

Long Range Plan 2007-2009 Methodology & Needs Assessment

Why plan?

- ❑ To engage the community in a dialogue, to better understand the role of the library.
- ❑ To determine key factors that would drive a person to visit the GPL and its services and programming in the future.
- ❑ To articulate guiding principles and core goals for the library.
- ❑ To create a specific and measurable set of objectives and activities for the next four years.

Timeline

Library Trustees

March 25, 2005 Trustees and Director finalized planning methodology, committee participants, and timeline for plan.

Planning Committee: 12 individuals. 2 Meetings

Invited a planning committee including a variety of community stakeholders, government leaders, and library staff.

April 14, 2005 Northeast Massachusetts Regional Library System led the committee through a SWOT exercise. Planning committee brainstormed strengths, threats, and weaknesses of the library in the community and offers opportunities.

May 16, 2005 Northeast Massachusetts Regional Library System led the committee through a Vision exercise. Planning committee prioritized the broad visions of the library in the community, ultimately the core components of the mission statement and strategic goals steering the library plan.

Focus Groups: 5 groups

3 Adult Community Focus Groups: June 2 10AM, 7PM, and June 3 10AM; 1 Young Adult Focus Group: 2:30 PM; 1 Library Staff focus group (includes Carlisle residents): June 8. Provided feedback in a discussion format regarding the role of the library in the community, including specific areas and ideas for improvement, and anecdotal information about personal connections and associations with the library. Many specific projects, as well as the framing of the objective priorities, resulted from these focus groups. Focus Group Notes are attached.

Library Survey:

Web and print survey were distributed and available for public input for 5 weeks. Library survey was available online through NMRLS website. A postcard was sent to all households announcing the survey and giving the web address. Information about the survey was posted in the local paper. Flyers were posted around the community. 377 surveys were submitted. The survey contained 24 questions, approximately half were options and half allowed for fill in the blank. We received many qualitative as well as quantitative responses. The Survey responses are attached.

Staff & Trustee Draft

Sept. 9, 2005 Director, with staff input, gathers data into draft Long Range Plan and revises with the Library Trustees to reach final plan draft.

Planning Committee: 12 individuals. Final Meeting.

Sept. 19, 2005 Library Trustees and Director present final draft of the Long Range Plan, including report on the methodology, results of survey, and priorities of the Library to the Steering Committee.

Gleason Public Library
September 2005

LRP Approval

Following Sept. 19, 2005 Board of Trustees approved Final Plan and submitted to the state for review. When approval affirmed, LRP will be presented to the community and local government boards.

Plan Dissemination

Plan will be posted on library website, including background information and action plan for FY07. Plan will be distributed to town boards, departments, and committees. Plan will be shared with Mosquito, including background information. Print copies of materials will be available at Reference desk of Library.

Long Range Plan will be revisited each year and the Board of Library Trustees will revise/update action plan.

Identifying User Satisfaction & Needs

To best capitalize on the many great ideas that the people of Carlisle have, the Gleason Public Library focused its planning efforts on “listening” and “collecting information.” This was carried forth, as outlined above, through focus groups and a survey. These two methods would capture quantitative and qualitative information about the needs of the community, in addition to specific ideas that would be articulated and implemented in the action plan.

Another important decision made at the outset was to set up a planning structure that could be replicated in three years for the next planning process. It was evident that the group wanted to be able to gauge in a longer-term method the role the library plays in the community and the satisfaction/needs of the library visitors.

The library staff met early on in the process to discuss the planning process. The staff felt that generally the public was happy with the services provided by the library. This confidence was coupled with a curiosity about how the Library could better meet needs and were the needs really being met and many long standing ideas came up in discussions – the planning process was perceived as an opportunity to craft a navigating tool by which to steer the library. The staff also identified areas that they would like to see improvement, supported development, and/or changes.

Planning discussions included:

- role learning and reading,
- community center/cultural role,
- unique Carlisle resources and qualities,
- pride in Carlisle and in library

Staff discussions included:

- Getting material into people’s hands,
- Recommending/Highlighting materials,
- Technology, Volunteerism,
- Use of Space

The Planning Committee early on demonstrated and articulated the important role that the Library plays in the community. They also incorporated a broader vision of the community and how the library fit within it into several vision statements. With the prioritized vision statements in hand and staff input, the Trustees and Director set forth into the Focus Groups and surveys to assess user satisfaction and articulate needs. From these many findings, the long range plan and action plan were developed. .

Attached: Survey Summary (Quantitative and Qualitative) and Results
 Focus Group Summary and Notes
 Vision Statement Results & Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats Notes