



**Forbes
Library**

Strategic Plan 2025-2027



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 physical environment as a community meeting place.

Our Vision

adapted from poem by Seth Gregory

a safe space
a community hub
a sanctuary for lifelong learning
we are here to welcome and meet your needs
believing that dignity is inherent
that knowledge is power
and that your library should be free

For All
NORTHAMPTON, MA



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A strategic planning process gives the library an opportunity to listen deeply to the concerns, needs, and hopes of our community. We spoke to many different members of our community about the library. This helped us to identify areas in which the library is already strong as well as areas in which our services need to be expanded or improved. We draw on this plan to develop budgets, prioritize activities, and continue to plan for the future.

This plan provides a clear sense of purpose for the library staff, trustees, friends, and volunteers. Largely aspirational, we will work hard to achieve the goals set forth and provide annual updates to our community.

Goals & Objectives for 2025-2027

wellbeing

Center the wellbeing of our community through the library's services and spaces.

- **We will continue to protect the intellectual freedom and privacy of our patrons.**
Sample activity: Publicly support legislation that protects intellectual freedom and library employees
- **We will take action to provide new pathways to library access.**
Sample activity: Increase the number of kindergarteners with public library cards in Northampton Public Schools
Sample activity: Actively collaborate with Northampton's new Resilience Hub
- **We will take action to support the City of Northampton's goal of carbon neutrality.**
Sample activity: Advocate for improved links to existing and planned bike infrastructure in the city to the library
- **We will make improvements to our building for the safety and comfort of people using it.**
Sample activity: Improve accessibility and ventilation of bathrooms

awareness

Empower our community by increasing awareness of local resources. By sharing information and building connections, we will drive growth and improve the quality of life in Northampton.

- **We will promote the library's services to an ever widening audience.**
 - Sample activity: Conduct targeted marketing campaign to Latinx members of our community
 - Sample activity: Seek grant funding to develop a communications strategic plan
- **We will improve wayfinding for increased access and discoverability.**
 - Sample activity: Use bilingual (English/Spanish) signage wherever possible
- **We will be more visible in the community.**
 - Sample activity: Increase cardholders living in Northampton Housing Authority properties
 - Sample activity: Explore hosting a community information fair

forbes library's values

Welcoming:

We offer an inclusive space that builds community and belonging.

Inspiring:

We foster curiosity, creativity, fun, and lifelong learning.

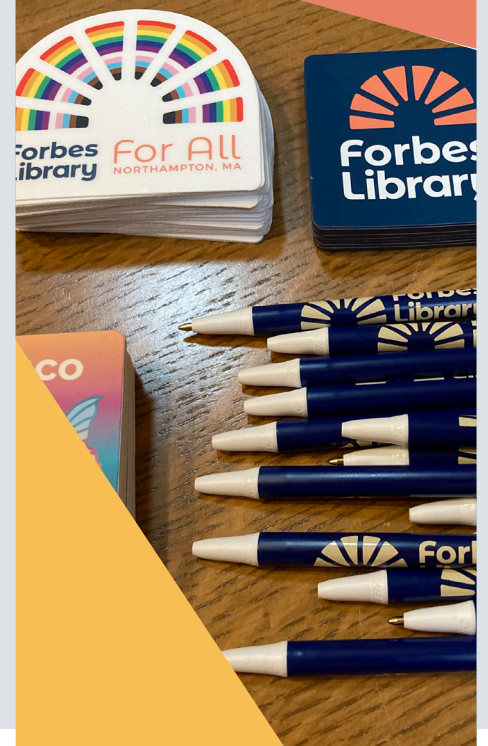
Equitable:

We ensure that the library is accessible and free for all.



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**Goals &
objectives for
2025-2027**





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Goals for 2025-2027

inspiration

Improve our physical spaces and resources so that we may continue to be a source of fun, wonder, and inspiration for the community

- **We will complete capital projects that support creativity, learning, and entertainment.**
 - Sample activity: Add an accessible performance stage to west lawn
 - Sample activity: Renovate the Young Adult Room
- **Our collection will support our community in new ways.**
 - Sample activity: Expand our Library of Things collection with additional crafting and other recreational items, household items, and tools
- **We will foster a learning culture for staff and patrons.**
 - Sample activity: Increase staff development funding
- **We will preserve and share our local history.**
 - Sample activity: Continue to expand Local History Collections with emphasis on cultural and political movements of the last 50 years. Focus on LGBTQIA+, music, arts, political activism, and journalism.
 - Sample activity: Develop a plan for renovating exhibits in Coolidge Museum

“I’m truly awed by the dedication of the Forbes Library staff, Trustees, Friends, and the advisory groups behind this beautiful and comprehensive FY2025-FY2027 Strategic Plan embracing a Forbes Library for all. I wholeheartedly support this well-crafted vision to enhance community well-being, boost awareness of our invaluable library and services, and inspire and welcome everyone in our community. Together, we can chart a course toward a stronger, healthier, and more vibrant community where knowledge freely circulates, support is readily available, and inspiration flourishes.”

– Gina-Louise Sciarra, Mayor of Northampton



The 2025-2027 Strategic Plan was unanimously accepted by the Forbes Library Board of Trustees on September 21, 2023.

