

# FRANKLIN LAKES PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2025



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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

**“The public library of tomorrow will require different thinking, even more technology and updated spaces.”**

The overall mission of a public library is timeless – provide products to borrow, resources to grow, spaces to create, and places to meet. Yet, as do all enterprises, public libraries consistently face an environment of tremendous change. The public library of today is different than the library of yesterday. And, the public library of tomorrow will require different thinking, even more technology and updated physical spaces.

Our Franklin Lakes Library has evolved with time – offering new products in different formats, expanding our physical facility in 2004, adding more technology to our offerings and operations and expanding programs to all residents – children, teens, adults, and seniors.

As our staff and Board studied where we are and where we would like to go, we reached out to our patrons and community to understand their needs and vision. We found that we are very good at what we do, but the expectations of our patrons are higher than ever. We found that while we touch much of our community, we could broaden our outreach. While we evolved over time to offer more than reading materials, we discovered that our patrons still demand a great reading collection, but also more diverse products and programs. We realized that while our physical facility was attractive, its design does not position us to offer a more modern, usable, and welcoming environment.

The strategic roadmap that follows outlines the direction for our Library to meet the future desires of our patrons. As you read our plan, I hope you will agree that we possess the aspiration, ideas, and talent to deliver on ways to broaden our Library’s appeal to our patrons.

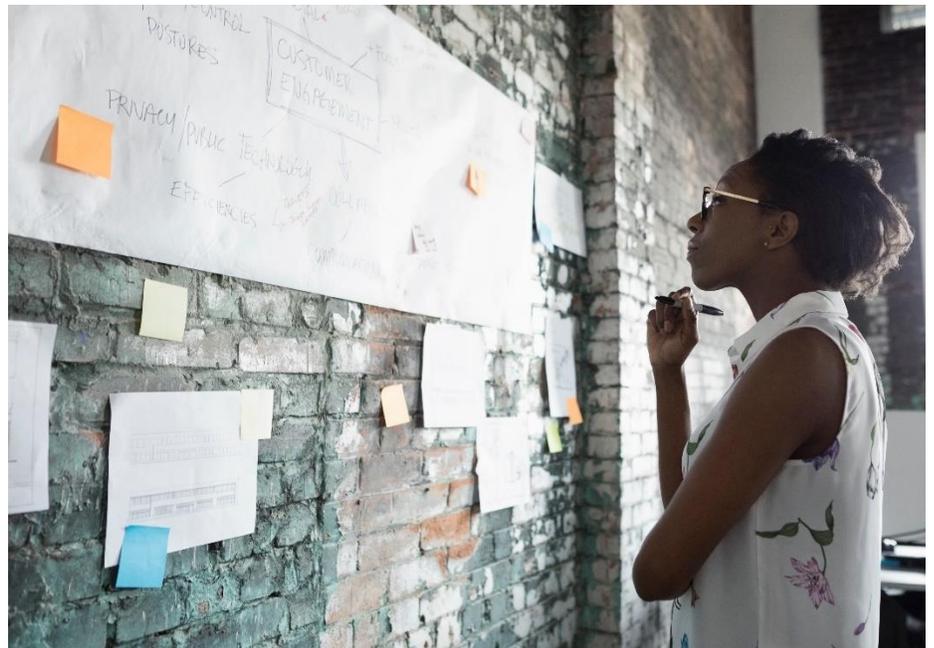
I thank Kerri Wallace, our Director, our entire staff and our Board members for their energy, time, insights and passion behind this work. As we go forward, I encourage all our constituents to partner with us by providing your input on how we are doing as we transform and grow our Library to meet the needs of our fast-paced and changing world.

JOE LEONE, PRESIDENT



# OUR MISSION

**CONNECT THE COMMUNITY  
WITH THE WORLD BY  
PROVIDING A GATEWAY TO  
INNOVATIVE INFORMATION,  
EDUCATIONAL AND LEISURE  
RESOURCES AND BUILDING A  
LIFELONG LEARNING  
EXPERIENCE OR HERITAGE.**





# OUR PROMISE

The 2022 Strategic Plan was built on suggestions and feedback derived both internally and externally. We included library staff to get their experienced views both through a survey as well as large and small group meetings. We reached out to community groups and school officials to get their input and included PTA presidents whose feedback was critically important to us. We communicated with other libraries to discuss common issues and understand how our peers were planning their evolutions to the library of the future.

One thing became very clear, quoting from a Bergen Magazine article, “Books are only the beginning”. We have a well thought out path as to how to accomplish our goals and a commitment to deliver the best available products and services to our patrons.





# ASPIRATIONS

**“Outreach  
to patrons  
will be a  
part of our  
DNA”**

- Outreach to patrons will be a part of our DNA, not a one-time event
- We will be transparent and inclusive in our actions
- We will create a collegial working environment such that our employees understand that their contributions are valued and that our patrons are our #1 priority
- We will strive to provide a consistent, high-quality experience for all
- We will provide a warm and welcoming environment to encourage patrons and community groups to avail themselves of our facilities more often
- We will continue to expand our products, services, and technology to meet and exceed expectations
- We will connect with our schools’ curricula such that students will look to the library as a resource for research, projects, and assignments
- We will expand the types of events we organize to include more exciting, informative, and entertaining social gatherings for patrons and community groups



# SHARED VALUES

## **INCLUSIVENESS**

Responsive, personal service based on needs and interests, so patrons receive what they want, when they need it.

## **COMMUNITY**

A library that works well and supports opportunities for people to meet and exchange ideas.

## **ACCOUNTABILITY**

Good stewardship of library resources for our community.

## **COLLABORATION**

Working with partners to foster community connections and civic engagement.

## **RESPECT**

Honoring diversity, individual perspectives, and the right to privacy and confidentiality.

## **LEARNING**

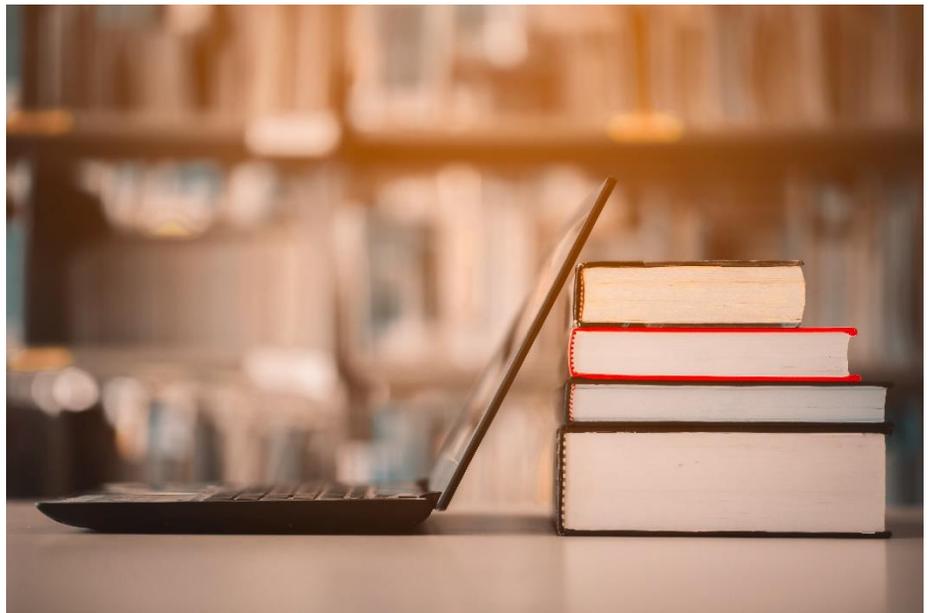
Promoting learning and literacy in all forms.



# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

**WE HAVE PRIORITIZED OUR FINDINGS AND KEPT THIS LIST SHORT SO WE CAN DELIVER ON OUR PROMISES**

1. Connect with patrons
2. Foster innovations
3. Create welcoming spaces





# PRIORITY #1: CONNECT WITH PATRONS

## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

1. Ensure that Library communications reach community group members
2. Educate community groups on Library offerings
3. Determine additional programs and services in which residents would be interested in and need
4. Create social activities tailored to residents' interests
5. Invite representatives to participate on a community advisory board to meet periodically with Library staff to provide satisfaction levels and ideas for future enhancements



# PRIORITY #1: CONNECT WITH PATRONS, CONT'D

## COMMUNITY GROUPS

Currently identified community groups include:

1. Audubon Society
2. Boys and Girls Scouts
3. Chamber of Commerce
4. Franklin Lakes Education Foundation
5. Franklin Lakes Moms
6. Lions Club
7. Newcomers and Neighbors Club
8. PTA Presidents
9. Senior Citizens Club
10. Women's Club of Franklin Lakes



# PRIORITY #1: CONNECT WITH PATRONS, CONT'D

## PATRON GROUPS - CHILDREN

The Children's Department hosts a variety of educational and creative programs both in person and on virtual platforms. The Department has a strong collection for all ages and includes popular collections like VOX books (picture books with attached recordings).

Future Plans Include:

1. Renovating the Children's Center with a friendly, welcoming, and engaging design with improved and hygienic seating.
2. Introducing programs that are complementary to school curriculums. This will be accomplished by creating and nurturing relationships with the appropriate school administrators and maintaining consistent contact to encourage new ideas.
3. Testing new technologies not available within the school system to enhance teaching methods.
4. Reaching out and delivering relevant programs and services on-site at Franklin Lakes schools.
5. Encouraging school-fostered field trips to the Library with the goal of providing each student with a library card.



# PRIORITY #1: CONNECT WITH PATRONS, CONT'D

## PATRON GROUPS - TEENS

Meetings with teens have already resulted in changes to the dedicated space. We've seen increased teen and tween interest in the library with displays and programs.

Future Plans Include:

1. Creating a comfortable space in the Library where teens and tweens will come to as their after-school destination.
2. Marketing and innovating new collections such as video games that will drive higher teen circulation.
3. Establishing a maker space with new and unique technologies that support the local schools and will gain interest from local teens.
4. Visiting schools and hosting school visits to allow a developing familiarity of the Library for students.
5. Creating a teen art gallery that displays art work from the Franklin Lakes middle school and high schools.
6. Reevaluating and creating new and unique collections that will boost circulation.





# PRIORITY #1: CONNECT WITH PATRONS, CONT'D

## PATRON GROUPS - ADULTS

The adult department consists of expert staff members who assist with programming, collection development, technology, local history, and reference services.

Future Plans Include:

1. Developing a marketing plan that will improve communication skills with Franklin Lakes organizations and residents.
2. Reaching out to community members who are in need of new and improved specialized services. These community members consist of new immigrants, homebound seniors, and special needs adults.
3. Working with retail consultants to evaluate current collection locations to increase circulation.
4. Attending outreach events and town social gatherings to establish partnerships with stakeholders and increase library card registrations.
5. Revitalizing the Franklin Lakes Library Foundation and recruiting community residents to create capital campaigns for future building improvements and renovations.





# PRIORITY #2: FOSTER INNOVATION

## INNOVATION - TECHNOLOGY

The 2020 Covid-19 Pandemic highlighted the improvements needed for the Franklin Lakes Library to run efficiently and connect with patrons remotely. The pandemic also proved that when the Library is unavailable, the needs for programming, services, and collections increased within the community. Program attendance in 2020 increased dramatically because patrons could tune into virtual programs at their convenience.

Future Plans Include:

1. Virtual reality
2. Gaming
3. Improved telecommunications
4. Faster internet
5. Technology training for staff
6. New a/v equipment and sound system in auditorium
7. Wireless access

**“Improve efficiency and effectiveness of our operations through technology”**





## PRIORITY #3: WELCOMING SPACES

The Library Board is considering a significant redesign of the inner space to provide a warmer, more welcoming feeling for adult patrons as well as a more attractive and functional area for teens. The children's room is also in need of upgrading and additional seating. The last time the Library was renovated was in 2002. We envision a patio and additional seating outdoors. Our entry space is unattractive and non-functional. The sightlines on the first floor are obstructed.

Plans we are considering include:

1. Hiring retail consultants to change the flow of the Library and boost circulation with new displays.
2. Overhauling the children's area with hygienic furniture, accessible shelving, and more open space
3. Reconfiguring the circulation desk for a better work flow and a friendlier customer service look
4. Creating more seating on second floor
5. Revitalizing the teen room as a welcoming space for students to study and meet after school
6. Revitalizing the adult room with updated furniture
7. Revamping the meeting room to be more functional and multi-purpose
8. Ensure availability of quiet space for tutors
9. Adding patios and seating outdoors





# RENOVATION PLAN

The last time meaningful changes were made to the library’s interior was about 20 years ago. A modernization effort is long overdue. The theme we have accorded this project is to make our library “warm and welcoming”, in keeping with our efforts to create an attractive gathering place for patrons.

Our initial thoughts were to make this a community project by selecting local residents well known as exceptional home decorators. However, we learned early on that working on a municipal building is vastly different than a residence, with its own set of rules and regulations. A solution began to materialize when our library director identified a firm that has specialized in library renovations for the past 30 years and, as such, is well-versed in the associated regulations.

A win-win solution evolved by creating a working team of two resident designers – Terri Fiore and Danielle Palmadessa-Lynch – with Ally Smith and Bridget Soyka Smith of the library specialist firm, Soyka Smith. Work should commence in the fall of 2022. We plan to meet with patrons and present our specific plans to get their feedback prior to start-up.

In terms of scope, as we met with community groups and better understood their desires from our library and met with designers and BCCLS and heard about trends in design and library modernizations, we realized there is much work to do.

We all knew our entry foyer needed an upgrade. But we now understand, so do our meeting room, our circulation desk, and the poor sight lines on the first floor. Therefore, we are now thinking bigger and want to take our warm and welcoming theme throughout the entire library, possibly including the outdoor space and second floor. We believe the scope will become clearer as we meet with our design team.

As to cost and funding, we are only at the starting line. Yet, we believe we should have sufficient funds on hand to bring our entry foyer and meeting room to a warm and welcoming level. From there, we can use those successful upgrades to revitalize our Foundation and have a fundraising campaign with interesting opportunities for Franklin Lakes residents to be part of our exciting library facility revitalization.



# MESSAGE FROM THE LIBRARY DIRECTOR

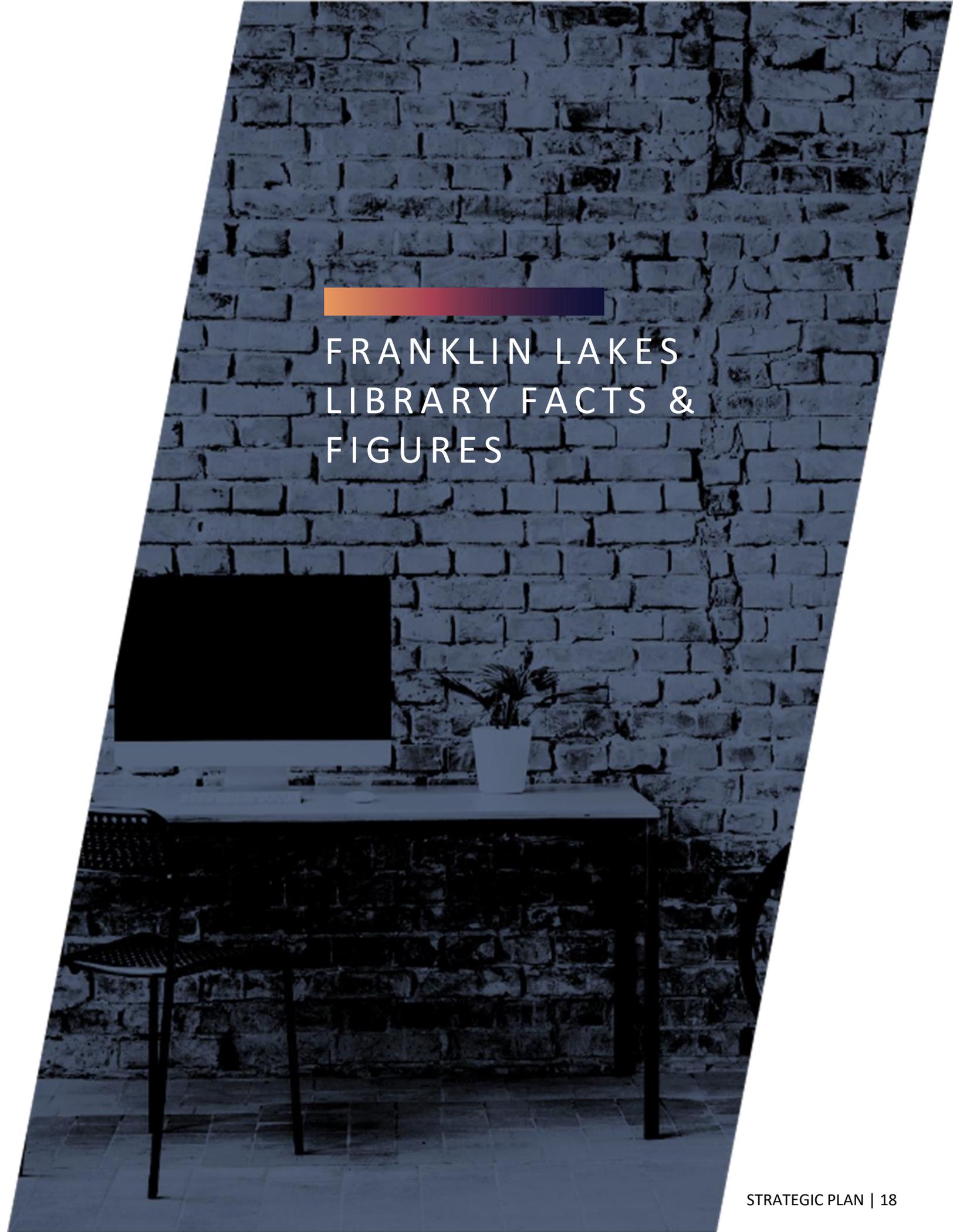
**“I am certain  
that with the  
2022-2025  
strategic plan,  
the Franklin  
Lakes Library  
can evolve to  
meeting the  
growing needs  
of our  
community”**

The 2020 Pandemic had a significant impact on the Franklin Lakes community. Local residents could not socialize with friends and family, work in-person with colleagues, attend school, or patronize local businesses. Public libraries were able to successfully create vital connections with their patrons through virtual programs, telephone assistance, and digital materials. During the Pandemic months of 2019 & 2020, attendance for virtual programs increased by 79%. Library staff took to Facebook Live and provided streaming storytimes, bingo for adults, trivia, and crafts for all ages. It was a new and exciting way to reach the Franklin Lakes community and bring a form of reprieve to residents who may have been having difficulties during this time.

When our doors reopened in 2020, how utilization of the Library had changed during the Pandemic lockdown and how it would change in the future was studied and analyzed. More of our residents needed spaces to work from home, college students were attending virtual classes, and our patrons wanted gathering spaces to reconnect and socialize with their friends and neighbors. The Library staff was providing more telephone and email reference transactions for residents and patrons who were not quite ready to gather in public spaces. After meeting with staff, stakeholders, and community groups, the Strategic Committee realized the importance of supplying reliable technology and services along with welcoming spaces where patrons could feel at home when visiting the Franklin Lakes Library.

I am certain that with the 2022-2025 strategic plan, the Franklin Lakes Library can evolve to meeting the growing needs of our community and become an example to neighboring libraries in the future. I am excited to lead our staff and position our library as the best library in Bergen Country.

KERRI WALLACE, LIBRARY DIRECTOR



FRANKLIN LAKES  
LIBRARY FACTS &  
FIGURES



# OUR TEAM

## 2022 BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Joe Leone, President

Donna Luciano, Vice President

Peter Swist, Secretary

Jeff Strauss, Treasurer

David Kampschmidt, Trustee

Dr. Robert Penna, Trustee

Larissa McCarthy, Trustee

Nishan Vartabedian, Trustee

Greg Maceri, Superintendent of Schools

Kerri Wallace, Library Director



## THE STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Nishan Vartabedian, Trustee & Committee Chair

Joe Leone, Board President & Mayor's Alternate

Donna Luciano, Trustee

Peter Swist, Trustee

Kerri Wallace, Director





# OUR COMMUNITY



## POPULATION

- Median age 48.3
- 57% Aged 18-64
- 3,895 households with families
- 2.9 average persons per household
- 7,422 residents with a Franklin Lakes Library card



## INCOME

- Median household income \$172,766
- Income per capita \$88,963
- 0.7% of population live below the poverty line
- 2.3% of students in the Franklin Lakes School district are economically challenged



## EDUCATION

- 1,129 students enrolled in Franklin Lakes School District
- 2,300 students enrolled in the Ramapo Indian Hills Regional High School District



## LANGUAGES

- 27.5% of population speak a language other than English

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

Franklin Lakes is a borough in Bergen County, New Jersey, with a population of 11,079, as of 2019. Franklin Lakes borders the municipalities of Mahwah, Oakland, and Wyckoff in Bergen County; and both North Haledon and Wayne in Passaic County. Franklin Lakes will be celebrating its Centennial year in 2022.

(Citation: U.S. Census Bureau (2020) and U.S. News (2019))





**OPEN 74 HOURS  
PER WEEK**



**24,500 SQ. FT.**



**83,439 PHYSICAL  
ITEMS**

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## **2021 STATISTICS & HIGHLIGHTS**



### **TOTAL CIRCULATION**

- +35% from 2020

### **FRANKLIN LAKES NEW REGISTRATION**

- +9% from 2020

### **TOTAL PROGRAMS**

- -23% from 2020

### **TOTAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE**

- -44% from 2020



# **OUR LIBRARY**

In 1952, the Parent Teacher Association and Woman's Club of Franklin Lakes organized volunteers to open the first public library. The location was at the railroad station on Pulis Avenue and was only open 9 hours a week. The Library moved to several different locations over the years as needs of the community became apparent.

In 1977, the Franklin Lakes Library moved to its permanent location with an eventual expansion starting in 2002 and the Library held a grand opening on May 16, 2004.





# APPENDIX



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: CHILDREN'S SERVICES



## STAFF:

MEGAN ROTHLAUF,  
CHRISTINA TILLSLEY,  
JENNIFER BOSCHETTI

## CURRENT ENVIRONMENT:

The Franklin Lakes Children's Department is committed to providing a diverse collection and program schedule for the community. We work to establish a love of reading and learning for children of all ages. The department provides a variety of materials including VOX books, Early Readers, Non-Fiction, Fiction, Picture Books, Audiobooks, Readalongs, and CDs.

## FLL CURRENT STATUS:

### Strengths

- Motivated, knowledgeable, and creative staff and leadership
- Sufficient budget for materials and programs
- Diverse programs and collection

### Weaknesses

- Furniture in Preschool Room
- Technology for programming
- Ability to properly showcase the collection



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: CHILDREN'S SERVICES, CONT'D

## BEST IN CLASS PRODUCTS / SERVICES OFFERINGS FOR CHILDREN:

- MakerSpace
- Designated space for crafting and programming

## SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS/ INVESTMENTS BY FLL:

### Services

- Innovative programming
- Proper training to allow staff to stay up to date
- Desktop computers correlating to district usage
- Up to date WIFI

### New Products

- Up to date ready-to-play books
  - examples: VOX, Wonderbook
- New technology to support modern services



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: CHILDREN SERVICES, CONT'D

## **NEW PRODUCTS:**

- Up to date ready-to-play books
- examples: VOX, Wonderbook
- New technology to support modern services

## **OUTREACH:**

- Introduce programs that are complementary to school curriculums
  - create and nurture relationships with the appropriate school administrators and maintain consistent contact to encourage new ideas
- Reach out and deliver relevant programs and services on site at Franklin Lakes schools
- Encourage school-fostered field trips to the Library with the goal of providing each student with a library card
- Build relationships with community groups

## **SPACE/BUILDING REDESIGN:**

- Renovate the Children's Department
  - friendly, welcoming, and engaging design with improved and hygienic seating
- Computer area for children
  - Charging docks within the computer area
- New shelving



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: CHILDREN SERVICES, CONT'D

## GOALS FOR YEAR 1:

- Outreach to schools
- Outreach to community
- New technology for programming
- Furniture in preschool room
- Provide proper trainings for staff to stay up to date

## GOALS FOR YEAR 2:

- Crafting storage area
- Computer area redesign for children's room including desktop computers
  - Charging docks for patrons
- Start planning renovation of Children's Department
- Provide proper trainings for staff to stay up to date

## GOALS FOR YEAR 3:

- Renovate Children's Department
- Shelving in preschool room
- Major overhaul of collection to maintain diversity
  - Scanning individual materials
- Reevaluate technological advances
- Provide proper trainings for staff to stay up to date



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: TEENS / YOUNG ADULTS



## STAFF:

SHANNON QUINN,  
MEGAN ROTHLAUF,  
LAURA HENDERSON

## CURRENT ENVIRONMENT:

Our experience and market research indicate that the attention span of teens continues to decrease in the age of social media and smartphone usage. Additionally, reading has declined throughout many age groups, including teens. Yet, libraries have the potential to offer an attractive environment, new products and meaningful programs that teens desire. Specifically, teens look for stimulating gathering/meeting spaces to collaborate on group projects, explore the latest technologies, and socialize by exchanging ideas and skills. The FL Library caters to tweens, teens, and young adults.

Our community has the resources, talents and ideas to meet the needs of the teen group. Our strategic plan for this cohort seeks to achieve the following objectives to Increase teens usage:

- Add new creative product offerings
- Connect more strongly with FL Schools
- Increase percentage of Library Cards held by FL teens

## FLL CURRENT STATUS:

### Strengths

- Motivated and creative staff and leadership
- Sufficient budget for materials and programs
- Nearby Franklin Avenue Middle School

### Weaknesses

- Current product offerings not in synch with current teen demands/desires
- Lack separate dedicated space with privacy for teens
- Improvement needed in outreach/collaboration with all FL schools
- Library not on same campus as schools



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: TEENS / YOUNG ADULTS, CONT'D

## **BEST IN CLASS PRODUCTS / SERVICES OFFERINGS FOR TEENS:**

- Video Games
- MakersSpace
- Meeting/Gathering Rooms with Teen Design in Mind
- Virtual Reality
- Strong After School programs

## **SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS/ INVESTMENTS BY FLL:**

### Products/Services (Details in attached Appendix)

- Establish Teen Advisory Board
- Create FAMS Students' Art Display and Scholarship
- Begin FAMS/Library Book Club
- Photography contests on social media
- Grab & Go crafts and STEM kits

### Other (Outreach opportunities)

- Send program calendars and fliers to schools
- Utilize social media outlets that teens are using to promote programs
- Put up fliers of events in prominent places in teen room & main entrance
- Hold game nights



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: TEENS / YOUNG ADULTS, CONT'D

## **NEW PRODUCTS:**

### Offer Video Game Rentals

- Popular in BCCLS - Hillside, Westwood, Fairlawn, and Mahwah
- Many patrons request video games
- Order Nintendo Switch, Play Station 5 and PS4 games
- Install Play Station 5 console for teens
- Host virtual reality workshops

### Modernizing technology and materials

- Add Cricut and update 3D printer
- Start advertising we have Cricut for use for programs
- Advertise that we can host one-on-one classes on how to use it
- Purchase 3D creative software to teach teens how to make 3D models and print them on the 3D printer



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: TEENS / YOUNG ADULTS, CONT'D

## OUTREACH:

### Outreach to FAMS

Meetings between FAMS students and Shannon Quinn on programs and materials they desired:

- Many ideas for future programs (video games, board games)
- Need better outlets to get out program information
- Utilize outdoor space for sports, games or just a relaxed environment
- Food based programs are big draw
- Continue talks with FAMS superintendent, principal, and art teachers
- Create more outreach
- Create familiarity with teen room

### Outreach to Area High Schools

- To Do – after successes in FAMS

### Outreach to other libraries

Wyckoff and Mahwah have high ratings for teen services. We reached out to counterparts at these libraries. Our discussions with them confirmed the need for more current and creative technology offerings, dedicated “teen” space and collaborative and competitive group exercises. See Appendix for details

## SPACE/BUILDING REDESIGN:

- Redesign teen space to reflect teens’ desires for meeting space with new technology.
- Update teen room to create comfortable and inviting environment that will create prime spot when school is out or just to gather
- Update décor to something more modern and age appropriate
- Add color, interactive stations (the Pixel Art Poster, Snowflake Making Station (seasonal,) and easily accessible board games
- Move and add furniture to create more seating allowing room to spread out and groups to settle in without invading other’s space



# DETAILED STRATEGIC PLAN: CIRCULATION & ADULT SERVICES



## STAFF:

KEN LEW  
JENNIFER DEMIRBAS  
LAURA HENDERSON  
JACKIE VICARI  
MARY MCCLAIN  
PATRICIA MACK  
ANN DZIEMIANOWICZ  
BARBARA LEMBO  
COLLEEN KORB  
LORRAINE WEISZ  
LOIS BODNER  
BETTY BUECHNER  
ISABEL ROJAS  
DEBBIE STILLMAN

*SUBSTITUTES: MEGHAN  
MCGUIRE, DEE REILLY, & EVA  
SAKELLAKIS*

## **BEST IN CLASS PRODUCTS / SERVICES:**

Circulation Staff provides reader's advisory, movie recommendations, and staff picks. They get many compliments about the service that they provide.

## **ADDITIONS TO CONSIDER:**

- Add a few automated stations, however still have the human interaction.
- Museum passes
- Fax machine
- Library of Things
- Look at dead collections and search for new opportunities

## **OUTREACH:**

- Promote MeeScan and new setup for more use
- Have more adult classes
- Chat sessions "meet the neighbors"

## **SUGGESTED REDESIGN / OPTIMUM SPACE:**

- Circulation Desk should be facing the front door
- Desk has poor design and has too many barriers
- Safety issues with desk
- Move collections around
- Bring in consultant or architect to think of better flow and access



# CAPITAL PLAN 2022-2025

PROJECT	RATIONALE FOR CAPITAL ITEM	ESTIMATED COST
HVAC Upgrades: Temperature Controls, and HVAC Units	HVAC units require upgrades that allow better control & efficiency over the heating & cooling system. HVAC Units #1 & #2 are 18+ years old & will need to be replaced within the next 1-2 years.	\$181,180.00
New Flat Roof	Warranty for the roof will be expiring in 2024 and will need to be replaced as the library has experienced several leaks over the years.	\$180,000.00
Outdoor Electronic Sign	Damaged pixels and upgrade needed.	\$6,500.00
Outdoor Building Siding, Power Washing, and Painting.	Pieces of siding are rotted and falling off the building.	\$5,000.00
Children's Room Upgrade and New Furnishings	Children's room furniture needs to be smaller for safety as well as well as sanitary. The design and layout need an update to allow for more seating.	\$183,818.00
Security Camera Upgrades	Additional cameras in children's room, meeting room, and parking lot.	\$8,000.00
New VOIP Phone System	Upgraded communication technology.	\$5,700.00
Key Fob Entryways	Provides safe, efficient, & secure way for staff to access areas of building. Can also connect to payroll.	\$6,000.00
Tech Lab Laptops	Updated laptops for computer classes and programs.	\$10,000.00
	<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$586,198.00</b>