



Newark Public Library

Bridge Plan

2021-2023



Vision, Mission, and Values

VISION

In serving the entire Newark community, the Newark Public Library will be a national model of innovation, collaboration, and service excellence.

MISSION

The Newark Public Library transforms, thrives and strengthens communities through innovative services, stimulating programs, and inspiring collections.

VALUES

<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Expression</i>
<i>Community</i>	<i>Inclusion</i>
<i>Cooperation</i>	<i>Innovation</i>
<i>Enrichment</i>	<i>Leadership</i>



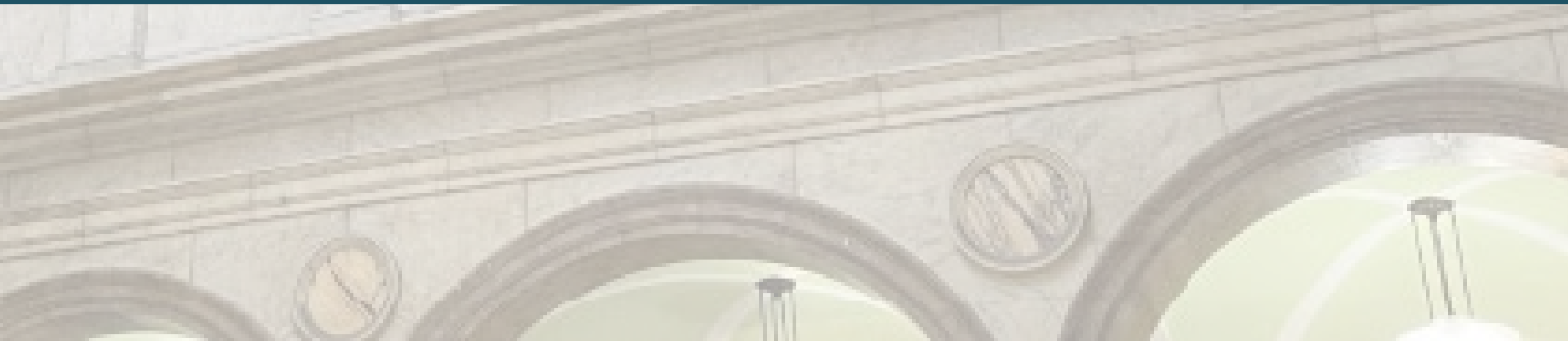
Objective





Bridge Plan

Timeframe: 2021-2023



Bridge Plan for Newark Public Library

Bridge plan will focus on the necessary short-term needs of the library – tactics to achieve the long-term vision.

0-2 years

Spaces

Library Cleanliness and Maintenance Standards



Create and sustain safe and inviting spaces for patrons and staff

Evaluate Current Spaces and Capacity for Future Spaces



Reimagine current, vacant and/or underutilized spaces

COMMUNITY

EMPLOYEES

People

Evaluate Current and Future Services & Opportunities



Improve internal and external customer service, retain current patrons by assessing and updating services as needed.

Identify, attract, grow and sustain library usage among underserved patrons and non-users.

Create a Staffing Plan



Anticipate future needs; address current environment
Create optimally functioning departments; provide staff training and development opportunities
Foster ecosystem of creativity, innovation, positive risk taking, and efficiency

Cultivate a Positive NPL Culture



Establish and maintain an inclusive, balanced, positive and productive workplace & brand

Funding

Develop a Funding Plan



Establish a standardized, system-wide grant policy

Evaluate current funding sources and financial practices; investigate trends, updated technology tools, and new approaches to fundraising

Cultivate additional funding

Strengthen Partnerships & Networks (New & Existing)



Amplify the Library's presence and relevance within the greater Newark community and beyond

Ensure partnerships align with strategic objectives & funding plan

Measurable Outcomes



Recognized best practices and standard operating procedures in place across service areas and administration

Discernable and distinctive positive brand to attract and retain engaged patrons and staff

Clean, safe and innovative spaces post-COVID and beyond

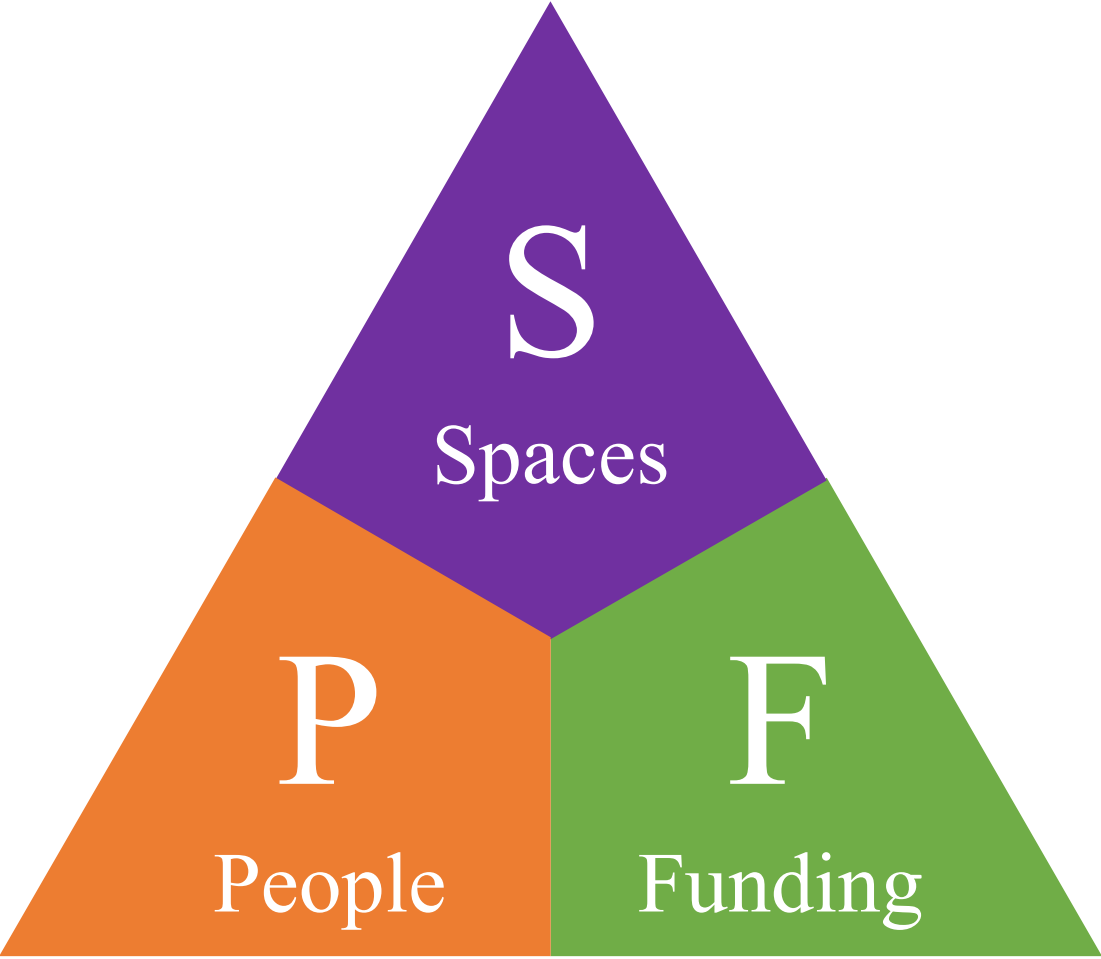
Ready for 2024-2028 Strategic Plan

Ready to fully realize goal of serving as anchor institution and dynamic hub for Newark community

Community engagement strategies in each focus area will include town hall meetings, focus groups, special interest roundtables, surveys, etc., to ensure engagement with and input from the community



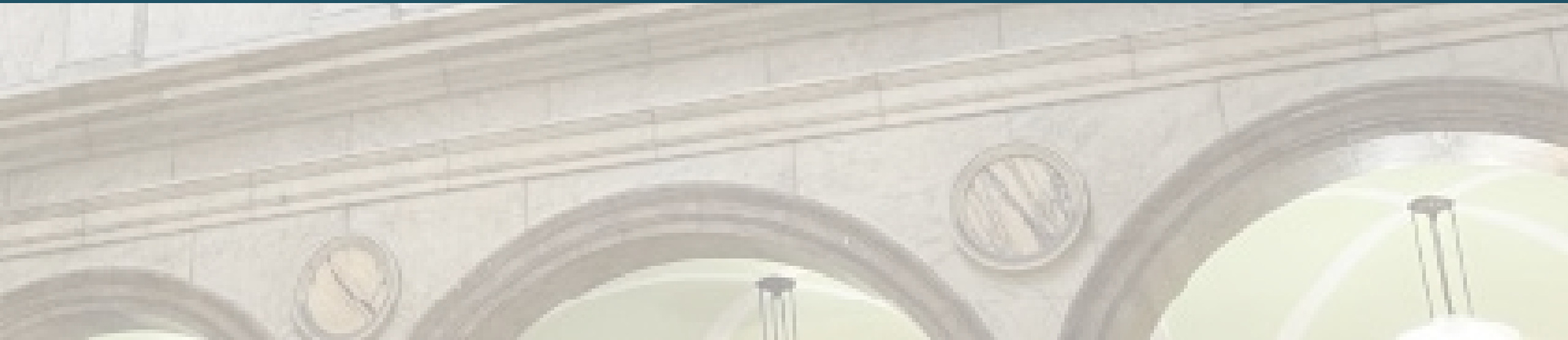
Protecting the Library's Future





Next Steps

Timeframe: 2021-2023



Next Steps: August 2021-March 2022

August
2021

- Work with Leadership Team to create measurable goals as they relate to and support the objectives of Bridge Plan

September
2021

- Present first year goals at LBOT meeting

March
2022

- Leadership Team report on six month progress of first year goals at LBOT meeting

Bridge Plan: First Year Goals - IT

SPACES

- **By December 2021**, the IT department will have all public spaces 100% covered with Wi-Fi. (Court yard, dead zones at all sites, Wi-Fi outside all branch buildings and main.)
- **By December 2021**, the IT department will have half of our locations equipped with new hardware. (New computers and monitors.)
- **By February 2022**, the IT department will have all teens and children spaces equipped with STEM technology. (Tablets, 3D printers, virtual reality, programming apps for children and teen, robotics.)
- **By April 2022**, the IT department will have our remaining locations equipped with new hardware.

PEOPLE

- **By March 2022**, the IT department will train staff to use the A/V equipment. (Projectors, Webcams, Laptops)
- **By December 2021**, the IT department will train staff to use ZOOM in order to live stream virtual events independently.
- **By December 2021**, the IT department will migrate and update our staff side interface to Outlook/Microsoft 365.
- **By November 2021**, The IT department will coordinate with staff to go live with the Orangeboy/Savannah community engagement platform.

FUNDING

- **By February 2022**, the IT department will implement a 3 year hardware renewal plan for all computers. (Budget & Grants)

Public Service SMART goals

- To improve customer service, NPL will implement quarterly staff training sessions, effective Dec. 2021. These training sessions can either be led by hired presenters or by internal staff.
- To best utilize staff and raise spending efficiency, Librarian 1-4s will be expected to plan, implement, and run at least 3 class-like programs for patrons per year. Examples of class-like programs can include coding classes for all ages, computer classes, painting classes, cooking classes, and any other class that utilizes staffs' skills. This will be implemented by June 2022.
- To ensure NPL is providing programs that best meet the needs of our public, regular surveys will be implemented at the end of programs. Surveys can be brief (3-5 questions), and be presented in paper format at the end of the program or emailed to registrants as an online survey. Regular program surveys will be implemented by June 2022.
- By February 2022, Public Services staff will be trained on the Savannah platform and fully integrate Savannah into program planning and promotion, meeting room reservations, collection development and other areas as applicable.
- By January 2022, Youth Services staff to create a Winter Reading Program using the Beanstack platform in order to incentivize and encourage reading and literacy and to engage staff and patrons in acclimating to using the Beanstack product

Bridge Plan First Year Goals - Development Department

PEOPLE

Cultivate a Positive NPL Culture

- Create a cross-disciplinary team to develop an internal newsletter that will be sent to all staff on a bi-monthly (every other month) basis to highlight new staff, “caught you being good/or making a difference” stories, and highlighting one branch per issue.
- There will be 6 issues a year starting in **2022** – **January, March, May, July, September and November**. Send out a survey to all staff to get ideas/topics for the newsletter, as well to recruit members for the committee.
- **By October 2020**, work with Leslie Colson to help develop an Employee Recognition/ Appreciation program that acknowledges staff milestones, new hires, and employee of the month – who must be nominated by their peers, but submitted by their supervisor. The person making the nomination and the chosen employee of the month could get a free lunch (to help incentivize nominations) and the write-up/story will be shared with everyone to help boost morale.

Bridge Plan First Year Goals - Development Department Cont.

FUNDING

Identify and Cultivate New/Diverse Funding in an effort to expand NPL's donor base, the Development Team will perform the following by **January 2022**:

- Identify and recruit 5 – 12 new NPL Ambassadors.
- Create a “menu” style donor webpage, which clearly articulates how donations support the library.
- Develop an online store for NPL by producing three (3) NPL products for sale (**bookmark, pint glass, and coffee mug**) as well as two (2) items (**journal & tote bag**) for the Philip Roth Personal Library. This online store may be in partnership with Newark Makerhoods, but will also be hosted directly on NPL's website.

Establish Clear Policies and Practices for Grants Management at NPL

- **By September 2021**, Development Team will create a slide presentation that will clearly set forth the roles and responsibilities for NPL's grant funded programs and services.
- Included in this document will be a reference document to assist NPL Program leads with identifying KPIs (key performance indexes), results and outcomes associated to grant performance.
- **By October 2021**, Development Team will establish a distribution schedule as grants come in to remind operational leads of milestones and due dates for each grant.
- **By January 2022**, migrate from quarterly to bi-monthly, and eventually monthly, grant expense reports for NPL program managers/leads.

Bridge Plan First Year Goals – Special Collections

Area of Focus: People

Completion Date: December 2021

Evaluate current and future services and opportunities: *Identify, attract, grow and sustain library usage among underserved patrons and non-users.*

- Special Collections staff (lead by NJIC) will develop a **Traveling Exhibit Program** at NPL to publicize and circulate existing and future NPL exhibits locally and regionally.
- Special Collections staff will work with NPL Youth Services Librarians to coordinate a minimum of four **events/programs** for middle or high school students. Events will introduce students to each of the divisions in the Special Collections Department (**NJIC, NJHRIC, JBAAR, Special Colls, PRPL**) in an age-appropriate, engaging way.
- Special Collections staff will create standardized printed **handouts or brochures** in English and Spanish on each of the Special Collections divisions.

Area of Focus: People

Completion Date: February 2022

Create a Staffing Plan: *Create optimally functioning departments; provide staff training and development opportunities*

- Special Collections staff will be required to attend a **customer service training session** that focuses, among other things, on clear communication & active listening, how to provide an experience above and beyond our patrons' expectations, and how to work with difficult and/or potentially dangerous people in the library.
- Special Collections staff responsible for creating exhibits will receive **training on exhibition development**, this training will also be available to interested Public Service staff.

Bridge Plan First Year Goals – Special Collections Cont.

Area of Focus: Funding

Completion Date: August 2022

Strengthen Partnerships & Networks (New & Existing): *Amplify the Library's presence and relevance within the greater Newark community and beyond.*

- Special Collections staff will partner with community groups /organizations to create two co-curated exhibits and two related programs focusing on New Jersey history.
- Special Collections staff (lead by PRLP) will coordinate with literature departments in Newark area universities and colleges to offer a minimum of two presentations on the Philip Roth Personal Library to literature classes.

Bridge Plan First Year Goals - Security

- In support of a safe work environment for staff, by **February 2022**, the Security Team will create an effective written evacuation plan and conduct at least 2 drills annually with staff based upon the newly created/updated plan. After each drill, will review performance with Director and department heads to fine tune plan, as needed.
- **By December 2022**, the Security Supervisor will create at least 3 annual training opportunities for security staff (first aid, customer service, diffusing difficult customers, anti-mask wearers, mental illness, homelessness, etc.) in support of providing a safe and welcoming environment.
- **By December 2021**, the Security Supervisor will cross train and optimize existing staff so that they are able to rotate effectively to provide security at different branches, as needed.
- **By January 2021**, Security Supervisor will work with Development and Facilities Department to create check list for security needs at events, in order to set expectations for support at events in order to ensure a safe environment for staff and library patrons.

Bridge Plan First Year Goals – Capital Planning

Spaces Goal #1: Evaluate Current Spaces

Capital Planning Office will assess the Capital Needs of each NPL Facility.

- A Consultant will be retained to conduct the assessment and prepare a written report.
- The Capital Needs Assessment will be utilized, in part, to inform the Library's Capital Budget submission to the City and for fundraising.
- The assessment will be completed by **January of 2022**.

Spaces Goal #2: Re-Imagine Current & Vacant Spaces

Capital Planning Office will renovate selected spaces in the Main Library based upon the Main Library Master Plan and/or the State Construction Bond.

- Capital Planning Office will complete the implementation of the Main Library Façade Repair Project, which is funded, in part, by Preserve NJ. This will be completed by the **Spring of 2022**.
- Upon completion of the above mentioned façade repair, Capital Planning will introduce a new exterior lighting plan for the Main Library. This will be completed by the **Fall of 2022**.

Spaces Goal #3:

Beginning October 2021, pursue opportunities to redevelop Clinton & Roseville Branches, by

- Collaborating with community stakeholders, the Mayor, and LBOT Ad Hoc Committee and other pertinent city officials to inform next steps in the process for Clinton and Roseville
- Investigating and securing swing/temporary space for Clinton while working to develop new plans for permanent space

Bridge Plan First Year Goals - Maintenance

Area of Focus: Spaces

- **By September 2022**, the Facilities supervisors will create a digital inventory system in order to keep track of supplies, know when to re-order items, and eliminate theft.
- **By October 2021**, the Facilities supervisors will deploy a team of two in order to ensure grounds are neatly maintained by completing monthly scheduled lawn care and snow-blowing at all branch locations.
- **By March 2022**, the Building Superintendent will collaborate with staff to create written daily/weekly checklists for all staff to follow all in effort to achieve a consistently clean, safe “back of the house” work environment as well as a positive patron experience.
- **By April 2022**, the Building Superintendent will replace current fleet of vehicles with fuel efficient work vehicles and implement effective mileage, refueling and preventative maintenance process.
- **By June 2022**, the Building Superintendent will implement at least 3 system wide green/recycle/ecofriendly initiatives in order to improve the Library’s carbon footprint and impact on climate change,

Bridge Plan First Year Goals - Finance

- **By April 2022.** in support of the Bridge Plan-Customer Service, Finance will create a plan to create an ACH payment platform/electronic payment for our Specials. This will provide efficient 21st century payroll service to the Specials, reduce mail time, and eliminate wait time for release of funds.
- **By May 2022,** in support of the Bridge Plan-Establish/Maintain Positive & Productive Workplace, Finance will create Monthly/Quarterly financial reports for Assistant Directors and their departments, which will include spending plan summaries and real time budget reports to prevent department from overspending and to empower staff to be good stewards of funding/tax payers dollars.
- In support of the Bridge Plan-Updated Technology Tools, Finance will migrate to a new accounting system-MIP to QuickBooks. This will assist us in creating user-friendly ad hoc reports for all constituents/stakeholders. With the assistance of the Finance Team, we will be positioned to report more accurately and actively involve all departments the budget creation process. In addition, with collaboration from the Development Team we will have a better grasp of our grant reporting and spending issues. This will be done by **June 2022.**
- **By August 2022,** Finance will complete all audits in arrears, in order to enable NPL to apply for more robust grants and to ensure alignment with New Jersey State fiscal requirements

Bridge Plan First Year Goals – Human Resources

Objective 1: Evaluate Current and Future Services and Opportunities

- By April 2022, create a recruitment plan to include new job openings and recently vacated positions within the organization.
- By February 2022, meet with NPL Leadership Team quarterly to review current organizational chart while identifying vacant positions.
- The human resources staff will reevaluate current process and procedures on job posting internally and externally by **November 2021**.
- Host a training session for NPL leadership and all supervisory staff on the proper protocols on staffing assessments: new hires, promotions, terminations, retirements and leaves by **March 2022**.

Objective 2: Cultivate a Positive NPL Culture

- By August 2022, reinstate staff recognition and awards program.

Objective 3: Employee Evaluations

- HR will work with the Leadership Team to review designated staff current job descriptions by **January 2022**.
- By May 2022, HR will create an improvement plan to encourage a positive outcome and track employees progress and check-ins through continuous feedback and regular one on one meetings with staff.

Next Steps: September 2022-November 2022

September
2022

- Report out first year goal progress at LBOT meeting

October
2022

- Work on Bridge Plan second year goals with Leadership Team

November
2022

- Present second year Bridge Plan goals at LBOT

Final Steps

May 2023

- Six month goal progress report at LBOT Meeting

September
2023

- Final report on achievement of goals

October
2023

- Begin preparation for 2024-2028 Strategic Plan