

# STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2026



ARLINGTON  
PUBLIC LIBRARY



For over a century, the Arlington Public Library has cultivated a space for the community to learn, explore, and discover. When the first library in Arlington opened in March of 1923, it held a collection of only 500 books and served a population of 3,700 residents. Now, the Library serves 1.5 million people yearly and maintains a collection of 600,000 items.

As the Arlington community continues to grow and change, the Library is committed to growing and changing along with it.



# A Letter From Our Director

I am pleased to present you with the 2024-2026 Strategic Plan for the Arlington Public Library. This plan will be our guiding compass for presenting programs and forecasting services as we strive to be our community's center for learning, experience, access, and discovery. This plan enables every Library team to be intentional in their offerings to engage more Library users and create pathways to prioritize our services for the next several years. Time and time again, the Arlington Public Library has served as an anchor in our neighborhoods by providing support and complementary services that nurture learning and exploration for all ages.

Exploring a strategic plan process in the midst of a pandemic was a challenging but necessary task. Our process began with a consultant who led focus groups with all staff and the Library Advisory Board. Surveys were conducted with the community at large in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic. Focus groups were held in person and virtually. Information was gathered, analyzed, common themes were identified setting the stage for establishing priorities. The Library's management team focused on the priorities and organized the strategies, resulting in a three-year plan that creates a roadmap to programs and services that help enrich lives, empower learners, and create a community of learning and discovery.

There are many people to thank who were part of this journey. Every Library staff member was involved in the process, providing feedback and perspective to create and develop the final version of this plan. I would like to thank the Library's management team for their hard work and dedicated approach to this project. I would also like to thank the Library Advisory Board and the Friends and Foundation of the Arlington Public Library for their participation. Last but certainly not least, to all of our Library users, thank you for your support, your feedback, and the opportunity to serve you. You are the reason we are here, and for that we are thankful.

The Library's Strategic Plan has been and will continue to be a collaborative and comprehensive effort with feedback from community members who envision a thriving Library system and an engaged and informed community. We look forward to building upon this success for years to come.

**Norma Zuñiga**  
Director of Libraries





OUR VISION

**We strive to be  
our community's  
center for learning,  
experience, access  
and discovery.**





OUR MISSION

**We build a bridge  
from curiosity  
to opportunity  
for a vibrant  
Arlington.**

# Our Values

To achieve our mission and fulfill our vision, the following ideals will direct us in our service to the community and interaction with each other. These values will help our organization align our intent with our actions.

**1 Knowledge**  
ALWAYS LEARNING

**2 Access**  
REMOVING BARRIERS

**3 Excellence**  
OUR BEST

**4 Respect**  
VALUE OTHERS

**5 Accountability**  
OUR WORD







**“The Arlington Public Library is my model for why libraries are so incredibly important today. Libraries are places where facts are kept safe, where imaginations can run free, and where curiosity can be cultivated [...] by meeting people exactly where they are, and by helping them get where they want to go.”**

- AMY SCHULTZ, ARLINGTON MUSEUM OF ART

# Our Strategies

Six strategies were identified as focus areas that will prioritize our work. These strategies are core to our planning and implementation in the next three years.

**1**

**We foster literacy**

**2**

**We curate collections**

**3**

**We embrace experiences**

**4**

**We welcome all**

**5**

**We nurture relationships**

**6**

**We engage with our library team**

# 1

## We foster literacy for learning success.



### WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN:



Learners have access to learning opportunities



Community is invested in refining their skills



Patrons are empowered to evaluate information that impacts their quality of life

**“We love that the public library has a summer reading contest each year [...] so we can try to address summer reading slump. We are so thankful for our APL librarians and their willingness to help us and our students.”**

*- SUZANNE SEVERNS, MARTIN HIGH SCHOOL LIBRARIAN,  
ARLINGTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT*

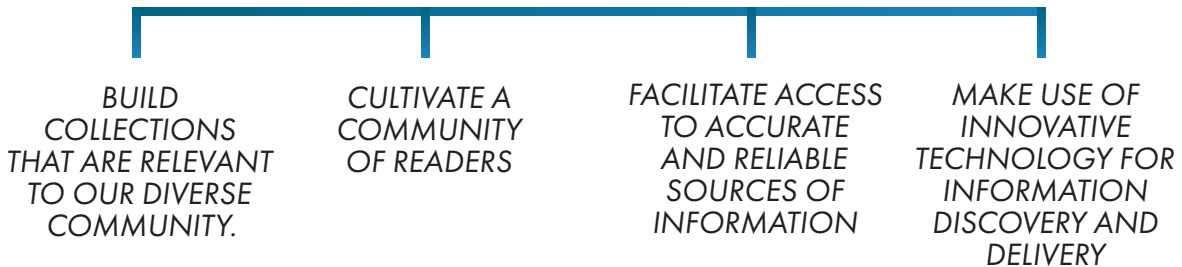


PICTURED: YOUNG LIBRARY USER ON CHILDREN'S COMPUTER



# 2

## We curate collections to increase knowledge and information.



### WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN:



**Collection reflects the community we serve**



**Community enjoys a diverse collection of relevant materials in various formats and platforms**



**Patron demand results in increased use of materials**

# 3

## We embrace experiences to encourage exploration and growth.

PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXPLORATION AND GROWTH

ADVANCE INITIATIVES THAT BRING THE COMMUNITY TOGETHER

SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY'S CULTURAL DIVERSITY

### WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN:



Community has a wide variety of opportunities to learn and experience



Programs and services reflect our community



Patrons are inspired to engage with their community



Community feels connected to the Library and each other



**“Libraries serve as one of the primary conduits for education within the broader community [...] Arlington libraries serve as not just a central resource for educational material [...] but also a means for connecting and hosting educational entities in the region.”**

- GREGORY PANDELIS, DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY,  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON



PICTURED: FOLKLORICO DANCERS AT APL'S HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH CELEBRATION



# 4

## We are welcoming in our spaces and interactions.

CREATE AN  
EXCEPTIONAL  
PATRON  
EXPERIENCE

DEVELOP NEW,  
INNOVATIVE IDEAS TO  
CREATE ENGAGING  
DESTINATIONS FOR ALL

MAINTAIN INVITING,  
RESPONSIVE  
AND ACCESSIBLE  
FACILITIES

### WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN:



Community has  
inviting and safe  
spaces to gather



Patrons are  
welcomed and  
respected



Community  
returns for  
continued service



Staff exceed  
patron  
expectations

# 5

We develop and nurture community relationships to extend our reach.



RESPOND TO  
THE EVOLVING  
NEEDS OF OUR  
COMMUNITY

SEEK  
OPPORTUNITIES  
TO REACH NEW  
LIBRARY USERS

CONNECT  
WITH LIBRARY  
ALLIES AND  
ADVOCATES

WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN:



Community  
recognizes Library  
as a vital partner



We build  
awareness,  
advocacy and  
support



Community is  
empowered to use  
library services

**“Libraries are essential to our community [...] to help people of all ages learn, grow, and connect with others [...] Libraries offer a variety of programs and services to support literacy and education, such as storytime for children, tutoring for students, and computer classes for adults.”**

- DERRICK JACKSON, COLLEGE OF SCIENCE OFFICE OF THE DEAN,  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON



PICTURED: AUTHOR TIM MADIGAN AT A FRIENDS & FOUNDATION OF THE ARLINGTON PUBLIC LIBRARY EVENT



# 6

## We engage with and support our library team.

EMPOWER  
LIBRARY TEAM  
SUCCESS

FOSTER OPEN,  
MEANINGFUL  
COMMUNICATION

SUPPORT  
GROWTH  
OPPORTUNITIES

BUILD A  
CULTURE OF  
TRUST

WE KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN:



Library team is engaged



Team cultivates the dissemination of institutional knowledge



Staff participate in growth opportunities



Staff engage in retention and succession planning

