

Long-Range Plan For Cortland Free Library: The purpose of the Long-Range Plan is to guide the development and actions of the library over the next 5-10 years and to meet minimum New York State standards for libraries. An (S) indicates a safety issue, a ** indicates an item which likely can be implemented with little or no expense and priority numbers are self-explanatory. The proposal was developed by a Long-Range Planning Committee comprised of citizens and Board Members. Long-Range Committee members include: Adam Megivern, Diane Ames, Jacie Spoon, Lois Meyer, Randi Storch, Steven Schaap and Nick Esposito.

A. Rationale for Long Range Plan:

- I. To guide the development of all aspects of the library over the next 5-10 years.
- II. To meet minimum State standards to retain our charter.

B. Motto ideas: Let the public suggest and choose.

- I. Re*create YOUR library
- II. "OUR LIBRARY. OUR FUTURE. IMAGINE!"
- III. "CHECK IT OUT...OUR LIBRARY'S FUTURE"
- IV. "OUR LIBRARY...NOT JUST BOOKS"
- V. "HELP CREATE OUR SPACE...THE FUTURE OF OUR LIBRARY "
- VI. "IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES AT OUR LIBRARY"
- VII. "LINK TO OUR PAST...GATEWAY TO OUR FUTURE...OUR LIBRARY"
- VIII. Your information highway...your library.
- IX. Ask YOUR librarian.

C. Mission Statement:

- I. **Current Mission Statement:** *"The Cortland Free Library strives to provide information in a variety of formats and to make available library materials and programs to educate, inspire, enrich, entertain and inform the people of the Cortland area and the patrons of the Finger Lakes Library System."*
- II. **Proposed Mission Statement:** *"The Cortland Free Library strives to provide information in a variety of formats to the people of the Cortland area and the patrons of the Finger Lakes Library System. It strives to make available library materials and programs to educate, inspire, enrich, entertain and inform. It strives to promote the tools, skills and techniques for literacy development, language skill acquisition, lifelong learning, recreation and research."*

D. Building and Grounds:

- I. Railings on windows where needed as safety barriers. (S) (priority 1)
- II. Full screens on windows for safety purposes. (S) (priority 1)
- III. Review all available space in the building and reconfigure as necessary for programming, meetings, viewing (DVDs, etc.) (priority 1)
- IV. Provide a more comfortable, 'bookstore-like' environment rather than 'classroom' feel. (priority 1)
- V. Consider use of library as a 'third space.' Replace benches with comfortable furniture in art gallery. [See article about library trends.] (priority 2)
- VI. Repair windows in and out. Explore grants. (priority 2)
- VII. Repair Art Gallery ceiling and walls. (priority 2)
- VIII. Install AC for preservation of materials, comfort of patrons and staff. (priority 3)
- IX. Provide handicapped access to art gallery and mezzanine. (priority 3)
- X. Revise/develop a policy regarding donated art and artifacts including, but not limited to, repair, display and sale. (priority 3)
- XI. Repair and clean Basement rooms (front, middle) where needed so they can be used for organized storage. Clean and paint walls and lower ceiling. (priority 3)

E. Community Relations:

- I. Better, more formal flow of information from community to library and vice versa. Continue developing community relations committee. ** (priority 1)
- II. Continue developing coordination with community programs and organizations such as Cortland Downtown Partnership (CDP), First Friday, Historical Society?, etc. Explore membership in CDP and Chamber of Commerce.** (priority 1)
- III. Actively support economic and community development through distribution of pertinent information, classes, seminars, etc., especially for small businesses. ** (priority 1)
- IV. Develop Cortland Free Library Friends of the Library. ** (priority 1)
- V. Develop and maintain a community calendar, i.e., events at YW, Historical Society, CDP, etc. ** (priority 1)
- VI. Target an employee (or hire one) that can head up a marketing committee, draw up a full plan and execute. (priority 1)
- VII. Establish a Library Board marketing committee. ** (priority 1)
- VIII. Participate with community to provide 'super wifi' in the community. (priority 2)

F. DPIL: Dolly Parton Imagination Library was approved as a library program with the proviso that it be self-sustaining. DPIL is currently in year 1 (2016). By 2021 the program is projected to have more than 800 children enrolled. The cost in 2021 will be about \$25,000 per year.

- I. Seek sponsorship for DPIL from corporations, organizations (such as PTOs), and other community groups. ** (priority 1)
- II. Formulate a plan for future fund raising: writing/mailling appeal letters to secure donations. ** (priority 1)
- III. Identify list of potential sponsors. Write letter / meet in person. ** (priority 1)
- IV. Develop Cortland Free Library (CFL) programming using DPIL books.
 - a. Survey public to determine what CFL innovations and new CFL programs they would like regarding local programming associated with DPIL. ** (priority 1)
 - b. Survey public to determine what overall future direction CFL programs associated with DPIL should take. ** (priority 1)
- V. Share our experience with CACTC as they identify other local champions to lead expansion of DPIL county-wide. ** (priority 1)

G. Executive Committee:

- I. Review and revise all Board policies. ** (priority 1)
- II. Add new policies as needed. ** (priority 1)

H. Finance and Investment:

- I. Reduce investment costs. ** (priority 1)
- II. Locate additional sources of revenue. ** (priority 1)
- III. Encourage bequests. Establish a Library Board Development Committee.** (priority 1)
- IV. Research and use 'best' practices to reduce all costs. ** (priority 1)
- V. Create a sustainability plan for finances as well as other functions. ** (priority 1)

I. Grants: Actively seek grants for program expenses, capital construction, etc. ** (priority 1)

J. Personnel: The Library strives to be a socially responsible employer with a safe, desirable and hospitable work environment, with competitive wages, salaries and benefits relative to the local economy while staying within the library's resources, and with opportunities for training and advancement. Because the Library Director has primary responsibility for all decisions about managing staff (within Board policies, procedures and budget) as per NYSED law, the Library Director rather than the Board should take the lead in mapping a Long Range Plan regarding specific staff issues. (priority 1)

K. Programs and Services:

- I. Increase budget for library programming. (priority 1)
- II. Develop processes to become leader in exchange of digital information, especially local digital information. Investigate, report on, and plan for the creation of a library archive for local curation of digital information. ** (priority 1 and in progress)
- III. Develop programs that appeal to wide range of community, especially 20-35 year old age group. ** (priority 1)
- IV. Provide more instruction in computers, popular software, databases, etc. (priority 1)
- V. Develop partnerships within the community to create new programs sponsored by the library (e.g. 'Lunch@theLibrary') investigate and report on partnerships with YWCA and YMCA, Historical Society, and other community programs. (priority 1)
- VI. Provide time and funding for additional staff training on using digital media. (priority 1)
- VII. Explore self-check station for patrons. (priority 3)

L. Adult Literacy:

- I. Establish within-library programs geared toward adult literacy. ** (priority 1)
- II. Establish 'outreach' programs geared toward adult literacy. ** (priority 1)
- III. Meet with other libraries and organizations to trade program ideas and practices. ** (priority 1)

M. Youth Services:

- I. Lead in the community on Early Literacy by publicizing the issue, contacting community organizations, and by having Early Literacy spaces and information for caregivers about this topic. ** (priority 1)
- II. Develop a plan to hire a Young Adult Librarian who could further expand services for teens through outreaches, more extensive programming, and development of maker spaces. (priority 1)
- III. Initiate more Afterschool programming for children and teens. ** (priority 1)
- IV. Initiate more Teen Programs. Make Teen area more alluring and add comfortable seating. ** (priority 1)
- V. Develop Early Literacy Area with appropriate educational toys, books, manipulatives. ** (priority 1)
- VI. Develop parent/Teacher Collection and area. ** (priority 1)
- VII. Initiate book clubs in school (Lunch Bunch) and here at the library. (priority 1)
- VIII. Initiate Minecraft Club. (priority 1)
- IX. Initiate Arts & Literature series for children focusing 4 weeks on bringing art form and literature together and 4 weeks bringing music and literature together. (priority 1)
- X. Invite more author and presenter visits, especially local authors and Early Literacy Spokespersons for caregiver program. (priority 1)
- XI. Make periodical room a Teen and Maker Space. ** (priority 1)
- XII. Make existing Teen Room (the area behind the YS room) into an area suitable for Teen Programs. ** (priority 1)
- XIII. Develop storage area for Youth Services crafts and supplies. (priority 1)
 - a. Add matching cupboards behind youth desk or bins to hold supplies.
 - b. Have a clean space in basement with appropriate shelving in the basement along with clear plastic bins for storage.
- XIV. Collaborate more with schools and S.U.N.Y. Cortland. ** (priority 1)

N. Emergency Preparedness:

- I. Develop a flood emergency plan. ** (priority 1)
- II. Develop a power outage plan. ** (priority 1)
- III. Develop a computer failure plan. ** (priority 1)
- IV. Develop plans for other emergencies, e.g. extreme cold, snow. ** (priority 1)

O. Technology: Provide Internet services with faster speeds and greater bandwidth to accommodate anticipated need for digital services. (priority 1)

P. Potential Threats:

- I. **No growth budgets:** Cortland Free Library has two major sources of revenue: library tax and investment income. Because of the state tax cap, the library tax increase is currently limited to a maximum of 2%. The allowable tax increase under the tax cap is based on two factors: the amount of growth in the municipality and the rate of inflation as measured by the government. The growth factor in Cortland is extremely small (2/10 of 1 percent for the last year) and (measured) inflation has been relatively low (under 1% for the last year.) Consequently, for the upcoming referendum we will be asking for the maximum increase, but that will amount to less than 1%. The Board of Trustees, by a two-thirds vote, can override the tax cap. However, for many reasons the Board does not deem that to be wise. The proceeds of the endowment's investments have not grown much since 2008 and probably will not grow much over the next few years. The conclusion is that for some time into the foreseeable future, there will likely be no-growth or small-growth budgets. At the same time, despite small (measured) inflation numbers, the library's expenses continue to grow principally because of personnel costs (retirement, health insurance.) The question: How does the library prepare and plan for this scenario?
- II. **Law suits re Association Libraries and library taxes:** New York State Education Law Section 259(1)(a) allows association libraries to place a funding proposition on a school district ballot. This law has been challenged in court and is currently being challenged again. Should such a suit ever be successful, the library would lose about 80% of its yearly revenue. How could the library replace the lost revenue?
 - a. **Become a public library:** Cortland Free Library could ask to have its charter changed to become a public library (e.g., a school district library.) The library could then collect taxes again. However, there would be other consequences.
 - i. **By-laws:** The by-laws would have to be re-written so that the public, not the Board, would elect new members to the Board
 - ii. **Endowment:** The library's endowment could not be invested in equities, only in a bank if the endowment were under the control of the Library Board. In some libraries, the Friends of the Library (FOTL) hold, invest and disburse the endowment. I don't know if that is feasible in our case. If it were feasible, the Friends of the Library would have to be reorganized, have a separate Board, etc. The library would have to petition the FOTL for endowment money so that two Boards would be involved in each decision. Writing grants would involve additional paperwork and assurances.
 - iii. **Construction:** Construction costs would be higher. Libraries chartered as public libraries are subject to NYS and federal Public Work laws.
 - b. Petition the City of Cortland, Cortlandville and Virgil and the county for money to operate the library. Ever decreasing funding from the City of Cortland was one reason the library opted for a direct library tax.

Adopted unanimously by the Board of Trustees on September 21, 2016 on a motion by Laura Gathagan and a second by Myron Walter.