

Wells Public Library

Strategic Plan



2021 – 2025

Mission Statement

Wells Public Library provides information and services for the residents of the community in their pursuit of educational, cultural, personal and recreational needs. The library accomplishes this by collecting, organizing and disseminating information in a variety of formats while actively working with other agencies to serve the diverse needs of the community.

Introduction

The Wells Public Library has served as a community center since opening in 1978. Over the years, the building has been expanded, technology has progressed, some materials have migrated to digital formats, and now a pandemic has struck. Through many changes, foreseen and unforeseen, the library has continued to serve as a community center to meet the needs of the residents of the town. The library provides a gathering place for adults to practice French and learn to paint, and for children to sing and learn their ABCs. The library provides public computers for email access and job searches. Looking toward the future, Wells Public Library must develop ways to meet the needs of its patrons and residents, adopt future trends and technologies, all while remaining a friendly, welcoming place for the community to gather, learn, and have fun.

It was the task of the Long Range Planning Committee of the Library Board of Trustees to determine what to focus on in the future based on input from residents. Feedback was gathered from the community by way of a survey. The Long Range Planning Committee worked over several months to synthesize the information and develop realistic goals and objectives for the library. The information-gathering portion of the strategic plan was cut short by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. Surveys were distributed around the town, made available in the library, and mailed out to a random sample of business owners. Once most businesses and the library shut down in the spring of 2020, the committee relied heavily on the online responses to the survey. However, the strength of received responses enabled the committee to develop this strategic plan.

This plan will serve as a guide for the next five years. It is not meant to be static and will be revisited annually to assess the need for possible revision to assure the library is meeting patrons' current needs. The objectives and timelines should be used to guide the Board of Trustees, Director and staff in decision making so that they may take actionable steps toward achieving the goals laid out in the plan. Residents should see a library that embraces the future while maintaining the small community feeling that so many of them value in the Wells Public Library.



Population Demographics

(from census.gov 2018 ACS survey estimates)

- Total Population (2019 estimate) 10,675
- 97% White
- 1.3% Asian
- 0.8% Black or African American
- 3% Hispanic (ethnicity)
- 51% Female
- 49% Male
- 16% Under age 18
- 26% Over age 65
- Median Income \$67,269

Library Usage Statistics FY 19

- Circulation 79,297
- Programs 473
- Program Attendance 8,882

Survey Results

Survey feedback was severely impacted by COVID-19. A total of 108 surveys were mailed to a random sample of business owners and 15 were returned. An additional 68 people responded to the online survey. Findings from the respondents:

How often do they visit the library?

64% visit the library at least weekly

Why do they visit the library?

94% visit to check out materials

44% visit to attend adult programs

24% use the library as a meeting or gathering place

21% visit to use the public computers

21% visit for a quiet place to work or study

22% visit to attend children's or young adults programs

17% visit to make copies

3 Wells Public Library Strategic Plan



What are their impressions of the library?

98% say the library provides a safe environment
97% say the library is clean and neat
95% say the library is welcoming and inclusive place
92% say the library is easy to use and convenient
83% say the library provides a learning-centered environment

Who is using the library?

82% are Wells residents
78% are age 50 or older

What do you value about the community of Wells?

How everyone looks out for one another
Small town feel
A beautiful place to spend the summer
A sense that everyone is welcome and belongs

How does the Wells Library currently help you and your family?

Books, activities, a place to relax
Friendly story time
Encourages kids to love reading
Providing books, music, movies, and programming
By the great, great service by the best staff ever
Providing everything I want to read whether it's on the shelf or through Minerva
Making books and media free for use is critical to a democratic society. Thank you for providing this service to our community!

Strategic Goals

- Future-ready technology
- Community Building
- Community-responsive enrichment
- Lifelong learning
- Physical and virtual media collections
- Facility



Goal Area

Technology

Wells Public Library will provide access to current technology to address patron and staff expectations within budgetary limits.

Measurement:

Achieve 85% or higher satisfaction rating on Technology Services on Patron Survey

- Develop replacement plan for public computers (Year 1-2)
- Research self-check out options (Year 1)
- Research feasibility of loanable hotspots (Year 1-2)
- Develop device training for patrons (Year 1, ongoing)
- Ensure staff are trained on the latest software and hardware (Ongoing)
- Develop off-site use of Sierra on portable devices to issue library cards and circulate materials at outreach events (Ongoing)

Community Building

Wells Public Library will expand activities to connect communities and schools to library resources.

Measurement:

Develop at least two programs each year built on partnerships with community organizations

- Identify opportunities for increased visibility in community: popup libraries: farmer's markets, Halloween fair (Ongoing)
- Build relationship with schools, businesses, senior center, Wells Reserve, Historical Society of Wells and Ogunquit, Parks & Rec to develop joint programming (Ongoing)
- Increase awareness of availability of public meeting space through marketing (Ongoing)
- Reach out to local homeowners' association and lodging to increase awareness of library services (Ongoing)

Community-responsive Enrichment

Wells Public Library will provide a collection, programming, and services that reflect the community's evolving needs and desires.

Measurements:

Achieve 85% or higher Satisfaction rating for Programming on Patron Survey

Achieve 90% or higher Satisfaction rating for Customer Service on Patron Survey

- Analyze current programs offered and look to expand successful programs (Ongoing)
- Identify new target audiences and interests (Ongoing)
- Develop and implement policy review schedule (Annually)



- Develop and implement annual Patron Satisfaction Survey (Year 2 then annually)
- Develop plan to meet MSL Library standards of excellence (Year 2)
- Marketing of materials, programming, and services: research new platforms to market information about programming (Ongoing)

Lifelong Learning

Wells Public Library will reach more adult users by providing enhanced lifelong learning and workforce development opportunities.

Measurement:

Increase attendance in adult programs by 10%

- Develop programming focusing on topics of current relevancy (Ongoing)
- Develop training/classes based on patron feedback (Ongoing)
- Host guest speakers to speak on relevant and educational topics (Ongoing)
- Host distinguished authors of interest (Ongoing)

Expand Physical and Virtual Collection

Wells Public Library will ensure access to a continually updated collection that encompasses all available media that meet public interest and demand.

Measurement:

Increase circulation of physical materials by 5%

Increase circulation of virtual materials by 10%

- Update cataloguing of music CDs (Year 2)
- Refresh Fiction and Large Print Collections (Year 1-2)
- Add paperback Beach Reads collection and shelving (Year 1)
- Continue to expand digital options and usage; increase Kanopy checkout limits (Year 1-2)
- Develop new methods of in-library marketing to increase visibility of collection (Ongoing)

Facility

Wells Public Library will maintain and enhance the functionality of the library to ensure an attractive, modern, accessible community destination.

Measurement:

Achieve 85% patron satisfaction rating on Library Space on Patron Survey

- Develop timeline and plan for high-cost building maintenance, including air conditioner replacement and other CIP projects (Ongoing)
- Install electric vehicle charging stations (Year 2)
- Modernize circulation desk (Year 3-4)
- Modernize staff work area (Year 2-3)
- Review signage and determine needed updates (Year 2-3)

The Wells Public Library will move forward with implementation of this strategic plan under unusual circumstances due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, the library adheres to the Town of Wells' Pandemic Policy. In addition, multiple measures have been taken to follow CDC and Maine State Library health guidelines. Safety of patrons and staff is of utmost importance and having a current pandemic policy and disaster plan in place is crucial. The library's disaster plan will be evaluated and revised, if necessary, annually to ensure it remains relevant to meet current circumstances.