

Albany Public Library

STRATEGIC PLAN

January 2018 through December 2020

Prepared by Nancy Meyers Preston | Strategic Advancement Solutions for Nonprofits

Approved by APL Board of Trustees | February 13, 2018



Albany **Public** Library

www.albanypubliclibrary.org

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This 2018-2020 Strategic Plan provides a roadmap for the Albany Public Library (APL) for the next three years. It is a living document that gives the organization the ability to adjust to the needs of the community and library trends. The plan aims to serve the community through investment in staff and our award-winning facilities, while protecting our financial future. The plan outlines the Library's approach to delivering high-quality outreach and services through investment in our staff and facilities to best serve residents of the City of Albany, and users throughout the Upper Hudson Library System.

Over the course of a year, a consultant helped us gather information from user and staff surveys; analysis of similar libraries; focus group discussions with users, staff, and the Friends of Albany Public Library and the Albany Public Library Foundation; aspirational model library visits and interviews; and regular public input. After synthesis of our experience the Board of Trustees recommended a three-year focus on four strategic goal areas.

- 1) Meeting Community Needs
- 2) Community Learning Platform
- 3) Cultivating Leadership
- 4) Long-Term Sustainability

Each goal carries with it several objectives. These are **SMART: Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic, and Time-defined.**

This strategic plan, by necessity, will impact the culture of the organization. Leadership recognizes this plan will guide activities, performance and evaluation. It will ensure that decision-making is consistent with priorities established in the plan. However, through implementation, it also requires the Albany Public Library to identify the changes that need to take place to support the plan. A committed and diverse leadership team of Board and staff members will take ownership of the strategic plan to support the agreed-upon goals and objectives.

While this document has been created, the strategic planning process is not complete. There needs to be a way to ensure that the plan is implemented, and that Board and staff leadership are held accountable for the plan's success. Every member of the organization shares responsibility for the success of the plan. It is essential that annual operating plans are developed for each goal. These provide details for the upcoming year in the language of objectives, action steps, timelines, progress-against-goals, and responsibilities.

MISSION STATEMENT

Albany Public Library educates, entertains, and empowers our community.

VALUES STATEMENT

The following values will inform our decision making:

COLLABORATION | Actively engage with community partners to address social and educational issues.

DISCOVERY | Help members of the community learn, grow, and achieve their dreams by expanding minds and opening new worlds.

DIVERSITY | Commitment to human rights, free thought and free expression.

EMPATHY | Treat everyone with understanding and compassion.

INTEGRITY | Committed to transparency in operations and governance.

LITERACY | Introduce the community to a wide variety of materials, programs, and resources that increase their knowledge, understanding, and enjoyment.

PRIVACY | Committed to protecting the privacy of library users.

SERVICE | Provide resources for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community.

STRATEGIC GOALS

In support of our mission – *to educate, entertain, and empower our community* – the following four overarching priorities will inform the decision-making of the Albany Public Library for the next three years:

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

We intend to align services with community needs by providing exceptional programs, material, outreach, and public interactions that promote literacy, lifelong learning, and civic participation.

COMMUNITY LEARNING PLATFORM

We intend to enhance the library's space, tools, and resources as a platform for community learning, creativity, and engagement.

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

We intend to develop and empower strong, capable, flexible, and vocal users, staff, volunteers and board members who embody the values of the organization.

LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

We intend to ensure the public's investment is maximized through efficient, creative, and intelligent management of resources.

PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

MEETING COMMUNITY NEEDS

Goal Statement:

We intend to align services with community needs by providing exceptional programs, material, outreach, and public interactions that promote literacy, lifelong learning, and civic participation.

The following objective will help us achieve our goal:

1. Develop multiple types of literacy in the community, including digital literacy, early literacy, cultural literacy, and life skills.
2. Regularly assess the needs of users and non-users by using varying forms of engagement.
3. Evaluate and strengthen programs and services to best meet community needs and work within organizational capacity.
4. Build broad awareness about the diverse services we provide and promote the impact of our quality programming.

COMMUNITY LEARNING PLATFORM

Goal Statement:

We intend to enhance the library's space, tools, and resources as a platform for community learning, creativity, and engagement.

The following objectives will help us achieve our goal:

1. Develop physical resources to support emerging trends in library use and expand services outside of library buildings.
2. Promote the idea of the library as a platform for innovation, dialogue, and social interaction.
3. Expand our leading role in bridging the digital divide in the City of Albany.

CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Goal Statement:

We intend to develop and empower strong, capable, flexible, and vocal users, staff, volunteers, and Board members who embody the values of the organization.

The following objectives will help us achieve our goal:

1. Ensure that APL has adequate staffing and staff expertise to address current and emerging trends in public libraries.
2. Create and implement engagement strategies that elevate the user to a patron and develop community champions.
3. Board of Trustees are engaged advocates and regularly assess their effectiveness.

LONG TERM SUSTAINABILITY

Goal Statement:

We intend to ensure the public's investment is maximized through efficient, creative, and intelligent management of resources.

The following objectives will help us achieve our goal:

1. Ensure that physical spaces are inspiring, environmentally responsible, and maintained cost-effectively.
2. Strengthen and align formal partnerships to build our capacity to meet community needs.
3. Create a coordinated development approach with the Friends and the Foundation that incorporate diversified revenue streams.
4. Reduce dependence on fund balance in budget projections.