A **Strategic Plan**
for Harford County Public Library

Harford County Public Library

HCPLonline.org

INSTITUTIONAL STATEMENTS

CORE PURPOSE: Connecting the community with high-quality Library experiences to promote the love of reading and learning.

CORE ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

- We act with civility at all times.
- We respect all individuals.
- We provide superior customer services and experiences.
- We believe in intellectual freedom.
- We believe in the importance of access to information for all.
- We operate with absolute integrity.
- We respect privacy and confidentiality.
- We believe staff members are integral to the Library experience.
- We encourage innovation.
- We support and expect personal and organizational growth.
- We believe in the value of partnerships.
- We commit to engaging and strengthening the community.

VISION STATEMENT: Every community member engages with the Library.

GOAL 1 ⟩ COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Harford County Public Library acknowledges the vital role of community engagement in serving our customers and fostering literacy and ongoing education. We aim to better understand our community's needs and tailor our services, events, and activities to address those needs. Our goal is to engage diverse demographics, including avid users and those who haven't yet used our resources, across all age groups. In doing so, we endeavor to highlight the Library as a valuable, inclusive resource for personal and professional growth. We aspire to become a central hub within the communities where our branches are located.

OBJECTIVES

REACH

- Enhance and expand our reach throughout the community through the Library fleet of outreach vehicles to ensure inclusivity and broad geographical coverage.
- Use marketing initiatives, social media, and the Library brand strategically and effectively supporting the Library's story.

INVOLVE

- Cultivate strong advocates by informing/educating the community about our wide range of services and their intrinsic value.

- Engage with the community to identify their needs and forge innovative partnerships to deliver excellent services, programs, classes, entertainment, and support.
- Develop and implement measurement tools to assess the effectiveness of Library initiatives.

RESPOND

- Develop internal training to equip staff with the skills and techniques needed to foster a learning environment for all Library users.
- Analyze customer data to pinpoint underserved groups and communities, then devise targeted engagement strategies to better connect with them.

GOAL 2 ⟩ TECHNOLOGY & COLLECTION INNOVATION

Technology access, training, and utilization is core to providing Library services. Technology supports HCPL's strategic plan, including not just existing technology platforms, but accommodating new and emerging technologies and staff training. The Library collections (physical and virtual) are equally critical and essential to ensure inclusion for our community and support of their diverse learning needs. Both technology and collections must be enhanced, sustained, and maintained. This strategic priority allows us to be a free, equitable resource for our customers and positions HCPL as the center of learning in our communities. Technology and the Library collection supports our customers in accomplishing their personal and professional goals.

OBJECTIVES

PLAN

- Update the Technology Plan to centralize the platforms used for information storage, sharing, and collaboration.
- Update the Materials Collection Plan to continue to adapt and acquire new formats and ensure the collection reflects and supports the community learning objectives, entertainment, and more.
- Create a Library culture that supports staff learning about emerging technologies and the Library's diverse collections with the intent of understanding their application, and sharing their knowledge with each other and their customers.
- Be intentional and proactive about selecting technology that facilitates processes, public access, and workflow, along with a collection that supports the diverse learning objectives for the community.

EXECUTE

- Provide professional development and staff training on internal technologies and emerging technologies to enhance staff readiness from onboarding and throughout their career.
- Create a culture of transfer of knowledge for technology and the Library collections.
- Create a transition plan for standardized platforms and tools, and a timeline for implementation.
- Assess current access points for information (website, Passport, app, etc.) and create an action plan for updating, revising, and replacing as appropriate.
- Create materials and training tools to support staff in providing technology education and collection knowledge and support to the public.
- Establish core measurements that evaluate and assess the Library's technology and collections to identify trends, staff, and community needs.
- Foster knowledge management for all staff on technology, identifying resources, and serving as a resource for staff and the public (if the public is expected to know about a Library resource, then all staff should be knowledgeable of it).

GOAL 3 > STAFF TALENT DEVELOPMENT

HCPL will support our staff and strengthen their capacity and capabilities. We view this strategic priority as critical for the organization's success. HCPL will build on our strong team while developing skills, tools, resources, and structures that allow our staff to meet future customer needs. Our goal is to have staff who are engaged in their work and feel invested in Library operations and direction. This will result in outstanding customer experiences and services.

OBJECTIVES

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

- Create an onboarding process that orients new staff to our culture and provides them with the necessary tools for success.
- Develop in-house training programs that support staff at all levels. Provide a structured mentoring program for people's continued growth.
- Strengthen employee recognition programs and opportunities to grow, take on new responsibilities, and advance professionally.
- Identify rising leaders for promotion and provide training and mentoring.

COMMUNICATION

- Set expectations for efficiently utilizing shared technologies to enhance communication.
- Develop shared correspondence standards, methods, and structures.
- Develop a searchable structure for policies and procedures that can be easily accessed by staff at the point of need.
- Create a knowledge management strategy for the Library to provide access to knowledge resources, experienced staff, and best practices from the branches.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- Provide cross training and capture best practices across the system, while recognizing the uniqueness of each branch.
- Develop a succession plan for senior level staff that retains institutional knowledge and facilitates an orderly transition for these positions.
- Evaluate organizational structure to realign with priorities, goals, and operations.

GOAL 4 ⟩ SUSTAINABLE FUNDING & INFRASTRUCTURE

HCPL will focus on creating stable, secure, and consistent funding streams for the Library that support the growth and demand of the system. This will allow for longer-term planning and implementation, which are critical for lasting change. We have a tradition of creatively securing financial support from the community, sponsors, and events for items that are not funded through the operational and capital budgets. Our best supporters are our customers who directly benefit from the resources, services, and value the Library brings to the community. We will focus on strengthening those relationships to nurture future Library advocates.

OBJECTIVES

SUSTAINABLE REVENUE STREAMS
- Identify new funding opportunities and enhance community partnerships.
- Implement proactive measures to diversify funding sources, enhance traditional sources, and create a more stable and sustainable financial model for the Library's operations.

COMMUNITY ADVOCATES
- Develop year-round strategies to engage and educate the community about the value and importance of the Library.
- Foster a culture of advocacy among staff, customers, and stakeholders.
- Expand the Library Advocacy Toolkit developed by the Foundation to offer partners more opportunities and resources to advocate on the Library's behalf.
- Use high visibility opportunities like the Gala, author events, and other programming to make the case for Library funding and advocacy.

- Empower staff and volunteers with training and resources to effectively communicate the Library's funding needs and engage in fundraising activities within their respective networks.

BUILD CAPACITY
- Enhance and expand the capabilities and resources of the Library's Development Team through training, recruitment of specialized talent, and investment in technological tools to streamline fundraising efforts.
- Utilize data analytics and performance metrics to assess the effectiveness of fundraising initiatives and adjust strategies accordingly to maximize impact and efficiency.
- Research and develop legacy, endowment, and congressionally-directed funding opportunities.
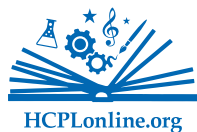
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