

**Lawrence Library, Pepperell  
Long-Range Plan  
FY 2025-2028**

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees September 4, 2024

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## **Executive Summary**

The Lawrence Library Long Range Plan is a blueprint for delivering services that support our patrons' needs and interests. Planning will focus goals and objectives and create a clear sense of purpose to help future development. The process will identify the strengths and weaknesses of the library, and provide a basis for ongoing evaluation. The purpose was to reach out to the community by asking residents and library stakeholders to help us envision the future role of the library. The process has been underway for one year, with needs assessment activities composed of focus groups, an online survey, and vision exercises with the focus groups. We evaluated the facility, programming, collections, and staffing levels and tried to anticipate the needs of users in the next three years.

The Long Range Planning Committee, a diverse group, focused their vision on the future of Pepperell and the essential role of the library in helping the citizenry achieve its goals. The committee agreed upon the following vision:

- Our library will be the intellectual and cultural “commons” of Pepperell.
- Our library will provide current materials in both fiction and nonfiction, on a breadth of topics.
- Our library will connect people to the rich history of Pepperell.
- Our library will provide and promote information access to all.
- Our library will catalyze and support lifelong learning.

The plan is intended to serve as a guide for library service development over the next three years. It will be reviewed annually and revised each year as objectives are met, new needs present themselves, and circumstances change.

## **Methodology**

The Lawrence Library Long Range Plan utilized the S.O.A.R. tool to help the planning committee analyze current and future conditions that affect library services.

The planning process began in the spring of 2023 and was finalized in the winter of 2023. The public was informed that the library was embarking on a long range plan via the library website, displays, and a press release. A survey was created and was made available on the library website, via a link in our email newsletter, and in print at the library.

The tabulated results of the survey, general population descriptions, statistics, and an overview of current services were provided to the Focus Group. Additional information about the major services the library currently provides, and how those services have been utilized, was also shared.

At the public first meeting, led by Greg Peverill-Conti, Library Land consultant, the group was given a brief overview of the planning process. They identified a vision for the community, reviewed current library services, and sought general feedback. At the second public meeting, they continued the discussion of the community vision for the

library.

Armed with the top five service responses, the library staff and Board of Trustees then began to discuss how best to implement these responses. The staff created a vision for the library and then assembled goals and objectives for each of the five service responses. The plan was approved by the Board of Trustees, with revisions they suggested, at their board meeting on xxx August 7, 2024.

## **Mission Statement**

Lawrence Library is dedicated to providing the best possible support for the cultural and intellectual lives of Pepperell residents, and residents of other communities with state certified libraries. Our goal is to ensure that all members of the community have free access to high-quality print materials, media, electronic resources, and programs that will meet their informational, cultural, and recreational needs. To achieve this goal, we are committed to maintaining a welcoming library space and a knowledgeable, helpful, and friendly staff. We also provide meeting space for town affiliated boards and committees, and non-profit groups serving the cultural and intellectual interests of residents. Exhibits by accomplished artists and photographers are held monthly, and there are twice a month music events from September through April.

The library will achieve its mission by fulfilling the following primary roles:

- Providing a collection of popular materials, both fiction and nonfiction, in a variety of print and non-print formats.
- Providing technology through which residents may access resources for their informational and recreational needs.
- Providing children's materials, programs, and services, designed to encourage a life-long interest in reading and learning and to introduce children to the resources of the library.
- Providing support to the local schools and to respond to the information requests of individual students.
- Providing a gathering place to support collaborative inquiry and to engender a sense of community among townspeople, including art exhibits and musical performances.

## Library History and Description

The Town of Pepperell was founded in 1775 and the first library in town, Pepperell Social Library Society, was established in 1795.

The Lawrence Library was designed by New York architects Ernest Flagg and W. B. Chambers, architects of the Corcoran Art Gallery, Washington D.C.; the Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland; the Singer Office Building, New York; the Scribner Office Building, New York; and many others. The Lawrence Library was dedicated in 1901 and is situated on a seven-acre site at 15 Main Street, near Town Hall. Charles Farrar Lawrence bequeathed the funds for the purchase of the land, design, construction, and furnishing of the building. He also included funds for the original book collection.

Built in a transitional style of Romanesque and Beaux-Arts architecture, in its day it was the most expensive and finely constructed building in Pepperell. The exterior of the building is constructed of brick bearing walls, Indiana limestone trimmings, and a copper roof raised at the top of each of three limestone arches. The building contains an iron framework and at the time of its construction was considered fireproof.

Skylights over two of the three main sections of the original building were covered with insulation until 2015. After extensive restoration to repair damage done during the winter of 2015, the antique skylights in the Art Gallery and Lyceum were restored. Charles Lawrence stipulated that an art gallery should always be part of the building, and the library continues to exhibit work of local artists as well as the 19<sup>th</sup> century American oil paintings bequeathed to the library by Mr. Lawrence.

In 1985, an addition was constructed through the generosity of a former Library Trustee, Ethel Clark. Funds bequeathed by Ethel Clark, supplemented by the Town of Pepperell and an LSTA grant, doubled the square footage of the building to a total of 13,400. The Ethel Clark addition enabled the library to expand services, especially in the children's area. For the first time, the children's room was able to hold an adequate collection of materials. A story time room and public meeting space were also added to the lower level. The Ethel Clark addition also made space available for a local history and genealogy collection.

In 2018, the Lawrence Library opened a spur trail to the Greens Brook Trail behind the library. The only one of its kind at a Massachusetts public library, the trail is accessible to people with motor and visual impairments. The trail also features a native plant garden. This project was made possible by the [Nashoba Conservation Trust](#), and the [Friends of the Library](#).

Also in 2018, the library was named a [Literary Landmark](#) by the American Library Association's United for Libraries—one of only seven in Massachusetts—in honor of children's author and illustrator Barbara Cooney, who lived in Pepperell for many years. The Lawrence Library was featured prominently in her book [Miss Rumphius](#).

In 2021, the Pocket Pollinator & [Monarch Waystation](#) Garden was added. The 25 species of plants in our pocket garden are all "pollinator magnets," providing a range of color throughout the growing season. The Monarch Way-station provides the resources necessary for monarchs to produce successive generations and sustain their migration. Our thanks to the [Invasive and Native Plant Advisory Committee](#) for working with the Friends of the Lawrence Library Gardeners to make this happen!

## **Library Operations**

The Library is a department of town government and governed by an elected six-member Board of Trustees. The board's authority is derived from Chapter 78, Sections 10 and 11 of the Massachusetts General Laws. In 2013, the town of Pepperell voted to adopt Home Rule Charter with a minor amendment in 2020. The library is exempt from the town Charter.

Financial resources for the Lawrence Library are appropriated by the Town of Pepperell. Gifts and interest income as governed by the Board of Trustees, together with State Aid to Municipal Libraries as administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), supplement the town appropriation. Funds raised by the Friends of the Lawrence Library provide for museum passes, supplemental book purchases, and all programming that is not grant funded.

The library is managed by the director, who, as required by the MBLC, is state certified and possesses a Master's Degree in Library Science from an accredited institution. The director is appointed by and directly responsible to the Board of Trustees, and works closely with the board in administration of the library. The director is responsible for the hiring of the staff. The Assistant Director/Adult Services Librarian, the Head of Youth Service Librarian, and the Inter-Library Loan Librarian all hold an MLS degree. Including the director, there are twelve persons on the staff, including one part-time custodian who is budgeted for ten hours per week. The library staff consists of the Director, Assistant Director/Adult Services, Youth Service Librarian, Head of Circulation, Inter-Library Loan Librarian, a senior catalog technician, four part-time library assistants, one page, and one custodian. All staff members, with the exception of the Director and the custodian, are members of the Massachusetts Library Staff Association. The total FTE is 7.48, with non-custodial FTE of 7.73.

As of July 1, 2024, the library is now fully funded and permanently open six days a week for 53 hours per week, including four evenings per week and Saturdays; closed on Sundays. The library moved to a 6-day model during Covid with reduced evening hours. In the fiscal years 2023 and 2024, the library moved to the current 53 hours per week model but was funded year to year by a warrant using free cash.

Post Covid, circulation and program attendance has bounced back 100%+ with increases in ebook circulation and high rates of in-person program attendance. The library has 6 computers available to the public for Internet use as well as word processing. The library

has provided free WiFi 24/7 since 2007.

## Collections and Circulation

The Lawrence Library holdings are 64,388 items. This represents a 11% increase since 2017 and does not reflect the e-collection\* offered through the state's Commonwealth eBook Collections and CWMARS Overdrive. Weeding the print collection is ongoing and needed due to space constraints. A brief description of holdings, as of June 30, 2024, follows.

Items	Adult	Teen	Children	Total
Books	31,276	5,496	23,048	59,820
Magazines	40	2	3	45
Audio	4,059	82	668	4,809
DVD	4,218	2	1,207	5,427
Electronic format	402	0	27	429
Microfilm	534	0	0	534
Miscellaneous	36	0	55	93
e-Collection*	190,680	21,119	29,077	240,876
Total	231,245	26,703	59,820	312,033

Circulation of materials has remained steady and rebounded to pre-Covid numbers. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) compares the libraries in the state according to size of population served. For the thirteen Massachusetts public libraries in the population range of Pepperell (11,000-12,000), the Lawrence Library has the fourth highest circulation total circulation, print and non-print. A summary of circulation for fiscal year 2024 follows.

Items	Adult	Teen	Children	Total
Books	25,927	3,402	30,305	59,634
Magazines	2,513	34	70	2,617
Audio	1,803	27	218	2,048
DVD	9,284	51	1,896	11,231
Electronic format	1,304	37	44	1,385
Miscellaneous	505	0	194	706
e-Collection*	22,608	13,60	2,139	26,107
Total	63,991	4,918	34,866	103,775

## Library Services and Functions

Traditional library services include the lending of books, magazines, music and audio CDs, and DVDs. E-circulation has had a 12.3-fold increase. Traditional services also include reference assistance, reader's advisory, and programming for children, teens, and adults. Pepperell offers all of these traditional services, as well as being a community cultural center, providing monthly art and music programs. In person programming resumed in the summer 2021.

### **Reference Assistance and Readers' Advisory**

Reference assistance and readers' advisory depends on the experience of the staff members on duty. The library has no reference desk, or reference center, and has only the Director, Assistant Director, Inter-Library Loan Librarian and the Youth Services Librarian as trained professionals. All staff members are familiar with the collections and assist patrons to the best of their abilities.

### **Community, Business & Cultural Center**

The Ethel Clark addition to the building (1984) provides a Meeting Room with space for fifty adults, an Activity Center (adjacent to the Children's Room), and an historical/genealogy room. All three of these spaces are used by various support groups, town committees, Friends meetings, book clubs, as well as regular children's, teen, and adult programming. It was not uncommon to have three meetings held simultaneously in these different spaces, so in 2014 the former Reading Room was renamed and repurposed as the Lyceum, which doubles as a Business Center while providing an additional meeting space. Additionally, evening meetings/programs are regularly booked in the Art Gallery, which has a capacity of 75 adults. To avoid room booking conflicts, the library utilizes a room reservation module from EventKeeper (Plymouth Rocket) in addition to our online Event Calendar.

The Friends of the Lawrence Library meet monthly in the Meeting Room, and regularly have attendance of 7-10 adults. The Friends total membership is consistently over 110. The Friends hold an annual Holiday Tree Lighting on the steps of the library, regularly drawing over 600 people, in addition to their annual Wine Tasting, Book Sale, and Toy Yard Sale for fundraisers. They fund the monthly art exhibit receptions and bi-monthly music venues, all museum passes, as well as 95% of the programming for all ages.

### **Youth Services**

Youth Services programming includes weekly baby, toddler, and pre-school programs, special events, and extended programming during school vacations. Programs for tweens (9-12) and teens have been added, including craft programs, movie screenings, gaming, and other special events. Teens have their own area on the main floor, with YA fiction, graphic novel, anime, Dungeons & Dragons/RPG, and audiobook collections, and a Teen Lounge.

## **Community Description**



The Town of Pepperell, established 1775 (as a district, 1753), is situated 35 miles northwest of Boston and is located at the confluence of the Nashua and Nissitissit Rivers in Middlesex County, Massachusetts. It encompasses 22.9 square miles and borders the State of New Hampshire and the towns of Dunstable, Groton, Shirley, and Townsend. Pepperell is nine miles west of Route 3.

Pepperell was once a stop on two railroad lines and has a rich history as both a mill town and a farming community. Pepperell still boasts the community living of the old mill village and the rural character of farmland, forests, and other protected recreation areas.

From 1980 to 1990, the population of the town grew 25.3%, from 1990 to 2000 growth slowed to 10%, and from 2000 to 2010 it grew by 3.2 %. The population grew by 5.8% from 2010 – 2015 (population in 2015 12,165). Population in the 2020 census dropped to 11,620.

The median age in Pepperell has been steadily climbing: from 24.3 in 1970, 31.2 in 1990, to 40.6 in 2011. This increase in median age can be attributed to a number of factors which have been affecting many communities, particularly that residents are having fewer children per family than in the past; when having children, they are having them later in life; are remaining in their homes for longer periods; and, are simply living longer. In 2020 the median age was 44.9.

## PEPPERELL CENSUS

### AGE DISTRIBUTION CHART

AGE RANGE	2000 CENSUS	2010 CENSUS	2020 CENSUS
0-4	867	594	554
5-17	2547	2298	2057
18-64	6896	7482	9257
65+	832	813	2065

There is little ethnic diversity in Pepperell. The 2010 Census shows a very small percentage of Black, American Indian, Asian, and Hispanic ethnic groups, with the population being 96.4% White. The 2020 Census reports 89.2% white, 5.9% mixed.

## **Housing**

Housing in Pepperell consists primarily of single-family houses, as well as some multi-family and multi-unit apartment buildings. East and Central Pepperell contain the greatest density in housing, representing approximately one-third of the town population, while the northern section of Pepperell contains the least. The southern and western sections of Pepperell fall somewhere in the middle, although they are still very rural in character. There are 292 (8%) single parent households.

## **Employment**

The economic recession in 1989 took its toll on Pepperell. Some industries that experienced cutbacks never returned. The Bemis Paper Bag Plant in Pepperell closed. It and another plant, the two oldest, technically outdated and inefficient, closed with some job redistribution to the company's three other larger, more efficient modern plants. Today, the largest percentages of those employed over the age of 16 are managers and professionals; the remaining number of those employed work largely in service occupations, construction and maintenance, and production and transportation. From the 2000 census, 20% of the population worked in Pepperell; 80% worked outside of Pepperell. According to the 1990 Census, nearly 89% drove alone to work; 50% spent less than 30 minutes commuting to work; 36% spent 30 to 59 minutes; 10% spent more than one hour; and 4% worked from home. By observation, in 2006 greater percentages are spending more time commuting to work.

## **Unemployment, Income, and Poverty**

- In July 2016, the labor force was 6,958, with 6,702 employed, and 252 unemployed. The unemployment rate was 3.6%. The highest unemployment rate since 1990 occurred in 1991 at 8.6%. The lowest unemployment rate since 1990 was in 2000 at 2.3%.
- The median family income in Pepperell is \$73,967
- 2% of the families in Pepperell (59) have incomes below the poverty line. There are 411 individuals (4%) below the poverty line.

## **Education**

- 93.1% of residents age 25 and older have at least a high school diploma or GED.
- 32.8% of residents have at least 4 years of college.
- Public schools located within Pepperell are Nissitissit Middle School (grades 5-8), and Varnum Brook Elementary School (grades pre K-4). There is also the private Maple Dene School serving children K through grade 6, with a preschool (The Moppet School) as well as child care both before and after school, and the private Pepperell Christian Academy for pre K-10. Other preschools/day care centers in Pepperell are The Family Tree and Apple Seeds.

## Survey Findings

The two-page survey [see Appendix A] was available in print at the library, on the library website, and via a link included in our monthly newsletter which is emailed to over 2,300 subscribers. Two in-person focus groups were held.

*Survey:* There were 200 total respondents.

- The largest number of respondents attended adult and children's programs plus art exhibits and music venues.
- Services used by most of the respondents include the borrowing of print and e materials and museum passes, computer and WiFi usage, art and music venues.
- Requested improvements: the majority wanted to secure funding for Monday hours; increase eBook and eAudio book selections and shorten waiting lists.
- The majority of respondents considered it important that a librarian should be available to answer reference questions and assist with technology questions during hours of operation.
- Increasing meeting space was mentioned by many respondents.

\*Additional Long Range Survey comments and summary can be found in Appendix B.

## Focus Group Findings

[See Appendix C]

The key themes that emerged were:

- Focus on diversity awareness and socialization
- Focus on intellectual and cultural needs
- Focus on extending library hours and staffing
- Focus on promoting existing library services

### *Children's Services*

Over the next three years, our goal for the Youth Services department is to foster a love of reading and learning through engaging programs and accessible resources. We will continue expanding our collection with a diverse range of books and educational materials that reflect the interests and needs of our young patrons. We want to create a vibrant space that encourages imagination and supports literacy development with interactive story-times, hands-on activities, and summer reading goals. Additionally, we plan to continue strengthening community partnerships to offer more events and workshops that enrich the lives of children and their families.

We also hope the Children's Room Assistant position will become full-time/benefited in the next few years.

### *Teen and Adult Services*

The teens enjoy the Teen Lounge area created many years ago, but they would like a

more private space and more seating to relax and read. Both Teen and Adult groups enjoy the current programs offered but would like more programming.

The senior population would like a larger selection of large print and digital materials in addition to more targeted programming. The business community, especially start-up entrepreneurs and home-based businesses, need more meeting space. Re-purposing the former Reading Room to the Lyceum has helped to temporarily address this issue. The ‘nook area’ off the Lyceum, known as the Aerie, has seen an increase in usage for small private meetings, studying, and video conferencing.

## **Community Vision Statement**

### **Community Strengths and Weaknesses**

The strengths of Pepperell are its community organizations, conservation resources, an active Senior Center and library, strong environmental awareness and activism, and its rich history. Current weaknesses of Pepperell include a lack of adequate stable funding for town government, community meeting space, inadequate social health resources, limited low-income housing, the lack of racial and cultural diversity, lack of public transportation, and a small business tax base and a narrow base of volunteers. The strengths and weaknesses have remained unchanged since 2006.

### **Community Opportunities and Threats**

Opportunities in the coming years include more affordable housing, and more businesses and employment opportunities. ARPA funding during Covid was helpful to address some one time purchases and building needs. Threats facing Pepperell in the coming years include ongoing school funding challenges, inadequate funding through taxes and slow growth, the continued opioid crisis, and climate change challenges.

## **Library Vision Statement**

### **Library Strengths and Weaknesses**

Current strengths of the library include its trained staff; good relations with community organizations and businesses; the library membership in CWMARS; monthly art and music venues; a strong and active Friends of the Library; a solid collection of current print fiction, non-fiction, and media with a growing e-collection; its meeting space for non-profit community groups and boards, and an excellent genealogy and local history collection.

The weakness of the library continues to be meeting and shelving space, staffing hours, which includes the need for additional staff to better serve the public on a daily basis, and the lack of volunteers or a paid staff person for the history and genealogy room.

It's been forty years since the library addition and space restrictions continue to impact services and collection development. Collections require vigilant weeding to address the shelving constraints. There is an ongoing need to provide more meeting space, which has encroached upon areas previously available as 'quiet' space.

Since FY2017 (July 1, 2016), the hours of operation have fluctuated between the state minimum number of 40 hours per week required to maintain certification to 43 hours in FY21, and finally securing permanent funding in FY2024 for Monday hours bringing us to 53 hours per week.

During the initial re-opening of libraries (Covid years) in April 2020 we were open 6 days a week offering browsing by appointment and remote programming. Several more changes were implemented in our service and business hours as the world emerged post-Covid. During the initial Covid months the library offered 24/7 curbside pick by utilizing outside lockers. We have continued to offer opt-in curbside locker service since 2021.

#### Library Opportunities and Threats

Opportunities for new service priorities include more eBooks and eMagazines to meet the increasing demand, more teen and senior programs to meet the shift in population, better communication with the schools, and an increase of public knowledge about the breadth of services we provide. In 2021, we added a part time program coordinator to help us increase program offerings for teens and adults.

Threats to the library to meet the new service priorities would include staff burnout, meeting room conflicts, and the under funding for new e-materials.

The Lawrence Library is an aging facility. Forty years ago, the library addition created a children's room, a meeting room, and space for the local history and genealogy collection. At the present time, the facility is adequately maintained, and collections and programs have been sized to adapt to the confines of the facility. Increasing needs of library users are not being met due to physical limitations of the facility.

In envisioning the future of the library, the staff continues support the following Vision Statement:

- The Lawrence Library will consist of facilities and resources that are well maintained and available for use by all members of the public. The library will provide users of all ages the print and non-print resources they need for their educational, intellectual, and cultural pursuits.
- The Lawrence Library is committed to the opportunities that new technology represents with regard to information accessibility, both within the facility and via

- the Internet.
- The Lawrence Library will continue to maintain and enhance the historical, genealogical, and local history collections. The library is committed to increasing access to these collections by digitizing the collection. Trained staff and volunteers will assist with use of the materials and in preserving the materials in the collection.
- The Lawrence Library will actively support town boards, committees, and civic groups dedicated to the education and enrichment of town members, by providing meeting and/or exhibit space.
- The Lawrence Library will actively support artists and musicians by providing exhibit space and hosting monthly music venues.

## **Library Service Responses**

From the Community Vision Statement, the focus group identified community needs to aid in developing plans with appropriate goals and objectives. The service responses selected for the long-range plan are:

- Commons – more meeting space
- Building and Grounds – restoration and maintenance of the existing building, and a future addition for meeting space
- Lifelong Learning, the 'Arts' and Formal Learning Support
- Local History and Genealogy

## **Multi-Year Goals, Objectives and Actions**

**Commons: Provide space for collections, activities, and events in a welcoming, well maintained environs.**

### **Goal 1: Increase library availability**

- Objective 1: Maintain current hours of operation (53 hours: 4 evenings, open 6 days per week)
  - o Action: Work with town government to find financial solutions to fully fund town departments, including the library (FY26, on going).
- Objective 2: Increase staff hours.
  - o Action: Seek to increase 30 hour/week employees to 35 hours/week to meet the additional Monday hours (FY 27)
- Objective 3: Increase hours from 28 hours to 30-35 hours/week for the program

coordinator position.

- o Action: Seek funding to meet the growing need for Young Adult/Teen patrons (FY 26)

**Evaluation: Compare circulation statistics and teen program attendance for the above changes to determine the effectiveness of the changes; poll patrons and solicit suggestions additional for teen programming.**

## **Goal 2: Improve Internet and Technology**

- Objective 1: Rewire the building to CAT6
  - o Action: Get quotes to rewire and upgrade existing Internet connect and add 4-5 new drops (FY 25)
- Objective 2: Upgrade public access computers to Windows 11 OS with one software version on all pcs.
  - o Action: Purchase 5 new pcs for staff (FY 26)
  - o Action: Upgrade OS for existing public pcs (FY 25)
- Objective 3: Expand online resources
  - o Action: Migrate to Assabet for the online calendar, museum passes and room booking (FY 25)
  - o Re-evaluate and add new databases to expand our patrons online experience (FY 26)
- Objective 4: Purchase laptops to be used by staff for public classes. (FY 25/26)
- Action: Create one-on-one workshops/classes targeting specific audiences (patrons and staff) for word processing, job search and resume creation, database tips and tricks, Internet and social media safety, basic email setup, etc. (FY 25, ongoing)

## **Goal 3: Passport Facility**

Objective: Implement this service. The library was pre-approved to become a Passport Facility and then established the necessary revolving account fund in FY 24 to handle payments, etc.

- o Action: Schedule staff training (FY 25/26)
- o Action: Establish a schedule for appointments using the Asaabet Interactive software (FY 25/26)

**Evaluation: Collect data on the daily use of wireless Internet, mobile app, online**

resources passport bookings and computer class attendance.

**Building and Grounds: The original 1901 exterior section of the library is in need of restoration and repairs to both the mortar and original copper roof.**

**Goal 1: Create a welcoming environment both inside and outside for all library users**

- Objective 1: Seek quotes for the mortar repairs
  - Action: Apply for a second Community Preservation historic building fund (FY 25)
  - Retain an architect
  - Submit the grant application to the Preservation Massachusetts (FY 25)
- Objective 2: Antique Door Restoration
  - Action: Hire historical restoration company to restore/refinish the three original 1901 front oak doors using Community Preservation funding (FY 25)
- Objective 2: Carpet replacement in Circulation area and stairways
  - Action: Consult with carpeting/flooring experts and establish quotes and timeline (FY 25)
  - Action: Seek funding at town meeting (FY 26)
  - Actions: Implement (FY 26)
- Objective 3: Explore options for retractable shades for the two glass skylights in the Lyceum and Art Gallery
  - Action: Get quotes from 2-3 vendors (FY 25)
  - Seek funding (FY 26)
  - Action: Consult with expert on ways to protect the Shattuck Bird Collection from possible UV damage (FY 26)
  - Action: Install UV protection to the glass panels in the bird display cabinet (FY 26)

**Evaluation: Collect data on the daily use of new seating and study areas. Seek feedback from patrons on the renovations and improvements.**

**Goal 2: Exterior and Interior lighting plan**

- Objective 1: Restore original exterior light fixture for the portico
  - Action: Seek additional quotes (FY 25)
  - Apply for funding from the Community Preservation Funds (FY 25/26)
  - Implement (FY 26)



- Objective 2: Assess interior lighting. Lighting efficiency has greatly improved since our last update in 2017. This update would allow us to conserve electricity while improving the candlepower.
  - Action: Seek guidance through the National Grid Energy Efficiency program and/or Guardian Energy Management (FY 26)
  - Action: Test various lighting options (FY 26)
  - Action: Seek funding through the Green Community Grant and or other source and implement (FY 27)

**Evaluation: Monitor electric usage and test candlepower before and after. Seek patron feedback.**

**Goal 3: Build upon and expand ADA compliance**

- Objective 1: Consider various options to improve access into the building. A recent town government building assessment was conducted in April 2024 which includes recommendations for the library. One such recommendation was a touch-pad plate to open the entry way doors This would improve access for the disabled, those with strollers, and those needing assistance.
  - Action: Explore options, gather quotes (FY 25)
  - Action: Seek funding (FY 26)
  - Action: Implement (FY 26/27)
- Objective 2: Improve upon our accessible spur to the Greens Brook Trail which is located at the rear of the library grounds.
  - Action: Partner with Nashoba Conservation Trust to create braille signage (FY 26)
  - Action: Work with Nashoba Conservation Trust and Pepperell Conservation to create an audio trail guide for the visually impaired (FY 27)
  - Action: create designated handicap parking spaces at the trail head (FY 25)

**Evaluation: Monitor usage, survey patrons for feedback and suggestions. Update the MBLC Library Accessibility for People with Disabilities.**

**Goal 4: Replace/restore historic copper roof on the original 1901 section of the library**

- Objective 1: Research Massachusetts and Federal historical restoration grants.
  - Action: Work with the town administration and library trustees to establish a ‘capital funding’ plan for the town historic buildings, which would include the library (FY 26)

- Objective 2: Locate qualified contractors for replacement/restoration of original copper roof.
  - Action: Update roofing quotes (FY 25/26)
  - Action: Identify funding source(s) (FY 26)
  - Action: Create a two or three-year plan to replace sections of the copper roof in phases (FY 26/27)

**Evaluation: Establish a yearly preventative 'walk-about' for the roof to monitor for potential issues and establish a funded maintenance schedule.**

**Lifelong Learning, the 'Arts' and Formal Learning Support: Provides curriculum support for area elementary, middle and high schools, as well as fulfills the intellectual and cultural interests of teens and adults.**

**Goal 1: Update the library book (print and digital) collection by continuing new acquisitions and the withdrawal of non-essential, outdated materials.**

- Objective 1: To continue to meet the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) in order to maintain state certification and needed funding to meet the state materials requirements.
  - Action: Advocate and promote awareness (FY 25-27)
- Objective 2: Re-evaluate the Large Print collection to better meet the projected demographic changes and needs (FY 25)
  - Action: Run circulation reports, evaluate, weed, and update the collection (FY 25, ongoing)
- Objective 3: Expand the eBook offerings through Overdrive in addition to promoting the Commonwealth eBook Collection
  - Action: Add new databases, such as Consumer reports, to expand our patrons' online experience (FY25)

**Evaluation: Survey patrons and evaluate circulation of these collections and online resources/databases. Determine the number of items added and withdrawn.**

**Goal 2: Current Topics and Titles: Provide library users with current fiction, non-fiction, and media to meet their intellectual, educational, cultural, and recreational pursuits.**

- Objective 1: Continue with the weeding schedule for the entire print collection to provide space for current materials.
  - Action: Utilize the Evergreen report module for 'dusty' and missing books

to identify items to delete from the collection and/or replace. (FY 25, on-going)

- Objective 2: Explore new programs to meet the various interests of patrons of all ages.
  - Action: Program coordinator to partner with schools, local business, senior center, artists, musicians, and local organizations to plan, implement, and promote the programs. (FY 25, on-going)

**Goal 3: Our commitment through outreach programs to provide books for residents of all ages who may not utilize the library. With a growing number of lower income families becoming disenfranchised within their own communities, local library presence at food pantries serves as a reminder to everyone that our doors are open to them.**

- Objective 1: Continue to build upon our partnership with Pepperell Aid from Community to Home (PACH Outreach) by providing books at the Pepperell food pantry.
  - Action: Evaluate the selection, expand categories as needed. (FY 25, on-going)
  - Action: Seek one more volunteer to help sort, select and label the donated books and maintain the weekly delivery schedule. (FY 25, on-going)
  - Action: Continue stocking the 'Little Free Library' using donations to the library for Friends Book Sale (FY 25, on-going)

**Evaluation: Determine the number of items added and withdrawn; keep a record of participation in programs/workshops; poll patrons for programs new ideas. Keep a record of the number of books by category that are donated to PACH and the Little Free Library.**

**Local History and Genealogy: Provides access to local history and genealogical materials.**

**Goal 1: Continue to organize access to local historical documents, information, and images for public access and use.**

- Objective 1: Continue to convert the Pepperell Free Press newspaper collection to a PDF searchable format
  - Action: Allocate funds within the budget each year to continue archiving this newspaper digitally (FY 25, ongoing)
  - Action: Purchase a new computer for the History Room and an

external drive to back up the digital files. (FY 25)

Objective 2: Utilize Digital Commonwealth to digitize special collection

- o Action: Staff members to evaluate collections to digitize (FY 25, on-going)
- o Action: Budget for the yearly membership (FY25, on-going)

**Goal 2: Expand access to the genealogical collections.**

- Objective 1: Increase the number of volunteers for the history room.
  - o Action: Solicited volunteers from the DAR, Historical Society, and Senior Center (FY 25)
  - o Action: Hold training sessions for staff and volunteers on the genealogy collection and Ancestry.com (FY 25/26)
  - o Action: Select one or two trained history room volunteers to assume the responsibility of training future volunteers. (FY 26, on-going)

**Evaluation: Compare past and present activity/usage of this collection; the resulting foot traffic and research queries received. Measure usage of the collection within Digital Commonwealth and usage of the digitized newspaper collection.**

## Acknowledgments

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Approved by the Library Board of Trustees, September 4, 2024

Charles Burnham  
Carol Case, Chair  
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Bob Kowalski, Secretary  
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