

# Strategic Plan 2020-2025

More of It...Make People Love It!



Alameda Free Library

Alameda, CA

12/1/2019



# Alameda Free Library

## Strategic Plan 2020-2025

### WELCOME

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I am delighted to present to you the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan for the Alameda Free Library, *More Of It...Make People Love It!* We chose this title because our Strategic Planning Committee said loud and clear that the physical plant needs to be expanded along with open hours, and that we should do even more to ensure that all Alamedans benefit from our wonderful library. That is what we intend to do and we want to say so in no uncertain terms.

This aspirational yet realistic plan will serve as a blueprint to guide the Library in our journey to broaden our reach, expand our physical and virtual spaces, transform lives, and improve the quality of life for our neighbors throughout Alameda.

Alamedans look to the Library to provide a sense of community, an inclusive place where every individual feels welcome and has equitable access to resources and the opportunity to thrive. Alamedans want the Library to be a safe harbor, to make life better for our residents, and to prepare them for a bright future.

The Strategic Plan will be a dynamic tool for the Library Board and Library Administration when making public policy and strategic decisions. In light of our ever-evolving environment – driven by new and emerging technologies, shifts in the demographic makeup of the community we serve, and the development of Alameda Point – this plan is designed to continue to position the Library as a relevant, meaningful public service organization. The plan will also help create and support an agile organization that is responsive to the growing needs and expectations of our customers.

Thank you to the Library's Strategic Planning Team for its guidance, the senior management team for its hard work and deliberate approach to this project, the Library Board for its support, the Friends of the Alameda Free Library for their participation in the entire process, and the Library staff for their time and effort in the development of the plan. This was a collaborative effort and the resulting Strategic Plan is something in which we can all take great pride.



Jane Chisaki  
Library Director

## OUR COMMUNITY

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Alameda is a city in Alameda County, California. Alameda was incorporated in 1872. It is adjacent to and south of Oakland and east of San Francisco across the San Francisco Bay. It is located on Alameda Island and Bay Farm Island. The city has a total area of 23.0 square miles: 10.6 square miles is of land and 12.4 square miles is of water.

Alameda is home to a racially and ethnically diverse population of 78,333 residents occupying 30,587 households. Over a third of residents speak a language other than English in the home. Alamedans have generally attained a higher education level compared to other locations: 89.7% have attained a high school or higher education; 50.7% of adults 25 years old and older have attained a bachelor's degree compared to 30.9% nationally. Alamedans are "connected": 93.3% of households have computers and 86.6% have broadband. A higher percentage than nationally are in the civilian labor force (66.3), have health insurance, and live above the poverty line (90.8). The per capita income in 2017 dollars was \$47,229, 51.48% higher than the national average; the median household income was \$89,045, 54.4% higher than the national rate.

Housing is a challenge for Alamedans where the median house sales price in the second quarter of 2019 was \$950,000.<sup>1</sup> About 47% of houses are owner occupied, compared to 63% nationally. The 2017 median monthly costs of owner-occupied housing with a mortgage was \$2,833, and median gross rent was \$1,607. These rates are 64% and 87% more, respectively, than the national median. Housing affordability may be the largest social and political issue confronting Alameda. The effects of low affordability also greatly impact the general economic picture in a wide variety of important ways, from hiring and business relocation, to the ability of "normal working people" (not enriched by the high-tech boom) to live here.

Alameda Point--part of the former Naval Air Station Alameda--is a 1,560-acre neighborhood in transition. The City is managing the planning and development for Alameda Point to create a strong employment base with a mix of commercial, residential, open space, recreational, and retail uses. Over 100 businesses, employing more than 1,000 workers, are currently located there. Creative reuse of military buildings and plans for new construction are in progress. Ground breaking for Phase 1 of Site A began in May 2018, and will create 637 housing units, including 130 units of affordable housing.

Alamedans know that the library can't solve every community problem. However, they look to the library to provide a sense of community, an inclusive place, where every individual feels welcome and has equitable access to resources and the opportunity to thrive. They want the library to be a safe harbor for all residents, and particularly for youth development, where learning inspires hope, self-confidence, and capabilities that sustain and prepare them for life.

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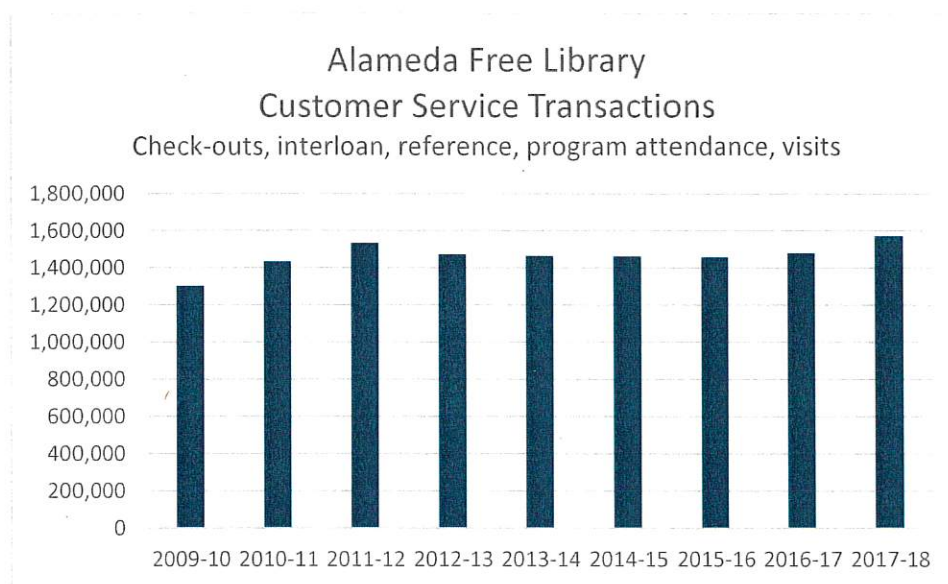
<sup>1</sup> "Housing Affordability in the San Francisco Bay Area, update August 2019, in Compass <https://www.bayareamarketreports.com/trend/bay-area-housing-affordability>

## OUR LIBRARY

The Alameda Free Library has been a community cornerstone since 1877. It is a municipal library system with a 47,500 square foot Main Library in downtown Alameda, a West End neighborhood branch, a Bay Farm Island neighborhood branch, and 24 x 7 virtual on-line branch through its website.

People are using the library in record numbers, both in the library system and through the library's website. In fiscal year 2017-18<sup>2</sup> the library logged 1,572,202 customer service transactions: walk-in visits, visits to the website, check-outs, both physical and electronic, reference questions, interlibrary loans, and program attendance.

The library continues to be that physical place that Alamedans want to visit, to browse, to attend programs, to study and do research and at the same time, to access a world of information and services via the Library's website. This they can do 24 hours a day, seven days a week.



Over the past decade, the City of Alameda and the Alameda Free Library have improved library service by remodeling and refreshing the existing neighborhood libraries within their existing footprints. The Library staff has developed a robust website and with it, 24 x 7 access to a virtual universe of information.

However Alameda's existing neighborhood libraries cannot support the library service needs of the developing Alameda. Bay Farm Island branch will need to be expanded to service East Alameda. Alameda Point will need a library to serve that developing neighborhood.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> The California State Library collects and publishes the annual report data for all public libraries in the state. The FY 2017/18 is the latest published data set. The FY 2018/19 will be available in 2020.

<sup>3</sup> 2008 *Neighborhood Libraries Facilities Report*, Kathryn Page Associates



## OUR VALUES

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**Public Trust:** We commit to being fiscally responsible with public resources, to protecting customer confidentiality, and to providing safe, well maintained, and accessible facilities.

**Access:** We believe in equitable access to all Alameda Free Library resources.

**Diversity:** We are committed to reflecting the diversity of our community through our collections, services and staff.

**Excellent Service:** We commit to providing excellent service by providing accurate and reliable information in a respectful interaction between well trained, friendly and efficient staff and all members of our community.

**Outreach and Partnership:** We will actively develop partnerships and joint activities with community institutions and organizations to further the Alameda Free Library mission.

## THE MISSION AND ROLES OF THE LIBRARY

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The mission of the Library is to foster individual and community enrichment, resourcefulness, and connection through welcoming, knowledgeable staff, and easily accessible collections, facilities, and virtual spaces.

## ROLES OF THE LIBRARY: IT IS ABOUT COMMUNITY

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The library is a unique institution in our community. With representational input, the community has identified the roles that the library should emphasize: community anchor, community builder, and community connector. These roles will guide the prioritization and allocation of library resources.

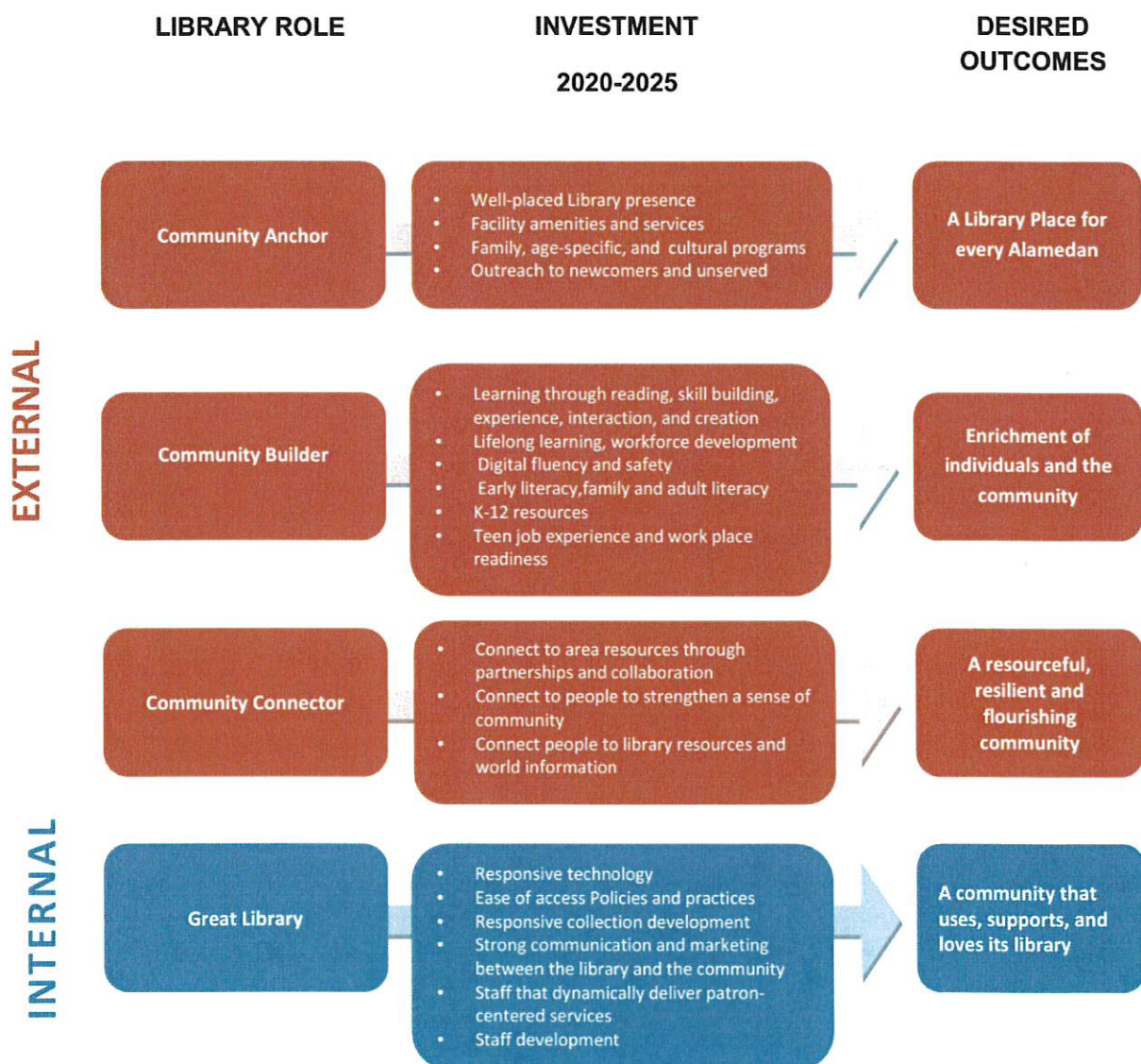
**Community Anchor:** the library anchors the community by the well-place physical presence of a neighborhood building that residents can access conveniently, readily, easily, and comfortably. Residents of every age will find a place there, collections that serve their needs, and staff that is knowledgeable and welcoming. Staff will reach out to residents to ensure that they feel included and welcomed and that there is a library place for every Alamedan.

**Community Builder:** the library builds community by enabling life-long learning for every person at every stage of their lives. Language and literacy for babies and young children, learning support for school-aged children, for the vocation/technical student, for the college bound, for the laborer in re-training, for the community in workforce development, for the adult learner who cannot read or is learning a new language, for the writer and artist, for the business-starter. As the library helps each individual attain their

learning goals through their lives, the library is helping build a better, stronger, more resilient community.

**Community Connector:** the library connects to area resources through partnerships and collaboration, it connects to people, and connects people to each other and to world resources and information. These connections make the community resourceful, resilient, and flourishing.

**Great Library:** to enable these roles, the staff work to make the library inclusive, welcoming, responsive, and efficient. That's what makes a great library and the result is a community that uses, supports, and loves its library.



## **STRATEGIC VISION: MORE OF IT...MAKE PEOPLE LOVE IT**

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We want to make it possible for all Alamedans to fall in love with the library. Going forward, the strategic priorities are to broaden the reach of the library to every resident by expanding the physical and virtual space AND the open hours for our growing community. If our libraries are well-placed, open, welcoming, and comfortable AND if we tell the library story well and broadly, Alamedans will use it, support it, and love it.

## **LIBRARY GOALS, 2020 - 2025**

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We will focus our energy and resources on achieving and laying the ground work for these two primary goals. Capital projects will need to be planned so that funds can begin to be raised. Additional operating revenues will need to be secured to add hours, develop the virtual branch, and open the tool lending/seed library. Staffing will need to be directed toward the new user campaign.

**Alamedans will have the library facilities and services they need.**

- **Expand Bay Farm Island Library**
- **Establish Library Presence at Alameda Point**
- **Open Seed and Tool Lending Library**
- **Expand the Virtual Branch**

**Alamedans will use, support, and love their library.**

- **Increase Operating Revenue**
- **Build Capital Revenue**
- **Conduct Community Outreach**
- **Increase Open Hours**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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### THE LIBRARY BOARD

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