

James L. Hamner Public Library

# Strategic Plan

2021 - 2026



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# Executive Summary 1

*How can the library provide free learning opportunities to Amelia residents of all ages?*

This question is the foundation of the James L. Hamner Public Library's mission, which guides this strategic plan. The plan contains ongoing goals that the library works to meet. These goals help to provide continuity, even as the plan is revised annually in order to avoid stagnation.

This plan is intended to help the library operate effectively - meeting its mission and the needs of the community with as little cost as possible. Without the community, there would be no need for a public library. Therefore, people are at the center of the library's vision of success.

*What is the library?*

The James L. Hamner Public Library obtained its charter in 1973 and is Amelia County's center for learning through all stages of life. According to the *Code of Virginia* (42.1-46), public libraries are part of Virginia's provision for public education. The library also serves as a community center, providing a place for people to connect with each other. A 21st-century library offers more than a warehouse of physical items; it provides a variety of opportunities for the community to access, evaluate, use, and create information.

*Why does the library exist? (Mission)*

The library exists to facilitate connections that provide free learning opportunities to Amelia County.

# Executive Summary, 2

## Continued

### *What kind of library should this be? (Vision)*

The library is a place that puts into practice the American Library Association's Code of Ethics.

The library strives to be consistent in its application of policies and procedures so that users know what to expect.

The library assumes positive intent.

The library seeks to serve all demographics in its service area.

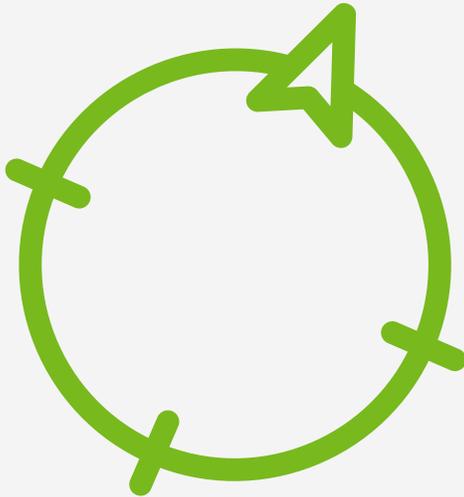
The library values technology.

The library looks for ways to make users' lives easier.

### *What are the library's foundational values?*

- The library is an educational institution that embraces a variety of learning methods.
- The library is a source of popular reading and viewing materials.
- The library seeks to provide access to relevant technology.
- The library values well-educated staff.
- The library is a place to meet other members of the community.

# Goals Introduction



**The strategic plan is a guide to help the library get where it wants to be.**

The goals are divided into three main categories:

- Community-focused goals are those which the library believes will best serve the community directly.
- Partner-focused goals are those which the library believes will help it serve the community most effectively in conjunction with other community organizations.
- Internally-focused goals are those which the library believes will help it effectively achieve its community and partner-focused goals.

# Community-Focused Goals

*What impact do we seek to have in and on the community as we work to fulfill our mission?*

- Contribute to users' well-being by providing positive human connection and saving them money through user-focused service, free meeting space, and physical and digital resources.
- Increase the digital and economic level of the community by providing opportunities for self-directed learning.
- Promote technological literacy by providing up-to-date or better technology services.

*What goals will help us to move forward?*

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## Technology

- Maintain computers with operating systems no more than one OS behind the current release.
- Provide new or experimental technology.

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## Public Relations

- Build a network of advocates for the library from community members who are not part of the Friends of the Library or Board of Trustees.

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## Facilities

- Build a facility that meets community needs, including meeting space for all ages and informed by the most current needs assessment and conceptual design.
- Look for resources that allow the library to be open for 8 hours on Saturdays.
- Look for resources that allow the library to be open after 5:00 p.m. on more days.
- Make the facility truly accessible for a variety of needs, not just ADA compliant.

# Partner-Focused Goals

*What are we trying to accomplish by including partners as we work to fulfill our mission?*

- Build a base of library advocates who understand what the purpose of the library is.
- Increase the community's understanding of what the purpose of the library is.
- Offer quality learning opportunities to library users.
- Supplement library workers' skills by utilizing outside resources.

*What goals will help us to move forward?*

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## **Programs**

- Expand partnerships with existing community programs and organizations.

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## **Public Relations**

- Promote collaborative projects with community organizations as a way to showcase library services and reach new users.

# Internally-Focused Goals

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*What organizational assets must be created or improved in order to meet our community and partner-focused goals?*

- Change the use of the physical space as benefits library operations and patron use.
- Connect people with already available resources rather than duplicating other organizations' efforts.
- Cultivate appropriately trained staff and support their continuing education.
- Determine the hierarchy of library services that require space.
- Evaluate the budget with the goal of increasing technology spending.
- Have relevant technology and the resources to maintain it.

*What goals will help us to move forward?*

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## **Collections**

- Continue call number clean-up.
- Continue patron catalog clean-up.
- Experiment with resources for the diverse demographic groups in Amelia.
- Inventory the collection in order to improve the accuracy of catalog searches.

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## **Public Relations**

- Create an official public relations program to be included in the 2022 Strategic Plan revision.

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## **Facilities**

- Establish a disaster recovery plan.

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## **Programs**

- Add programming for specific groups as needs are shown.
- Connect patrons with other resources rather than duplicating other organizations' efforts.

# Internally-Focused Goals, Continued

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*What goals will help us to move forward?*

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## **Staffing**

- Refine the volunteer recruitment and recognition programs.
- Create a formal employee recognition plan.
- Create a formal orientation for new Board of Trustee members.
- Send at least one part-time employee, at least once per year, to a training event provided by an outside agency.

## **Staffing, Continued**

- Have a minimum of two full-time and one part-time circulation staff.
- Hire a full-time Assistant Director who will also manage public relations (e.g. social media).
  - Creating and filling this position will be an integral part of succession planning.
- Hire a full-time Youth Services Librarian.
- Convert the Circulation, Programming, and Outreach Librarian to Technology Librarian (or other appropriate title).
  - This is not an IT position. The Technology Librarian will focus on programming related to technology (e.g. coding clubs, personal-device training).
  - This conversion will be dependent on hiring a Youth Services Librarian and Assistant Director.

# Conclusion

*Partners enhance library services.*

Working with community partners is historically a valuable part of how the library meets community needs. A modern library facility that meets community needs will aid in these partnerships.

*Building on strengths brings success.*

## People

- Maintain necessary requirements for staff positions, advocating for the conditions needed to hire and retain qualified employees.
- Provide consistent continuing education for all employees.

## Finances

- Continue to meet all requirements for state and e-Rate grants.
- Evaluate how expenditures meet community needs and adjust accordingly.
- Use grant and other funding to the extent that the cost of acquiring this funding does not exceed the cost of the grant itself.

As the James L. Hamner Public Library seeks to meet its mission through the goals in this strategic plan, it will continue to work with the community in order to meet most effectively the information needs of those served by the library.

# Acknowledgements

James L. Hamner Public Library Board of Trustees Planning Committee

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