

# Long Range Plan 2021-2026



**RPL Headquarters (Salisbury)** 



**RPL East (Rockwell)** 



**RPL West (Cleveland)** 



**RPL South (China Grove)** 

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### Vision, Mission, & Areas of Emphasis

Responding to its Vision of "A knowledgeable, progressive, diverse, and economically vibrant Rowan County," Rowan Public Library has identified its Mission as:

# Inspiring the spirit of exploration and the power of imagination, promoting the joy of reading, and supporting the lifelong pursuit of knowledge for all people.

Accordingly, the library must respond to a diverse client base by providing a complex mix of information services in a variety of formats. Clearly, the library will continue to build its collections and deliver its services, even as it adapts continuously to the ever-changing demands of the local populace and the advances of emerging technologies.

In so doing, the library will focus on seven areas of emphasis in developing special efforts and concentrating its resources:

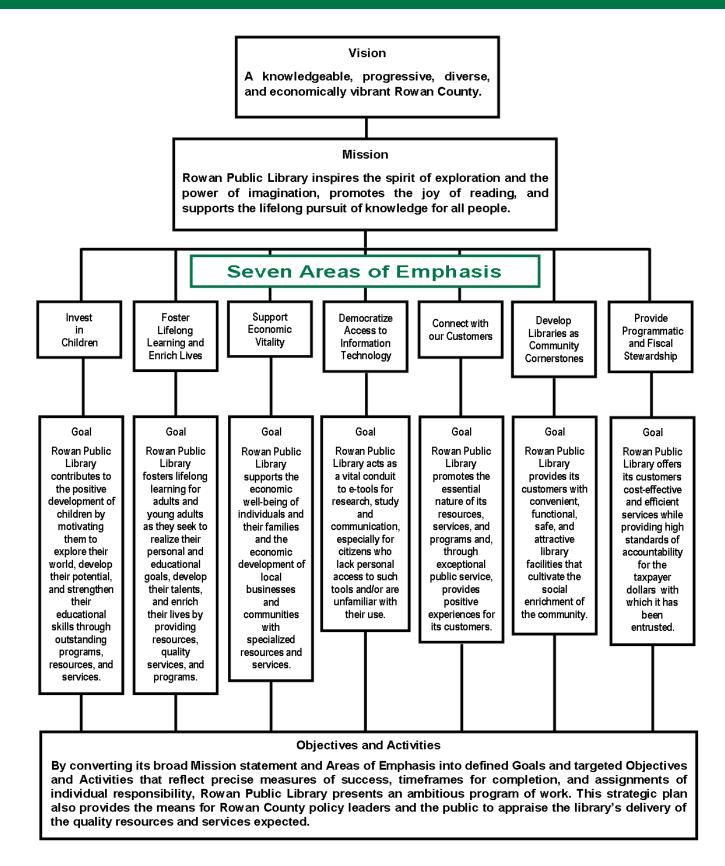
- Invest in Children
- Foster Lifelong Learning and Enrich Lives
- Support Economic Vitality
- Democratize Access to Information Technology
- Connect with Our Customers
- Develop Libraries as Community Cornerstones
- Provide Programmatic and Fiscal Stewardship

The pages that follow cover these areas in detail, listing a general goal for each and the specific objectives and the actions needed to attain them. Also identified are the library staff holding lead responsibility for successfully addressing each objective and the criteria that will determine whether or not that success has been achieved.

As a public agency, Rowan Public Library has an attendant responsibility to define its program of work in a manner that allows evaluation of its effectiveness, not only by its policy and staff leadership, but also by the public in general. This strategic plan provides such a means.

Along with the ability to measure the effectiveness of the library's program of work, it is the hope of Rowan Public Library staff, its Board of Trustees, and the Rowan County Board of Commissioners that this document helps guide the library system in growing its customer base and fostering the loyalty of those who will be library advocates and promoters.

### Framework for Accountability



### **Invest in Children**

#### Summary

- Contribute positively to mental, psychological, and physical development
- Promote the joy of reading through storytelling
- Provide year-round reading activities to strengthen reading skills
- ► Offer homework help
- Encourage lifelong learning
- > Partner with schools and preschool programs to strengthen learning skills
- Develop collections and programs tailored to the defined demographic
- Model teaching and storytelling techniques for caregivers



#### Goal

Through outstanding programs, resources, and services, Rowan Public Library contributes to the positive development of children by motivating them to explore their world, develop their potential, and strengthen their educational skills.

#### Create and update unique, attractive spaces especially designed for children and parents

Desired Outcome: Children and parents seek out children's services areas as comfortable, desirable destinations

- Activity A: Further renovate Headquarters' children's area with an updated theme designed for children
- Activity B: Replace worn furnishings in Headquarters' children's area, which will encourage children and parents to sit and read together
- Activity C: Plan a children's area at the new West Rowan Branch Library that will appeal to children and be seen as a desirable destination
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Library Services Manager Branch Operations Manager
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### **Objective 2**

#### Provide computer services that are educational and entertaining

- Desired Outcome: Children visit the library to use computers for learning and entertainment
- Activity A: Continue to evaluate existing software programs and services and discard those that are out of date
- Activity B: Find and evaluate new and innovative programs and services that have significant child appeal and implement the most valuable
- Activity C: Research and explore grant funding for updated and expanded AWE early literacy platforms in the children's areas
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Technical Services Supervisor
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget Grant Funding

#### Market the summer reading program with an emphasis on at-risk students

Desired Outcome: At-risk students improve their reading skills

- Activity A: Continue to evaluate and develop the program's annual implementation and marketing plan
- Activity B: Partner with the Rowan-Salisbury School System, Rowan Literacy Council, Crosby Scholars and Youth Council to identify and serve at-risk students
- Activity C: Incorporate a sensory storytime into the summer schedule
- Activity D: Assess and adjust traditional summer reading program schedule to maximize efficiency and staffing while providing optimal program times for participants
- Activity D: Utilize READsquared software throughout the year, taking advantage of special features (raffles, reading lists, expanded missions) This software is offered for free through the State Library of NC
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Library Management Team
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### **Objective 4**

#### Continue to expand regular storytime programs to incorporate rhythm, music, and art

- Desired Outcome: Children throughout Rowan County learn basic listening and rhythm skills, positively impacting their literacy, social and emotional development, pattern recognition, and learning of language and mathematics
- Activity A: Provide children with opportunities to listen to music and to create their own, using various instruments
- Activity B: Using various tools, incorporate rhythms found in books and music to develop pattern recognition
- Activity C: Provide crafts and basic art opportunities to expand imaginative thinking and improve direction-taking
- Activity D: Develop sensory storytimes and other specialized programs for children with disabilities
- Activity E: Supplement in-house programming by creating kits that parents can check out in order to teach literacy and employ manipulatives at home

Activity E: Incorporate ALA Every Child Ready to Read principles into storytimes

Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### Objective 5

### Design and implement additional programming targeting tweens (children in upper elementary school grades)

- Desired Outcome: Children view the library as a place for learning and entertainment in a fun, safe environment
- Activity A: Develop book-based programs focusing on current trends
- Activity B: Explore winter reading programs utilizing READsquared software
- Activity C: Continue partnering with the Children's Theatre, Livingstone College, the Rowan-Salisbury School System, and the Salisbury Symphony
- Activity D: Expand the annual bookmark contest into a regional contest that collaborates with other county libraries
- Activity E: Research and develop other programs of interest for the defined demographic
- Activity F: Develop and implement a plan to make the new programs reoccurring, consistent across the system
- Activity G: Expand social media presence with green screen storytimes using stories in the public domain
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Children's Librarian at RPL South Children's Outreach Program Supervisor
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### **Objective 6**

#### Continue to develop and expand the Books To Grow Program

- Desired Outcome: To provide patrons with quality programming and materials that encourage "Read Aloud" sessions at home on a routine basis
- Activity A: As public schools add more NC Pre-K classrooms, increase the number of classrooms that the library serves
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Children's Outreach Program Supervisor
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget



Books to Grow Kit

#### Expand Stories to Go by adding a second bookmobile

Desired Outcome: Centers on the waitlist (as of Spring 2021) take part in the Stories to Go program, and centers previously served have more frequent visits

- Activity A: Find and acquire additional vehicle for bookmobile
- Activity B: Acquire additional staff for expanded services
- Activity C: Develop rotation for the two bookmobiles to provide service to child care centers on a three to four week rotation
- Activity D: Create STEAM kits for classrooms to check out between visits
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Children's Outreach Program Supervisor Stories to Go Staff
- Cost: \$400,000 Annual Operating Budget





#### Professional development for children's storytime staff

Desired Outcome: Further develop the professionalism, quality and consistency of children's storytimes system-wide through training in storytelling techniques, public speaking, acting and vocalization skills.

- Activity A: Research and identify affordable training programs, online courses and workshops to develop storytime skills
- Activity B: Identify staff that are interested in and would benefit from additional training, have them share what they have learned with coworkers
- Activity C: Research and identify affordable training programs, online courses and workshops to further develop competencies associated with virtual storytelling programs including video and production technologies
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Branch Supervisors
- Cost: \$1,500 Annual Operating Budget

#### **Objective 9**

#### Implement 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program

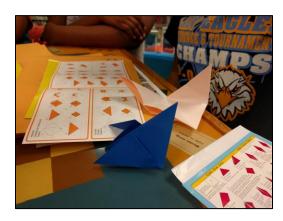
Desired Outcome: Launch this program which targets children 0-4 years old and their families to encourage early literacy skills

- Activity A: Research, identify and attend training/workshops for this program
- Activity B: Assign staff to design and oversee the program and work with the library's PR team to promote the program year-round
- Activity C: Educate all library staff on the how the program works and how they can effectively promote it to the public
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Branch Supervisors
- Cost: \$1,000 Annual Operating Budget Grant opportunities

### Foster Lifelong Learning and Enrich Lives

#### Summary

- Develop collections for recreational, informational and educational interests
- Create programs of interest to adults and young adults
- Support educational endeavors for students of all ages
- Answer questions from the very simple to the very complex
- Connect library users with computers, other devices, and online resources
- Provide opportunities for citizens to increase their technological literacy
- Support adult literacy programs
- Value Rowan County's rich heritage by collecting local history and genealogy materials and providing research assistance





### Goal

Rowan Public Library fosters lifelong learning for adults and young adults as they seek to realize their personal and educational goals, develop their talents, and enrich their lives by providing quality resources, services, and programs.

#### Expand program activities for adults and young adults

Desired Outcome: Customers enjoy a wider variety of programming on current topics, and program attendance increases

- Activity A: Develop a multi-modal program that incorporates both the physical and digital collections
- Activity B: Offer a workshop on how to preserve documents and artifacts; partner with Rowan Museum and/or film and archive for later use
- Activity C: Offer a variety of informative and self-improvement workshops for adults and young adults, such as legal seminars and scholarship application assistance
- Activity D: Continue to offer vibrant teen programming that utilizes input from the Teen Advisory Board and incorporates the library's makerspace
- Responsibility: Adult Services Supervisor Youth Services Supervisor Young Adult Librarian
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget Friends of Rowan Public Library NC Humanities Grants

#### **Objective 2**

#### Further engage teens in art and literature

Desired Outcome: Attractive, teen-oriented spaces allow for the creation and sharing of literature, music, and art

- Activity A: Continue to provide opportunities for teens to explore the growing media of digital technologies by accessing and using animation technology and 3D printing
- Activity B: Develop a Poetry Slam program for teens in conjunction with the Rowan-Salisbury School System
- Activity C: Develop and provide opportunities for teens and their parents to learn about college funding
- Activity D: Actively participate in YALSA-sponsored Teen Read Week and Teen Tech Week on a regular basis
- Activity E: Research and develop makerspace activities for teens

- Activity F: Continue to provide and expand summer reading for teens through online registration and tracking software that works with the current summer reading program
- Activity G: Redesign and relocate the Teen Space at RPL South (China Grove)
- Responsibility: Youth Services Supervisor Young Adult Librarian Children's Librarian, South Branch
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget Grants Other Funding to be Determined

# Continue to improve and expand local history digital archives available through the library's website

- Desired Outcome: The improved website attracts more traffic, which, in turn, attracts more visitors to the physical library
- Activity A: Select, digitize, and publish additional historical documents and online exhibits to the library's website on an annual basis
- Activity B: Develop and publish finding aids for current and newly acquired collections to the library's website
- Activity C: Microfilm, digitize, and index the McCubbins/Linn/Auxiliary Collection (professionally outsource this activity)
- Responsibility: History Room Supervisor
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget Grants Other Funding to be Determined

#### **Objective 4**

#### Improve and expand readers' advisory services for adults and young adults

- Desired Outcome: Staff are better able to assist customers and fulfill their reading, listening, and viewing needs
- Activity A: Identify effective web-based training materials and provide staff with opportunities to complete them
- Activity B: Evaluate usage of reader advisory tools
- Activity C: Expand and promote venues for readers' advisory (i.e. Facebook, the library's *Library Notes* column, display screens, *Goodreads*, etc.)

#### Responsibility: Information Services Staff Adult Services Supervisor Young Adult Librarian

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### **Objective 5**

# Partner with community theater and arts organizations to enhance these services in the community

Desired Outcome: Enhanced community opportunities for the arts in Rowan County

- Activity A: Pursue developing a storytelling amphitheater at South Rowan Regional Library
- Activity B: Continue partnering with agencies such as Waterworks Visual Arts Center, Piedmont Players, Lee Street Theatre, Rowan Arts Council, Salisbury Symphony, Center for Faith & the Arts, and Livingstone College on community theater and art projects
- Responsibility: Library Management Team Librarians
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### **Objective 6**

# Partner with surrounding county libraries and Rowan County organizations and agencies to promote reading for all ages

Desired Outcome: Extensive promotion of reading

- Activity A: Partner with other library systems and/or entities to offer extended reading programming (for example, RPL participated in the 2018 Great American Read, launched by the Public Broadcasting Service)
- Activity B: Participate in World Book Night and provide a site for book distribution to community members
- Activity C: Participate in Little Free Libraries, assisting with collecting books to stock Little Free Libraries in Rowan County and promoting them and maintaining the Little Free Library on the grounds of RPL West
- Activity E: Explore collaborating with area libraries to sponsor a library night at Atrium Health Ballpark, home of the Kannapolis Cannon Ballers.

Responsibility: Assigned Staff

Cost: Annual Operating Budget Grants Donations

### Support Economic Vitality

#### Summary

- Develop specialized collections for small businesses
- Enhance the quality of life in our communities
- Contribute to economic development
- ► Aid those in search of employment
- Promote adult literacy programs
- Support communities with meeting spaces
- Provide research and resources for Rowan County Government
- Collaborate on promotion of Rowan County



#### Goal

With specialized resources and services, Rowan Public Library supports the economic well-being of individuals and their families and the economic development of local businesses and communities.

# Promote the library as a quality of life resource to potential citizens and businesses relocating to Rowan County

- Desired Outcome: Local business and economic leaders recognize the library's significant role in enhancing the quality of life in Rowan County
- Activity A: Partner with local agencies, including the Rowan County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Rowan IDEA Center, and the Economic Development Commission, to promote the impact of library resources and services upon quality of life in Rowan County
- Activity B: Explore and identify promotional opportunities online, such as visitsalisburync.com
- Responsibility: Librarians Library Director
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### Objective 2

# Provide assistance and resources to community members seeking employment and/or development of job, career, and life skills

Desired Outcome:	Rowan County citizens are more prepared for success on the job
	market, enjoy a better quality of life, and experience skill development

- Activity A: Offer tech stops/classes on topics such as computer literacy, resume creation, job searching, etc.
- Activity B: Create pathfinding materials to assist patrons in navigating commonly used job-seeking websites
- Activity C: Collaborate with local agencies and JobLink to provide resources for job seekers
- Activity D: Hold an annual job fair at RPL Headquarters (Salisbury)
- Activity E: Create a resource guide for customers and local agencies to help them identify and utilize library resources to assist with employment skills and career development
- Responsibility: Information Services Staff Adult Services Supervisor Technical Services Supervisor
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### In coordination with the Tourism Development Authority and Rowan County Genealogical Society, develop a genealogy conference

Desired Outcome: Rowan Public Library and Rowan County at large are widely recognized as valuable sources for genealogy materials and research

Activity A: Study similar programs

Activity B: Create a task force to guide the creation of the conference

Responsibility: History Room Supervisor Technical Services Supervisor Library Services Manager

Cost: Not yet known

#### **Objective 4**

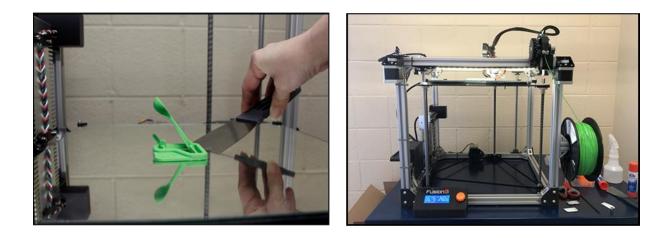
#### Promote entrepreneurship and the development of small business in Rowan County

- Desired Outcome: Those who wish to start businesses in Rowan County receive the necessary support, including guidance, information and services
- Activity A: Target the small business collections (print and digital materials, online resources) for enhancement and update promotion efforts
- Activity B: Collaborate with local agencies and initiatives to provide programming at the library on starting and/or operating a business
- Activity C: Provide training in office applications, productivity software, and online resources
- Responsibility: Information Services Staff Adult Services Supervisor
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

### Democratize Access to Information Technology

#### Summary

- Ensure that all community members have equal access to information technology
- Conduct relevant training programs on computer uses
- Emphasize the distinction between raw data and vetted information
- ► Incorporate current technology applications throughout the library
- Maintain a comprehensive, responsive, and easily accessible website



#### Goal

Rowan Public Library acts as a vital conduit to e-tools for research, study, and communication, especially for citizens who lack personal access to such tools and/or are unfamiliar with their use.

# Use information technology to make library resources universally available to the community twenty-four hours a day

Desired Outco	me: Library customers can use library resources and services off-site twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week
Activity A:	Further develop the library's digital archives for those who are interested in local history and genealogy
Activity B:	Enhance the library's web pages and include clearer headers to help guide users to digital resources.
Activity C:	Pursue development of the use of mobile apps for online access to library resources and tools
Responsibility	Library Management Team Technical Services Supervisor Information Technology Staff

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### Objective 2

# Ensure equity of access to emerging electronic technologies that improve access to information and resources for the community

- Desired Outcome: Library customers receive library information and materials through the easiest available means
- Activity A: Broaden public access to tablets and/or other mobile computing devices
- Activity B: Expand digital and audiovisual materials collections
- Activity C: Convert analog oral history materials to digital format
- Activity D: Evaluate electronic resources collection for potential expansion
- Activity E: Explore use of emerging technologies for children, teens, and adults
- Activity F: Improve access and functionality to makerspace and makerspace technologies to encourage creativity and spark curiosity in STEAM areas
- Responsibility: Library Management Team Information Services Staff
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

# Effectively use the Internet to best provide information about and access to library services, resources, and programs

- Desired Outcome: The community enjoys convenient online access to library resources and information about library services and programs
- Activity A: Digitize McCubbins & McCubbins Annex Files and other rare documents for public use
- Activity B: Continue digitizing and indexing the Salisbury Post newspaper

Activity C: Assist and support Friends of RPL and RPL Foundation to create their websites, thereby improving accessibility to information about their organizations and to online giving opportunities in support of the Library.

Responsibility: Information Technology Staff Information Services Staff History Room Supervisor Public Relations Team

Cost: Annual Operating Budget



#### **Objective 4**

#### Expand computer literacy programs with a variety of public classes

Desired Outcome: Citizens acquire basic and advanced computer literacy skills

- Activity A: Support and promote classes in basic computer skills, job seeking, audiovisual technologies, productivity applications, etc.
- Activity B: Provide individualized instruction through reference interactions with Tech Stop appointments for more in-depth one-on-one learning.
- Responsibility: Adult Services Supervisor Information Services Staff
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

### **Connect with our Customers**

#### Summary

- Dedicate energies to providing outstanding customer service
- Respond to and anticipate customer requests
- Recruit and hire a diverse, professional, friendly workforce
- ► Promote effective communication
- ► Train staff continually
- Promote the library, its services, and its collections





#### Goal

Rowan Public Library promotes the essential nature of its resources, services, and programs and, through exceptional public service, provides positive experiences for its customers.

# Develop and implement marketing efforts that focus on the reliable information, services, and program opportunities offered by the library

- Desired Outcome: Current and potential library customers are aware of the quality and variety of library services provided
- Activity A: Increase community awareness about library services with promotion of library programs and services through existing and new media outlets, including radio, newspaper, local publications, websites, social media, and local venues
- Activity B: Gather customer input as a tool to improve and educate the community about our services and programs
- Activity C: Enhance and promote community connections and civic participation by partnering with local organizations and groups, such as the Rowan County Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Rowan-Salisbury School System
- Responsibility: Library Services Manager Library Management Team
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

### Objective 2

# Provide customer service and library advocacy training to staff and board members that reinforces the connections between our services and the community

- Desired Outcome: Community members feel positive about their library experience and the library system as a whole
- Activity A: Provide staff customer service training that reinforces communicating a spirit of helpfulness and engaging with customers
- Activity B: Provide advocacy training for library staff and board members
- Responsibility: Library Management Team Library Director
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget

# Effectively use Internet and social media platforms as educational, informational, and communication tools

Desired Outcome: The community enjoys convenient, online access to library resources and information about library services and programs

- Activity A: Continuously update the library's website to increase visibility of primary services, promote access to resources and information, and provide timely updates about programs and events
- Activity B: Continue to utilize the library's Facebook page, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media platforms to publicize programs and events and to invite participants
- Activity C: Provide training opportunities for staff to learn how to create early literacy virtual programs
- Responsibility: Library Services Manager Technical Services Supervisor Public Relations Team
- Cost: Annual Operating Budget



### **Develop Libraries as Community Cornerstones**

#### Summary

- Enhance our neighborhoods with attractive and inviting facilities
- ► Maintain comfortable, safe, and secure facilities
- ► Plan for future growth
- Accommodate for facility enhancement and expansion



#### Goal

Rowan Public Library provides its customers with convenient, functional, safe, and attractive library facilities that cultivate the social enrichment of the community.

#### West Branch Library project

Desired Outcome: Build awareness of and a strong customer base for the new RPL West Branch in Cleveland

Activity A: Continue to work with library consultant(s) on interior design and selection of appropriate library furnishings and service desk

- Activity B: Continue community awareness campaign to build support for the branch
- Activity C: Continue to seek monetary donations to support branch collections
- Responsibility: Library Director Library Management Team RPL Foundation
- Cost: \$100,000 Annual Operating Budget Donations





# Begin evaluation for the addition of a new library facility or significant addition to East Branch Library

Desired Outcome: Initiate plans to expand services to the citizens of East Rowan

Activity A: Collect demographic and statistical data for the area

Activity B: Determine factors to be considered for library expansion in the area

Responsibility: Library Director East Branch Supervisor Library Management Team

Cost: Not yet known

#### Objective 3

#### Expand storage capability for local history and genealogy materials

Desired Outcome: Efficient storage that meets archival standards and permits the retrieval of materials while allowing the continued collection of important documents

- Activity A: Digitize materials so that information is accessible without requiring the retention of physical items
- Activity B: Install compact mobile shelving surplussed from the Department of Social Services in July 2020 and currently stored at West End Plaza in Unit D-2.
- Activity C: Conduct space needs study for the Edith M. Clark History Room

Responsibility: Library Director History Room Supervisor Library Management Team

Cost: Annual Operating Budget Grant Opportunities

### Provide Programmatic and Fiscal Stewardship

#### Summary

- Secure adequate funding for quality, cost-effective services
- Evaluate services, programs, and staffing
- Strategize to anticipate and meet future needs
- Utilize the latest technology innovations to achieve greater efficiency



#### Goal

Rowan Public Library offers its customers cost-effective and efficient services while providing high standards of accountability for the taxpayer dollars with which it has been entrusted.

#### Improve and expand staff training

Desired Outcome: Staff are better trained to serve customers well

Activity A: Update staff orientation program

- Activity B: Create new online training manuals that are division specific
- Activity C: Create new and/or make use of existing web-based training modules for efficient staff training
- Activity D: Establish quarterly rotating shift assignments between public service desks so that staff can experience working at all library locations
- Activity E: Develop in-house staff training opportunities for professional librarians
- Activity F: Incorporate more vigorous diversity, equity and inclusion training

Responsibility: Library Management Team Supervisors

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### Objective 2

#### **Increase Library Endowment**

Desired Outcome: Library collections are improved through increased funding

Activity A: Develop and implement signature fundraising event

Activity B: Develop new promotional materials for the Foundation

Activity C: Educate library staff about Foundation activities so that they can speak confidently and accurately about Foundation activities and donation opportunities

Responsibility: Library Director Library Management Team Rowan Public Library Foundation

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### Improve library system operations through reorganization of staff as needed

Desired Outcome: The library is more responsive to the needs of its customers

Activity A: Explore reorganization and work flows when a position is vacated

Responsibility: Library Management Team Supervisors

Cost: Annual Operating Budget

#### **Objective 4**

#### Seek additional means for improving operational efficiency

Desired Outcome: The library will reduce costs of operations

- Activity A: Evaluate collection practices and investigate more effective means of collecting overdue fees
- Activity B: Pursue system-wide booking software for meeting room use
- Activity C: Evaluate InterLibrary Loan services and investigate more effective means of providing this service and lower cost to customers.
- Responsibility: Library Director Library Management Team Supervisors

Cost: \$1,500

#### Objective 5

#### Develop integrated program for library energy efficiency and recycling

Desired Outcome: The library will be a good steward of natural resources

- Activity B: Adopt policy for using low VOC paints and finishes in library facilities
- Activity C: Replace lighting with LED fixtures as funding permits
- Activity E: Incorporate green building tech in expansion, renovation, and new construction
- Activity F: Increase use of recycled and renewable resources and products

Responsibility: Library Management Team Supervisors

Cost: Annual Operating Budget