a family night at local schools to inform families about library resources.

Evaluation

- A stronger, more consistent message to the public.
- A stronger working relationship with schools and local leaders.
- A more welcoming atmosphere at the library.

Year Three 2026

Objectives

- Statistical reporting will show that people are using the library website, library databases, eBooks, downloadable audiobooks, as well as other in-house services. The report will show that resources are being used more and more each year.
- The library will be able to add one to two additional electronic resources due to the continued use and growth of current electronic resources.
- Rawlins Municipal Library will host two to four programs with partner organizations from the community.
- Rawlins Municipal Library will promote four library events at The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County (i.e., commission meetings).

Strategies

Continue to make the Library known in the community

- Expand upon the social media campaign advertising the benefits of library cards and online databases as well as other library benefits (i.e., new electronic resources that are now available at the library).
- Host seminars at the library showing the public how to use online databases and other library resources (i.e., classes on how to use Google Docs or Microsoft Excel).
- Continue to meet and network with local non-profit organizations (i.e., Right Turn, Discovery Center) and invite them to have a joint program at the library.
- Promote the library through publications (i.e., newsletters, bookmarks, websites).
- Invite patron comment through a suggestion box.
Continue to seek out ways to make the library warm and welcoming (i.e., coffee, lighting, foyer décor).

Continue to seek a higher profile in the media and community

- Continue to ask to attend commission meetings for The City of Pierre, The City of Fort Pierre, Hughes County, and Stanley County to promote library events.

- Continue to work with the City Communications Director to place at least four featured stories about the library in the newspaper.
- Continue biweekly People in the Neighbor radio segments on DRG radio and try to expand to other local media networks.
- Offer reporters interviews about the local library.
- Reach out to local leaders and invite them to library events.

Reach out to middle schools and high schools

- Strongly promote library services, including teacher cards, school drop-off of library materials for teachers.
- Visit schools and offer training sessions for teachers on library resources.
- Network with school librarians and collaborate on resources.
- Offer library flyers of upcoming events for students to take home.

Evaluation

- A message being sent to the community that the library is a strong and stable institution in the library.
- A message being sent to the community that the library works with schools, families, and individuals to make all people feel welcome in the library.

Strategic plan for advertising budget

- Rawlins Municipal Library will work within the allotted advertising budget from the City of Pierre each year to positively promote Rawlins Municipal Library in the community.
- For the year 2023, the advertising budget is set at \$1,600.
- The Library Director will work with the City of Pierre Communications Manager, Brooke Bohnenkamp, on paid social media advertisements and on all types of advertising that Rawlins Municipal Library utilizes.
- The advertising budget will be spent on a combination of items:
 - Capital Journal Newcomers Guide
 - Other advertisements that might need to be published in the Capital Journal throughout the year
 - Rawlins Municipal Library promotional materials (i.e., pens) to hand out at events
 - Social Media Ads

Approved by the Rawlins Municipal Library Board of Trustees July 31, 2023

Reapproved by the Rawlins Municipal Library Board of Trustees March 25, 2024