



LORTON COMMUNITY CENTER
& LIBRARY

Letter from the Director

Hello,

Strategic plans are often documents that are created, set on a shelf and dusted off from time to time. Not so at the Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL)! This document, our 2023-2027 Strategic Plan, is one which will live and grow with us over the coming years to ensure we are best meeting the needs of the public through our services, spaces, materials and staff. This new strategic plan was created with thought, care and dedication by a talented group of library staff and the FCPL Board of Trustees who have been diligent about the impact of every word and punctuation point. My thanks to each and every person involved in the document’s development and deployment.

This five-year plan is specific to the library, as it aligns with community need and interest. But as a department within Fairfax County, all of our work and goals also align with the **Countywide Strategic Plan** and in particular, the outcome areas of Cultural and Recreational Opportunity, Effective and Efficient Government, and Lifelong Learning and Education. This document also includes clear linkage to the County’s **One Fairfax** policy of racial and social equity. FCPL strives every day to reduce barriers for our visitors, so that every person knows they are welcome in the library and can find the resources they need.

FCPL made incredible progress through the framework of our prior Strategic Plan including eliminating fines, increasing public programs, engaging visitors through library technology, and created consistent and expanded hours. The 2023-2027 Strategic Plan will help guide our community and our library to even greater heights. Thank you for using your library, supporting your library and loving your library.



A handwritten signature of Jessica Hudson in black ink.

Jessica Hudson
Director
Fairfax County Public Library

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Our Identity

Staff and Volunteers

Staff – Library staff are crucial to our success. We work beyond the walls of our individual branches, providing outreach to schools, senior centers, civic organizations, non-profits and other neighborhood organizations. Our staff go to these places not just as emissaries of library service, but to assist others where they are. Library staff use their tangible skills and know how to navigate an increasingly complex world of information whether it be in the physical or the digital form.

FCPL staff give invaluable feedback on how to make the library more efficient and help chart the many changes the library has undergone through the years. They ensure the library is a safe place to learn, create and explore where all people are welcome.

Volunteers – Each volunteer hour is meaningful and brings a special gift to the library. Our volunteers are effectively involved in the delivery of quality library service and support the library's mission and objectives. Our needs are matched with their skills whether for a few hours on a one-time project or for years as a veteran volunteer. Each year, hundreds of individuals and corporate volunteers donate thousands of hours of their time to the library.

We are continually amazed and astounded by the dedication and commitment of our volunteers. They provide immense benefits throughout the library system as they work behind the scenes processing mountains of books; diligently spend hours getting and keeping our books in order; preserve the history of our county; and enthusiastically introduce children to the wonders of reading. Without them, we could not offer residents the level of outstanding service they deserve.

Intellectual Freedom and Equal Access

Free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. Librarians have a profound responsibility to protect that freedom by making it possible for readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings. FCPL supports intellectual freedom through a commitment to facilitating open public access, privacy and an extensive range of constitutionally protected information, ideas, opinions, perspectives and viewpoints. Attempts to restrict or prevent access to library materials are a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy. To that end, we affirm the following principles¹:

- We protect everyone's privacy and confidentiality in the use of library resources and services, including children and teenagers.
- We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services.
- We connect people and ideas by helping each person select from and effectively use the library's resources.

By embracing these principles, FCPL contributes to a future that values and protects freedom of speech in a world that celebrates both our similarities and our differences, as individuals. Librarians have a profound responsibility to advocate for that freedom and provide a variety of offerings that embrace diversity of people, opinion and thought. FCPL trusts our users to make their own decisions about what they read and believe.

¹ Position adopted by the Council of the American Library Association, February 3, 1999.

Intellectual freedom is a core value of the library profession and a basic right in our democratic society. We adhere to professional ethics and standards for public libraries and support the ALA Library Bill of Rights, and the statement that “Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.” Publicly supported libraries provide free, equitable and confidential access to information for all people in our community.

Diversity and Inclusion

Libraries play a crucial role in serving diverse community members with varying needs and interests. FCPL strives to be a key part of the rich resource landscape in which our residents and families live, work, play and learn. We work to reflect our nation’s diversity by providing a full spectrum of resources and services, recognizing that equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) impact all aspects of life with the communities we serve. Public libraries occupy a unique position to provide access to resources and the guidance to navigate those resources independently.

Libraries respect that individual needs vary based on many facets, including race and ethnicity, age, income, physical limitations, religious beliefs, education, language, affiliations, sexual orientation, gender identification or geographic barriers. As

facilitators of the public’s access to information and materials without prejudice, we ensure all library resources are available to each member of the community. In alignment with Fairfax County’s One Fairfax policy, the library prioritizes equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) in our organizational values, strategic planning and key initiative areas.

Communities draw strength from differences that bring valuable perspectives, experiences and knowledge to a more inclusive community. FCPL ensures the availability of resources and services for those who may be under-represented, marginalized or excluded from participation. Now, more than ever, we intend to preserve and strengthen our core values of intellectual freedom and equal access to information, as well as the stewardship and accountability of the public resources entrusted to us.

Physical vs. Digital

FCPL works to balance the physical with the digital in an ever evolving world. We are adapting and energizing library spaces and resources. We keep up with the needs and interests of our users by offering changing services and programs. The library offers the unmatched nostalgia of a trusted and familiar space with the lure of holding a physical book so reassuring to many library users while also offering the ease of accessibility and availability of digital collections and resources.



Our challenge is to connect the physical space of the library with the digital space of information and communication. Leveraging their strengths and experimenting with the ways they can complement each other, we are reimagining what the library of the future will look like.

Library users require and demand a mix of both physical and digital experiences, each complementary in nature. These transitions will continue to become more seamless and effortless in the future. Technology will enable this, and libraries are adapting, adopting and creating new opportunities.

Digital Equity

FCPL bridges the digital divide by providing internet access and offering digital skills programs. Library users build their technology skills through events and online learning resources. All online content is available at no cost with a free library card. Our role in helping achieve this vision became even more visible during the COVID-19 pandemic, as people were encouraged to visit public library parking lots where we extended wireless internet access while the buildings were closed.

The library plays a key role in promoting Fairfax County's ideal vision of digital equity including::

- Affordable digital hardware and connections
- Awareness of digital resources and services
- Access to specific digital tools
- Advancement of digital literacy skills

Without digital inclusion, the expansion of technology becomes another barrier to entry and participation whether as a student seeking educational opportunities, as an empowered employee in the job market, or simply engaging with others online. Technology impacts our daily experience, and the library is assisting through new and established partnerships, and our expanding knowledge and resources.

Our Vision

Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) is a unique, trusted and essential resource to inform, engage and inspire our community.

Our Mission

FCPL actively builds community, furthers literacy, and promotes freedom of access and expression through programming, community spaces, technology, and collections of educational and recreational resources

Our Guiding Principles

- We reflect and celebrate our diverse communities.
- We provide excellent service in every interaction.
- We recognize the changing needs of our community and environment.
- We provide free, equitable and confidential access to information.
- We promote educational and personal growth.
- We value responsible and transparent cultivation and management of resources.
- We draw strength from differences that bring valuable perspectives, experiences and knowledge to a more inclusive community.

Our Strategic Priorities

- Expand equitable access to library services.
- Enhance the library experience through expansion, innovation and integration of technology.
- Provide diverse services, programs and materials to support literacy development for all ages.
- Prioritize and strengthen connections with our communities, schools and patrons to create mutually beneficial relationships.
- Champion workforce development in order to contribute to economic opportunity for all.



Our Vision

Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) is a unique, trusted and essential resource to inform, engage and inspire our community.

Our vision reinforces the library's focus on making personal connections with our communities. We share in the vision of a Fairfax County transformed by the collective impact of people and organizations working together to make the County better educated, healthier, safer and more prosperous.

The library is the center of the county's culture of learning, inspiring residents from all walks of life to continually learn and grow. We seek to strategically align our vision with the priorities set by residents, staff and elected officials. When more people actively participate, the culture of learning expands with their unique backgrounds, interests, abilities, experiences and perspectives.

By focusing on relationship building and service excellence, the library will meet new and evolving needs. In alignment with Fairfax County's strategic plan, the library is a place where all residents, businesses and visitors are aware of and able to participate in quality and enriching recreational and cultural activities.

We ignite growth through connectedness and transformative experiences.



VISION

Our Mission

FCPL actively builds community, furthers literacy and promotes freedom of access and expression through programming, community spaces, technology, and collections of educational and recreational resources.

People – The library's greatest advantage, our staff of professionals, provide unbiased service to our communities. We adhere to a professional code of ethics and fashion the library to serve its patrons and its community. These professionals are the library's driving force for adaptive change.

Place – Our physical facilities are collaborative and comfortable spaces. They serve as hubs of community activity and represent a valuable physical asset for the County.

Principles – The guiding concepts outlined on page 4 of our strategic plan guide us and ensure freedom of access to a diverse range of information, privacy with respect to our patrons and the media they use, and unbiased assistance and recommendations.

Pride – We are a source and subject of community pride displayed through the quality of our resources, services and facilities. More importantly, this pride shows in the highly favorable attitudes shared by community members toward their library.

We combine all our information, education, resources, services and entertainment functions in one package to inform, engage and inspire.



MISSION



Our Guiding Principles

Community Focused – We reflect and celebrate our diverse communities.

We maximize our impact through dynamic partnerships and work to ensure that our resources and services are available to all. Our people, collection, events and services reflect our communities.

Service Oriented – We provide excellent service in every interaction.

We provide fair and equitable access to information, materials, services and resources. We adhere to professional ethics and treat our patrons and our community with respect.

Innovative – We recognize the changing needs of our community and environment.

We adapt and introduce new tools and techniques to encourage innovation and creativity to better serve the evolving needs of our community.

Intellectual Freedom and Equal Access – FCPL provides free, equitable and confidential access to information.

We embrace diversity of people, opinion and thought. We create conditions that facilitate open public discourse, while valuing and defending our patrons' right to privacy. We advocate for free and equitable access for all, and we adhere to professional ethics and standards for public libraries.

GUIDING
PRINCIPLES





GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Learning and Innovation – FCPL promotes educational and personal growth.

We are a skilled professional staff who believe that powerful results are possible when individuals exercise their right to learn and to grow. We champion information literacy for all, leading to an informed community. We inspire a culture of continuous learning for personal, intellectual and cultural growth. We support our community in expanding their knowledge and experiences and preparing for workforce changes.

Stewardship and Accountability – FCPL values responsible and transparent cultivation and management of resources.

We provide the highest possible value to the communities we serve and assure the public that resources entrusted to our care are carefully secured and managed for current and future stability and success.

Diversity and Inclusion – FCPL draws strength from differences that bring valuable perspectives, experiences and knowledge to a more inclusive community.

We value and respect all members of our community, removing barriers to participation, and fostering community connections through a wide array of programs and services. We focus in particular on resources and services for those who are often under-represented, marginalized or excluded from participation. We strive to examine our own biases and prejudices to eliminate all forms of unfairness and discrimination within the organization and in our service to the public.



Our Strategic Priorities

To realize our vision:

Where the Fairfax County Public Library is the essential and trusted resource to inform, engage, and inspire our community:

- Equitable Access
- Technological Integration
- Literacy Development
- Community Engagement
- Resilience and Economic Opportunity

Expand equitable access to library services.

- Identify and eliminate barriers to access.
- Diversify and expand our physical and digital collections.
- Provide educational programming, literacy services and materials for our diverse community.
- Be recognized as the center for community information through innovative programming, in-depth collections and responsive services.
- Protect privacy and equitable access, especially for young people.

Enhance the library experience through expansion, innovation and integration of technology.

- Research and implement technology based on community needs.
- Help narrow the digital divide and connect all residents to the digital economy.
- Offer technology training for library users and staff to ensure traditional and evolving library services.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Provide diverse services, programs, and materials to support literacy development for all ages.

- Support literacy through collections, technology and partnerships.
- Provide programs and materials to support English language learners.
- Promote and develop strategies for lifelong learning.

Prioritize and strengthen connections with our communities, schools and patrons to create mutually beneficial relationships.

- Explore, create and strengthen partnerships with community organizations and County agencies.
- Provide open, welcoming spaces that encourage collaboration and connection.
- Conduct outreach activities to increase awareness of library resources, programs and services.
- Support informed participation in civic life with rich library resources.

Champion workforce development in order to contribute to economic opportunity for all.

- Provide programming and resources that support job searching technology access and career development.
- Engage in strategic partnerships that contribute to the economic success of Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax.
- In cooperation with business partners, provide opportunities for job skill development.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



Visit



bit.ly/FCPL-Strategic-Plan
to learn more about our strategic priorities and
the specific initiatives we are taking in support of them.



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