



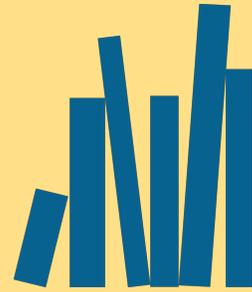
FANWOOD MEMORIAL LIBRARY

strategic plan | 2019–2021

By the end of 2018, the library had finished successfully addressing most of the goals detailed in the Strategic Plan 2013–2018, along with other significant operational and staffing objectives. The only real area left wanting was providing residents space and safe access: space for safe, ADA-compliant access for all library users; space for books, materials, displays, and storage; space for tutoring, studying, and collaboration; space for library and community programs and meetings; universally designed flexible and effective public space for staff, our local business community and Fanwoodians of all ages, interests and abilities.

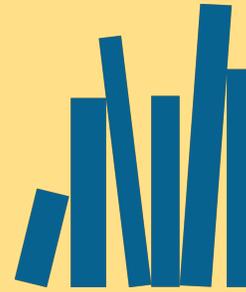
This new Strategic Plan outlines the library's goals and service objectives from 2019–2021. It will help guide us effectively through the next three years, enabling us to focus on and best serve the specific needs of all members of all the demographics of the Fanwood community.

contents



Background	3
vision / mission / goals	4
library improvement project	5
staff and services	7
community outreach	8
public relations	9
funding	10
2013–2018 strategic plan goals reached	11
moving forward	13

background

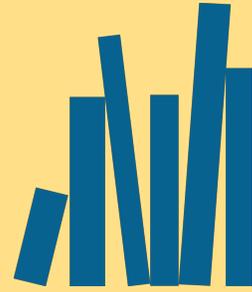


Since its inception, the Fanwood Library has evolved and shifted locations to meet the changing needs of residents. It began in 1899 when book club members wanted more choices in reading material. They donated \$26 and 156 volumes to the borough to start a free lending library. By 1928, the borough had hired a librarian and allowed the collection to fill the post office building on North Avenue. By 1951 demand for books had grown the collection to 7,000 books, and voters had approved construction of a new building, the first building built in Fanwood specifically for municipal purposes. Thirty years later, in 1980, the borough added a modest addition.

In the decades after the addition was completed, the technology age came into full swing. Now, in 2019, many activities under our library's roof would be unrecognizable to a resident from the 1920s, 1950s, 1980s, and especially the 2000s. While we still lend plenty of books (over 40,000 in 2018), residents visit our library to surf the web, check their email, use our Wi-Fi, fax a résumé, check out DVDs, and learn how to format a Word document. From home they download e-books, audiobooks, and magazines, learn languages, and stream films and videos. Families and kids make heavy use of our busy Children's Department and services. Library users also listen to storytellers, read quietly, attend programs, hold tutoring sessions, and gather in emergencies. In short, the Fanwood Memorial Library, the most heavily used public building in Fanwood, has become a community destination and a source of civic pride.

While preserving and expanding the best of our services, we (the staff, board, Friends, and residents) have already begun to transform our library. No longer just a book-oriented resource, our library is making the transition from the print to the digital age, from a repository to an active community destination.

vision / mission / goals



Vision

The Fanwood Memorial Library fosters the joy of reading, the spirit of exploration, and the opportunity for personal transformation for all ages and cultures in its role as a community hub, a gateway to electronic information, and a refuge in emergencies.

Mission

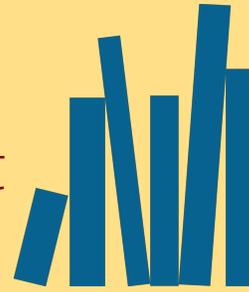
The mission of the Fanwood Memorial Library is to provide the space, materials, and services that residents of all ages and abilities require to grow and connect to each other and the world.

Goals

This plan seeks to build on the success of the last five years, complete the areas left unaddressed, build on our strengths, and expand our services for the future to ensure that all Fanwoodians have the modern library they expect and deserve. In continued support of the mission, the board and staff will focus attention in the following areas:

- 1. Library Improvement Project**
- 2. Staff and Services**
- 3. Community Outreach**
- 4. Public Relations**
- 5. Funding**

2019–2021 goals library improvement project



Finalize New Building Design

The need for a new, ADA compliant, energy-efficient, expanded building has been clearly demonstrated and is supported by all of the local stakeholders: the library, board, Borough council and the public. Now, more than ever, with the prospect of one-to-one matching funds available from the state, the time has come to act.

The goal for the next three years is to finalize the design for the new building, complete a successful application for matching funds from the Library Bond Construction fund and begin construction of the new library facility on the existing site. The new facility will provide Fanwood with a source of pride and a busy, active community hub that will effectively serve residents from 2 months to 102 years old now and well into the future.

The Building Committee and Library director will continue to work with the architect to refine the design with a strong emphasis on both form – how the facility looks and fits the neighborhood and the community, and function – how the building operates, is staffed and especially how it effectively serves all residents of Fanwood. With the grant application approved and the council commitment to provide the matching funding, we will work closely with the architect and the Borough Council to drive the project forward as quickly as possible. The board will also undertake a publicity campaign to inform the public about the new library project and the benefits it will provide along with undertaking a capital campaign to support the project.

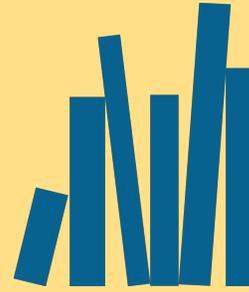
Parents with young children (and the children themselves), seniors, the disabled, and staff need universal design considerations and an elevator for safe access to all areas of the facility. The new building will be in legal compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act regulations regarding accessibility.¹

1. **Subtitle A of Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, Pub. L. 101-336** – prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability by public entities. Subtitle A protects qualified individuals with disabilities from discrimination on the basis of disability in the services, programs, or activities of all State and local governments. This rule, therefore, adopts the general prohibitions of discrimination established under section 504, as well as the requirements for making programs accessible to individuals with disabilities and for providing equally effective communications
www.ada.gov/regs2010/ADAregs2010.htm
www.ada.gov/2010ADASTandards_index

Both small and large meeting spaces are needed so the library can respond to the increasing diversity of populations and their needs. Individuals and small groups need quiet places to read, to study, to learn and collaborate and to gather without disrupting other patrons. Fanwood's business community, those who tele-commute or work from home and local organizations (Girls Who Code, Scouts, Scrabble Club, etc.) also need these small spaces.

At the same time, the community, the Borough, local organizations and library program participants require larger, flexible meeting areas to serve their various needs and prevent overcrowding and violations to the fire code. In addition, performance space is so limited that the library is often not able to accommodate all those who wish to attend and are restricted from presenting some programs.

2019–2021 goals staff & services



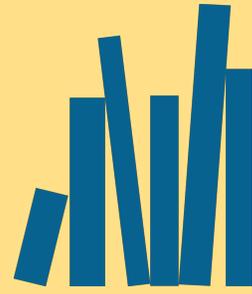
Staff

Staff members will embrace cross-training and redundant skills in all areas of library services to ensure continuity and to prepare for staff succession. Emergency procedures and on-site chain of command will be revisited regularly in areas including medical emergencies, structural emergencies and natural disasters (fire, water, weather, etc.), and situations involving persons of questionable behavior. All staff members will address the need for ongoing competence in technology troubleshooting skills to better serve all of our users' needs.

Services

The library will continue to provide both traditional library services (books, programming, early literacy, etc.), along with delivering access to other formats and services that reflect the community's needs. We will continue to emphasize web-based online services, website improvements, and the effective use of social media. And while we don't look forward to disasters, we welcome the opportunity to serve as a community social hub now and in the future when we have more appropriate spaces, and a shelter or refuge whenever needed.

2019–2021 goals community engagement



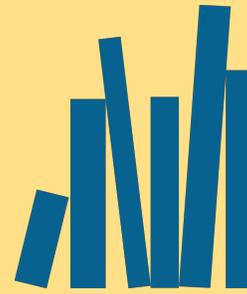
Strengthen Community Engagement

We will continue our focus on community engagement through outreach, programming and services to engage all demographics of patrons that use the library, and strive to attract new users. There are currently many groups who meet regularly at the library (Girls Who Code, Grupo ñ, the Hook and Needle knitting group, Scrabble Club). We look to increase the number of associations we are able to accommodate once we have larger meeting spaces.

The library will make efforts to engage the key patron groups we serve: young families, children, home-based workers, the local business community, adults, seniors and teens with programming, focused collection development, technology and online resources.

We will have a continuing presence and participation in local events like Fanny Wood Day and Rockin' for Autism, and others.

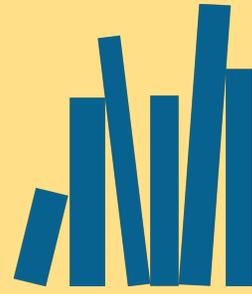
2019–2021 goals public relations



Increase Promotion

- Continue our effective presence on various social media platforms and seek out new ways to reach the public.
- Work with our council liaison to make sure library messaging reaches as broad an audience as possible.
- Utilize borough programs like the town wide weekly e-news blast, the train station sign, and local TV station to publicize the library.
- Expand the use of our direct email communications with patrons.
- Seek ways to maximize in-house promotion of our resources and services.
- Partner locally with retailers, clubs, and schools to develop and promote programs and services.

2019–2021 goals funding

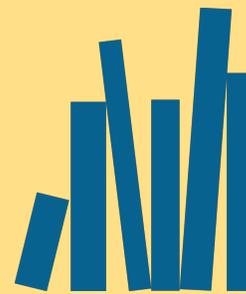


Funding

We will explore funding outside of the usual municipal support and build a greater understanding of the funding environment and opportunities. In coordination with the building project, the board will engage in a local capital campaign to raise funds to support the many 'extras' the project will need and help secure the support of the community.

At the earliest opportunity, the library will apply for one-to-one matching funds from the state's Library Bond Construction Act to provide significant relief to Fanwood taxpayers in supporting the library construction project. We will work with the Friends of the Library, the Fanwood Community Foundation, and other private sources and actively pursue other grant opportunities.

2013–2018 strategic Plan goals reached



1 *Developed New Building Design*

The primary achievement of the board and staff was the selection of an architect and the design of a new building, laying the groundwork in anticipation of the NJ Library Construction Bond Act to apply for 50% of the project's funding. Working with our architect, the staff, building committee and the borough council, we continued to refine the structure's details to ensure the new space will be an ADA compliant, efficient facility that will effectively serve patrons of all ages and abilities, especially:

- Families with young children, home-based workers, the local Fanwood business community, seniors, and teens
- Community organizations

2 *Improved Materials & Technology*

- Completed a major overhaul and replacement of IT equipment, improved connectivity, and wireless capacity with a high-speed static IP line.
- Increased subscriptions to databases, digital services, and access to e-books, audiobooks and streaming services.

3 *Expanded Promotion*

- Expanded and improved the website with a complete WordPress based redesign, and social media presence
- Published monthly e-newsletter

4 *Broadened Public Outreach*

- Hosted public meetings to discuss Fanwood Library Improvement Project (FLIP)
- Started a monthly e-newsletter, which currently reaches over 2,025 subscribers.
- Implemented email notification for check-out receipts, coming due and overdue materials.
- Greeted the public and gave away many free books at Fanny Wood Day.
- Polled seniors to identify the need for services and programs.
- Visited downtown merchants to make them aware of the library's service and discuss ways we could collaborate.
- Made community appearances with our LibraCycle BookBike.
- Supported and continue to maintain the placement of two Little Free Libraries in town parks.

5 *Improved Staff Training*

- Improved staffing, training, and coordination between children's and adult departments

6 *Outside Funding Initiatives*

- The library continued to seek alternative, supplemental funding, garnering several grants. Over the course of the Strategic Plan 2013 – 2018 engaged in a 'Close the Gap' funding drive that raised over \$10,000; the Friends of the Library underwrote most of the programming we did in excess of \$7,500 each year; we secured over \$30,000 in grants from funders like the Service League of Fanwood and Scotch Plains, the Union County Freeholders, the Fanwood Community Foundation and others.
- Representatives of the Building Committee met with the Fanwood Community Foundation to explore and agree to the possibility of their partnering with the council to accept donations.
- The Friends of the Library provided significant financial support for our robust programming offerings as well as other necessities not provided for in the municipal budget.

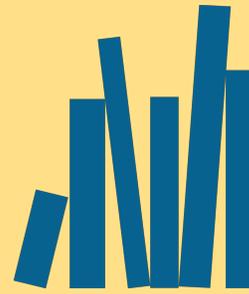
7 *Strengthened Board Operations*

- Broadened the committee structure of the board to enable small groups to better implement plans and reach strategic plan goals
- Worked with the Friends in promoting and hosting programs

Over the five-year period addressed in the 2013–2018 Strategic Plan, the library:

- Increased operating hours;
- Increased the number of people through our doors annually, especially in the last three years;
- Increased in-house public computer and WiFi use;
- Increased program attendance;
- Increased eBook and audiobook circulation from 1,101 in 2013 (the first year eBooks were offered) to over 3,090 in 2018, an increase of 180%;
- Increased the large number of online services we currently provide that were not available in 2013: RBdigital eBooks, AudioBooks, magazines, streaming content, SAT test prep; Kanopy streaming service, NY Times online, eLibraryNJ participation and more;
- Branded ourselves with a new logo;
- Completed complete redesign of the website, which moved to the WordPress platform.

2019–2021 goals moving forward



Wish list for the future

Beyond the goals detailed earlier, some specific projects and initiatives that are on the horizon for the library before, during and after the three years of this strategic plan and the construction project include:

- Finding the appropriate space and venue to provide library services to the community during the construction period.
- Utilize RFID (radio-frequency identification) tags for the collection to improve control, collection management, check out process – including self-service checkout and reduction of staff time, inventory, and weeding and minimize theft.
- Consider implementing a fine-free operation in concert with Scotch Plains.
- Implement automatic renewal of borrowed materials.
- Continue to explore effective ways to assess and meet the needs of Fanwood’s library community.