

NORFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029



NORFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY
Creating a City of Lifelong Learners



CONTENTS

3 Executive Summary

4 Strategic Plan at a Glance

5 Vision, Mission & Values

6 Strategies

14 Norfolk Public Library Locations

15 Norfolk Public Library Support

16 Quotable Facts



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The last few years have seen many challenges and changes for NPL. As we work to usher in a new, exciting chapter for our library, our goal remains the same: to provide equal opportunity access to information, materials and programs while providing excellent service and civility. To achieve this, we have created the 2024 - 2029 Strategic Plan.

This Strategic Plan will provide the groundwork for Norfolk Public Library in the coming years. We have streamlined the thirteen previous Strategic Directions into five key Strategic Directions of Customer Service, Collections, Programs, Community Engagement and Communications & Marketing that encompass all aspects of Norfolk Public Library.

Within these pages, you will discover NPL's Vision Statement, Mission Statement, Values, locations and support network. In doing so, we trust that you will come to a better understanding of NPL and its importance in the lives of Norfolk's citizens. NPL is constantly growing, changing and evolving to meet the needs of the Norfolk community.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sonal Rastogi".

Sonal Rastogi

STRATEGIC PLAN AT A GLANCE

Strategy 1: Customer Service

Strengthen library staff members' ability to serve our patrons through well-crafted hiring, training and development practices, including expanding staff knowledge of community services.

Strategy 2: Collections

Continue to evolve and maintain a diverse and relevant collection of printed and digital books and resources that meet community needs.

Strategy 3: Programs

Coordinate and promote systemwide programming that focuses on early literacy, after-school, teen, adult, intergenerational and multicultural programs and events with an emphasis on inclusivity and celebrating diversity. Identify programming needs to connect and engage with residents.

Strategy 4: Community Engagement

Promote information and resources related to the Library, community services and organizations through Outreach, partnerships and promotional material. Provide library services to a variety of locations through Mobile Delivery. Increase external support through workforce enhancement: volunteers, interns, Federal Work-Study and Norfolk Emerging Leaders.

Strategy 5: Communications & Marketing

Cultivate an awareness of library resources, community services, agencies and organizations among residents through digital and print media. Conduct customer-oriented market research and evaluate the effectiveness of marketing methods. Cultivate community input regarding the effectiveness of library services and activities.

CUSTOMER SERVICE STRATEGY I

Strengthen library staff members' ability to serve our patrons through well-crafted hiring, training and developmental practices, including expanding staff knowledge of community services.

Rationale: NPL strives to be the heart of community learning, technology and civic engagement throughout Norfolk. We are a trusted, convenient destination where people feel comfortable asking questions and looking for information. A trained and devoted staff is the heart of good library service.

- The Library is committed to being a diverse, equitable and inclusive organization. Enhance recruitment efforts by partnering with organizations to employ a diverse workforce.
- Develop and provide an effective, comprehensive and consistent orientation program; administer ongoing training to keep staff current on practices and policies; conduct an annual Staff Development Day; and create, promote and facilitate development opportunities. Value staff contributions by recognizing and rewarding efforts that enrich the lives of staff and patrons.
- Provide career-related programs and instruction through partnerships with other local agencies such as the Virginia Employment Commission, Career Access Network and the Norfolk Public Schools Adult Education program. Provide adults with access to a fully accredited high school diploma program through Career Online High School.
- Educate staff in the nationally-recognized Family Place, YOUmedia and Maker Space concepts and philosophy to develop world-class learners.
- Increase awareness of relationships and resources among NPL, community organizations, local colleges and local government agencies.
- Use expertise to ensure that patrons find the most highly regarded and critically acclaimed works of fiction and non-fiction on the shelves in the library system. Ensure that patrons' item and InterLibrary loan requests are met efficiently.
- Offer diverse services that connect patrons to resources that will educate, inform, entertain and inspire. Maintain a high-quality array of resources for those seeking information, programs and books and research (readers' advisory).
- Promote both internal and external programs and resources via staff guidance, the NPL website, in-branch printed materials and the installation and use of digital displays. Provide programs educating the public in how to conduct research. Provide tools and resources such as books, computers, Wi-Fi hotspots, programs, training opportunities, databases and the Sargeant Memorial Collection.



COLLECTIONS

STRATEGY 2

Continue to evolve and maintain a diverse and relevant collection of printed and digital books and resources that meet community needs.

Rationale: Patrons rely on their library as a source of readily available and high-quality books, eBooks and materials to be informed, educated, entertained and inspired. The Freedom to Read is essential to our democracy; therefore, we make available a diversity of views and expressions. To create a City of Lifelong Learners, a strong book, eBook and materials collection is a priority.

- Strengthen the book collection so that Norfolk residents have ready and free access to a wide range of materials - from classics to fiction to important works of non-fiction to current bestsellers- in adequate condition and quantity.
- Provide materials in support of the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOLs) and provide sufficient copies of books on summer reading lists.
- Develop book collections and increase material formats to meet the needs of adult learners and senior citizens.
- Provide materials in various formats including eBooks, eAudiobooks and streaming media. Provide STEAM and digital equipment for emerging technologies. Purchase digital magazines, journals and databases to support researchers with accurate and convenient information.
- Ensure diverse collections to meet the needs of the community. Provide materials in languages based on local demand.
- Provide highly regarded and critically acclaimed works of fiction and non-fiction on the shelves in the library system.
- Use industry-standard data analysis tools to ensure collection quality and timeliness while striving to meet diversity, equity and inclusion goals.
- Enhance local history and genealogy resources in the Sargeant Memorial Collection through acquisitions, processing, digitization, research services and partnerships.
- Partner with community groups and individuals to enhance and expand collections by soliciting archival materials that illustrate the achievements and contributions of individuals from marginalized and underrepresented communities within Hampton Roads.



PROGRAMS

STRATEGY 3

Coordinate and promote systemwide programming that focuses on early literacy, after-school, teen, adult, intergenerational and multicultural programs and events with an emphasis on inclusivity and celebrating diversity. Identify programming needs to connect and engage with residents.

Rationale: Libraries are an important destination where members of the community can safely gather and learn, completely free. By providing a variety of engaging and educational programs for all ages, the library aims to foster resiliency, develop informed citizens by offering career assistance, life skills enhancement, parental education and support and more. With an emphasis on civility and lifelong learning in our programming, we are continuing our trajectory in creating a City of Learners.

- Identify trends. Adhere to local, state and national metrics established by educational and library affiliations. Develop, implement and promote social, economic and culturally diverse programs and events that are educational and appealing to patrons of all backgrounds and ages.
- Develop and promote engaging innovative creative spaces (Playscapes, KidZones, Nature Explorium, Art Studios, Maker Space Studios) as destinations for youths, teens, families and adults. Regularly upgrade our interactive learning spaces in all library agencies with an emphasis on ensuring equitable distribution of access.
- Conduct and promote early literacy classes to enhance language skills as well as provide STEAM programs to boost the development of science, technology, engineering, art and math skills.
- Actively educate children, parents and caregivers in the six early literacy skills: phonological awareness, vocabulary, print awareness, print motivation, letter knowledge and narrative skills.
- Conduct and promote programs and classes that offer life skills enhancement, career development and other opportunities for young adults and adults of all ages and stages.
- Develop and implement programs catering to the recreational interests and hobbies of adults, especially through partnerships and by connecting with residents.

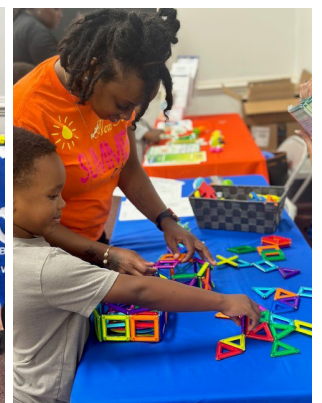


COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 4

Promote information and resources related to the Library, community services and organizations through Outreach, partnerships and promotional material. Provide library services to a variety of locations through Mobile Delivery. Increase external support through workforce enhancement: volunteers, interns, Federal Work-Study and Norfolk Emerging Leaders.

Rationale: Outreach and Mobile Delivery services make accessible informational, educational and entertainment resources to many Norfolk residents who would otherwise find Library resources difficult to use. Through partnerships and workforce enhancement, the Community Engagement Office provides NPL with critical low-cost support.

- Promote and provide information related to library resources, community services, agencies and organizations through Outreach and Mobile Delivery services.
- Represent NPL at parades as well as City initiatives and events.
- Provide library services to a variety of locations through Mobile Delivery. Provide seniors and young children with equitable access to library materials. Ensure that customers' item requests and InterLibrary loans are met efficiently.
- Identify and establish partnerships with organizations and local governmental agencies to promote and enhance library resources in new and innovative ways. Maintain Express Book Nook partnership with City locations to provide free literature and entertainment to residents.
- Promote the need for and value of library volunteers, interns, Federal Work-Study students and Norfolk Emerging Leaders (NELs) to the public. Work with local volunteer recruitment organizations and educational institutions to recruit individual and group volunteers, interns and Federal Work-Study students. Recruit volunteers and interns through recruitment websites and advertising. Process and refer volunteer and intern applications. Ensure all City policies are met regarding volunteers and interns.
- Coordinate NEL Program at NPL, including applications, branch placements, orientation and supervision.



COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

STRATEGY 5

Cultivate an awareness of library resources, community services, agencies and organizations among residents through digital and print media. Conduct customer-oriented market research and evaluate the effectiveness of marketing methods. Cultivate community input regarding the effectiveness of library services and activities.

Rationale: Communications and marketing are vital parts of library operations. Creating an awareness of the resources and services the library provides allows patrons to reap the benefits of these services.

- Create, maintain and update NPL website, social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube), digital displays, signage and promotional material, as well as provide City of Norfolk and community organization information.
- Provide access to local, state and national resources and materials related to stated community needs.
- Support new and ongoing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion offerings by promoting multicultural programming, cultural booklists, graphic bibliographies, facilities, etc., through website, social media and print marketing.
- Advance equity by installing digital displays at all branches to promote library and City of Norfolk services and programs.
- Collaborate with City, local and state media organizations to expand the target audience and reach of NPL.
- Ensure that City, graphic design and standard marketing guidelines are met throughout the NPL system to best promote NPL resources.



NPL VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Vision Statement

The Norfolk Public Library strives to build a city that believes in learning. When citizens are literate and have access to technology and resources, they can develop a love and active pursuit of civility and learning to last a lifetime. A city that believes in and enthusiastically promotes lifelong learning is a city where citizens are productive and everyone contributes to and enjoys a high quality of life.

Mission Statement

The Norfolk Public Library provides equal opportunity access to information, high quality book and multimedia materials, programs, exhibits and online resources to meet the needs of our diverse community for lifelong learning, cultural enrichment and intellectual stimulation. To fulfill its mission, the Library employs a knowledgeable, well-trained staff committed to excellent service and civility.

Values

In order to fulfill our mission, we believe in:

- Excellent public service
- Equity and ease of access to information regardless of means, age, race, background or beliefs
- Engagement with non-users of the library
- Provision of materials in formats that are most meaningful to the user
- The active promotion of literacy by intervention and the provision of independent learning opportunities through diverse collections, programs and services
- “Library Bill of Rights” and the “Freedom to Read Statement” of the American Library Association



A Snapshot of Spaces FY 2023

Space & Branch Operations



Library Visits

352,000



Meeting Room
Requests

2,100

KidZone Users

9,500



Playscape Users

2,400



Nature Explorium,
Studio & Collaborative
Space Users

3,100



Mobile Delivery
Users

1,200

Computer Usage
(Hours)

600,000+



Staff Training &
Development (Hours)

25,000



Strategic Plan in Action

FY 2023

Collection & Circulation Support

Top 8 Most Borrowed Books



Physical Items Borrowed

510,000



Digital Items Borrowed

150,000

Materials Processed

24,000



Inter Library Loans

2,600



Equipment Library Items

120



WiFi Hotspots

200

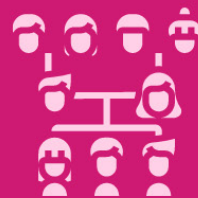
SMC Digitized Images

105,000



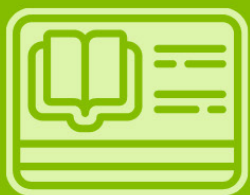
Genealogy Requests

500+



New Library Cards

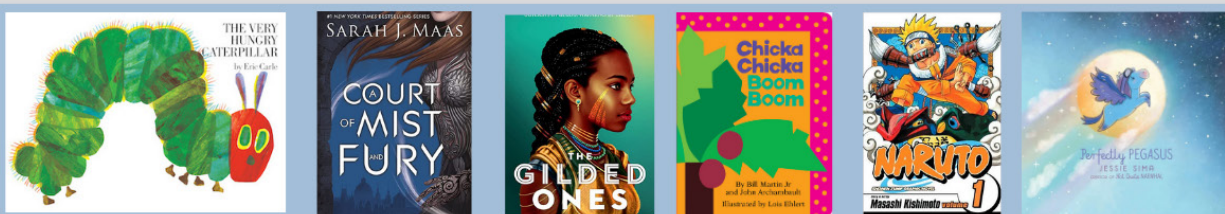
8,500



Total Active Card Holders

81,000

Most Borrowed Children's Books



Programming at a Glance

FY 2023

Programs Department

Summer
Meals

2,200



Free Books

1,100



SRP Minutes
Read

3.2 Mil



Youth Programs

1,400



Youth Program
Attendance

26,000

Adult Programs

550



Adult Program
Attendance

19,000



Technology Classes

200



Books donated to
Express Book Nooks

9,500

Outreaches

200+



Volunteer Hours

10,000



Website Visits

620,000



Social Media
Followers

12,000

Summer Reading
Program Registrants

2,000+



We're Going **FINE-FREE!**
on all library materials
FOREVER



Most Viewed
Social Media
Post

BELIEVE IN LEARNING NORFOLK

The City of Norfolk Lifelong Learning initiative, guided by the 2018 Mayor's Commission on Lifelong Learning, is the road map for innovation, resiliency, economic opportunity, and prosperity.



The Believe in Learning Norfolk (BILN) program developed as a result of the Mayor's Commission on Lifelong Learning. This initiative provides access to programs, resources and services throughout the City for residents across interest areas and across all age groups.

BILN has over 100 incredible partners (from senior centers to job training, universities to recreational facilities) each with a lifelong learning goal to provide a variety of educational resources to our residents. Throughout the year, BILN hosts in-person and online public events that allow residents to interact with partner organizations, increase their involvement in the community and reach their personal and professional goals.



DID YOU KNOW...?



NPL was ranked #2 out of 25 City of Norfolk departments, right after Norfolk Fire-Rescue in the 2022 residential satisfactory survey.

Libraries are the place for lifelong learning. 95% provide online homework assistance. 95% offer summer reading programs for children.



Libraries create healthier communities. 77% of libraries offer online health resources. 59% provide programs on finding health insurance. 58% provide programs to help people find and evaluate health information. 23% offer fitness classes.

There are more public libraries than Starbucks in the U.S. - a total of 16,568, including branches. Nearly 100% of public libraries provide Wi-Fi and have no-fee access to computers.



Libraries play a critical role in a community's quality of life. States that spend more on libraries, parks and other public goods are shown to have happier residents.

NPL TEAMS OF SUPPORT

NORFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Mavis McKenley - Chair
Charles E. Johnson, Jr. - Vice Chair
Molly Burns
Jane K. Goldman
Edward G. Lazonby
Roy B. Martin IV - Former Chair
Andrea C. Petras
Vickie H. Rogers

FRIENDS OF THE NORFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY EXECUTIVE BOARD

Bobbie Fisher - President
Jean Swartz - Former President
Rebecca King - Vice President
Perry Bussard - Membership Vice President
Jim Weckerly - Recording Secretary
Carol A. King - Treasurer

NORFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

Thomas H. Jones III - President
Dr. Warren A. Stewart - Vice President
Sonal Rastogi - Secretary
Marie Torrans
Joyce Hoffman

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2029 COMMITTEE

Trista Pope	Deputy City Manager
Mavis McKenley	Chair, Norfolk Public Library Board
Sonal Rastogi	Director of Libraries
Terri Raymond	Library Administrator - Programs
Paris Colburn	Library Administrator - Business & Fiscal Management
Sean Bilby	Library Administrator - Collection and Support Services
Jessica Harvey	Librarian IV - Branch Services Manager
Julia Rodriguez	Management Analyst III - Norfolk Public Library
Adrienne Gardner	Management Analyst III - Diversity, Equity & Inclusion
Dr. Erica Woods-Warrior	Consultant, Believe in Learning Norfolk Initiative
Patricia Kendalls	Library Branch Services Administrator
Sierra Sauls	Adult Services Coordinator
Victoria Lannetti	Public Relations & Marketing Coordinator

ACHIEVEMENTS

Norfolk Public Library (NPL) has made steady gains in increasing hours, programming, resources and spaces for patrons.

Here are a few achievements:

- In January 2023, NPL opened the Randi Marston Peterson Maker Studio at the Mary D. Pretlow Anchor Branch Library. Located on the first floor of Pretlow, it provides NPL patrons free access to several areas of equipment: Recording, Photo/Video, Gaming, Crafting/Textiles and Coding/Robotics. Patrons can use state-of-the-art equipment on a reservation or walk-in basis.
- The Richard A. Tucker Memorial Library, opened November 2021, is Norfolk's third anchor branch location. This branch provides library services to the Berkley and Campostella regions of Norfolk and includes meeting rooms, conference rooms, a large Children's Area with a Playscape and Kidzone as well as Virginia's first Nature Explorium, an outdoor play area. A celebration of the legacy of Richard Allen Tucker, Norfolk Public Schools' first African American principal, this library boasts a sculpture and portrait of Mr. Tucker.
- NPL has gone fine-free forever! After a one-year trial period beginning on July 1, 2021, NPL joined over 200 libraries in America to successfully eliminate overdue fines.
- At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, NPL launched Express Book Nooks and Mobile Delivery to provide free literature and library services to patrons throughout the City. With the reopening of branches, NPL has continued these initiatives, including expanding the Express Book Nook network from four locations to seven.
- Norfolk values the Freedom to Read. Residents value freedom of speech and celebrate Banned Books Week. We are a read-and-let-read city.
- In November 2023, NPL opened the Innovation Hub at Jordan-Newby Anchor Branch Library at Broad Creek. This hub, which consists of a Memory Lab and a Teleservices Booth, provides new ways for patrons to digitize files and receive remote services.

LIBRARY LOCATIONS



Norfolk Public Library Administrative Offices and Service Center

1155 Pineridge Road
(757) 664-7328
Square Footage: 42,000



Barron F. Black Branch Library
6700 East Tanners Creek Drive
757-441-5806
Square Footage: 5,950



Blyden Branch Library
879 E. Princess Anne Road
757-441-2852
Square Footage: 3,570



Janaf Branch Library
124 Janaf Shopping Center
757-441-5660
Square Footage: 3,570



Jordan-Newby Anchor Branch Library at Broad Creek
1425 Norchester Ave.
757-823-4800
Square Footage: 28,200



Lafayette Branch Library
1610 Cromwell Drive
757-441-2842
Square Footage: 6,750



Larchmont Branch Library
6525 Hampton Blvd.
757-441-5335
Square Footage: 6,990

LIBRARY LOCATIONS



Little Creek Branch Library

7853 Tarpon Place
757-441-1751
Square Footage: 6,700



Mary D. Pretlow Anchor Branch Library

111 W. Ocean View Ave.
757-441-1750
Square Footage: 32,500



Norfolk Fitness & Wellness Center

7300 Newport Ave.
Coming Soon!



Park Place Branch Library

620 W. 29th St.
757-664-7330
Square Footage: 4,000



Richard A. Tucker Memorial Library

2350 Berkley Ave. EXT
757-823-4200
Square Footage: 17,000



Sargeant Memorial Collection

235 E. Plume St., 2nd Floor
757-431-7249



Downtown Branch Library at The Slover

235 E. Plume St.
757-431-7491



Van Wyck Branch Library

1368 DeBree Ave.
757-441-2844
Square Footage: 6,325



Mobile Delivery

757-664-7328

UMBRELLA OF SERVICE

NORFOLK PUBLIC LIBRARY EMBRACES
LIFELONG LEARNING



Customer Service

Collections

Programs

Community
Engagement

Communications
& Marketing

DIVERSITY

EQUITY

INCLUSION