Why a Strategic Plan for the Library?
In 2017-18, the Library and other City of San Mateo Departments initiated a strategic planning process that was in alignment with the City Council’s strategic goal setting and which served as the foundation for the development of the biennial two-year Business Plan and the annual Work Plan. The strategic planning process allowed the Library to focus staff and other resources on the most important goals, services, and activities that will drive the Library forward during the next few years.

San Mateo's libraries are well used, highly respected and much loved by the community. Library staff members take great pride in providing excellent service and library buildings provide a twenty-first century infrastructure for users and staff.

This is a time of very rapid change for public libraries. Information technology, user needs and expectations, and the library workforce are experiencing changes at an unprecedented pace. Thoughtful planning is essential for libraries to be able to anticipate and respond to these changes and to keep the Library an essential, vibrant information and learning resource for San Mateo.

The Planning Process
A diverse planning team was assembled from various perspectives at the Library including representation from the Library Board and the San Mateo Public Library Foundation Board. A library management consultant was contracted to lead the planning process and facilitate its work. The planning committee collected and reviewed information about the community, its demographics, the Library and its services and users.

How will the Strategic Plan be Used?
The strategic plan will serve two primary functions — as a communication tool and to set organizational direction and priorities. It will be used to communicate the Library’s vision for San Mateo and the mission, values and goals of the Library in support of that vision to the community, to the City Council, to library users, to other stakeholders, and to employees and potential employees. The plan will also be used to make operational decisions and to allocate personnel and other resources. Opportunities and options will be evaluated in the context of their impact toward attaining the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan goals.
**Mission**
San Mateo Public Library builds community by inspiring imagination, discovery, and reading.

**Vision**
San Mateo is a resilient, innovative, and inclusive community that is knowledgeable and empowered, embracing the future while honoring its history.

**Values**
- Equitable access
- Lifelong learning
- Privacy and confidentiality
- Intellectual freedom
- The trust of our community
- Innovation
- Diversity
- Public Service

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

### Lifelong Learning
Make available a variety of lifelong learning opportunities that meet the needs of our community.

**Strategies:**
- Provide early education and literacy programs for children and parents/caregivers using current child development research.
- Make available resources that support people of all ages in developing skills and pursuing interests.
- Curate and coordinate programs and activities that bring people together as they learn.
- Develop partnerships to provide tools and programs for improving literacy.

### Technology
Adopt and adapt technologies for customer use and the efficacy of staff.

**Strategies:**
- Provide opportunities to learn about and to use a variety of technologies and tools.
- Ensure that staff are trained and available to provide individuals with assistance in accessing and using library technology-based resources.
- Loan technology equipment and other resources to increase access for patrons.
- Utilize the library's technology and its high-speed network to deliver innovative experiences and programs with new resources and tools for improving literacy.

### Supporting and Developing Staff
Ensure that staff members have opportunities for professional growth throughout their careers.

**Strategies:**
- Recruit, hire, and retain skilled staff members that are passionate about libraries and learning.
- Recognize and motivate staff through opportunities to innovate and lead.
- Create opportunities for staff members to use their expertise and personal interests at work.
- Ensure that all staff members have opportunities to participate in professional development activities.
- Provide a welcoming, stimulating and safe work environment.
- Integrate regional employment best practices.

### Outreach and Marketing
Build awareness of library services and programs and provide access in the community.

**Strategies:**
- Promote and provide services at locations and events where people gather.
- Establish partnerships with key organizations to promote and support library services.
- Promote the Library as a welcoming place and resource for everyone.
- Develop a cohesive look to brand all library promotional and informational materials.

### User Experience
Enhance the in-person and virtual experiences of our users.

**Strategies:**
- Conduct an audit of the user experience at the Library and develop a plan to improve the user's virtual and in-person experience.
- Enhance facilities so that they are attractive, comfortable, functional and support 21st Century learning.
- Implement a reservation system for equitably regulating access to the small conference rooms of the library.
- Develop collections to meet the needs of our diverse patrons.
- Ensure that users receive assistance when and where they need it.