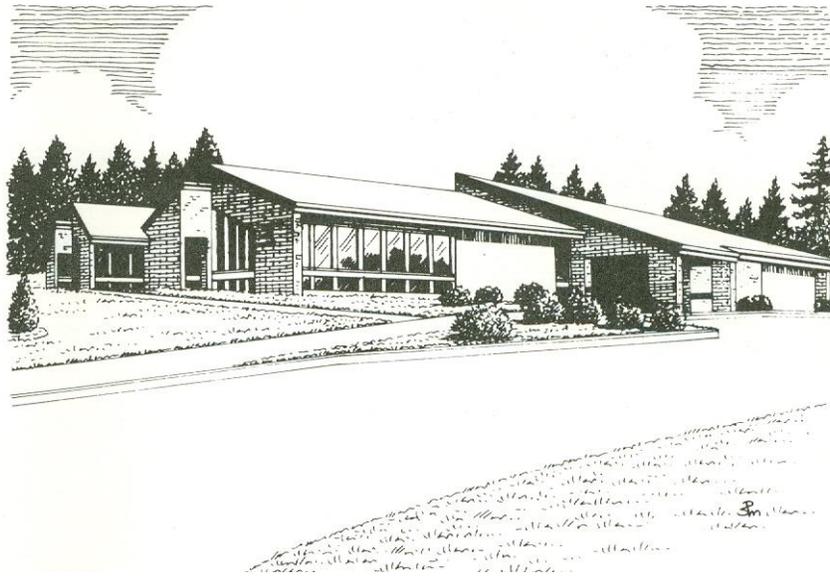


**A FIVE-YEAR PLAN OF ACTION
FOR THE
BELLINGHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY
TOWN OF BELLINGHAM, MA
FY2016-FY2020**



**October 1, 2014
Bellingham Public Library
100 Blackstone Street
Bellingham, Massachusetts
508-966-1660**

**Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY2016-FY2020
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 community focus group meetings, patron surveys and observations, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) 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.

Amy Bartelloni, Vice Chair, Library Board of Trustees
Lisa Cavossa, Friends of the Library
Cecily Christensen, Library Staff
Michael Connor, Chair, Board of Selectmen
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Barbara Pacak, Library Staff
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Approved by the Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees on September 18, 2014

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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 is the hub of the community... where people and ideas come together.

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STANDARDS OF LIBRARY SERVICE

The legal requirements for state aid to libraries in Massachusetts provide 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.
- The Bellingham Public Library is currently open six days a week (closed on Saturdays during the summer months of late June, July and August). Starting in July of 2014, the library will be expanding hours from 50 to 54 hours per week. We will be open Monday through Thursday until 8 pm. The library will be open an average of 54 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 Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.
(605 CMR 4.01: Regulations 4; Libraries in communities with population 10,000 and up.)
- In each of the library's last fiscal years the library has spent between 17.1% and 19.4% of its budget on books and materials, exceeding the 15% requirement.
(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 years 2009-2013, 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. 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 1,374 students out of a total school population of 2,404. The BHS class of 2013 saw 80% of its members go on to 2 or 4 year post high school courses. 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.

In the Summer of 2014 the School Committee voted to close the Clara Macy Elementary School in June of 2015. In the fall of 2015 the two remaining elementary schools will house grades K-3, the middle school will house grades 4-7 and the high school, grades 8-12. This will be a shift for not only the schools, but the library. Having 4th graders within walking distance of our facility will impact our afterschool programming. We anticipate changing our afterschool programming to include the 4th graders, as reality dictates, they will be coming to the library.

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, WalMart, 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, jewelry store, two restaurants and additional space available for lease. Charles River Bank opened a branch office in the Spring of 2009 on the opposite side of Maple Street from these malls. This building also houses a dry cleaner and spa.

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 other 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 Cultural Council partially funds programs. Finally, the Bellingham Business Association holds monthly dinner meetings to discuss their mission of providing a town-centered commercial venue for residents and fund scholarships for high school students.

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COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS

Total Population, Federal Census

1970	13,967
1980	14,300
1990	14,877
2000	15,314
2010	16,332

Significant Racial Groups, 2010 Federal Census

White	93.45%
Asian	2.58%
Two or more races	1.52%
Other	1.24%
Black/African American	1.09%
American Indian and Alaska Native	0.08%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Native	0.04%

Age Breakdown, 2010 Federal Census

Under 5	6.4%
5 – 19	19.5%
20 – 64	62.3%
65 +	11.7%
Median Age	40.3 years

Educational Attainment, 2010 Federal Census

High School Grad	94.12%
College Grad	36.79%
Graduate Degree	6.26%

Households, 2010 Federal Census

Total Number	6155
Persons per Household	2.6

Income

Per Capita Income	\$30,736	2010 Massachusetts Municipal Profiles
Median Family Income	\$82,859	2008-2012 American Community Survey
Percent Below Poverty Level	3.2%	

Labor & Employment, 2008-2012 American Community Survey from the US Census Bureau

Management, business, science, and arts occupations	3,450	37.8%
Service occupations	1,305	14.3%
Sales and office occupations	2,783	30.5%
Natural resources, construction and maintenance occupations	729	8.0%
Production, transportation and material moving occupations	858	9.4%
Total	9,125	100%

Registered Voters as of 2010 Massachusetts Municipal Profiles 10,543**Taxation as of 2010, Massachusetts Municipal Profiles**

Total assessed valuation of taxable property	\$2,206,813,918
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Municipal Finance, 2010, Massachusetts Municipal Profiles

Municipal Budget Expenditures	\$ 40,172,115	(2008)
Average Teacher's Salary	\$ 67,072	
Library Budget	\$ 522,932	(FY15)

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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 the 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, From FY'05 through FY09, we met the state aid requirements. In FY10 the repercussions of the economic downturn affected the library budget and we had a 10.4% budget reduction. This reduction required the library to apply for a waiver in each of the fiscal years FY10 through FY 14. In FY15, a 7% budget increase enabled the library to meet the State Aid requirements and open 4 additional hours per week.

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, in FY10, it was reduced to 0.98%, and in FY15 will be 1.06%, 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.

In 2010 we renovated the community room with new carpet and freshly painted walls. In 2011 the library had turnover of key staff, both our Youth Services Librarian and Young Adult Librarians resigned. In 2011, with donations from local businesses we renovated the area around the "Cartwheel" statue in the front of the building; it now sits in a beautiful brick patio, surrounded by a "wrought iron" fence enclosing the area. Twice in 2011 the library was able to provide emergency services due to weather events; we had power when many town residents did not. We were a place to stay warm (or cool); charge phones and laptops and access the Internet either through our WiFi or wired computers when most of the town had no power.

In 2012 with assistance in funding from the Friends of the Library and the Eldredge family, the library was able to complete a long overdue project, lighting the library flagpole. The new flagpole was unveiled at a Veterans Day Ceremony that has since become an annual event. In 2012 we also launched a newly designed library website, streamlining content and making it easier for staff to update. Our major special program in 2012 was the “Libraries for Job Seekers” Program. Funded by an LSTA grant, this program assisted over 150 people who were looking for jobs that year.

In 2013 the library began a special project to reorganize the library picture book collection into a hybrid Dewey Decimal System/bookstore model. We then used a similar model for our Young Adult Nonfiction collection. In 2013 we replaced all of the main pipes in the library’s fire sprinkler system; updated a few areas with fresh coats of paint and prepared a space for the library’s newest program: an educational seismograph for our STEM programming.

LIBRARY STAFFING, GOVERNANCE and FUNDING

Staffing Information for FY’15

Full-time staff members	8
Part-time staff members	5
(FTEs) Full-time equivalents	9.3
Number holding MLS degrees	3
Library Director’s annual salary	\$66,445

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 materials 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.

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	The Library Expendable Trust Fund
The Norma Rogers Memorial Gift Fund**	The 100 th 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 6/30/14

FORMAT	Adult	YA	Children's	Total
PRINT FORMAT: Books (including paperback, picture books, large print)	25,680	3,816	14,892	44,388
PRINT FORMAT: Volumes of print periodicals, newspapers and other print serials	729	86	16	831
AUDIO FORMAT: Compact discs, cassettes and Playaways	2,479	347	581	3,407
VIDEO FORMAT: DVD, videocassettes	2,621	166	824	3,611
ELECTRONIC FORMAT: (CD-ROMS, Serials)	22	96	0	118
MISCELLANEOUS: (kits, art prints, film, Video Games)	600	42	283	925
TOTAL PRINT AND NON-PRINT HOLDINGS	32,131	4,553	16,596	53,280

LIBRARY FACILITIES and EQUIPMENT

	FY14	FY15
Hours open to public per week (months of September – June)	50	54
Days open per week (months of September – June)	6	6
Hours open to public per week (months of July and August)	43	47
Days open per week (months of July and August)	5	5
Evenings open per week year-round	2 until 8 pm 2 until 6 pm	4 til 8 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	120	
Parking capacity	47	

Facilities and Equipment

- Library is centrally located in Bellingham.
- The facilities are well-maintained and attractive.
- 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 restroom designed for children.
- An open young adult room is furnished comfortably.
- 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.
- 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 and tables with electric power strips available for laptop/tablet wireless access.

Additional library resources for public use:

- (1) Public Access Catalogs (PAC) are available for patron use.
- (10) Internet Access computers are available for patron use, 5 in the YA area, 5 in the adult area
- (2) Whitelisted Internet access computers are available for use in the children's room.
- (1) Low-vision Telesensory equipment available for patron use.
- (1) Adaptive Technology/Scanning computer is available for patron use.
- (1) 3D Printing and Design PC is available for patron use.
- 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 and is networked to the public computing stations and our Wi-Fi network.
- Mobile classroom with 6 Laptop computers.
- Facsimile transmission/reception for patron service.
- Three display cabinets are used for library and patron displays.

Library Equipment for staff use:

- (5) Staff circulation computers, 2 on the desk and 3 in staff office area.
- (3) Staff computers on C/WMARS Network
- (2) Staff computers on town network
- Staff copier, color printer, fax machine

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LIBRARY WEBSITE

In January of 2005 the Bellingham Public Library arranged for its own domain name and web hosting 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. By 2009 the site had grown to approximately 70 pages. In January of 2012 we launched a newly designed website using the WordPress platform, currently displaying 455 pages. Website visits grew from 2900 per month in 2005 to 5700 in 2009. The newly designed site had 6715 hits per month in FY13 and averaged 8345 per month in FY 14, a 24% increase.

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:

Fiscal Year	Annual Budget
FY05	\$407,825
FY09	\$479,789
FY10	\$429,789
FY11	\$441,992
FY12	\$449,449
FY13	\$468,640
FY14	\$486,534
FY15	\$522,932

FY10 was the first budget year since FY04 that we saw a decrease in the library budget. Over the past five years our budget has increased and for the first time since FY11 we will meet the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR) without applying for a waiver from the MBLC.

Per capita total annual operating expenditures:

FY05	15,504 residents	\$26.30
FY10	15,867 residents	\$27.06
FY11	15,950 residents	\$27.71
FY12	15,746 residents	\$28.54
FY13	15,820 residents	\$29.62
FY14	16,332 residents	\$29.79
FY15	16,521 residents	\$31.65

Annual materials expenditures (print and non-print):

FY05	\$69,450	17.02%
FY10	\$85,296	19.19%
FY11	\$86,749	18.9%
FY12	\$81,991	17.56%
FY13	\$93,898	19.41%
FY14	\$86,231	17.11%

Our FY15 budgeted materials expense is \$80,000, 15.3% of our budget. We usually budget just over 15% and arrange to expend at least 17%.

Funding source income for the last four full fiscal years:

	FY2011	FY2012	FY2013	FY2014
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

**Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY2011-FY2020
Bellingham, Massachusetts**

LIBRARY ANNUAL CIRCULATION FY14

Item	Adult	Young Adult	Children	Total
Books	28,280	4,049	42,009	74,338
Print Periodicals Newspapers and other print serials	1,763		77	1,840
Audio (Music & Books) CD or other Physical Format	5,955	517	1,193	7,665
Video (VHS & DVD)	11,156	421	6059	17,636
Ebooks	3,765		115	3,880
Downloadable Audio	1,116			1,116
Downloadable Video	7			7
Other Materials in Electronic Format (CD Roms)	343	456		799
Miscellaneous		24	586	610
Total	52,385	5,467	50,039	107,891

Additional Circulation Data

Circulation per capita FY14	6.5
Reference transactions per month FY14	81

User Registration and Library Visits

Number of cardholders as of 6/30/14	8,750
% of the population registered	54%
Number of user visits annually FY14	91,179

Public Programming

Number of adult programs FY14	90
Number of children's programs FY14	550
Number of young adult programs FY14	124
Non-library groups held meetings/programs at the library FY14	711

FIVE-YEAR CIRCULATION STATISTICS

Year	Registered Borrowers	Adult Print	Adult Nonprint	YA Print	YA Nonprint	Children's Print	Children's Nonprint	Total	ILLS Provided
FY09	8,649							119,904	18,132
FY10	8,652							120,569	19,272
FY11	7,918							120,683	20,185
FY12	8,491							125,100	19,140
FY13	8,535	31,544	20,759	4,390	1,703	40,655	9,153	108,204	21,300
FY14	8,750	28,281	19,292	4,049	1,472	42,015	7,949	103,056	19,839

In FY12 our library network, C/WMARS moved from the Innovative Interfaces ILS to Evergreen. We believe that the decline in the 5 year circulation statistics is based on differences in how the 2 ILS's calculated our circulation. We acknowledge the 4.75% decrease between FY13 and 14 as an accurate reflection of the circulation of our physical objects. However, we question the 13.5% decrease between FY12 and FY13 when the new system was installed.

In the meantime eBook circulation has exploded:

FY10 106
 FY11 912
 FY12 1,860
 FY13 2,904
 FY14 4,942

5,148 decrease in physical items that were checked out between FY13 and FY14
 2,038 increase in electronic items checked out between FY13 and FY14

We have recently signed on to the statewide Massachusetts eBook Project which will increase access to electronic materials. We expect to continue to see increases in electronic check outs and small decreases in the checkout of physical items.

**Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY2011-FY2020
Bellingham, Massachusetts**

LIBRARY COMPARISONS FY 2013 RANKINGS REPORT FROM MBLC

Neighboring Libraries and Libraries with populations between 14,332 and 18,332

Category	Average for Selected Group	Bellingham	Number Ranking of 44 libraries in group
Population	16,352	16,332	22nd
Full-Time Equivalent Employees	10.63	8.61	27th
Salaries Paid from Library Budget	\$430,709	\$302,885	28th
Salaries as a percent of Total Operating Expenditures	68.30	62.85	36th
Total Salary Expenditures per capita	\$26.08	\$18.55	29th
Holdings	95,887	75,762	31st
Materials Expenditures	\$86,806	\$90,082	17th
Holdings Per Capita	6.10	4.64	31st
Materials Expenditure Per Capita	\$5.41	\$5.25	18th
Total Circulation	178,457	126,902	26th
Circulation Per Capita	10.74	7.77	29th
Hours Per Year	2,511	2,385	26th
Visitors	110,068	92,512	26th
Cardholders	9,588	9,126	26th
YA Programs	32	123	4th
Children's Programs	198	513	2nd
Adult Programs	106	229	4th
Appropriated Municipal Income per capita	\$36.47	\$29.62	26th
Total Appropriated Municipal Income--Operating	\$597,005	\$483,709	25th
Total Operating Income	\$501,191	\$647,333	27th
Total Other Operating Expenditures	\$85,179	\$85,732	17th
Total Operating Expenditures	\$611,039	\$481,936	25th
Total Other Operating Expenditures per capita	\$14.87	\$17.79	14th
Total Operating Expenditures per capita	\$37.22	\$29.51	29th
Network Membership Fees	\$23,230	\$18,343	32nd

These numbers show Bellingham as ranking between 17th and 29th (5 from the average of 22 libraries) in 17 of the 25 categories. We rank higher than that average in 4 categories, our number of programs of all types and other operating expenses per capita. We rank below average in 4 categories, 2 in holdings, one each in salaries and network membership fees.

**Bellingham Public Library Long-Range Plan FY2011-FY2020
Bellingham, Massachusetts**

**ASSESSMENT OF USER NEED
CONCLUSIONS**

On Monday April 14th and Monday, May 14th the Library Long Range Plan Committee Members met at the library for a planning session facilitated by Owen Shuman of Owen Shuman Consulting.

The first meeting on April 14th had 9 participants. The session included an overview of strategic planning, the status of the library and a SOAR exercise to help analyze current and future conditions that affect the library and its ability to provide services that are determined to be the most important.

That session outlined the following:

Strengths: What can we build on?

What are the greatest strengths of the Bellingham Public Library?

1. Wonderful staff
2. Serves a diverse population (all ages, socioeconomic levels, etc.)
3. Has versatility (collections, books, space)
4. Central location (by schools and town departments & on well-traveled road)
5. Facility is in good condition (open plan allows for versatility (#3))
6. Town values the library
7. It is a true cultural center (democratic ideals, art, music, programs, etc)

What is working well?

1. Programs for all ages
2. Friends of the Library (contribute \$15,000 annually)
3. The collection is solid (all formats)
4. Staff (work well together and in serving the public)
5. Community resource utilization
6. Staff are staying current with technology (and able to assist users)

What is valued the most?

1. People (users and staff)
2. Customer service
3. Remote services (website, 24/7 access to “visit BPL” and place a hold)
4. Children’s programs
5. Library as a community center
6. Multi-age programs
7. Young Adult services and programs

As an organization, what are you most proud of?

1. Staff
2. Staff skills (they “act together”--they support each other and work well as one)
3. Facility
4. Atmosphere
5. Customer Service
6. Well run programs
7. After school programs

What makes you unique?

1. Programs are exceptional
2. Seismograph (1 of 4 in the state)
3. Programs for homeschool constituency
4. Place to charge devices when power was out/shelter

What can you be best at in this town or in the library communities in the area?

1. Services provided
 2. STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics)
 3. Community outreach
- NOTE: comment was made that BPL currently does stand out as a strong library among area libraries for programs & collections

Opportunities: What are our users asking for?

What are our best opportunities? What are possible new services, hours, or collections or other things that we can offer? How can we best meet the needs of your stakeholders?

1. Shoppes @ Bellingham—a new development that is in the planning stages. May bring 100 stores/businesses to the area. Approach for support/money for BPL.
2. Additional parking—either on library grounds or overflow at football field
3. Opportunity to initiate a one community-wide strategic plan for the town
4. Addition of four more hours—when should they be added? Ask in survey
5. Pilot program for e-books (1 of 51 libraries in the state); promote this new service
6. Promote museum passes and other services that may not be well known
7. Grants (current and future) from MBLC and potentially other sources
8. Connect with schools (in other ways—Youth Librarian goes to schools but would like to do more) Thursday is packet day—can BPL add information sometime?
9. Card sign up with schools (K, 5, 8) and promote w/ businesses—free comic when you get library card and/or discount on ice cream (free cone?). Use w/ Summer Reading Program?
10. Young Adult Librarian funded full time will allow us new opportunity to explore and serve teens.
11. Coordinate with Youth Center (focus on 3rd graders)
12. Have more art/photography shows (have plan to address issue of potential damage)

Aspirations: What do we care deeply about?

What are your hopes for the Bellingham Public Library? What are you deeply passionate about?

What is your preferred future? What projects, programs and services support these aspirations?

1. Complete the Young Adult space renovation
2. To maintain/grow monetary support (increase % of town budget from 1.1% to ?)
3. Reach non-users (outreach re: online learning, ebooks, and other online resources)
4. Increase adult attendance at programs; discover what adults want in programs
5. Grow more with technology and increase the library's devices/replace old ones
6. Make best use of our flexible space; determine top need and plan for it
7. Improve/replace furniture & carpet (create plan & determine funding source)
8. Increase parking spots from 47 to 75-100
9. Improve role of cultural center (unique position) for all; learning, movies, music
10. Connect with and get support from local businesses for Summer Reading Program &/or card drive
11. Keep up great children's programs
12. Get a generator and become a FEMA approved Disaster Recovery Center

Results: How will you know that you are succeeding?

What are 3-5 indicators or measures that will let you know that you are moving toward your preferred future? What will be different for stakeholders?

1. People counter will show increased traffic
2. Statistics will show increased attendance at programs
3. Demographics-survey may show expansion of age range
4. There will be more parking spaces
5. There will be four more hours (given and promoted as requested by survey)
6. Borrowing/collection use will increase
7. YA programs and program attendance will increase
8. Social media will reflect outreach efforts (hits on website and friends on FB)
9. Noise levels will decrease because there will be an enclosed YA area
10. Staff will not be spread as thin

The second meeting on May 12th reviewed the SOAR exercise report and took those ideas and drafted a vision statement and suggested goals for the library's strategic plan. Attendees were asked to answer two questions:

When the Bellingham Public Library is at its best, what are you doing and what does that look like?

- It is busy
- There are lots of programs
- All the computers are being used and working well
- There are no lines (patrons do not have to wait to be served)
- Small rooms are being used for tutoring, meetings or studying
- The staff are helping people and are engaged with them
- All ages are here

- All the space is being used
- There is a group in the Community Room
- School groups are here
- Parking lot is full (of cars owned by library users)
- The website is getting lots of hits as is FB page
- People are learning online and downloading books from website
- Seismograph is being observed/used
- People are getting their needs met and are happy to be here
- Museum passes are being used

Bellingham Public Library in 2020 is vibrant and vital. What is it doing and what does it look like? Describe what you see.

- 100-150 parking spaces
- Technology that serves all needs
- Self Check-out (to free up staff from one manual task and as an option)
- A “Red Box” type service outside the library that offers books/DVDs etc.
- A strong library and school connection
- Community connections with businesses, groups and other town departments
- A creative space in the library (as determined by survey as to what is wanted)
- Non-traditional items for loan (collaboration w/ DPW or other: seeds, tools, etc)
- Library programs around town in Senior Citizen’s Center, Whole Foods, other
- Strong outreach program that ensures all citizens know the value of the library
- A vibrant Young Adult Room and outdoor patio
- An energy efficient building
- A solar canopy for the parking lot
- IT support (a part-time or full-time IT person for BPL)
- Strong connections with surrounding towns (libraries?) for joint programs
- Coordinate with senior citizens to share bus/transportation
- Library interior has totally new look with new paint, carpet, furniture and layout
- BPL is part of a town-wide strategic plan
- Diversity in programming is promoted
- A collaboration with Cable TV and BPL highlights programs/events
- Community Room is being used by many others (YA room is completed)
- Town-wide calendar improves coordinated programming
- Coffee is sold and perhaps a café is created
- Open houses and non-traditional events/programs that “hook” first time visitors and turn them into regular library users. Ideas include: pre-homecoming event and/or other sports events. Use location to entice townspeople & get support.

VISION STATEMENT

A vision statement defines the optimal desired future state of what the library wants to be over time. It is an inspirational statement that acts as the “north star” or goal. It is succinct so everyone can remember and state it.

**The Bellingham Library is the hub of the community...
where people and ideas come together.**

SURVEY RESULTS

During June & July of 2014 we surveyed community members about library services. Here are the questions and the relevant results. We had 374 respondents. In each question area the number reflected is the number of people of the 374 that chose that option. On many questions they were able to choose up to 2 to 5 options.

Question #1. Tell us the top 5 days and times you are likely to use the library. **In red are the times we are not open.**

130 - Saturday morning school year	87 - Saturday mornings summer	76 - Tuesday mornings
101 - Wednesday afternoons	86 - Friday afternoons	74 - Monday afternoons
100 - Saturday afternoon school year	82 - Wednesday mornings	74 - Saturday afternoons summer
98 - Thursday evenings	81 - Friday mornings	73 - Wednesday evenings
96 - Tuesday afternoons	80 - Monday evenings	68 - Thursday mornings
95 - Thursday afternoons	77 - Tuesday evenings	65 - Sunday afternoons Oct-Apr
91 - Monday mornings		

Analysis: The only time the library is not open that was in the top 10 times of requested times is Saturday mornings in the summer. When discussing expanding or changing hours, Saturdays during the summer, should be considered. This could be accomplished with either a budget increase; paying for those hours out of state aid or revolving fund; shortening full day Saturdays to October to April and being open from 9-1 from May through September.

Question #2 Tell us which types of items in the library collection you use or borrow most often.

347 - Books	31 - Magazine	7- Online Continuing Education Classes through Universal Class
185 - DVDs	31 – Video Games	5 - None of the above
134- Museum Passes	30 – Music CDs	4 – Online Language Learning through Mango Languages
56 – Audio Books on Cd or Playaway	11- Newspapers	4 - Online Magazines & Journals
55- Ebooks or Eaudio	9 – Online Career & Job Resources through Career Cruising	1 – Online Newspapers

Analysis: Our budget expenses for books, audio and periodicals exceed stated preferences; Video and electronic budget is less than stated preferences.

Category	Our Budget	Responses
Books	63%	45%
Audio	18%	7%
Video	6%	24%
Periodicals	8%	5%
Electronic	7%	10%

Question #3 Select the 3 library services that are most important to you.

206 – Assistance from librarians and library staff	95 – Preschool Programs	43 - Middle School Age Programs
150 – Interlibrary loan (getting materials from other libraries)	73 – Wireless Internet Access	33 – Access to and assistance with computers and Internet
149 – Library Website	58 – Adult Programs	10 - High school age programs
107 - Elementary Age Programs	53 – Online Resources (language learning, continuing education courses, job resources)	

Analysis: Pleasantly surprised by website importance being so high. Surprised that elementary age programs exceed preschool programs in importance, as attendance at preschool programs greatly exceeds elementary age program attendance. Online resources and adult programs were voted as more important than middle and high school programs. We need to better promote these offerings as they are not well used, but seem to be important to the community.

Question #4 Select the 2 aspects of library space that are most important to you.

265 – Comfortable atmosphere	92 - Book displays	14 – Informal meeting spaces
130 - Available parking	57 – Attractiveness of interior	6 – Group study rooms
97 – Quiet area	50 - Community meeting rooms	

Analysis: Quiet area is high on the list, but group study rooms are not as important. Small study rooms can serve as quiet space and that should be considered when planning space.

Question #5 Tell us which 5 of these services are most appealing to you.

188 – Library café or coffee shop	73 – School/library partnerships	35 – Film Series
116 - Ebooks	70 - Music Programs	33 – Cake Pan Library (borrow character and symbol cake pans)
115 - Red Box type service for books & DVDs when the library is closed	62 – STEM Programs	33 – Topical lectures
101 – Outdoor seating/patio	54 – Internet access	27 – Seed library (borrow plant and flower seeds and return what you can at season’s end)
96 - Afterschool homework center	53 – Art Shows/Programs	26 – Downloadable Music (like an iTunes or Pandora model)
91 – Self-checkout stations	51 – Streaming video, like a Netflix model	18 – FEMA Disaster Recovery Center
83 – Author Talks	51 - Job and career resource center	12 – Small Business Resource Center
76 - Tool Library (borrow power washers, rototillers, etc.)	39 – Group computer training	

Analysis: Work to get some kind of a café as soon as possible; continue to expand eBook budget; and begin looking at the Red Box type service and a patio before self checkout, as well as considering a formal homework center program.

Question #6 Tell us the 5 types of books you borrow most often from the library.

194- Fiction & Literature Books	46 – Craft & Hobby Books	17 – Graphic Novels
183 – Bestselling Books	32 - Cookbooks	17 – Science & Nature Books
139 – Mystery, Crime & Thriller Books	31 – Travel Books	13 – Music, Film & Theater Books
130 – Elementary Age Children’s Books	31 – Parenting & Family Books	13 – I don’t borrow books from the library
90 – Preschool Children’s Books	30 – Self Help and Self Improvement Books	11 – Computer & Technology Books
73 – Nonfiction Books	29 – History Books	10 – Sports & Adventure Books
59 – Middle School Age Children’s Books	25 –High School Age Children’s Books	10 – Business Books
58 – Science Fiction/Fantasy Books	24 – Health & Fitness Books	9 – Politics & Public Affairs Books
56 – Romance Books	21 – Home & Garden Books	9 – Poetry Books
55 – Biography Books	18 – True Crime Books	9 – Art, Architecture & Photography Books

Analysis: These results generally reflect our purchase selections.

Question #7 Have you ever had difficulty finding a parking space at the library and if yes, what did you do?

185	No, I have never had a problem parking at the library
87	Yes and I parked on the access road to the football field
75	Yes and I just left and did not go to the library that day
54	Yes, and I parked in a staff area
60	Yes, and I parked in a space that wasn’t really a space
4	Yes, and I parked in a handicapped space

Analysis: Only ½ of respondents have never had a problem and more telling to me is almost 20% of respondents one time or another just left the library when they couldn’t find parking.

Question #8 Are you?

311	Female
59	Male

Question #9 Your age range?

180	25-44
110	45-59
68	60+
4	Under 12
4	12-17
5	18-24

Analysis: Underwhelming response from those less than 24 years old. We will try a separate survey aimed at that demographic.

Question #10 Are you a Bellingham resident?

298	Yes
70	No

Analysis: A little more than 20% of respondents were not Bellingham residents. 14% of our cardholders are not Bellingham residents.

**Comments are grouped by topic and like ones grouped within the topic.
People that wrote more than one sentence as a comment in differing areas have been broken up and put in their specific area.**

Parking

- Parking safety is a concern for me. I am 'lucky' enough to have a handicapped parking permit, and consistently use it to avoid concerns about cars coming and going in the limited access parking that is available. The welcoming nature of the staff makes a huge difference to the enjoyment I receive upon visiting the library, any day or time. Thank you!
- Really need more parking spaces especially on those days that you have kid programs. The lot is packed with no space for those of us who wish to check out books, etc.
- I have not had difficulty finding parking, but I do think the parking area for patrons needs to be expanded. I also think that the library should be connected to town sewers and NOT have a septic tank
- Expanding the parking area would be helpful
- Love the BPL but parking is a challenge especially to the older driver.
- Need better parking; an expanded parking lot would be very beneficial.
- Really need more parking spaces.
- Yes get more parking spaces...
- I have never had trouble finding a parking space because I have a handicapped placard.

Hours

- I love the new library hours!
- Great to hear the new hours change allows people working day-hours four evenings to access the library!
- I love our library and appreciate the additional evening hours to accommodate those of us who work full time.
- You guys are doing an amazing job!! With the extended hours, things are only going to get better! Keep up the great work! :)
- Open at 9 am in the morning M-F. Open until 6 pm on Fri & Sat.
- Open on Saturdays during the summer would be terrific.
- Afternoon summer hours would be amazing. We can get the kids out of the heat for some quiet reading and play in the children's area.
- I love the library and really wish it was open more hours in the week. Especially the weekends, I work full time and it is very frustrating that I cannot go to the library or I need to rush to get there.

Collection

- Just a comment: my favorite feature in the library is the "staff recommendation" carousel. I go straight for it when I am not searching for a specific book. I was wondering if you would consider starting a Bellingham Library Book Club.
- Great selection of books.
- Super book selection
- Consider increasing religion / spirituality catalog.
- Maybe some type of service for college bound students. Like having textbooks needed for classes even if it's just math, English, etc.
- I enjoy the staff picks & new book section.
- I love coming to the library with or without my children. I have found that I'm having a tough time finding the books I want to read. It's great that you can get them from other libraries. It would be better if I could get them right when I'm there
- The Bellingham Library is a great place to get all of my books from.
- My family uses the library constantly, for almost all of our reading needs.

- Expand the size and increase video collection for other languages like Indian movies
- DVDs are often scratched and unusable. Maybe a "reporting" function for borrowers to let you know, so you can take it out of circulation?
- We also rely on the library and inter library loan for movie/DVD watching.

- I would love to see more than five hold spots for EBooks especially since popular ones can have hundreds of people on the waiting list.
- Very new to this area. Would like to see kindle lending etc. Do not know local newspapers yet either.
- Love the idea of the cake pan but I also would love maybe a Cricut (craft cutter) cartridge share program.
- It would be great if you could increase your Audio book collection to more current up to date novels.
- a very wide selection
- books on tape are somewhat outdated
- We have found that the recent reorganization of the children's picture books to be more confusing and less helpful than how it was set up before. It would be more useful if books were in order of author, and maybe some separated only for holiday books (Christmas, Easter, Halloween, etc)

Services

- My kids love to check out books on their cards so if I need one I have them grab it for me (and I like that they can do that at age 12)
- it was very difficult to pick only 3 reasons the library is important to us. We had to leave out interlibrary loan which is VERY important ---we use it all the time
- I borrow books frequently from the library, and am completely satisfied with the services. I love how I can order a book I am interested in online, and the book can come from any other library if it is not available in Bellingham. I also love how when the book is in, I get an email notification that it is in, and am able to pick it up without difficulty. Please never change this.
- Love the inter library loan service.
- Catalog access from home is wonderful
- One other concern I have is how the library cards expire yearly. It has been tough for me to get in and reactivate my card. Would love an alternative solution for this.
- It would be really cool if you could "join up" with the Minuteman Library Network.
- Would like to access books through the Minuteman network.
- I borrow the CD's to listen to books back and forth to work. I wish that the computer system had the capabilities to maintain a history of CD's-instead of having to maintain my own CD history.
- Similar to other stores when we forget our card it would be great for the library staff to look it up or in the past when my out of town parents have taken the kids to the library the staff have given them a hard time as their name is not on the card. This type of service is frustrating.

- I work for the Bellingham DPW, but I'm a Millville resident and the library in Millville is not accredited so I can't use the Bellingham library. I think I should be able to considering I work for the Town. You should make an exception for me.
- Love my library. Interlibrary loan is so helpful in getting me what I need.
- Computers with individual hard drives. Having a bunch of computers on one big unit slows things down. Things take forever to load and often the screen freezes (especially when it gets closer to closing time).
- More classes on the computer during the day
- I like the computers and Internet access.
- I have gone to the library on 2 separate occasions to print my resume and other job search activities, all computers were being used, I waited about 5-10 minutes and had to leave without using a computer. We need about 5 more computers, maybe 10 more.
- I would like to see the community room made available for art shows without the fear of middle schoolers and high schoolers destroying the pictures that are hung up because they play ball or disregard the valuable property in the room.
- It would be nice if there was a way to obtain museum passes on weekends for non-residents.
- It would be nice if museum passes were available for non-Bellingham residents. I live in Mendon, right on the Bellingham line and frequent the library 2 times a week. It was frustrating to have to go to the Mendon library, which is farther away and didn't have the pass that I needed anyways.

Staff

- Mr. Steve is great!
- I use the library for my grand kids who are residents..Mr. Steve is the best
- I live in Medway but have been traveling to this library for Mr. Steve's pre school programs for 3 years! Mr. Steve is amazing and so good at the classes and with the children.
- Mr. Steve plans great programs for kids!
- Mr. Steve is fabulous!
- Mr. Steve is the BEST!
- Mr. Steve is amazing!! you are very lucky to have him.
- My children love Mr. Steve.
- I want to add how great the librarians have been! So very helpful! And Mr. Steve! I can't say enough! He's wonderful! A fantastic addition to our library!
- I am from Franklin but use the Bellingham library much more often, especially because of the great children's programs and Mr Steve.

- Thank you for all you do. My family and myself enjoy going to the library almost every week.
- Everyone is always helpful and welcoming.
- The staff is wonderful and helpful. Thanks to all of you.
- Staff is awesome and pleasant.
- We love the helpful librarians.
- Name tags for librarians. First name large enough to read without glasses. If I need help I'd like to be able to address a librarian by name
- Awesome library staff!
- Very helpful, nice staff.
- Staff is always helpful and friendly.
- Great job everyone who is involved in the running of our great library.
- The librarians are terrific!
- I love this library and all of the staff!
- I find that the people employed at the Bellingham Library are kind and helpful!
- The library staff is awesome...great interaction with the patrons. This level of customer service is what keeps bringing people back.
- And you have a great staff!
- The library staff is helpful and courteous.
- Also, the staff is terrific.
- Someone on staff always greets us when we enter. The employees we have interacted with have always been helpful and kind.
- The staff is friendly
- Staff is very welcoming and informed!
- The staff is very helpful and knowledgeable.
- Wonderful helpful staff.
- The staff is helpful and pleasant
- The staff is always very nice.
- I enjoy working at our library. It's as though I've acquired a 2nd family.
- staff is terrific
- All the women at the library are so nice and helpful. Always find the books I want for me.
- Your staff is amazing and always so willing to help. They always make you feel welcomed and always smiling.

Programming

- Your children's and youth programs are fantastic! Keep up the good work.
- We absolutely love coming to the Bellingham library! Our 2 girls (7&3) love the children's area with toys & "kids" computer. Mr. Steve is a HUGE deal around our house and we so appreciate all the fabulous children's & family activities he & the library have planned. Our 7 year old still talks about

the Amazing Race and cherishes her medal. Thanks for all you do!!!

- We love all the children's programs so much!
- Children programs are excellent.
- Great children's programs.
- Activities for the children during the summer are also wonderful. It does keep them interested in reading.
- I think the Bellingham library is fantastic, especially the children's programs. I prefer it over my hometown library - which is Franklin.
- We really enjoy the preschool programs at the library. They have been a great thing to look forward to as my son grows.
- Throughout my children's young life we have enjoyed many of the wonderful program and services offered.
- Your programming for young kids is awesome!
- I think that the summer reading program for kids is wonderful! No complaints, I just wanted to let you know!
- I think the library offers wonderful programs for children!
- We are a homeschooling family and have loved some of the educational opportunities you've had for homeschool families - there were 2 this past year that we knew about. We would love more!!!
- I have noticed that more preschool and elementary programs have been added the past few years. Please keep up the good work!!!
- Summer programs for kids are excellent.
- Your library is terrific. The programs for children of all ages are the biggest attraction for us. We live in a surrounding town and the preschool/youth programs are scarce and not engaging.
- I am so amazed at the quality and quantity of the children's programs at our library. I am always telling friends with small children about our library and am saddened to hear that they do not have what we in Bellingham have
- I love the preschool age programs you offer. They are fantastic and are usually very full. Parking can be very tight when these programs are being offered. My children enjoy the play area in the children's room after attending a program which allows me to meet other parents and allow enrichment time for my children. I am so impressed with the Bellingham library that I just keep coming back.
- With such great children's programming going on, it is sometimes hard to get a parking spot.
- Mr. Steve's classes for the children are excellent. He is amazing with the kids and knows how to capture their attention.
- I love and appreciate having activities for young children. My child attends Book Babies; however I cannot attend because I work full time. I would love to have more opportunities to have these groups on the weekends.

- More adult programs. I would especially like programs on the history of Bellingham.
- I would like to see more programs to update computer skills with new technology w/ Library or w/ school system
- I would like to learn more about book clubs that may meet in the evening as well. Thank you!
- I would like to see genealogy classes
- I like all of the programs and I think going 21st century is a great idea.
- More lectures on utilizing online resources. More thematic events.
- Because I work until 6pm Monday thru Friday, it's very important to me for the library to have adult functions in the evening hours. Really loved the films and music programs.

Facility

- Comfortable chairs - i.e. ones with padded seats. I have sciatica and the wooden ones are tough on that but the ones on wheels that look more comfortable... well, they're on wheels
- Love the idea of an eating area so when I come with kids we can have a snack. Also a good area for people to meet up.
- A very nice environment
- I like the setup of the library
- As an adult I use our library to correct papers and do research (usually on Saturday afternoons) and find the atmosphere perfect.
- I grew up in Bellingham, and now my mom (who still lives there) and I use the library for my baby boy when we come up every week. You have a beautiful little children's area (love the Bruins stuff!)
- I love the idea of a patio.
- I love working on a puzzle and enjoy the air conditioning and relax!! I enjoy picking out a movie (DVD) to watch at home with or without my husband ("chick flick")
- Kids outdoor play place if possible

General comments

- I have been very happy re-connecting with the library services since my sister pushed for a visit last year.
- Thank you!
- Love the library
- I responded on behalf of myself. My middle school age kids would have responded differently and are unlikely to take a survey. Please do outreach/gather feedback from youth as well (especially middle school / high school aged b/c younger kids will likely have parents responding on their behalf)
- I think that the people of Bellingham are very fortunate to have such a great library available to them. Thank you for all you do!
- We love the library!

- Thank you for everything you do.
- Bellingham library is incredible.
- The library is a wonderful resource in the community for all ages -- keep up the great work! Thanks for all you do!
- My son isn't in middle school just yet (4th grader), but I chose many "middle school" answers as I don't want to see those services lost before we get a chance to try them out
- I love this library.
- We love the library and are very happy with the resources and services available.
- We love the Library! Everyone is very helpful and happy! I am not a resident but my precious granddaughters are residents. THANK YOU :o)
- I think the library and its staff do a terrific job with limited resources
- Keep up the great work. We love our library!
- I love the Bellingham Library! It has always been a great resource for me and my family. I would recommend a yearly reminder for people about renewing their "friends of the library" membership- I'm not sure where my membership stands right now, but was happy to be a card carrying member.
- The Bellingham Public Library truly excels in making the most out of the resources it is given. I am always impressed, and even more so excited by what the future holds. Libraries are transitioning, and it'll be very interesting to see the exciting changes in community-based systems.
- Service has always been great & friendly at the library. We have only lived here for the past 2 years but love the library.
- Live in Franklin but work in Bellingham schools, so library is handy resource for me
- I often find myself borrowing books when I should be doing work. Keep up the good work BPL!
- Love our library, great resources and staff!!
- Thank you!
- I think the library does a great job.
- I think the library is wonderful!

Other comments

- Although I'm not a resident of Bellingham but live near the border of Bellingham over in Milford, I also don't mean to be a traitor or anything but I really like coming to the Bellingham Public Library more than the Milford Public Library. Even if they are both in central Mass and I don't want to discriminate, Milford used to have more to offer like printers which I tend to use once in a while. Since I live near the Bellingham town border, the Bellingham Library is a lot closer to me now, I think. If I'm interested in renting a movie, Bellingham has more selection than Milford too. I've got a few nice things to bring up it's that both Milford and Bellingham librarians are all nice and helpful people and I really like the online education provided through Bellingham. Also if I ever need to take a day trip, I really like the passes that both the libraries offer. I like the wooded area setting of the Bellingham Library too and I also like the architectural structure and atmosphere setting at the

Hopedale and Grafton Public Library. Hopedale also offers the same tools that I look for but they tend to have shorter opening hours and limited days too. Now I know this might be too much to ask for and might be farfetched, I've seen a coffee shop within the Worcester Public Library and thought it would be nice to see similar shops at either the Bellingham or Milford libraries. :)

- I enjoy the library as it stands; the changes I'd like to see aren't much of actual changes but augmentation. Added parking, added loaning, added hours, etc.
- I enjoy the atmosphere, the big comfy chairs, as well as using the museum and park passes, computer and "quiet" rooms. I also enjoy the puzzle table. The library is very relaxing after a long work day or week. Maybe we should add a yoga class. :)

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE LONG-RANGE PLAN FY2011-FY2020

The group then reviewed the notes of the planning committee and drafted preliminary goals. The library director, in coordination with the staff and trustees, prepared a community survey that was completed by members of the community between June 24, 2014 and July 31, 2014. Based on the results of the work of the committee and the survey, the director, staff and trustees have set the following goals for the next 5 years:

Facility

Year 1

- **Parking/Sewer** - Develop, plan and secure funding to expand library parking to 100 spaces and connect the library to town sewer through the high school connection. As part of the process, investigate the feasibility of solar panels being incorporated into the parking plan.
- **Book Drop** – As recommended by our insurance company, explore options on either fireproofing our current book drop that is inside the building, or as part of the parking/sewer project, install an outdoor, drive up, book drop.
- **Café** – Determine appropriate space to provide and sell hot beverages in a café area.
- **Storage** – Explore ways to reconfigure space to meet storage needs.
- **Sign/Landscaping** – Work with Eagle Scout Candidate to replace outdoor marquee and landscape the sign area.
- **Windowsill Repair** – Work with town carpenter to fix damaged window sills throughout the exterior of the building.

Year 2

- **Painting** – Plan, prioritize and secure funding to paint both the interior and exterior of the library using both library staff and painting professionals.
- **Middle & High School Age Area** – Secure funding to renovate and enclose this area of the library.
- **Meeting Rooms** – Explore options for increasing the number of small meeting rooms whether by renovating the old typing rooms or adding a meeting room as part of the Middle & High School Age area renovation.
- **Energy Efficient Lighting** – Replace dated lighting fixtures with energy efficient ballasts using rebates from National Grid in areas of the building that need better lighting (children’s program room, circulation desk, and technical services area).

Years 3-5

- **Carpet** – Plan, prioritize and secure funding to replace carpet, in sections, throughout the majority of the building.
- **Patio** – Explore options for long term acquisition of patio space outside of the Middle & High School Age Area
- **Furniture** – Plan, prioritize and secure funding to replace dated and damaged furniture.
- **Generator** – Acquire funding for a generator that would enable the library to stay open and serve as a community information center with Internet Access and a charging center during electrical outages and storms.

Technology

Year 1

- **Computer Hardware & Software** – Keep up to date with computer technology to meet the needs of library staff and the general public.
- **Social Media** – Develop systems to optimize the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, You Tube, etc.)
- **Electronic Message Board** – Plan and secure funding to install an indoor electronic message board at the circulation desk to relay information about library and community programs to the public.
- **IT Support** – Work with Town Tax Work Off Program or local colleges to find qualified IT help to assist the library with ongoing computer maintenance and upgrades.

Year 2

- **Website** – Maintain up-to-date website to meet the needs of the community. Explore website design and mobile compatibility.
- **Remote Services** – Explore options and expand opportunities for the public to engage with the library remotely.
- **Library Vending Machine** – Explore the demand and feasibility of obtaining a vending machine (like a Red Box) to dispense books and DVDs when the library is closed.

Years 3-5

- **Self-Check Out Station** – Plan and secure funding to acquire a self-check out station to free library staff for higher level activities and give patrons options on checkout.

Programs & Services

Year 1

- **Staff Training** – Take advantage of opportunities to expand staff expertise and staff training through grants, programs offered by C/WMARS (our library network), Massachusetts Library System, Massachusetts Library Association, New England Library Association and grant funding from the Mass Board of Library Commissioners and other sources.
- **School Outreach** - Work with key school staff to expand opportunities to collaborate with all of the Bellingham schools to improve student achievement in all grades.
- **STEM** – Continue to offer science, technology, engineering and math programs using the seismograph, 3D Printer and other tech tools acquired as part of our Shaking Up STEM grant. Look into opportunities to expand the STEM programming to other topics.
- **Community Outreach & Offsite Programming** - Work with key community members to expand opportunities to collaborate with the Senior Center, Local Access Cable TV, the Youth Center and commercial businesses to offer programs and services to the community.
- **Collections** – Maintain and grow library collections (both physical and electronic) of books, DVDs, CDs and other formats to meet the needs of the community. Explore expanding museum pass offerings.
- **Adult Programs** – Explore best options for adult programs including art, music, lectures and films.

- **Afterschool Programs** – Maintain a vibrant and well-attended afterschool program for middle and high school aged children.
- **Children’s Programs** – Maintain vibrant and well-attended programs for preschoolers and elementary school age children.

Year 2

- **Creative Space** – Explore ways to reconfigure library space to offer a creative space. A space where people can gather for creative pursuits be it crafts, technology or other use of their leisure time.
- **Open Houses** - Work with other town departments on Blackstone Street (police, fire, DPW, Senior Center) to offer an annual open house to highlight programs and services to the community. Coordinate open houses with Homecoming, the Thanksgiving Football Game and the 4th of July Fireworks when activities are taking place at the football field next door.
- **Multigenerational Programs** – Explore the best options for introducing multigenerational (grandparent-grandchild) programs to the community.
- **Library Resources** – Offer training for the public in effective use of library resources.

Years 3-5

- **Nontraditional Borrowing** – Explore community interest in nontraditional library borrowing programs such as cake pans, seeds and tools, or other needs identified by the community.
- **Hours** – Explore feasibility of funding Saturday morning summer hours.

ACTION PLAN FY16

Goal 1: Facilities

<p>Objective: Expand library parking.</p> <p>Time Frame: Through July 2016</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: Work with selectmen and DPW to investigate options for expanding parking lot. Go to fall 2014 Town Meeting with an interim plan to secure approximately 20 spaces immediately. Work on parking enforcement plan to insure that library spaces are only used by library patrons when the library is open.</p>
<p>Objective: Replace or renovate the library book drop as recommended in our insurance inspection.</p> <p>Time Frame: July – December 2015</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: Depending upon the results of the parking lot expansion, one of these two options will be explored and implemented as soon as possible.</p>
<p>Objective: Identify an area in the building that could serve as a patron café.</p> <p>Time Frame July – December 2015</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: As our community survey identified it as a patron priority, explore options for and appropriate space to locate and provide a place to sell hot beverage in a café area.</p>
<p>Objective: Reconfigure space to meet storage needs.</p> <p>Time Frame July – December 2015</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: Evaluate the current use of storage areas and determine what shelving or other materials are needed to optimize space.</p>
<p>Objective: Replace outdoor marquee and landscape sign area.</p> <p>Time Frame July – December 2015</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: Work with Eagle Scout Candidate to coordinate the project with the sign company, granite company, electrician and landscape contractor.</p>
<p>Objective : Windowsill repair</p> <p>Time frame July – December 2015</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: Work with town carpenter to fix damaged window sills throughout the building.</p>

Goal 2: Technology

<p>Objective: Computer Hardware & Software Maintenance</p> <p>Time Frame: July 2015 – June 2016</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: Review hardware and software needs and update as necessary to meet the needs of library staff and the general public.</p>
<p>Objective: Social Media Optimization</p> <p>Time Frame January – June 2016</p>	<p>FY16 Action/Method: Develop systems to optimize the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, You Tube, etc.)</p>

Objective: Electronic Message Board Time Frame July – December 2015	FY16 Action/Method: Plan and secure funding to install an indoor electronic message board at the circulation desk to relay information about library and community programs to the public.
Objective: IT Support Time Frame July 2015 – June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: Work with Town Tax Work Off Program or local colleges to find qualified IT help to assist the library with ongoing computer maintenance and upgrades.

Goal 3: Programs & Services

Objective: Staff Training Time Frame: July 2015 – June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: In addition to successfully executing our "Customer Experience in the Digital Age" LSTA grant, enable staff to take advantage of opportunities to expand expertise and training by attending workshops and trainings at C/W MARS (our library network), Massachusetts Library System, Massachusetts Library Association, New England Library Association and other sources.
Objective: School Outreach Time Frame September 2015-June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: Work with key school staff to expand opportunities to collaborate with all of the Bellingham schools to improve student achievement in all grades.
Objective: STEM Programming Time Frame September 2015 – June 2016	FY16Action/Method: Continue to offer STEM programs using the seismograph, 3D Printer and other tech tools as part of our "Shaking Up STEM" grant. Look for opportunities to expand the STEM programming to other topics.
Objective: Community Outreach & Offsite Programming Time Frame July 2015-June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: Work with key community members to expand opportunities to collaborate with the Senior Center, Local Access Cable TV, the Youth Center and commercial businesses to offer programs and services to the community.
Objectives: Collection Management Time Frame July 2015-June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: Maintain and grow library collection (both physical and electronic) of books, DVDs, CDs and other formats to meet the needs of the community. Based on survey results, explore expanding museum pass offerings.
Objectives: Adult Program Planning Time Frame September 2015-June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: Explore best options for adult programs, including art, music, lectures and films.
Objectives: Afterschool Program Planning Time Frame September 2015-June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: Maintain a vibrant and well attended afterschool program for middle and high school aged children
Objectives: Children's Program Planning Time Frame July 2015-June 2016	FY16 Action/Method: Maintain vibrant and well attended programs for preschoolers and elementary school age children.

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.