



STRATEGIC

PLAN



Lexington Public Library

**LEXINGTON
PUBLIC
LIBRARY**



FY 2025–FY 2027

TABLE OF CONTENTS

03

Acknowledgments

04

Letter from the Director

05

Process

06

Mission/Vision

06

Values

07

Roles

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LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

I am thrilled to unveil our new strategic plan, a collective vision that defines and reimagines the language and purpose of the Lexington Public Library.

This process has been a reflection of our commitment to continuous improvement and a sincere desire to better serve our growing community.

Over the past nine months, we have engaged in a reflective exercise, asking how we, as a public library, can best contribute to the well-being of our growing and changing community. This journey was guided by the expertise of BerryDunn, a consulting firm experienced in leading strategic planning processes with libraries and other public entities. Throughout this time, we prioritized meaningful engagement – both with our community and dedicated staff.

Our findings were insightful and encouraging. The significance of libraries in our community remains unwavering, and our community values what we do. In response, we have leaned into this appreciation, reshaping our values to align more closely with the aspirations and needs of those we serve.

Through this process, we have identified four main roles for our library going forward:

Community Connector: We are not just a library; we are a cross-class space, a free haven, and a source of knowledge for everyone in our community. A place to gather, share music, art, books, and connect with one another. A welcoming space for newcomers to discover resources and services.

Trusted Source: Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion permeates everything we do. We offer a quality collection in various formats, online resources, and a dedicated staff ready to assist with diverse needs, from technology to genealogy.

Learning Together: Learning never ends at the library. We offer a multitude of programs and Experiential Learning Spaces for all ages, creating supportive and non-judgmental spaces for exploration.



Community Space: Providing meeting and study rooms, we strive to be a free, comfortable environment open to all, encouraging gatherings and fostering a sense of community.

This strategic plan is not just a document, but a shared commitment to the future of the Lexington Public Library. Join us on this exciting journey as we continue to be a dynamic force for learning, community, and connection.

Thank you for being an integral part of our evolving story.

Heather Dieffenbach

Heather Dieffenbach, Executive Director

PROCESS

The Lexington Public Library FY 2025 – FY 2027 Strategic Planning process was rooted in community input, data analysis, and staff insights, embodying a forward-looking approach to meet the evolving needs of our customers. The process ran from July 2023 - February 2024. Beginning with initial project planning in July, we set objectives to frame a strategic initiative that was inclusive and data-driven. This groundwork laid the foundation for an extensive analysis and engagement phase, where internal discussions ensured staff insights were interwoven with our strategic ambitions.

From September to December 2023, the library implemented a multifaceted community outreach and staff engagement strategy. This included leveraging a Social Pinpoint project website to gather online

input, conducting over 40 key informant interviews and focus groups, attending 30 community events, gathering 685 survey responses, receiving 900 dotocracy votes, establishing six passive information gathering points, and hosting numerous staff information gathering sessions.

Also crucial to this engagement were a Community Task Force and a Staff Task Force. The Community Task Force was composed of a wide array of community members, each bringing forward the unique views and needs from different segments of Lexington's demographic spectrum. Similarly, the Internal Task Force included employees from various levels, locations, and roles within the organization, providing a comprehensive internal perspective. These groups each convened three times during the planning process to review findings and collaboratively shape the strategic plan elements.

All these efforts ensured the strategic direction in this plan is both reflective of the community's aspirations and aligned with organizational capabilities.



Engagement Numbers



40 INTERVIEWS AND FOCUS GROUPS



685 SURVEY RESPONSES



30 COMMUNITY EVENTS



900 DOTOCRACY VOTES

VISION

A curious community engaged in discovery.



MISSION

Our mission is to enrich and connect our community through welcoming spaces, engaged staff, diverse resources, and lifelong learning opportunities.

VALUES



EXPANDING KNOWLEDGE



ENCOURAGING CURIOSITY



CULTIVATING INCLUSION



STRENGTHENING CONNECTION



CHAMPIONING INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

ROLES



COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

We create a stronger community by meeting our customers where and how they need us and connecting them with resources, in our buildings and beyond.



TRUSTED SOURCE

We build a collection that supports our function as a trusted source for information. The collection reflects the diversity of the Lexington community and meets its educational and recreational interests.



LEARNING TOGETHER

Learning never ends at the library. Our programming, exhibits, and initiatives forge new ways for our community and customers to learn and develop new skills.



COMMUNITY SPACE

We are a safe and free third space for our community—a warm and welcoming place where people can learn, play, gather together, or simply be.



ENGAGED STAFF

We provide an inclusive culture for employees through learning and development, stewardship of resources, and a commitment to diversity.



COMMUNITY CONNECTOR

We create a stronger community by meeting our customers where and how they need us and connecting them with resources, in our buildings and beyond.

GOAL

Centralized Community Hub

The library will cultivate vital gathering places for the community that not only facilitate learning and personal growth but also provide targeted support for the most vulnerable populations, fostering social inclusion and aiding in the integration of newcomers.

STRATEGY

- Reimagine service delivery models to reach high-need communities with limited access to library services
- Be a resource for immigrants, refugees, and newcomers by connecting them to resources and services
- Strengthen community partnerships to expand library outreach and enrich learning opportunities
- Cultivate opportunities for connection and togetherness to alleviate loneliness and promote social inclusion
- Expand the library's reach and deepen awareness of all the library has to offer

MEASURE

- Number of outreach programs conducted and attendance rates
- Patron surveys assessing satisfaction with library support and services
- Increase in visits to library locations
- Number of targeted partnerships that are created and renewed
- Number of referrals to community agencies
- Attendance at Farish Theater events
- Visits to gallery spaces

Examples of Services:

- Outreach and off-site visits
- ESOL and citizenship classes
- Arts and culture
- Library programs
- Customer engagement
- Adult, teen, and children's spaces
- Strategic partnerships
- Volunteer opportunities





TRUSTED SOURCE

We build a collection that supports our function as a trusted source for information. The collection reflects the diversity of the Lexington community and meets its educational and recreational interests.

GOAL

High Quality Resources

Build collections and offer resources that expand knowledge, encourage curiosity, and cultivate inclusion.

STRATEGY

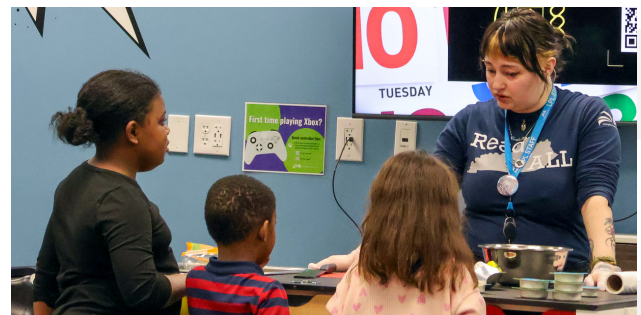
- Build a collection that accurately represents the community’s cultural and linguistic diversity through inclusive cataloging practices
- Use evidence-based software to evaluate collection relevance and diversity needs for selection
- Promote a love of reading in the community through author talks, book events, and community engagement
- Provide a structure that ensures collections are maintained and weeded correctly, and to provide selectors with the opportunity to learn more about each branch’s specific needs
- Provide resources that highlight Lexington’s past and present that include a celebration of who we are while accounting for inequity and racism inherent in the system
- Be a resource for a civically engaged community

MEASURE

- Targeted growth of collection materials in diverse languages and cultural content
- Targeted usage statistics for collections aimed at teen, youth, and language learners
- Patron feedback on the representation and inclusiveness of the library’s collection
- Biannual collection audits
- Number social media posts related to issues of civic engagement
- Number of programs and attendees at programs and events related to civic engagement

Examples of Services:

- Community reads
- Book clubs and writers groups
- Kentucky Room
- Website and database resources
- Digital and physical materials
- Book a librarian
- Reader’s advisory services





LEARNING TOGETHER

Learning never ends at the library. Our programming, exhibits, and initiatives forge new ways for our community and customers to learn and develop new skills.

GOAL

Broad Educational Access

Community members will enjoy wider access to quality materials, learning resources, and programs promoting empowerment, enjoyment, and personal development.

STRATEGY

- Inspire curiosity through relevant and responsive programs for all ages that reflect the interests and needs of our community
- Be a resource for job seekers in the community
- Provide classes to meet the needs of ESOL learners and to provide general print literacy
- Work with education partners to offer comprehensive opportunities to further education in the community

MEASURE

- Enrollment and outcomes in ESOL and citizenship classes and employment assistance workshops
- Program attendance
- Use of experiential learning spaces, including drop-in hours and program attendance, as well as examples of completed projects
- Formal and informal evaluation that provides feedback on the relevance and effectiveness of programs
- Increase in library card registrations
- Number of partners and number of targeted partnerships renewed

Examples of Services:

- Experiential learning spaces
- Children, teen, and adult programs
- Workforce development
- Reference services
- LPL after school
- ESOL and citizenship classes
- Literacy initiatives





COMMUNITY SPACE

We are a safe and free third space for our community—a warm and welcoming place where people can learn, play, gather together, or simply be.

GOAL

Responsive Spaces

Library spaces facilitate a range of activities and services, from quiet study to collaborative projects, ensuring that all community members, regardless of age, ability, or background, can utilize and enjoy the library's resources in a welcoming environment.

STRATEGY

- Evaluate use of spaces within all locations, and develop a plan for improvements and the creation of additional spaces
- Ensure library buildings are welcoming, inclusive, and easy to use
- Conduct branch needs assessment and refresh and replacement schedule
- Evaluate experiential learning spaces/equipment, including consideration of expanded hours, training opportunities, and expansion to all locations
- Prioritize environmentally sustainable practices at all locations

MEASURE

- Usage data of spaces, including occupancy rates and frequency of use
- Patron satisfaction surveys focused on the functionality and accessibility of library spaces
- Number of community groups and individuals using the library for meetings and personal events
- Evaluation of spaces to ensure spaces meet the needs of all community members, including those with disabilities
- Visits to the library

Examples of Services:

- Maintenance and custodial support
- Safe and secure buildings
- Community meeting rooms and study spaces
- Computer and wifi access
- Library operations





ENGAGED STAFF

We provide an inclusive culture for employees through learning and development, stewardship of resources, and a commitment to diversity.

GOAL

Culture and Organizational Health

The library will support employees' wellbeing by prioritizing collaboration, personal development, fiscal responsibility, data-informed decision making, and stakeholder accountability.

STRATEGY

- Support a diverse workforce where all employees are treated fairly
- Provide responsive and inspired service through data-informed decision making
- Cultivate a learning culture through trainings and conference attendance
- Align financial and operational resources with strategic priorities to ensure long-term sustainability
- Provide consistent, transparent, high quality communication at every level
- Create an adaptive organizational structure to support internal alignment and achievement of goals
- Regularly evaluate policies, procedures, pay, and benefits with an equity lens

MEASURE

- Scores on annual engagement survey
- Scores on annual DEI survey
- Learning and development courses, completion rates and outcomes
- Breadth of stakeholder teams
- Annual Friends and Foundation support and number of members/donors
- Employee retention rates

Examples of Services:

- Recruitment and onboarding
- Wellness team
- Learning and development
- DEI Task Force
- Financial stewardship
- Rewards and recognition
- Strategic planning and organizational development





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