

# Southold Free Library 2024-25 Strategic Plan

## **Background**

The Southold Free Library has enjoyed a long and successful history. It was formed in 1797 and received its charter in 1904. The Library is located in the heart of the hamlet of Southold. The building, originally Southold Savings Bank, was purchased and donated for Library use in 1928 by the Cahoon family. It was expanded in 1990, and it underwent a complete interior renovation in 2019. Open 7 days a week except in June through August, the Library offers programs, resources, and spaces for users of all ages.

## **Mission Statement**

The Mission of the Southold Free Library is to bring community members together through a lifelong passion for reading, learning, play, and intellectual curiosity.

## **Vision Statement**

The Southold Free Library will be an important contributor to the intellectual and cultural life of the Community. Contributions will include:

- Provide access to information, knowledge and ideas
- Continue partnerships with community groups
- Bring people together to foster community
- Support collections that are broad in scope and varied in formats for information and entertainment
- Provide outstanding service
- Provide an inviting, user-friendly facility

## **Philosophy of Service**

The Southold Free Library is committed to offering quality library service. To best achieve this, the Library follows these philosophies:

- Commitment to intellectual freedom. Individuals are responsible for making their own choices regarding appropriateness of materials, and parents/guardians are responsible for the choices they make for their children within the limits of the law
- Representation and respect for diversity in its collections, programs, and services
- Commitment to supporting formal and informal education and cultivating lifelong learning
- Commitment to providing cost-effective library services

## **Personnel**

Goal: The Library will provide resources to support staff in their continued professional development.

Objectives:

1. The staff will offer friendly and knowledgeable service and information to the public.
2. Staff development will be encouraged and facilitated by the Board of Trustees. One day a year will be set aside for training, and the Library will close for a staff development day.
3. Staff will be well informed on library services, policies and procedures.
4. The Library will aim to hire diverse staff that will reflect the values of the community it serves.

## **Acquisitions and Collection Development**

Goal: The Library will continually update its collection in terms of both content and format. Content will address the broad spectrum of human knowledge and culture, and by its emphasis reflect the desires of the community it serves. Acquisitions will include print and electronic media, with the relative weight of the different formats reflecting user preferences.

Objectives:

1. The Library will continue its current practice of allocating approximately ten percent of its annual budget toward acquisitions and collection development.
2. The Board will support the freedom to read through the application of library policies and will resist all attempts at censorship.
3. The Library will grow, improve, and increase access to its "library of things."

## **Marketing and Public Relations**

Goal: Take proactive and sustained steps to brand the library as a platform for community learning, development, and entertainment.

Objectives:

1. Continue to publish and distribute (to all households) a newsletter 6 times per year, both physically and digitally.
2. Make copies of the newsletter available in Southold school(s).
3. Maintain and update a website on a continual basis.
4. Utilize social media to promote the Library's services.
5. Make the community more aware of the online databases available (e.g. Brainfuse, historical newspapers, Novelist).

6. Increase marketing to the underserved within the community through organizations such as CAST, Family Service League, et al.

## **Outreach**

Goal: The Library will establish and maintain relationships with community organizations and groups to ensure that all members of the community have access to Library resources and services.

Objectives:

1. Broaden linguistic content by continuing to nurture relationships with community organizations to further awareness of library services and programs, and offering the newsletter in Spanish.

## **Programs and Events**

A large number of programs are continually offered to the community. These include but are not limited to: storytimes and craft programs, yoga, book discussion groups, art exhibits, gaming, historic walking tours, and concerts.

Goal: The Library will provide programs and events that enhance the intellectual and cultural life of the community.

Objectives:

1. Continue to explore winter reading clubs for both children and adults.
2. Increase attendance at English as a Second Language conversation program.
3. Continue to offer “pre-job” skills—resume writing and job and career skills for all applicable ages.
4. Continue offering organic and native plant seeds in the seed library.

## **Technology and Innovations**

Goal: Meet community needs by continuing to enhance technology for operational purposes, public outreach, and education

Objectives:

1. Use technology to achieve greater accessibility to information and provide effective service.
2. Commitment to offering training and educational opportunities in the use of new technologies and existing technologies for all ages.
3. Create a “Maker Space” which will include a Cricut machine, sewing machine, and 3D printer.
4. Update and maintain all devices for patron use.

## **Preservation and Conservation**

Goal: The Library will engage in activities designed to preserve and protect artifacts, annals, print materials, and other items that have historical or cultural value to our community.

Objectives:

1. The Director and selected staff will continue current efforts in preservation and conservation.

## **Facility**

Goal: The Library facility should be warm and inviting, accessible to all, and should support the various programs and services provided by the library.

Objectives:

1. Undertake a project to enhance the pocket park and access to the park from both Main Rd and library property.
2. Undertake an exterior survey to assess how to best address improvement of all the areas on the library parcels, including the pocket park, green area near Traveler Street, area on Main Rd, and all other grounds. Prepare a plan for comprehensive grounds improvement.
3. Investigate the installation of a generator and security system.

## **Fundraising**

Goal: Since it is funded by the School District tax base, the Library will continue to fundraise to supplement the budget. Friends of the Library, which are volunteers, assist with fundraising efforts.

Objectives:

1. The Library will develop a strategy for targeted fundraising efforts to support improvements to the exterior of the Library.
2. Mail an annual appeal letter to all residents.

## **Environmental Sustainability**

Goal: The Library will study and plan how to create a sustainable future and how best to respond to the potential impacts of the climate on library services, facilities, staff, resources, and the community we serve.

Objectives:

1. Evaluate current efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle library materials supplies and equipment.
2. Identify landscaping and building maintenance practices that can adapt to more sustainable forms, including the use of native plants.
3. Enroll in the Sustainable Libraries Initiative to achieve and maintain certification.

### **Equality/Diversity/Inclusion and Social Justice**

Goal: the Board of Trustees will approve a policy statement on EDI/SJ

Objectives:

1. Create training opportunities for library staff to deepen their knowledge of SJEDI.
2. Make safe spaces available where library staff can respectfully explore SJEDI issues together.
3. Provide and maintain resources for library staff to utilize in their SJEDI exploration.
4. Update resources for member libraries as needed in regard to SJEDI information.
5. Continue SCLS's mission to support and educate libraries regarding SJEDI issues in libraries.
6. Examine hiring practices and standards with an eye toward reaching and recruiting a more diverse set of candidates.
7. Investigate ways that the library can incorporate communities that are currently excluded from discussion and involvement.

\*The above 2024-25 Strategic Plan will be reviewed annually to determine progress and potential development. Committee members (2024) are: Matthew Daddona, Jim Roth, Priscilla Reilly, Camille Broussard, Perry Weiss, Jennifer Schlecht, Penny Kelley, Caroline MacArthur.