



Powhatan County Public Library Strategic Plan

for FY2025 – FY2030

July 9, 2025

Introduction

Powhatan County Public Library aspires to:

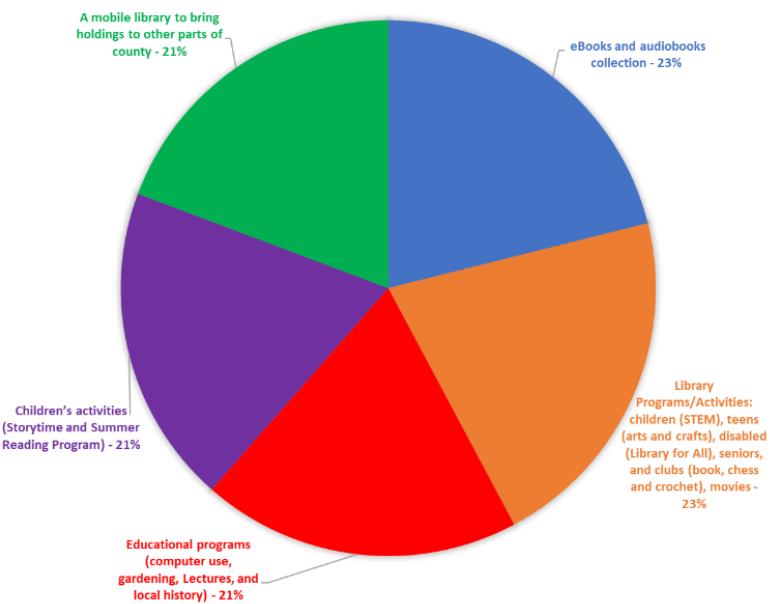
- Be a community center
- Provide access to technology and information
- Provide activities, programs and resources for lifelong learning, enrichment & enjoyment.

To guide us in achieving these aspirations, the Library creates a five-year strategic plan. The five-year plan is also a requirement for receiving funding through the State Aid to Public Libraries Grant, which is vital to the Library as it funds all of our materials (books, DVDs, databases, etc.) as well as our Internet and network. The end result of meeting five-year plan goals is to better serve our community. To that end, in concert with our Friend of Powhatan Library, we conducted a series of focus group discussions and surveys to collect feedback from varied demographic groups within our community. This data comes from what will be an ongoing conversation about what our community wants and needs from the Library in the near future.

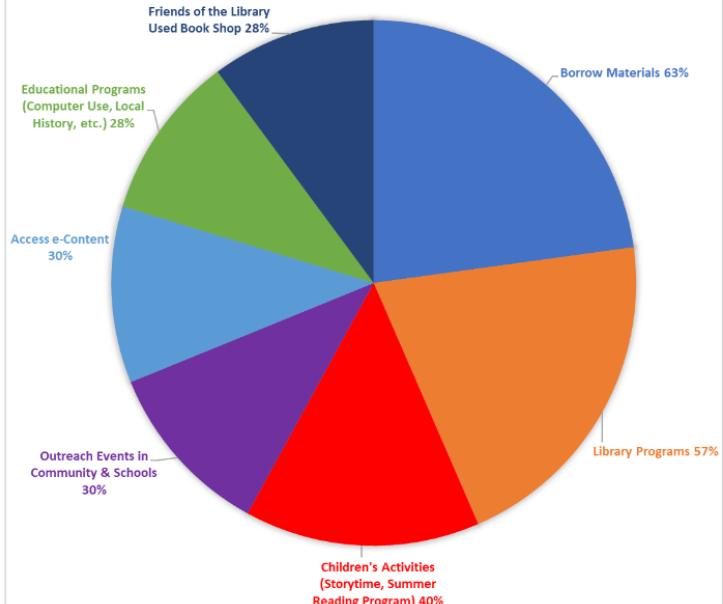
The plan will be evaluated for progress annually. Measures used to determine progress towards each goal include attendance of programs, library visit counts, circulation of materials, public feedback and new members. Our measures are a means of communicating both our progress and evolving needs to stakeholders such as the Friends of the Library, the Library Board, the Powhatan County Board of Supervisors, and the greater library community. These measures are reported annually to the Library of Virginia, and this annual report is key in determining the amount of grant funding we receive from the state.

Summary of Results from the 2025 Five-Year Plan Focus Group Meetings and Surveys

RESPONDENTS THEMES FOR ADDITIONAL LIBRARY SERVICES



RESPONDENTS' TOP PRIORITIES BY PERCENTAGE



The Plan

The mission of the Powhatan County Public Library is to be a premier Library system for all citizens of Powhatan County by providing resources for the intellectual, educational, artistic, and entertainment needs of the growing numbers of our citizens.

In support of our mission, we envision the Library providing traditional services as well as being a community center for the population. Based on our staff's interaction with patrons and the responses received in the focus group study that was conducted, this vision for the Library is what is expected by our community. In order to accomplish this mandate, we must plan on accomplishing the following goals within the next five years:

- Expand emphasis on pre-school children to encourage a positive attitude towards reading; reading readiness; and promote early literacy. This would include more Storytimes and additional Arts & Crafts programs addressing dexterity, creativity, and communication. Additionally, we need to develop programs to help parents help their young children with literacy.
- Develop more programming for school-aged children that involve creativity, practical skills, and outdoor activities.
- Initiate efforts to address the growing population of special needs children. This might include smaller, limited number Storytimes. Develop programs that address special needs school age children including Outreach programs.
- Increase programs and resources for the growing number of individual home schoolers and home school groups.
- Continue to develop partnerships with organizations that can help provide stimulating programs for all adults. These groups may include Master Gardeners, the Powhatan Historical Society, AARP, and the Powhatan State Park. The target of such programming is to provide lifelong learning engagement and to address the special needs of adults such as those in need of memory care.
- Increase staff to facilitate the increases in programming and services. Based on the Virginia Public Libraries Standards for Excellence (Based on Virginia public library standards compiled by the Library of Virginia and regional library leaders in Planning for Library Excellence: Standards for Virginia Public Libraries 2023), the best practice for staffing is .3 FTE for every 1,000 in population. Using this standard and Powhatan's estimated population of 32,000, the Library should have 9.6 FTEs. We currently have 7 FTEs. Our goal would be to increase staff by at least 1.0 FTE in the immediate future.
- Address the limited square footage of the library. Based on the door count, attendance at programs, and our focus group feedback, space is inadequate. We cannot provide enough personal work space and crowding continues at popular programs. Our Library also falls short of Virginia state recommendations for square footage based on population. Ideally, building an extension or second branch library would be the course of action at this point. Considering cost, an alternative would be to investigate a co-location at other county facilities. In lieu of either of the above two options, establishing an outreach vehicle to promote service to residents living farther than the Virginia State recommended guidelines for access to libraries would provide a minimal solution. This would help seniors who are limited in their ability to drive and people who cannot easily leave their homes as well as the general population. Such a vehicle would provide a mobile physical extension of the library's facility. Currently a vehicle meeting this need is in the County's CIP for FY2027.