

MOUNT VERNON PUBLIC LIBRARY



WHERE OPPORTUNITY AWAITS

Strategic Plan 2021-2025

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Resolution #025-23

MOUNT VERNON PUBLIC LIBRARY



THE MODEL OF CONSISTENT INSPIRATION FOR ALL

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Why Have a Strategic Plan?

- The strategic plan fulfills a registration requirement for libraries that are chartered by the New York State Education Department (NYSED), to ensure eligibility for federal and state grants and funding.
- The strategic plan describes long-range goals for the library's board of trustees as it fulfills its role of governance and fiduciary duties of "care, loyalty, and obedience." When goals are clearly defined with measurable outcomes, it is possible to know whether the goals were met. Achieved goals inspire confidence in the board's governance, which in turn helps to increase the library's capacity, levels of service, funding, and programs.
- This cycle of success will enable the library to continually plan and implement programs and offer resources that meet the needs of all communities served.

Shared Values: Our Vision and Mission

Vision

- The Mount Vernon Public Library is the model of consistent inspiration for all.

Mission

- "The Mount Vernon Public Library connects people, information, and resources to enrich lives and build communities."

Mount Vernon Public Library: The Model of Consistent Inspiration for All

Goals and Objectives

Goal One

- Community engagement to inform the planning of optimally relevant and impactful programs and services.
- Target date: December 2023

Objectives

- 1.1 Expand partnership with the Mount Vernon School District and other organizations in the City of Mount Vernon.
 - 1.2 Partner with city on community events.
 - 1.3 Review and revise internal policies and procedures that reflect the library's mission.
 - 1.4 Evaluate options to provide non-traditional library services, e.g., voter registration, passport applications, and adult education programs.
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Goal Two

- Explore comprehensive strategy implementation (Universal Design for Learning, i.e., UDL) that supports programs that are suitable for all targeted communities.
- Target date: December 2023

Objective

- 2.1 Implement UDL initiatives that will be diversified and inclusive.

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Goal Three

- To create an empowering atmosphere of healing that addresses the challenges and needs of diverse communities through education and tangible supports.
- Target date: August 2024

Objectives

- 3.1 To make meeting space available for self-help / personal development support groups and organizations, e.g., Alcoholics Anonymous, Double Trouble, CoDA.
- 3.2 Partner with professional organizations that address mental health and homelessness, e.g., Department of Community Mental Health (DCMH), National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), and Coalition for the Homeless.

Goal Four

- Increase participation in digital society for all communities.
- Target date: June 2025

Objectives

- 4.1 Expand access to update technology in the library.
- 4.2 Offer a robust technology training program for all ages.
- 4.3 Make the library the “go-to place” for residents needing assistance with technology.
- 4.4 Establish the library as the community’s help center for online transactions, e.g., job applications, online passport applications, government ID cards, birth certificates, Department of Motor Vehicle transactions, etc.

History of the Mount Vernon Public Library

- This library was chartered by the State of New York in March, 1896. Andrew Carnegie, the steel tycoon and benefactor of libraries, donated \$50,000 in 1904 for the construction of the building. The library, a neo-classical revival-style building, was designed by Edward L. Tilton.
- Additions to the library were made in 1909 and 1925. The first was financed by a second donation from Carnegie (\$20,000) and the second by a school bond issue (\$125,000).
- In 1929, another school bond issue of \$125,000 was voted to purchase adjacent property to provide room for expansion. In the late 1930s, a building program began to transform the library into what we have today. The ground-breaking ceremony in 1937 began the third addition to the new South wing and was completed in 1938.
- In 2014, the library became a school district library. No longer a city library, the library now presents its operating budget annually to school district voters for a majority vote. After years of declining funds, the library's budget has been buoyed by an enthusiastic public that approved a budget of over \$4 million for the library's first year (2014), as an independent institution. With this change came a commitment from the library's board of trustees, administration, and staff to work with the residents of Mount Vernon to create the library's shared community values.

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Shared Community Values

The Mount Vernon Public Library values the following:

- Excellence;
- Support for intellectual freedom;
- Literacy promotion that includes closing the “digital divide” with accessible and current technology and education;
- Respect for and inclusion of all people of all ages, interests, and abilities;
- Education to foster a healthy democracy;
- Strong partnerships;
- Adaptability and innovation;
- Professional, skilled staff development to assure excellence;
- Service to patrons with fairness and equality;
- Full accessibility in a safe environment;
- A culture that nurtures and champions lifelong habits of learning, self-improvement, and self-expression;
- Resources that are continually updated to meet the varied and changing needs in the communities served;
- Rights to privacy, intellectual freedom, and learning opportunities in a safe environment;
- Collaborative partnerships that achieve goals.

Results of the Community Survey

In spite of the pandemic, the Mount Vernon Public Library adapted a comprehensive study for the purpose of redefining its services to the communities it serves.

Questions asked included, “What library services are vital to the patrons, and what role should the library play in their lives?” “How does the library provide access to content, information, and entertainment

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while maintaining relevance, given the continually evolving technology?”

The study consisted of an assessment of needs, to learn more about the community’s perception of the library, to hear their ideas about how the library could be more useful, and how services could be improved.

Mount Vernon residents shared their ideas via a written survey and offered suggestions by participating in one of the several group discussions that included library staff, community residents, and parents of young children. This ongoing dialogue provided invaluable suggestions for the library’s future.

Communication was solicited with non-users of the library as well, thereby further assessing the positive and negative issues impacting services, and what expectations the public has for the future.

In conclusion, our community stakeholders and patrons desire optimal accessibility to the resources their tax dollars support.

Acknowledgements: The Strategic Plan Committee

- Timur Davis, Library Director
- Ron Hood, Chair
- Janelle Allbritton, MPH, Vice Chair
- James Carlos, Trustee
- Hope Marable, Trustee

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- Friends of the Mount Vernon Public Library
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