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## Access & Innovation

Forbes Library connects all patrons to services, resources, and technology that are convenient, relevant, and accessible.

- Increase access to library services
- Increase digital access for our community (bridge digital divide)
- Raise public awareness of the library's resources and services
- Provide vibrant collections for all

Sample activities:

- Expand hours
- add Bikemobile service in neighborhoods and at community events
- loan mobile hotspots
- welcome newcomers to our community and introduce the library through targeted outreach in partnership with service organizations, the housing authority, and realtors

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## Children & Teens

Forbes Library fosters the love of reading, and encourages the development of creative and critical thinking skills among children and teens, from early literacy through mature readership, by offering services that spark curiosity and nurture learning.

- Actively engage with the community to increase access to and awareness of collections, programs, and services available to children, teens, and their families
- Update and improve children and teen spaces to provide appropriate, fun, and safe spaces for all
- Foster a community around early literacy starting at birth

Sample activities:

- emphasize programs that engage all ages, families, and mixed generations
- remodel Young Adult Room
- incorporate learning opportunities for caregivers about early literacy topics in early childhood programming

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## Fun

Forbes Library enriches lives by providing free entertainment, recreational reading, access to the arts, and opportunities to create.

- Celebrate and support authors and readers
- Inspire and encourage the community to explore and create
- Provide opportunities to experience art and music
- Enhance library grounds for community building and education

Sample activities:

- Present a local children's authors series
- add a garden tool collection
- offer a Musicians-in-Residence program
- Increase outdoor seating areas
- offer series of hands-on art workshops

*"I am excited that the Forbes Library has chosen to profile access in their new strategic plan. Access is at the core of what a library should provide. To have it front and center in the plan is a hallmark of the Library striving to meet patron needs. Specifically, I am most encouraged about the Library's focus on access through increased hours."*

– Nicole Sibley, Amherst College & Strategic Planning Committee Member

## FORBES library

NORTHAMPTON'S PUBLIC LIBRARY

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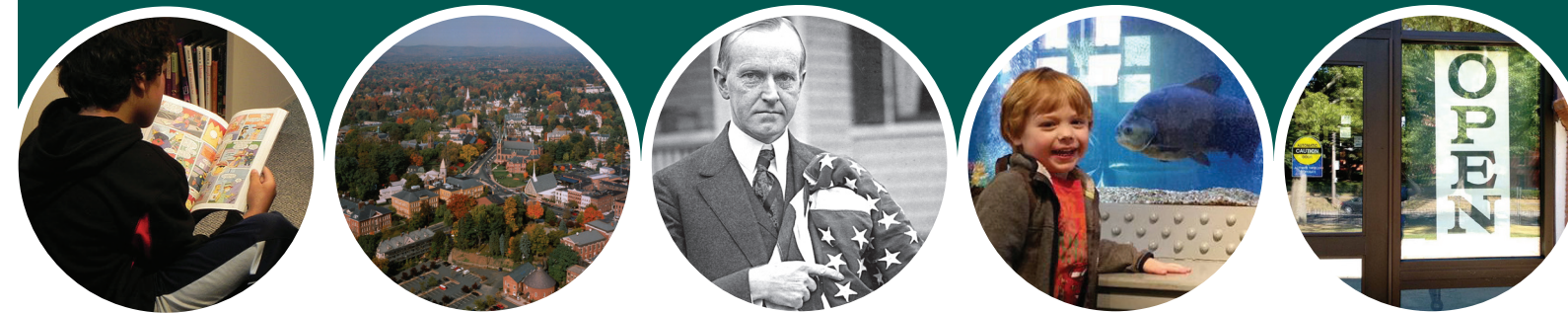
Text/SMS: 413-570-0444

<http://forbeslibrary.org/>

# FORBES library

NORTHAMPTON'S PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Strategic Plan 2019-2023



### OUR MISSION

Forbes Library exists to provide a wide range of information and materials to all of the people of Northampton, and to encourage and support the civic, intellectual, and cultural pursuits of the community. Forbes Library encourages curiosity, free inquiry, and lifelong learning, and provides a friendly environment as a community meeting place.

### OUR VISION

Forbes Library is a welcoming haven for all. We build connections that strengthen our communities, inspire curiosity, open windows to the past, and create pathways to the future.







# About the Strategic Plan

Forbes Library's Strategic Plan for FY2019 through FY2023 is an exciting and ambitious plan that provides a framework for the library to meet the needs of our community and deliver higher levels of service. The plan was developed based on input from the Northampton residents who came to our community forum and responded to our survey. We also spoke to over forty local stakeholders about the challenges their organizations, and our city, will face in the coming years and ways in which the library can help. The library staff, the board of trustees, the Friends of Forbes Library, the Coolidge Museum Advisory Committee, and the members of our strategic planning committee identified the library's strengths and created goals for the future.

What we heard most often was the need for more access to everything the library offers. The plan addresses the need for both physical access to the library building and expanded access to all types of resources for everyone in the community. It includes improving access to online resources as well as taking library services outside of the building to parts of the community where they are wanted and needed. The library aims to be a gathering space for our community to access each other's ideas and a place where information about vital services can be found.

Through the goals set-out in this plan, we will improve services to children, teens, and families to ensure everyone has access to tools that spark curiosity and nurture learning. We will also expand access to local history and grow the library's special collections to gather information and work that is being created today, and enhance the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum.

Providing books and information is an important and vital part of our mission, but we also want to show how information can be used to explore, entertain, and create. We will celebrate and support the writers, artists, and makers in our community and provide people of all ages a place to create, collaborate, and learn how to problem-solve.

As part of the planning process, we have rewritten the library's Mission and Vision Statements so that they are aligned with our motto: Forbes for All. Everyone is welcome at Forbes. It is a safe space where access to information is free and discovery, participation, and dialogue are encouraged.

This Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document, providing a continuing touchstone for staff yet flexible enough to change as our city evolves. The library is here to serve our community. If you have any thoughts or ideas we'd love to hear them at any time!

2019 will be the 125th anniversary of Forbes Library and we'll be hosting special programs and exhibits throughout the year. We're looking forward to celebrating this milestone with everyone in our community!

Katy Wight,  
Trustee & Chair of Strategic Planning Committee  
Lisa Downing, Director, Forbes Library  
Molly Moss, Assistant Director, Forbes Library



*Public libraries are a cornerstone of our democracy and vital centers of knowledge, inspiration, and community. Northampton is fortunate to have just such an institution in Forbes Library and I commend the Board of Trustees for working with our community to create a long-term vision for sustaining it now and into the future.*  
— David J. Narkewicz, Mayor of Northampton



# Forbes Library Goals for 2019-2023

## 1 Community Hub

Forbes Library engages the community by providing a place and services that connect people and help bridge divides.

- Provide a safe, secure, and comfortable place
- The Library's collection, services and programming will reflect the cultural, ethnic, religious, economic, and gender diversity of the community
- Leverage partnerships with local organizations
- Provide opportunities for civic engagement
- Create an engaging and positive atmosphere for library patrons and staff

Sample activities:

- expand the visibility and availability of quiet space for working!
- review our collection management policy and procedures to ensure diversity in our collections
- increase the number of opportunities for people to contribute to the library through volunteerism and provide information about opportunities in the community
- offer Great Discussion series about critical global issues facing us today

## 2 Connecting Past, Present & Future

Forbes Library provides a connection to local history and documents today's history through our growing Special Collections, Hampshire Room for Local History, and the Calvin Coolidge Presidential Library and Museum (CCPLM).

- Grow collections by engaging our community to make and document today's history in partnership with other organizations
- Increase digital access to, and awareness of, our collections
- Expand the Hampshire Room for Local History & Special Collections to provide research space and room for the collections to grow
- Upgrade the CCPLM and expand community engagement
- Celebrate Forbes Library's history and continuing vital role in the community with 125th anniversary events

Sample activities:

- develop a Historian-in-Residence Program to create and present new work based on our collections
- launch a crowdsourced transcription project
- partner with local schools to offer a student research project based on the library's collections
- develop an archive of born digital content pertaining to the ongoing history of our community

*"I'm excited by the parts of the plan that will increase the ways in which new and different people in Northampton will be drawn into the library by the proposed initiatives."*

— Cheryl Zoll, Tapestry Health, Strategic Planning Committee Member

