

Southold Free Library 2026-27 Strategic Plan

Use of this Plan

This plan shall act as a living document used by the Director, the Board and all Committees. It can be thought of as an umbrella or a roadmap under which the Board, the Director and the Committee Chairs can establish a set of objectives and development of strategies for the current year and future years.

It is the responsibility of the Chair of the Strategic Planning Committee to ensure that this document is updated and they should work with the Committee, the Director and the other Committee Chairs to do so.

Vision Statement

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

Mission Statement

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

- Provide ready and equitable access to information, knowledge and ideas
- Continue partnerships and active engagement with community groups
- Support collections that are broad in scope and varied in formats for information and entertainment
- Provide outstanding service by employing a collaborative and creative staff focused on the interests and needs of our library users
- Bring people together to foster community
- Provide an inviting, user-friendly place for community members to gather

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
- Commitment to being a good steward of financial and material resources

Finance

Goal: The Director provides the Board with a balanced budget for approval every year. The list of projected costs shall include but not be limited to the following:

- Any anticipated changes, goals or objectives that carry financial impacts shall be referenced in the financial tables in the Appendices of this document A list of SFL assets with anticipated future maintenance or replacement costs.
- Major capital improvement projects (See Appendix C).
- A list of Southold Free Library assets with anticipated future maintenance or replacement costs where available.

Personnel

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

- The staff will offer friendly and knowledgeable service and information to the public.
- Staff development will be encouraged and facilitated by the Board of Trustees. One day a year will be designated “staff development day.” The Library will close on that day to allow staff training.
- Staff will be encouraged to attend educational programs, seminars and professional meetings to support their success in the changing nature of services and key skills.
- Staff will be well informed on library services, policies and procedures to maintain consistent service quality in all areas.
- The Library will aim to hire diverse staff that will reflect the values of our community and to ensure that the right talent is in place to achieve the library’s overall strategy and goals.

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, museum passes, library of things, electronic media, and other relevant items with the relative weight of the different formats reflecting user preferences.

- The Library will continue its current practice of allocating approximately ten percent of its annual budget toward acquisitions and collection development.
- The Board will support the freedom to read through the application of library policies and will resist all attempts at censorship.

- The Library will grow, improve, and increase access to its “library of things.”

Marketing and Public Relations

Goal: The Library will take proactive and sustained steps to promote its brand as a platform for community learning, development, and entertainment.

- Continue to publish and distribute (to all households) a newsletter 6 times per year, both physically and digitally.
- Make copies of the newsletter available in Southold school(s).
- Maintain and update a website on a continual basis.
- Utilize social media to promote the Library’s services.
- Make the community more aware of the online databases available.
- 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.

- Broaden linguistic content by continuing to nurture relationships with community organizations to further awareness of library services and programs.
- Offer the newsletter online in Spanish
- Share resources with other organizations that appeal to the entire community.

Programs and Events

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

- Offer “pre-job” skills—resume writing and job and career skills for all applicable ages.
- Offer organic and native plant seeds in the seed library.
- Explore winter reading clubs for both children and adults
- Increase attendance at English as a Second Language conversation program.
- Work with neighboring libraries to share programming costs.

Technology and Innovations

Goal: The Library will meet community needs by continuing to enhance technology for operational purposes, public outreach, and education

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

Preservation and Conservation of Local History

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.

- The Director and selected staff will continue current efforts in preservation and conservation.
- Collaborate with the Southold Historical Museum and the First Presbyterian Church.

Buildings and Ground

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

- Enhance the pocket park and access to the park from both Main Rd and library property.
- Help coordinate and oversee capital projects outlined in Appendix C.

Fundraising

Goal: The Library will continue to fundraise to supplement the budget.

- The Library has a strategy for targeted fundraising efforts to support improvements to the Library (e.g., the Pocket Park).
- Mail an annual appeal letter to all residents.
- Have donation envelopes available throughout the library.
- Friends of the Library will continue to support the Library through independent fundraising activities..

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.

- Evaluate current efforts to reduce, reuse, and recycle library materials supplies and equipment.

- Identify landscaping and building maintenance practices that can adapt to more sustainable forms, including the use of native plants.
- Enroll in the Sustainable Libraries Initiative to achieve and maintain certification.

Equality/Diversity/Inclusion and Social Justice

Goal: The Library will promote and integrate equality, diversity, inclusion and social justice into its operations, offerings, and programs.

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

Appendix A – Revision History and Document Control

This appendix records all material revisions made to this document after its initial adoption. The log is maintained to ensure transparency, accountability, and an accurate historical record of Board-approved changes.

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| Document Owner | Caroline MacArthur, Library Director |
| Approval Authority | Board of Trustees |
| Review Cycle | Annual |
| Next Review | January 2027 |

Revision History

| Version | Date | Overview of Changes |
|----------------|---------------|---|
| 2026.0 | February 2026 | Updated structure and contents of strategic plan as part of annual review |
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Appendix B - Current Strategic Committee Members

1. Caroline MacArther (Library Director)
2. Lisa Davidoff (President)
3. Nick Colon (Chair)
4. Jennifer Schlecht
5. Penny Kelley
6. Thomas Hudgens
7. Daniel Kohs
8. Nancy Carroll
9. Lucille Jones

Appendix C – Capital Projects Summary

| <u>Project</u> | <u>Category</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Fiscal Year</u> | <u>Notes</u> |
|--|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Movie and sound system for Community room | Technology | | FY25 | In process |
| Pocket park project | Site | \$1,000,000 | FY26 | |
| Repairs to roof and gutters | Building Exterior | \$55,000 | FY26 | |
| Repair to windows, screen replacements | Interiors/Furnishings | Included in above | FY26 | |
| New frames and sills as needed | Site / Parking | Included in above | FY26 | |
| Exterior trim repair and/or replacement | | Included in above | FY26 | |
| Lighting software replacement/retrofitting | | | FY26 | Bidding process ongoing |
| Book cottage maintenance | | | | As Needed |
| Book Cottage Oil burner replacement | | | FY28 | Completed in 2025 |
| Stone work on Main Rd wall | | | FY27 | TBD |
| Railroad tie flower and tree bed walls | | | FY27 | wood is rotting |
| Installation of a library generator | | | FY27 | Applying for a grant |
| Elevator update/upgrade | | | FY28 | TBD |
| Interior painting | | | FY30 | |
| HVAC | | | FY35 | Installed 2020 |
| Main water line | | | | SCWA |

Appendix D – Other Anticipated Future Costs

| <u>Item</u> | <u>Category</u> | <u>Cost</u> | <u>Fiscal Year</u> |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Pocket Park Maintenance Contract | Buildings and Grounds | TBD | FY27 |

Appendix E – Asset Inventory

| <u>Equipment</u> | <u>Age (Yrs)</u> | <u>Condition</u> | <u>Avg Annual Maintenance Cost</u> | <u>Remaining Useful Life (Years)</u> |
|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Server Hardware | | Good | | 2 |
| Public PCs | | Good | | 1 |
| Network Switches | | Poor | | 0 |
| Main HVAC System | 5 | Good | | 15 |
| Elevator | 5 | Good | | 3 |
| Boiler | | | | |
| Building | | | | |