



#StartHere



**MEMPHIS PUBLIC
LIBRARIES**

CONNECT... LEARN... GROW

STRATEGIC PLAN 2020

Memphis Public Libraries’ strategic plan provides a cohesive vision and clear direction for the Library for next five years and beyond: We create inviting and engaging public spaces that offer programs and resources for all Memphians and bring people of different life circumstances together in meaningful ways. We promote literacy for all, provide economic and workforce development, and create opportunities for our city’s most important asset – it’s youth.

...Our plan is rooted in our ^{#StartHere} **BRAND PROMISES**

WELCOMING

We strive to create spaces where community members can connect with our staff, our resources, and each other for exciting programs, literacy and workforce development activities, and entertaining and fun cultural events.

FRESH AND FUN

Creating great customer experiences is key to the success of the library. What we offer our customers is vital. Injecting the unexpected and making our spaces and programs fun and engaging adds value to that experience.

HELPFUL

The Library exists to provide help to those in need...whether it is for literacy, workforce development, lifelong learning, or referral for basic needs, our customers deserve knowledgeable staff, a useful collection, and relevant programs.

TRANSFORMATIVE

The services and programs the library offers have extensive impact on the lives of our community members. We recognize that each encounter is an opportunity to help change lives.

OUR GOALS

CREATE EQUITABLE
ACCESS

CHAMPION LITERACY
FOR ALL AGES

PROMOTE ECONOMIC
ADVANCEMENT AND
WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT

ADVANCE THE
LIBRARY’S ROLE AS A
COMMUNITY ANCHOR

INCREASE COMMUNITY
AWARENESS OF MPL
OFFERINGS

REACH BEYOND THE
LIBRARY WALLS WITH
STRATEGIC OUTREACH
AND INNOVATION

STRENGTHEN THE BACKBONE OF MPL BY SUPPORTING STAFF

OUR PRIORITIES

Enhance equitable access to educational, service, and cultural resources that meet the diverse and multifaceted needs of Memphis and Shelby County.

- Increase Access to Educational Resources.
- Increase Access to Cultural Resources.
- Increase Access to Service Resources to meet the needs of our most vulnerable community members.
- Ensure quality and consistency of our programs and services by enhancing our standards and metrics.

Champion literacy for all ages and learning levels by creating a program and resource continuum designed to foster ongoing engagement and lifelong learning.

- Establish, enhance, and promote literacy resources for children to create continuum of learning and educational advancement.
- Find creative and engaging strategies to attract and retain tweens and teens in MPL programs.
- Expand upon successful programs to reach adults with needs not being met by current offerings.
- Recognize the unique needs of area seniors and find strategies to overcome access barriers.
- Increase collection spending each year to keep collections fresh/current and relevant for patrons.

Promote economic advancement and workforce development to meet the demonstrated needs of our residents and help break the cycle of poverty in our community.

- Evaluate strategies and make recommendations for engaging and retaining opportunity youth to connect them with education and workforce opportunities.
- Evaluate and update MPL collections geared towards job-readiness and skills-building.
- Use Welcome Home Centers and housing partner network as a springboard to bridge wealth inequality and connect participants to other valuable programs.
- Build upon the early successes of MPL's financial literacy curriculum to empower more residents to manage their finances and build personal wealth.
- Install Career Readiness Resource Centers in all branch libraries.
- Enhance and expand JobLINC offerings.

- Continue to enhance resources for new citizens and those working towards citizenship.
- Because a substantial number of workforce opportunities require a minimum of basic technological skills, invest in additional equipment, staff training, and program supplies to enhance offerings.

Advance the Library's role as a community anchor and serve as a catalyst for neighborhood development and civic engagement.

- Expand role of the Infrastructure Planning Team to evaluate all branch locations and make recommendations for operations improvements as well as annual budget forecasting for needed improvements and upgrades.
- Build policies and procedures that serve as a roadmap for program success.
- Strategically develop programming designed to bring together diverse groups of citizens who otherwise might not have the opportunity to interact or learn from each other.
- Create innovative collections that meet the needs of the unique communities served by each branch.
- Implement strategies to connect at-risk populations and those who have intersected with the criminal justice system with library resources to reduce crime and recidivism.

Increase community awareness and utilization of MPL offerings through targeted marketing and strategic partnerships.

- Build upon the successes of the Start Here campaign for targeted marketing strategies that increase community awareness and utilization of MPL's offerings.
- Convene MPL leadership, COM Marketing, MLF, and Friends as needed to evaluate brand standards and determine if updates are needed to stay relevant and up-to-date with market trends.
- Update MPL's Mission and Vision Statements to better communicate the life-changing work taking place each and every day.
- Create consistent policies and procedures for donor recognition.

- ❑ Because MLF and the Friends are MPL's funding partners and allies, evaluate strategies to better support one another on an ongoing basis, develop joint goals, and maximize collective impact and streamlining.
- ❑ Create clear delegation of responsibilities with MLF to ensure they are serving as a fiduciary agent and raising enhancement funding, but not responsible for program implementation.
- ❑ Pursue grant funding to support successful partnerships as needed to maximize collective impact.
- ❑ Work with City Marketing to streamline communications process.
- ❑ Build upon the highly successful housing partner network and Welcome Home Memphis model to leverage and convene partner networks around other community needs when appropriate.

Reach beyond the Library walls with strategic outreach and innovative programming that engages those unaware of or unable to utilize our vast resources.

- ❑ Pilot Library Bike Initiatives.
- ❑ Expand relationship with local school districts, as well as private and charter schools.
- ❑ Expand partnership with the City of Memphis' Division of Parks and Rec to offer literacy and STEM activities, as well as innovative joint programs.
- ❑ Support the ongoing work of the Connect Crew to reach traditionally underserved communities.
- ❑ Increase capacity for mobile circulation.
- ❑ Expand the recently launched 901VOICES oral history program to include a mobile outreach version.
- ❑ Expand DiscoverREAD-On-The-Go
- ❑ Ensure Branch Library Staff is prepared to deliver consistent outreach programming per MPL protocols.

Strengthen the backbone of MPL with strategic hiring, trainings for capacity building, and opportunities to regularly engage with front line staff in shaping organization priorities and culture.

- ❑ Establish an HR and Talent Committee with emphasis on diversity of talent.
- ❑ Enhance staff capacity to provide accurate information, evidence-based, data-driven programming, and excellent customer service.
- ❑ Create a Volunteer Department that is efficient and provides fulfilling experiences through serving MPL.
- ❑ Build upon Staff Con successes in team building and training.
- ❑ Encourage staff to find innovative strategies to support MPL's Brand Promises: Welcoming, Helpful, Fresh, and Fun.