

Hammond Public Library:

Long Range Plan 2024-2027

Mission:

"The Hammond Public Library (HPL) is dedicated to serving our community by empowering individuals through access to information, resources, and transformative experiences. We catalyze lifelong learning, personal growth, and community connection."

Cornell White

Hammond Public Library Long Range Plan 2024-2027

Executive Summary

The 2024-2027 Long Range Plan for the Hammond Public Library establishes a comprehensive roadmap for transforming our institution into a dynamic, inclusive community hub that meets the evolving needs of all residents. This strategic framework balances traditional library excellence with technological innovation while maximizing impact within a focused three-year timeline.

Our mission remains steadfast: "The Hammond Public Library (HPL) is dedicated to serving our community by empowering individuals through access to information, resources, and transformative experiences. We catalyze lifelong learning, personal growth, and community connection."

This plan is anchored in our core values of Service Excellence, Inclusive Access, Innovative Adaptation, and Privacy Protection, which inform all library operations and initiatives through 2027. Through careful implementation of the following strategic priorities, we will strengthen HPL's position as an essential community resource:

Strategic Priorities:

1. **Enhanced Physical Collection Management:** We will systematically refresh our collection by increasing overall physical holdings by 8% while implementing strategic weeding protocols to remove outdated, damaged, and low-circulating materials. Our collection age targets will ensure materials remain current and relevant, particularly in rapidly evolving subject areas.
2. **Mobile Application Development:** A comprehensive mobile app will extend services beyond physical buildings, featuring account management, digital library cards, event calendars, and push notifications. This initiative will launch in phases beginning Q2 2024, with full functionality implemented by Q2 2025.
3. **Technology Infrastructure Modernization:** We will replace aging public access computers with a mix of desktops and laptops, implement enhanced peripherals, and develop a technology lending program, including tablets, laptops, and WiFi hotspots, to bridge the digital divide.
4. **Flexible Makerspace and Technology Lab:** A versatile creative environment with modular furniture, mobile computing solutions, and configurable learning zones will support digital media production, hands-on crafting, and collaborative learning. This adaptable space fosters digital literacy, provides equitable technology access, and develops transferable workforce skills.
5. **Community Engagement and Inclusive Outreach:** We will implement data-driven community assessment, multilingual programming, and targeted services for underserved populations, including the Deaf community, visually impaired patrons, special education partnerships, and homeschool resources.
6. **Educational Partnerships:** Through strategic collaboration with Hammond Schools, early literacy initiatives, workforce development programs, and small business support, we will amplify our educational impact throughout the community.
7. **Operational Excellence:** We will invest in staff development through technology competency frameworks, collection management training, and wellness initiatives while implementing data-informed decision-making processes.

Hammond Public Library Strategic Vision

A. Statement of Community Needs and Goals

Based on input from our community planning committee representing diverse Hammond residents, we have identified the following primary community needs:

1. Equitable access to current information resources and technology
2. Creative spaces for hands-on learning and digital content creation
3. Support for lifelong learning across all age groups and abilities
4. Culturally responsive services for Hammond's diverse population
5. Enhanced digital access through mobile and remote services

B. Measurable Objectives and Service Responses

Mission Statement

"The Hammond Public Library (HPL) is dedicated to serving our community by empowering individuals through access to information, resources, and transformative experiences. We catalyze lifelong learning, personal growth, and community connection."

Service Response 1: Current Topics and Titles

Goal: Provide Hammond residents access to a refreshed collection that meets diverse information needs.

Hammond Public Library Strategic Vision

Measurable Objectives:

- Increase the physical collection by 8% by December 2026, focusing on high-demand categories
- Reduce the average age of the non-fiction collection from 8 years to 5 years by December 2025
- Achieve a 15% increase in circulation of newly acquired materials by Q4 2025

Activities:

1. Implement quarterly weeding schedule targeting outdated materials beginning Q2 2024
2. Establish collection age targets by subject area (medical: 3 years; technology: 2 years)
3. Create "Express Collection" for high-demand items by Q4 2024
4. Develop "Lucky Day" collection for walk-in patrons by Q1 2025

Service Response 2: Digital Literacy

Goal: Empower community members with the skills and access needed to thrive in a digital environment.

Measurable Objectives:

- Launch mobile application with core functionality by Q4 2024, achieving 2,500 downloads by Q2 2025
- Replace 100% of aging public computers with updated hardware by Q3 2025
- Conduct 24 technology literacy workshops annually, with 75% of participants reporting increased confidence

Hammond Public Library Strategic Vision

Activities:

1. Develop and release the Hammond Library mobile app with account management features
2. Implement computer lab modernization with laptops and modular furniture
3. Establish a technology lending program, including tablets and WiFi hotspots
4. Offer weekly "Tech Help Hours" providing personalized assistance

Service Response 3: Maker and Creative Expression

Goal: Provide spaces, tools, and programs that foster creativity, innovation, and hands-on learning.

Measurable Objectives:

- Complete flexible maker space implementation by Q1 2025
- Host 36 maker programs annually with an average attendance of 15 participants
- Achieve 60% utilization rate of maker space equipment by Q4 2025

Activities:

1. Install modular furniture and mobile computing solutions by Q4 2024
2. Create zoned activity areas for digital creation, fabrication, and collaborative learning
3. Develop a maker program series targeting diverse age groups and interests
4. Train 100% of public service staff on essential makerspace tools by Q2 2025

Service Response 4: Information Literacy

Goal: Enhance community members' ability to find, evaluate, and use information effectively.

Hammond Public Library Strategic Vision

Measurable Objectives:

- Establish partnerships with 5 Hammond schools by Q3 2024
- Conduct 15 information literacy workshops annually for students and educators
- Increase database usage by 25% by December 2025

Activities:

1. Implement embedded librarian program within Hammond schools
2. Develop curriculum-aligned research guides for students
3. Create instructional videos on effective research strategies
4. Host quarterly workshops on evaluating information sources

C. Assessment of Facilities, Services, Technology, and Operations

Facilities Assessment

- The current main library building requires accessibility improvements
- Limited flexible space for programming and collaborative activities
- Need for dedicated teen space and maker space identified
- Electrical infrastructure requires upgrading to support technology needs

Services Assessment

- Firm traditional library services but limited digital outreach
- Need for expanded multilingual services identified
- Current hours of operation meet basic needs, but expanded evening hours are desired
- Limited services for special populations, including the deaf community and the visually impaired

Technology Assessment

- Public computers averaging 5+ years old require replacement
- Network infrastructure is adequate but will need upgrading by 2026
- There is no current mobile application for remote access to services
- Limited technology lending program currently in place

Operations Assessment

- Staffing levels are appropriate, but additional technology training is needed
- Collection management procedures require standardization
- Data collection for decision-making needs enhancement
- Marketing and outreach strategies require modernization

D. Ongoing Annual Evaluation Process

The Hammond Public Library will implement a comprehensive evaluation process including:

1. Quarterly progress reports to the Library Board tracking initiative advancement
2. Annual community report sharing outcomes and impact metrics
3. Staff-wide strategic plan review sessions fostering collective ownership
4. Biannual community feedback forums gathering input on implementation quality
5. Mid-plan comprehensive evaluation in Q1 2026 to inform adjustments

Specific metrics will be tracked for each objective, with data collected monthly and analyzed quarterly. Annual reports will document progress toward goals and identify areas requiring adjustment.

E. Financial Resources and Sustainability

Funding Sources

- Annual operating budget: \$4,899,420 (2025 Budget Estimate for General Fund)
- Rainy Day Fund: \$100,000 (2025 Budget Estimate)
- Property Tax Levy: \$5,715,345 (with estimated Property Tax Cap impact of -\$1,370,000)
- Miscellaneous Revenue: \$187,467 (projected for 2025)
- Financial Institution Tax Distribution: \$10,031
- Vehicle/Aircraft Excise Tax Distribution: \$131,652
- Commercial Vehicle Excise Tax Distribution (CVET): \$45,784

Estimated December 31, 2024 Cash Balance: \$3,717,291 (combined Rainy Day and General Fund)

Budget Allocation for Strategic Initiatives

- Collection enhancement: \$250,000 over three years
- Technology infrastructure: \$350,000 over three years
- Makerspace implementation: \$85,000 initial investment
- Mobile application development: \$45,000
- Staff development: \$25,000 annually

Sustainability Strategies

- Maintain healthy operating balance (projected \$2,587,663 for General Fund by the end of 2025)
- Utilize Rainy Day Fund strategically for one-time investments
- Develop a grant calendar targeting funding opportunities aligned with initiatives
- Implement volunteer program expanding capacity in targeted service areas
- Explore partnership opportunities leveraging shared resources
- Establish equipment replacement schedules with dedicated funding
- Create donor recognition program for maker space and technology sponsorships

F. Collaboration with Other Libraries and Community Partners

Public Library Collaboration

- Participate in Indiana's Statewide Reciprocal Borrowing program, allowing Hammond patrons to borrow materials from participating libraries across Indiana and vice versa.
- Explore membership in the Evergreen Indiana consortium to expand access to shared catalog resources and digital collections.
- Continue reciprocal borrowing agreements with Lake County library systems, including Lake County Public Library, Crown Point, East Chicago, Gary, Lowell, and Whiting.
- Coordinate collection development with neighboring libraries to maximize resource diversity and avoid unnecessary duplication.
- Partner with regional libraries for joint staff development opportunities and shared programming initiatives

Community Partner Collaboration

- Hammond Schools: Coordinate curriculum support, research assistance, and joint grant applications
- Purdue University Northwest: Develop shared programming and technology initiatives
- Hammond Chamber of Commerce: Create business resource center and entrepreneurship support
- Franciscan Health Hammond: Partner on health literacy programming and resources
- Northwest Indiana Deaf Alliance: Develop specialized services and staff training
- Friends of the Hammond Public Library: Enhance fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and advocacy efforts
- Local cultural organizations: Co-sponsor multicultural events and language resources

1. Mission and Core Values Framework

1.1 Mission Statement

"The Hammond Public Library (HPL) is dedicated to serving our community by empowering individuals through access to information, resources, and transformative experiences. We catalyze lifelong learning, personal growth, and community connection."

1.2 Guiding Principles

Our strategic direction is anchored in four interconnected values that inform all library operations and initiatives through 2027:

Hammond Public Library Strategic Vision

Service Excellence: We place our patrons at the center of our decision-making, creating welcoming environments and responsive services that anticipate and address evolving community needs. Each interaction reflects our commitment to exceptional customer experiences through knowledgeable assistance, personalized recommendations, and efficient resource delivery.

Inclusive Access: We actively dismantle barriers to library participation through targeted outreach, multilingual resources, and culturally responsive programming. Our collections, services, and facilities reflect and celebrate Hammond's rich demographic diversity, ensuring all community members are represented and valued within our spaces.

Innovative Adaptation: We embrace technological advancement and creative problem-solving to enhance service delivery. Through continuous environmental scanning, professional development, and thoughtful experimentation, we position the library as a forward-thinking institution capable of navigating changing information landscapes.

Privacy Protection: We safeguard intellectual freedom by implementing robust data security protocols, minimizing the collection of personally identifiable information, and educating staff and patrons on privacy best practices. Our commitment to confidentiality extends across all service platforms, reinforcing the library as a trusted information provider.

2. Innovative Resource Facilitation and Technological Advancement

2.1 Hammond Library Mobile Application Development

Develop a comprehensive mobile application to extend library services beyond physical buildings, with an accelerated timeline for deployment by Q4 2024:

Core Functionality Development:

- Account management allows patrons to place holds, renew items, pay fines, and receive due-date notifications
- Digital library card integration with scannable barcode for checkout at physical locations
- Event calendar with personalized recommendations and registration capabilities
- Location services featuring branch information, hours, and turn-by-turn directions
- Push notification system for holds, upcoming events, and library announcements

Technical Implementation Strategy:

- Utilize open-source development tools such as PhoneGap that enable cross-platform compatibility across iOS and Android devices without requiring extensive coding expertise
- Implement a phased development approach, starting with core functionality in Q2 2024 and adding enhanced features by Q2 2025
- Ensure complete integration with the library's integrated system (ILS) for real-time account updates.
- Prioritize accessibility features, including screen reader compatibility, adjustable text size, and high-contrast display options.

User Experience Considerations:

- Design an intuitive interface requiring minimal training for patrons of all technology skill levels
- Conduct user testing with diverse patron groups, including seniors, teens, and non-English speakers
- Create multilingual interfaces reflecting Hammond's demographic diversity
- Develop comprehensive tutorial materials, including in-app guidance, video demonstrations, and in-person assistance

2.2 Enhanced Technology Infrastructure

Computer Lab Modernization (2024-2025):

- Replace aging public access computers with a mix of desktops and laptops leveraging discounted purchasing opportunities through Dell, HP, and Lenovo
- Implement an accelerated 18-month replacement cycle for the initial refresh, then establish an ongoing maintenance schedule
- Upgrade to higher-resolution monitors and ergonomic peripherals enhancing user comfort during extended sessions
- Install both Microsoft Office Standard for traditional productivity and cloud-based alternatives, providing flexibility for diverse user needs

Expanded Technology Lending Program (2025-2026):

- Establish circulating technology collection, including tablets, laptops, WiFi hotspots, and e-readers
- Create specialized technology kits supporting creativity (digital cameras, audio recording equipment) and skill development (coding kits, robotics sets)
- Develop comprehensive lending policies balancing accessibility with equipment protection
- Implement RFID tracking system ensuring accurate inventory management

Technology Training Infrastructure (2026-2027):

- Create a dedicated digital learning lab with specialized software for graphic design, video editing, and programming
- Install collaborative presentation technology enabling screen sharing from multiple devices simultaneously
- Implement recording capability for creating tutorial content and preserving training sessions
- Establish virtual meeting spaces supporting remote training sessions and hybrid program delivery

2.3 Integrated Discovery System and Digital Experience

Implement a unified digital platform by Q3 2025 for seamless access to physical/digital collections, including AI-driven recommendations and personalized user dashboards. Install smart kiosks in high-traffic areas with tailored content like job resources or children's materials by Q1 2026. Expand self-checkout stations and automated sorting systems to optimize staff efficiency by Q4 2026.

2.4 Community Access Points

Extend library services beyond physical buildings through strategically placed access points in community locations, offering drive-up services (Q3 2024), pop-up libraries (Q1 2025), and specialized resource collections (Q2 2026).

3. Strategic Collection Development and Management

3.1 Physical Collection Enhancement Strategy

Implement data-driven approaches to collection growth and maintenance within the 2024-2027 timeframe:

Targeted Collection Expansion:

- Increase overall physical collection by 8% over three years, focusing on high-demand categories identified through circulation analytics
- Develop specialty collections addressing unique community interests and needs, including career development resources, ESL materials, and local interest items
- Create themed "mini-collections" that rotate between branches, maximizing exposure of specialized materials
- Establish dedicated budget lines for emerging formats, ensuring the collection evolves with changing media consumption patterns

Collection Refresh Program:

- Implement a systematic weeding process removing outdated, damaged, and low-circulating materials using both statistical and evaluative criteria beginning Q2 2024
- Establish collection age targets by subject area (e.g., medical information: 3 years; technology guides: 2 years; classic literature: no expiration)
- Maintain shelving capacity at approximately 75% complete, creating browsable environments that highlight available materials
- Implement front-facing display strategies throughout stacks to increase the visibility of collection depth

Circulation Enhancement Initiatives:

- Create a strategic display program highlighting seasonal themes, current events, and staff recommendations by Q3 2024
- Implement "Express Collection" for high-demand items featuring shorter loan periods and no-renewal policies to increase turnover by Q4 2024
- Develop a "Lucky Day" collection of popular titles available only for walk-in patrons by Q1 2025
- Institute periodic fine forgiveness programs tied to increased checkout volume (e.g., \$1 off fines for every five items checked out) starting Q2 2025

3.2 Weeding Implementation Framework

Establish a comprehensive approach to collection maintenance, ensuring materials remain current, relevant, and accessible:

Subject-Specific Weeding Criteria:

- Technical subjects (computers, medicine, law): Remove items older than 3-5 years unless historically significant
- General non-fiction: Evaluate based on currency of information, physical condition, and circulation history
- Fiction: Prioritize removal of damaged items and those with no circulation in 3+ years unless part of an established series or by notable authors
- Reference materials: Transition to digital formats where appropriate, retaining print editions with enduring value

Weeding Process Optimization:

- Implement quarterly "quick-and-dirty" weeding targeting outdated materials (e.g., outdated tax guides, obsolete technology manuals) beginning Q2 2024
- Conduct comprehensive collection evaluation on a two-year rotating basis by section through 2027
- Train all librarians on weeding best practices by Q3 2024 to integrate ongoing maintenance into regular workflows
- Document all weeding decisions to ensure consistency and provide a rationale if questioned

Deaccessioned Materials Management:

- Establish relationships with resellers by Q3 2024 to generate revenue from withdrawn items with remaining market value
- Develop partnerships with community organizations for a donation of appropriate, withdrawn materials by Q4 2024
- Create transparent communication strategies explaining the benefits of weeding to patrons and stakeholders by Q1 2025

3.3 Digital Collection Integration

Ensure seamless integration between physical and digital resources through unified discovery systems, cross-format recommendations, and complementary collection development strategies by Q2 2026.

4. Educational Partnerships and Collaborative Learning

4.1 Hammond School District Integration

Strengthen alignment with formal education through embedded librarian programs (Q3 2024), curriculum support (Q4 2024), teacher professional development (Q1 2025), and joint literacy initiatives (Q2 2025).

4.2 Early Literacy Foundation

Enhance developmental outcomes for Hammond's youngest residents through targeted programming, caregiver education, literacy-rich environments, and multilingual offerings with complete implementation by Q4 2025.

4.3 Workforce Development Hub

Address economic mobility through career-focused resources (Q2 2024), training programs (Q3 2024), employer partnerships (Q1 2025), and certification preparation (Q2 2025).

4.4 Small Business Support Network

Foster entrepreneurship through specialized business resources (Q3 2024), mentoring programs (Q4 2024), skill-building workshops (Q1 2025), and collaborative workspaces (Q2 2026).

5. Programming Excellence and Community Engagement

5.1 Age-Specific Programming Continuum

Develop tailored programming addressing developmental needs across all age groups with phased implementation:

- Early Childhood (0-5): Sensory storytimes, play-based learning activities, caregiver education (Q3 2024)
- School Age (6-12): STEAM challenges, reading clubs, art exploration, homework help (Q4 2024)
- Teen (13-18): Leadership development, creative expression, college/career preparation, gaming (Q1 2025)
- Adult: Lifelong learning, health education, creative pursuits, technology training (Q2 2025)
- Senior: Digital literacy, memory care programming, social connection opportunities, health topics (Q3 2025)

5.2 Dedicated Teen Space Redesign

Transform teen services by creating a specialized environment with flexible furniture, gaming systems, digital creation tools, and youth-led advisory structures by Q4 2025.

5.3 Community Cultural Programming

Celebrate Hammond's diversity through author series (beginning Q3 2024), art exhibitions (starting Q4 2024), community reads (beginning Q1 2025), and film screenings (beginning Q2 2025) that highlight diverse perspectives and experiences.

5.4 Technology Literacy Programs

Launch comprehensive digital empowerment initiatives, including personalized tech assistance (Q3 2024), specialized workshops (Q4 2024), emerging technology demonstrations (Q1 2025), and device lending programs (Q2 2025).

6. Operational Excellence and Organizational Development

6.1 Staff Professional Growth

Invest in workforce development through individualized professional development plans (Q2 2024), cross-training programs (Q3 2024), mentorship initiatives (Q4 2024), and technology education (Q1 2025).

Technology Competency Framework:

- Develop a tiered technology certification program ensuring all staff possess core digital skills by Q3 2024
- Create specialized training tracks for mobile app support, maker space facilitation, and digital privacy counseling by Q4 2024
- Implement regular technology update sessions, keeping staff current on new features and services beginning Q1 2025
- Establish peer learning communities where tech-savvy staff mentor colleagues needing additional support by Q2 2025

6.2 Collection Management Training

Develop a comprehensive staff education program focusing on evidence-based collection development practices:

Weeding Proficiency Development:

- Train all collection development staff on CREW (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) or similar methodologies by Q2 2024
- Implement shadowing program pairing experienced selectors with new staff members by Q3 2024
- Create decision-making frameworks for challenging weeding scenarios by Q4 2024
- Develop community communication strategies explaining the importance and benefits of regular collection maintenance by Q1 2025

Selection Expertise Enhancement:

- Ensure all selectors receive training on using collection analysis tools to identify gaps and opportunities by Q2 2024
- Implement regular publisher/vendor presentations highlighting upcoming releases and trends beginning Q3 2024
- Create subject specialty areas allowing staff to develop deep knowledge in particular fields by Q4 2024
- Establish a peer review process for selection decisions encouraging collaboration and knowledge sharing by Q1 2025

6.3 Facility Optimization

Enhance physical environments to support strategic initiatives through space utilization studies (Q2 2024), universal design principles (Q3 2024), flexible meeting spaces (Q1 2025), and improved user experience elements (Q2 2025).

6.4 Data-Informed Decision Making

Strengthen evaluation practices through systematic assessment using performance dashboards (Q3 2024), standardized evaluation tools (Q4 2024), usage pattern analysis (Q1 2025), and impact storytelling (Q2 2025).

7. Implementation Timeline and Accountability

7.1 Technology Implementation Phases

Phase 1 (Q2-Q4 2024):

- Complete technical requirements gathering for mobile application
- Begin computer lab equipment assessment and replacement
- Implement initial collection analysis to identify weeding priorities
- Launch first-generation tech lending program

Phase 2 (Q1-Q3 2025):

- Release a public version of the mobile application with core functionality
- Complete the first phase of computer replacement
- Implement a systematic weeding program beginning with the highest-priority sections
- Deploy initial digital learning lab infrastructure

Phase 3 (Q4 2025-Q4 2026):

Hammond Public Library Strategic Vision

- Add enhanced features to mobile applications based on user feedback
- Expand the technology lending program
- Complete comprehensive collection refresh across all subject areas
- Launch community access point initiative

Phase 4 (Q1-Q4 2027):

- Evaluate and refine all technology initiatives
- Implement second-generation technology upgrades
- Establish continuous collection management processes
- Develop a sustainability plan for post-2027 operations

7.2 Resource Allocation Strategy

Align financial and human resources with strategic priorities through budget realignment (Q2 2024), grant development (Q3 2024), volunteer engagement (Q4 2024), and partnership leveraging (Q1 2025).

7.3 Progress Monitoring Framework

Establish accountability mechanisms ensuring implementation fidelity through:

- Quarterly progress reports to Library Board tracking initiative advancement beginning Q3 2024
- Annual community report sharing outcomes and impact metrics starting Q1 2025
- Staff-wide strategic plan review sessions fostering collective ownership beginning Q2 2025
- Biannual community feedback forums gathering input on implementation quality beginning Q3 2025
- Mid-plan comprehensive evaluation to inform adjustments for the remainder of the plan period in Q1 2026

8. Flexible Makerspace and Technology Lab Integration

8.1 Vision and Educational Goals

The Hammond Public Library will develop a versatile maker space and technology lab that catalyzes creativity, technological literacy, and collaborative learning. This multipurpose environment will support diverse activities from digital media production to hands-on crafting, accommodating users of all ages, abilities, and technological comfort levels.

Core Learning Objectives:

- Foster digital literacy and technical competency across all age groups
- Provide equitable access to emerging technologies for underserved populations
- Support project-based learning that bridges digital and physical creation
- Create collaborative opportunities between community members, schools, and local businesses
- Develop transferable skills applicable to modern workforce needs

8.2 Infrastructure and Physical Environment

8.2.1 Modular Furniture Solutions

Implement a comprehensive modular furniture system designed for maximum flexibility and rapid reconfiguration:

- **Adaptable Workstations:** Install height-adjustable tables with locking casters featuring solid birch or maple butcher block surfaces that are resistant to wear from various creative activities. Select tables arranged individually for focused work or clustered for group collaboration.
- **Mobile Storage Units:** Integrate modular storage components, including:
 - Tool storage cabinets with transparent doors for visibility of available resources
 - Material bins with clear labeling systems using both text and visual cues
 - Locking cabinets for valuable equipment and potentially hazardous materials
 - Pegboard modules for hanging frequently used tools and supplies

Flexible Seating Options: Provide diverse seating that accommodates different user preferences and activities:

- Ergonomic task chairs with adjustable features for computer work
- Standing-height stools for higher worksurfaces
- Soft seating areas for ideation and collaborative discussion
- Movable ottomans and floor cushions for younger users

8.2.2 Technology Infrastructure

Create a robust and adaptable technological backbone to support diverse digital activities:

Mobile Computing Solution: Develop a laptop-based computing environment rather than fixed desktop stations:

- Establish a laptop cart with 20 devices meeting recommended specifications (16GB RAM, 256GB SSD storage, quad-core processors)
- Implement a secure charging and storage system
- Configure devices with both standard productivity software and specialized creative applications
- Develop checkout procedures for in-library use with the potential for an extended lending program

Power Distribution: Install flexible power solutions throughout the space:

- In-surface power units with integrated USB charging
- Floor-mounted power towers for center room configurations
- Cable management systems to minimize tripping hazards and cluttered appearance

Network Connectivity: Ensure robust wireless coverage throughout the space with multiple access points to accommodate dense device usage. Supplement with wired connections for bandwidth-intensive applications.

8.3 Zoned Activity Areas

Design the space to accommodate multiple simultaneous activities through thoughtful zoning:

8.3.1 Digital Creation Zone

- Dedicated space for laptop use with appropriate power access
- The green screen area for video production
- Audio recording station with sound-dampening features
- Large monitor for collaborative work and presentations

8.3.2 Fabrication and Prototyping Zone

- Workspace for 3D printers with appropriate ventilation
- Dedicated table for electronics and circuit exploration
- Stations for hand tools and light construction
- Storage for materials and works in progress

8.3.3 Collaborative Learning Area

- Configurable seating for workshops and classes
- Interactive whiteboard or projection system
- Storage for educational materials and facilitator resources
- Flexible boundary system to create semi-private space when needed

8.4 Accessibility and Universal Design

Implement universal design principles to ensure the space is accessible and usable by all community members:

- Create clear pathways with a minimum 36" clearance for wheelchair navigation
- Ensure adequate turning radius (60") in activity areas
- Provide adjustable-height work surfaces accommodating seated and standing users
- Install task lighting to supplement ambient lighting for detail work
- Create visual and tactile wayfinding cues throughout the space
- Incorporate acoustical considerations to manage noise levels

8.5 Implementation Timeline

Phase 1: Planning and Design (Q2-Q3 2024)

Hammond Public Library Strategic Vision

- Conduct community needs assessment with a special focus on creative technology interests
- Form an advisory committee including educators, makers, and accessibility advocates
- Develop detailed space plans and furniture specifications
- Identify technology requirements and evaluate laptop options

Phase 2: Infrastructure Preparation (Q4 2024)

- Modify existing space, including electrical upgrades and network enhancements
- Address ventilation requirements for specific maker activities
- Install modular furniture systems and storage units
- Establish safety protocols and training procedures

Phase 3: Technology Integration (Q1 2025)

- Procure and configure laptop fleet with necessary software
- Install specialized equipment, beginning with high-demand items
- Develop reservation system and usage policies
- Train staff on equipment operation and troubleshooting

Phase 4: Program Launch and Expansion (Q2 2025-Q4 2027)

- Begin introductory programming to familiarize the community with available resources
- Collect user feedback to guide iterative improvements
- Expand equipment and capabilities based on demonstrated needs
- Develop advanced workshop curriculum for regular users

8.6 Resource Management and Sustainability

8.6.1 Staffing Considerations

- Designate a Makerspace Coordinator responsible for operations and program development
- Train all public service staff on essential makerspace tools and troubleshooting
- Develop a volunteer program to expand available assistance during peak times
- Partner with local experts for specialized workshops and demonstrations

8.6.2 Budget Planning

- Allocate initial capital investment of approximately \$75,000-\$100,000 for furniture, equipment, and technology
- Establish an annual operational budget of \$15,000-\$25,000 for materials, maintenance, and program support
- Explore grant opportunities specifically targeting STEAM education and digital equity
- Investigate partnership opportunities with local businesses for equipment donations or sponsorships

8.6.3 Safety and Operation Procedures

- Develop comprehensive safety manuals for both staff and patrons
- Install appropriate safety equipment, including first aid supplies and eye wash stations
- Create clear signage regarding the proper use of equipment and materials
- Implement regular maintenance and inspection schedules for all equipment

8.7 Measuring Success and Continuous Improvement

- Track usage statistics, including visitor counts, equipment utilization, and program attendance
- Conduct quarterly user surveys to assess satisfaction and gather improvement ideas
- Document and share project outcomes through physical and digital displays
- Perform annual evaluation of technology needs and refresh equipment as necessary