

AMHERST PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021-2023

The Amherst Public Library strives to deliver exceptional service as it provides opportunities for information, entertainment, and personal enrichment to the community at large.

A. Library Building: The physical structure of the library will be added to and improved in order to maximize the “library experience” for the patron.

1. An addition to the existing library building will be thoughtfully designed and built to provide flexibility and adaptability for collections and services.
2. Creative and useful spaces will be included to meet the ever changing needs of our patrons.
3. A drive-thru circulation window, book drop into the building, and book lockers may be included in the new building addition.
4. New cohesive signage will be included in the addition and remodel.

B. Customer Service: Well-trained and enthusiastic staff are key to a positive library experience for the patrons.

1. The safety of the patrons will remain the top priority in this ever changing world environment.
 - a) The library will adjust its service model as needed to meet the patron comfort level of engagement.
 - b) Additional self-service, non-contact checkout will become available for patrons.
 - c) Services will be resumed and made available as the containment of the pandemic allows.
2. Quality customer service will continue to be the focus of all library transactions and decisions.

- a) All staff members will be required to attend at least two continuing education type programs per year, such as: webinars, workshops, and conferences.
- b) Patron surveys will be utilized to evaluate the service.
3. Communication among staff will be improved through meetings, emails, and newsletters.
4. Training initiatives and cross training will be investigated for best practices.
5. Elimination of fines for all patrons will be seriously considered.
6. Automatic renewal of materials will be reviewed for implementation.

C. Collections: The library will encourage literacy by providing conveniently accessible materials for patrons of all reading levels, ages, and interests.

1. Collection development will continue to focus on print, audio, visual and digital materials.
2. Collections within the larger and newly renovated library building will be continually evaluated so as to achieve the optimal quality, organization, and display for patron advantage.
3. Collections will be regularly weeded in order to remain relevant.
4. Nontraditional library items will be considered for circulation.
5. Early reading/ literacy will continue to be encouraged through:
 - a) Maintaining popular collections and programs, as well as implementing new activities and materials.
 - b) Story times, both live and virtual, utilizing quality materials and renewed methodologies.
6. Multiple reading programs for all ages will aspire to promote lifelong reading through the gift of books and other incentives.

D. New Trends in Lending and Technology: The library will utilize cutting-edge technologies and library trends to optimize the library experience for users, as well as staff.

1. The digital footprint will be expanded to facilitate training of staff and patrons alike.
2. RFID (radio frequency identification) will be installed for materials tracking. Materials will be tagged in 2021.
3. Makerspaces will be researched for inclusion in the library.

4. Innovative products for current tech learning, such as TAPit and Everbright, will be provided in the children's department.
5. Technology will be regularly reviewed to ensure the needs of the patrons are met.

E. Community Engagement: Being a Good Neighbor

1. Social media will continue to be used to communicate with the community. Emerging social media platforms will be evaluated for inclusion.
2. The library will continue to maintain the technology necessary to provide access to Internet-based resources and services.
3. The library's website will be continually updated to serve as a gateway for the users to access materials and stay abreast of library activities.
4. Programming will be developed and frequently evaluated to fit the needs and interests of the community.
5. Community and school engagement will be strengthened through enhanced communication channels, which promote available on-site and digital resources and services.

F. Long Term Sustainability: The library will ensure the public's investment is maximized through responsible management of resources.

1. The library will ensure that physical spaces are constructed to maximize quality, while maintaining cost- efficiency.
2. Existing service contracts will be analyzed and RFPs will be issued to assure we are receiving the best services for our money.
3. The library will work to efficiently schedule staff in order to maintain salary costs while providing excellent customer service.
4. The library will reduce dependence on fund balance carryover in budget appropriations.
5. The library will maintain a cash balance of at least 3-months' worth of operating expenses.

Mission Statement

Amherst Public Library welcomes

People of all ages to enjoy

Lifelong learning and personal enrichment.

Approved 10/12/2020