



Planning for the Future
Marlborough Public Library
Long Range Plan 2013 – 2017



Introduction

The Marlborough Public Library produced its last long range plan in July 2002 covering FY2003 – FY2008. This plan focused on goals in 6 key areas: current library space, future space needs, disaster planning, strategies for increasing use, technology needs and staff development.

Much has changed in the 10 years since the plan was written. While many of these goals are relevant to today's library, the path to meeting these goals has changed. One of the most striking areas is in technology. The evolution of electronic content and the proliferation of personal mobile devices in the past few years have changed the way many people access information.

But not everyone... the library still serves a substantial number of traditional users who prefer print to electronic content and do not have the devices to read anything else. So while the spectrum of users and their format preferences has widened considerably in the past 10 years, library budgets have not kept pace with these changes. This is one reason why a long range plan is so important. Defining priorities is essential to making the best use of available resources.

While some may wonder what role libraries can play in the Internet age, the answer is obvious to everyone who sees what happens seven days a week at the Marlborough Public Library. While it is still a place to borrow a bestseller or learn more about any topic you can think of, it is now also a place where you can download an e-book or learn how to use your Kindle, where you can use the Internet to apply for a job or bring your children to do their homework or listen to a story. It's a place where expert researchers are available to help you find accurate, current information in both the printed and digital universes, and access to databases that are not available anywhere else. It's also a place where the public gathers for library programs on an incredibly diverse range of topics and community meetings.

As with libraries everywhere, the Marlborough Public Library continues to adapt in order to keep pace with all the changes happening in our society. This long range plan reflects the changes we can predict and will remain flexible so we can respond to other changes that are sure to come.

We hope you will support our efforts to create library services that meet the evolving needs of the residents of Marlborough.

Margaret Cardello
Library Director

Community Input

A committee of community leaders and representatives of the Trustees and Library Staff met twice in the spring of 2011 to talk about their vision of the City and to brainstorm ideas about how the Marlborough Public Library could help the City to achieve this vision.

A survey was also distributed in the summer of 2011 to solicit input from residents. It was linked on the City's web page, the library's web page and a print survey was distributed in the library. We received 345 responses. Many also took the time to offer comments on what needs to be addressed as we plan for the future. These comments have been extremely valuable in helping us to address things we can change today and other issues that will take a longer time to address.

Marlborough Public Library Today

The challenge of today's public library is to remain relevant and closely connected to the needs of the community. The Marlborough Public Library strives to meet this challenge with the following mission and resources:

Mission

The mission of the Marlborough Public Library is to create a community meeting house where citizens of all ages are free to gather and pursue common educational, cultural and recreational interests.

This mission was crafted in April 2009 by the Board of Trustees and served as a conceptual framework for this plan.

Facility

The current library facility is primarily a product of the renovation project that happened in 1969. In the 43 years since that project, society and the world we live in has undergone tremendous changes and the pace of those changes has quickened to lightning speed. The current facility is not able to adequately serve the needs of Marlborough's community. Parking is inadequate with just 22 spaces in the library's lot, one of which is designated as handicapped. Current library building specifications indicate that a library of our current size should have 56 spaces with 18 for staff.

The library has 2 meeting rooms available for library programs, Friends of the Marlborough Public Library events, and community meetings. One is the Bigelow Auditorium, with a capacity of 85, and the other is the Children's Story Hour Room, with

a capacity of 29. The demand for program/meeting space far exceeds the capacity of these rooms.

The Library has no quiet study rooms, no library classroom, no bathrooms on the 1st floor and no room for expanding collections space.

Recent improvements include a new roof completed in May of 2011 and a repaved parking lot. In the past year the library replaced some shelving on the 1st floor both in the fiction and non-fiction sections and the reference room. In recent years both new and reupholstered furniture, new carpet, a new main floor circulation desk and painting projects have helped brighten the space. New furniture in the Young Adult section was largely purchased with federal grant funds administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, the state agency responsible for overseeing public libraries.

Even with these improvements, most survey respondents commented on the deficiencies of the current building.

Services

The Marlborough Public Library provides materials and related services to meet the needs of the diverse community we serve, including books, reference materials, databases, magazines and newspapers, large print books, E-books, CDs, and DVDs.

In FY 2011 the library added over 10,000 new materials to the collection and circulated 208,000 items to library users.

The Library also offers programs to promote the collections and services to the community.

Technology

The Marlborough Public Library is a member of the C/W MARS automated network. Through this membership the library participates in a shared database of more than 9 million items held in 150 libraries throughout central and western MA, providing Marlborough library card holders with much more than the Library could ever provide on its own.

Through our membership in C/W MARS we also have access to a collection of E-books, and E-Audio Books that can be downloaded to computers and a variety of mobile devices. This collection is growing as libraries, including the Marlborough Public Library, see increased use of these resources. In FY10 100 e-books and e-audiobooks were borrowed by Marlborough card holders and in FY11 that number soared to 900. This is a growing collection that appeals to many of our patrons.

The Library also provides computers for public use, to access the CW MARS database, search the Internet or reference databases or use word processing software.

In FY 2011, 23,614 individuals used these computers.

Staffing

in FY2012 the Marlborough Public Library has 10 full time and 22 part time employees.

Financial Information

The FY11 Library budget totaled \$774,733 or \$20.42 per capita. This represents 0.62% of the City's total municipal budget.

The Library's FY12 budget is \$823,133 or a 6.2% increase over FY11. This totals \$21.66 per capita and represents 0.66% of Marlborough's total municipal budget.

The library's municipal appropriation is supplemented by an annual state certification grant which amounted to \$34,947 in FY11. The library budget is also supplemented with trust funds left in memory of individuals. Total trust fund revenue for FY11 equaled \$10,000.

Friends of the Marlborough Public Library

The Friends of the Marlborough Public Library is an active group of volunteers who provide cultural and educational opportunities to the greater Marlborough community through their programming efforts and support of library services.

The Friends also support the Library's Summer Reading Program and other Library programs.



Goals and Objectives

GOAL 1: The City of Marlborough will have a public library facility that meets the needs of the community.

Objective 1 – To pursue funding for a new library facility

Objective 2 – To redesign the Children's Room space in order to provide a more inviting and engaging environment for children and their caregivers

Objective 3 - To maintain the library facility and make the library environment more welcoming to visitors

GOAL 2: The Marlborough Public Library will respond effectively to changes in local education.

Objective 1 – To develop an outreach program to Marlborough Public Schools

Objective 2 – To develop an annual event for Elementary, Middle and High School students in cooperation with the Marlborough Public Schools in order to support annual school initiatives and encourage library use

Objective 3 – To develop web resources for public, private and home schooled children and their parents to support learning initiatives and build a connection to Marlborough Public Library resources

Activity 1 – Identify existing resources and define needs for additional resources that should be part of a new website

Activity 2 – Incorporate resources into new website

GOAL 3: Residents will view the Marlborough Public Library as a primary source of local information.

Objective 1 – To develop local resources and provide links to existing local resources on website

Objective 2 – To identify community calendars and see how the library can help bring them together into a more integrated resource for community access

GOAL 4: The Marlborough Public Library will provide collections and services to meet the diverse needs of Marlborough's residents, especially Children, Teens, the ESL community and Senior Citizens.

Objective 1 – To develop a process of collection management and development that reflects the community's diverse needs and expectations

Objective 2 - To offer children's programs that best meets the needs of families

Objective 3 – To offer a variety of programs that will engage teen interests and build a strong connection to library collections and services

Objective 4 – To develop services and programs to meet the needs of the Senior Citizen community

Objective 5 – To develop an outreach program to offer services to the English as a Second Language (ESL) community in Marlborough

GOAL 5: The Marlborough Public Library will seek partnership opportunities with businesses, schools, and community organizations to strengthen library services to the community.

Objective 1 - To identify organizations within the city that the library can work with in order to strengthen connections within the community and to further understanding of the library's role in the community

GOAL 6: The Marlborough Public Library will use technology to facilitate access to information

Objective 1 – To provide a library technology infrastructure that meets the needs of the public

Objective 2 – To provide training opportunities for the Marlborough Public Library staff in order to develop technology skills that will enable them to better serve library users.

GOAL 7: The Library will increase awareness of the library and its collections, programs and services.

Objective 1 – To develop a new website to provide information and increase awareness of all that the library has to offer the community

Objective 2 – To create library displays to better highlight new library materials and other resources

Objective 3 – To develop adult programs that highlight library materials and services

Objective 4 – To develop regular ways to promote library through existing media outlets, MetroWest Daily News, Marlborough Patch, Marlborough Enterprise, Main Street Journal, Marlborough Cable and other outlets

Marlborough Public Library and the Future

Both the work of the Planning Committee and the results of the Community Survey have provided important feedback to the Board of Trustees, Library Director and Staff. As we begin work on implementing this plan we will keep this information close at hand and refer to it often. We will also continue to let the public know that we value their input and are working toward achieving the goals outlined in the plan. The ultimate goal of this plan is to improve library services to the residents of Marlborough. With this plan in place we have a blueprint that will aid us in achieving this goal.



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Robyn Ripley

Margaret Cardello, Library Director



35 West Main Street

Marlborough, MA 01752

508-624-6900

www.marlboroughpubliclibrary.org

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