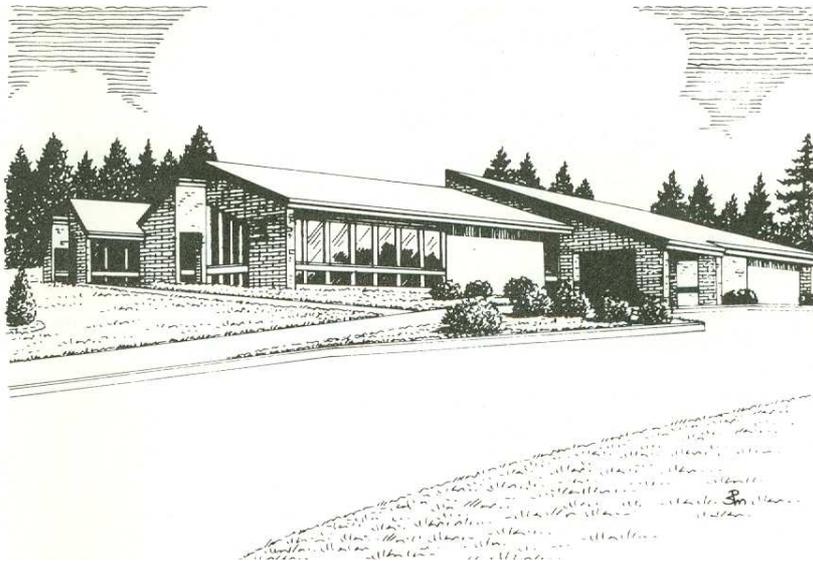


**A FIVE-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION
FOR THE
BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
TOWN OF BELLINGHAM, MA
FY2011-FY2015**



**October 1, 2009
Bellingham Public Library
100 Blackstone Street
Bellingham, Massachusetts
508-966-1660**

Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY11-FY15
Bellingham, Massachusetts

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INTRODUCTION

The planning process has given us the opportunity to examine our past activities, programs, facility and staff, critique our present service and set goals to work toward the future.

Now is the time to plan for our next five years. The following pages contain information on what we have discovered about the Bellingham Public Library through patron surveys and observations, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners data and State and local facts.

From all of this information we have put forth goals and objectives to accomplish over the next five years.

We thank the Long-Range Planning Committee members for all their effort in producing this document.

Suzanne Garten, Board of Trustees
Nina Hunt, Head of Youth Services
Russ Lafond, Board of Trustees
Joyce Notine, Community Member

Bernadette Rivard, Library Director
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Approved by the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees on September 10, 2009

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MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Bellingham Public Library is to be an important resource for all members of the community in their search for knowledge, ideas, information, and creative use of their leisure time.

VISION STATEMENT

The Bellingham Public Library embraces the rich heritage and vibrant future of our community. We aspire to be the best possible library for the residents of Bellingham: a true community center, the destination place residents consult to acquire and indulge a lifetime love of learning, literature and leisure activities.

- We will optimize space to provide a safe and welcoming atmosphere for patrons of all ages. We will value mutual respect and ensure freedom of access to information to all.
- We will provide unparalleled public service by being the resource for identifying and meeting the educational, informational, and recreational needs to enhance the community's opportunities for self-directed life-long learning, reading and leisure activities. We will offer the space and technological tools for people and ideas to come together.
- We will provide materials, creative programs, and access to technology, which encourage personal enjoyment and professional enrichment, while promoting literacy. We will provide programs that educate, inspire and entertain.

The Bellingham Public Library will become a regionally recognized example of excellent library service.

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STANDARDS OF LIBRARY SERVICE

The legal requirements for state aid to libraries in Massachusetts provides the minimum standards for library service. (Code of Massachusetts Regulations 4.00: Free Public Library Service – Regulations.) The Bellingham Public Library has consistently met these requirements.

- The library is open to everyone with no charge for normal services. Out-of-state patrons have an initial charge to check out materials.
- The Bellingham Public Library is currently open six days a week (closed on Saturdays during the summer months of July and August). Starting in July of 2009, the library reduced its hours from 57 to 50 hours per week. We are currently open two evenings until 8 pm and 2 evenings until 6 pm. The library is open an average of 50 hours per week.
(605 CMR 4.01: Regulations 3; Recommended Minimum Hours Open Per Week for libraries in communities with a population of 15,000 to 24,999 – 50 hours per week, including some part of five days, including some evening hours, hours requirement based on hours from Labor Day to Memorial Day, summer hours do not effect compliance.)
- The library employs trained library personnel including a Director with a degree from an approved graduate school of library science and a certificate of professional librarianship issued by the Board of Library Commissioners.
(605 CMR 4.01: Regulations 4; Libraries in communities with population 10,000 and up.)
- In both FY08 and FY09 the library is spent over 17% of its budget on books and materials.
(605 CMR 4.01: Regulations 5; Libraries in communities with population 15,000 to 24,999 – shall spend a minimum percentage (15%) of the library’s total annual budget for books and periodicals.)
- The library lends books to other libraries in the Commonwealth and extends privileges to the holders of cards issued by other certified public libraries in the Commonwealth on a reciprocal basis.
- The library has met the standards set forth by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners for small libraries since 1979, with a waiver given for the year 2004 and has filed an annual report (ARIS) each year.

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ELEMENTS OF QUALITY LIBRARY SERVICE

The Bellingham Public Library embraces the following fundamentals which constitute quality library service:

- A **building** that is inviting, user-friendly for all, comfortable and with numerous locations for staff use, private use, study use and group events.
- A **staff** that is dedicated to library patrons and customer service.
- A current and useful **collection of materials** to meet the popular needs and interests of the community.
- A simple set of **by-laws** for the trustees and a clearly-written policy for all library practices adopted by the Board of Library Trustees.
- A fully operational **computer/information system** for personal work and for linking Bellingham to thousands of users and millions of materials in Massachusetts and beyond.
- Informed and supportive trustees who have the **courage** to advocate for adequate and above-average services at the local level.
- **Trustees** charged with the responsibility to secure adequate library funding for maintenance, materials, programming and staffing.
- An ongoing **planning process** to meet the needs of the community, including young adult/children's services and adult programs.
- Promotion of good services through effective **marketing and publicity** is essential to the continued growth of the library.
- We are a **community activities center** and we encourage the use of our facilities where availability and space allows.

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DESCRIPTION OF BELLINGHAM

Bellingham history dates back to the late 1600's when land once a part of Dedham was divided into 100 acre land lots for settlement. Many early settlers were Quakers and Baptists seeking religious freedom from the strict Puritans who had a stronghold on the northerly sections of Norfolk County. In 1719, Bellingham became the last most southerly town incorporated into the county on land that was once part of Mendon.

Bellingham is bordered on the east by Franklin and Wrentham, on the south by Woonsocket, Rhode Island, on the west by Blackstone, Mendon, and Hopedale, and on the northwest and north by Milford and Medway.

In the 1800's, the town had many mills and was known for years as a boot making and farming community. It wasn't until the end of World War II that any major housing developments were started on land once used for farming. The largest development, Wethersfield, a 500-home tract a mile north of the town center, ushered in a building boom that saw the population of the town more than double in 10 years. Between 1950 and 1979 population statistics show a jump from 4,100 to 14,692, a rather startling fact when one learns that in the next 20 years the population only grew by 75 people. Another housing boom started again in the late 1990's when land once unsuitable for building became connected to the town sewer. In the early 2000's two hundred new 4+ bedroom homes, 112 townhouses, and a 300 unit rental complex were completed.

Bellingham adopted a home rule charter at the Annual Town Meeting in May, 1993. A Town Administrator appointed by a five-member elected Board of Selectmen conducts the town's business. The new charter continued the practice of electing members to the Board of Library Trustees as well as an elected Moderator who presides over two yearly open town meetings, one in May and one in October.

One interesting fact in town history is that its long narrow shape was settled by three distinct ethnic groups. The Caryville section in the north was settled by Polish and Irish; the center sector was settled by the English; the southern end on the Rhode Island border attracted many French-speaking Canadians lured to America by the mill jobs along the Blackstone River. Each section of Bellingham boasted its own post office. Even today a group of Polish residents meets at the public library to practice their conversation Polish. Although towns closer to Boston and some of our surrounding communities have seen an influx of immigrants from the Far East, South America and Russia, Bellingham has not.

The heavy burden placed on the public school system during the population boom of the 60's and 70's forced the town to construct three elementary schools. One opened in 1966, another in 1971, and a third in 1989 with each teaching grades K to 6. The year 2001 saw the opening

of the 35 million dollar Bellingham High School for grades 9 to 12; by 2003 the old high school built in 1964 had been renovated into a middle school to house grades 5 to 8. This project cost 15 million dollars.

These two schools, each within walking distance of the Bellingham Public Library, house 1,637 students out of a total school population of 2,692. The BHS classes of 2004 saw 86% of its members go on to 2 or 4 year post high school courses, the highest percent in 5 years. However, the school department has concerns with the MCAS testing scores which place Bellingham in the middle of ranking when compared to the 350+ towns within Massachusetts.

Bellingham also has an Alternative Junior/Senior High School housed in a former elementary school. Technical training for high school students from thirteen contiguous towns is provided in Upton at the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School. The nearest college is Dean College in Franklin.

The 1990's saw the emergence of the town's first modern industry; a power plant manufacturing electricity and carbon dioxide. It has since been joined by another power plant. Both are major contributors to the tax structure of the town. Bellingham's proximity to Route 495 with available land at exit #18 provided the impetus to three shopping complexes to blossom. Major shopping attractions include Home Depot, Wal Mart, Barnes & Noble, and the Gap; dining venues include Outback Steakhouse, Chili's, and Pizzeria Uno. Regal has a 14 theater cinema that draws huge weekend crowds. There are now three major supermarkets, Stop & Shop, Market Basket and Whole Foods. The growth of commerce continues. One town center strip mall has all store fronts rented. Another about three miles south is finally being finished and occupied. A major company, Dunkin' Donuts, has a regional distribution center less than a mile from the town center, while another, the Ninety-Nine Restaurant chain, has a distribution center on one of the main access roads to Route 495. This building also houses some office space and is around the corner and abutting another distribution center, Blue Linx. All of these businesses will be a future factor in traffic flow.

Two new strip malls opened on the corner of route 140 and Maple Street, one in 2007 houses a Dunkin' Donuts, D'Angelos and Rapid Refill gas station. The second opened in the Spring of 2009 with a comic book store and pizza shop, and there is additional space for lease in the second strip mall. Charles River Bank opened a branch office in the Spring of 2009 on the opposite side of Maple Street from these malls. This building will also have space for lease.

With development has come the problem of automobile traffic since no public transit is available in town. The major north/south route through town, State Road 126, now has eleven traffic lights where once there was one. Redesigning traffic flow at all major intersections is an ongoing project. The nearest commuter rail service is on Route 140 in Franklin with a 65-minute train ride to South Station, Boston. A fifteen-minute drive on

Route 495 will allow a traveler to access either Interstate 95 to the south or Interstate 90 to the north.

Bellingham offers recreational facilities for all ages. Children have access to Pop Warner football, Little League baseball, soccer, field hockey and softball. Swimming lessons are offered at Arcand Park while Silver Lake provides swimming and picnicking areas along the beach of the town owned lake. In 2009 the Bellingham Playground Association opened Kaspar Park at Silver Lake. With two areas, (one for the 2-5 year old crowd, and one for the 5-12 year old crowd) ingenious play design, slides and swings, the playground is the newest spot in town for children. Senior citizens can enjoy a new, beautifully decorated senior center where a coordinator arranges for bus trips, outings, and other special events. There are two residential elderly and/or handicapped living complexes.

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COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

Many of Bellingham's organizations provide activities for our children and hold various fund raisers to provide scholarships for Bellingham High School graduates. Parents serve as coaches and mentors for most of the sport activities previously mentioned. Churches have youth groups and the schools have Parent-Teacher Organizations working to provide funds for field trips and programs not covered in the school budget. While the Friends of the Arts cover the music program at the middle school, The Friends of Music conduct fund raisers to support the high school band program. The Friends of the Library raise more than \$10,000 annually so the library can offer museum passes and programs during the year. The Lions Club actively supports the Special Olympics while the Bellingham Women of Today raise funds for a high school scholarship. The WalMart Foundation donates funds to many of these town organizations to aid them with their programs and scholarships. The Boy Scouts and Girls Scouts have active representation in our schools. The V.F.W. Post #7272 organizes the annual Memorial Day Parade, while the Bellingham Sportsmen's Club has made donations to the D.A.R.E. anti-drug and smoking program the local police conduct in the schools. The Bellingham Arts Council conducts several art competition shows for area residents in the library's Community Room as a way of fostering an interest in painting and photography. The Arts Council also partially funded 13 school programs and opened an Arts Center in a former bank where free art-centered programs were offered during the summer and after school. Finally, the Bellingham Business Association holds monthly dinner meetings to discuss their mission of providing a town-centered commercial venue for residents.

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COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

Total Population, Annual Town Census

1970	13,967
1971	14,300
1972	13,981
1973	14,877
2000	15,314
2005	15,504
2008	15,787
2009	15,707

Significant Racial Groups, 2000 Federal Census

White	14,844
Black	140
Asian	131
Other	199

Age Breakdown, 2000 Federal Census

Under 5	1077
5 - 17	3312
18 - 64	9442
65 +	1483
Median Age	36.3 years

Educational Attainment, 2000 Federal Census

High School Grad	9139
College Grad	2280
Graduate Degree	653

Households, 2000 Federal Census

Total Number	5557
Persons per Household	2.8

Income, 1999 Mass Municipal Profiles

Per Capita Income	\$25,047
Median Family Income	\$72,074
Persons in Poverty	384

Labor & Employment, 2000 Federal Census

Managers & Professionals	2934 (51.1%)
Service occupations	1170 (20.4%)
Farming, Fishing Forestry	20 (0.3%)
Construction & Maintenance	709 (12.4%)
Production & Transportation	904 (15.8%)
Total	5737

Registered Voters as of 2006 **Mass Municipal Profiles** 9917

Taxation as of 2007, Mass Municipal Profiles

Total assessed valuation of taxable property	\$2,544,933,036
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Municipal Finance, 2006, Mass Municipal Profiles

Municipal Budget Expenditures	\$36,815,510
Library Budget	\$ 415,584
Average Teacher's Salary	\$ 54,249

Sources for the community characteristics data are:

2000 US Census

2008 Annual Town Census

2008 Massachusetts Municipal Profiles

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DESCRIPTION OF THE BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 1894, Bellingham's first library was opened in a private residence on South Main Street with interested townspeople donating books and magazines. Eleven years later, the old four-room Center School used one of its rooms to house the town library, and in 1911, an interested resident in the south sector of town set up a branch in her home. When the fourth room was needed in the school in 1928, the library had to be moved into town hall, which was right next door.

The annual town meeting of March 1929 appropriated \$10,000 to build a new library on land adjacent to the town hall on Common Street, and the small brick building was dedicated on May 15, 1930. During the following three decades, residents in the northern part of Bellingham had a library branch available for their use in first, the North School and, when that closed, it occupied a corner of the school library in the new, modern Stallbrook Elementary School. In 1963, the south branch moved into the Keough School. Four years later, half the basement of the main library was paneled, carpeted, and open as The Children's Room, and in 1972 the remaining basement area was converted into a quiet reading room. These alterations produced a library with 2,000 square feet of usable space serving a population of over 14,000 townspeople.

The boom in population put heavy demands on library use, and the Board of Library Trustees decided to close the two branches and concentrate their efforts on upgrading services in its main building. To this end, the Trustees expanded hours of operation, hired its first professional library director in 1978, encouraged the formation of a Friends of the Library organization, and lobbied for additional staff and funding. They also wisely saw the need to start planning for library space expansion and, once the library met the requirements for a Library Incentive Grant and Municipal Equalization Grant Funds, these funds were set aside in a special fund until 1984, when a Space Needs Study Committee was formed and then a Library Renovation Committee. The conclusion drawn from these efforts were that expansion of the existing building was not feasible, and relocating into the 85-year old Center School was not desirable. 1985 saw the formation of a Library Building Committee who used the MEG and LIG funds to hire a design architect, and at a special town meeting in August 1987, voters approved the construction of a 2 million dollar library. By October of the same year, the library, a new elementary school, and a partial sewerage of the town were placed on a special election ballot. Voters were asked to exclude the debts incurred by the three projects from the constraints of Proposition 2-1/2. All met with voter approval, but the new library garnered the most 'yes' votes, due in part to the assurances from building committee members and Trustees that a large percentage of the total cost could be reduced with a grant from a 35-million dollar library construction bill which had reached committee in the Massachusetts State House.

The new library had also been one of the only two Massachusetts towns to be awarded LSCA Title II funds that year, so it was hoped that this \$252,000 in additional outside funding would lighten the tax burden that this new library would impose. Legislative delays on both the state and national level proved frustrating to committee members, and when the bidding process finally got underway, building costs far exceeded expectations. All of the LSCA Title II monies had to be applied to building furnishings rather than to debt reduction, and the final crushing blow came when the MBLC awarded Bellingham only \$200,000 for the library construction debt, a figure only 11% of the total cost rather than the hoped for 45%.

The actual construction of 18,000 square foot brick and wood facility on town-owned land adjacent to the high school went smoothly, and in ten months the beautiful structure was ready for the historic move. Scores of volunteers packed books and assisted in the transfer of all useable items. A one-hundred seat community room with kitchen, staff lounge, technical service area, storage room, Director's office, more than adequate shelf space, and inviting spacious children's room were some of the new features in the library which opened to the public on September 5, 1989.

Although we had to apply for a waiver for State Aid for FY'04, we have since been budgeted at qualifying levels, until the current fiscal year, FY10. In 1994 the town budget showed that library service accounted for .7% of the entire municipal budget. In 2005, the library accounted for 1.3% of the annual budget of the town, but in FY10, it has been reduced to 0.98%, still significantly more than in 1994, but less than years before the current economic challenges. Without the support of our Board of Selectmen, Finance Committees, our community, and our two Massachusetts State House legislators, the Bellingham Public Library would not have attained the level of service it currently provides.

In 2003, additional computers were added to increase the number of public Internet access stations to a total of 10. Additional shelving was purchased to accommodate the library's growing collections and an outdoor message board was installed to provide the community with information about library programming. In 2005, the building was over 15 years old and was beginning to show wear and tear. Carpeting was replaced and walls were painted. The fire and security alarm systems were updated. Additional signage and furniture was purchased. Two "low-vision" centers were installed to aid people with vision problems in reading personal and library materials. A network file server and a media center computer were purchased to streamline staff computer operations. In 2006, the exterior of the building began to show its age and in addition to the regular annual exterior painting, the entire roof was replaced.

In 2007 and 2008, Roland Laprade, the town carpenter, built office furniture for our technical services area; resulting in a more organized workspace for our behind the scenes work area. In 2008, with generous funding from the Friends of the Library we were able to renovate the Community Room Kitchen, turning it from a tired worn space, to a bright, organized space. In 2009 with help from the Friends of the Library and Martine Descoteaux, a Girl Scout

working on her Gold Award project, renovated the children's program room. The room was painted and storage shelving was added to help organize the space. In 2009 the library installed PC Reservation & LPT1 printing through C/WMARS. This enables patrons with active library cards self service on the library PCs and printing through a state of the art Ricoh color copier/printer.

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LIBRARY STAFFING, GOVERNANCE and FUNDING

Staffing Information for FY'09

Full-time staff members	7
Part-time staff members	10
(FTEs) Full-time equivalents	9.3
Number holding MLS degrees	4
Library Director's annual salary	\$58,500

Staffing Information for FY'10

Full-time staff members	7
Part-time staff members	6
(FTEs) Full-time equivalents	6.4
Number holding MLS degrees	4
Library Director's annual salary	\$58,500 thru 12/31/09 \$60,255 as of 1/10/09

Library Governance

The library has been governed by a five-member Board of Library Trustees as provided by the new Home Rule Charter of 1992, each elected to serve a three-year term. The Board elects a chairman, vice chairman and recording secretary.

Library Funding

Library funding is through municipal appropriations at the Annual Town Meeting held in late May of each year. Supplemental funds are generated by a special revolving account which allows the Trustees to keep fines or assessments for damaged or lost library property, and to apply this money to buy new library material or supplies. Additional funds are realized through Library Incentive Grant and Municipal Equalization Grant awards. The Friends of the Bellingham Public Library have provided funds for programming on a regular basis. By October 1993, the cost of computerizing the circulation and cataloging system of the library was accomplished using LIG, MEG, and contributions from the Friends of the Library. These funds are generated by an ongoing used book sale and other special fundraising events.

The cost of providing additional cultural programs and museum passes is realized through grants from various community organizations and the Friends of the Library.

The library also has access to funds in the following trust funds:

The Mable Drake Library Trust Fund*	The Henry A. Whitney Library Trust Fund*
-------------------------------------	--

The Library Gift Fund
Fund

The Library Expendable Trust

The Norma Rogers Memorial Gift Fund** The 100th Anniversary Book Gift Fund

*Expenditure of interest in these funds is limited to the purchase of library books.

**Expenditure of these funds is limited to maintenance of the Norma Rogers Memorial

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LIBRARY COLLECTION HOLDINGS INFORMATION AS OF 6/30/09

FORMAT	Adult/YA	Children's	Total
PRINT FORMAT: Books (including paperback, picture books, large print)	33,986	14,645	48,631
PRINT FORMAT: Volumes of print periodicals, newspapers and other print serials	2,620	141	2,761
AUDIO FORMAT: Compact discs, cassettes and Playaways	2,244	269	2,513
VIDEO FORMAT: DVD, videocassettes	2,074	718	2,792
ELECTRONIC FORMAT: (CD-ROMS, Serials)	35	0	35
MISCELLANEOUS: (kits, art prints, film, Video Games)	194	22	216
TOTAL PRINT AND NON-PRINT HOLDINGS	41,153	15,795	56,948

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LIBRARY FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT

	FY09	FY10
Hours open to public per week (months of September – June)	57	50
Days open per week (months of September – June)	6	6
Hours open to public per week (months of July and August)	49.5	42
Days open per week (months of July and August)	5	5
Evenings open per week year-round	4	2 until 8 pm 2 until 6 pm
Number of square feet for public use	15,000+	
Number of square feet for staff work area	2,000+	
Total linear feet of shelving	Approximately 5115 linear feet	
Patron seating for in-library use		
In Children’s room, Young Adult room, Reading room, Quiet room, History room, Main library areas, study carrels, and at all equipment		147
Community Room seating capacity		100
Parking capacity		47

Facilities and Equipment

- The library is secured by a motion alarm and infrared monitoring system.
- All areas are handicapped-accessible.
- Separate children’s room has appropriate shelving and furnishings as well as a program room, separate staff office and private toilet.
- An open young adult room is furnished comfortably.
- Library is centrally located in Bellingham.
- The Staff work area is separate from the public areas.
- Signage is clear and effective.
- Full kitchen facilities adjacent to the community room are available for patron use.
- A private lounge with kitchen facilities is available for staff use.

- The facilities are well-maintained and attractive.
- Patron in-library reading areas are well-lit and comfortably arranged next to the magazines and daily newspapers.
- A quiet reading room is available for privacy or small group meetings.
- A local history room houses books of local or state history and is also available for small groups to hold meetings.
- Study carrels with electric power strip available for wireless laptop use.

Additional library resources for public use:

- (2) Word Processing computers with printers are available for patron use.
- (3) Public Access Catalogs (PAC) are available for patron use.
- (8) Internet Access computers and printers are available for patron use.
- (1) Low-vision Telesensory equipment available for patron use.
- (1) Low-vision Internet-Access computer is available for patron use.
- Piano, flip-chart/dry erasable easel, CD player, DVD/video player and motorized movie projection screen are available in the Community Room.
- A state of the art photocopier/printer is available, which prints in both black and white and color.
- A laptop computer is available.
- Facsimile transmission/reception for patron service.
- Four display cabinets are used for library and patron displays.

Library Equipment for staff use:

- 3M security circulation equipment.
- (5) Staff circulation computers.
- (3) Staff office computers.
- (1) Staff media center.
- Staff copier, color copier, fax machine, electric typewriter and electric stapler.

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LIBRARY WEBSITE

In January of 2005 the Bellingham Public Library arranged for its own domain name and web hosting through Pair Networks. This is now separate from the Town of Bellingham which maintained and hosted the website for the 3 previous years.

www.bellinghamlibrary.org was launched in February 2005 with 15 initial pages. The site has grown to approximately 70 pages in 2009. Website hits have grown from 2900 in 2005 to 5700 in 2009.

The library website is our “online branch,” a place where patrons can access many library services, such as the online catalog, calendar, databases, directions and hours as well as the library newsletter.

LIBRARY BUDGET DATA

Annual municipal appropriations for library operating expenditures:

FY01	\$356,587.02
FY02	\$373,182.67
FY03	\$391,886.60
FY04	\$382,889.01
FY05	\$407,825.00
FY06	\$414,817.00
FY07	\$433,941.00
FY08	\$456,700.00
FY09	\$479,789.00
FY10	\$429,789.00

FY10 is the first budget year since FY04 that the library funding has been decreased. Due to the financial crisis and economic downturn, the library trustees were asked to submit an FY10 budget in the amount of \$429,789, a 10.4% decrease of \$50,000 over the FY09 budget of \$479,789.

Per capita total annual operating expenditures:

FY01	15,075 residents	\$23.65
FY02	15,093 residents	\$24.73
FY03	15,301 residents	\$25.61

FY04	15,347 residents	\$24.95
FY05	15,504 residents	\$26.30
FY06	15,645 residents	\$26.51
FY07	15,714 residents	\$27.61
FY08	15,787 residents	\$28.76
FY09	15,783 residents	\$30.38

Annual materials expenditures (print and non-print):

FY01	\$52,149	14.60% of total municipal appropriation
FY02	\$63,289	16.95% of total municipal appropriation
FY03	\$66,771	17.03% of total municipal appropriation
FY04	\$66,557	17.38% of total municipal appropriation
FY05	\$69,450	17.02% of total municipal appropriation
FY06	\$71,791	17.31% of total municipal appropriation
FY07	\$92,477	20.75% of total municipal appropriation
FY08	\$86,094	17.71% of total municipal appropriation

Funding source income for the last four full fiscal years:

	FY2006	FY2007	FY2008	FY2009
Municipal Appropriation	\$414,817.00	\$433,941.00	\$456,700.00	\$479,789
MA State Funding LIG	\$ 10,609.20	\$ 11,310.31	\$ 11,277.65	\$11,922.00
MA State Funding MEG	\$ 6,308.94	\$ 6,362.57	\$ 6,696.94	\$7,717.30
MA State Funding NRC	\$ 2,805.27	\$ 3,072.73	\$ 3,529.42	\$4,435.79
Total MA State Funding	\$19,723.41	\$20745.61	\$ 21,504.01	\$24,074.79
Total Funding All Sources	\$434,540.41	\$454.686.61	\$478,204.01	\$503,863.79

LIG: Library Incentive Grant

MEG: Municipal Equalization Grant

NRC: Nonresident Circulation Offset Award

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Bellingham, Massachusetts**

FIVE-YEAR CIRCULATION STATISTICS

YEAR	REGISTERED BORROWERS	ADULT /YA PRINT	NON- PRINT	CHILDREN PRINT	NON- PRINT	TOTAL	ILL's PROVIDED
FY03 Reported FY04	7,141	29,801	9,439	29,156	7,668	76,067	6,613
FY04 Reported FY05	7,604	35,325	15,977	29,727	10,973	89,439	7,250
FY05 Reported FY06	7,573	32,762	13,261	28,306	11,599	85,928	7,715
FY06 Reported FY07	8,034	41,311	18,885	31,418	13,529	105,143	11,002
FY07 Reported FY08	8,050	43,697	24,037	37,332	13,840	118,906	13,951
FY08 Reported FY09	8,649	50,902	23,044	35,471	10,599	120,016	17,104

**Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY11-FY15
Bellingham, Massachusetts**

**LIBRARY COMPARISONS 2008 RANKINGS REPORT FROM MBLC
Neighboring Libraries**

Library	Bellingham	Blackstone	Franklin	Hopedale	Medway	Mendon	Milford	Wrentham
2007 Population	15,908	9,042	31,381	6,165	12,749	5,767	27,263	11,116
Region	Central	Central	Metrowest	Central	Metrowest	Central	Central	Southeast
Total Appropriated Municipal Income	469,913	315,712	920,196	244,005	108,369	201,842	975,040	308,680
Total Operating Income	507,583	320,375	993,710	262,766	414,772	213,172	1,038,420	337,712
Total Operating Expenditures	500,088	305,231	855,919	249,824	332,244	192,836	1,010,407	321,151
Salary Expenditures	294,117	170,998	623,999	138,475	103,867	111,853	767,289	203,898
Salary Expense %	59%	56%	73%	55%	31%	58%	76%	64%
Materials Expenditures	96,094	64,578	165,879	45,752	78,964	53,708	132,035	71,642
Materials Expense %	19%	21%	19%	18%	24%	28%	13%	22%
Other Expenditures	106,487	68,955	47,132	51,051	149,255	27,275	105,073	45,611
Other Expenditures%	21%	23%	6%	20%	45%	14%	10%	14%
Municipal Appropriation Per Capita	29.54	34.86	29.32	39.58	8.5	35	35.76	27.77
Salary Expenditure Per Hour Open	104.6	87.5	196.5	78.7	86.8	39.2	261.4	94.6
Materials Expenditure Per Capita	6.04	7.14	5.29	7.42	6.19	9.31	4.84	6.44

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Public Library Per Capita/Per 10,000 Ranking Report

	Median within Population Group (15,000-24,999) 54 Libraries	Bellingham (53 libraries reporting)	Bellingham Rank within State (370 libraries reporting)	Bellingham Rank within Population Group (54 libraries reporting)
Population	18,527	15,908	120	49
Total Appropriated Municipal Income	33.14	29.54	184	31
Salary Expenditures	22.42	18.49	224	42
Materials Expenditures	6.03	6.04	186	27
Attendance	6.49	6.49	107	16
Reference Transactions	.43	.09	264	42
Holdings	4.72	3.89	285	37
Total Circulation Activity	10.60	8.08	217	37
FTE	6.45	5.85	224	35
MLS FTE	2.00	1.65	169	37
Weekly Internet Access	182	159.04	182	32
Hours Open Per Week	51.5	54.1	93	20

**Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY11-FY15
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NON-RESIDENT CIRCULATION *

*Total number of on-site loans to residents of municipalities certified for state aid, to residents of municipalities not certified for state aid, and to residents of other states

YEAR	Massachusetts Certified	Non-Certified	Out-of-state	Total
FY02	8,631	0	33	8,664
FY03	17,817	0	216	18,033
FY04	19,052	0	497	19,549
FY05	22,521	116	23	22,660
FY06	24,806	43	205	25,054
FY07	29,336	8	504	29,848
FY08	33,990	5	979	34,974
FY09	36,626	295	830	37,751

Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY11-FY15
Bellingham, Massachusetts

ASSESSMENT OF USER NEED
CONCLUSIONS

From May 1 – June 14, 2009 the library conducted a survey of patrons primarily through our website, although paper copies of the survey were available in the library for those who preferred that format. The survey was completed by 224 residents and/or library users.

Important information obtained from the survey included the following:

- Almost 60% of respondents use the library about once a week, more than 84% at least once a month. Almost 40% of respondents use the library on weekday afternoons.
- The most frequent reasons respondents use the library are: 1) To borrow books, DVDs and other materials; 2) To read or study; and 3) To attend children's programs.
- The services that are most important to respondents are: 1) Assistance from librarians and library staff; 2) Interlibrary loan; and 3) The library website
- The aspects of library space that are most important to the respondents are: 1) Comfortable atmosphere; 2) User friendly layout; and 3) Quiet reading areas
- More than 93% of respondents rated the overall quality of staff service as either good or excellent.
- The aspects of the library collection that are most important to the respondents are: 1) Fiction; 2) Recent & bestselling titles; and 3) Nonfiction
- Changing concepts of library services that were important or appealing to respondents included: 1) Environmentally friendly; 2) Education and entertainment programs; 3) School-public library partnerships
- The survey respondents were 76 percent female and 24 percent male.
- The age of survey respondents ranged from under 12 to over 60, with more than 70% of respondents between the age of 18 and 59.
- Over 75% of the respondents had lived in Bellingham more than 5 years.

The Bellingham Public Library has strengths in the following areas:

1. **Building facilities:** Although the Bellingham Public Library was designed and built in the late 1980's, the community is fortunate to have a library that affords them wonderful space in its 18,000 square-foot facility. This includes a spacious and airy Children's room complete with separate program room, office and toilet; a large, separate Young Adult Services area; a well-appointed Reference/Internet Services island, open space with both table seating and leisure seating for over one-hundred patrons; study carrels with electricity for wireless internet access; a large foyer and

circulation desk; a quiet, yet central reading room; quiet and historical rooms; thousands of feet of shelving space; large restrooms; a fully-equipped community room and kitchen; staff room and kitchen; separate staff restroom; a large and open technical services room; and a comfortable office for the director.

2. Patronage: The library has community support with plenty of patron satisfaction. The recent results of a survey indicate that with some very minor exceptions the customer base of the library is pleased with library services and materials.
3. Collection: The library owns a collection of over 50,000 non-fiction, fiction, children's, and young adult print and audio-visual materials. The library subscribes to more than 75 serial publications.
4. Staffing and Hours: The library currently has 12 employees, including four MLS professionals in key roles: Director, Head of Youth Services, Reference Librarian and Administrative Assistant. There are three 30-hour a week library technicians, a 30-hour a week custodian, a 19.5 hours per week Young Adult Librarian, a children's services assistant, and 4 part time library clerks. The library is open fifty hours per week and 273 staff-hours per week are worked on average. MLS professionals are scheduled 98 hours per week.
5. Equipment: The library possesses ten staff-only computers, three Public Access Catalog computers, and 16 other computers for public use; a lap-top computer; video and compact disc players; a projector and screen. In addition, through grant funding the library has obtained video gaming systems for Wii, PlayStation and XBOX.
6. Delivery within the CMRLS (Central Massachusetts Region): We currently belong to the Central Massachusetts Region which delivers books between its member libraries on a daily basis. Our delivery schedule is currently five days per week.
7. Membership in the C/WMARS (Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing Network): We share the resources of all members of the C/WMARS network which allows our library access to millions of titles.
8. Technology: The library has been able to fulfill several technological plans in the past decade and can compete with most other Massachusetts libraries in offering adequate computer services with several Public Access Catalogs, many Internet computers and other word processing programs and print services. The library has recently installed Envisionware's PC Reservation system, a time and print management system for the public PCs. The printer/copier that is attached to this system is a state of the art copier that prints in black and white, and color. The staff has been connected via a LAN and the entire staff has use of a Media Center complete with web design, publishing and photographic software. The library has acquired two digital cameras with photo software and photo quality printers.

9. Friends of the Bellingham Public Library: The Friends of the Bellingham Public Library are continually improving the services of the library through their financial support of innovative programming in Children's Services, Young Adult Services and Adult Services, mostly through funds raised in an ongoing book sale.

We are continually addressing the following areas:

1. Programs: Children's programming, young adult programming and adult programming are on the increase. The library plans to continue to add innovative and creative programs in all areas. Attendance at adult programs increased 32% in FY09 compared to FY08. Attendance at children's programming during the same period was up 3% and YA program attendance is up 53%.
2. Public relations: The library is very well publicized in the local area. The Bellingham Bulletin, a monthly newspaper that is distributed free to the entire town, provides excellent coverage of library programs and issues. ABMI Cable 8 also posts calendar information about library events. The Country Gazette, a free weekly newspaper publishes library hours and calendar events each week. The library publishes a newsletter twice a year and each month distributes the library calendar and flyer at the library and through the library's Google Group
3. Parking: Due to its proximity to the middle school and high school playing fields there is not adequate parking at all times. Additional parking must be acquired through cooperation with town and school officials.
4. Facilities: The excellent facilities of the Bellingham Public Library are now seeing the wear of twenty years of use. In addition, as library services change, there are areas that need resigning to meet the current needs of the community. Interior, exterior, equipment and furnishing replacement and upgrades are foreseen in the next decade, some within the next five years.
5. Community Relations: Bellingham is a town bordered by eight other towns, one in another state. Bellingham is the longest town in Massachusetts and although easy access is facilitated by major routes (140, 126 and 495) the town is cut into several parts. The library hopes to unite these various geographic and political divisions and become the common outlet for information and community relations.

Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY11-FY15
Bellingham, Massachusetts

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES
OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN FY11-FY15

Goal 1. Facilities Objectives

- To search for ways in which to increase library parking;
- To reorganize the space within the library, in order to better utilize staff, space and equipment. Specifically to redesign the Young Adult Area and work to obtain more area for quiet study.
- To educate the town and town officials in order to obtain the financial resources for capital improvements to library facilities, including a CCTV Security System; separate walled Young Adult Area; more quiet study space; energy efficient utilities and services, and exterior landscaping

Goal 2. Technology Objectives

- To update the library website to a more comprehensive, user friendly format, including the use of social networking tools, when appropriate;
- To acquire a mobile computer classroom, for use by the after school program and for Internet training for the public;
- To continue to replace and update all equipment, as necessary;
- To continue to fully utilize library's new Media Center and all capabilities of the automated network to optimize functionality;
- To continue to train the library staff on new technologies and encourage the use and advancement of new technologies.

Goal 3. Communications Objectives

- To host a focus group of library survey participants to better understand community needs and perceptions of the library
- To promote community identity and unity;
- To motivate civic pride and participation;
- To enhance participation in social and cultural events and to encourage community-wide discourse and interaction by cooperation with other Town-wide information services (Bellingham Bulletin, local Cable Access television and the Town website) and by cooperation with educational, resources, the Historical Commission, the Senior Center and with Town officials.

Goal 4. Collection Evaluation & Inventory

- Obtain funding to sort, inventory, catalog and assess materials in the Local History Room
- Complete thorough weeding of adult fiction and non-fiction collections
- Complete an inventory of the library collection

METHODOLOGY

We used the survey results to aid in formulating our goals and objectives for this long range plan. Specifically mentioned in the survey and translated into objectives were:

Creating more quiet study areas. Particularly in the afternoons, when the Young Adult area is busy, the noise level throughout the building is not optimal. By either walling in the Young Adult area, or rethinking our current one person only quiet rooms, we hope to make more quiet study areas.

Redesigning the library website. As more and more people turn to the Internet for information on library programs and services, we need to have a better format and layout, as well as an easy way for staff to update content to this vital communication resource.

ACTION PLAN FY11

Goal 1: Facilities

<p>Objective: To reorganize the space within the library, in order to better utilize staff, space and equipment. Specifically to redesign the Young Adult Area and work to obtain more places for quiet study.</p> <p>Time Frame: July – June FY11</p>	<p>FY11 Action/Method: Begin to investigate the costs and advantages of enclosing the YA area. Redesign the quiet study room with multiple study carrels so it can be used by more than one person at a time.</p>
<p>Objective: To educate the town and town officials in order to obtain the financial resources for capital improvements to library facilities; including a CCTV Security System, separate walled Young Adult Area; more quiet study space; energy efficient utilities and services and exterior landscaping</p> <p>Time Frame: July – June FY11</p>	<p>FY11 Action/Method: To obtain funding before July 2011 for a CCTV camera security system for the library. As mentioned above, begin to investigate the costs and advantages of enclosing the YA area, as well as funding sources to make it happen. Redesign the quiet study room with multiple study carrels so it can be used by more than one person at a time.</p>

Goal 2: Technology

<p>Objective: To update the library website to a more comprehensive, user friendly format, including the use of social networking tools, when appropriate</p> <p>Time Frame: July – June FY11</p>	<p>FY11 Action/Method: Begin to investigate costs and options for an overhaul of the library website. Our survey indicated that it is a widely used source for library information, and since it grew organically, it not only needs reorganization, but an easy way for staff to keep the site updated.</p>
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Goal 3: Communications

<p>Objective: To host a focus group of library survey participants to better understand community needs and perceptions of the library</p> <p>Time Frame: Jul - June FY11</p>	<p>FY11 Action/Method: The Long Range Plan Committee will reconvene to hold a focus group of survey participants. This may even happen in FY10.</p>
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Goal 4: Collection Inventory & Evaluation

<p>Objective: Complete weeding of adult fiction and nonfiction collections.</p> <p>Time Frame: July – June FY11</p>	<p>FY10 Action/Method: Library director and reference librarian will continue to work with staff and volunteers to complete the weeding project.</p>
<p>Objective: Complete an inventory of the library collection</p> <p>Time Frame: July – June FY11</p>	<p>FY11Action/Method: Upon completion of the weeding project, library director will head a project to begin a complete inventory of the library collection, one area at a time.</p>

MONITORING THE PLAN AND STAYING ON TARGET

The library director will be expected to present regular reports at the Trustees' meetings. These reports will not only inform the Board as to the implementation of the stated goals, but will also suggest revision and changes as needed.

Since a major aspect of this plan deals with maintaining or increasing the library budget over the Five-Year cycle, it is imperative that the Board of Trustees include these goals in the budget they approve for submission to the Town Administrator. The Trustees all take an active part in convincing the Finance Committee and the Annual Town Meeting voters that the request for level or increased funding is based on a carefully considered plan for maintenance and improvement of library services for the Town of Bellingham.

Finally, as the plan enters year 4 of the 5-year cycle, the Trustees will ask the Director to form a new planning committee made up of interested patrons, staff members, and Trustees to take action on the new Long Range Plan.