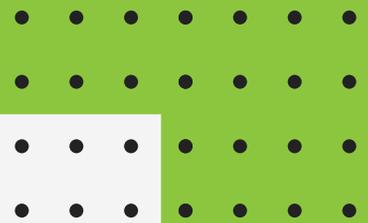




HAYWOOD COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY

HAYWOOD COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Strategic Plan



2022 - 2027

CONNECT | DISCOVER | GROW

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CONNECT

DISCOVER



GROW

INTRODUCTION



The Haywood County Public Library Strategic Plan for 2022-2027 provides a flexible framework for the library system to transform and enrich lives with community-focused collections, programs, and services.

A strategy timeline was proposed and adopted by the Library Board of Trustees in late 2020. The Board voted to keep the library's established mission statement while crafting a new vision statement that is more reflective of what the library system provides to Haywood County. The Strategic Plan was developed based on input and feedback received from a survey distributed in the fall of 2021, and from Community Input sessions conducted in late October and early November at all four library branches. With results from these sessions, and discussions with local stakeholders, the Friends of the Library, and the Library Foundation, the Library Board of Trustees and staff came together to establish major goals and objectives for the plan. Input from library staff was instrumental in establishing specific activities to meet goals and objectives.

Feedback from the public stressed the need for improved accessibility in library facilities and programming, and improved awareness of existing services. The Strategic Plan addresses the need for physical improvements to facilities and use of outdoor spaces, expanded access to resources, and the need for better communication about existing services. The North Carolina Public Library Standards will be instrumental in providing self-assessment strategies for quality service based on community needs.

Kathy Vossler
Haywood County Library Director

The library really is a palace. Public institutions such as libraries... are vital parts of the social infrastructure. Libraries stand for and exemplify something that needs defending: the public institutions that...serve as bedrocks of civil society.

-Eric Klinenberg, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life*

OUR MISSION & VISION



MISSION

Inspiring our community to connect, discover, and grow.

The Haywood County Public Library enriches and transforms lives with community-focused collections, programs, and services.



VISION

ENHANCE EXPERIENCE



Goal 1: Create opportunities for discovery of information, education, and collections in user-focused facilities

- **Services & Programs**

- **Plan and implement varied programming and services for all**

Sample activities:

- *Implement and offer multi-generational and varied programs to appeal to the broadest sectors of the local community*

- **Narrow the digital divide**

Sample activities:

- *Continue high-speed internet availability and hotspot circulation, while seeking and offering new technologies*

- **Extend outreach and eliminate barriers**

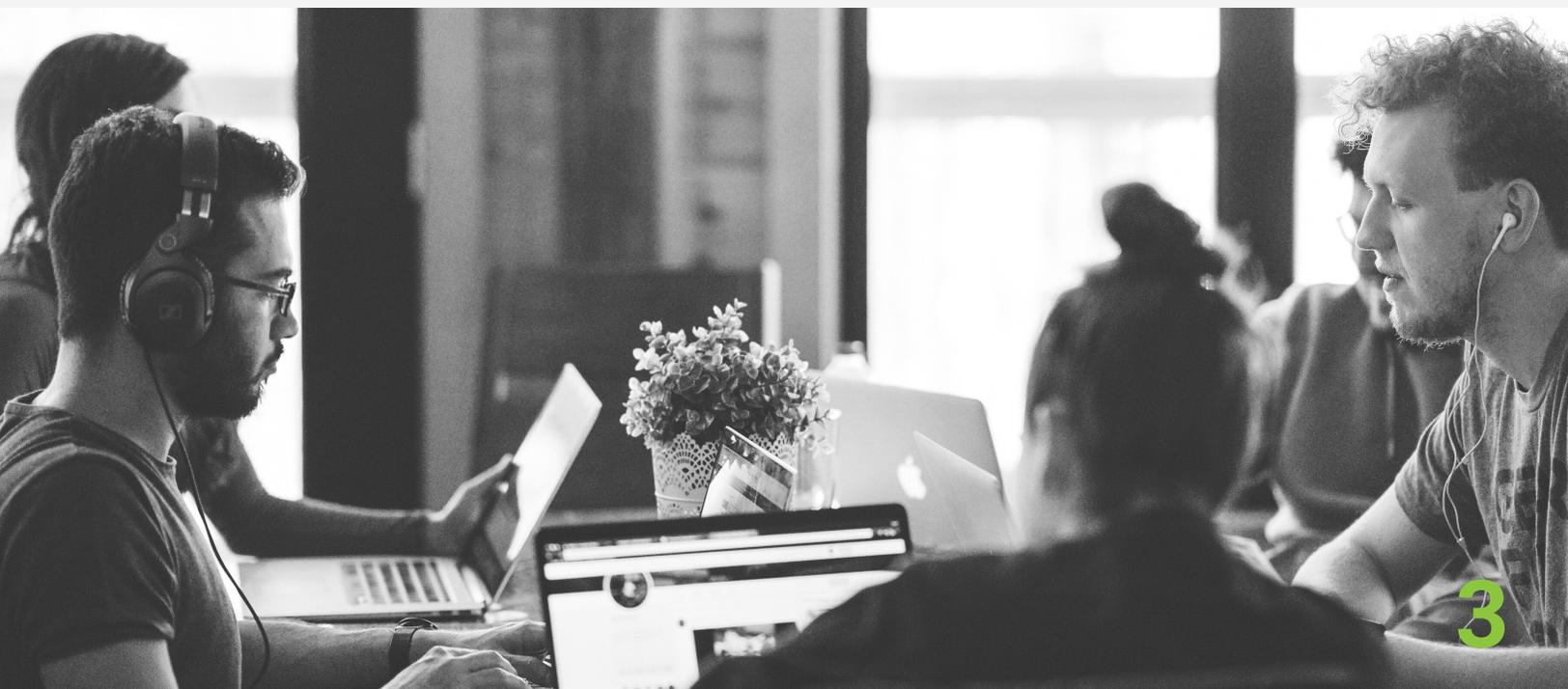
Sample activities:

- *Provide access to services with curbside pickup, virtual programming, book lockers, and/or a mobile branch to add service points; pursue digital access for students with local schools*

- **Establish mobile, offsite service**

Sample activities:

- *Pursue acquisition of mobile van for the delivery of materials, Wi-Fi, and/or technology assistance to provide service to rural areas*



ENHANCE EXPERIENCE



- **Facilities**

- **Pursue renovations or new construction**

- Sample activities:

- *Update buildings, including air systems, to protect collections; ensure ADA compliance; meet changing technology needs with regular updates*

- **Improve and utilize outdoor spaces**

- Sample activities:

- *Develop green spaces for gathering, programming, and play*

- **Enhance common spaces**

- Sample activities:

- *Create dedicated teen space at main branch; enhance meeting spaces, focusing on privacy and technology needs (for telehealth, entrepreneurial support, and more)*

“
The library is a place of safety, freedom of information,
and power of knowledge.
-Richard Gould, Chair, Library Board of Trustees
”



ENHANCE EXPERIENCE



- **Collections - Print & Digital**

- **Preserve and grow physical and digital collections**

- Sample activities:

- *Provide materials to maintain and enhance library core collections to include print, audiovisual, electronic, digital, and other formats for all ages*

- **Promote use of collections**

- Sample activities:

- *Utilize marketing, merchandising, signage, and displays to highlight all formats and create opportunities for discovery*

- **Continue systematic collection management**

- Sample activities:

- *Utilize standardized collection management tools for maintaining relevant collections; conduct annual inventories of all physical collections*

- **Continue preservation and digitization of historical documents**

- Sample activities:

- *Scan historical local articles and photos, digitize, and provide access to them through library website; promote Appalachian heritage by preserving and recording oral histories, music, and more*



ENHANCE EXPERIENCE



- **Policies & Procedures**

- **Update policies and procedures periodically to ensure best practices**
Sample activities:
 - *Review procedures and policies, such as the Collection Development Policy, and revise as needed*
- **Assess operational hours and days**
Sample activities:
 - *Review branch hours, collect and analyze daily data, and adjust to meet demand*
- **Implement a formal marketing plan**
Sample activities:
 - *Ensure plan enhances brand awareness and discoverability of services, incorporate public feedback, and update every three years*

“
Bad libraries build collections, good libraries build services, great libraries build communities.
-R. David Lankes
”



ENLIGHTEN & ENGAGE



Goal 2: Promote and extend services to meet community needs, to reach the underserved, and to increase awareness of the library and services

- **Continue to develop and promote digital branch and online resources**
Sample activities:
 - *Increase awareness of library website and promote resources for increased use*
- **Establish and utilize marketing strategies**
Sample activities:
 - *Utilize consistent color and typography across all aspects of digital and print media to promote collections, programs, and services; expand social media presence*
- **Support entrepreneurs, career development, and small business**
Sample activities:
 - *Pursue facility upgrades to support one-on-one meetings and co-working spaces; implement supportive programming*
- **Support student learning**
Sample activity:
 - *Pursue student access to library materials with local school systems*



ENCOURAGE PARTNERSHIPS



Goal 3: Partner with library supporters, county officials, educational institutions, and community organizations to advocate for, support, and enhance opportunities

- **Collaborate with the Friends of the Library and Library Foundation**
Sample activities:
 - *Build upon existing relationships to encourage advocacy and secure donations for the future of the library system*
- **Cultivate relationships with Haywood County officials and local businesses and organizations**
Sample activities:
 - *Offer programs and services aligned with community needs, shared perspectives, and local interests*
- **Develop relationships and coordinate events with local educational institutions**
Sample activities:
 - *Collaborate on mutually beneficial programming and align partnerships through shared goals to encourage lifelong learning*





Goal 4: Provide staff with tools to ensure excellent customer service and support professional growth

- **Meet state staffing standards**

Sample activities:

- *Ensure staffing meets NC Public Library Standards (2022), based on population size and growth, to provide quality service; ensure all staff are proficient in fulfilling the library's mission and vision*

- **Train qualified staff**

Sample activities:

- *Provide customer service training, annual staff development training, and professional learning opportunities*

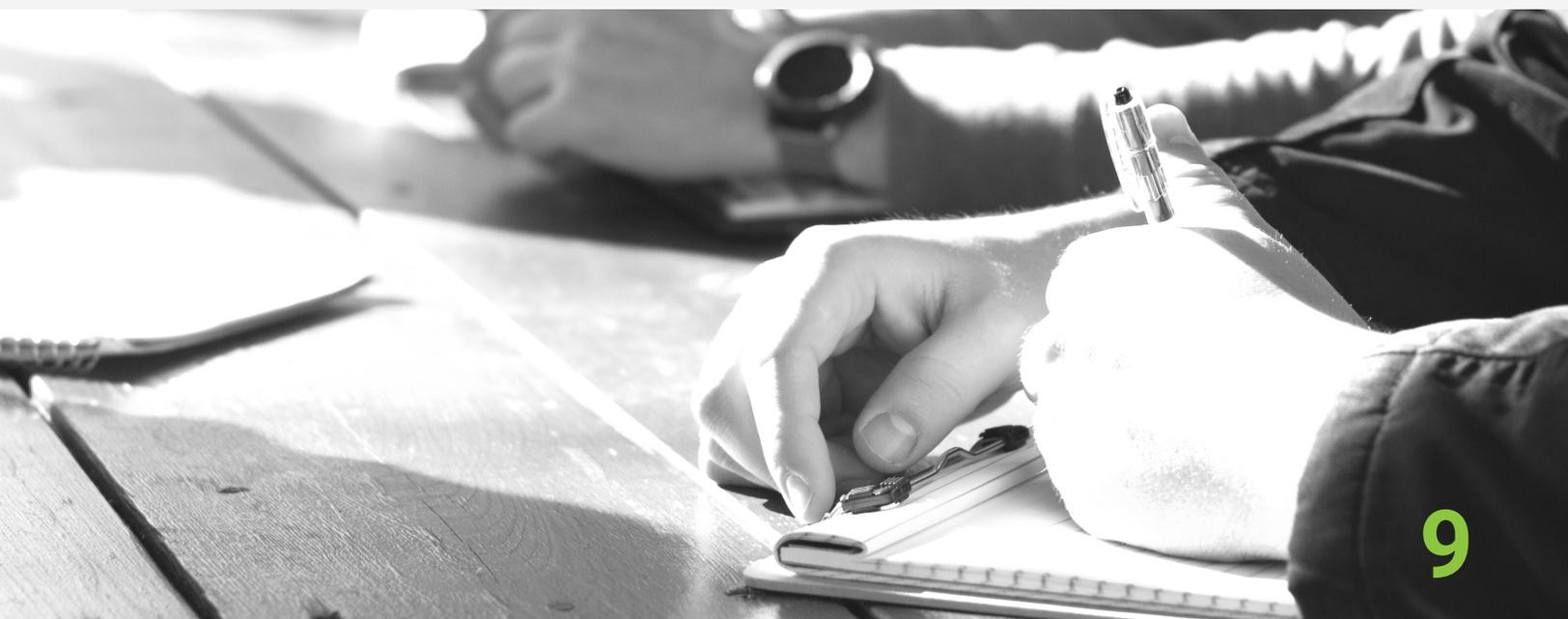
- **Encourage participation in outreach activities and cross-training**

Sample activities:

- *Provide staff opportunities to engage with the community at outreach events; engage staff with assignment rotation and job exploration*

“ Today, we know that public libraries are not only essential to their communities, they are a microcosm of the community. What is happening at the public library is happening in the community and to the people the library serves.

-Andrew Sanderbeck, Former Chair, Library Board of Trustees



ENSURE PROGRESS



Goal 5: Develop a forward-thinking strategy for library facilities and technology updates to support operations, community impact, and future development

- **Facilities planning**

Sample activities:

- *Consider appropriateness of library facilities to meet community needs for service; consider need for new or renovated facilities based on current population size and growth, collection size, programs/services, and use, per NC Public Library Standards (2022)*

- **Technology planning and funding**

Sample activities:

- *Ensure infrastructure is sufficient for present and future technologies; pursue funding to replace/upgrade equipment every three years to support staff and public needs and future growth*

- **Design flexibility**

Sample activities:

- *Ensure proximity of library facilities to rural and urban residences, per NC Public Library standards (2022); consider flexibility, adaptability, and expandability in future development*



STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS



Edward A. Merritt, Library Board of Trustees Vice-Chair and strategist, crafted the Strategic Plan timeline, shared with the Library Board of Trustees at their January 2021 Board meeting. The Trustees participated in pre-planning, evaluation of the library's mission and vision statements, crafting the Community Survey, and evaluation of survey results. Three Trustees and the Library Director met monthly to set strategic direction and to evaluate objectives. Staff were consulted for goals and objectives for their respective departments and provided sample activities for the new plan. County Manager Bryant Morehead and Assistant County Manager Kris Boyd were apprised of plan progress periodically.

Throughout the process, many resources provided guidance, including:

- A Library Board's Practical Guide to Strategic Planning, United for Libraries, a Division of the American Library Association
- Strategic Planning 101, Mandy Pearce and Marie Palacios, Funding for Good
- Simple Strategic Planning, Jami Yazdani, Yazdani Consulting and Facilitation
- *Leadership and Strategy: Understanding, Planning, and Implementing*, Edward A. Merritt, PhD
- North Carolina Public Library Standards 2021, State Library of North Carolina
- The E's of Libraries: Advocacy, Legislation & Issues, American Library Association
- *Haywood County Strategic Plan 2017-2022*
- *Haywood County FY22 Manager's Adopted Budget - Strategic Plan*



STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS



January - March 2021

- Planning
- Library Mission Evaluation
- Library Vision Evaluation and Crafting New Statement - Staff & Trustees

April - June 2021

- Planning Community Input Survey

July - September 2021

- Conducting Community Input Survey
 - Online and Paper
 - Library Branches - Waynesville, Canton, Maggie Valley, Fines Creek
 - Haywood County Recreation Center
 - Senior Resource Center

October - December 2021

- Evaluation of Survey Responses
- Community Input Sessions
 - Library Branches - Waynesville, Canton, Maggie Valley, Fines Creek

January - March 2022

- Plan Development
 - Setting Strategic Priorities
 - Setting Objectives

April - May 2022

- Plan Development
 - Setting Goals for Strategic Priorities
 - Refining Plan and Setting Sample Activities
- Final Evaluation - Staff & Trustees

June 2022

- Presentation & Approval - Haywood County Board of Commissioners

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The 2022-2029 Strategic Plan process has been highly dependent upon input from the Haywood County community, library cardholders, staff, and many support organizations who all contributed in significant ways. The new Strategic Plan is a concise document to share with the community, and provides a flexible, achievable framework for staff.

Many people and groups contributed to the new plan, including community members who completed surveys and attended Community Input Sessions, as well as library staff who provided input and set goals for the next five years. Many thanks to the Library Board of Trustees, the Haywood County Public Library Foundation, the Friends of the Haywood County Public Library, and to County Administration for their support throughout the process.

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