



# RICHLAND COMMUNITY LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 – 2025

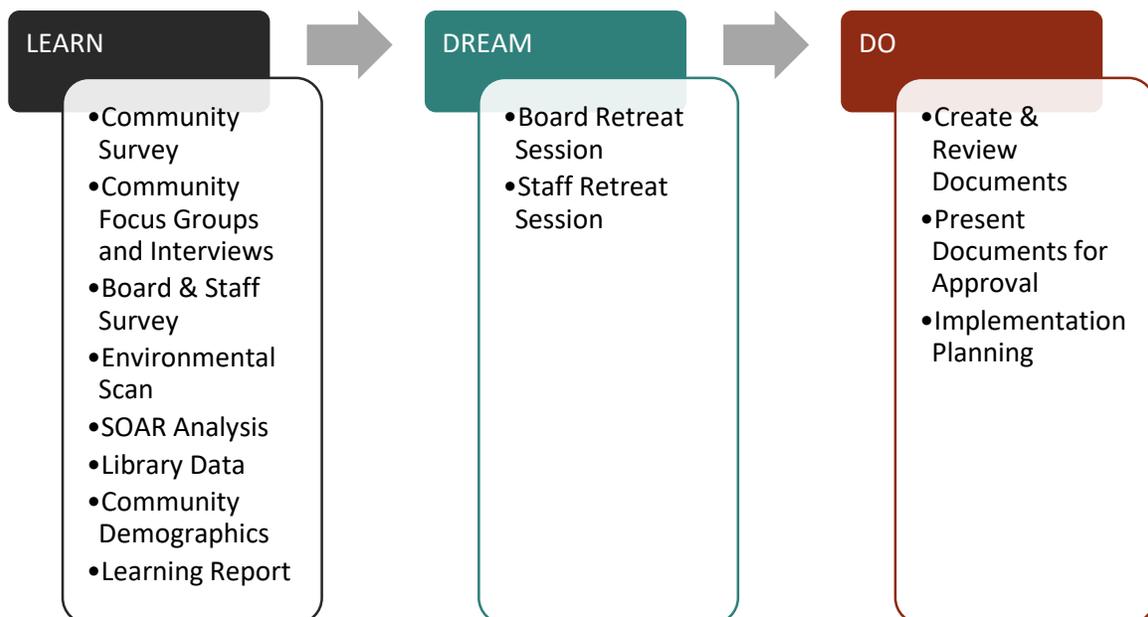
## OUR PROCESS

In September 2021, Richland Community Library (RCL) engaged with Amanda E. Standerfer with [Fast Forward Libraries](#) to complete a strategic planning process. With a strategic plan in place to guide the next three plus years, RCL will have a clear vision for the impact they are trying to achieve in the community. The strategic plan will support decision-making and align staff activities and budget.

The process was engaging and inclusive, with strong community participation. At each phase, Board and staff members considered community needs and aspirations. The process was guided by a Planning Team that included the following members:

- Deb Chassee, Board Trustee
- Carrie Dunn, Children’s Librarian/Programming
- Monica Hepner, Patron Services
- Karen McConnell, Library Director
- Anna Merritt, Assistant Director
- Marsha Meyer, Officer of RCL Friends of the Library
- Darren Sabuda, Board Trustee

Below is a description of the elements of the three phased planning process, which took place between September 2021 and February 2022:



## VISION & MISSION

The vision and mission statements in a strategic plan explain the “why” behind what the library is hoping to achieve in the community. The statements communicate to the community what they can expect from the library. The vision is an aspirational statement that articulates the result the library is hoping to achieve by carrying out its mission. The mission is a concrete statement that describes the work the library will do in order to achieve its desired vision. Below are RCL’s vision and mission statements:

Welcoming, inspiring, and connecting our community.

VISION

MISSION

We serve as a community hub by connecting our patrons to all forms of literacy, lifelong learning, and growth.

The following page is a one-page graphical summary of the RCL strategic plan, followed by details for the four strategic directions, each with two goals. The plan is grounded in what was learned from the community during the LEARN Phase of the process (see the Learning Report in the Appendix).

## Strategic Direction: ROBUST COLLECTIONS

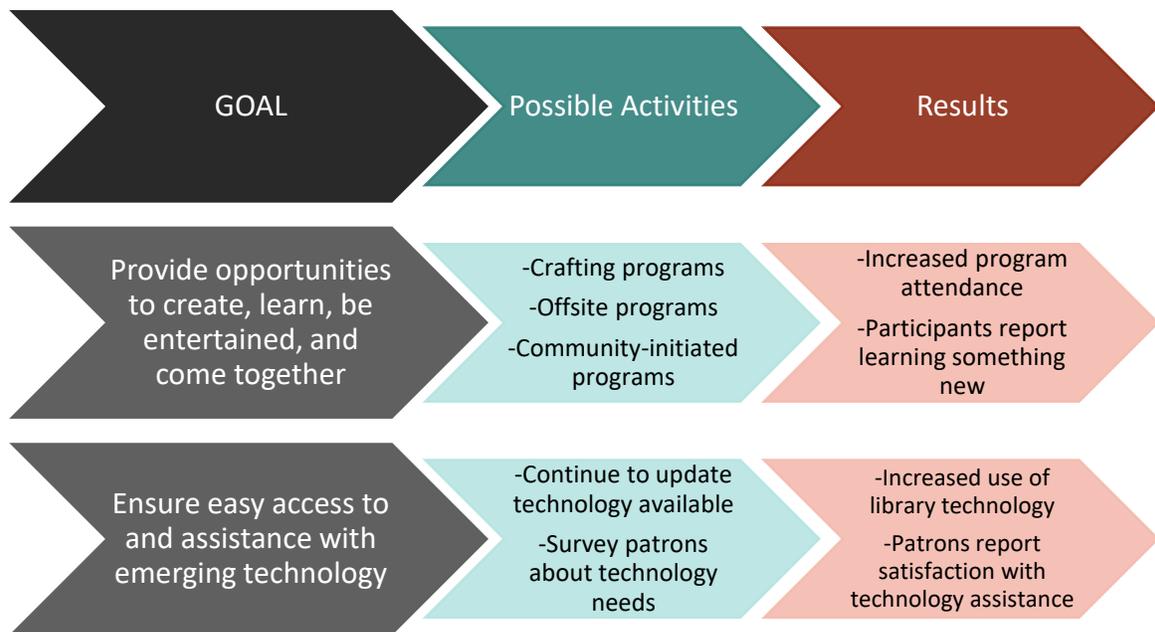
Building and providing access to a robust collection is the primary value of the library to the community. Library staff members are guides to the collection and experts in connecting patrons with the resources they need. Goals in this strategic direction will focus efforts on promoting the collection and making access easy. The library will also consider adding resources and formats that meet emerging community needs. Fundamentally, the library exists to promote reading and access to information. By working towards these goals, the library can be creative in communicating about what the library offers and connecting with readers in the community.



## Strategic Direction: ENRICHING PROGRAMS

Community members reported high satisfaction with library programs during the LEARN Phase of the strategic planning process. Data showed a need to increase programs, especially author programs and hands-on crafting programs. In addition, the library has the opportunity to offer programs throughout the community to engage with people in new ways. Goal 1 in this strategic direction will challenge the library to think about where to connect with the community by offering programming.

Goal 2 focuses on technology. Many community members rely on access to the Internet, computers, and printers at the library, so having staff members well-trained in how to assist patrons with technology needs is essential. In addition, community members reported looking to the library to try new technology that they may not want to purchase for themselves or only have the need to use occasionally. The library can spend time learning more about community technology needs and implementing new services to meet those needs.



## Strategic Direction: BROAD OUTREACH

The library is not just a building. This strategic direction focused on the ways the library hopes to be more present in the community to work with partners and community members. The library has already cultivated strong partners and will seek to leverage those relationships to reach new audiences. The library is a place of community connection and strives to include everyone by creating a welcoming atmosphere and communicating about collections, programs, and services offered to meet diverse community needs.

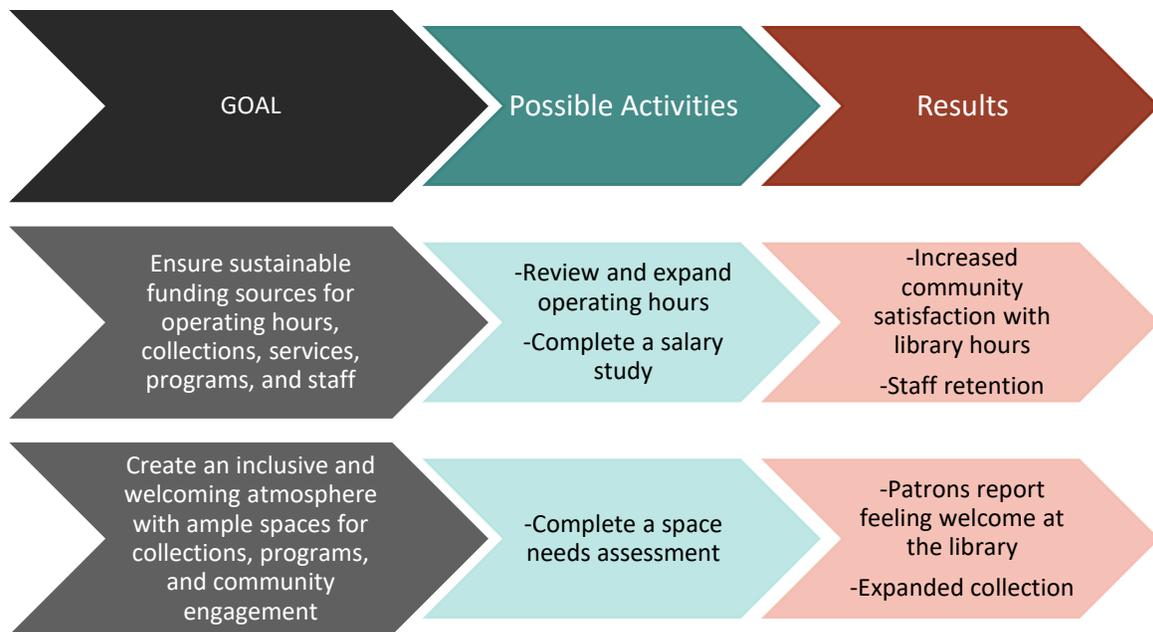
Increasing awareness of all aspects of the library is an ongoing and never-ending activity. To achieve the goal of expanding the library's reach, the library will seek creative solutions to be in unexpected places that will create memorable experiences. Engaging outside of the library building will ultimately translate to more usage of library resources and programs overall. By meeting people where they are at, the library can learn and adapt to ensure community needs are met.



## Strategic Direction: STRONG OPERATIONS

This strategic direction is internally facing to ensure the library has the capacity to achieve the goals detailed in this strategic plan. Sustainable funding, proper facilities, and well-trained staff are vital to everything the library does. Without these three elements, the library will be limited in the impact achieved by striving towards these goals. During the LEARN Phase of this process, data showed that the community wants more from the library – more hours, expanded collections, and more spaces to meet. Goals in this strategic direction will focus efforts on finding ways to provide the expanded services and spaces needed.

During the Board Retreat Session, participants committed to demonstrating the value of the library to the community to make the case for expanded services. Trustees play a key role in communicating with the community about the importance of the library and advocating for the resources needed to serve the community. Goals in this strategic direction will ensure the library is prepared for the long-term future to achieve goals beyond this strategic plan.



## NEXT STEPS

After this plan is adopted by the Board, staff will complete an activity plan to guide implementation. Implementation is a continual process, and the timing of certain activities will be determined by priority and influenced by various factors, such as funding and space. Review and adjustment of the activity plan will happen on a regular basis.

Evaluation of the plan will be ongoing once the plan implementation is underway. Measurements for each goal will vary, and some activities will be best evaluated by collecting data through patron and community surveys at regular intervals. Other activities will be evaluated based on information collected in-house such as circulation, usage statistics, and program participation. Some goals will be met by creating deliverables, like plans for community partnerships and a space needs assessment. Continued reporting of successes and challenges will ensure that the library is transparent about progress and open to community feedback.

The library commits to a comprehensive review and update of this plan at its completion. This plan will move RCL significantly forward by guiding next steps on plans for an increasingly welcoming and comfortable library, ensuring diverse and inclusive collections and programs, and expanding community connections to improve awareness of and access to our services. This plan is an investment in the future of the library as a growing and central asset of the community.