

STRATEGIC PLAN

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The Plan

Anchorage Public Library's 2025-2028 strategic plan emphasizes internal order to enhance external engagement. By establishing a strong foundation and structure, APL aims to better serve the community through skilled, supported staff, and prioritized resources. The plan, developed with input from staff across all levels, focuses on addressing challenges and valuing staff contributions. It includes six categories with specific goals and action items assigned to workgroups. These workgroups will collaboratively implement the plan over the next three years. With this strong infrastructure in place, APL will work to address external challenges identified through community feedback provided as part of the planning process, as well as in the future.



Staffing

In three years, we will be successful if we have a well-trained, mission-focused, empowered, supported, and celebrated staff that wants to stay with us and serve the public.



Communication

In three years, we will be successful if we have optimized communication within the department to maximize comprehension, retention, and mutual accountability throughout the library team.



Safety & Wellness

Library work and library spaces have seen an increase in challenges related to safety and the mental and physical well-being of staff and patrons. In three years, we will be successful if we have intentional systems and operational strategies that prioritize health and safety for employees and the public.



Community

A survey of library non-users was conducted as part of the strategic planning process. Data from the survey will be incorporated into action items for strategic plan workgroups. Future community engagement will come in year three as capacity to receive and address feedback increases.



Operations & Change Management

In three years, we will be successful if all changes made are mission-focused and implemented with deliberate preparation, collaboration, and after-action review, improving operations in ways that positively impact patrons and staff.



Leadership & Team Culture

In three years, we will be successful if we have created reciprocal trust among all library leaders, staff, and the library community as a whole, with mutual accountability and consideration for each other.

Community Survey

As part of the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan process, Anchorage Public Library worked with Hays Research Group to conduct a survey targeting non-users of the library. This target was identified as a priority by the Strategic Plan Committee, with additional support from the Library Advisory Board.

The survey was conducted via text message to Hays database of survey takers, e-mail to APL lapsed users of one year or more, and a boosted social media campaign by Hays.

We received over 700 responses that generally represented patrons from all five library location communities. However, some users did not consider using Libby or Hoopla as “using a library” i.e building, so responses were more limited than we hoped.

After reviewing the data, the following trends rose to the forefront as the largest opportunities to help increase library usage or decrease stoppage.

- **Safety & Security**
- **Public Communication**
- **Time**

Safety & Security

Safety concerns were the primary reason reported for discontinued library patronage. 30% of respondents reported they would be more willing to use the library if the library became a “safer and more welcoming place”. APL will prioritize addressing security concerns for visitors, both inside and outside of library buildings, as well as a continuing to focus on safety in operations.

Public Communications

The survey demonstrated a need for increased external communication about libraries and the services they provide. ~29% respondents selected ‘I’m not aware of the resources or programs offered’ as an answer to the question ‘Please identify the main reasons you haven’t used your public library recently.’ APL will explore ways to expand and enhance public communication via public relations and marketing efforts.

Time

This survey made clear a common theme of time. Adults are too busy and do not have enough time to visit a library and/or they do not have time to use the materials/resources they would get from a library. Factors include their stage in life, locations are too far away or inconvenient, open hours are not convenient, materials and programs are not interesting enough to prioritize over other time usage, and wait times for materials too long. This topic will be tackled across departments and work groups to devise creative solutions.





Your Library

Mission

Connecting people to education, information, and community.

Vision

Our vision is for the Municipality of Anchorage to be an educated and connected community where our Library is an essential center for learning, inspiration, and community pride for people of all ages, backgrounds, and cultures.

Values

Access

- We welcome all people
- We are committed to reducing barriers to library resources

Community

- We strive to be a vital center of the community supporting the public with respect and dignity.
- We work to create an environment of mutual support, collaboration, and professionalism.

Integrity

- We endeavor to be trusted stewards of public resources by providing reliable and sustainable services
- We are supportive of each other, transparent in decision making, and mission focused

Learning

- We actively facilitate and encourage curiosity, literacy, and life-long learning
- We are open to new ideas and committed to evolving and growing with our community

Core Services

- Access to a diverse collection of materials in various formats
- Knowledgeable and approachable staff
- Access to internet connectivity
- Professional reference and research assistance
- Spaces for individual or group use
- Programming and outreach to support the mission and vision of the library