

David A. Howe Public Library  
Five Year Strategic Plan: 2024-2028  
Adopted February 13, 2024 by the David A. Howe Public Library Board of Trustees

**MISSION**

The David A. Howe Public Library is to serve as the center of cultural life for the Wellsville area by creating a high level of patron engagement through a balanced program of collecting and preserving books and materials, developing educational and cultural programming, and supporting the social and economic fabric of the community by providing a space for people to come together.

**FUNDING**

Operational funding is the lifeline of the David A. Howe Public Library. In order to fulfill the mission of the library and ensure enduring incorporation as a public library it is imperative to secure and grow funding opportunities, so long as they have a fair and positive impact on Wellsville area residents.

**STRATEGIC GOAL #1**

**To secure sustainable operational funding that provides Wellsville area residents with the highest return on investment and maximizes the cultural and educational wealth of our community.**

Sustainable revenue will be addressed in order of importance:

1. Endowment
2. Taxpayer Investment
3. Grant Writing
4. Fundraising
5. Capital Campaigns

**ADMINISTRATIVE OBJECTIVES**

1. Endowment
  - a. Maintain and review financial records regularly
  - b. Conduct annual external audits of finances and record keeping
  - c. Review operational profit/loss statements monthly
  - d. Promote gift and estate planning to Wellsville-area families
  - e. Apply for endowment grants as available
  - f. Review portfolio annually per investment policy
  - g. Plan and conduct major endowment drive
  - h. Reduce endowment draw percentage
  - i. Minimize use of endowment funds for operational purposes by increasing other sources of revenue including grants, taxpayer investment and capital campaigns

2. Taxpayer Investment
  - a. Request additional taxes through school district as needed (tax appropriation requests are the responsibility of the Library Board)
  - b. Remain transparent through annual budget presentations and literature
  
3. Grant Writing
  - a. Write grants for specific projects as outlined in Collections, Programs, Facilities
  - b. Encourage and incentivize Director and senior staff to proactively seek and write grants.
  
4. Fundraising
  - a. Make monthly funding requests of the Friends of the David A. Howe Public Library for specific projects
  - b. Host fundraising events based on opportunity and financial need
  - c. Work with local community groups and organizations on mutually beneficial projects
  
5. Capital Campaigns
  - a. Hold capital campaigns to help finance major renovation/construction projects as deemed necessary

**STAFFING**

Library employees are the greatest asset of the David A. Howe Public Library. They provide, develop, sustain and enhance every form of service the library has to offer. In addition to supporting and investing in these assets, the library board of trustees will make every attempt to make the library the safest and most enjoyable environment to work. The trustees acknowledge that by caring for library employees and encouraging collaboration among departments, they will in return provide the Wellsville area with the best public library service possible.

**STRATEGIC GOAL #2**

**To ensure that the library hires and retains the most highly qualified employees, the Board of Trustees will provide whatever resources deemed necessary and within reason, so as to offer the highest quality service to the residents of Wellsville and the surrounding area.**

**FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Maintain adequate staffing, including professional and support staff
- B. Develop cost effective and/or nonmonetary ways to motivate employees, in addition to annual wage/salary increases
- C. Provide adequate resources to ensure staff has access to regular professional development

**OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Ensure all staff members receive adequate training to do their jobs well and to provide excellent service to patrons
- B. Encourage employees to attend STLS and other training opportunities, which apply to and enhance the specific position of the employee
- C. Compensate employees for attendance at professional conferences, including NYLA, annually, and as financially feasible
- D. Ensure clear lines of communication so that all employees are aware of programs and services in a timely manner
- E. Continue to hold annual staff gathering to create a positive environment and boost morale

### **COLLECTIONS**

The collection of the David A. Howe Public Library is the core service upon which the library is built. The library seeks to select, organize, preserve and make freely available those materials, print and non-print, which will fulfill the informational, recreational, social and educational needs of the community.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL #3**

**To meet community need and increase overall usage of the library collection by Wellsville area residents.**

### **FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Strive to maintain or increase collections budgets annually
- B. Seek supplemental funding for collections from local foundations and civic groups
- C. Promote existing *memorial/honorary donation* program
- D. Request funding support from the Friends of the Library
- E. Seek grant funding for collection development
- F. Seek grant funding to restore and preserve special collections

### **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Work to stay current with highly regarded and popular items across all ages and genres and populate the collections accordingly
- B. Work to familiarize community with digital collections available for all ages, thus increasing their usage
- C. Keep collections in good useable condition and weed as needed
- D. Ensure availability of materials to all library patrons by maintaining clear rules and communications with patrons
- E. Make cosmetic and functional updates to Youth and Adult stacks to encourage use of the collections kept in those places.

## **PROGRAMMING**

Library programs are intended to be educational and cultural in nature as well as entertaining. The library seeks to develop, foster and make freely available programs that satisfy the curiosity and interests of our community. The library will fulfill its commitment to programming through the frequent use of the Nancy A. Howe Auditorium, Howe Gallery, and meeting spaces throughout the library.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL #4**

**To enhance the quality of life of Wellsville area residents by offering educational and cultural programs on a continual basis.**

## **FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Strive to maintain or increase general programming budgets annually
- B. Increase funding for Auditorium and Gallery programming by at least 50% and diversify funding sources so as not to be dependent on the timeline of and funds available from limited grantors
- C. Research and secure funds from other public and private sources to support programs
- D. Solicit sponsorships for programs
- E. Seek supplemental funding from civic groups
- F. Actively solicit donations from participants and attendees at programs
- G. Partner with other regional educational and cultural institutions to share programming costs for major events

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES: AUDITORIUM AND EXHIBITS**

- A. Develop a robust programming lineup for all ages, including, but not limited to music, art, theater, film, and educational offerings
- B. Build new and strengthen existing partnerships with organizations in the area that have similar cultural programming goals in order to leverage opportunities that would be out of reach for each organization acting individually and to reduce duplication of efforts and unnecessary competition
- C. Update the Howe Gallery with the following:
  - a. A hanging system that will make show installation more efficient
  - b. Furniture that is comfortable but can also be stored easily when the space is needed for events and meetings.
- D. Upgrading auditorium technologies

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES: ADULT SERVICES**

- A. Cultivate regularly scheduled book clubs
- B. Increase regular participation in programs that appeal to a diverse group of patrons
- C. Expand collaboration with local artisans and lecturers for adult program offerings
- D. Develop additional programming partnerships with local colleges and universities
- E. Offer a cohesive Adult Summer Reading Program and explore new ideas for connecting with patrons
- F. Develop new strategies for promoting adult programs and services to the public
- G. Expand outreach within the community

- H. Ensure comfortable seating as well as meeting space for all
  - a. Ensure adult library spaces are functional and attractive (inviting & comfortable seating/lounging areas. Adding a specific space for passive and active programs and crafts)

### **COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

Strong relationships with community agencies, local business and other institutions are key to the success of the library. The library seeks to grow these bonds and to serve as a hub for services and outreach to the community.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL #5**

**To enhance partnerships with area organizations and increase awareness of library service, in order to more effectively meet the needs of the community.**

### **FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Maintain and strive to increase overall public relations budget each fiscal year
- B. Establish and Outreach line in the annual budget
- C. Secure grant funds from a variety of sources
- D. Work with area organizations to co-sponsor initiatives

### **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES: COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

- A. Increase and expand promotion of services, facilities and library resources
- B. Develop a cross-platform, cohesive social media strategy
- C. Refocus mailing strategy to advertise specific programs and services
- D. Expand community outreach through collaborations with organizations such as Wellsville Area Chamber of Commerce, Wellsville Central School, service groups, Wellsville Development Corporation, ACCORD, Office for the Aging, etc
- E. Expand outreach with regular deposit collections to senior living facilities and Allegany County Jail, and others
- F. Establish outreach programs to address specific community needs
- G. Expand work with groups like the Community Kitchen, Salvation Army, and the Wellsville Central School to address food insecurity in our area.

### **TECHNOLOGY**

Technology at the David A. Howe Public Library plays a vital role in services by offering access to technologies that are needed by residents of our rural community.

### **STRATEGIC GOAL #6**

**To provide public access to modern technologies for patrons and staff, and to develop the skills needed to use them.**

FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES

- A. Maintain sufficient library operational revenue to continue with annual upgrades of hardware and software
- B. Seek outside funding sources for technology upgrades and maintenance

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- A. Follow an annual schedule of upgrades for computers, software and peripherals including library server
- B. Upgrade library website
- C. Expand and increase usage of one-on-one tech help with community
- D. Offer classes for specific demographics or groups as needed
- E. Offer staff training on a regular basis
- F. Work with area organizations to provide tech related assistance to community members

**YOUTH SERVICES**

Fostering an appreciation for learning among youth is important to developing a sustainable future for our community. The library will develop programs and collections that are entertaining and rich in culture, and promote literacy among children and youth.

**STRATEGIC GOAL #7**

**To maintain and improve library services in an inviting environment for the educational and recreational needs of area youth.**

FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES

- A. Seek supplemental funding for collections from local foundations and civic groups
- B. Maintain and strive to increase overall collection and programming budgets each year
- C. Explore feasibility of and seek grant funding to upgrade furnishings in the youth wing

OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- A. Expand attendance with regular story time programs for young children and caregivers
- B. Develop a one or more recurring programs for middle grade students as well as an additional recurring programs for teens.
- C. Improve communication with middle and high school age patrons about programming and establish means to receive their input.
- D. Conduct Summer Reading Programs for youth up through 12<sup>th</sup> grade

- E. Collaborate with early childhood, elementary, middle and high school teachers, library media specialists, administrators, curriculum specialists, and parent-teacher organizations to develop and promote library programs and collections to youth
- F. Develop a means to ensure more consistent library usage throughout different life stages up to and including adulthood
- G. Upgrade furnishings for more comfort and practical use and keep toys and other grab-and-play items up to date
- H. Update collection development practices to include engagement with trends, events and popular culture.
- I. Develop strategies for promoting youth programs, services and collections to families, schools and local organizations
- J. Incorporate technologies for education and entertainment.
- K. Creation of a teen advisory board and a core of teen volunteers
- L. Collaborate with local schools to provide every child with a library card

## **FACILITIES**

The building and facilities that support the operations of the David A. Howe Public Library are one of the community's greatest assets. They support both the operational functions of the library, but also provide one of the most beautiful pieces of architecture in Wellsville and Western New York.

## **STRATEGIC GOAL #8**

**To maintain the architectural integrity, preserve the historic value, and encourage and expand community use of the library's building, while incorporating energy efficiency and ensuring accessibility to all members of the Wellsville area.**

## **FINANCIAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Investigate and secure funding from all possible sources
- B. Conduct capital campaigns for major capital projects

## **OPERATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- A. Maintain aesthetic appeal of buildings and grounds
- B. Develop and maintain an overall plan of maintenance department functions and operations
- C. Promote availability of meeting room spaces, including as rental for private events
- D. Develop plans for climate control throughout main building, and for dehumidification system for Auditorium
- E. Replace windows throughout the library as needed
- F. Inventory, organize and securely maintain maintenance department equipment and work areas
- G. Develop, adopt and distribute disaster plans and fire drill procedures
- H. Assess the condition of the library roof and develop plan for replacement or refurbishment

- I. Refurbish children’s bathroom, and install a diaper-changing station
- J. Refurbish adult stacks
- K. Repaint rooms and ceilings throughout the library
- L. Update library fire and trouble monitoring system

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This Five Year Strategic Plan was developed by staff members and trustees of the David A. Howe Public Library, and representatives of the Wellsville community. Additional community input was obtained through a public survey. The purpose of this plan is to create a vision for the library over the next five years and to ensure that the mission of the library is fulfilled through obtainable operational objectives. This plan will serve as a working resource for library staff and trustees, so that the community of the Wellsville area will receive the greatest return on its investment by receiving library services that meet and exceed the expectations of the whole community.

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(To Be) Adopted on February 13, 2024 by the David A. Howe Public Library Board of Trustees