



John C. Hart
MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Strategic Plan 2024 - 2027

Adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on Dec 13, 2023

Message from the Board of Trustees



The John C. Hart Memorial Library is a thriving library that serves a wide community, ranging from toddlers to senior citizens. The library is one of the busiest in Westchester County and strives to respond to the needs of our patrons. The library has a diverse range of programming, and you can walk into the library during different times of the year and see tweens engaged in building a haunted house for the community, senior citizens working with teens on technology assistance, community members visiting the library for passport renewal, and our youngest members at story time sessions. While books and our vastly expanding digital collections remain a central component of the library's purpose, serving all the various community needs and being a place for trusted information is a key goal for our library.

The John C. Hart Memorial Library operates, like all institutions, within a cultural, political, and economic context that poses interesting challenges. The Library is a Town Department and works collaboratively with the Town leadership. It exists within a current climate of nationwide book challenges and has had to remain vigilant upholding its purpose as an information source for our community. It must respond to rapidly expanding shifts in technology. While our historic building is a point of local pride, it needs updates to its physical infrastructure.

The Library relies on the Town to set its operating budget. We have a supportive community that values the Hart Library and requests expanded services. Our central goal is in being responsive to these requests from our community while operating within a budget landscape that is challenging.

Our next strategic plan serves to be responsive to the challenges in our current times by building in plans to engage in a capital campaign and be proactive in investment in new digital technology. The Plan also represents the excitement of these investments and the opportunity to continue to make the library a vital part of the community.

The Board would like to thank all of those who contributed in various ways to the creation of this plan.

Cathey Richey
Board President

Message from the Library Director



A good strategic plan reflects the needs of the community, is aspirational as well as realistic and relevant, and serves as a guide for moving forward -- still allowing the organization to be nimble -- all while keeping a focus on our core mission. I am pleased to present this four-year strategic plan which incorporates all these elements.

Our process had wide input and included an in depth, town-wide, publicly available survey, which was conducted in May and June of 2023, with 618 responses from the community. A comprehensive analysis of the responses was presented to the Library Board of Trustees who also conducted their own separate analysis of the library's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) to prepare this thoughtful document. I want to extend my sincere gratitude to the members of the community who participated in the process, the staff and the Library Board of Trustees who gave their time, effort and skills to prepare this for you, our patrons.

We are passionate about serving the Yorktown community and surrounding areas with quality resources and programs and this plan reaffirms the library's commitment to that service. We have a strong belief in the importance of the institution of the library as a beacon of light in every community. This plan will outline our intention to remain a leader in the region for providing high standards and free access to cultural, intellectual and personal enrichment for people of all ages.

We listened to you. We will keep listening to you. We welcome your ongoing feedback... after all, this is your library.

Warmest regards,

Yvonne Cech
Library Director



The Library: Then & Now

The John C. Hart Memorial Library received its charter from New York State on September 3rd, 1920. The House serves to honor John Coleridge Hart and his family, who were caretakers of the property and devoted community members to the Shrub Oak area of Yorktown. Since its original charter, the Library has diligently worked to build itself as a pillar of the community and a place for members to trust, providing resources from birth to the senior years.

Previous strategic plans have focused on creating more virtual library options, branding their programming, and increasing partnerships with the community. The library has succeeded in these initiatives. The Library regularly has programs that honor the history of the community but also works to connect its patrons to current events and technology. In other words, you are just as likely to see programming about the historical railways of Westchester as to see a screening and a discussion on the newest Barbie film. Children play, seniors and teens work together to conquer the latest in technology, and the collection is carefully curated to stay current but retain classic works. The community comes to the library, but the library also visits the community with outreach to schools or programming that invites partners in to update the community on important information.

One hundred years after its charter, the Covid-19 global pandemic forced the library to adapt and change direction in how best to serve the community. The entire team, led by the Director, pivoted quickly, and moved indoor events outside, in-person events virtual, expanded the digital collection, and made sure that they were serving the most vulnerable members of our community. The Board also recognized this as a historical moment for libraries and have worked closely with the Director to track usage as the Library shifted out of the pandemic to see which services will need to be adapted to a society's changing expectations around programming, collections, and services. The John C. Hart Memorial Library aims to be at the forefront of this change and to work well to balance the goals and vision of the library while adapting to the changing needs of the time.



Mission and Vision



The mission of the **John C. Hart Memorial Library** is to serve the town of Yorktown and surrounding areas by providing a center for intellectual, personal, and cultural enrichment to the people of all ages and backgrounds and under-represented groups. The Library has a circulating collection of books, audiobooks, magazines, CDs, DVDs and eBooks, audiobooks, videos and music to download. In addition, Hart has technological resources and programs for the purpose of education, recreation and satisfying informational, cultural and recreational needs.

Our Vision:

We are a destination for education, information, and literacy
We provide tools and resources for our patrons
We are responsive to changing digital technologies
We are a welcoming place for all our community members



Strategic Goals 2024 - 2027



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| 1. Educate and advocate for resources for The John C Hart Memorial Library | Engage with the community and town leaders to solicit input as well as inform on the challenges libraries face in today's climate |
| 2. Expand the Digital Experience via investment, staffing and education | Stay current on emerging technologies through staff and patron education and innovation |
| 3. Attract new patrons | Explore new ways to connect the community to the library, integrating diversity, equity and inclusion and partnering with businesses and other organizations |
| 4. Improve facility to meet the evolving needs of the community | Redesign and update existing space while planning for future expansion of the facility |
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Goal 1: Educate and advocate for resources for The John C Hart Memorial Library

Focus	Initiatives	Measures
Engage with the community to solicit their input on the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey patron base every other year Develop methodology to survey non-users Solicit Testimonials & develop methodology to evaluate individual programs 	<p>Increased patron satisfaction vs 2023 baseline, specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of surveys completed % of patrons Satisfied or Very Satisfied
Build robust community engagement to illustrate the value of investing in the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build and launch an awareness campaign 	<p>Representatives from each group attended at least one community non-library event to promote library testimonials or statistics per year; Library Board of Trustees, Library Staff, Friends of the Library, Capital Campaign Committee</p> <p>Measure awareness in patron survey</p>
Continue to establish and strengthen relationships with town leadership to advocate for the library needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trustee representation at Town Board meetings and/or budget meetings Library Director engages with and educates town leadership 	<p>Trustee participation levels 2024: 80%</p> <p>Trustee participation levels 2025: 85%</p> <p>Trustee participation levels 2026: 90%</p> <p>Trustee participation levels 2027: 90%</p> <p>Presented a State of the Library annual report to the town board</p>
Grow resources available for Library use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmark JCH Library against peer libraries Increase business partnerships Advocate for hiring additional professional staff to support expansion of library resources 	<p>Increased year on year Operating Budget funds</p> <p>Added one new business partner per year</p> <p>Formulated a proposal for Town Board by end of 2025</p>

Goal 2: Expand the Digital Experience via investment, staffing and education

Focus	Initiatives	Measures
Continue to build support to patrons that moves beyond the walls of the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase promotion of digital and web-based offerings ● Offer teen/senior programs to assist with adoption 	<p>Circulation improvement in non-physical books vs 2023 baseline</p> <p>Increased number of patron programs offered in the digital space vs 2023 baseline</p>
Invest in emerging technologies and work to educate patrons on the value of new technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 3D printer ● Kindle Book Clubs ● Increase investment in digital collection 	<p>Developed and hosted at least 1 3D printer intro class in the first year</p> <p>Established a Kindle Book Club</p> <p>Increased ebook portion of spending from overall materials budget vs 2023 baseline</p>
Develop the library's digital infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Upgrade staff workstations ● Increase bandwidth and physical reach of wifi 	<p>Converted 6 existing staff workstations to laptop docking stations</p> <p>Analyzed existing bandwidth and physical reach of wifi and create a plan and timeline for increasing both</p> <p>Documented improved wifi service vs 2023 baseline</p>
Train staff in library on new best practices with emerging technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increase number of staff in training programs ● Expand staff training in new technologies ● Advocate for hiring IT staff 	<p>Cross training between departments</p> <p>Increased staff training sessions vs 2023 baseline</p> <p>Increased number of staff trained vs 2023 baseline</p> <p>Formulated proposal to Town Board by end of 2025</p>

Goal 3: Attract New Patrons

Focus	Initiatives	Measures
Use programming to entice new audiences to the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connect our programming to patron feedback	Increased programming attendance and variety at least 5% each year
Explore new ways to connect patrons to the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outreach via direct mail• Awareness campaign to educate public about library services	Report # of new patrons annually, increase vs 2023 baseline
Expand service for Diversity and Equity Initiatives, including building collections and programming designed to serve these audiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop and use data to identify underserved segments of the population (per DEI plan)• Evaluate the accessibility of our website to meet ADA requirements• Develop and execute plan to reach and serve needs of underserved groups	Developed 2024 baseline, determined by newly developed data Identified underserved segments Annually audit website for website ADA accessibility Increased outreach to underserved segments
Develop partnerships with other businesses and organizations to connect new audiences to the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Define and solicit value added partnerships	Added one community partner per year

Goal 4: Improve facility to meet the evolving needs of the community

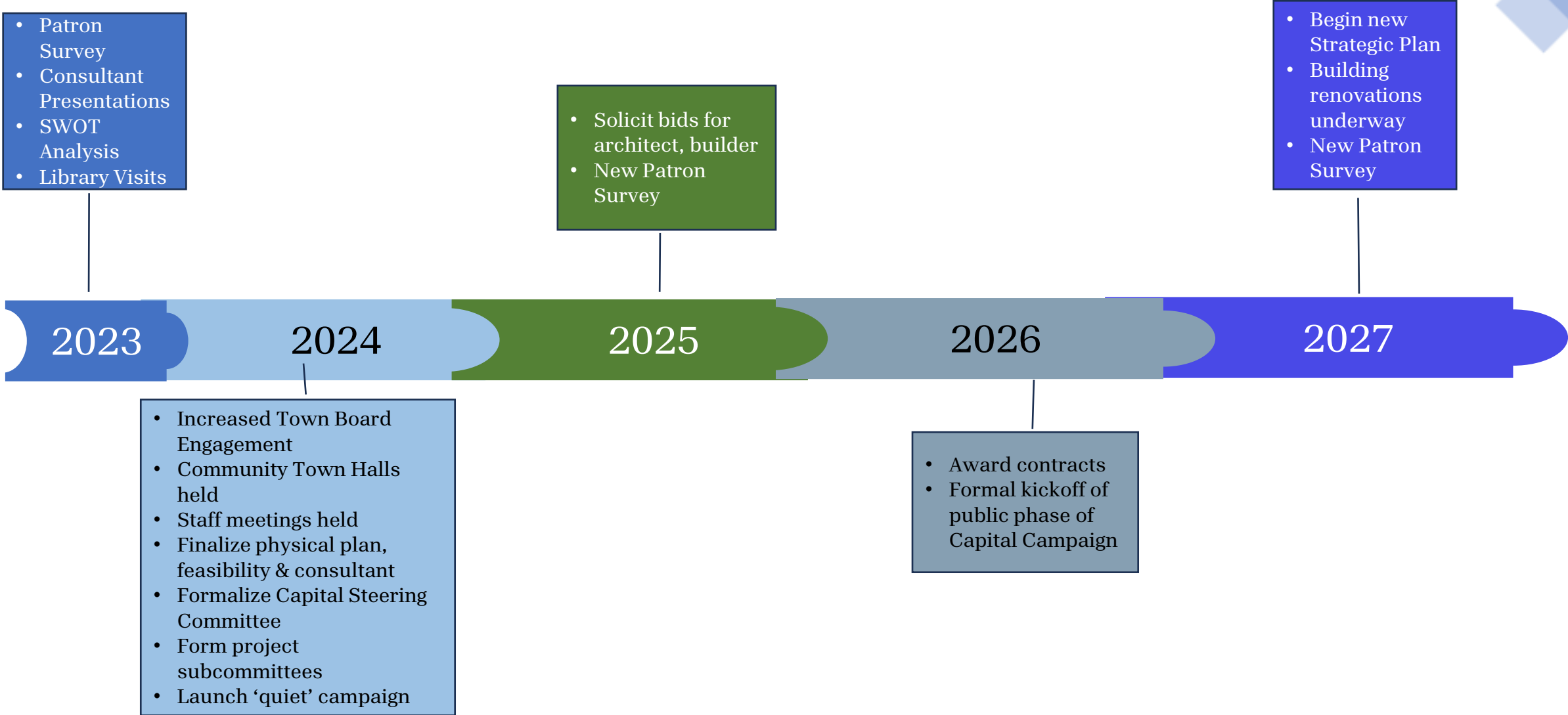
Focus	Initiatives	Measures
Work with architects to develop plans to engage in a physical expansion/re-organization while retaining the historical structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Contract with at least one consultant to develop plans	Completed Feasibility Study/Master Plan in 2024
Meet with key staff, community, business and political leaders to solicit their counsel for expansion/revision of the library	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Organize at least one staff meeting for inputOrganize at least two community Town Hall meetingsOrganize at least one meeting with Town leadershipForm Capital Campaign Steering Committee	Completed staff input in 2024 Completed Town Halls in 2024 Completed Town Leadership meeting in 2024 Committee active by 2024
Work with architects and develop strategic physical plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Solicit bids to develop final physical planChoose a plan and vendor	Began in 2025 Made selections by end 2025
Work with development consultants on plans to raise capital for the expansion	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Include need for project manager in capital campaignKick off quiet phase of capital campaign	Began in 2024



John C. Hart
MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Appendix

Strategic Planning Timetable



Selected Statistics 2022



115,111
visitors came
through our doors!

Total circulation
of library
materials:
306,600

1,993
programs offered;
17,163
people attended!

public computers
were used
4,860
times!

There were
56,999
visits to our
website!