



NORTHBROOK PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027

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Message from the Executive Director

Dear Northbrook Community,

We are thrilled to unveil our new strategic plan, which will help us better meet the needs of every member of our community. Looking at the work ahead, we know that based on listening to the voices of the community, we will continue to shape the library in ways that strengthen the Northbrook community.

We envision a library that not only provides access to information and resources but also serves as a vibrant hub for learning, exploration, and connection. Our strategic plan lays out a roadmap for focusing our programs, services, and collections to better serve you. Whether you're looking to learn a new skill, spend time in quiet contemplation, or find a welcoming space to connect with others, we want the library to be your go-to destination.

We hope you will feel a deep sense of belonging the moment you step through our doors or visit our website. You're not just welcome here; you belong.

The Board and staff are thankful for the opportunity to serve this wonderful community. Here's to an exciting new chapter together.

Kate Hall
Executive Director



Introduction

Northbrook Public Library (NPL) is a vital resource for the community. Its dedicated staff, engaged patrons, and vibrant services create a welcoming and inclusive community space. To align its resources with the emerging priorities of the community, the library has undertaken a comprehensive strategic planning process incorporating feedback from community members and stakeholders, as well as the Board of Trustees and staff.

Implementing a new strategic plan allows the library to focus on:

- Expanding connections with the community through collections, programs, and services;
- Embedding equity, diversity, and inclusion in all areas of operation; and
- Reviewing and updating the library's space usage to meet and exceed the community's desires for access to resources and innovative services.

Introduction

NPL's strategic planning process began in Summer 2023. Fast Forward Libraries LLC was engaged to facilitate the planning process in three phases: *Learn, Dream, Do*:

- The *Learn* process was community-focused, with a community survey, stakeholder interviews, and community focus groups.
- During the *Dream* phase, the Board and Staff members added their lived experience to the community data to dream about the future and start to set priorities.
- In the *Do* phase, the plan was finalized, activating an implementation process that effectively guides the library for three plus years.

Process Timeline

AUGUST TO DECEMBER 2023

Planning Team Kick-off Session
Community Survey
Strategic Capacity Assessment
Focus Groups and Interviews

JANUARY 2024

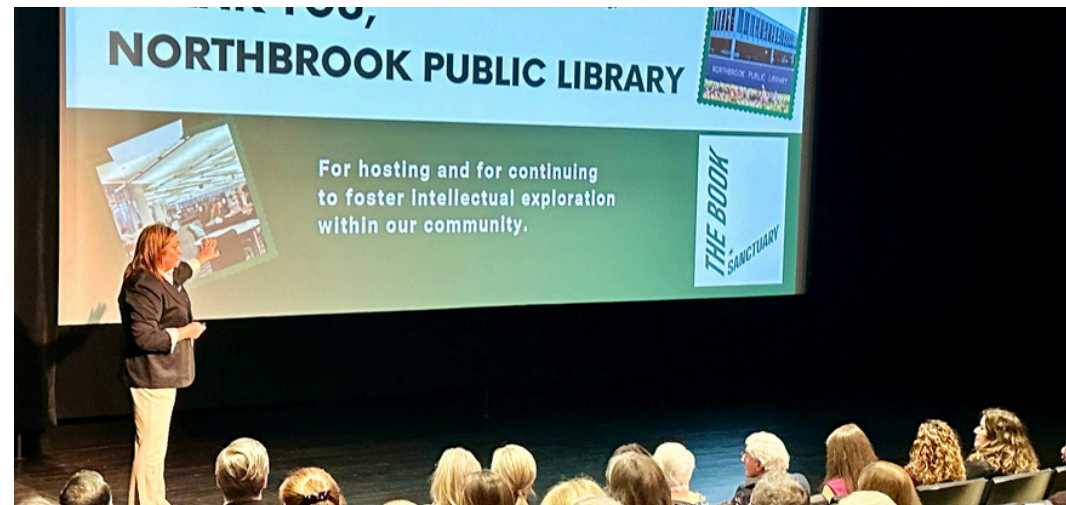
Learning Report
Board and Staff Retreats

FEBRUARY TO APRIL 2024

Plan Development and Review
Present to Board
Transition to Implementation

MAY TO JULY 2024

Create Activity Plan
Develop Evaluation Metrics





Mission

We build community, champion intellectual freedom, and provide open access to the world of knowledge in a welcoming, inclusive environment.

Vision

The Northbrook Public Library will

- Inspire lifelong learning,
- Connect community members to each other and the world,
- Enable the pursuit of knowledge for all.



Strategic Directions

The following strategic directions were selected to help define the library's goals and activities in the coming years. These priorities build upon and support one another to achieve the library's vision and mission in service to the community:

- 1. Connect with Our Community**
- 2. Build an Inclusive Culture**
- 3. Create Spaces to Belong**



Connect with Our Community

We want our community to be informed about all the library offers and find value in the library's evolving services and resources. Through diverse collections and programs, we will provide strong core services and experiences that support lifelong learning, fun, and cultural understanding. Patrons will report ease of access to the wide variety of resources provided at NPL, and the community will gain knowledge about intellectual freedom.

Goals

- Position ourselves as the community's center for information needs.
- Provide exposure to new experiences and ways of looking at the world.

Our Impact

- Community members are aware of what the library offers.
- Community members express satisfaction with our collections.
- Community members feel their voices are heard by the library.

Build an Inclusive Culture

We want our operations to be built on a strong foundation and aimed at enhancing our performance through deliberate and intentional efforts that center equity, diversity, and inclusion. By focusing on strong communication and encouraging a culture of continuous growth and learning, we will empower staff to continue our history of exceptional service to our patrons. Staff will understand their roles and responsibilities and feel valued and heard by management. We will work collaboratively to provide a high level of service to the community.

Goals

- Align staff roles and responsibilities and improve decision making processes across the organization.
- Foster a culture of shared growth and learning.
- Embed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Operations.

Our Impact

- Staff have high morale and feel a sense of belonging in the organization.
- Staff capacity increases.
- Staff retention is high.

Create Spaces to Belong

We want the library to be a flexible community hub that offers a wide array of programs, meets individual needs, and promotes inclusion and environmental sustainability through updated spaces. The library should serve as a space for patrons to connect, discover new learning opportunities, and easily access resources. We want staff and patrons to feel a sense of belonging and aim to create materials, programs, and services that meet the needs of our different users.

Goals

- Reimagine our spaces to increase flexibility and opportunities to explore and connect.
- Cultivate an inclusive and welcoming library environment.
- Improve access to facilities, programs, and materials to better serve all populations.

Our Impact

- Patrons and staff feel a sense of belonging at the library.
- The library considers green practices and sustainability efforts in decision making.
- Patrons with varying needs feel welcomed and accepted at the library.

Next Steps

IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

Now that this plan has been adopted by the Northbrook Public Library Board of Trustees, library staff members will develop annual activity plans to guide implementation. Implementation is a continual process. The timing of certain activities will be determined by priority and influenced by a variety of factors, such as funding and other resource allocation. Review and adjustment of the activity plan will occur regularly.

A complete evaluation framework will be developed once the activity plans are finalized. Evaluation of the plan will be ongoing once plan implementation is underway. The plan's status and implementation will be reported on a regular basis to Trustees and stakeholders.

