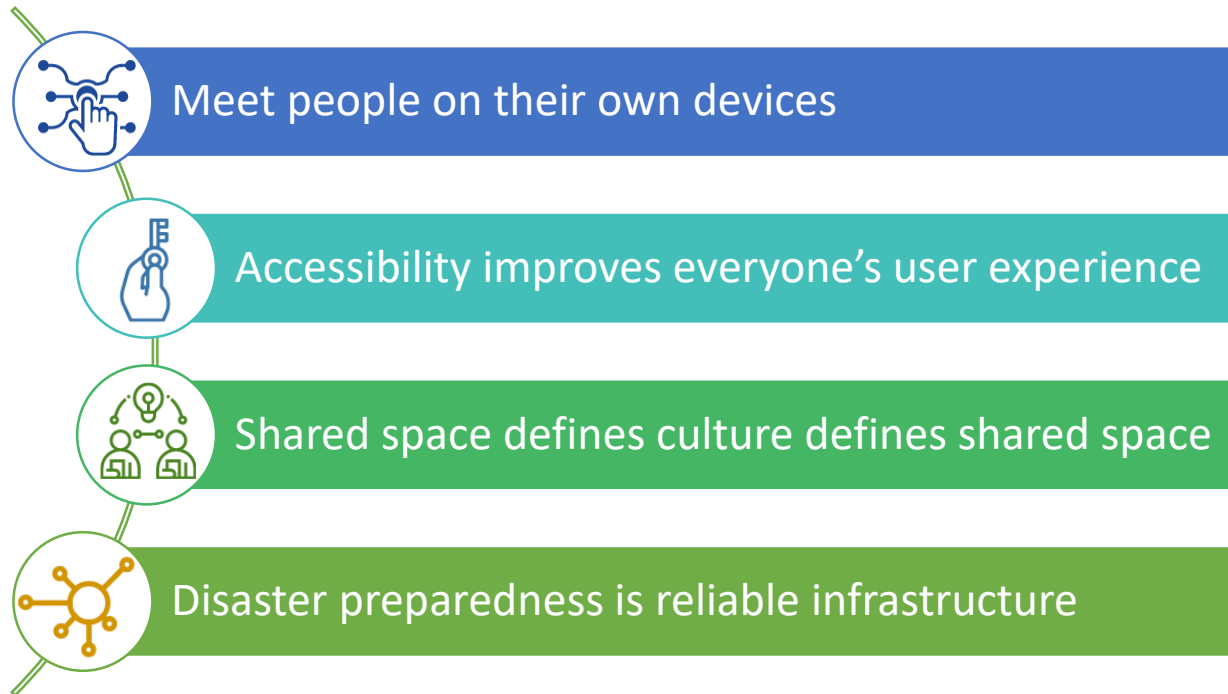# Avon Free Public Library
Technology Plan, 2021

Simplicity supports complexity.

Avon Library aims to support the complex and diverse needs of the Library organization and community with technology that is simple, flexible, and reliable.

Guideposts:

Meet people on their own devices

Accessibility improves everyone's user experience

Shared space defines culture defines shared space

Disaster preparedness is reliable infrastructure

While the specific projects on the Technology Plan are intended to evolve over time, these guideposts are based on long-term core values and trends.

Guidepost 1: Meet people on their own devices

Accessing library services should be a good experience for the user, regardless of the device they are using. As of 2019, 81% of people have a smartphone[1], and 47% of all Avon Library website traffic comes from a handheld device. Smartwatches, voice assistants, etc. are increasingly part of the way that people seek services and information as well. Library services and communication should be created to be accessed in a mobile-first and device-agnostic environment wherever possible. Where possible, users should be able to choose how they interact with the library tools and services available to them.

Criteria:
- Is this designed to be used on mobile devices/works equally well on a variety of devices?
- Does this meet staff and public needs and priorities?
- Does this empower users to interact in a way that works well for them? Can they customize this?
- Can this be easily shared or modified with minimal configuration?

Guidepost 2: Accessibility improves the user experience for all

26% of American adults live with an impairment or disability.[2] By actively implementing technology tools, practices, and services that have been designed for accessibility and inclusivity, we can better address individual needs while improving the user experience of all Avon residents.

Criteria:
- Is this designed to meet or exceed ADA/WCAG accessibility standards?
- Who is excluded from using this? Are reasonable accommodations available?
- Does this promote an overall ease of use?

Guidepost 3: Shared space defines culture defines shared space

We should scan for, recognize, and respond to the ever-evolving cultural trends of how people use technology in shared spaces. The library includes both physical and virtual spaces that shape how people interact. When people bring their own device to the library, they should have access to the space, power, and internet that they need. When they engage with the library online, we should consider how their needs are met in that virtual space. Our approach should prioritize spaces for people and a thriving community instead of being technology-centric.

---

[1] https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/mobile/
[2] https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/infographic-disability-impacts-all.html

Criteria:

- Does this support the public's needs for space and technology?
- Does this enhance community and library service?
- Is this trend likely to continue?

Guidepost 4: Disaster Preparedness is reliable infrastructure

Library technologies and services should be planned to adapt over the course of their lifecycle to meet changing needs. Supporting technology should be designed to be reliable, secure, and supported with clean code. A plan should be in place for maintenance, support, and sustainable recycling and disposal. When emergencies and disasters occur, staff should have options for offsite access to continue to provide service.

Criteria:

- What is the lifecycle and maintenance of this? What is the availability and cost of ongoing updates and support?
- Is this secure and reliable? Does this meet security and privacy best practices?
- Does this allow for flexibility of use, such as remote access?
- What limitations, such as vendor lock-in, platform limitations, or contracts, does this place on the library?
- Does the library own this data? How is this data be migrated/deleted/backed up/restored?

Methods

1. Promote empathy and inclusivity.
2. Work with clean, tested code.
3. Include user research in decision making.
4. Build and leverage staff expertise.
5. Maintain clear documentation.

Further Reading

Complex vs. complicated: https://sloanreview.mit.edu/article/the-critical-difference-between-complex-and-complicated/

Benefits of accessibility on overall user experience: https://www.section508.gov/blog/benefits-accessible-design

Universal design: http://universaldesign.ie/What-is-Universal-Design/The-7-Principles/

Mobile first design: https://www.uxmatters.com/mt/archives/2020/09/mobile-is-now-everything-1.php

Technology in public spaces: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1110016815002124

Disaster preparedness: https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590061719300122