

**Chelmsford Public Library**  
**Long Range Plan**  
**FY 2007 to FY 2009**

**Introduction**

Despite the dire prediction that the book is in demise and the world of technology is taking its place, there appears to be plenty of room for a peaceful and lasting coexistence between printed books and electronic text. As author and futurist Howard Rheingold says “The book remains one of the most robust, useful, and universal technologies ever invented.” We see the truth of this every day as circulation figures skyrocket at the same time that our computer use continues to expand. Our library patrons also agree, with 96.3% of our 2005 library survey respondents saying that they plan to use their library as much or more in the next five years.

Library patrons come to Chelmsford every day to check their e-mail, book tickets on-line, research consumer, stock and health information databases and yes, to check out books. Book discussion groups, story times and author visits remain immensely popular and our library patron satisfaction levels are at 98.5%. Due to the recent economic downturn, the last few years have been especially busy.

Across the United States, libraries are facing the deepest budget cuts in history. In the last few years libraries have reduced their hours, cut staff or in some extreme cases, closed their doors. Massachusetts libraries have not been immune to these cuts. In FY2001, just two libraries applied for state-aid waivers because of cutbacks in their community. In FY2002 it was five, and in FY2003 it was 11. In FY2004, communities started to feel the effects of economic recession and an incredible 70 libraries applied for waivers. The numbers remained high in FY05 with still 50 libraries needing waivers.

The town of Chelmsford has been fortunate that due to sound fiscal management and conservative library budgets, our state aid allotment was not in serious jeopardy – although the town manager did request an additional library budget allotment of \$20,104 at a supplemental town meeting in October 2005 in order to qualify the library for state aid. In the past three years, staff and hours were reduced at the MacKay Branch. Sunday hours were cut from the municipal budget and instead funded out of state aid on a reduced scale. Our technology and book budgets were slashed and cost-of-living raises for non-union personnel have been virtually non-existent. Our circulation has increased by nearly 30% since we opened the new building while our staffing over the same periods has decreased.

Librarians have long believed that when the economy goes into recession, public library use increases. But there was no data to substantiate this belief until the American Library Association hired the University of Illinois Library Research Center (LRC) to study library use. Using data from 18 large public libraries, the study found that circulation has increased significantly since March 2001, when the National Bureau of Economic Research pegged the beginning of the latest recession. Using statistical analysis, the LRC found that circulation in March 2001 was 8.3 percent higher than would be expected from the trend observed since

January 1997. Following the events of September 11, circulation in October 2001 exceeded the trend by 11.3 percent.

"This data confirms what librarians have seen from experience - that in times of economic difficulties, people turn to their libraries and librarians," said former ALA President John W. Berry. "Libraries are America's great information equalizers - the only place people of all ages and backgrounds can find and freely use such a diversity of resources, along with the expert guidance of librarians."

The previous long-range plan from 2000-2003 was created for what was perceived as a new era of library service for the town of Chelmsford. It was the time to embrace new technologies and offer a larger, expanded and updated library facility to the community. Response to the new library building was phenomenal with 4,290 new library cards being issued in the first two years. We have continued to increase our patron base at a rate of 1817 new library cardholders per year. It has now been 5 years since the new building opened and use patterns have been established. In light of the increased economic stresses on staffing, services and collections, it is time to take stock of what we are doing and how we can do it better. It also is the time to build upon our successes.

### **Planning Methodology**

In the spring of 2005, a long-range planning committee was formed -- comprised of library staff, trustees and Friends of the Library. We met several times with three consultants from the Northeast Massachusetts Regional Library System (NMRLS) who guided us through the long-range planning process. These steps included re-tooling our community vision statement, an analysis of our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT), a review of the library and community profile/scan, and a session focusing on goals and objectives.

NMRLS hosted a library survey for us on their website and collected and compiled the results for us to review. We also had hard copies of the survey available in the library and at various locations around town. Input in the planning process was solicited from the town manager, town department heads and town meeting representatives via an e-mail distribution list. The Rotary Club of Chelmsford was asked to participate in the library survey and staff members gave us their ideas in a workshop conducted by Redline Consulting out of Norwood, MA.

Library Department Heads met every two weeks for updates on the long-range planning process and an editing committee was formed. The plan was submitted to the trustees for approval on September 14<sup>th</sup> and submitted to the Board of Library Commissioners by the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.

Special thanks to the many people who helped with this process:

- Library Staff who willingly attended bi-weekly meetings, developed surveys, collected statistics and data.

Kathy Cryan-Hicks, Head of Community Services  
Maureen Foley, Head of Children's Services  
Becky Herrmann, Library Director  
Christopher Kupec, Assistant Director  
Christine MacDonald, Head of Reference  
Barbara Morrison, Assistant Director of Technology  
Nancy Rager, Office and Facilities Manager  
Linda Robinson, Head of Circulation Services  
Vickie Turcotte, Head of Technical Services

- The Board of Library Trustees, who gave their time and ideas and who assisted with surveys

Eric Groves*	Elizabeth A. McCarthy
Linda Hubbard	Carol Sneden
Steve Maloney	Patricia Wojtas
Margaret E. Marshall*	

#### **\*Long-Range Committee Members**

- The Chelmsford Friends of the Library, who also contributed time and ideas and placed two Friends members on our Long-Range Planning Committee: Madeleine Needles and Andy Michaud.

### **Chelmsford: A Profile**

Ideally, every public library acts in concert with the community and the patrons it serves. An essential part of the planning process is to analyze the community, articulate and reaffirm a community vision, determine the community needs and finally decide which community needs library services are able to address.

The LRP Committee reviewed demographic figures, business indicators, town services, recent bond proposals for the town and Chelmsford's Comprehensive Five Year Plan and Master Plan. The Committee conducted a patron survey via our web page and in-house. In addition, survey notices were e-mailed to all town officials and Town Meeting representatives.

Chelmsford is a residential community consisting of 22.54 square miles and is located in Northern Middlesex County. Chelmsford is bordered by the densely populated city of Lowell to the north; the suburban city of Billerica to the east; the rural community of Carlisle to the south and the rapidly growing semi-rural community of Westford to the west. Chelmsford is 24 miles from Boston and 40 miles from the city of Worcester. Its climate is closer to southern New Hampshire than Boston and North Shore communities.

Public libraries bridge the digital divide. 95% of libraries in the United States offer public access computers and 14 million people regularly use them. Consumer Reports states that 80% of households with income over \$50,000 a year have home Internet access and half of the households with income over \$75,000 have broadband access.

This is borne out through our library survey statistics. 92.3% of survey respondents had Internet access from home with 66.7% of them having broadband access and 25.6% having dial-up service. –And yet, they continue to come to the library for guidance and instruction. Not only do librarians in Chelmsford introduce computer novices to the Internet jungle, but they also instruct and inform the many members of our business community who avail themselves of our wireless access.

As more and more of our business, recreational and educational goods and services are primarily being offered over the Internet, library patrons are more plugged into technology advances and becoming increasingly self-sufficient. But with the increased interest in technology, the demands to offer -- faster, better, more sophisticated and often more costly -- options increase too. Our challenge is to continue to keep abreast of new technologies at the same time as we watch the bottom line. Prioritizing patron needs will be paramount as this three year plan is implemented.

In addition to changing library use due to the evolution of technology, there are larger community impacts at work. Social and political issues have been stirred up and the public debate has been lively. Issues such as 9/11, the War in Iraq, gay marriage –the Patriot Act, the Children’s Internet Protection Act and stem cell research are hot buttons for some and create opportunities for the library to present materials and programs that encourage the community to see all sides of an issue. An uncertain economy can also limit resources. State funding has been influenced by the War in Iraq and long-term effects of Hurricane Katrina have yet to be determined.

## **History**

Settlers came to Chelmsford in 1653, when a group of 39 citizens from the neighboring towns of Woburn and Concord received a six mile settlement grant from the General Court. In 1655, the Town was incorporated. Chelmsford Center was initially settled and here the Town built its first meeting house. The oldest roads in the area intersect here. Other settlements grew up around mill activities in North and West Chelmsford.

After the Revolutionary War, Chelmsford was the site of important improvements in transportation and communications. The valuable Pawtucket Falls of the Merrimack River was

the first such project with the development of the lock and canals on the Merrimack River. The Pawtucket and Middlesex Canals provided the basis for investment by textile manufacturers which would transform the area, resulting in the formation of the City of Lowell which split from Chelmsford in 1826. This division separated Chelmsford from the areas with the highest industrial potential. As a result, Chelmsford remained essentially agricultural, providing food for those employed in the mills of Lowell.

During the 1830's, railroads came to town. The first was the Lowell and Nashua Railroad, with a station built in North Chelmsford. This was followed by the Stony Brook Railroad with stations at North and West Chelmsford, and the Framingham and Lowell Railroad which brought service to the rest of the Town.

During the 1880's, manufacturing became the most common type of employment in Chelmsford accounting for nearly half of the work force. The largest industry was wool and cotton textile manufacturing. Manufacturing accelerated in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Population growth doubled between 1880 and 1915. During the Depression of the 1930's, Chelmsford's manufacturing base was hurt. The population continued to increase and residents were increasingly employed in neighboring cities.

Between 1950 and 1960, the population increased by 60%; between 1960 and 1970 by 107%. Land once used as pastures, corn fields, and hayfields, between Chelmsford's old roads was laid out with new streets; new housing was built.

The State improved its highway system with the construction of a new Route 3 in the 1950's and Interstate 495 in the 1960's. These industrial highways, which provided easy access routes to Route 128 and to Boston, paved the way for the high tech boom and rapid industrial growth of the 1980's. During this decade, Chelmsford experienced tremendous commercial growth that provided additional services. The new tax growth of the 1980's accounted for approximately 20% of the tax levy.

The recession in the national economy during the early 1990's affected the regional and local economy. The rapid growth of the 1980's was over. In 1992, the town Assessors anticipated revenues from new growth at \$150,000 - down from \$1,154,426 in 1986. At the same time, much of Chelmsford's industrial base deteriorated. Wang Laboratories in neighboring Lowell, once a major employer in the area, let go thousands of workers; Digital Equipment Corporation closed its Chelmsford facility; other business and high-tech companies moved or downsized. In fact, Chelmsford's Industrial Park resembled a high-tech ghost town. In 1992, 45% of business properties in Chelmsford, both new and old, were vacant.

In 1993, the Town looked to the future with cautious optimism. The Town had stabilized its fiscal condition through downsizing, restructuring and reducing its debt service. Business development began to improve. Over the next five years, the Town's revenues continued to experience moderate increases. These increases reflected slow but steady improvement in the regional and local economies.

The late 1990's and the early 2000's were a robust period in Chelmsford history with budget revenue growing by about 5% per year. But during the period of FY03-FY05, revenue has only grown by an average of 2.7% per year. According to town manager Bernard Lynch, lean fiscal conditions began in 2003 and exist as a result of an economic environment that has affected private sector growth and investment and accordingly state and local budgets. This period has been described by many as the most difficult fiscal climate for states and municipalities since the 1930's. The economic downturn after the prosperity of the 1990's, along with increasing expenses related to various "fixed" costs in a number of areas including health care, insurance and pensions has placed pressure and fiscal uncertainty onto state and local budgets.

## **Chelmsford Schools**

Chelmsford is proud of its school system. In the early 1990's residents showed support of the schools by passing a Proposition 2 \_ override to maintain quality education in the community.

District wide enrollment in the Chelmsford Public Schools for 2004-2005 was 5,732 students. Enrollment has remained relatively constant for the past three years, after an increase of approximately 100 students each of the three years prior to that. Enrollment in 1997-1998 was 5,409 students.

Increased enrollment projections at that time necessitated a town wide redistricting plan in 1996. In addition, the Center School, which was closed in the 1980's, reopened in September 1999, alleviating overcrowding in the elementary schools. Currently there are one high school, two middle schools, and five elementary schools as part of the Chelmsford School District. Chelmsford's Charter School was established in 1994 under the MA Educational Reform Act.

Chelmsford students' average SAT scores in both verbal and math (522 and 524, respectively for 2004) are significantly higher than the state or national average. In 2004, 73.8% of high school graduates went on to four year college programs; 14% to 2 year programs and 4% entered the workforce.

The total public education budget for FY2006 is projected at \$42.3 million or 47.6 percent of the entire municipal budget. Chelmsford Charter School is approximately one percent of the total municipal budget; while Nashoba Technical High School is 1.4 percent of the budget. Per pupil expenditures in 2003 was \$7,350, which was less than the state average.

The Chelmsford School Committee continues to be committed to the mission "to cultivate the development of students into self-confident, lifelong learners and responsible citizens who possess personal integrity and the ability to succeed in a global society."

## Demographics

### Population

The state of Massachusetts was the only state to lose population in 2004 and while Chelmsford's population has not decreased, it has been leveling out. This trend is expected to continue. While residential population is static, daytime population is still increasing due to commercial and industrial development over the last ten years.

With a population of 33,858 in 2000, the population has remained relatively stable since 1970. The population will decrease slightly over the next 15 years according to current population projections. There will be a decrease of approximately 700, or 2.1 percent by 2010, according to the 2003 MISER (The MA Institute for Social & Economic Research at UMass Amherst) study. MISER's projection for 2020 is a decrease of 4.6 percent from the 2010 projection.

1970.....	31,432
1980.....	31,174
1990.....	32,383
1995.....	33,013
2000.....	33,858
2010 (projected)...	33,151
2020 (projected)...	31,602

Source: MISER 2003

The median age of the Town's citizens has increased over the past twenty years. In 1970, the median age was 25.4; in 1990, it was 34.9; in 2000, it was 38.9. The population under 18 years shows a slight decline while the number of residents over 65 is increasing. The age groups below 18 years and above 65 are of major concern in community planning because these are the groups that require the most municipal services.

### Chelmsford Age Composition

<u>Age</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Under 18 years	7,613	8,455	11%
Between 18 - 64	21,613	20,985	-3%
65 years and older	3,135	4,418	41%

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Changes in age distribution will have a direct impact on the demands for library services and materials. As the population grows older, formats and services will be expanded including large print books, audio books and deliveries to homebound and elderly residential housing communities.

Even though the ethnic composition of library users appears to have evolved --evidenced by the mix of ethnic groups attending story times and conversation groups at the library -- the actual town demographics haven't changed dramatically. Chelmsford is still rather homogenous with over 93% being Caucasian. The racial makeup of library patrons however is more diverse, as library users reflect not only our community but many of the surrounding cities and towns. Lowell residents in particular make up a significant portion of our borrowers.

Chelmsford

**Race or Ethnicity (U.S. Census, 2000)**

White	31520	93.09%
Black/African-American	266	0.79%
American Indian	23	0.07%
Asian	1563	4.62%
Pacific Islander	3	0.01%
Other	177	0.52%
Two or More	306	0.90%
Hispanic	418	1.23%

Lowell

**Race or Ethnicity (U.S. Census, 2000)**

White	72,145	68.60%
Black/African-American	4,423	4.21%
American Indian	256	0.24%
Asian	17,371	16.52%
Pacific Islander	38	0.04%
Other	6,813	6.48%
Two or More	4,121	3.92%
Hispanic	14,734	14.01%

**Educational Attainment**

Forty-four percent of residents over 25 years old have a college education or more and 93 percent have completed high school. Formal education attainment for residents is significantly higher than state averages. Education attainment is closely related to library use. These figures indicate a strong library “market”

Educational Attainment	Percent	State Percent (2000)
High School graduates.....	93%.....	84.8%
College Graduates and beyond.....	44%.....	33.2%

**Income**

In 1999, the median family income was \$82,676, which was approximately 34 percent higher than the State’s median family income of \$61,664. That percentage has remained steady over the past decade. In 1999, 938 persons were listed in poverty, up 14.5 percent from 1990, when 819 persons were listed in poverty; 168 persons received public aid; 3,328 received Social Security. Income levels indicate a community’s ability to pay for services, but do not necessarily indicate a willingness to pay. A major concern to Chelmsford’s residents is taxes and a strong desire to keep taxes stable.

**Employment**

The three largest employers in town, excluding the town itself:

1. United Parcel Service which employs 1,550;
2. Kronos Incorporated which employs 1,500;
3. Cisco which employs 1,000.

Computer equipment and software developers are expected to continue being strong employers in the next five years.

According to the Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training, in April 2004, the Town had a total labor force of 21,760. There were 839 residents that were unemployed or 3.9 percent of the workforce, as compared with 4.6 percent for the Commonwealth and 5.6 percent for the entire nation. Sixty-two percent of the Town’s residents are employed. Library services, materials, and hours must respond to changing lifestyles of residents. Evening and weekend hours, services, and programs are essential to meet the needs of working residents.

**Library Scan/Analysis**

**Introduction**

The library scan/analysis was reviewed and updated from the previous plan. The scan is used to identify the library's strengths and weaknesses and to assist in developing the best service responses to meet community needs.

## **Overview**

The Chelmsford Public Library consists of the main library (The former Adams Library) in Chelmsford Center and the Anna C. MacKay Branch Library in North Chelmsford.

The Chelmsford Public Library is a member of the Northeastern Massachusetts Regional Library System (NMRLS) and the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium (MVLC). The Merrimack Valley Library Consortium is a 35 member automated network of public libraries which provides members with a shared database, catalog, and access to numerous periodical databases, indexes, and electronic reference resources. Nearly three million items are speedily available to its members through MVLC. MVLC is also one of the library's Internet Providers.

The Northeast Region is one of six Massachusetts regional library systems. It is a multi-type, state funded library system providing support services - including inter-library loan and delivery service, reference and database services, deposit collections, professional development and advisory and technical consulting services. Membership totals 330 and consists of public, school, special, and academic libraries.

## **Library Governance**

A seven member elected Board of Library Trustees has legal responsibility for overall operation of the library. The Board of Library Trustees appoints and evaluates the director, determines and adopts written policies; secures funding to carry on the library's program; acts as a liaison between the community and library; and advocates on behalf of the library.

Library Trustees are active and involved community members and work to provide quality library service. Members are elected for three year terms.

## **Library History**

The first social library in town was founded by the Rev. Dr. Hezekiah Packard in 1794 and it was incorporated in 1812. In 1893, the Free Public Library was organized with volumes from the social libraries in the Center and South sections and the Chelmsford Agricultural Library. It was a group of private citizens who organized the effort, banding together and generously donating a collection of 1,846 volumes which became Chelmsford's first "free public library."

The Commonwealth contributed \$100 toward the establishment of the Chelmsford Public Library and in 1894 a parcel of land was donated by Mr. J. Adams Bartlett for the site of a new

library building. Capt. C.E.A. Bartlett undertook the cost of grading the land and Mr. Amos Francis Adams stepped forward with \$30,000 to finance the construction of the new library. In 1895, the Amos Adams Library opened its doors. Over the years, townspeople have continued to support the library tradition by donating books, memorial and gift funds and most recently the community raised in excess of \$500,000 to aid in the cost of the construction and furnishing of the expanded Chelmsford Public Library, completed in 2000.

The North Chelmsford Library Association was organized in 1872 and two years later the town appropriated funds for additional books which were to belong to the town and be made available free to residents. In 1945, Stewart MacKay gave his North Chelmsford home to the town to use as a library, in memory of his sister. The North Chelmsford Library books and funds were then incorporated in the Anna C. MacKay Memorial Library in 1949. All assets of the Anna C. MacKay Library were subsequently turned over the Chelmsford Public Library's Board of Trustees in 1950. The MacKay Library is presently a branch library of the Chelmsford Public Library.

## **Library Facilities**

The main library underwent a major renovation and expansion in 1998 and opened its doors for business on February 29, 2000. The 4,000 sq. ft. Adams Library building was expanded with a 25,000 sq. ft. addition. The building project enabled the library to have space for current and future collections and users, a vibrant children's room, a teen area, and an improved reference and non-fiction area that houses over 40 computers with catalog and public Internet access, wireless technology, a public meeting room, expanded parking, and full handicapped accessibility.

The library has a collection of more than 140,000 items and includes books, periodicals, audio books, CDs, DVDs, videos and newspapers. A wide range of library programs are offered for all ages and interests from the more traditional services of story time, reading groups, and author visits to computer workshops, concerts, star-gazing parties, and poetry slams.

The MacKay Branch Library, housed in a former residence, had its hours scaled back in the last four years and operates primarily as a pleasure-reading branch of the Chelmsford Public Library. Vigilant weeding has kept the collection current and accessible. The story time room was refurbished with paint and carpeting, new windows were installed, the exterior was repainted and a new flat rubber roof was installed over the addition. Most recently, a new circulation desk was custom-made and installed and new shelving and end caps were added to make the library more attractive and functional. Only the first floor of the MacKay Library is accessible to the handicapped. The library has been re-cabled for new technologies, and a music listening kiosk and several Internet computers have been added. A new gas fire burner was installed in 1997.

## **Chelmsford Public Library Services**

## **Circulation Department**

The Circulation/Inter-library Loan Department's main function is to circulate all library materials. The staff check out and check in all materials using computers; issue library cards; place reserves on items that are not immediately available; process bins of network transfers daily; request and process items that are not available from our network (Interlibrary Loan). Circulation staff is responsible for overdue notices, patron accounting, supervising pages and shelf maintenance. Staff also maintains, with the reference staff, an on-line museum pass scheduling program. Selected staff members have fiction collection development duties, but all serve as readers' advisors, answer phones and assist patrons with the online catalog.

## **Reference Service**

The Reference Department provides information or access to information. The staff assists patrons with the use of the library including bibliographic instruction, suggestions for further sources of information, and use of provided technology and resources. Staff members answer walk-in questions as well as telephone questions. The Reference Department resources include:

- printed reference materials
- online catalog
- listings of community information and events
- magazine and newspaper databases that allow full text printing
- business, financial and genealogical databases
- the Internet

## **Children's Services**

The Children's Department contributes to the individual growth and development of children by promoting the lifelong joy of reading and discovery through a variety of enriching experiences; and by meeting their informational needs through age appropriate materials.

The children's department serves a wide range of clientele including: children from infancy through age twelve, parents, adults working with children, and agencies/organizations serving children. Others who may need children's materials include: students of children's literature, writers, teachers, artists, and craftspeople, adults developing language skills, and adults needing basic subject material.

### Basic services:

- Provide reference, including homework assistance, and telephone information.
- Plan, implement and publicize a variety of programs, (including story hours,) which excite children about the library and literature.
- Provide outreach activities, such as cooperating with community groups, school visits, and book talks to community groups.
- Provide reader's advisory and guidance
- Develop and maintain a collection of children's materials in print and non print formats for in-library use and circulation to meet the fullest possible range of needs.

## **Young Adult/Teen Services**

The Young Adult/Teen Services area at Chelmsford Public Library offers a variety of resources to meet the academic as well as social needs of youth ages 12-18. The collection includes fiction, non-fiction, biographies, audio books, magazines, video games and a graphic novel collection that continues to grow. Teens have access to computers with Internet connections as well as an iTunes kiosk that is filled with songs ranging from rap, rock, contemporary, alternative, show tunes and more! The Homework Center provides supplies and help for students with homework inquiries. A couch, chairs and study tables are provided in a relaxing and attractive environment.

**Anna C. MacKay Branch Library**

The MacKay Branch Library offers a varied range of services and programs to its North Chelmsford users. MacKay’s strength is as a browsing library, focusing on fiction, large print and popular and current non-fiction. It also has an excellent mystery collection. MacKay’s circulation policies are consistent with those of the main library. Two adult book discussion groups meet monthly at MacKay -- one discusses mysteries and the other, popular fiction. MacKay has a popular and well-attended story time program and additional special programs for children are offered during school vacations, holidays and during the summer months.

**Community Services Department**

The Community Services Department is responsible for promoting library resources via programming, publications and publicity. This department initiates and coordinates regular programming such as the Poetry Slams, monthly art exhibits and receptions, and music series such as "First Sundays" and "World Wide Wednesdays @Chelmsford," and develops new programs in collaboration with other library departments, community groups and town departments. Publications and publicity materials include "Library Lines," the Library’s website, contributions to the town's Community Newsletter and regular press releases to local newspapers, PTO newsletters, Cable TV and other community media outlets.

This department recruits volunteers and coordinates the work of volunteers for all departments.

	<b>FY98</b>	<b>FY01</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>FY05</b>
<b>Volunteers</b>	41	65	166	170
<b>Volunteer Hours</b>	1,650	1,854	3,804	3,860

**Programming**

With the coordination of the Community Services Department Head, all departments plan, sponsor and conduct programs throughout the year from Internet training to weekly story times. Programs help to introduce the library to preschoolers; provide lifelong learning opportunities; and cultural events.

<b>FY98</b>	<b>FY01</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>FY05</b>
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Children's Programs		237	347	348	332
Attendance		3,788	8,260	7,177	7,910
Adult Programs		135	191	409	383
Attendance		1,511	4,901	8,032	7,538

### Technical Services

The Technical Services department is the behind-the-scenes supply line for the Library. This department is responsible for ordering, cataloging and processing all the books, videos, audio books and other library materials for children, young adults, and adults. They make sure that the items desired by our users and staff are neatly covered and labeled, listed in the online catalog, and available as soon as possible.

### Library Collections

The Chelmsford Public Library owns materials of diverse formats and contents. In addition to print materials, it provides DVDs, videocassettes, compact discs, CD-ROMs, and audiocassettes. The collection must be large enough to support the needs and requests of its users. In Chelmsford, heavy library use results in long lists for bestsellers and a collection which frequently cannot meet demand. In addition, as a larger library that is part of a library consortium, our collection is taxed with requests from libraries with smaller book budgets. As library budgets have been slashed statewide, this has become more of a concern. Consortium-wide, patrons report frustration at the lack of new materials available.

Chelmsford's per capita materials expenditure is average for the selected communities but it is the second highest in circulation for the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium. See following chart.

Materials Expenditure and Circulation Per Capita*		
Community	Circulation	Materials Expenditure
	Per/Capita	Per/Capita
+Andover	17.53	9.03
+Billerica	8.15	3.60
Braintree	8.73	5.47

+Chelmsford	16.26	6.08
+Lexington	14.59	7.28
Marlborough	5.73	2.42
Melrose	9.63	3.88
Natick Morse	17.39	6.70
Needham	15.58	5.79
Norwood	9.79	5.27
Randolph	6.44	2.38
+Tewksbury	7.36	4.67
+Westford	15.36	8.80

\*Source: MA Board of Library Commissioners: MA Public Libraries Ranking Report 2004.

**+Members of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium.**

**CIRCULATION**

Libraries traditionally measure use by the number of items borrowed each year, reference statistics, and the number of people entering a library building. This plan utilizes circulation statistics as a barometer of library use.

According to direct circulation statistics reported to the MA Board of Library Commissioners for FY2004, Chelmsford was the busiest library among the 35 members of the Merrimack Valley Library Consortium. The following list shows the direct circulation figures for all MVLC libraries in descending order:

Chelmsford	522,714
Andover	514,022
Haverhill	406,056
Westford	312,654
Billerica	304,908
Burlington	300,682
Newburyport	244,198
Lowell	212,401
North Andover	210,314
Wilmington	205,138

Tewksbury	204,552
Methuen	198,071
Hamilton-Wenham	191,184
Topsfield	157,174
Lawrence	137,229
Littleton	136,111
Ipswich	127,843
Dracut	126,322
Amesbury	116,565
Carlisle	106,191
W. Newbury	96,189
North Reading	95,491
Boxford	79,864
Tyngsborough	73,653
Rockport	71,766
Newbury	61,628
Middleton	55,624
Georgetown	45,525
Manchester-By-The-Sea	41,373
Merrimac	34,900
Dunstable	28,231
Rowley	27,064
Groveland	24,598
Salisbury	22,266
Essex	19,559

FY1997 was the last full fiscal year of data before the library's expansion. The first complete fiscal year after moving into the renovated and expanded library was FY2001. From FY1997 to FY2002, total circulation increased by almost 30 percent. Since that large increase, circulation growth has settled down into a more gradual average yearly increase of 3.5 percent.

<b>Direct Circulation</b>	
FY1990	284,420
FY1991	356,246
FY1995	373,279
FY1997	380,313
FY1998	334,840
FY2001	431,126

FY2002	492,802
FY2003	513,104
FY2004	522,714
FY2005	545,216

**Circulation by Collection**

<b>Total Circulation</b>	<b>FY98</b>	<b>FY01</b>	<b>FY04</b>	<b>FY05</b>
<b>Books</b>	237,535	256,303	312,065	327,281
<b>Audio</b>	28,458	42,680	53,507	57,869
<b>Videos</b>	81,878	116,047	137,437	139,054

The most significant trend in library circulation is the increase in non-print circulation. The library began circulating DVD’s and Books on CD in 2002.

**PERSONNEL**

The library is currently staffed by 14 full time and 33 part time employees. The full time equivalent (FTE) is 28.6. Seven department heads hold a Masters degree in Library Science. Chelmsford staffing levels and salary expenditures and circulation per F.T.E. are above average for both the MVLC and comparable communities of similar population size (25,000-49,999).

	<b>Group Avg.</b>	<b>Chelmsford</b>
FTE :	19.4	28.6
Salary expenditure/capita	19.67	26.89
Circulation/FTE	14,145	21,262

(Source: MA Board of Library Commissioners, MA Public Library Data 2004.)

Circulation per FTE directly correlates with staff work loads. Chelmsford’s circulation per FTE is much higher than average. When the library reopened in 2000 in the new facility, circulation and library use continued to grow. The main reason for this increase is the ease of library network transfers (inter-library loans). More and more items are being requested and shipped from library to library via van delivery. Increased volume requires additional staffing:

**Network Transfers**

FY2001	17,933
FY2002	52,865
FY2003	69,364
FY2004	87,459
FY2005	97,311

The library’s staffing has not increased proportionately to this increased workflow. The following staffing levels assume that by FY2010, circulation will increase to 600,000 - a conservative estimate considering circulation grew by 3.5 percent on average the previous four years (FY02 – FY05). Staffing should increase proportionately in order to keep staff workloads at a consistent level. Just to keep staffing up to the FY04 Circ/FTE level would require FTE of 28.2.

	FY93	FY97	FY01	FY04	FY10
*FTE’s	22.3	22.4	26.04	26	28.2
**Circulation	14,370	17,279	17,279	21,262	21,262

- \*Library employees, excluding custodial staff
- \*\*Circulation per FTE, excluding custodial staff

**Library Survey 2005**

Two hundred and eighty four library users responded to our survey which was posted on our web page and distributed by hand. According to NMRLS, who hosted the web version of our survey, any number over 200 is a great response and statistically, a good reflection of the community. The majority of library users rated library services as excellent. In fact, 98.5% of respondents rated the library as “good” (19.4%) or “excellent” (79.1%) when responding to the question “How would you rate our services overall?”

The majority of respondents were female (74.7%) and between the ages of 35-44 (31%), 45-54 (19%) or 25-34 (14%). The majority were primarily users of the main library in Chelmsford center. 54.1% said that they never use the Mackay Branch, 24.6% use the branch less than once a month and 21.1% use the branch monthly or more.

68% of respondents use the library for recreation, 43% for independent learning, 41.2% for their children, 40.5% for museum passes, 34.2% for the newspaper and magazines and 25.4% for programs.

Comments about children's services included a wide range of accolades for staff, suggestions on rearranging collections for better access and suggested areas to expand the collection. Queries about in-library use of non-circulating materials and placement of new non-fiction collections warranted no significant changes to present arrangements.

79.2% of respondents said they would be willing to try a self-checkout system. The few who were naysayers said they would miss the personal connection. Our publicity about museum passes needs to be stepped up as many of the passes folks requested we add were passes we already offered. (Davis Farmland was the most requested new addition.) The service or improvement that patrons requested the most was for the library to be open on Sundays year round (64.1%)

Other requests included a public fax machine, (29.6%), fast track DVDs (37.7%) – more computers (21.1%) and audio books to download to your own MP3 device (26.1%) Patrons continue to value traditional library program areas with the top three requests for adults being book discussion groups (47.5%), informational programs (45.8%) and author visits (45.1%).

92.3% of respondents had Internet access from home with 66.7% of them having broadband access and 25.6% having dial-up service. 90.5% of the sample had visited our website, with the majority using it for the library catalog (72.5%) Other features used more frequently included the events calendar (47.5%) the online reference and databases (39.4%) and the hours and directions (38.7%). 90.7% found the website easy to use.

Patrons do not seem to have enough information about the paid subscription databases the library owns, such as Infotrac, Valueline and Morningstar – only 30% said they were aware we subscribed to these databases and 71.9% did not know databases could be accessed from home.

Our patrons' fiction reading interests seem to fall into many categories with only westerns (2.8%) and modern romance (13.0%) at the bottom of the lists.

When respondents were asked if they thought they would use the library more, the same or less in five years, 49.8% answered more, 46.5% the same and less than 4% said they would use the library less. Survey results are appended.

## Summary

The Chelmsford Public Library's most apparent strength continues to be its friendly and skilled staff -- a staff that provides great customer service, innovative and interesting programs and terrific children's services. The library itself is lauded for its solid and diverse collection, its role in the community as a cultural meeting place, its increasing array of technology and its comprehensive ILL services. The library is bolstered by a well-managed, fiscally sound budget and a supportive town manager. The Board of Library Trustees is always ready to lend a hand and the active Friends group is a real asset.

Our community agrees with this assessment. With a 98.5% approval rating, according to our recent survey, we are fortunate to have such involved patrons invested in their children, their own education and their community. Our challenge then is maintaining this quality of service while responding to increasingly more sophisticated and demanding community requests.

Over the next three years, we must strive to retain and recruit dedicated, well-educated personnel. This can be a struggle in a climate where staff can feel overworked and understaffed. The expertise of a trained staff is invaluable for the public as they navigate their way through the library's collection and technological resources. Librarians are the ultimate search engine. Librarians provide more than facts. They provide the expertise and services that add meaning to those facts.

Over the past five years, the workload has significantly increased due to the ability of library cardholders to reserve items from home. In FY2001, library staff handled 17,933 network transfers. In FY02 that number jumped to 52,865 and this past FY05, the number was 97,311. And yet, the library staff has not increased proportionately to this increased workflow.

And it isn't just staffing levels that are affected. Any library patron who has seen the red bins arrive filled with network transfers will attest that we are running out of space to put all the books! The library's physical limitations are put to the test each day as more and more community members use the library. Circulation has stabilized somewhat after the initial burst when the new building opened. It is now growing at an average of 3.5 % per year.

Story times and children's programs have brought more and more families into the library. A head count at the last drop-in family story time targeted to children under the age of two was 106 attendees. In addition to the library's service roles identified in the previous plan, the current plan adds and emphasizes Chelmsford's role as a "Preschoolers' Door to Learning. We will be stressing the importance of building lifelong readers through the introduction of early literacy programs and services.

On any given afternoon-- prior to 6 pm -- quiet space is at a premium. Approximately 75% of our afternoon population is comprised of young adults, using the computers, working on school projects, checking out the magazines and music collection. All 48 of our public computers would be occupied by teens if the machines were not being used by other age groups too. If teen use continues to increase, we will need to explore alternate space plans or ideas for expansion.

Another challenge we face is to maintain our budget at a level that qualifies us for state aid especially when faced with possible statewide cuts in funding that will affect levels of product and service at both the consortium and regional office level.

This long range plan was written as a blueprint for the next few years, it is intended to be an accurate reflection of our goals and objectives and be employed as a useful tool. It is not something to stick in a drawer and haul out at the end of the three year period. It will be reviewed at monthly department head meetings and goals and objectives will be adjusted as needed. It will be a way of gauging how well we stay on-track. The library director will also give quarterly updates on long-range plan progress to the Board of Library Trustees.

In 1999, when the last long-range plan was written, a vision of library service for the town of Chelmsford was formed. Over the last five years, this vision has crystallized and it is articulated in the five library service roles outlined in this plan. The challenges to our resources, staff and building have increased but by using this plan as a road map, we will successfully move toward our vision.

## **Community Vision Statement**

A Community Vision Statement describes residents' hopes and dreams for their community. What type of town do residents want? The Committee surveyed Town Officials and developed the following Vision Statement.

### **Community Vision Statement**

1. All residents will be provided the lifelong educational opportunities they need to be self supporting and active citizens.
2. The residents of Chelmsford will be provided an efficient and sufficient infrastructure (roads, water, sewer, telecommunications) which will enhance the quality of life and promote economic and business opportunities.
3. Residents of all ages, particularly youth will be provided diverse and affordable cultural and recreational opportunities which promote leisure time and community connections.
4. The professional and business community will find strong municipal services, financial stability, and a skilled labor force which will promote economic growth and development.
5. Residents of all ages will have access to quality, convenient and affordable support services to meet medical and social services.
6. Residents will be provided a variety of religious, housing, career, cultural, and educational opportunities which will promote economic, racial, education and employment diversity.
7. The library will be perceived as *the* place to go for information -- with the resources, technology and trained staff to support this concept. The library will be the place to level the information playing field between the have and the have-nots.
8. The library will develop and sustain partnerships with community and civic groups and organizations, town and school departments, and local businesses. Cooperative resource sharing will be encouraged and promoted.

### **Mission Statement**

The Chelmsford Public Library provides an inviting, welcoming public space for users of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities. The Library seeks to be an integral part of its community by offering a variety of materials, services, and programs to enrich daily lives, extend personal and intellectual development, and enhance educational endeavors. Users will be assisted by a friendly, knowledgeable staff committed to excellent customer service; collections will reflect diverse interests, ideas, and information; and the library facility will exist for both library and community activities.

The Chelmsford Public Library has chosen to emphasize the following public library roles:



- Popular Materials Library: The Library provides current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for community members of all ages.
- Preschoolers’ Door to Learning: The Library encourages young children to develop an interest in reading and learning through services for children, parents and professionals who work with children.
- Independent Learning Center: The Library supports individuals of all ages in their pursuit of self-directed personal growth and lifelong learning.
- Reference Library: The Library is a resource for accurate, timely and useful information on a broad array of topics related to work, school, and personal life.
- Community Gathering Place: The Library is an inviting public space which fulfills the need for people to come together and share ideas. It is a central focus point for community activities, meetings and services.



The following goals and objectives build upon our mission statement and library roles while maintaining a commitment to robust public library service through the traditional, core library services of reference and information referral, reader’s advisory, and children’s and adult

programming. Goals and objectives outlined in this three-year plan call for us to evaluate and build upon existing strengths while expanding and exploring new services and collections.

The Year One Action Plan will be comprised of all activities designated as “Short-term” in the following plan.

**CHELMSFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**LRP GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**  
FY2007- FY2009

**Goal I: The library will provide materials, services and technology that reflect and fulfill our users’ interests in popular, cultural, recreational and social trends.**

*Objective 1: The library will continue to expand its collection -- selecting materials in response to demographic changes, patron interest and currency of information.*

**Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** As an outgrowth of patron survey information, develop and grow fast-track DVD’s in both children’s and adult departments.

**Activity 2:** As a result of patron survey information, increase acquisition plans for books on CD and books on tape.

**Activity 3:** The children’s department will target collection development in the following areas: Japanese Manga; India – North and South; and Asian, European, and African literature.

**Activity 4:** Using standardized collection tools, maintain collection integrity and currency with a departmental program of weeding/maintenance

**Activity 5:** Using patron survey results and circulation statistics as guides –continue to respond and develop a prioritized subject list for expanding collection as budget allows.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 5:** Work with the collection development committee for the consortium to identify individual library collection strengths including local history, genealogy and ethnic specializations. Promote to staff and public.

*Objective 2: The library staff will develop and maintain resources and programs to promote patron interest in reader's advisory services.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Bookmarks highlighting different genres or targeted at particular patron groups will be developed, updated and disseminated.

**Activity 2:** Rotating displays of staff picks, award- winners, subject-specific and genre-specific will be placed on bulletin boards/display cubes/and the foyer kiosk.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 3:** The reader's advisory web presence will be strengthened by assigning staff responsibilities.

**Activity 4:** Hard copies of resources such as web-link directories, assigned school lists, bibliographies, bookmarks etc. will be collected and available at the service desks for the public to peruse and the staff to use as a reference tool.

**Activity 5:** Staff training will continue at conferences, lunchtime workshops, in-house mentoring/training and visits from vendors of reader's advisory software.

**Activity 6:** Explore the re-design of service desks and reassignment of duties to accommodate a reader's advisory function at the circ desk.

*Objective 3: The Chelmsford Library will work with MVLC and NMRLS to provide the best possible service for resource sharing -- including patron holds, mediated ILL services, delivery, network transfers etc.*

### **Ongoing Activities**

**Activity 1:** The benefits of belonging to a consortium and being part of a statewide network will be explained and promoted to public and to staff in a hand-out and on the library web page.

**Activity 2:** A Chelmsford Library staff member will be an active participant on NMRLS delivery committee.

**Activity 3:** Library Department Heads will participate on consortium committees such as: Collection Development, Finance, Long-range Planning, Key Users, etc.

**Activity 4:** Library staff will attend section meetings for the consortium. (Technical Services, ILL and Circulation, Reference, etc.)

*Objective 4: In addition to maintaining the array of traditional library programs already offered by the library –(story hours, book discussion groups, poetry readings, summer reading, author visits etc.) staff will explore ways to deepen the connections to the community through targeted programming.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Respond to changing face of the community by offering culturally diverse programs highlighting holidays, traditions, customs, etc. such as: Chinese New Year, St. Patrick’s Day, Cinco de Mayo, Deepavali.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 2:** Secure funding for library programming through state and federal grants (including the Chelmsford Cultural Council) -- Friends of the Library and budgetary process.

**Activity 3:** Develop a list of agencies, businesses, charitable and civic groups who will be possible program collaborators within the community. (Previous examples have included: Chelmsford Alliance for Racial Justice, Chelmsford Women of Today, Altrusa, League of Women Voters, Chelmsford Genealogy Club etc.)

**Activity 4:** Encourage artists and performers who reflect our diverse community to take part in established library programs (ex: Worldwide Wednesdays, art exhibits, etc.) or invite them to collaborate on new programs.

**Activity 5:** Respond to the changing age demographic in the community by establishing programming for the growing “baby boomers” population with programs such as “Meeting of the Minds” -- a lecture/discussion series targeted to the “mature” self-learner and “Lifelong Access”- a federally- funded grant that creates a website, resources and help with program planning region-wide.

**Goal II: The library will provide materials, services and technology that enable users to obtain information and answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school, and personal life.**

*Objective 1: Increase school and library partnerships through collaboration on collection development, programs/activities and grant and funding opportunities.*

**Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Continue town-wide field trips to the library for 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

**Activity 2:** Collaborate with faculty and school library media specialists on summer reading lists.

**Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 3:** Organize and have head of children's services attend annual meeting with Chelmsford School Library Media personnel.

**Activity 4:** Coordinate with schools on 1 or 2 major research projects for each of grades 1-6.

**Activity 5:** Compile a list of businesses willing to sponsor school and library programs; explore joint funding opportunities.

**Activity 6:** Explore database resource sharing between the school and the library.

**Activity 7:** Pursue staff access to school library catalog from the public library.

*Objective 2: Strengthen our local history/community collaborations.*

**Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Regularly schedule updates of the community information database.

**Activity 2:** Create displays of daycares, volunteer opportunities, and answers to other common requests for community resources.

**Activity 3:** As part of the ending events for the town's 350<sup>th</sup> celebration, hold a forum at the library early in 2006 on "Visualizing Chelmsford 50 years from now."

**Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 4:** Work with Local History centers to create bibliographies of wish list titles for our collection and resources available in other libraries and collections.

**Activity 5:** Building on the enthusiasm from the town's very successful 350<sup>th</sup> celebration, preserve connections by assimilating the 350<sup>th</sup> website into the library's website, creating a clearinghouse for other town-wide cultural collaborations. Also included will be a merging of e-mail distribution lists.

**Activity 6:** Working with the Chelmsford Cultural Council, local artists and the school's Fine Arts Department, begin the process of creating a cultural blueprint for the community that would promote and integrate Chelmsford's cultural resources into the greater community.

*Objective 3: Explore reference improvements in resources and services.*

#### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Create and distribute handouts on how to log into library resources from home.

**Activity 2:** Promote this service in local media outlets.

#### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 2:** Investigate the possibility of Chelmsford reference staff participating in 24/7 Reference and MassAnswers. Contact our regional library center to discuss requirements and feasibility of our participation.

**Activity 3:** Create a list of desired competencies for reference staff. Evaluate staff, and then seek appropriate training as needed, taking advantage of consortium, region and state training programs.

**Activity 4:** In conjunction with Activity 3 above, set-up a training workstation for staff to use when scheduled off desk.

**Activity 5:** Develop and distribute a cheat sheet of recommended databases by subject so that patron and staff database searching is quicker, easier and will result in more useful information.

**Activity 6:** Develop menu screens for the computers in the reference and non-fiction areas with links to and explanations of resources.

*Objective 4: Continue to explore and evaluate technological resources -- keeping staff and public aware of software and hardware advances.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Evaluate databases for consumer versus academic -- acquire more consumer/user-friendly tools.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 2:** As patron needs evolve, evaluate uses of existing computer stations and prioritize needs/desires. Explore viability of accommodating new technologies. (Voice Instant Messaging, Phone over IP, Music and audio book downloads, Burning CD's, IPOD broadcasting, etc. Distance learning needs, streaming video, allowing students to download programs, etc.)

**Activity 3:** Explore software options that will enable users to use one interface that will search multiple databases by subject – i.e. federated searching.

**Activity 4:** Develop a marketing plan for database usage targeted at specific groups, the businessman, the techno-phobe, the parent, the non-academic.

*Objective 5: Establish and maintain a virtual homework center.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** YA librarian will work with the schools to evaluate the viability of continuing our service of providing school textbooks for in-library use.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 2:** Create website section of children's and young adult pages to guide children/teens to resources in the library and online.

**Goal III: The library will promote and encourage lifelong learning by providing collections, services and training that address our users' desires for self-directed personal growth.**

*Objective 1: Serve as both a provider of technology/computer training for public and an information clearinghouse.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Upgrade training laptops for wireless access to provide maximum training flexibility – i.e. a portable classroom, outreach to the community.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 2:** Implement a regular schedule of classes offered by staff.

**Activity 3:** Develop a handout of area resources that offer computer classes and/or individualized instruction.

**Activity 4:** Compile a bibliography/webliography of computer books/videos etc. available in consortium and on-line tutorials.

**Activity 5:** Evaluate present circulating collection of technology items. Purchase additional software, media and books to support current trends and interests.

*Objective 2: Identify issues that concerns community members at different life stages and address them through workshops, lectures and programs.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Use initial patron survey results to create a programming plan. Continue to gather information about popular trends through library literature, e-mail communications, staff observation, etc. Possible topics include: Changing careers, health issues, college planning, etc.

**Activity 2:** Initiate a parenting series with Family Foundation Network.

*Objective 3: Expand and promote children's non-fiction*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Grow the non-fiction section of the Easy Readers (ER) to represent 10% of the ER collection.

**Activity 2:** Increase children's non-fiction DVD's. Subject areas to expand include: cooking, animals, parenting, and science.

**Goal IV: The main library facility and the MacKay Branch library will be welcoming, inviting public spaces continually evolving to meet the needs of a diverse and growing base of users.**

*Objective 1: Re-assess existing space in anticipation of future needs.*

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Identify and prioritize patron and staff wishes for functional changes in use of space. Areas previously identified as problematic at the main library include the YA area, the children's toy area, and the reference area. Expressed needs include: more private study rooms, more group meeting room space, private computer space, and quiet study areas. Wishes include a coffee spot.

**Activity 2:** Evaluate current functions at service desks and re-locate or re-assign tasks as dictated by space demands.

*Objective 2: Explore and implement technology improvements that will provide streamlined customer service.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Implement on-line booking of museum passes.

**Activity 2:** Evaluate software options for on-line meeting room scheduling.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 3:** Initiate self-checkout in the Children's Room as a pilot program; if successful, expand to circulation desk when feasible.

**Activity 4:** Evaluate sound system options for public meeting spaces in library. Implement as budget allows.

**Activity 5:** Work with MVLC on developing a plan for expansion of Horizon modules that improve customer options such as tele-circ and expanded content.

**Goal V: The library administration, staff and board of library trustees will strive to create an effective, productive and supportive operational infrastructure that meets the increased and growing demands of an active community.**

*Objective 1: Foster strong relationships with the town manager, budget committee and town meeting representatives to encourage community and financial support for the library.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Working with the Library Board of Trustees, develop a well-documented, fiscally responsible budget plan that addresses state aid, trust funds and endowment activity and is available in electronic format for the public to review if requested.

### **Ongoing Activities**

**Activity 2:** As appropriate, the library director, trustees and department heads will advocate on behalf of the library at civic meetings, school visits, library programs and to community organizations.

*Objective 2: The library staff will be supported with adequate training, education and compensation.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Library job descriptions and overall departmental goals and objectives will be reviewed, revised and approved annually during job performance reviews.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 2:** The library administration will perform a continuous survey of Massachusetts libraries in communities with comparable area, population, demographics and commercial versus residential composition. Staffing, salaries, municipal budgets and employee benefits for both professional and support staff will be compiled and compared.

**Activity 3:** If changes are recommended as a result of these surveys, library administration and trustees will work together to raise awareness about potential changes with a marketing/public relations program directed to town residents, town officials and the media.

*Objective 3: The Library will establish a means for listening and responding to feedback and communication from members of the community and from the staff.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Keep staff informed of pertinent library information by taking minutes of department head meetings and distributing to staff.

**Activity 2:** Continue to provide space for e-mail comments/suggestions via our website.

**Activity 3:** Continue to provide a suggestion box at all service desks.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 4:** Register interested readers for an interactive e-mail newsletter.

**Activity 5:** Work with volunteers and staff to distribute e-mail newsletter.

**Activity 6:** Keep the public informed and updated on library services and programs through regular publicity in community newsletter, local media, bulletin boards and website and via the proposed e-mail distribution list.

*Objective 4: The Community Services Department will structure a volunteer program that effectively uses volunteer resources in the community.*

### **Short-Term Activities**

**Activity 1:** Establish an up-to-date volunteer database that can be accessed by all department heads.

**Activity 2:** Hold an annual reception event for volunteers.

### **Medium and Long-Term Activities**

**Activity 3:** Streamline communication with volunteers by expanding current volunteer e-mail distribution list and creating a volunteer bulletin board.