



# Harlingen Public Library

Strategic Plan for 2016-2021

## **PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Harlingen Public Library Strategic Plan provides a cohesive vision and direction for the Library for the next five years and beyond. The Plan outlines the Library's direction for customer-focused service delivery, a 21<sup>st</sup> century facility, and enhanced technology to better serve Harlingen and its surrounding areas.

## **OUR MISSION**

We exist to build bridges that strengthen the ties of our community. We create innovative pathways for people to connect with information and each other. Working together, the people of our community can experience infinite opportunities and growth. We are the bridge builders, we make ways where none exist.

## **OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE**

Through innovative services and dynamic technology we will be recognized as the leading library in the Rio Grande Valley.

## **OUR VALUES**

### ***Respect***

All library users are treated with dignity and respect without regard to race, gender, age, occupation, socio-economic class, sexual orientation, or religion.

### ***Partnership***

We strive to build community partnerships that support and benefit our citizens through diverse programming, outreach, and other resources.

### ***Environment***

The library strives to create a warm, inviting, and safe atmosphere for all.

### ***Progression***

We aim to remain an evolving environment allowing us to offer the most current technology and services available.

### ***Teamwork***

Library staff and volunteers unite through open communication and honest support to achieve a common goal.

### ***Service***

We will provide all internal and external library users our upmost customer care.

## **Goal 1**

Grow and sustain readers and lifelong learners

Reading is essential for life success. HPL supports readers of all ages and adds value to the learning experience. In addition to library based programs, we will seek other venues to support reading for pleasure and discovery. Staff training on assessing patron's needs and recommending appropriate titles will be an essential part of this strategy.

### **Strategies**

#### 1.1 – Develop lifelong readers

- Expand programs that promote reading for enjoyment and learning throughout the community
- Develop staff competencies through training
- Engage in patron conversations that focus on individual reading interests
- Actively pursue events that reflect community interest to develop a culture of readers

#### 1.2 – Strengthen youth literacy programs

- Provide a robust program of storytimes and lapsits for children from birth to five
- Create space at HPL for preschool children to engage in interactive learning activities
- Offer quality programming that supports school curriculums
- Seek partnerships with other youth literacy providers in the community
- Establish a young adult agenda to include programs, events, seminars, and other social opportunities which cater to the intellectual growth of community teens
- With a teen advisory group, carve a stage for young adults to voice their opinions, gain leadership skills and spotlight ideas and services important to them

#### 1.3 – Ensure collection development remains a key focus

- Analyze and evaluate HPL's collection use and reading patterns
- Develop a browsable, engaging collection
- Continually evaluate buying patterns and emerging trends as indicated by patron interest
- Maintain future funding for library materials at a robust and appropriate level
- Enhance creative display methods for promotion of the library collection

## **Goal 2**

Establish HPL as a social hub

In response to evolving needs of the community, HPL can be reformatted in a way that makes sense to today's visitor. HPL has the capacity to create repurposed spaces for café/snack bar, teen services; and to provide an often-requested dedicated quiet study area. The Library will

also provide options for electronic communications to patrons. We will seek automated solutions that will enable patrons to personalize the way they use our resources.

## **Strategies**

### 2.1 – Re-imagine the Harlingen Public Library facility to meet user’s needs

- Offer pre-school children a unique interactive discovery space
- Create space for teen activities
- Explore repurposing of library balcony space
- Offer dedicated quiet study and reading space
- Design areas for collaboration and small group learning
- Provide furnishings that support access to technology
- Continue the refreshing and renovation of the library facility to provide a warm and inviting environment

### 2.2 – Promote HPL’s services

- In partnership with the city communication officer, analyze and optimize HPL’s overall public communication strategy to include branding such as logo and taglines
- Use current social media to connect with our community and explore and implement new tools as they develop
- Utilize targeted promotions for library events
- Develop a promotion strategy for services, programs and collections

## **Goal 3**

Provide up-to-date and innovate technology and training

We strive to ensure ample technological infrastructures to meet evolving needs of our community.

## **Strategies**

### 3.1 – Improve patron access and understanding of technology

- Introduce community members to new technology and discovery tools
- Present programs for the community to learn new products, software and skills

### 3.2 – Improve infrastructure

- Create a fast network that anticipates future bandwidth needs with specific regard to cloud computing and hosted services
- Increase the number of machines and devices available at HPL to reflect patron and staff needs

### 3.3 – Improve digital holdings

- Enhancing and expanding current digital holdings to include a variety of media formats
- Improve access to digital archives that support local history research

## **Goal 4**

Improve library accessibility within the community

Moving beyond library walls helps us understand our community in new ways and brings the library in touch with residents.

### **Strategies**

#### 4.1 – Remove barriers and enhance the library experience to increase the number of active library users

- Review and update policies to ensure a seamless experience in getting and using library services
- Explore and implement new community collaborations to expand services
- Actively promote library resources to raise awareness of available services

#### 4.2 – Improve access to underserved areas of Harlingen

- Partner with educational institutions to offer digital access membership cards to students
- Explore options to offer library services such as book vending machines, little libraries, and a book mobile to areas not currently served

## **Goal 5**

Staff Development

HPL's staff is the key to our success. By fostering a culture of learning we will have a well-trained and educated organization.

### **Strategies**

#### 5.1 – Enhance the knowledge of job duties for all employees

- Promote HPL by developing staff training for effective and professional presentation skills
- All employees should be able to answer questions relating to basic technology needs such as connectivity and printing
- Develop a staff well versed in using and implementing digital services
- Establish key competencies for all staff members to include customer service skills, needs analysis, interpersonal communication skills, phone etiquette, and other essential proficiencies

- Identify and develop staff strengths and talents to further the goals of the library
- To cross train staff and encourage a flexible mindset in order to succeed as a unified organization
- Identify and develop top talent in order to ensure the future success of the organization

#### 5.2 – Continually evaluate staffing and positional needs

- Identify gaps in services and create new positions as needed
- Expand library staff positions to keep up with growing demand

#### 5.3 – Improve productivity

- Automation and outsourcing for organizational efficiency
- Re-evaluate current practices to eliminate outdated procedures