



QUEENS  
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# STRATEGIC PLAN

2025-2030

[QueensLibrary.org](https://QueensLibrary.org)



## Introduction

From late 2023 through 2024, Queens Public Library engaged in a strategic plan refresh process. At its core was an enduring commitment to respond to the evolving needs of our diverse communities and a recognition that the challenges and opportunities of our times require us to be as clear eyed and intentional as possible about our priorities as we look to the future.

The Library reexamined the mission, vision, values, and goals established in our 2018 strategic plan and found that they remain profoundly relevant. Still, our rapidly changing world, driven by the crises and shifts of the past several years and those on the horizon, has demanded that we continually improve and adapt, with new approaches and objectives. In this era of intense polarization, upheaval, and uncertainty, the role of the Library is exceedingly important – to connect people to learning, growth, and one another, to be a trusted source of information and help, to advance equity and inclusion, to provide steadfast support to marginalized communities, and to build resilience.

Through a comprehensive planning process informed by Library staff, board members, customers, community partners, funders, and other stakeholders, as well as by extensive data collection and analysis, we have identified eight strategic priority areas for the next five years.

1. Improve and expand programs and services for immigrants
2. Evolve and expand programs and services for teens
3. Enhance and expand programs and services for older adults
4. Promote climate literacy
5. Rethink and redesign our spaces
6. Improve systems and streamline processes
7. Strengthen talent management and development
8. Increase data utilization across the organization

Building on our core services and the strengths of our exceptional staff, these strategic priorities will expand and deepen our impact on our communities and strengthen our organizational capacity. They will guide our time, our talent, our financial resources, and our fundraising to ensure the Library continues to be a vibrant cornerstone of opportunity and is well positioned to serve the public for years to come.

# Planning Process Design

In partnership with Julia Ritchie Consulting, the Library undertook a participatory planning process that focused on innovation using human-centered design principles and practices. The work involved interviews and focus groups with a variety of stakeholders and an extensive data review of Queens demographics and Library metrics. Library employees submitted more than 60 ideas for advancing our strategic goals. With guidance from a Steering Committee of QPL leadership and board members, a Strategic Plan Design Team, comprised of two dozen staff representing departments across the organization, engaged in an extended “design sprint” to help set direction for the Library.

Over 16 weeks, the team gathered insights about the experiences, needs, pain points, and motivations of customers and employees, identified common themes, and generated and tested solutions. It was from these collective efforts that the strategic priorities emerged. In the process, the team not only developed innovative and viable strategies but also cultivated the collaborative, empathetic, and creative mindset and skills that will be needed to bring the plan to life.

## MISSION

**Queens Public Library transforms lives by cultivating personal and intellectual growth and by building strong communities.**

## VISION

**Our vision is a vibrant, informed, cohesive, and empowered society.**

## VALUES

Queens Public Library is committed to our diverse communities and staff, who are at the heart of all we do. We strive to ensure that our work, practices, and services are embedded in an antiracist, diverse, equitable, and inclusive framework. We adhere to the following values:

### Inclusion

Queens Public Library welcomes and serves everyone.

### Access

We provide free information, programs, and services that are open to all.

### Intellectual Freedom

We uphold the right to privacy and the right to seek, access, and express diverse points of view.

### Customer Service

We care about the people we serve and strive to deliver exceptional experiences.

### Innovation

We encourage organizational and staff innovation that adapts to emerging needs.

### Integrity

We are committed to transparency and accountability.

### Respect

We treat our customers, staff, and diverse communities with respect and courtesy.

### Excellence

We hold ourselves to the highest standards in everything we do.



# QPL's Five-Year Strategic Framework

## STRATEGIC GOALS

- Advance literacy and lifelong learning through outstanding collections, programs, and services.
- Deliver exceptional customer experience with world-class staff who reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.
- Strengthen Queens Public Library's role as the center of community life.
- Expand and facilitate access to digital content and technology.
- Provide inspiring, safe, functional, and sustainable spaces for the public and staff.

These overarching goals guide our strategic priorities for the next five years.



## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

### 1. Improve and expand programs and services for immigrants

Nearly half of Queens residents are foreign born, and Queens Public Library has long been and will continue to be a vital resource for them as they build their new lives in the United States. Amid growing uncertainty and need in immigrant communities, the Library will lean into its core strength and reputation as a welcoming and trusted place where immigrants can find concrete resources and tools, including English classes, training, immigration legal assistance, and career development support.

By 2030, QPL will expand programs and services to meet the needs of immigrants across the borough.

Examples of objectives include:

1. Increase the number of ESOL classes available across the system to reduce the waitlist by 50%.
2. Grow the number of ESOL conversation groups by 50%.
3. Grow the High School Equivalency (HSE) program to serve students in one language other than English.
4. Increase the number of job and career pathways for immigrants through sector training and skills training, including doubling the number served in credentialing programs.
5. Develop a partnership to provide opportunities for immigrants with international academic credentials to be evaluated for employment or admission to educational institutions.
6. Expand methods and channels of communication to increase language access in relevant languages and increase the number of materials that are translated.
7. Reinforce established partnerships and build new partnerships with eight organizations to expand pathways for legal services for new immigrants.
8. Develop and launch a plan for providing programs, services, and volunteer opportunities specifically for immigrant older adults.

## QUEENS PUBLIC LIBRARY





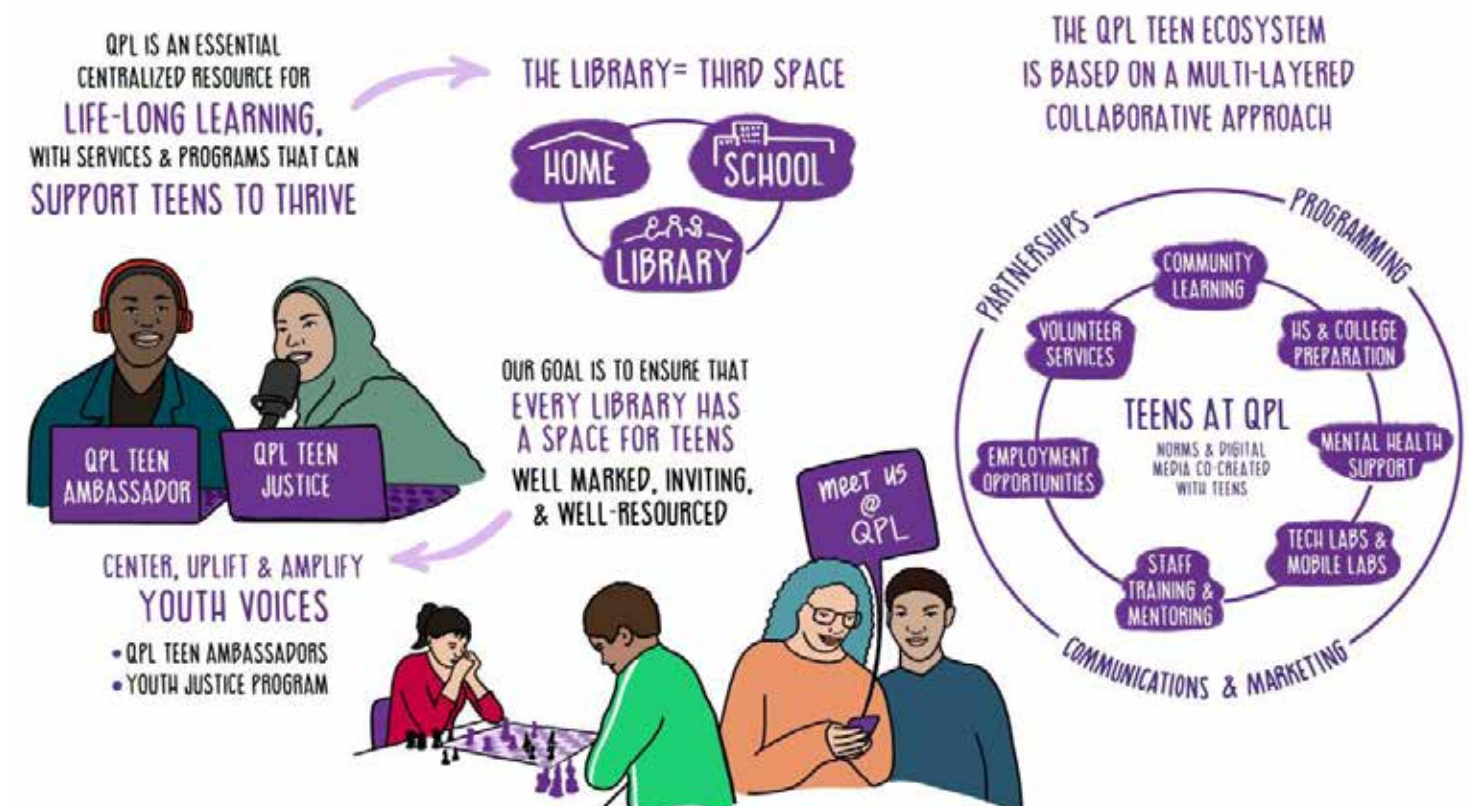
## 2. Evolve and expand programs and services for teens

Major investments by public and private sources have helped the Library create inspiring, state-of-the-art teen centers where youth have access to technology, programs, and trusted adults to support them in digital literacy, college access, career exploration, and civic engagement opportunities. We will continue and grow our commitment to teens and young adults by increasing teen-centered and teen-driven programs across the Library system and by expanding related training and professional development for our employees.

**By 2030, QPL will increase teen engagement with the Library, centered around youth voice.**

*Examples of objectives include:*

1. Engage every staff member in training on culturally responsive, inclusive, and positive teen development and engagement.
2. Ensure 100% of QPL's libraries have welcoming teen areas and 50% have regular teen programming.
3. Continue and expand robust technology and career pathways programming at five Teen Centers and 13 Teen Innovation Stations to enhance social and economic mobility reaching 25% more teens.
4. Expand high school and college prep programs, counseling, and resources to all locations.
5. Use youth voice to promote library programs and services to teens not currently using the library, with the goal of increasing the number of teen library cardholders and teen program attendance by 25%.
6. Every library will establish at least five partnerships with local schools/CBOs to promote relevant programs and services to teens and parents via school communication channels.



### 3. Enhance and expand programs and services for older adults

Queens is home to more older adults than any other county in the state and is seeing the fastest rise in the older adult population as well. Older adults account for 17% of the borough's population, and 16% are living at or below the poverty level. The number of foreign-born seniors in Queens increased by 60% in the last decade. The Library will deepen and expand our programs and services for older adults, especially those who are new to the United States, with the aim of engaging and connecting them to their communities to reduce social isolation and loneliness. Older adults are wise, valuable contributors to our community, and we will focus on creating intergenerational programs that tap into their wisdom and experience.

By 2030, QPL will increase connection and learning opportunities for older adults across the borough, focusing first on Library locations in communities with the highest concentration of older adults.

Examples of objectives include:

1. Develop partnerships with five senior-serving human services organizations to connect older adults with social services and resources.
2. Increase large-print materials and audiobooks.
3. Increase and diversify programming and services across the library system to reach a broader audience of older adults in Queens.
4. Increase outreach efforts to engage more older adults with QPL.
5. Develop programming and services targeting older adult immigrants.
6. Create or expand virtual, hybrid, and in-person programming in at least four languages for older adults at 75% of our libraries.
7. Create and launch a pilot intergenerational initiative at two to three locations with the potential of expanding it to 10 libraries by the end of five years.



#### 4. Promote climate literacy

Climate change is one of the biggest threats facing our communities, with more extreme heat, intense rainfall, flooding, droughts, and acute weather events impacting health, ecosystems, the economy, and infrastructure. With 113 miles of coastline, inadequate sewer infrastructure in many neighborhoods, and dense development that creates urban heat islands, Queens residents face great risks. Some communities – environmental justice areas – are disproportionately affected. The Library will invest in educating our employees and the public about the impact of the changing climate and create awareness of strategies for mitigating its impacts to build a more resilient and equitable future.

**By 2030, QPL will establish the Library as a leader in climate literacy and resiliency in Queens.**

*Examples of objectives include:*

1. Become accredited through the Sustainable Libraries Initiative.
2. Develop at least five programming partnerships with Queens environmental organizations and governmental agencies.
3. Adopt environmentally sustainable policies systemwide to divert solid waste from landfills by 50% and reduce energy consumption by 40%.
4. Scale Hunters Point Library and Environmental Education Center programs and other environmental education programs for youth to 40 of our libraries.
5. Develop and present environmental education workshops for adults in three languages at 40 of our libraries.
6. Develop a dedicated microsite with climate resources and information that Queens residents can use to learn their community risks.



#### 5. Rethink and redesign our spaces

The Library manages 66 unique locations and has been making significant strides in updating these aging facilities. Sustaining our infrastructure long term means we must develop additional funding streams for capital improvements and work to ensure all our buildings achieve net zero emissions by 2050. The emerging needs of our communities, including diverse programming, new ways of learning and working, and the multitude of functions our libraries are called on to fulfill require that we be innovative and adaptable in the design and utilization of our spaces.

**By 2030, QPL will rethink our facilities and spaces to make them more flexible and sustainable to meet evolving and future needs.**

*Examples of objectives include:*

1. Increase non-City sources of capital funding by 25%.
2. Complete a systemwide, comprehensive assessment of facilities, including sustainability, resiliency, accessibility, and other building conditions, setting standards for 100% of QPL locations.
3. Develop a plan, informed by an ongoing assessment of community needs, for new and alternative uses of space, starting with five planned renovations of QPL locations.



#### CLIMATE IMPACTS IN QUEENS INCLUDE:

POOR AIR & WATER QUALITY SEVERE STORMS & FLOODING EXTREME HEAT & COLD

GREEN SPACES LIMITED ACCESS TO LOCALLY GROWN FOOD



THE PEOPLE OF QUEENS & QPL MUST BE PART OF THE GLOBAL MISSION TO MITIGATE CLIMATE CHANGE. WE NEED TO BE AWARE OF BOTH MICRO & MACRO ASPECTS TO BUILD RESILIENCY.



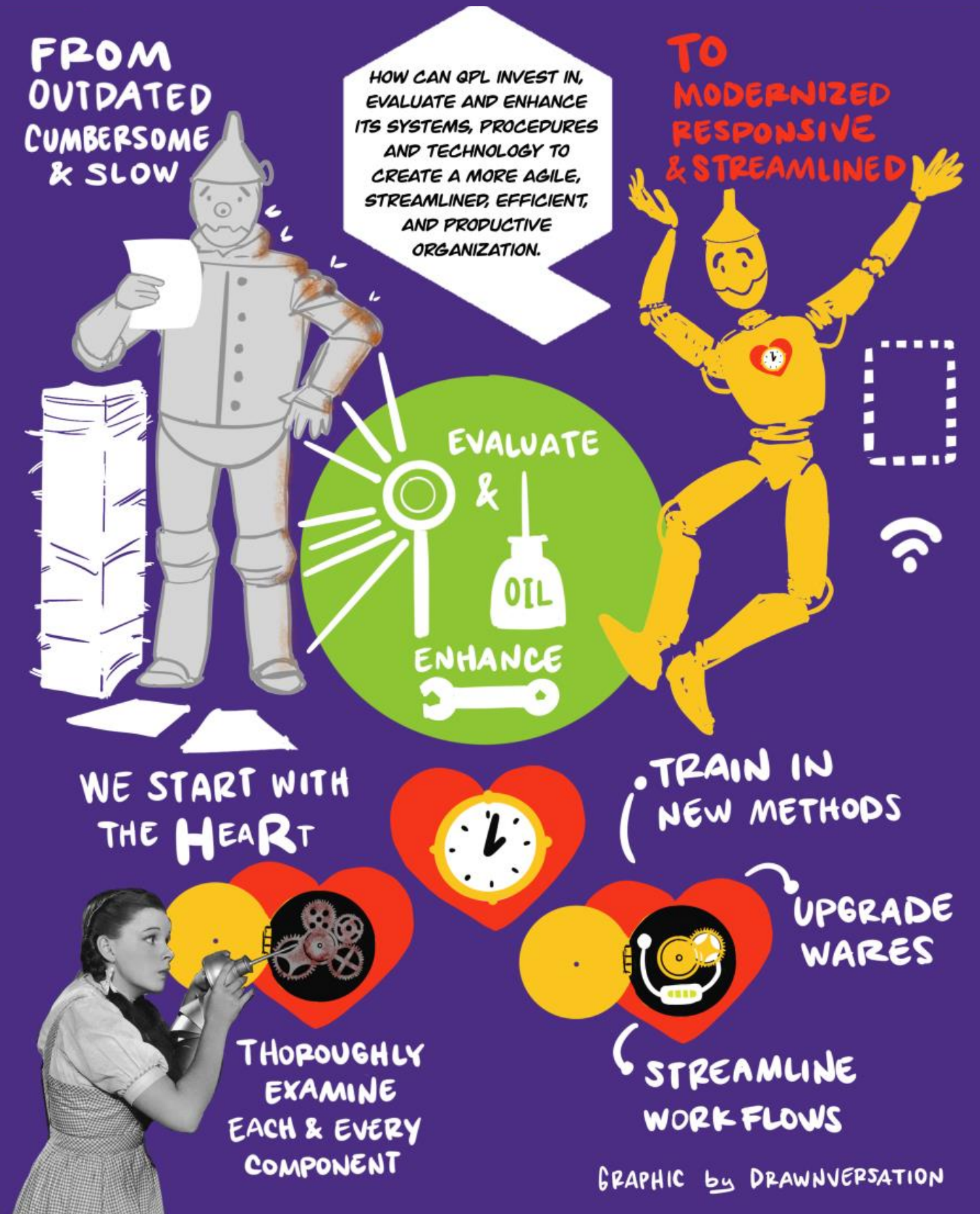
## 6. Improve systems and streamline processes

The Library is committed to ensuring that the tools and systems used to facilitate day-to-day operations are keeping pace with technological advancements and the needs of our staff and the public. By taking a business re-engineering approach to many of our administrative, operational, and technological systems, we will identify and address ways to streamline processes, automate systems, and integrate technology, ultimately making it easier for employees to do their jobs effectively and efficiently and for customers to access information and resources across the system.

By 2030, QPL will assess, upgrade, and improve QPL's business and administrative systems to ensure our systems and practices are as efficient as possible, reducing unnecessary burdens and creating an enabling environment for our employees and customers to access the resources they need.

Examples of objectives include:

1. Identify and implement best-of-breed technology systems to update or replace existing systems for Finance and Human Resources and the Digital Asset Management System (DAMS).
2. Evaluate our Learning Management System, Library and Marketing Program System, and other systems to identify potential improvements through better data entry standards, reconfiguration, and staff training.
3. Streamline business processes across the organization to increase efficiency and effectiveness, beginning with a focus on the Library's human resources and procurement policies and procedures.
4. Foster a culture of continuous iteration and improvement through training and end-to-end business improvement initiatives. Encourage regular feedback from programs, departments and branches on what is and is not working.



## 7. Strengthen talent management and development

Our dedicated staff are at the heart of Queens Public Library's ability to serve the public. Every employee across the organization plays a crucial role, and as they continue to rise to meet the evolving and growing demands on our libraries, we will focus on providing the necessary staffing levels and supports. More than ever, we must build our internal capacity to recruit, onboard, develop, and retain talent aligned with our values and goals. We plan to make significant investments in our people and talent team to support a robust human capital strategy that includes the expansion of training and professional development offerings. Additionally, the Library will strengthen employee engagement by creating new opportunities for meaningful cross-team, cross-branch collaboration and partnership. We want to recognize the talents and expertise of our staff and promote a culture where all employees feel valued and have opportunities to succeed and thrive.

**By 2030, QPL will ensure exceptional employee engagement throughout the professional lifecycle at the Library.**

*Examples of objectives include:*

1. Expand organizational capacity to recruit and hire candidates in a timely manner.
2. Improve onboarding process for all full-time employees to ensure a robust and thorough understanding of the organization and provide a solid foundation of training for initial and future success.
3. Develop more robust professional development to support employee training, mentorship, growth, and advancement opportunities.
4. Implement a Learning Management System that facilitates planning, implementation, tracking, follow-up, identification of employee skills and interests, and connections among employees.
5. Move Talent Development to Human Resources to ensure a fully integrated approach to employee engagement.
6. Implement a leadership and management development training program.
7. Streamline Human Resources processes to increase efficiency and effectiveness.
8. Facilitate and elevate collaboration and communication among QPL staff to share ideas and expertise and increase connectedness and effectiveness.
9. Explore in-person and technological tools to increase connection and collaboration across the Library.



## 8. Increase data utilization across the organization

In order to support innovative, adaptive, and dynamic programs and operations, the Library is committed to building out its data analysis and evaluation capacity. We will use the strategic refresh as a catalyst for ongoing innovation, experimentation, and continuous quality improvement across the entire organization. Using an evaluation framework, the Library will be able to monitor and track progress against strategic goals and priorities. The shift towards greater data-informed decision-making will involve staff training and the development of planning tools and practices for monitoring, tracking, and accountability.

**By 2030, QPL will consistently use data to inform, evaluate, improve, and demonstrate effectiveness.**

*Examples of objectives include:*

1. Automate and integrate data collection processes and systems across departments.
2. Develop customized dashboards of key metrics to be reviewed regularly throughout the organization to help guide decision-making and resource allocation.
3. Provide staff with training and tools to access, understand, analyze, and use data to evaluate and inform our work and show impact.



We recognize that this plan is by no means a static expression of our priorities and objectives, and we expect adjustments of varying dimensions throughout the process of implementing the plan over the coming years. Ongoing developments related to artificial intelligence and governance changes at the city, state, and federal levels, for example, have vast – and not entirely foreseeable – implications for our work. We will continue to navigate the changing landscape thoughtfully and strategically to keep our institution and communities strong.



## STRATEGIC PLAN STEERING COMMITTEE

**Dennis M. Walcott**, President and CEO  
**Cloyette Harris-Stoute**, QPL Board of Trustees  
**Carl Koerner**, QPL Board of Trustees, QPL Foundation Board of Directors  
**Nick Buron**, Chief Librarian, SVP  
**Justin Deabler**, General Counsel, SVP  
**Sung Kim**, Chief Operating Officer, SVP  
**Stephen Mack**, Chief Financial Officer, SVP (former)  
**Gitte Peng**, Chief of Staff, SVP  
**Luisa Benedetto**, Director of Government Affairs  
**Lisi de Bourbon**, Vice President of Communications  
**Bill Funk**, Vice President of Procurement  
**Bill Goldband**, Vice President of Information Technology and Development  
**Susan Latham**, Executive Director, QPL Foundation  
**Jacqueline Martinez**, Vice President of Human Resources  
**Sharon Myrie**, Vice President of Programs and Services

## STRATEGIC PLAN DESIGN TEAM

**Camille Barrett**, Director of Community Affairs and Special Events  
**Luisa Benedetto**, Director of Government Affairs  
**Matthew Brookshire**, Assistant Director of Individual Giving  
**Denise Clark**, Director of Government Grants  
**Lisi de Bourbon**, Vice President of Communications  
**Manny Figueroa**, Talent Development and Training Manager (former)  
**Fatma Ghailan**, Director of Community Learning  
**Bill Goldband**, Vice President of Information Technology and Development  
**Ruth Herzberg**, Director of Operational Library Facility Planning  
**Rita Karl**, Director of Programming  
**Jeffrey Lambert**, Director of Strategic Planning and Operations, Programs and Services  
**Susan Latham**, Executive Director, QPL Foundation  
**Josephine Lew**, Senior Manager of Organizational Assessment  
**Nelson Lu**, Director, Central Library  
**Tatyana Magazinnik**, Director of Community Library Services  
**Jacqueline Martinez**, Vice President of Human Resources  
**Thomas Maxheimer**, Director of Community Library Services  
**Scott McLeod**, Director of Civic Engagement  
**Kim McNeil-Capers**, Director of Community Engagement  
**Sharon Myrie**, Vice President of Programs and Services  
**Sumiya Nowshin**, Marketing Manager  
**Felix Perez**, Vice President of Facilities and Environmental Services  
**Shakira Smalls**, Executive Director, Langston Hughes Library and Cultural Center  
**Yang Zeng**, Director, Flushing Library



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