



*Toward a Sustainable Future*

SARATOGA SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
STRATEGIC PLAN OF SERVICE  
2017-2020

# TOWARD A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE: SARATOGA SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN OF SERVICE 2017-2020

## The Planning Process

For this planning period, the library employed a hybrid of planning models, based primarily on Planning for Results, developed by the Public Library Association, but incorporating elements of community information gathering suggested by the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation, and including assessment metrics suggested by the Public Library Association's "Project Outcome" initiative, which includes outcomes - measurements of the effectiveness of programs and services - to complement traditional outputs - measurements of how many programs or services were offered, and counting program attendees, circulation, library visits, etc. The steps in the planning process:

### **1. Determining Community Aspirations and Information Needs:**

To gather input from the community to help set our service direction for the next several years, this round of planning forewent the traditional process of convening focus groups and meetings of a committee of community members selected to represent various stakeholders, in favor of dozens of direct one-on-one interactions. All library staff members were drafted to go into the community to complete one-on-one interviews with community residents, including individual interviews with elected library Trustees. The product of this process is the **Community Vision Statement** that is included herein.

**2. Prioritizing Library Service Responses:** In *Planning for Results*, the Public Library Association suggests several "Service Responses" that include typical services that a public library might provide. Library leaders identified a number of these responses that best corresponded to the needs expressed in the community vision statement. The initial round of responses were shared with library trustees as draft goals, and subsequently shared with staff who helped to narrow down the responses to those that will be priorities for the next period.

**3. Setting Goals and Objectives:** Having identified our service priorities, we then identified eleven service goals for the planning period, along with objectives that include output and outcome measurements, and a timeline for achieving them with staff who helped to narrow down the responses to those that will be priorities for the next period.

**4. Identifying Activities:** Normally the final step in the process of creating the plan of service is identifying and prioritizing what we will actually DO to meet our goals and objectives. This process involves an inventory of what we already do that will help us meet our goals, what new or additional things we might need to do, and, given the resources that we have, what we might need to stop doing. If the previous steps of the process are mainly community driven and outward-focused, this step is primarily driven by frontline staff.

**5. Naming our Mission, Vision, and Values:** As part of this planning process, and in response to input from our residents about their community aspirations, we took this opportunity to review and simplify our mission statement, and to develop our own statement envisioning how library services can contribute to the aspirational vision the community has for itself. Similarly, we used time at a staff development day to catalog and prioritize our institutional values. Together, the new Mission, Vision, and Values statements included in this plan provide some guiding principles for how we carry out our activities in service to our goals and objectives to meet the community's information needs.





## The Community's Vision:

People want a diverse, lively community that preserves the unique character of Saratoga Springs, which combines small-town charm with unusually rich cultural, entertainment, and natural amenities; but they're concerned that overdevelopment is changing that character, and threatening to exclude some people from enjoying a high quality of life by making the area increasingly unaffordable for the middle class.

As people talk about those concerns, they talk specifically about a lack of affordable housing and public transportation options; preservation of our unique neighborhoods, downtown businesses, cultural institutions, and natural resources; and a lack of civil discourse among our elected leaders.

They believe we need to focus on creating opportunities for "everyday people" to have a greater say in decision-making, and if our area's many non-partisan, non-governmental and grassroots organizations, such as Skidmore College, Saratoga PLAN, the League of Women Voters, Sustainable Saratoga, Saratoga Preservation Foundation, Saratoga Springs Public Library, the Interfaith Council, neighborhood associations, the Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Business Association played a part in those actions, folks would be more likely to trust the effort and step forward.

## Our Vision:

At Saratoga Springs Public Library, we envision a community where individuals are appreciated for their uniqueness; our community is celebrated for its distinctiveness; and all our residents enjoy an exceptional quality of life because they are well-informed, civically engaged, and intellectually satisfied.

## Our Mission:

Saratoga Springs Public Library is a source for information, inspiration, and entertainment, which sustains and enhances the quality of life in our community by providing access to resources and experiences to help all of our residents satisfy their curiosity about the world, and participate fully in civil society.

## Our Values:

At Saratoga Springs Public Library, supporting independent learners is at the heart of all we do. We strive to foster a healthy democracy, to be a responsible steward of resources, and to be of service to one another and to every member of our community. We take pride in being a safe and welcoming place, where all are treated with dignity, respect, fairness, and compassion. We operate sustainably and transparently, and are excited by new ideas. We honor our traditional role of providing access to the written word, while embracing innovation in the delivery of services.



# SERVICE RESPONSES

## Saratoga Springs Public Library Will:

**Foster Early Literacy:** Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.

**Provide Opportunities for Lifelong Learning:** Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.

**Provide Resources for Reading, Listening, and Viewing for Pleasure:** Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options.

**Facilitate Access to Electronic Resources:** Residents will have high speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources available through the Internet.





**Collect and Disseminate Local History:** Residents and visitors will have resources they need to connect the past with the present and to understand the history and traditions of the community.

**Encourage Creative Expression:** Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment.

**Serve as a Clearing-House for Community Information:** Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.

**Provide Capacity-Building Support for Successful Enterprises:** Non-profit organization directors and their managers will have the resources they need to develop and maintain strong, viable organizations.

**Enable Civic Engagement:** Residents will have the information they need to support and promote democracy, to fulfill their civic responsibilities at the local, state, and national levels, and to fully participate in community decision-making.

# GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

## **Goal 1: Young children (age five and under) will develop a love of reading and an appreciation for the spoken word.**

1. By June 30, 2020, the circulation of easy books will be at least 31,000.
2. By June 30, 2020 , the number of young children (age five and under) attending a program in the library will be at least 13,000.
3. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of young children (age five and under) attending a program offered by library at a non-library location will be at least 1,650.
4. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of young children (age five and under) participating in the Summer Reading Program will be at least 150.
5. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 85% of parents and caregivers surveyed will indicate that the library's services for young children are very good or excellent.
6. By June 30, 2020, a minimum of 85% of parents and caregivers surveyed will indicate that, as a result of participating in library programs, children in their care have a greater understanding of how to use books.

### Selected Activities:

- Offer story times for babies, toddlers and preschoolers
- Select, acquire, and process library materials
- Present family-oriented programs
- Offer animal-related programs
- Help young people and their caregivers find and use appropriate library materials
- Provide display cases for young patrons to display personal collections
- Present story time programs for community groups in and out of the library
- Provide continuing education for staff

**Goal 2: Children (ages 6 – 12) will have the resources they need to satisfy their curiosity and explore topics of personal interest.**

1. Annually, the circulation of juvenile non-fiction will be at least 43,000.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 85% of children surveyed who were looking for information or materials to explore a topic of personal interest will indicate that they found something of interest to them.



**Selected Activities:**

- Offer summer reading program
- Select, acquire, and process age-appropriate non-fiction library materials
- Create educational exhibits
- Offer STEM/STEAM-related programs
- Help young people and their caregivers find and use appropriate library materials
- Make outreach visits to schools and other agencies
- Present story time programs for community groups in and out of the library
- Provide continuing education for staff

**Goal 3: Children (ages 6 – 12) will have materials and programs that engage their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.**

1. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the circulation of juvenile fiction will be at least 50,000.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the circulation of juvenile media (CDs, videos, DVDs, etc) will be at least 92,000.
3. Annually, a minimum of 7,000 children will attend a library sponsored or co-sponsored program designed to stimulate their imagination.
4. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of children participating in the Summer Reading Program will be at least 450.

**Selected Activities:**

- Offer third-grade library visit programs
- Select, acquire, and process library materials
- Partner with community groups to provide performing-arts related programs
- Offer family programs during school breaks and on weekends
- Partner with community organizations to present outdoor programs
- Offer after-school programs
- Present story time programs for community groups in and out of the library
- Provide continuing education for staff



**Goal 4: Teens (age 13 and older) will have materials and programs that respond to their current interests and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.**

1. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the circulation of young adult materials (fiction and non-fiction) will be at least 30,000.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 75% of teens surveyed will indicate that they found something good to read, listen to, or view at the library.
3. Annually, a minimum of 1,000 teens will attend a library sponsored or co-sponsored program.
4. Annually, a minimum of 75% of teens attending a library sponsored or co-sponsored program will evaluate the program as very good or excellent.
5. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of teens participating in the Summer Reading Program will be at least 150.

**Selected Activities:**

- Visit local middle and high schools
- Find an avenue for sharing library information with students and caregivers
- Select, acquire, and process library materials
- Offer fun and interesting summer reading program options
- Offer STEM/STEAM activities that teens can do alone or in groupss
- Help teens find and use appropriate library materials
- Provide continuing education for staff



**Goal 5: Adults and teens will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.**

1. Annually, the circulation of adult non-fiction will be at least 100,000.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 75% of teens surveyed who were looking for information or materials to explore a topic of personal interest will indicate that they found something of interest to them.
3. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 75% of teens surveyed who were looking for information or materials to explore a topic of personal interest will indicate the library's collection was very good or excellent.
4. Annually, 9,000 adults will participate in a library sponsored or co-sponsored program.
5. Annually, a minimum of 85% of adults who attended a library sponsored or co-sponsored program will evaluate the program as very good or excellent.
6. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 90% of adults surveyed will indicate staff were helpful in finding information or materials to explore a topic of personal interest.
7. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 85% of adults surveyed who were looking for information or materials to explore a topic of personal interest will indicate the library's collection was very good or excellent.

**Selected Activities:**

- Host a variety of topical programs for adults
- Select, acquire, and process adult non-fiction library materials
- Provide "if you like, then try..." lists for books and movies.
- Create topical displays of library materials
- Help patrons find and use appropriate library materials
- Partner with groups to provide services in and out of the library
- Provide continuing education for staff

## Goal 6: Adults will have convenient, timely access to a variety of new and popular materials.

1. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the circulation of adult fiction will increase from 124,475 (FY16) to 130,000.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the circulation of adult media (CDs, videos, DVDs etc) will be at least 240,000.
3. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 85% of adults surveyed will indicate that they found something good to read, listen to, or view at the library.
4. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 75% of adults surveyed will indicate that they received the material they reserved in a timely manner.

### Selected Activities:

- Select, acquire, and process library materials for the New and Popular collection
- Expand downloadable collection
- Place holds
- Help users find and use appropriate library materials
- Present programs for community groups in and out of the library
- Provide continuing education for staff



**Goal 7: Residents will have access to information technology and the assistance they need to use it effectively in their daily lives.**

1. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of PC sessions will be at least 65,000.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of people who connect to the Internet via the Library's Wi-Fi access will increase from 45,926 (FY 2016) to 55,000.
3. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 75% residents surveyed will indicate the library's Internet services are very good or excellent.
4. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), 75% of web site users surveyed will rate the Library's web site as informative and easy to use.
5. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of hits on the library's web site will increase from 381,418 (FY16) to 400,000.
6. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the use of licensed electronic databases will increase from 7,221 (FY10) to 7,500.

**Selected Activities:**

- Explore option of expanding time-limit on public PCs
- Maintain IT infrastructure
- Provide service remotely and wirelessly
- Expand downloadable collection
- Update/revamp library's website
- Provide wireless printing service
- Explore hotspot lending service
- Provide continuing education for staff



**Goal 8: Residents and visitors will have the resources they need to understand the history and traditions of Saratoga.**

1. By June 30, 2020, the number of local history questions answered will increase from 2,400 (CY16) to 3,000.
2. By December 31 2020, the number of hits on the Local History web page will increase from 3,095 (CY16) to 4,000.
3. By June 30, 2020, 85% of users surveyed will evaluate the local history collection as very good or excellent.
4. By June 30, 2020, the attendance at local history programs will increase from 1,000 (CY16) to 1,300.

**Selected Activities:**

- Collect and preserve a collection of oral histories
- Explore ways to expand shelf-space in Saratoga Room
- Present a variety of local history programs
- Create displays of local history materials in and out of Saratoga Room
- Assist independent researchers with questions about Saratoga Springs
- Process backlog of Saratoga Room collection
- Provide continuing education for staff



**Goal 9: Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.**

1. By June 30, 2020, the number of community agencies co-sponsoring library programs annually will be at least 12.
2. By December 31 2020, annual meeting room bookings by community organizations will be 1,000.
3. By June 30, 2020, 85% of users surveyed will indicate that when necessary, they were referred to the appropriate community agency.

**Selected Activities:**

- Collect contact information about local grass-roots and community organizations
- Create updatable database of community resources
- Promote use of library meeting space to non-profit organizations within the service area
- Partner with local agencies to offer informational programs at the library
- Consider installing a bulletin board for non-event-related community information
- Provide continuing education for staff



**Goal 10: Non-profit organizations will have the resources they need to develop and maintain strong, viable organizations.**

1. By June 30, 2020, the number of community agencies co-sponsoring library programs annually will be at least 12.
2. By December 31, 2020, annual meeting room bookings by community organizations will be 1,000.
3. By June 30, 2020, 85% of representatives from community agencies surveyed will indicate that library services and collections were useful to their organizations.

**Selected Activities:**

- Create guides to library resources about organizational development and sustainability
- Create updatable database of community resources
- Promote use of library meeting space to non-profit organizations within the service area
- Partner with local agencies to offer informational programs at the library
- Consider installing a bulletin board for non-event-related community information
- Provide continuing education for staff
- Identify agencies in our community with which to partner on presenting programs about sustainability topics
- Collect library materials in all formats about sustainability issues.
- Offer a number of programs designed to help non-profit organizations maintain strong, viable operations



**Goal 11: Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment.**

1. By December 31, 2010, the number of people annually attending programs designed to encourage creativity will be 200.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), the number of people using the library's 3D printer will be 60.
3. By June 30, 2020 (FY20), a minimum of 85% attendees surveyed will indicate that because of attending a library program, they engaged in creative activity.

**Selected Activities:**

- Expand offerings of arts, crafts, and writing-related programs for all ages
- Promote use of library's 3D printer
- Partner with local agencies to offer creative and making programs at the library
- Provide continuing education for staff



# Sustainability:

While not necessarily directly related to all of our service measures, the library's Trustees have identified sustainability as a value and guiding principle for many of our efforts for the duration of the present plan.

Particularly, our commitment to operating sustainably will focus on two goals for maximizing current and future generations' ability to live, work, and play in our shared environment.

## **Goal 1: The library will minimize its environmental impact:**

1. By June 30, 2019 (FY19) 75% of the staff will report that they have changed their behavior based on sustainability training and implementation
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20) the number of library suppliers from eco-alternative contracts will increase by 25%
3. By June 30, 2020 (FY20) 75% of our community members that are surveyed will report that they are aware of SSPL's Sustainability efforts

### Selected Activities:

- Join Westchester Green Business
- Complete an audit of library operations related to recycling and energy efficiency
- Investigate the feasibility of supplementing our current electric power supply with alternative sources of energy.

## **Goal 2: Residents of the library's service will be empowered to productively engage in dialogue about, and have the resources to ensure, a more resilient future.**

1. By June 30, 2020, the number of people annually attending library programs or meetings about sustainability issues will be 150.
2. By June 30, 2020 (FY20) 75% of our community members that are surveyed will report that they are aware of SSPL's Sustainability efforts.

### Selected Activities:

- Commit to the NYLA Sustainability Certification Program

**Saratoga Springs Public Library** is chartered to serve the residents of the Saratoga Springs City School District (pop. 49,070). It is governed by a five-member board elected by district residents. Funds to operate the library come primarily from school district property taxes, and district residents must vote upon increases in local tax support.

The current 58,626 square foot building, which opened in 1995, is located on 1.92 acres in downtown Saratoga Springs one block east of Broadway between Henry and Putnam Streets.

### **Library Board of Trustees**

Janet Lindner, President  
Steve Sheinkin, Vice President  
Dede Hill, Secretary  
Darren Drabek, Treasurer  
Frank Brady, Trustee

### **Library Administration**

A. Issac Pulver, Director  
Dan Hubbs, Head of Adult Services  
Jennifer Ogrodowski, Head of Youth Services  
Jennifer Ferriss, Head of Circulation and Technical Services

SARATOGA SPRINGS PUBLIC LIBRARY  
49 Henry Street  
Saratoga Springs, NY 12866  
**518.584-7860 • [www.sspl.org](http://www.sspl.org)**