

Strategic Plan 2030



**Tacoma
Public Library**

Welcome to the Tacoma Public Library

2030 Strategic Plan

Dear Tacoma Community,

As we step into a new chapter with our 2030 Strategic Plan, we are excited to share a vision that reflects your voices, hopes, and our shared commitment to a thriving Tacoma. This plan is more than a roadmap—it’s a promise to you, our community, that the library will continue to be a place where everyone belongs.

This plan was shaped by community input gathered through surveys, conversations, and interactive displays in our libraries featuring our beloved Book Buddy characters. Your ideas and experiences guided us in setting and refining our priorities. We believe that learning is a human right, and we are dedicated to breaking down barriers so that every person can discover, connect, create, and thrive.

We know that strong communities are built through collaboration. That’s why we are deepening partnerships with local organizations, schools, and civic groups to amplify opportunities for learning, creativity, and engagement. Together, we will invest in youth, nurture innovation, and create spaces that inspire curiosity and belonging.

This plan also calls us to be responsible stewards of the resources entrusted to us—ensuring that our libraries remain vibrant, resilient, and ready to serve future generations.

Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support and participation make the library a cornerstone of Tacoma’s growth and connection. We invite you to explore the full plan and join us in shaping the next five years of library service.

With gratitude and excitement,



Amita Lonial
Library Director



Manny Santiago
President, Library
Board of Trustees



Your feedback reminded us why libraries matter. Here are a few voices from our community:

“Libraries are the most important public buildings we have. They serve a variety of roles, including classes, space for public meetings, and programs that strengthen democracy.”

“I can’t imagine life without the library! It’s my home away from home—full of knowledge and a very supportive environment.”

“We love you, Tacoma Public Library! You are a valuable resource and asset to our community. You do so much with way too little funding and we appreciate you so much!”

Cover image: A young reader at Primetime Family Reading with Amara. Photo by Caden Stockton.

2030 Strategic Plan Process

Our Strategic Plan guides our work in serving the community, so it was of utmost importance to gather input from Tacoma residents and library users on the services, resources, and collections that matter to them most. To understand our community's vision for Tacoma Public Library, we collected both qualitative and quantitative data through online and in-person surveys, meetings with local partners and leaders, input from stakeholders and staff, and interactive Book Buddy ballot stations in our neighborhood libraries.



In-person community feedback surveys were part of the Strategic Plan Refresh process.

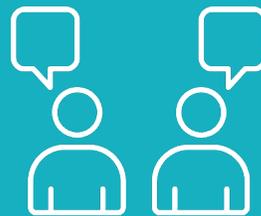
Because one of our strategic priorities is Investment in Youth, we were pleased to see that younger library users participated through interactions with the Book Buddy Ballots. Youth voted for their favorite categories with pom-poms placed into jars and contributed written comments on index cards. We are grateful to everyone who gave us feedback during the strategic plan refresh process, and to Tacoma Public Library staff for facilitating engagement with all ages.



Public Survey
(online)
1,821
responses



Book Buddy
Ballots
(in-person)
more than
17,000
responses



Community
Interviews
15



Staff Survey
86 responses



Strategic Priorities



Equity and Access



**Learning, Creativity,
and Innovation**



Investment in Youth



**Cultivate and
Engage Community**



**Responsible and
Resilient Stewardship**

Mission (our purpose and why we exist)

We empower our community by bringing people together to discover, connect, create, learn, and thrive.

Patron Promise (our commitment to our patrons)

We are radically welcoming: a trusted community hub where all people can find joy, compassion, and inspiration.

Our Vision (our aspiration for our community)

We envision a thriving community that fosters learning, literacy, and belonging for all.

Values (what we believe in)

We work to break down barriers of access

Our commitment to racial equity and social justice guides our work, allowing us to learn about and respond to Tacoma's diverse communities' needs and opportunities.

We believe that learning is a human right

We work to provide free access to information and ideas from diverse points of view and encourage our community to explore new ideas, perspectives, and experiences.

We foster a culture of teamwork

We engage with our community, our partners, and one another to cultivate collaboration and innovation.

We are committed stewards of our human, environmental, and financial resources

We practice equitable decision-making and resource allocation and take an active, visible role in supporting sustainable and resilient communities.



Equity and Access

We provide accessible and culturally relevant resources, spaces, and services that are welcoming to all.

Outcomes:

- Community can easily access library facilities and services in spaces that are welcoming and culturally affirming
- Resources and programs are easily accessible and responsive to community interests, needs, and cultures
- Community receives culturally affirming and expert support from staff

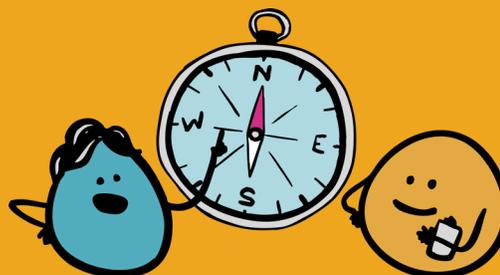
Measures of Success

Materials Circulation

Visits

Questions Answered by Staff

Social Worker Interactions



Below: Russian-language storytime at Kobetich Library.





Learning, Creativity, and Innovation

We cultivate curiosity, spark creativity, and nurture innovation to support lifelong learning, growth, and development.

Outcomes:

- Increased opportunities for learning through improved technology access and digital literacy support
- Community and staff participate in experiences that inspire creativity and support innovative thinking
- Responsive programming that reflects community interests and needs
- We are recognized by the community as a trusted steward of local history and storytelling

Below: Patrons utilize the embroidery machine in the Wonder Lab.

Measures of Success

Technology Usage

Technology Assistance

Library Programs and
Attendance

Northwest Room
Engagement





Investment in Youth

We invest in young people by prioritizing services, programs, and partnerships that support learning, development, and belonging.

Outcomes:

- Children and their caregivers engage in early learning experience that build literacy, curiosity, social emotional development, and school readiness
- School-aged youth access supportive environments where they can foster positive relationships and participate in opportunities to discover and develop their interests
- Young adults explore and strengthen the skills, interests, and competencies that prepare them for future education, careers, and life pathways

Below: A Play to Learn program with Greentrike underway at Swasey Library. Photo by Brian Cox.

Measures of Success

Youth Materials Circulation

Youth Programs and Attendance

School Visits

Summer Reading Participation

1000 Books Before Kindergarten





Cultivate and Engage Community

We serve as a trusted community hub for social connection, meaningful collaboration, and partnership.

Outcomes:

- Increased access to civic learning and engagement opportunities
- New audiences actively participate in library spaces, services, and programming
- Strong, collaborative partnerships leverage community strengths and expand the library's capacity to support community members/patrons
- We are an integral partner in a sustainable network that supports a thriving Tacoma

Measures of Success

New Library Cards

Active Library Users

Tacoma Reads Engagement

Outreach Events and Engagement

Partnerships



Below: TPL staff at Tacoma Pride Festival.





Responsible and Resilient Stewardship

We steward resources responsibly to ensure efficient operations, resilient facilities, and a vibrant library system for future generations.

Outcomes:

- The community trusts the library to manage resources with transparency and care
- Diversified funding sources will create opportunities to expand access, strengthen operations, and ensure that the library remains responsive to the community
- Strengthen and preserve library facilities through proactive maintenance and investment

Below: Mural at Fern Hill Library created with artist Jesse Peterson, South End Neighborhood Council, community volunteers, and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts.

Measures of Success

Building Improvement Projects

Tacoma Public Library Foundation Engagement

Staff Professional Development

