



James Prendergast Library Strategic Plan Presentation December 10, 2020

Introduction:

We would like to thank our former Executive Director Tina Scott, the library staff, and the Board of Directors for guiding the library through a difficult transition over the last few years. Their hard work and dedication to the library are why we are here today, and it is the reason we can respond to our community and present this new Strategic Plan.

We also want to thank the voters in the City of Jamestown, who supported the library with sustainable funding this year. We can't wait to share our plan for the future with our community.

We have all faced a challenging year; COVID has changed how we do things, including managing the strategic planning process. We are thankful that the library is open and here for the community. When we started this year, we could never imagine that we would have to close the library building!

It was a first, but we managed to virtually deliver programs and services to the community and have seen an increase in support and participation. We will move forward through this pandemic and continue to keep the staff and patrons safe and provide the best services we can to our community.

We began the 2021-2024 strategic planning process in December of 2019 by providing the community the opportunity to fill out a survey and provide feedback on the library's mission, community awareness and engagement, the library's collection, and programs and services. We received 165 completed surveys.

This fall, the library management team worked with Dr. Amanda Lake, a consultant from Lakeside Leadership. Dr. Lake is a volunteer with Catchafire, a New York-based organization that makes skill-based connections between professional volunteers and non-profits. Thank you to the Sheldon Foundation for giving the library a spot with Catchafire!

Finally, I would like to thank the staff for all their hard work. The staff's passion for this library and the community shows every day. They are integral to this plan and the future of the library.

Strategic Plan Presenters:

Anne Greene, Executive Director

Tress Williams, Library Manager

Jennifer Champ, Assistant Library Manager

Kristie Bemis, Collection Development Librarian

Library's Mission:

Responsibly empowering lifelong learning for the residents of the city of Jamestown.

- Our Strategic Plan will assist us in fulfilling our mission.

Library's Values:

A review of our values is important as they are the library's guiding principles – they led us to focus on the goals and approaches that we chose in our Strategic Plan.

Not only does the library as an institution align with these values, but our working culture is also aligned with our values. These are not just words printed on paper for show, this plan is the DNA of what our staff believe, and our positive working culture practices as a team, and this is what will allow us to achieve these goals.

- **Equity:** We are an inclusive and equitable organization that promotes equity of access in our community, and serves the diverse needs and requirements of all our users.
- **Community:** We align our services and programs with the needs of our community.
- **Creativity:** We embrace a culture of exploration, experimentation, and reflection to improve services, anticipate needs, and manage change.
- **Sustainability:** We invest in economic feasibility, environmental stewardship, and social justice—to inspire investment and build support for the future.
- **Collaboration:** We build partnerships to achieve shared goals and increase the impact of our mission.

Strategic Focus:

There are three areas of strategic focus that are guiding our goals and investments:

- A focused mission for James Prendergast Library
- Increased community engagement and awareness
- A plan for a sustainable future

Investments - the following areas are where we will focus our efforts:

- Programs and services
- Collection
- Information technology
- Staff
- Outreach
- Public Relations
- Facility
- Revenue

1. Programs and Services:

Goal: Quality and sustainable services and programming that supports life-long learning in the community.

- The investment is to create programming and services that meet community needs.
- We are working on a programming plan that will reach new audiences, help Students thrive in the classroom and beyond and brings the collections to life.

Some of the ways we intend to reach the goal are:

- To increase our adult programming, Prendergast Library staff will plan and execute programs, presentations, workshops, and participatory experiences for our adult population.
- The survey results indicated a need for more adult programming. Suggestions included lectures, writers' workshop, lectures on nature, art, literature, social issues, computer classes, and book clubs.
- All program development will include ways for people with similar interests to connect, socialize, and learn.
- Program development staff will identify barriers that prevent people from participating in library programs and develop proactive plans to address challenges using innovation and creativity. An example of this is offering bilingual storytimes, so children learning English have an opportunity to participate. Due to the pandemic, we have pivoted to online programming and will continue to provide this even after returning to in-house programming. Offering a virtual component increases participation and accessibility.
- Survey results indicate satisfaction with the library's children's programming; therefore, we will continue to develop quality children's programming with an emphasis on including a digital component.
- We will increase opportunities for at-home learning and offering patrons the ability to use library materials traditionally not available for check-out. An example of this program is the recent grant we received from CRCF to create STEAM-based kits that patrons can check out.

2. Collection:

Goal: A well maintained and innovative library collection that meets the educational needs of the community.

- The investment is to develop a collection management plan that is exciting and current.

Some of the ways we intend to reach the goal are:

- Ensure the collection meets the community's needs and embraces digital and multi-media resources through a collection development team.
- Continue to order new materials and update materials to ensure that the collection is at the forefront of information in all subject areas. An example is reviewing all medical, science, law materials and keeping them current.
- Continue to build a collection that strengthens patrons' ability to use information and technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information.
- Utilizing the library's new website (once up an running), we will create an updated way for patrons to make collection recommendations and memorial donations.

- Focus on building an inclusive collection that meets the needs of the community. These needs may differ due to race and ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identification, socioeconomic status, or physical ability.
- Provide access to popular and significant titles in multiple formats, including e-book, large print, print, and audio and e-audio formats. We will also be assessing popular databases.
- Research new ways to promote the collection in the library and virtually.

3. Information Technology:

Goal: A library that is responsive to technology advancement and community and staff technology needs.

- The investment is to improve information technology to enhance library services.

Some of the ways we intend to reach the goal are:

- In 2021 the library will reinstate programs such as computer classes and one-on-one technology assistance. These were two areas identified in the community surveys as a need in the community.
- Community surveys indicate a strong interest in e-books. We have already invested significantly in this area as a direct result of the pandemic. Still, we will continue to do so, making it even easier for people to access digital materials.
- We will continue to offer video tutorials on using library materials and services and utilize virtual meeting platforms such as GoToWebinar to conduct classes online.
- In 2021 the library will launch a new website that improves functionality, responsiveness, accessibility, ease of use, and aesthetics. An example of this is updating the programming/events calendar for maximum searchability, allowing the user to filter between children, teens, adults' events, special events, and ongoing events.
- We will focus on improving the accessibility of library technology to patrons in the library. An example of this is the installation of a new patron printer and updated software on public computers.

4. Staff:

Goal: A well-trained and efficient staff that delivers service in the most effective way.

- We will Implement organized approaches to staff development.

Some of the ways we intend to reach this goal are:

- Develop a training plan to teach staff to be library advocates. A part of this plan is creating staff development workshops that focus on communication skills, marketing, and advocacy.
- Organize a formal staff mentoring program, where staff can strengthen their job skills, learn new skills, and identify and work on career goals.
- Develop a plan for recognition of individual and team success.
- Provide more formal training opportunities for staff. An example of this is training all staff on collecting library statistics to support the Strategic Plan.

5. Outreach:

Goal: A well-connected library that reaches all members of the community with impactful library services.

- Improve community connection to strengthen the effectiveness of library services

Some ways we intend to meet this goal are:

- Continue to collaborate with community organizations to develop new programs to address some of our community's needs and help those organizations in any way we can with their mission. An example of this is working with the *SNAP-Ed Nutritionist through Cornell Cooperative Extension* to create videos on applying for SNAP, nutrition, and cooking.
- Develop a volunteer program that involves community members as library ambassadors. They might speak about library services to groups or organizations they belong to, attend community events in support of the library, and serve on library committees that help with programs, outreach, and fundraising.
- Visit organizations and locations in the community to host live storytimes and pop-up events. An example of a pop-up would be library staff visiting public parks with book sale books, information on programs, and crafts for kids.

6. Public Relations:

Goal: A community that understands the role, services and importance of the library.

- Create a campaign that celebrates the library's history and continuing its vital role in the community.

Some ways we intend to meet this goal are:

- Utilize all media platforms to communicate the library's services in unique and exciting ways.
- Embrace radio, video, and e-news formats to get information out to the community. An example of this is growing our e-newsletter and creating e-blasts for specific audiences, such as those interested in children's programming, adult services, programming or events, genealogy, and local history research.
- Involve staff, patrons and volunteers in public relations by featuring them in stories, videos and targeted messaging.

7. Facility:

Goal: A library facility that is well maintained and provides appropriate access to relevant services.

- We will promote effective stewardship of the building and natural environment.

Some of the ways we intend to meet this goal are:

- Dedicate more time to building and grounds upkeep by investing in a facility assistant.

- Review the library's landscape and improve appearance and through landscaping and maintenance projects both indoor and outdoor.
- Remark handicap accessible parking spots to ensure they are visible to the public.
- Address community survey concerns regarding safety and security in the library by investing in a part-time security guard.
- Review the library's indoor space to accommodate new technologies and services.

8. Revenue:

Goal: A library that is sustainable for generations to come.

- We will make continued improvements in the stewardship of the library's resources.

Some of the ways we intend to meet this goal are:

- Create a fundraising plan that evolves yearly to include new ideas and community involvement. The plan will also replace fundraisers that have run their course and identify challenges that might arise, such as this year's Annual Run for Literacy adapting to an online fundraiser due to COVID.
- Maintain a yearly grant management plan that anticipates library needs, is open to change, and embraces all opportunities. The master plan recognizes that grants are supportive and align with the library's Strategic Plan.
- Creatively communicate with the community more about the library's fundraising, grant writing, and donation goals. An example of this is including periodic PR updates on fundraisers such a GiveBig CHQ with photos that show the impact of the fundraiser on the library and the community.
- Involve staff in all aspects of the grant management plan, including writing, execution and promotion.