

HICKORY PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN
2019-2022



INTRODUCTION

In spring 2019, the City of Hickory Library Advisory Board began work toward a new library strategic plan. The Board worked with the Library Director and State Library of North Carolina staff to develop a community survey and planning process.

The community survey was distributed in April and May 2019 in libraries, at various community sites and online. Responses were used to evaluate community needs and aspirations and to receive feedback about specific library services.

The following plan was developed from the survey results. The plan envisions robust library services that reflect our residents' values and priorities and address community stakeholders' concerns.

As we work to best serve residents and visitors through new and existing services, our staff will exhibit the City's core values of customer focus, innovation and teamwork.



MISSION

Hickory Public Library promotes a high quality of life by providing empowering opportunities and excellent service.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Every service of the library will incorporate four key elements.

• LEARNING

The library encourages learning and literacy. We provide access to resources and programs to support personal growth, educational attainment and access to information.

• CREATIVITY

The library supports imagination, creativity, craftsmanship, innovation and entrepreneurship. We provide opportunities to turn knowledge and skills into action to make something new.

• CONNECTION

The library builds social connection by bringing people together around common interests. The library facilitates connections to local agencies for further growth and learning.

• FOR EVERYONE

The library is welcoming to all. We provide safe, modern spaces. We prioritize equity, convenience and ease of use in our policies and procedures.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

- **LITERACY AND EDUCATION**
- **ARTS AND CULTURE**
- **INCLUSION AND ACCESS**
- **ECONOMIC SUCCESS**
- **HEALTH AND WELLNESS**

LITERACY AND EDUCATION

Libraries play a critical role in supporting education and literacy. By providing free access to books, information and technology, we allow every resident to pursue educational and economic opportunity, entertainment and personal growth. To promote literacy and education, we will:

- Support readers through library collections and programs
- Promote early childhood education and parent support
- Provide support to K-12 students
- Provide the highest available standard of technology

Identified Goals

- Support K-12 learning through after-school services
- Encourage reading throughout the community
- Prioritize early childhood education
- Provide events that connect readers with others who have common interests



"I want to live in a place with opportunities for children and adults of all ages to keep learning & growing."

Hickory resident, May 2019

ARTS AND CULTURE

The library will foster creativity and imagination through exploration of arts and culture. Cultural events provide entertainment for all ages, facilitate awareness and understanding and bring community members together.

The library will:

- Provide access to diverse visual and performance arts
- Collaborate with local arts organizations
- Provide opportunities to explore literature and writing
- Provide technology and maker tools for creative use

Identified Goals

- Expand selection of multi-media maker technology
- Create cultural events that bring the community together



"I want to live in a vibrant community that appreciates the arts and has a strong vision for the future."

Hickory resident, May 2019

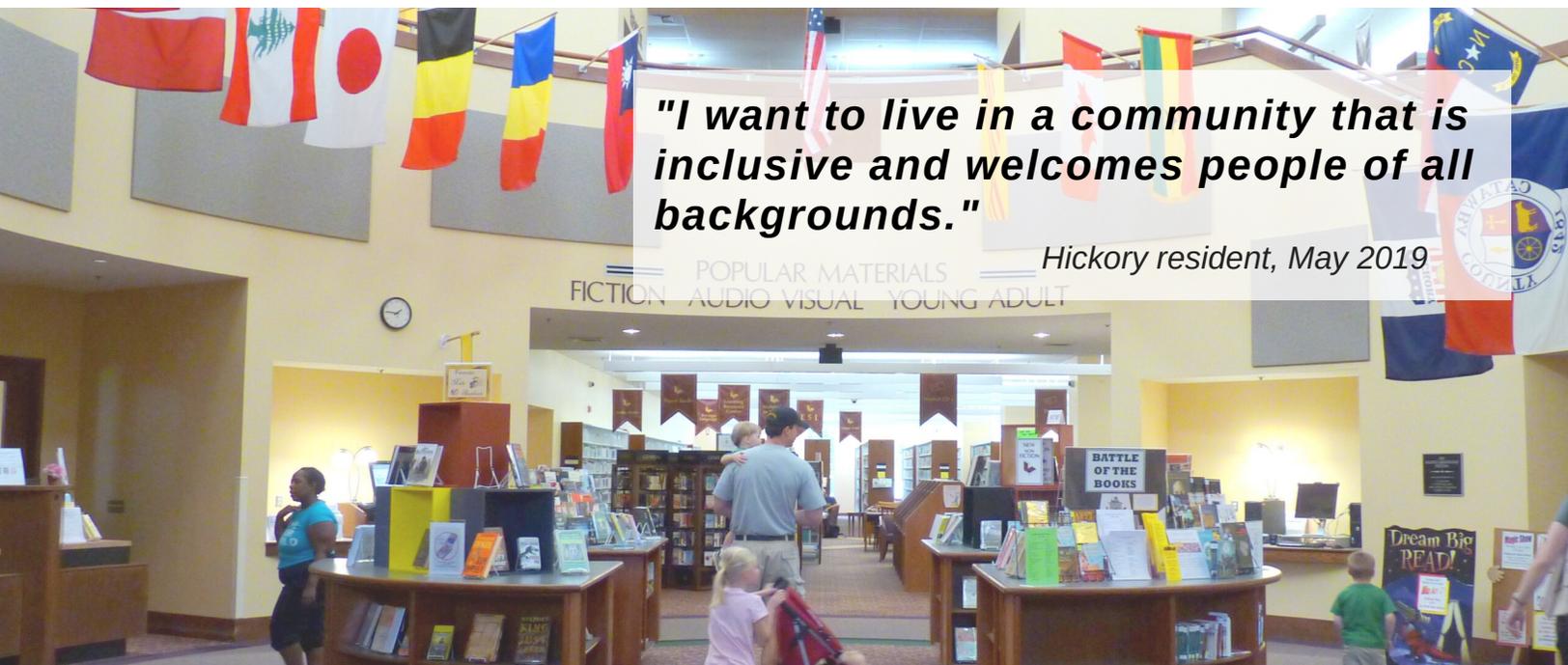
INCLUSION AND ACCESS

The library recognizes and values the diversity of our city. We provide free and equitable access to all residents. To promote inclusion and library access, we will:

- Engage with community stakeholders to develop programs and collections that highlight diverse voices
- Evaluate policies and procedures to promote equity and remove unnecessary barriers to library access
- Provide welcoming library facilities
- Prioritize the convenience of library services

Identified Goals

- Eliminate daily overdue fines
- Add Sunday hours at both libraries
- Assess the need for additional service locations



ECONOMIC SUCCESS

The library supports residents in reaching their career and financial goals. To promote the economic well-being of our community, the library will:

- Support job-seekers with access to information and technology
- Promote financial literacy
- Provide information about federal, state and local government resources as well as services offered by nonprofit agencies
- Provide consumer information about home ownership and affordable housing
- Support the small business community through information and technology

Identified Goals

- Collaborate with business community
- Educate patrons about fraud and financial scams
- Inform residents about government and community resources



"I want to live in a safe and economically vibrant community, a community dedicated to enriching the lives of all residents while welcoming visitors with sites of interest."

Hickory resident, May 2019

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The library supports health and wellness as essential to a high quality of life. To promote the well-being of our community, the library will:

- Provide accurate and authoritative resources for health information
- Connect patrons to community health organizations and services
- Present classes and events that promote healthy living
- Prioritize the safety of library facilities
- Train staff to respond appropriately to emergency situations

Identified Goals

- Promote understanding of mental health challenges through library resources and programs
- Connect patrons with needed resources through collaboration with social work professionals
- Incorporate outdoor spaces in library programs

"I want to live in a vibrant community where people are active, safe and healthy and where families thrive."

Hickory resident, May 2019



MEASURING OUTCOMES

We will regularly evaluate our progress toward the goals of this plan.

Library Advisory Board Review

Library staff will provide updates about progress related to the strategic plan at each board meeting. Specific objectives will be reviewed annually.

Comments and Suggestions

We listen to ideas from library users. Comment boxes are placed at all of our library service desks. Emails and phone messages will be shared among management staff. We will address concerns immediately and share praise across library departments.

Community Conversations

Library staff and Board members will continue conversations with community stakeholders. We will add or adjust services as new community needs are identified.

Outcomes

We will evaluate the impact of our services in patrons' lives. By using the Project Outcome toolkit developed by the Public Library Association, staff will gather survey responses about the effectiveness of at least two service areas each year.

Statistics

We expect to see increases in the number of library visits, program attendance and use of materials. An annual report will use data from the State Library of North Carolina to compare our library to others across the state.