



Cortland Free Library Long Range Plan -- as of December 16, 2020

<p>Drafted by Long Range Planning Committee 2020 Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">* John Hoeschele (Committee Chair, CFL Trustee)* Vivian Bosch (President CFL Board of Trustees)* Jen Graney (CFL, Library Director)* Tammy Sickmon (CFL, Youth Services Librarian)* Lois Meyer (community member)* Chris Lund (President, Friends of the CFL)* Lauren Mossotti-Kline (CFL Trustee)	<p>Approved by Board of Trustees December 16, 2020</p>
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Introduction: The purpose of the Cortland Free Library Long-Range Plan (LRP) is to guide the advancement, development, and actions of the library over the next 5-10 years; the plan has also been drafted and is maintained in order to satisfy the Long Range Plan requirement set forth in the NYSED Minimum Standards for Public Libraries. Originally drafted and approved by the Cortland Free Library Board of Trustees in September 2016, this plan has been duly reviewed, revised, and updated on an annual basis thereafter by a designated Long Range Planning Committee comprised of Trustees, library staff, and members of the community.

Process: Each year, the previous year's approved plan is reviewed, revised, and updated by the Long Range Planning Committee, followed by a review, any applicable revisions, and an approval by vote of the full Board of Trustees. This current plan and its previous iterations are available on the Library's website (www.cortlandfreelibrary.org) or upon request.

Structure: By design -- and bearing in mind the NYSED Minimum Standards for Libraries -- the Plan's structure mirrors the major operational, service, and programmatic structure of the Library and seeks to convey the Library's high-level, long-term goals and actions necessary to meeting said goals.

	Action Item to Accomplish Goal Status D = done (prev yr) IP = in progress H = on hold OG = ongoing N = new NS = not started
A. Buildings and Grounds Goal: Provide a safe, comfortable, welcoming, and accessible environment for patrons and staff	
Repair windows in/out as needed and explore options for funding (i.e.: grants)	OG
Alleviate hot baseboard radiator problem in Youth Services	D
Review all available space in the building and reconfigure/renovate as necessary for programming, open/private meetings, screenings (DVDs, etc.), and storage	OG
Create a clean space in the library basement for storage of Youth Services crafts and supplies, and provide an area for organized storage for other groups in the library	D
Designate an area for a MakerSpace	D
Provide 'bookstore-like' environment rather than 'classroom' feel	OG
Present the library as a "third space" (aka: a space that is akin to home or the workplace)	OG
Further develop Teen Area to be more appealing to teens	IP
Renovate Art Gallery	IP
Improve environmental control for preservation of materials, comfort of patrons and working conditions of staff	IP
Provide accessibility for all to art gallery and mezzanine	H
Fully develop the area of the library recently designated for a used-books store	OG
Explore and implement security measures as needed and as funds allow	OG
B. Marketing and Community Relations Goal: Increase awareness of and use of the library through various brand-building, marketing, and communication channels	
Rebrand and reposition the library as a multi-faceted institution via new brandmark and slogan	D
Update website to match new brand, improve user experience and navigation, and work on fixed and mobile platforms (aka: responsive design), accessibility	IP
Develop and distribute steady stream of press releases to promote activities, programs, and other news at the library; keep the list of media outlets current; as possible and applicable, supply information to various community calendars (e.g. Hello Cortland for kids, Experience Cortland for adults, etc.); continue to brainstorm ways to promote the library through PR/the news media	OG
Develop a series of PSAs and infographics promoting value of library to the community for use by local media, distribution via social media, and visibility on the website	N
Continue to utilize social media (FB, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest) as appropriate	OG
Having recently improved the design, format, and content of the library's electronic newsletter, continue its use to promote the library and continue to expand the library's email subscriber list	OG
C. Development and Grants Goal: Increase financial support of the institution through a range of development and fundraising strategies and tactics.	
With oversight, guidance, and, as capacity allows, hands-on help from the board – continue to research new grant and funding opportunities -- applying for and pursuing those that are aligned with the library's goals	OG
Coordinate with fundraising efforts of Friends of CFL as needed and appropriate	OG

Explore and experiment with alternative fundraising methods, e.g.: FB, crowdfunding, peer-to-peer, etc.	N
Develop year-end appeal letter to CFL supporters (patrons, friends, donors, etc.) – via physical mailings and/or emailing as possible based on availability of lists. Appeal should be ‘from’ the Director, should briefly re-cap progress made in the current year, and could include specific items to support (e.g.: capital projects, programs, etc.)	N
Increase legacy giving opportunities using the library’s recently developed legacy-giving document and other means	OG
Implement ongoing library book sales utilizing the designated space within the library for that purpose	N
Continue increased coordination with community programs and organizations (e.g. Cortland County Cultural Council/First Fridays, Historical Society; Chamber of Commerce, of which the library is a member, etc.)	OG
D. Board of Trustees	
Goal: Recruit and retain a skilled, motivated, engaged, and diverse Board of Trustees to provide high-level oversight of the Library’s finances, personnel, operations, and programming in accordance with accepted best practices, New York State and Federal laws pertaining to 501c3 non-profit organizations, and NYSED requirements for Libraries	
Review, revise, adjust all Board policies as needed to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and best practices	OG
Recruit Trustees with specific skills and experience, including legal, financial, buildings/grounds – as well as those interested in taking on leadership roles on the Board	OG
E. Finance and Investment	
Goal: With a view to fulfilling the Library’s mission, long-term sustainability, and warranting the public’s trust, continuously seek to optimize the Library’s finances through legal, ethical, and transparent fiduciary best practices.	
Investigate options (e.g. passive management) to reduce investment costs -- while preserving the integrity of the endowment investment strategy over the long term	OG
Research and use other 'best practices' to reduce expenses	OG
Research and use ‘best practices’ to increase revenue (e.g. grants, encourage planned giving)	OG
Create a sustainability plan for finances	NS
F. Personnel	
Goal: To support the Library Director in building and maintaining a team that meets the needs of our patrons while fostering a work environment that encourages excellence, passion for the library’s mission, creativity, and job satisfaction.	
Continue regular evaluations of the Library Director, including review of and updates to the Director’s job description which will be completed by the Board of Trustees	OG
Continue regular staff evaluations including review of and updates to job descriptions which will be completed by the Library Director	OG
Provide time and funding for additional staff training on using digital media	OG
Explore the feasibility & timing for hiring Teen Librarian and Reference Librarian	OG
Recruit volunteers (e.g. from SUNY Cortland, Recreation Department) who can assist with furthering the library’s goals	OG
G. Programs, Services and Collections (general):	
Goal: To provide timely, relevant programs, and to increase the level of service provided to patrons so that they leave the library inspired, heard, and empowered to move forward.	
As possible and feasible, allocate money in the annual budget to support library programming	OG
Advocate, explore and participate in community public access wi-fi as it becomes available	OG
As possible and feasible, promote the library’s resources to the business community (e.g. business-related books, online access for job searching and other research, public space for	OG

speakers, etc.) – and as a contributor to the community’s economic well-being (e.g. as an employer, cultural and educational asset, etc.)	
Develop and implement a standardized method for continually assessing, measuring, and responding to the ever-changing needs of the communities in the library’s service area – with regard to the library’s programming, services, and collections	N
Identify and reduce barriers to use of the library by all members of the public. Examples include elimination of overdue book fines, access to library WiFi without requiring a library card, etc.	OG
G. (a.) Programs, Services and Collections (Adult Services)	
Continue to research and develop opportunities to position the library as a source for curated and digitized information of interest and value to our community (e.g. digitized back issues of the Cortland Standard)	OG
Increase opportunities for one-on-one and remote instruction for patrons on the use of technology (computers, smart phones, Google docs, etc.)	OG
Develop programs and resources that appeal to wide range of community, notably the underserved 20-35 year old age group	OG
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	OG
Promote adult literacy through library programs and outreach to/collaboration with community organizations, businesses, and other libraries	OG
G (b.) Programs, Services and Collections (Youth Services)	
Be an advocate in the community for early literacy by publicizing the issue, scheduling presentations, providing outreach, partnering with community organizations (e.g. CACTC), and offering early literacy spaces and information about this topic	OG
Further expand services for teens through outreach and more extensive programming, such as development of maker spaces, crafts, and games (e.g. Dungeons and Dragons)	OG
Further develop afterschool and Saturday programming for children (e.g. Second Saturday, Arts and Literature)	OG
Continue book clubs in schools (Lunch Bunch) and through the library	OG
Schedule authors and presenters, especially local authors	OG
Collaborate with schools and S.U.N.Y. Cortland	OG
Expand services and programming for home-school families	OG
Promote and support DPIL	OG
G. (c.) Dolly Parton Imagination Library (DPIL)	
Goal: To foster the love of reading and learning among Cortland's preschool children and their families by mailing an age-appropriate book directly to the child’s home every month – at no cost to the families.	
Explore and implement all efforts to achieve sustainability (e.g.: grants; sponsorships from corporations, PTOs, other community groups; written appeals)	OG
Continue to encourage DPIL registration through Early Head Start, local pediatricians, the library, and others	OG
H. Emergency Preparedness	
Goal: Develop plans and policies to facilitate continued operation during and/or recovery from threats to the library. These include (1) Natural Risks (e.g.: flooding/water damage, fire/smoke/fumes, severe weather, pests), pandemics; (2) Technological Risks (e.g. power outages, data loss, telecommunications disruptions, malware/ransomware; and (3) Security Risks (e.g. theft (from collections, IT equipment, etc.), fraud, information theft, bomb threats, workplace violence, hostile intruder, vandalism); and (4) enterprise risks (see appendix)	
Expand on and add more details to the high-level disaster recovery plan provided by ServPro, to more fully account for various types of emergencies.	OG
Establish Emergency Closing policies and procedures	D

Continue development of Pandemic Plan and related policies necessitated by COVID-19 – adapting and expanding as needed for future public health crises	OG
I. Technology Goal: To utilize and to provide technologies that will position the library to achieve its mission and its patrons to be successful in the 21st century.	
Provide Internet services with faster speeds and greater bandwidth to accommodate anticipated need for digital services	N
Replace phone system	N
Procure a recording solution (e.g.: camera, lighting, microphone, backdrops, etc.) for virtual programming, social media, etc.	N
Research and budget for presentation solutions (e.g. for lunch & learns, public meetings, etc.)	N
Continue assessment of, and necessary upgrades to, both internally and publicly utilized hardware and software	OG

APPENDIX

Potential Threats (Enterprise)

1. No growth budgets

- a. Tax Funds: While the inflation rate for 2019 provided by the NYS Comptroller's Office is 2.25%, the allowable levy growth factor used in determining the amount of the library tax is limited by the NYS Tax Cap to a maximum of 2%. Therefore, inflation continues to exceed any increases in the library's tax funding.
- b. Endowment: The rate of return on the Library's endowment may perform below the rate of inflation and may fail to protect the purchasing power of the endowment funds over the next few years.
- c. Expenses: The library's expenses continue to grow principally because of personnel costs (mandated minimum wage increases, retirement, health insurance.)
- d. The conclusion is that for some time into the foreseeable future, there will likely be no-growth or small-growth budgets.

2. Lawsuits 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, however these challenges have been unsuccessful to date. Should such a suit ever be successful, the library would lose about 80% of its yearly revenue. Options to replace that lost revenue include:

- 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 to our by-laws, endowment, grant applications, and construction projects.
- b. Petition the City of Cortland, Cortlandville and Virgil and the county for money to operate the library. However, ever-decreasing funding from the City of Cortland was one reason the library opted to switch to a direct library tax.