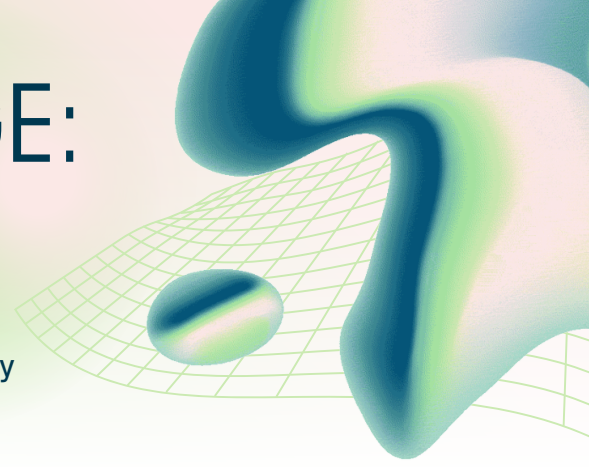


TURNING A NEW PAGE: A STRATEGIC PLAN

A Roadmap for the Future of the Lansdowne Public Library



Introduction

The Lansdowne Public Library serves as the heart of our borough, offering a welcoming and inclusive space for all, regardless of age, identity, education, background, or ability. Through its diverse and comprehensive resources, the Library serves as a trusted source of information and connection for Lansdowne and the surrounding area, empowering individuals and communities alike. The Lansdowne Public Library is at a point of transition as we enter a Borough-led expansion project that will enhance the Library's function as a community hub in its own right.

The Library's Board of Trustees wrote this plan with input from community members engaged through a survey, conversations with community groups, and a public meeting. As a result of these conversations, we identified strategies we believe will help improve the library's ability to meet community needs and respond to new challenges. As you read, keep in mind that the Plan doesn't try to describe *everything* the library will do in the next five years. The Plan also does not dictate specific operational decisions that are the purview of our excellent library staff. Instead, think of this Plan like a to-do list: it identifies a list of priority goals we have charged ourselves and the Library Director with accomplishing in the next five years. Part of the motivation for this approach to strategic planning is our recognition that community input should be a constant guide to decision-making. Some of the strategies listed in the plan respond to specific, already actionable suggestions we received during the community input period, but many of the strategies put in place processes to bring greater public awareness of Library operations on a continual basis moving forward.

The Plan is rooted in a vision of our Library as a shared public resources available to everyone. The Board of Trustees is eager to hear from community members and patrons in our continued work as we support the Lansdowne Public Library in its next chapter.

Overview

Our strategic plan focuses on the following key goals:

- 1. Communication: Inform patrons about Library operations and enhance our ability to gather feedback**
 - Review and publicize the Library's approach to program development
 - Improve event promotion

- Collaborate with local organizations
 - Strengthen community participation in Library by increasing accessibility of Board of Trustees meetings
2. **Inclusion: Provide a safe, welcoming, and accessible community hub for all visitors**
 - Regularly review accessibility
 - Support patrons building community
 - Continue refining Library's portfolio of services
 - Consider the open hours of the Library as a factor in how it meets the needs of the community
 3. **Excellence: Maintain and grow a collection that serves the community**
 - Ensure the collection meets the needs of the diverse community of Lansdowne
 4. **Expansion: Support the Borough's potential library expansion project**
 - Ensure continued community input to a possible expansion project
 - Prepare to participate in fundraising for library expansion
 5. **Staffing: Maintain high quality staff adequate to patron and operational needs**
 - Continually review staff wages as part of retaining and recruiting an excellent staff

Background

This strategic plan was developed by the Lansdowne Library's Board of Trustees in collaboration with Library Director Bill Paterson and members of the community.

1. Discussion:

The board met with the Library Director to discuss the goals and scope of this plan

2. Preliminary research:

A general survey was distributed to community groups to gather input on major areas of the library's operations. 111 community members responded.

3. Focus Group:

In October of 2025, a focus group was hosted at the Library. 16 community members participated in a lively discussion about the library's offerings and future.

4. Analysis:

The board analyzed notes from the focus group and general survey to synthesize actionable takeaways and determine a path forward.

Goal #1: Inform patrons about Library operations and enhance our ability to gather feedback

One key takeaway was the need for enhanced communication with patrons. Several focus group participants expressed a desire for services already available through the Lansdowne Library or the the Delaware County Library System, highlighting a gap in communication with the public. Furthermore, some participants were curious and uncertain about the Library's decision-making

processes. Strategies aligned with this goal address communication regarding programming, events, partnership, and governance.

1.1 Review and publicize the Library's approach to program development

- Review programming plan that describes how new programs are developed, how existing programs are retired, and how community feedback is regularly gathered.
- Create a public-facing summary of the programming plan.
- Beginning for 2026, Library Director will share an annual general programming calendar for the upcoming year with the Board of Trustees.
- Twice per year starting in 2026, Library Director will share information with the Board about regular review of programming and decisions to modify, retire, or add programming.

1.2 Improve event promotion

- Review and update the event publicity procedure for all event promotion, to include discussion of how the strategy reaches multiple target demographics with respect to age, income, gender, location, and race. The procedure should include electronic and physical media.
- The updated publicity procedure will be reviewed at least twice in the first year and annually thereafter.
- Create a mechanism for evaluating the success of event promotion that informs decisions about revisions to the publicity procedure.

1.3 Collaborate with local organizations

- Discuss successes and challenges of event promotion community knowledge of events with other local organizations and groups.
- Review the current procedure for partnerships and to what extent it benefits both the partnership and the library.

1.4 Strengthen community participation in Library by increasing accessibility of Board of Trustees meetings

- Beginning in 2026, The Board Secretary will submit a shorter set of highlights from monthly minutes to the Library newsletter and other appropriate forums as identified by the Board.
- The Board will establish clear public comment procedures for public attendees of meetings.
- Library Staff will include notice and highlights of upcoming Board meetings in newsletters and other relevant communications to patrons.

Goal #2: Provide a safe, welcoming, and accessible community hub for all visitors

Feedback from patrons included support for the Library as an accessible community hub. This accessibility took many forms in patron comments, with wide agreement that the Library should be welcoming to all patrons without exception. Strategies aligned with this goal address issues of physical accessibility, connection to variety of Library resources, and open hours of the library.

2.1 Regularly review accessibility

- By the end of 2027, Library Director will create or seek out a method of regular evaluation of the accessibility of the library, to include consideration of patrons with disabilities, first time visitors / new community members, and patrons needing assistance to meet basic needs such as food or housing. If the evaluation suggests a means of ensuring greater accessibility, Director will prepare a proposal of possible implementation steps to the Board.

2.2 Support patrons building community

- By the end of 2026, Library staff will create and publicize a procedure for patrons to host their own public events using available community meeting space. The library will create an acceptable means of spotlighting these community-presented programs that maintains a clear wall between library- and community-presented programs.
- In the year following the creation of this procedure, some combination of members of the Board of Trustees will host at least three of these trial events using this procedure.

2.3 Continue refining Library's portfolio of services

- Library staff will create, publicize, and maintain a clear and thorough description of available services. The guide will distinguish between services offered directly by the library, partner organizations, and other municipal/county organizations.
- Library Director will deliver information to the Board on at least an annual basis about the use and cost of available library-offered services and considerations for adding to or retiring available services.
- Explore possibilities for incorporating tools and other useful objects into the collection

2.4 Consider the open hours of the Library as a factor in how it meets the needs of the community

- The Director will regularly review the library's open hours to assess how they are meeting community needs; if it is determined that hours should be modified, then the Director will develop an analysis of options, costs, and implications of modified hours.

Goal #3: Maintain and grow a collection that serves the community

Feedback garnered through the general survey and focus group discussions revealed that patrons feel adequately served by the Library's current collection. As such, this strategic plan's third goal is to maintain and continue developing the quality and breadth of the media materials on offer.

3.1 Ensure the collection meets the needs of the diverse community of Lansdowne

- Review the current policy for diversity, interest and needs of the community, to maintain a balance in the collection.
- Discuss policy with acquisitions staff and review the collection to see to what extent the collection policy is being carried out as written.

Goal #4: Support the Borough's potential library expansion project

This strategic plan centers the materials, resources, and operation of the Lansdowne Public Library. However, the plan must also acknowledge the Library's plan to expand its physical space in the coming years, and the support necessary to accomplish this large-scale endeavor. Strategies aligned with this goal formally define the expected contributions of the Board and the Director to library renovation efforts, which will be led and managed by the Borough.

4.1 Ensure continued community input to a possible expansion project

- Three representatives from the Library, including the Director and one Board member, will participate in Borough Council committee(s) that involve planning for library renovation. These participating Trustees will report about the progress of these committees regularly at Library Board Meetings.

4.2 Prepare to participate in fundraising for library expansion

- In the event of a fundraising campaign in support of library renovations, Director's monthly reports will begin to include updates about the progress of the campaign.
- The Board of Trustees and Director will review any Borough fundraising plan for opportunities for collaboration and community engagement.
- Board will regularly communicate with the Friends about the progress of their ongoing fundraising efforts.

Goal #5: Staffing

A common refrain in the research behind this plan was the high quality of the Lansdowne Library's team of staff members. In order to accomplish this plan's goals and to maintain the level of service patrons have rightfully come to expect, the fifth and final goal of this plan is to maintain high quality staffing through regular review of compensation.

5.1 Continually review staff wages as part of retaining and recruiting an excellent staff

- As part of preparation for the annual budget request to the Borough, the Board Treasurer and Director will annually discuss the status of staff wages and the necessity of adjustment; if it determined that an adjustment is needed, they will conduct a review process including factors such as local cost of living and other employment opportunities in Lansdowne and surrounding communities. The results of the review will inform the budget request to the Borough.

Keeping the Community Informed of Our Progress

The Board of Trustees will inform the public of progress on the strategies in the plan through the following means

- Regular monthly meetings of the Board, the third Tuesday of the month at 7pm, which are open to the public. Meeting agendas will be published by the Borough in advance of the meeting and will clearly state which strategies within the plan are under discussion.
- Library Director's reports, shared at Board meetings, will refer to ongoing progress on the Plan's goals and strategies.
- We will inform the community through Board meetings and other announcements if the timeline of some goals is impacted by Borough-led expansion efforts and related work that may impact the capacity of the Library to implement new strategies.