

AMHERST PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024- 2026

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 and Grounds

1. Redesign public service work areas, including the purchase of new desks.
2. Evaluate options for developing the vacant property on the corner of Tenney Avenue and Spring Street.
3. Actively maintain the 1906 addition, including the excavation of the west side to determine and repair the cause of water leaks and insect infestation.
4. Redesign landscaping and plant new materials, particularly in front of the 1906 addition.
5. Investigate and install accessible bathroom features where possible.
6. Investigate options for making the drive-up window more accessible.
7. Investigate accessible emergency evacuation equipment.

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

1. Safety will remain the top priority in this ever changing world environment.
 - a) Train staff to deal with disruptive patrons, including those threatening violence.
 - b) Train staff to effectively follow library procedures concerning banned patrons.
 - c) Maintain staff training on general first aid procedures and AED use.

2. Quality customer service will continue to be the focus of all library transactions and decisions.
 - a) Train staff to provide patrons with contact information for services in regard to mental health, financial, and other needs.
 - b) Encourage diversity.
 - c) Revamp notary service and policies to have at least one notary available during all open hours.
 - d) Introduce a new online calendar to both patrons and staff.
 - e) Promote ongoing continuing education using resources such as NEO-RLS and OLC.
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. The managers will assign a balanced responsibility workload amongst the PSA staff.

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 the ever increasing demand for digital materials.
2. Collections will be continually evaluated so as to achieve the optimal relevancy, organization, and display for patron advantage.
3. Collections will be regularly weeded in order to remain relevant.
4. Additional 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 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.
7. Add all items to the catalog when they are ordered to allow patrons to place holds.
8. Implement a process for patrons to request material directly through the website.
9. Utilize the Gerstenberger Estate Special Revenue Fund to update the local history area and print and digital collections.

10. Investigate implementing a system to securely store non-traditional and larger items in public areas with locked shelving.
11. Reevaluate the existing borrowing terms for new items, specifically DVDs.
12. Research possible changes to magazine and newspaper shelving.

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. Innovative products for current technology learning will be investigated for the children's department, such as a weather station, toddler gear wall, and teen interactive wall.
2. Emerging technology will be regularly reviewed to ensure the needs of the patrons are met.
3. Purchase new technology for the local history area.
4. Investigate the possible implementation of a library app.
5. Continue replacement schedule to keep staff and public technology up-to-date.

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's website will be continually updated to serve as a gateway for the users to access materials and stay abreast of library activities.
3. Investigate feasibility of library interior panoramic tour through Google 360.
4. Programming will be developed and frequently evaluated to fit the needs and interests of the community.
5. Partnerships with community, local business, and local schools will be strengthened through enhanced communication channels, to promote available on-site and digital resources and services
6. Continue to participate in Main Street Amherst and other community events.
7. Preference local businesses for library program prizes.
8. Explore possible expansion of our outreach services.

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

1. Existing service contracts will be analyzed and RFPs will be issued to assure we are receiving the best services for our money.
2. The library will work to efficiently schedule staff in order to maintain salary costs while providing excellent customer service.
3. The library will reduce dependence on fund balance carryover in budget appropriations.
4. The library will maintain a cash balance of at least 3-months' worth of operating expenses.
5. The library will review, update and organize the organization's policy manual.

Mission Statement

Amherst Public Library welcomes
People of all ages to enjoy
Lifelong learning and personal enrichment.

Approved 12/11/2023