



Strategic Plan 2026–2031

Introduction

The Greenville Public Library (GPL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization located in the village of Greenville in the town of Smithfield, Rhode Island. It is one of two non-profit organizations that provide public library services to the town, with the other being East Smithfield Public Library. The Greenville Public Library has been an integral part of the community since its founding in 1882.

GPL is a member of Ocean State Libraries Consortium (OSL). Founded in 1982, OSL is a consortium of Rhode Island's 48 public libraries that coordinates a statewide catalog of library materials, digital content, and technology services for its member libraries so they may better serve their patrons and communities. A library card from the Greenville Public Library entitles you to borrowing privileges at all Rhode Island public libraries.

GPL receives roughly 78% of its financial support through an annual appropriation from the Town of Smithfield, with the rest coming from the State of Rhode Island, fundraising, grants, endowments, bequests, and donations.

This updated strategic plan outlines the library's priorities for 2026–2031. It builds upon the accomplishments of the 2020–2025 plan, incorporates current community

needs, and positions the library for sustainable growth and enhanced community impact. Input was collected through a print and online survey conducted in the fall of 2025, allowing residents and library users to provide feedback on services, programs, and future priorities. In addition, a strategic planning committee composed of library staff and trustees met to shape the goals and strategies outlined in this plan.

Smithfield At a Glance ([Source: US Census](#))

Population: 22,118 Median Age: 43.7 years Median Household income: \$101,653	Population by age: Under age 18: 16.4% 18-24: 18.1% 25-44: 17.7% 45-64: 26.6% 65+: 21.3%
Educational Attainment: High School graduate or higher: 92.4% Bachelor's Degree or higher: 38.1%	Race and ethnic composition: White: 84.8% Asian: 7.4% African American: 1.25% Hispanic or Latino: 3.73% Two or more races: 4.33%

Mission Statement

The Greenville Public Library supports lifelong learning and personal growth by providing access to information, resources, programs, and expert staff. The library is open to all, does not charge for its services, and is focused on serving the needs of the community.

Vision Statement

The Greenville Public Library contributes to a more informed and connected society by welcoming all to discover knowledge, explore new interests, and build meaningful community ties.

Strategic Priorities 2026–2031

The following framework outlines six key areas of focus to guide GPL through the next five years.

1. Library as a Community Center

Create a welcoming and comfortable environment that meets the evolving needs of the community. Be a trusted “third space” that is free, open, and accessible. Ensure the building’s interior and exterior are safe for patrons and staff by continually monitoring for issues that need repair or may cause health and safety concerns. Take action to address any such issues to preserve the building and grounds for future generations. Expand use of outdoor space and act as a responsible steward of library grounds by caring for and preserving the diverse trees and plantings that enhance the property.

Goals:

- Conduct a space utilization study to determine better ways to make use of current space.
- Reevaluate the layout of the reference area in order to improve privacy and maintain a safe and confidential environment for patrons seeking social, educational, or technology-related support.
- Move or expand the children’s department to alleviate crowding and meet current demand.
- Replace old furniture and add smaller group seating options in the magazine area.
- Add seating and a walkway to the pollinator garden area and utilize it for educational programming. Participate in the Growing RI Native Seeds (GRINS) program to promote the propagation, growing, and sharing of native plants. Explore partnerships with gardening and environmental groups for educational and hands-on programming opportunities.
- Work with the town to improve pedestrian safety in the library parking lot by addressing the issue of drivers cutting through the library parking lot to avoid traffic. Implement signage on Putnam Pike indicating that the library parking lot is not a through-way. Work with town officials to increase awareness and discourage drivers from using the library parking lot as a cut through.
- Explore and implement appropriate energy efficiency measures to reduce operational costs and conserve resources.

2. Community Partnerships

Strengthen relationships with community organizations and expand shared initiatives.

Goals:

- Create an outreach kit that includes signage, tent, marketing materials, laptop and a wifi hotspot to facilitate more impactful outreach and the ability to issue library cards offsite. Hold library card drives throughout the community in collaboration with town departments and community groups.
- Collaborate with East Smithfield Library to hold collaborative programs at both library locations and/or other community spaces.
- Participate in town-wide events and serve as a resource hub for community organizations.

3. Community Services & Programs

Offer diverse, high-quality programs and services that support learning, creativity, and personal development.

Goals:

- Replace the existing microfilm reader/printer with a modern, reliable machine that provides improved image quality, printing, and accessibility for patrons. GPL holds the only microfilm copies of historic local newspapers and other materials that are not available to be loaned outside of the library. The current machine is not adequate to serve the needs of researchers and genealogists who seek access to unique town historical records.
- Create a technology plan that supports public computer use, Wi-Fi, digital collections, staff training, and emerging service models.
- Review and update library policies and procedures to ensure they remain current and are aligned with best practices and community needs.
- Manage the library's print and digital collections responsibly to balance growing demand for eBooks and audiobooks with sustainable budgeting.
- Enhance volunteer opportunities and program support by establishing a dedicated volunteer manager position to train and coordinate volunteers effectively.

4. Awareness, Communication & Outreach

Engage the community and share library news and information through consistent and modern communication channels.

Goals:

- Use the website and social media as active communication tools to increase awareness, engagement, and participation in library services and programs. Develop guidelines and a schedule for regular website updates and social media communication to ensure consistent messaging.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive library style guide that defines font usage, color standards, branding elements, and the library's voice to ensure consistent, accessible, and professional communication across all platforms.
- Produce and market GPL branded merchandise such as shirts, hats, and stickers to generate revenue, create a sense of connection, and expand awareness of library offerings.

5. Organizational Capacity & Governance

Strengthen internal leadership and operational effectiveness.

Goals:

- Maintain a full, diverse, and skilled Board of Directors reflective of the town's demographics.
- Implement a structured onboarding and training program for new trustees.
- Conduct a staff compensation and classification review to ensure competitive pay.
- Support ongoing staff training aligned with library trends and technologies.
- Track progress on strategic plan goals and report annually.

6. Financial Stability & Sustainability

Ensure the library maintains long-term financial stability, responsibly manages resources, and sustains programs and services for the community.

Goals:

- Work collaboratively with the Town of Smithfield to obtain an audit, financial review, or other appropriate financial documentation, and to jointly determine a responsible approach for funding these services.
- Meet with town officials to ensure they understand the costs to operate the library and the value the library brings to the community.
- Develop and implement strategies to encourage supporters to include Greenville Public Library in their estate plans to help secure its future and mission. Increase annual giving and cultivate donor relationships.
- Pursue state, federal, and private grant opportunities.