

North Haven Memorial Library

Strategic Plan

2025-2028

WE WELCOME
ALL RACES & ETHNICITIES
ALL RELIGIONS
ALL COUNTRIES OF ORIGIN
ALL SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS
ALL ABILITIES & DISABILITIES
ALL AGES
EVERYONE



North Haven Memorial Library

Table of Contents

Message from Director & Library Board Chairman	2
Planning Process	3
Timeline	4
Mission, Vision, Values	5
Goals	7
Plan Assessment	11
Appendix - Acknowledgements	13



Message from the Library Director and Library Board Chairman

As Director of Library Services and Chairman of the Library Board, we're proud to introduce our very first Library Strategic Plan. This is a forward-looking yet attainable roadmap, with clear priorities that show how we can continue to make a meaningful and lasting impact in the lives of North Haven residents and the surrounding community.

This Strategic Plan is more than just a document—it's a shared vision, shaped by the voices, values, and aspirations of the people we serve. It is grounded in what makes North Haven so special: a deep-rooted sense of community, a love of lifelong learning, and a strong belief in the Library as a place of growth, connection, and opportunity for all.

Created through a thoughtful and inclusive process, this plan reflects the input of patrons, staff, and community partners. From surveys and focus groups to interviews with key stakeholders, every part of this plan was guided by the real needs and dreams of the people we serve.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the Strategic Plan Work Group—our dedicated Library Staff and Library Board members—whose commitment, collaboration, and care were essential in shaping this vision. Their hard work is woven throughout this plan and has helped create a clear, meaningful plan for the Library's future.

Most of all, we thank you—our community—for your continued support and engagement. Your voices shaped this plan, and your passion for the North Haven Memorial Library has been evident every step of the way.

As we move into the implementation phase, we are excited to continue this journey with you, working together to ensure the Library remains a vibrant and inclusive resource for all.

The North Haven Memorial Library has always been more than a building. It's a place to discover new ideas, meet new people, and feel a sense of belonging. As we look ahead, we remain committed to ensuring that the **North Haven Memorial Library** continues to be **your space to enjoy, explore, and connect**.

With excitement and gratitude,

Michael Fletcher
Library Board Chairman



Susan Griffiths
Director of Library Services

Strategic Planning Process

In January 2024, the North Haven Memorial Library engaged Maxine Bleiweis & Associates (MB&A) to facilitate the strategic planning process. This process began with a community and organizational assessment completed in May 2024. This assessment gathered information from more than 500 members of the North Haven community through surveys, interviews, and focus groups, as well as census and other existing reports and data. The organizational assessment included staff input, review of policies and procedures, and observation. In addition, a Community Advisory Group was convened to provide feedback on the findings. **The assessment found that the North Haven Memorial Library had the potential to meet the following community needs:**



Increase social cohesion and sense of belonging



Provide a community hub and spaces to gather to meet a variety of needs for all ages and stages of life



Provide opportunities for community members to connect through meaningful shared experiences



Inspire curiosity and openness within the community and beyond

In August 2024, a Work Group made up of six staff members and three Board members was formed to use the information gathered in the assessment to draft the Library's Strategic Plan. Over the course of five meetings held between August 28th and December 5th, the Work Group reviewed the results of the community needs that had been identified through the process, developed proposed mission and vision statements, selected service priorities, drafted goals and objectives, and reviewed activities and foundational strategies. In addition, the NHML staff were engaged in the process through an all-staff meeting focused on the development of action steps to be used for accomplishing goals. The Community Advisory Council met on October 29th to review the strategic priorities and offer feedback on how the Library's efforts can be augmented through community partnerships.

Strategic Planning Process

TIMELINE

PHASE 1 - COMMUNITY, STAFF, & POLICY ASSESSMENTS

JANUARY 2024

The North Haven Memorial Library engaged Maxine Bleiweis & Associates (MB&A) to facilitate the strategic planning process. A detailed timeline was established, and a data collection survey was developed.

FEBRUARY 2024

Key Informant interviews were completed. Four focus groups including business owners, parents and caregivers of young children, 7th graders, and general adult library users, were conducted. The Community Survey was disseminated.

MARCH - APRIL 2024

Staff assessments, meetings, and interviews were completed and SOAR goals were created. Policy and procedure reviews were completed. The first Community Advisory Council meeting was held. The Community and Organizational Assessment Report was completed.

PHASE 2 - CREATION & APPROVAL OF THE PLAN

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER 2024

The Strategic Plan Work Group was convened. Multiple meetings were conducted to assess the data collected in Phase 1. The Work Group began to create goals and objectives.

OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2024

The Second Community Advisory Council meeting was held to offer feedback and assess if tentative goals aligned with needs of the community. The Library's new Mission, Vision, and Values were created. The first draft of the Plan was written.

JANUARY - MAY 2025

Work continued on the Strategic Plan draft. An Action and Assessment Framework was created. MBA and the Library Director presented the completed Strategic Plan to the Library Board, and NHML received approval of the Strategic Plan.

JUNE - NOVEMBER 2025

The staff continued work on the Action and Assessment Framework. NHML officially launched the Strategic Plan to the public in November 2025.

The adoption of a new strategic plan offers the Library a valuable opportunity for thoughtful self-reflection, starting with a shared understanding of its **mission**—what the Library does—its **vision**—what it aspires to be—and core **values** as an integral part of the North Haven community.

Presented below and approved by the Library Board on May 15, 2025, these statements will steer the Library's work over the next three years and provide direction as it adapts to an ever-changing environment.

Mission

The North Haven Memorial Library
is your space to enjoy, explore, and connect.

Vision

The North Haven Memorial Library will be
a vibrant hub of connection, innovation, and learning,
where all members of the community feel they belong and are valued.

Values

We are...

- Accessible and Welcoming
- Committed to Exceeding Library Users' Expectations
- Always Curious
- Collaborative Leaders
- A Gathering Place

ACCESSIBLE AND WELCOMING:
All members of the community can comfortably access resources in spaces that meet their needs.

COMMITTED TO EXCEEDING LIBRARY USERS' EXPECTATIONS:
NHML will foster a healthy and supportive library staff culture that is reflected in delivering positive patron experiences.

ALWAYS CURIOUS:
NHML is committed to supporting lifelong learning and fostering a sense of wonder and discovery, helping each person experience the joy of reading and the power of ideas.

COLLABORATIVE LEADERS:
NHML leads by example, bringing together community members and groups, bridging gaps and supporting new ideas.

A GATHERING PLACE:
NHML is the space where people of all ages can come together to experience community.

Goals



Create Community Connections

Both new and longtime community members will see the Library as the place that connects them to one another and to the wider community by having access to opportunities to share ideas, resources, and meaningful experiences in a welcoming environment.

Diversify types of materials, displays, and programming that include North Haven community members' contributions.

Strengthen community partnerships and collaborations to support and extend library services.

Increase opportunities for community members to share hands-on experiences and common interests.

Identify current underserved communities and create strategies to increase library usage.



Visit a Comfortable Place

Community members will feel welcomed into accessible spaces, both physical and virtual, that give them the opportunity to:

- Meet and interact with others
- Enjoy quiet moments
- Study, work, and learn
- Find the resources they need

Develop a balance of active and quiet areas that meet the needs of the community.

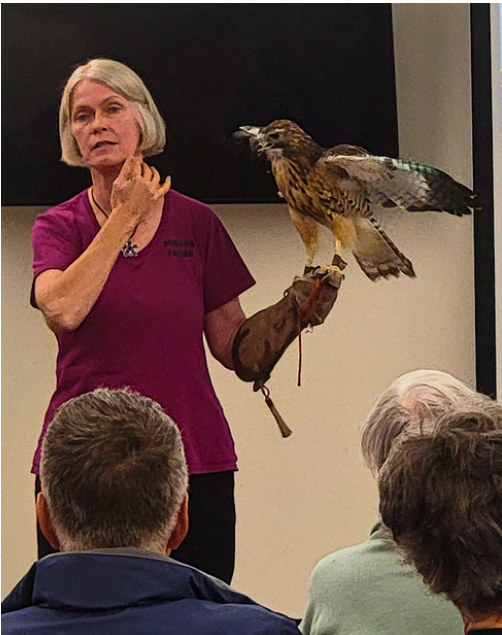
Increase community member usage of the Library.

Deliver positive patron experiences that connect library users with the resources they seek.

Improve the accessibility of the website.

Promote Lifelong Learning

Community members of all ages will feel supported and engaged in learning opportunities that meet them at their individual life stages so that they can access the resources they need to be successful in school, work, and life.



Offer services that support families and the community to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence necessary to support children's and teen's learning.

Expand partnerships with groups that offer lifelong learning opportunities to identify and fill gaps in community learning.

Expand and cultivate opportunities that build essential life skills.



Spark Curiosity & Encourage Imagination

Community members will encounter reading, viewing, and listening materials, programs, and hands-on experiences that spark their interest, reflect and expand their perspectives, and enrich their lives through skill-building and fun.

Develop, build, and maintain collections and resources that are relevant and engaging.

Encourage users of all ages to participate in hands-on activities, skill-building, and active play.

Increase the awareness that community members have of the Library's programs, collections, and services.



Putting the Plan Into Action

During the planning process, the Work Group, staff, and Community Advisory Group identified hundreds of potential activities and initiatives designed to bring the Strategic Plan to life. The resulting activities are grouped into four key categories that provide the plan's framework: marketing and communications, community outreach, staff alignment, and physical/virtual space planning.

The Strategic Plan will be carried out in three phases – Assessment, Alignment, and Action.

1

PHASE ONE: ASSESSMENT

NHML will focus on assessing its current activities as they relate to each objective and each of the four categories. For example, the first objective under Create Community Connections is to “diversify types of materials, displays, and programming that include North Haven community members’ contributions.”

In Phase One, staff will assess how this is currently being done and what changes may need to be made in how the Library communicates/markets opportunities, who from the community is currently engaged and who will need to be engaged, how staff are currently deployed to do this work, and what spaces are available to achieve the objective.



2

PHASE TWO: ALIGNMENT

NHML will focus on aligning the work it does with the objectives by potentially changing communications/marketing methods, engaging community members and organizations more effectively, shifting library work responsibilities, and altering or updating spaces to meet the identified needs.

3

PHASE THREE: ACTION

NHML will begin to carry out the activities that lead to the accomplishment of each objective and ultimately its goals. Each objective will have an associated measurement so that progress can be tracked.

In each phase, the Library will work closely with the community, including the Community Advisory Council, to develop ways to receive feedback on its progress and learn about new needs that arise in North Haven. The timeline for each of these phases will vary and will be cyclical, with activities being assessed and re-aligned as needed.

In tandem with the implementation of the Strategic Plan and based on community feedback, NHML will be making significant improvements to its physical spaces. In 2024, the Library received a State Library Construction Grant and expects renovations to begin in the fall of 2025. These updates are designed to support the Strategic Plan's Vision and Objectives. The improvements include a larger Teen space featuring modular seating, a dedicated gaming center, and computer stations exclusively for teen use. A combined Information and Circulation desk will streamline service. An expanded café area will offer a more inviting, casual setting. Three new study rooms will be constructed on the second floor to further support independent and collaborative learning and provide meeting space. Additionally, the installation of a high-capacity generator will enhance the Library's role as a community hub, ensuring it can provide power, internet, and climate control during storms and emergencies. Throughout the majority of the renovation period, NHML will remain open. While some services may be temporarily affected, staff are committed to minimizing disruptions, maintaining accessibility, and extending library services into community spaces.

Acknowledgements

*Thank
you*

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THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who participated in the research and creation of our inaugural Strategic Plan. We could not have done this without the help of our staff and community!

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Library App :
North Haven Library
Available in the App Store & Google Play

