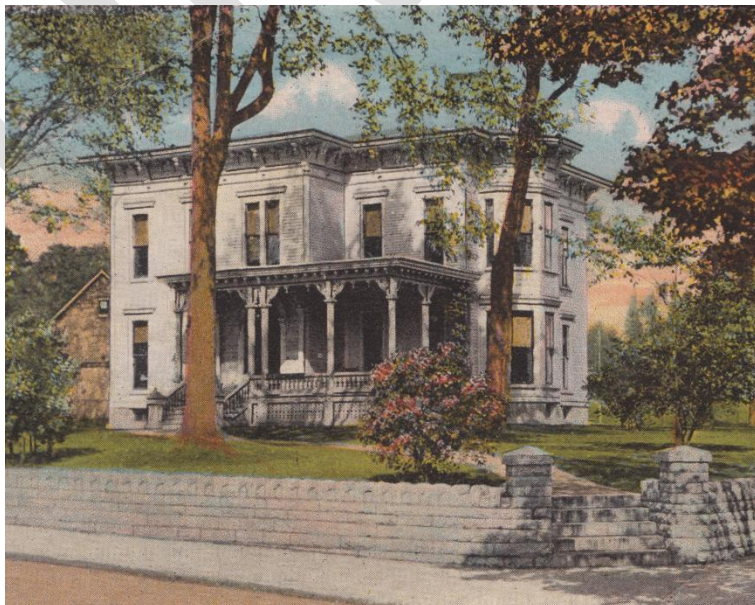




2026-2030 LONG-RANGE PLAN

PREPARED BY ALEXANDER BENJAMIN
Library Director

IN COLLABORATION WITH
Library Board of Trustees



A Message from the Director

PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

There's an old saying: "May you live in interesting times." And indeed, these are interesting times. As technology becomes increasingly central to daily life, access to it has never been more essential. At the same time, many individuals are struggling to meet basic needs. Libraries sit at the intersection of these realities – providing stability, access, and connection when they are needed most.

Our long-range planning process gives us the opportunity to ask: what is the library's role at this moment? As I reviewed the data collected from our community and staff, one theme stood out clearly: the continued importance of the library as a true *third space*. A place where people can exist without expectations and where everyone is welcome.

The data shows that one thing has remained constant: people's love of books. The feedback we received overwhelmingly affirms that access to books is the most important service we provide. The second most popular service the library provides is staff assistance. While it may not always be recognized as a formal service, the presence of a friendly and knowledgeable staff member remains one of the library's most valued assets.

At its core, the library is an educational, recreational, and community-centered institution. The objectives outlined in this plan reflect the insights gathered during the planning process, aligned with our mission and identity. Some goals are already in motion, while others are aspirational, but all speak to the needs and hopes of the Oneonta community.

Alex Benjamin

Library Director

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide a safe space for life-long learning and collaborative activities.

This mission statement is founded on these guiding principles:

Life-long learning is the foundation of a democratic society

Information resources should be freely accessible to all people in the community

Community members should have a safe place to read, research, and participate in all forms of life-long learning

While the strategic plan informs our priority areas for future development, it is important to emphasize that these goals do not replace the guiding principles of our library.



STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Empowering Access

Inspiring learning

Strengthening Community

EMPOWERING ACCESS

Goal: To ensure equitable access to information and resources through dedicated staff, a relevant collection, and relevant services.

Objectives

1. Using patron feedback, checkout data, and reader's advisory resources, such as Publisher's Weekly, maintain a print collection that meets the needs and preferences of our community.
2. Improve the marketing of our current resources.
 - a. Increase awareness of pre-existing services like our Library of Things and home delivery.
 - b. Additional staff outreach to promote services.
 - c. More social media presence around existing services.
3. Continued expansion of digital resources.
 - a. Continued digitization of local history collection
 - b. Research potential online resources similar to Libby and Hoopla.
4. Manage the local history collection and access to the community.
 - a. Increased promotion of local history services and collection.
 - b. Continue curating local history collection.
 - c. Rotate local history displays quarterly.
5. Expand the Library of Things.
 - a. Research and add relevant items.
 - b. Increased storage space and improved signage.
 - i. Better visibility for patrons.
 - ii. Relocate collection to a more suitable area.
6. Continue adding technology.
 - a. Increase accessibility of technology for our patrons.
 - b. Stay up to date with current and emerging technology needs and trends
7. Improved education around digital tools and skills.
8. Remove late fines from items in the circulating collection.
9. Staff members better distributed throughout building

INSPIRING LEARNING

Goal: To inspire and cultivate lifelong learning for all ages through diverse programs, educational opportunities, and a welcoming environment that encourages curiosity and growth.

Objectives

1. Expand story-times to increase accessibility for families
 - a. More after school story-times
 - b. A more diverse offering of story-time activities.
2. Improved children's area
 - a. More space for activities.
 - b. More passive activities.
3. Provide varied and exciting adult programming.
 - a. Continue fostering the Writer's Program.
 - b. Identify educational programming needs within the community.
 - c. Research and create passive programming.
 - d. Experiment with the timing and content of adult programs.
 - e. Utilize more passive adult-programming.
4. Collaborate with other community members and organizations on programming gaps within the library's services.
5. Evaluate and update non-fiction collections.
6. Explore alternative educational resources.
 - a. Add museums, parks, and zoo passes to the library collection.
 - b. Utilize Huntington Park as an educational resource.

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY

Goal: To foster a vibrant, connected community by offering welcoming spaces, helpful services, and collaborative opportunities that reflect and support the needs of the Oneonta community.

Objectives.

1. Add and improve quiet reading areas.
 - a. Create an additional reading room after the children's items move out.
 - b. Update furniture in currently existing reading room
2. More small private meeting spaces.
 - a. Identify a way to create one more private space for 2-4 patrons.
3. Additional emphasis on adult and children's programming.
 - a. Priority on digital literacy for both adults and children.
4. Outreach to encourage more community usage of our public spaces.
5. Promote tabling opportunities for non-profits and community organizations.
6. Audit and improve signage in the building.
7. Increased presence at community events and festivals.
8. Focus on staff customer service training.
 - a. Invisible shoppers.
 - b. Audit other businesses in the area and look for examples of good and bad customer service.
 - c. Continued staff customer service training.
9. Strengthening the Library's Friends group.
 - a. Increase enrollment in the Friends of the Library.
 - b. Increase visibility of the Friends and encourage them to perform outreach.