

# San Francisco Public Library Strategic Planning Initiative

Library Commission Presentation  
01.18.24



**Gensler**



**contigo.**



# Meeting Goals

## TODAY

Share the core components of the draft Strategic Plan and get feedback.

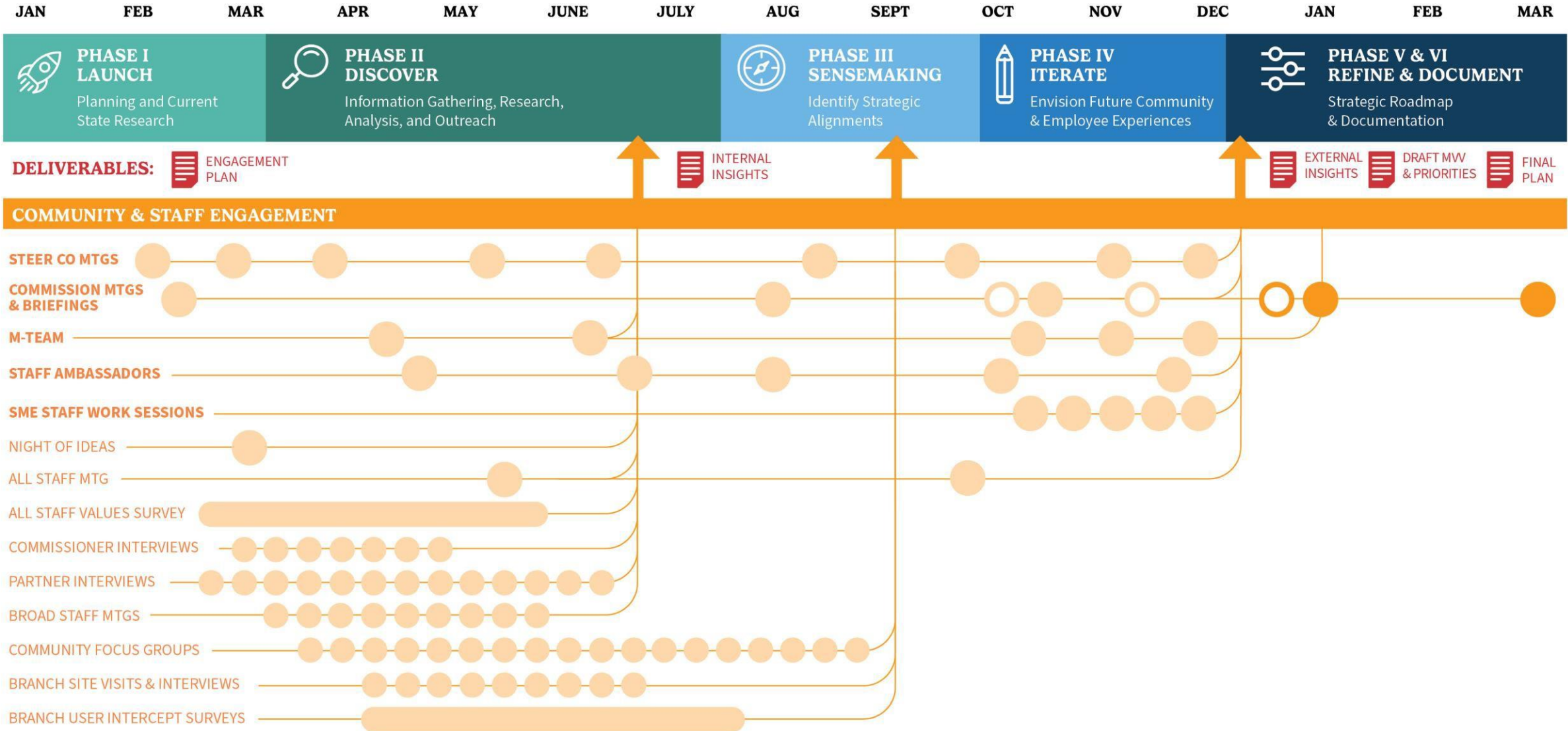
### Discuss:

- Does the plan communicate a **clarity of purpose** and the **community outcomes** we desire as an organization?
- What **parts of the plan resonate** with you?

## MARCH 2024

Final Strategic Plan

# Where We Are



# Who We Talked To

To inform the future of the library, we spoke with 3 core groups: SFPL Partners, SFPL Staff and members of the broader Community.

## PARTNERS

**13** Interviews with City of San Francisco Department Heads

**11** CBOs and Partner Organizations Engaged



## INTERNAL STAFF



**5** Co-Creation Sessions with **32** Staff Ambassadors

**15** Staff Meetings & Workshops

**460** Completed Staff Surveys

**2** All-Staff Meetings

**5** SME Staff Work Sessions on Draft Plan

**9** Steering Committee Meetings

**5** MTeam / Leadership Meetings

**7** Interviews with Library Commissioners

## EXTERNAL COMMUNITY



**9** Branch Tours & Manager Interviews



**2,283** Branch User Surveys



**19** Community Focus Groups

With people who live in all 11 districts and the following priority populations:

- Teens
- Disabled Residents
- Chinese speakers
- Filipinos
- Spanish speakers
- Parents
- Elders



**500+** Night of Ideas Public Workshop Participants

**604** Non-User City Survey Responses



# Thank You to our Staff Ambassadors!



Alice Chan  
Ana Elisa de Campos Salles  
Chazorae Savattere  
Christina Moretta  
Cristina Mitra  
D'Arion Curry-Matthews  
Eun Lee  
George Tran  
Guillvin Magno  
Hai Qing Chen  
Ileana Pulu  
Jaime Wong  
Jamilla Hyatt  
Jeremy Jacinto  
Jimmy Tran  
Joanna Arteaga La Spina

Khanh Lu  
Leni Matthews  
Lia Ryland  
Luis Francisco Cardona  
Lyman Villaraza  
Marciel Gamino  
Maria Mastrokyriakos  
Maricela Leon-Barrera  
Mel Reyes  
Nick Ott  
Rachel Fiege  
Sam Genovese  
Shirley Yoshida  
Stephon Carson  
William Alvites  
William Ching

*Staff Ambassadors will continue to play a pivotal role in promoting and implementing the final plan in the coming years.*

**A diverse group of 32 SFPL employees representing all SFPL divisions contributed to the strategic planning process through:**

- Helping us understand SFPL's strengths and opportunities
- Co-creating the plan focusing on the new values
- Providing feedback and guidance



# Staff Ambassador Feedback



*“I think [the plan] will help us **stretch beyond what we do right now**, but it also **feels familiar and aligned** with what we say we are and our meaning to the community.”*

*“I believe that the plan has grown into **a good representation** of my idea of the library's purpose. It does **a good job of giving words to the role that both I and the library each play** in bettering ourselves and our community.”*



# Draft Strategic Plan

# Strategic Plan Overview

## STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Derived directly from community feedback, these priorities outline **specific roles we will embody** to best serve the community.

## ORGANIZATIONAL SHIFTS

These **shifts in our service model** are guidelines that will **internally direct us** in realizing our Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Priorities.





# Vision

The Vision Statement represents our view for the future of San Francisco and articulates desired community outcomes resulting from our efforts.

*Speaks to our hope for a city where all groups have access to the resources and opportunities necessary for improving the quality of their lives.*

*The city in which our efforts are devoted to improving.*

## **A democratic, equitable and vibrant San Francisco for everyone.**

*We strive for a city governed “by the people, for the people.” This requires both a robust civil society and that people have the tools needed to make informed decisions.*

*Captures the energy and diversity we envision for the future state; balances the more technical nature of democratic and equitable.*

*Suggested by an Ambassador, ‘everyone’ addresses the vision for the individual in a warm, inclusive tone. It feels library-specific as it’s one of the few institutions that is welcoming to all.*

# Mission

The Mission Statement is what we do to achieve our Vision. It represents the purpose of the organization based on our role in the community.

*References our focus on the community level while recognizing the spectrum of needs. "Our" speaks to a familiarity that only comes from deep immersion.*

## Connect our diverse communities to learning, opportunities and each other.

*Shifts SFPL from the passive role of providing access to the more active role of connecting.*

*Identifies the outcomes we strive to generate to reach our overarching goal of enriching lives:*

- *The active state of acquiring knowledge (classes, skill building, and providing access to information and resources)*
- *Opportunities (giving people the tools to realize their goals)*
- *Each other (speaks to our increased emphasis on enabling moments of connection and relationship building)*

# Values

The values guide our behaviors and beliefs within our organization and towards the communities we serve:

## Well-being

We prioritize well-being by creating a safe, respectful, and supportive environment.

## Equity

We advance equity by providing access to free, high-quality resources and impactful opportunities.

## Community

We strengthen our communities when we come together to engage, inspire, and learn from each other.

## Collaboration

We embrace diverse perspectives through thoughtful collaboration.

## Exploration

We inspire all to harness the power of learning and discovery, wherever their imaginations and curiosities may lead.

# Strategic Priorities

Derived directly from community feedback, these priorities outline specific roles we will embody to best serve the community.

## LITERACY CHAMPION

Cultivate the critical literacies necessary for meaningful participation in society through immersive and varied learning activities.

## CULTURAL AMPLIFIER

Facilitate cultural experiences that celebrate and deepen understanding of the diverse communities of San Francisco.

## COMMUNITY CATALYZER

Foster experiences both within and beyond the library that create and strengthen social connections.

## THOUGHTFUL NAVIGATOR

Serve as a caring and knowledgeable gateway, helping people find and use library, community, and city resources to realize their goals.

## RESOURCE PROVIDER

Deliver the experiences, guidance, and resources that support basic needs, encourage personal growth, and enrich life in San Francisco.

# Literacy Champion

Cultivate the critical literacies necessary for meaningful participation in society through immersive and varied learning activities.

## STRATEGIES

Expand content types and instructional format to support 21<sup>st</sup> century literacies including reading and writing, media, technology and civic.

Deliver comprehensive programming to support kindergarten reading readiness.

Bridge education gaps and minimize learning loss through expanding out-of-school-time learning opportunities.

Expand the impact and scope of current core literacy programs citywide using the most current community insights, including Storytime, the Bridge, FOG Readers and Project READ.

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

- High quality educational opportunities for all
- Assistance with homework
- Educational instruction and resources in primary language
- Literacy aid for all, especially young children
- Support for digital skills and career guidance

## OUTCOMES

- More students reaching educational and developmental milestones
- Individuals can better navigate government, institutional and financial systems

# SFPL Aspiration

Staff-generated ideas for potential offerings based on community needs

## Early Childhood Hub

The library provides a dedicated space for early childhood development that offers varied activities, including singing, rhyming, and facial expression classes (for practicing emotional intelligence) supporting kindergarten readiness.

*Illustrated below: Young children learn shapes by playing with blocks and practice facial expressions as guided by a book in the Early Childhood Hub.*



## New Immigrant Center at Hartford Public Library

The American Place at Hartford Public Library offers wide-ranging support for immigrants transitioning to the United States by providing trainings in digital, financial, and English literacy.

## Industry Example

Literacy Champion in practice in other library systems

# Cultural Amplifier

Facilitate cultural experiences that celebrate and deepen understanding of the diverse communities of San Francisco.

## STRATEGIES

Enable internal and external creators with the tools, materials and knowledge to explore creative passions, increase opportunities and grow the local creative economy.

Develop offerings and experiences that facilitate cultural exchanges to deepen our understanding of ourselves and each other.

Connect people to diverse arts and culture experiences across San Francisco.

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Low cost/free exposure and access to arts and cultural events
- Low cost/free access to materials, instruction, equipment and spaces for creative expression and storytelling
- Ways to learn and share diverse cultural histories, especially those which have been historically misrepresented or erased
- Fair compensation opportunities for artists and creatives

## OUTCOMES

- Equitable access to creative opportunities, especially for underrepresented groups (for both professionals and hobbyists)
- More public engagement in arts and culture citywide
- Communities build relationships and co-create cultural experiences with staff
- Heightened visibility, appreciation and empathy for San Francisco's diverse cultural identities



## Jay Z Exhibit at Brooklyn Public Library

An immersive experience showcasing never-before-seen images, art and ephemera from one of Brooklyn's most influential artists. The exhibit honors the musical and cultural icon and engenders local pride and inspiration.

# Industry Example

Cultural Amplifier in practice in other library systems

# SFPL Aspiration

Staff-generated ideas for potential offerings based on community needs

## Cultural Displays

A rotating gallery open for community members to display a cultural artifact that is important to them and their heritage.

*Illustrated below: Community members bring in their chosen artifacts to display and share the story and meaning behind it with one another.*





# Community Catalyzer

Foster experiences both within and beyond the library that create and strengthen social connections.

## STRATEGIES

Create shared experiences through library-led, community-led and co-created activities.

Provide social and creative experiences that bridge generations, fostering social connections based on shared interests and passions.

Connect with community members off-site to reach those who don't typically use the library.

Organize programs that encourage civic engagement.

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Free, welcoming and safe public gathering spaces
- Opportunities to meet new people, socialize and learn from peers and neighbors
- Activities and opportunities for aging adults to socialize with a focus on intergenerational connection
- Places to support civic activities and engagement

## OUTCOMES

- Enhanced community health and well-being
- Patrons feel a sense of belonging in and ownership of library spaces
- Stronger social connections, especially across generations and socio-economic backgrounds
- New audiences benefit from library spaces and services
- Residents engage in a variety of civic activities



## Let's Talk Race Curriculum at Richland Library

Designed for libraries, museums, non-profits, educational and community organizations as well as individuals, Richland Library's Let's Talk Race curriculum provides user-friendly resources such as best practices for facilitation and conversation guides to create opportunities for civic engagement that foster impactful dialogue about challenging race-related topics.

# Industry Example

Community Catalyzer in practice in other library systems

# SFPL Aspiration

Staff-generated ideas for potential offerings based on community needs

## Intergenerational Affinity Groups

The library connects individuals to each other around shared special interests to form affinity groups.

*Illustrated below: After SFPL connects them, community members of all ages who are interested in developing their green thumb work in a community garden together.*



# Thoughtful Navigator

Serve as a caring and knowledgeable gateway, helping people find and use library, community, and city resources to realize their goals.

## STRATEGIES

Guide immigrants and high-need residents towards vital services and comprehensive support networks, taking a tailored approach based on specific needs.

Take a warm approach to orient newcomers to the neighborhood and branch-specific offerings to help foster a sense of belonging.

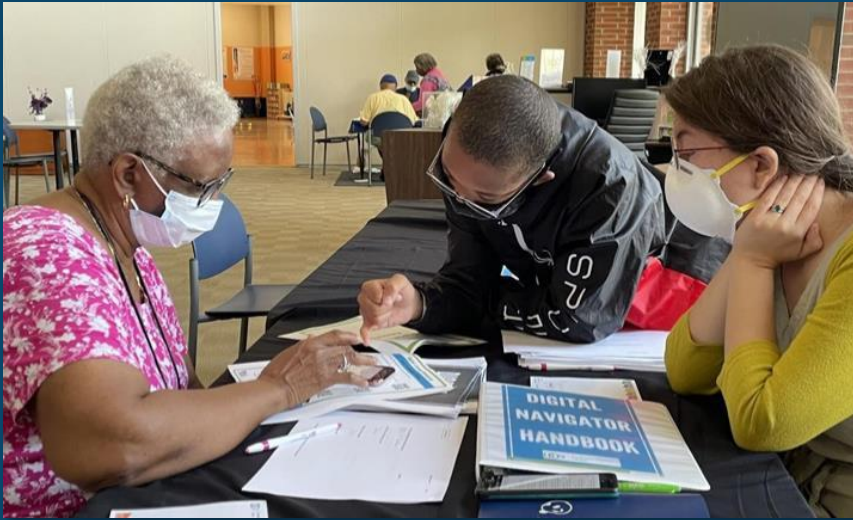
Support the whole family's well-being by being a centralized, approachable starting point to address intertwined needs.

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Assistance utilizing social services, healthcare and education systems
- Customized resource recommendations based on needs and cultural understanding
- Support and guidance for the whole family
- Resources and outreach in native languages
- Childcare solutions to make classes for parents accessible (e.g., simultaneous youth and adult programming/classes)

## OUTCOMES

- Patrons have personal connections with library staff
- Residents, especially newcomers and immigrants, feel welcomed and supported
- Residents access and enjoy essential resources for a higher quality of life in an expensive city
- Parents and caregivers have strong support networks
- The conditions are in place for whole family achievement



# SFPL Aspiration

Staff-generated ideas for potential offerings based on community needs

## Gateway to SF

Info-film screenings, workshops, and pop-up info fairs for immigrants navigating confusing American systems, including evaluating their healthcare options and citizenship.

*Illustrated below: SFPL hands out multilingual “Navigating the Neighborhood” booklets with key information about the resources available to them.*



## Digital Navigators at Durham County Library

At Durham County Library, library staff guide patrons to where to learn technology skills, get connected to low-cost devices, and access affordable internet at home. Digital Navigators host sessions both on and off-site, including at local senior centers, family shelters and community events.

# Industry Example

Thoughtful Navigator in practice in other library systems

# Resource Provider

Deliver the experiences, guidance, and resources that support basic needs, encourage personal growth, and enrich life in San Francisco.

## STRATEGIES

Provide community members with traditional library services, including books, media, equipment and spaces, that align with their interests.

Inspire skill-building, passion development and new interests through access to SFPL's unique collections and nontraditional resources (e.g., library of things, event access and specialized arts and design equipment).

Champion digital equity through access to emerging technologies.

Support personal growth and love of learning at all life stages.

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

- Access to no and low-cost resources and experiences
- Collections catering to youth, diverse cultural backgrounds and non-English speakers
- Tech-enabled spaces for meeting and studying
- Access to emerging and future-forward technologies

## OUTCOMES

- Increased usage and enjoyment of materials and spaces
- Accessible exposure to experiences which normally require specialized equipment or access fees
- Under-resourced communities have access to emerging-tech-dependent opportunities



### **Innovation Hub** at New Haven Free Public Library

New Haven Free Public Library's Ives Squared is a high-tech center for innovation and collaboration designed to inspire and augment the vibrant civic and entrepreneurial culture of its community with a makerspace, co-working areas and more.

# Industry Example

Resource Provider in practice in other library systems

# SFPL Aspiration

Staff-generated ideas for potential offerings based on community needs

## Teen Mental Health Support

Designated library spaces for teens to decompress and learn to process emotions with trained staff, available resources, and therapy animals.

*Illustrated below: SFPL hosts "The Mindful Oasis," a one-stop-shop with resources and trained emotional support animals for teens seeking mental health support.*



# Organizational Shifts

These shifts in our service model are guidelines that will internally direct us in realizing our Vision, Mission, Values, and Strategic Priorities.

**PRIORITIZE THE COMMUNITY** in all we do to meaningfully meet residents' needs and empower them to realize their aspirations.

**ADOPT A GROWTH MINDSET** to evolve and adapt to changing circumstances.

**EMBRACE COLLABORATION**, partnerships and network creation to amplify impact and foster creativity.

**PROACTIVELY CONNECT** patrons to our services, with a focus on driving awareness and equitable access.

**AMPLIFY THE JOY AND WONDER** of the library to create experiences that reflect the unexpected delight of San Francisco.

**PROMOTE THE WELL-BEING AND SAFETY** of staff and community members while remaining a welcoming place for all.

## ORGANIZATIONAL SHIFTS

**Prioritize the community** in all we do to meaningfully meet residents' needs and empower them to realize their aspirations.

### Opportunities:

- Elevate the **community's needs as the primary decision driver** to provide focus and increase the impact of library services
- Unite around a **process and best practices to incorporate community input** into the development of library experiences through consistent engagement and feedback loops
- **Leverage the diverse expertise** of partners, community members, and library staff to guide equitable offering development
- **Expand the languages** in which programs and services are offered to **directly reflect primary languages** spoken in branch neighborhoods





**Adopt a growth mindset** to evolve and adapt to changing circumstances.

**Opportunities:**

- Building on SFPL's belief in the power of learning, **emphasize discovery over achievement** internally and externally
- Support the continued evolution of the library by **creating the space and time needed to experiment** with new approaches
- Support the **professional growth of staff members**



**Embrace collaboration,** partnerships and network creation to amplify impact.

**Opportunities:**

- Build on existing trust and relationships with other city organizations to lead a **Collective Impact approach** to achieve mutually beneficial goals around the Social Determinants of Health
- Create networks of partner services and programs to expand offerings while optimizing library effort
- Develop a shared infrastructure with partners to support deeper integration of efforts
- Evolve internal culture and ways of working to **embrace diverse staff perspectives** and reap the benefits of collaboration



**Proactively connect** patrons to our services, with a focus on driving awareness and equitable access.

**Opportunities:**

- Evolve service model to enable swift action
- Lean into a community-development mindset (enabling participation, ownership, empowerment, equal access, etc.) to create community transformation versus focusing on transactional information delivery
- Redistribute specialized services to off-site and non-Main branches to increase ease of access for high-urgency groups
- Work to reinforce lifelong relationship with patrons by identifying the most common lapse points and ways to reengage



**Amplify the joy and wonder** of the library to create experiences that reflect the unexpected delight of San Francisco.

**Opportunities:**

- Reflect San Francisco's unique qualities of magic and surprise when creating employee and patron experiences
- Embrace feeling and emotion-inducing experiences, especially wonder, surprise, and curiosity, to drive depth of connection with the library
- Better utilize the diverse staff skills and interests to increase staff engagement and deepen the personal connection between staff and patrons



**Promote the well-being and safety** of staff and community members while remaining a welcoming place for all.

**Opportunities:**

- Lead the charge on finding innovative and sustainable solutions to safety issues facing today's urban libraries
- Re-invigorate the city to work on safety issues collectively with a human-centered lens
- Better support staff health and well-being to enable a more profound community impact



# Strategic Plan Overview

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# Priorities for Implementation

How we'll implement the strategic plan.

## PHASE 1

### Organizational Impact

**OUTCOME:** A purposeful culture where staff are living SFPL's Values and developing the capabilities to realize the Strategic Plan

## PHASE 2

### Community Impact

**OUTCOME:** A library that is genuinely community-centered in how it works and in what it delivers

## PHASE 3

### Comprehensive Impact

**OUTCOME:** SFPL is fully realizing the Strategic Plan and broadening its impact in San Francisco

# Look Ahead & Discussion





# Next Meeting

March 21, 2024

**Share the Final Strategic Plan**

# Discussion

**Does the plan  
communicate a clarity  
of purpose and the  
community outcomes  
we desire?**

**What parts of the plan  
resonate with you?**