JERSEY CITY FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY
STRATEGIC PLAN
2020
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OVERVIEW

OUR COMMITMENTS

We will transform our work by embedding the following commitments into the implementation of our Strategic Plan:

- We condemn systemic racism and work actively to support anti-racism efforts in our community.

- We steward our intellectual and physical resources, and the public funds which support our libraries.

- We advocate for the needs and interests of under-served individuals and groups within our communities.

- We pursue excellence in our collections, programs, services and engagements and seek continual improvement to ameliorate inequities.

- We provide leadership by innovating to meet community needs, developing best practices for urban libraries and creating a work environment that encourages learning and growth.

- We honor and celebrate the diverse cultural heritage throughout our communities with engaging services and programming.

OUR VISION

We embrace and empower all people to strive for their dreams and goals, while building a just and sustainable community.

OUR MISSION

We promote lifelong learning and cultivate equity in our community through innovative programs, engaging collections, welcoming spaces, and committed staff.

Jeffrey Trzeciak
Library Director
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS & GOALS

1 SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Expand access to quality programs, resources and services that meet the changing needs of individuals in our community.

- Create a comprehensive collection development strategy that emphasizes resources the community wants and needs.
- Foster a culture of continuous assessment.
- Develop and enhance tools to share positive and inspiring news, thoughts, ideas, and information about services and programs.
- Engage with patrons to encourage use of staff expertise as well as materials.
- Become a national model for urban libraries.

2 HEALTHY COMMUNITY

Provide the tools that help individuals build strong, healthy and informed lives.

- Identify and raise awareness around the issues that affect healthy lives of all residents.
- Design programs and services that inspire and support healthy living, with emphasis on:
  - older individuals
  - immigrants and refugees
  - persons with disabilities
  - persons experiencing or at risk of homelessness
- Identify new and creative ways to adapt and deliver Library services during times of crisis that address the community’s needs for economic, social and personal recovery.

3 LIFELONG LEARNING

Strengthen literacy skills to inspire continuous growth in ourselves and in the community.

- Create programs and services that serve the needs of future and existing small business owners.
- Build a strong program of services, resources and events that support Job Seekers.
- Reduce barriers to information technology and the skills residents need to be successful.
- Develop services that promote media and information literacy development.
- Design and deliver diverse programs that serve the needs and interests of individuals and families at all ages.
- Attract and engage a community of readers.
4 WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Create and maintain physical and virtual spaces where everyone feels important, respected and celebrated.

- Optimize library website to enhance access to library resources, services and programs.
- Complete a comprehensive plan for the library’s future building and space needs.
- Create an environment where every patron and staff member feels equally important and valued.
- Remove physical and policy-driven barriers to access.

5 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Build and strengthen a shared sense of community that celebrates our history and is engaged in creating our future.

- Develop a comprehensive marketing, communications and outreach plan.
- Strengthen partnerships with primary, secondary and tertiary schools.
- Build relationships with multicultural groups to offer special programs reflecting on Jersey City's diversity.
- Use our position as the keeper of the community’s history to help build an inclusive and edifying sense of community identity.
- Be a visible partner to community organizations and take an active role in amplifying available community resources.
- Build relationships with the corporate community, to enhance the Library’s profile and offerings.

“ I am truly proud of the direction we have envisioned for this library. Our strategic plan reflects the involvement of members of our Jersey City community and of our staff. ”

-Jeffrey Trzeciak
The Library’s priority was to engage as many voices as possible in the development of this Strategic Plan, ensuring that a diverse range of perspectives would be included. This level of engagement was carried out in five primary phases of work:

Phase One - Launching the Work
- Steering Committee formed with Library employees from across the system
- Meeting with committee to identify expected outcomes and guiding principles for the work
- Identify key constituents to engage in the planning process
- Develop communication strategies to keep stakeholders informed

Phase Two - Environmental Scan
- Exploration of trends in public libraries around the country
- Research of peer libraries to identify potential ideas and relevant strategies for service
- Public forums to listen to ideas and concerns from the community
- Staff forums to hear priorities from those who know the Library best

Phase Three - Vision, Values and Strategic Directions
- Review input from environmental scan to identify potential strategic directions
- Work with committee members to develop a change agenda based on where the Library should be in 3-5 years
- Engage all Library staff in work to develop shared organizational values
- Develop draft of strategic directions

Phase Four - Goals and Initiatives
- Engage all Library staff in work to develop high-level goals for each strategic direction
- Identify potential initiatives to help move the Library towards its desired vision

Phase Five - Prepare and Finalize the Strategic Plan
- Prepare a written draft of the strategic plan to review with the committee
- Revise the strategic plan based on input from the committee
- Develop a strategy to share and communicate the strategic plan
- Plan for implementation of the new strategic plan
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- Plan for implementation of the new strategic plan
APPENDIX B: GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Steering Committee was committed to the following principles as part of the work to develop a new strategic plan:

- Focus on the future and what we want to become.
- Respect the past and the work that got us here.
- Be inclusive throughout the process to engage with many voices.
- We will make the library and Jersey City “hot.”
- Transparency is key to this process and to our work moving forward.
- We will maintain and support our core assets and services while thinking about new areas for growth and focus.
- We will be in synch with current/evolving thinking about best library practices and the role of libraries in society.

"JCFPL is well poised to deliver on its goals of service excellence, community engagement, healthy community, lifelong learning and a welcoming environment. This is attributable to the visionary Executive Director, the wonderful and dedicated staff at the JCFPL and support from the City."

-Curt Harris
President of JCFPL Board of Trustees
APPENDIX C: STEERING COMMITTEE

The Strategic Planning Steering Committee was charged with leading a transparent and participatory process to develop a strategy that will guide the Library’s work for the next 4-6 years.

- **Reena Campbell**, Library Assistant, Pavonia Branch Library
- **Elizabeth Cartaina**, Division Leader, Collections & Access
- **Ronalee Chatman**, Division Leader, Youth Services
- **Issac Green**, Program Specialist, School Outreach Team
- **Deyana Hopson**, Supervising Library Assistant, Earl Morgan Branch Library
- **Deborah Oriol**, Branch Manager, West Bergen Branch Library
- **Darnelle Richardson**, Division Leader, Lifelong Learning
- **Shane Smith**, Division Leader, Public Engagement
- **Cecile Tropel**, Executive Assistant
- **Jeffrey Trzeciak**, Library Director
- **Sharon Tucker**, Librarian, Reference and Research