

Amherst Public Library (APL)

Honorable Shirley Chisholm Library;
Clearfield branch;
Egbertsville-Snyder branch;
Williamsville branch

Strategic Plan (2026-28)

Mission Statement:

To enrich the lives of Amherst's diverse residents and visitors by creating and sustaining noteworthy public library services via staff, resources, and technology.

The following six goals have been selected for the Strategic Plan of service period 2026-28:

Goal 1: COMMUNITY and OUTREACH

- The APL will strengthen collaborative engagement through increased library awareness, inclusivity, relevance and value in the community.
 1. Make the APL responsive to the community;
 2. Continue ongoing outreach programs to ensure the library's participation in the life of the community and the neighborhoods we serve;
 3. Establish the library as a versatile community center;
 - Facilitate usage of library program rooms and study rooms by community organizations and other non-profit groups, as well as patrons;

- Cultivate partnerships to connect community members with information and the library's services:
 1. Collaborate with community organizations and schools to develop services/ collections that support the interests and needs of our stakeholders;
 2. Collaborate with schools, in particular working with school librarians, to promote programs both in the library and at the schools to encourage reading year-round;
 3. Support collaboration with partners featuring relevant, timely information such as health related resources and instruction;
 4. Build a network of volunteers;
 5. Engage with local leaders and elected officials to support community awareness and involvement.

- Support economic development:
 1. Assist job seekers by providing employment resources, both print and online;
 2. Increase the visibility of our libraries through online/social media;
 3. Seek out opportunities with Town of Amherst Departments and Village of Williamsville for assisting with Town wide and Village events;
 4. Work with local businesses, public officials, and other organizations to share our promotional materials.

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Goal 2: RESOURCES

➤ Children, teens and adults will have engaging resources to satisfy curiosity, personal growth and expand informational opportunities:

1. Evaluate collection resources for addition or retention to promote maximum use;
2. Increase collections that reflect the wants and needs of the community;
3. Increase community awareness of digital content (eBook, eAudiobook) available to download for free from the library web site;
 - Ensure staff knowledge of downloadable functions and services for patron assistance;
4. Develop and provide inspiring and relevant resources to promote community engagement;
 - Provide equal access to all library materials;
 - Increase awareness of the availability of accessible technology & resources;
 - Use digital communication and social media to engage with the local community and beyond;
 - Continue to provide broad based programs, services, during open public service hours;
 - Collaborate with local talent, businesses and community organizations to bring a variety of events and classes to the Library;
5. Protect intellectual freedom by upholding the right to access information and fighting against censorship;

Goal 3: GROWTH AND LEARNING

➤ Learning – Children, teens and adults will have materials that will promote and expand literacy:

1. Encourage young children (ages 5 and under) to develop an interest in reading and learning by providing early literacy services to children and their caregivers, as well as providing access to materials designed to help children prepare to enter school ready to learn;
2. Continue to offer relevant programming for school age children;
3. Explore tween and teen volunteer opportunities for character growth;
4. Continue to offer quality programs for adults and provide appropriate supporting materials;
5. Work with local school districts to ensure the APL is providing access to current materials, services and programs designed to support the current curriculums;
6. Re-evaluate and adjust current staffing model as needed to adapt to the needs of the community and provide for optimal public service;

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7. Maximize opportunities for lifelong learning, personal growth and well-being:
 - Establish the library as a trusted source for information on daily life, living and learning;
 - Re-envision programs and services to ensure dynamic and relevant experiences;
 - Continue to support and develop the talents of library staff - through continuing education/professional development trainings;
 - Provide awareness and increase opportunities for professional development so that the staff maintains and enhances their skills
8. Foster a supportive environment that empowers individuals, enhances access to resources, and ensures that all voices are valued in our diverse community.

Goal 4: INNOVATION AND TECHNOLOGY

➤ The APL will recognize and support the increasing demand for technology access and resources:

1. In conjunction with the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System resource sharing initiative, the APL will provide its patrons with the following:
 - Broadband internet access through public workstations with appropriate software and optimal performance platforms for patrons
 - High-speed access to the resources available on the internet
2. Adapt to new and changing technology to address community interests and needs;
3. Continue to provide updated technology training sessions to patrons;
4. Increase staff's knowledge of current technology;
5. Offer programs, with a particular focus on STEM/STEAM fostering creativity and exploration.

Goal 5: SPACE

➤ The APL will provide a welcoming physical and virtual environment:

1. Provide and maintain a building/grounds that is safe, clean, organized, comfortable, and aesthetically pleasing;
2. Optimize communication with both in-house signage and via the library's social media presence;
3. Staff will increase their knowledge of service trends in an effort to keep evolving spaces to meet these trends;
4. Market the library as a free public gathering destination;
5. Choose environmentally sustainable products/materials whenever possible;
6. Ensure continuous ADA compliance and accessibility for all;
7. Continuously evaluate the interior and exterior spaces to assess how they can best achieve the greatest flexibility for accessing the collection and to accommodate programming functions while remaining a comfortable, attractive, and open destination for visitors;
8. Create engaging and interactive spaces to inspire innovation and imagination.

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Goal 6: Trustee / NYS Minimum Standards

- Secure adequate funding for the implementation of goals one to five as listed above;
 1. Support the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees in their ongoing effort to obtain funds in the annual Erie County budget and maintain and enhance library services to meet community need;
 2. The Board will keep current with emerging library trends;
 3. Encourage ongoing donations to the library, including memorials;
 4. Promote community awareness of the services and needs of the APL;
 5. Strengthen relationships with relevant government officials, policymakers, and other organizations.

- Encourage community engagement with the library;
 1. Support and encourage library volunteers;
 2. Support engagement with community partners and library patrons, which may include community questions, requests, and concerns brought to the Board.

- Provide fiduciary oversight of the APL;
 1. Review and approve a written annual budget as prepared by the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library and APL Director;
 2. Review disbursements and receipts of the APL operating and Town maintenance account funds;
 3. Approve appropriate use of operating and donated funds.

- Work with the APL Director of the libraries to monitor the condition of the building, grounds, access, parking, and signage.

- Advocate for library visibility and resources with the Town of Amherst and the greater community.

Adopted by the Amherst Public Library Board of Trustees - January 13, 2026