

Chatham County Public Libraries

2026-2031 Strategic Plan

August 17, 2026 Work Session - Chatham County Board of Commissioners



Introduction



Overview

- Staff is presenting a new strategic plan developed to guide Chatham County Public Libraries over the next five years: **2026-2031**.
- The plan was informed by:
 - Community survey;
 - Data Analysis;
 - Focus Groups;
 - Library Staff Input;
 - Stakeholder Engagement;
 - and Leadership Team Review.
- Includes 7 focus areas and goals aligned with community and organizational needs.
- Adoption is required for eligibility for state library aid and grants.



Community Survey

- Chatham County launched a two-month community survey on October 16, 2025.
- Digital and paper copies were available at all three library branches.
- Survey was made available in multiple languages.
- Survey results informed the plan's goals and metrics.

Help Plan the Future of Chatham County Public Libraries

Community Input Survey

Chatham County Public Libraries (CCPL) wants to know what you think about our community and its library services. Your valuable feedback will help us develop a strategic plan to guide the library system over the next several years.

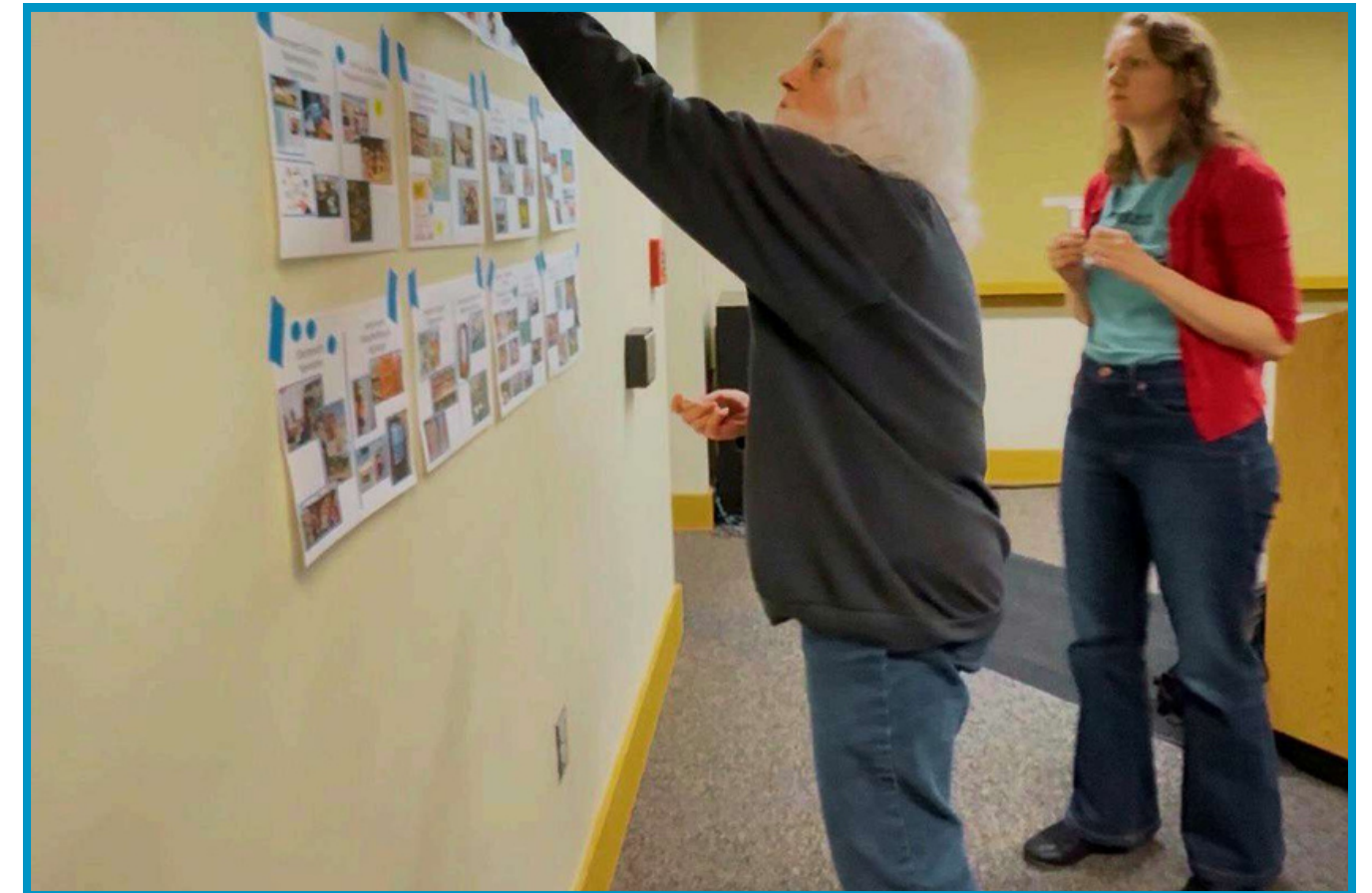
This survey includes questions about library use, programs, technology, and community engagement. It should take about 10–15 minutes to complete. All responses are anonymous and will be used to ensure that our planning reflects the needs and priorities of residents throughout Chatham County.

Thank you for your time, input, and support as we work together to strengthen the future of Chatham County Public Libraries.



Focus Groups

- Focus groups were held at:
 - All three library branches and Chatham Grove Community Center.
 - Each branch's Friends group.
- Additional pre- and post-development focus groups were held with the Library Advisory Committee.
- Staff used focus group and survey data to develop the plan.



Library Profile, Data, and Asset Inventory

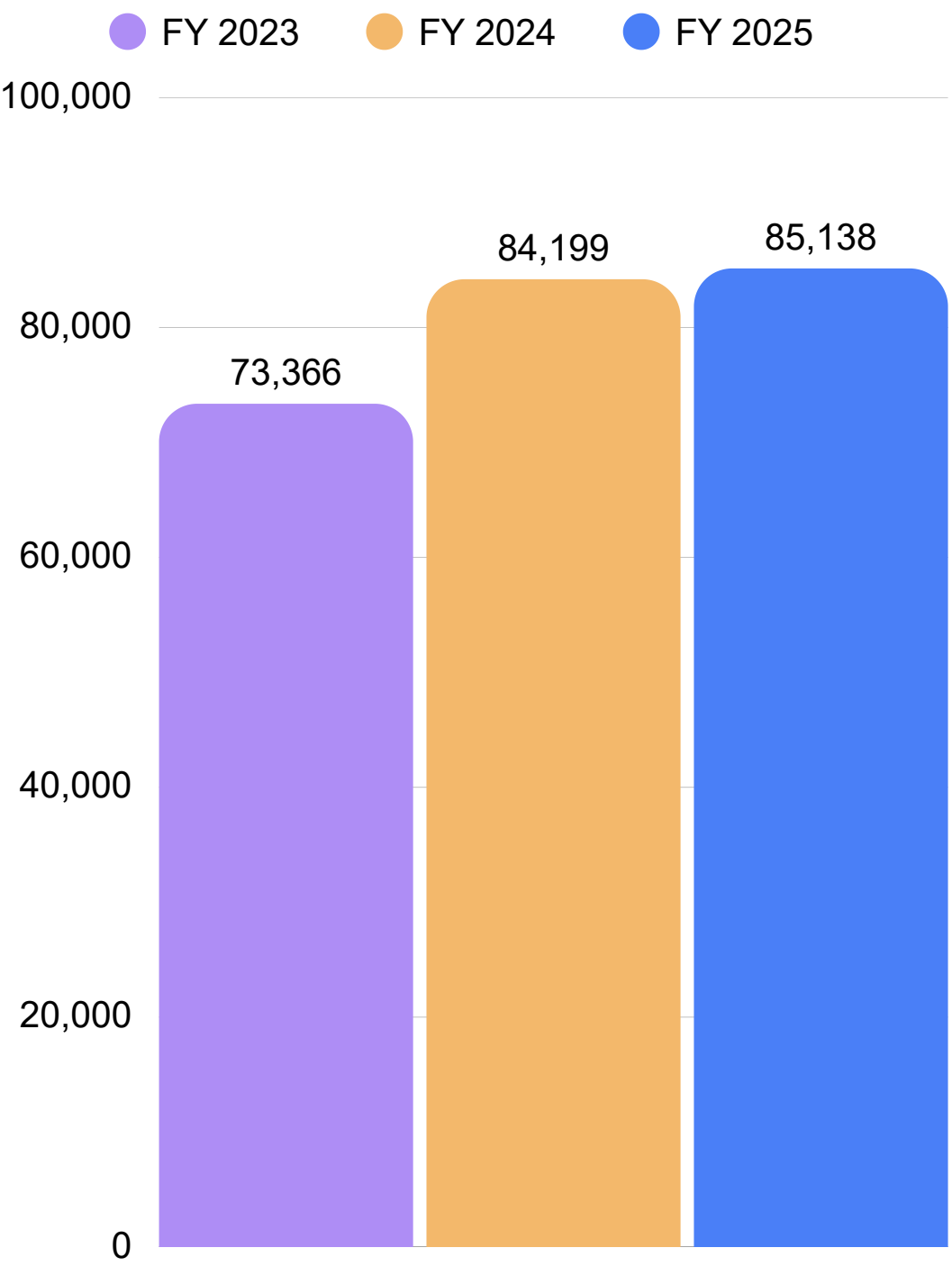


Types of Programs and Services Offered

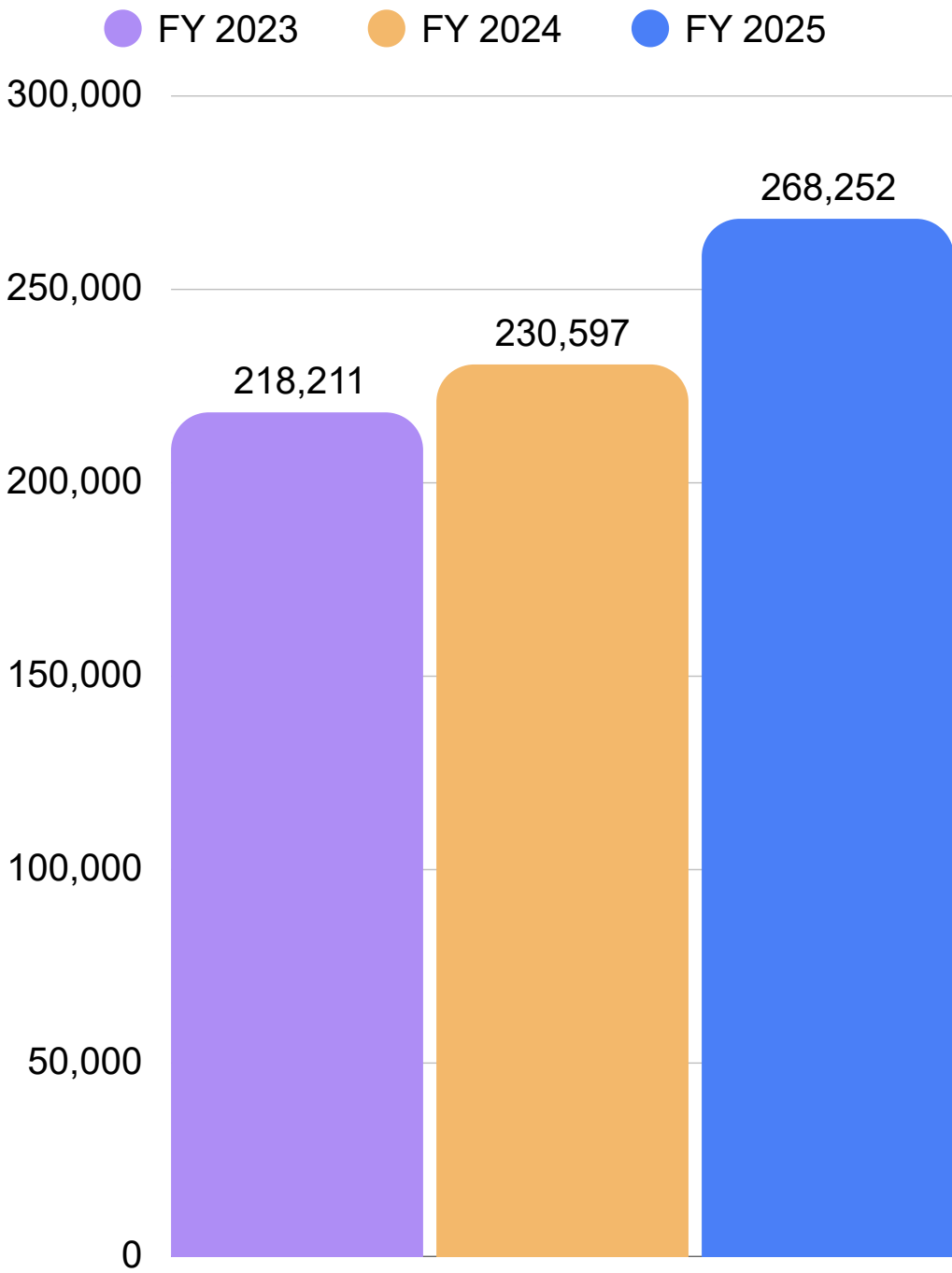
- Book Lending
- Audio Book Lending
- Entrepreneurial Mindset Training
- Book Clubs
- Computer Classes
- Adult Education Programs
- STEM Learning Kits
- E-Book Lending
- Interlibrary Loans
- Children Programs
- Teen Programs
- Early Literacy Digital Services
- Digital Research Databases
- Technical Assistance



Total Library Visitors



Total Library Circulation



Total Money Saved by Library Users

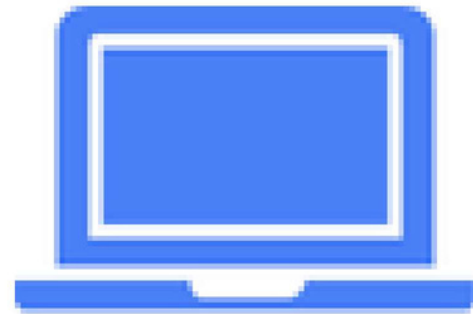
2025

\$5,067,700.45



Technology Data

Reference Desk
Tech Assistance in
FY 2025



1,378



30

FY 2025

Technology Classes

Computer Usage
between FY 2023 and
FY 2025



28% Increase



7 Focus Areas + Goals

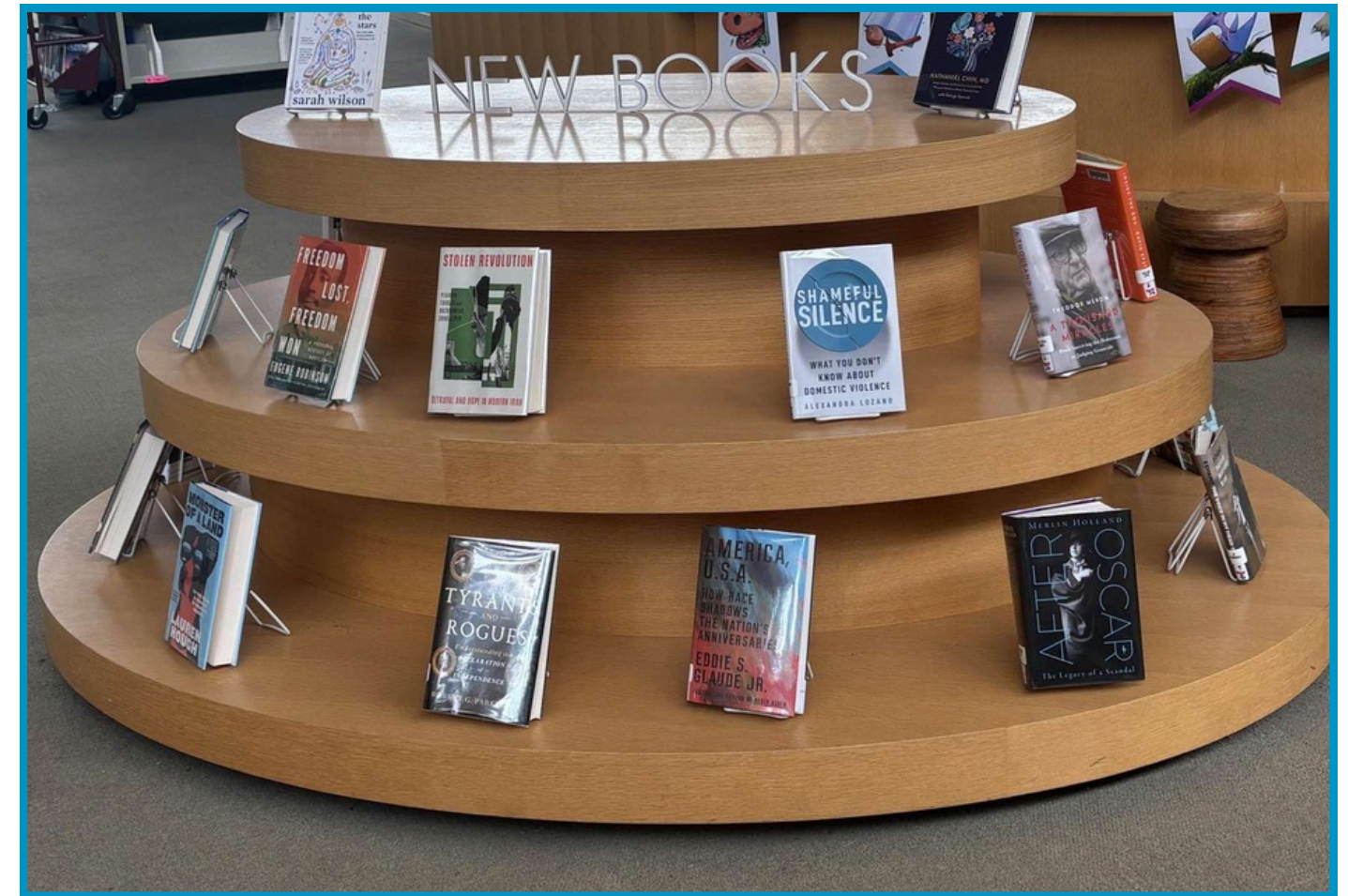


Focus Areas



Focus Area 1: Collections

- Collections include:
 - Books;
 - E-books;
 - Magazines;
 - Audiobooks;
 - and online databases.
- Goals focus on expanding available materials, items, and access to information.



Focus Area 2: Programs and Services

- This focus area refers to the variety of programs and services offered by CCPL.
- Goals focus on expanding and enhancing current offerings, including:
 - Intergenerational Programming
 - Educational Programing
 - Creative Programming



Focus Area 3: Community

- This focus area acknowledges that libraries play a key role in the community.
- The community goals focus on how the libraries can:
 - Foster connections;
 - Expand Outreach;
 - and Strengthen Partnerships



Focus Area 4: Adaptability

- This focus area addresses adapting to community and technological changes.
- The adaptability goals focus on:
 - Emerging technologies;
 - Digital Inclusion;
 - and Language Access.



Focus Area 5: Communication

- This focus area recognizes that communication with residents is essential for the libraries to deliver services.
- The communication goals focus on:
 - Providing the community with relevant information;
 - Marketing;
 - Multi-lingual communications;
 - and community partnerships.



Focus Area 6: Staff

- This focus area recognizes that Chatham County Public Libraries staff are the backbone of the work the libraries do to serve the community.
- The staff goals focus on:
 - Staff expansion;
 - Investing in their professional development;
 - and Building interest in library careers.



Focus Area 7: Facilities

- This focus area refers to physical library spaces.
- The facilities goals focus on:
 - Improving currently existing library facilities;
 - Exploring the possibility of adding additional facilities in the future;
 - and Responding to the needs of patrons.



Moving Forward



Tracking Progress

- The Chatham County Information Hub is the primary repository for County strategic plans (County Plans Tab).
- A new page is available track the goals in this plan.
- Progress will be updated quarterly or bi-annually, depending on the goal.
- Residents and the Board of Commissioners can view progress toward each goal.



Questions?



Requested Action

- Motion to adopt the 2026-2031 Chatham County Public Libraries Strategic Plan.



Appendix: Plan Goals



Appendix: Goals Page 1

Collections Goals

- Maintain and expand physical and digital collections.
- Conduct a diversity audit of all collections to ensure that all points of view are represented.
- Create and maintain a Library of Things collection that provides residents with access to items and resources they can borrow for temporary use.
- Expand access to library databases and research resources across a variety of topics.

Programs and Services Goals

- Expand educational programs and services.
- Increase access to maker, creative, and STEM-related resources and programs.
- Enhance and expand intergenerational partner-based programs.



Appendix: Goals Page 2

Community Goals

- Evaluate library hours to determine whether current service hours best meet the needs of residents.
- Explore expanding outreach staffing to strengthen community engagement and coordinate partnerships.
- expand outreach efforts to residents who may not regularly visit library locations.
- strengthen partnerships with public schools, private schools, and homeschool families to better support student learning.
- Build or expand partnerships with government agencies, peer libraries, and community organizations to connect residents with library services and develop programs that respond to local needs.



Appendix: Goals Page 3

Adaptability Goals

- Develop programs and resources that help residents understand emerging technologies, including AI, online safety, privacy, and misinformation.
- Maintain and expand digital inclusion services, including technical assistance, drop-in computer assistance, and training on both existing and emerging technologies.
- Expand language access and services that support non-English speaking residents.

Communication Goals

- Develop a consistent marketing approach for promoting library services.
- Expand multi-lingual communications.
- Expand utilization of community partners to share library information with residents who may not receive traditional library communications.



Appendix: Goals Page 4

Staff Goals

- Expand staff office and support spaces to ensure library staff have the workspace and operational areas needed to effectively support library services.
- Prioritize staff development and training.
- Strengthen and maintain working relationships between Friends of the Library organizations, advisory committees, and library staff.
- Develop a staffing plan that supports appropriate staffing levels and advances the library system toward exemplary status under North Carolina Public Library Standards.



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Facilities Goals

- Explore long-term library system expansion needs and coordinate future growth through the County Capital Improvement Process.
- Develop dedicated spaces for teens and young adults.
- Develop and improve outdoor library spaces.
- Expand access to meeting and program spaces.
- Ensure library facilities are accessible, welcoming, and responsive to the needs of all residents.
- Ensure library facilities include sensory-friendly spaces and accommodations that support residents with diverse needs.

