



Fort Edward Public Library

Strategic Plan

2021 – 2025

Mission Statement

We will continue to preserve our past and present resources while researching, developing, and investing in new materials, programs, and services that will benefit our community.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

History of Organization and Landscape Review

Mission Statement

Vision Statement

Value Statement

Community Aspiration

Strategic Priorities

Outcomes Goals and Objectives

Resource Identification

The Planning Process

Acknowledgments

The 2021-2025 Strategic Plan for the Fort Edward Free Library was created jointly by a committee of Library Trustees, Library staff, stakeholders and community leaders. Community meetings were held to record public input and patron needs were surveyed. A great deal of consideration was given in the delivery of this document. We are grateful to those who contributed to its formation and we look forward to successful implementation of this plan in the years to come.

James Donahue
President, Board of Trustees

2020-2021 Board of Trustees

James Donahue
Janelle Rose
Mary Ellen Fisher
Kathleen Smatko
Denise Mayer
Katie Hunsdon-Stannard

Planning Committee Members

James Donahue
Katie Hunsdon-Stannard
Mary Ellen Fisher
Vicki Plude

Fort Edward Free Library Staff

Vicki Plude
Lynne Ives

Library History

One hundred and six years ago, 43 Fort Edward ladies met at the home of Mrs. A. P. Hill for the purpose of organizing a Civic League. One of the committees formed at that meeting was a library committee. Six months later, in September of 1914, the library committee revealed its plan to establish a free library in the village. The Board of Regents for and on behalf of, the Education Department of the State of New York, granted an absolute charter to the Fort Edward Free Library, Fort Edward, Washington County. It was incorporated by the Board of Regents under a provisional charter granted on March 4, 1915, and extended by action of the Regents on December 20, 1940, and June 21, 1946, and has continued the said corporation with all its powers, privileges and duties. The library subsequently opened at the corner of Broadway and Washington Street.

In 1919 it was moved to 190 Broadway and in 1932 the library moved to its present location at 23 East Street, the former Crane House. The library building has seen many changes throughout the years.

In 1996, the library expanded and the children's room was added. Other renovations at the time consisted of new library shelving, carpeting, circulation desk, siding, pane windows and landscaping. Mr. John Weber of Weber Cabinets provided the shelving and the circulation desk.

In 2006 the library front reading room was renovated with new shelving and named after a former Fort Edward High School math teacher, Marietta Hanna. The Marietta Hanna reading room holds non-fiction titles, large print titles, audios, serials and a historical cabinet.

In 2010 new flooring was installed in the Children's room and new carpeting was installed in the main area, young adult section and stairway.

The library is fully automated. There are two computers available for public use and internet access. The library has WIFI connection which will accommodate local patrons as well as visitors. The library provides availability of electrical outlets for allowing patrons to access their electronic devices. It is recommended that patrons bring their own connections to enable them to charge their devices.

In 2018 a grant was awarded from the Washington County Home for Aged Women, Inc. for our driveway expansion. This expansion now accommodates parking for up to nine cars with another 3 spaces designated for persons with disabilities.

In 2019 the library was awarded a Construction Challenge Grant from SALS. This grant allowed the library to purchase and install outdoor lighting over the new parking lot, update the inside of the library's electrical capacity by installing new electrical outlets in the young adult section, update electrical circuits to allow more effective usage, convert interior lights to LED and seal and paint lines on the new parking lot.

In September of 2020 a grant was awarded from the Washington County Home for Aged Woman, Inc. for purchase and installation of a new drive-up return material drop box. The new drop box was installed in spring 2021.

Demographics

As of 2020, the village of Fort Edward has 3,108 residents, with 48.5% male and 51.5% female.

Ethnically, the village is approximately 90% white, 5.4% identifying as two or more races 2.7% Hispanic and 1.9% other.

10.3% live in poverty

The median resident age is 37.

Description of Community

Our community is racially, economically, educationally and religiously diverse. We are a close-knit community with deep historic roots. The library strives to have resources available to all these community members of various backgrounds.

Three Statements

Our Vision – To be the center of a community network that provides lifelong learning without disparity toward culture, race, background or ability.

Our Mission – We will continue to preserve our past and present resources while researching, developing, and investing in new materials, programs and services that benefit our community.

Our Values – We believe that everyone in our community is welcome and deserves the same learning and enrichment opportunities.

Community Aspiration

The community expressed a desire for more businesses and activities available within the area and clear communication as to when activities happen.

Strategic Priorities

The library will discover resources and programs that anticipate and satisfy the needs of everyday information, enjoyment and enlightenment. We will investigate media sources to help facilitate effective communication of current offerings to the community. The library will continuously assess building needs, make environmentally-sound facility decisions, maintain a sustainable budget and staff and increase communication with key community agencies.

Outcomes, Goals and Objectives

Goal 1 - The Library will strive to play a more visible role in the community.

- a. Implementation: Library Director
- b. Goal: The library will have a more visible role in the community.
- c. Target group: People of all ages. Objective: People will be drawn to the library because it is a welcoming and fun place to visit, a place that provides unique and engaging programs and resources.
- d. Action steps: Increase program attendance and increase circulation materials. Increase the impact of the library within the community.
- e. Time frame: Steps will be taken on an ongoing basis.
- f. Measurement: Will survey in five years to determine the success of our plan with a minimum of a 50% awareness.

Goal 2 – Provide essential technology to the community.

- a. Implementation: Library Board and Library Director
- b. Goal: To provide modern technology to our patrons and community by providing state-of-the-art computers and other technical tools.
- c. Target Group: People of all ages and abilities.
- d. Objective: Patrons will have access to electronics and tools aided by library staff as needed.
- e. Action steps: Train library staff, utilizing SALS tools, to maintain library inventory. Train staff to support public access to technology. Consider what emerging technology to purchase. Pursue grants to purchase technology items.
- f. Timeframe: Steps will be taken on an ongoing basis.
- g. Measurement: Will survey in five years to determine the success of our plan with a minimum of a 50% awareness.

Goal 3 – Focus on Sustainability

- a. Implementation: Library Board and Library Director
- b. Goal: The Library will continuously evaluate building, budget staffing needs.
- c. Target Group: All patrons.
- d. Objective: Have an environmentally-friendly library and building, a sustainable budget and improved staff development.
- e. Action steps: Solicit community volunteers to supplement staff, proactively address any building needs, pursue opportunities for fundraising, donations and grants.
- f. Time Frame: Steps will be taken on an ongoing basis.
- g. Measurement: Will survey in five years to determine the success of our plan with a minimum of 50% awareness.

Resource Identification

The Strategic Planning Committee developed this plan while considering the impact on the budget. Its adoption, by the Board, affirms goals and objectives presented. The plan will be available to the public on the library website. It will be continuously evaluated and edited to serve as a living document and will evolve and be adapted to ensure all goals and objectives are met.

The Planning Process

In October of 2019, the Board of Trustees and Library Director, Vicki Plude met with Erica Freudenberger of the Southern Adirondack Library System (SALS) to review the strategic planning process. The board elected to follow the SALS' Engaged Planning process, incorporating tools developed for the American Library Association by the Harwood Institute for Public Innovation. The board then formed a committee to identify community needs, select potential service priorities to fulfill those needs, set goals based on the selected services and craft objectives to measure progress toward meeting those goals.

In December of 2019, the ASK Aspiration Questionnaire was disseminated to the public for input toward what they envision for our community.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, we were set back in our planning process until we met again with members of the community to continue with strategic planning in June 2021. Following that meeting, the Strategic Planning Committee reviewed the identified goals and determined which were within the scope of the library's mission and abilities. The committee met three more times thereafter and developed a plan for completing these goals.

Approved December 8, 2021