

FY2021 – FY2026 Long-Range Plan



The Framingham Public Library System

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From the Directors

The Framingham Public Library is an educator, community resource, civic space, and source of social support. Its founding purpose—to provide access to information and guide patrons toward books and other resources—remains central to everything we do. The Library has also become a place to take classes, participate in cultural events, and meet neighbors from different backgrounds. The Library is a literal place and a collection of resources, many of which are available anywhere there is internet access. It is a shared space that sparks collaboration and a space for individual reflection.

This complexity of purpose should come as no surprise: public libraries are working on the front lines of information access, perhaps the fastest changing part of our economy and society. It is also no wonder that in a City with many different cultures and a wealth of public spaces, our buildings are used in a limitless variety of ways. For precisely these reasons it is important to keep asking questions about the Library’s core goals and to take stock of both its resources and potential as we work to deliver a broad array of services today while envisioning a vast future.

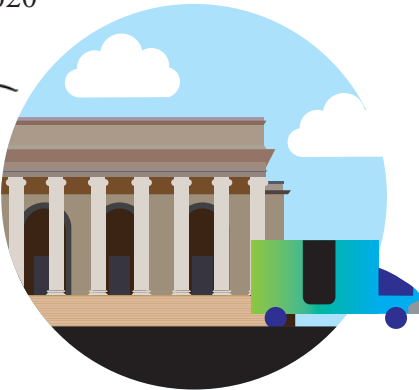
This plan and the initiatives it identifies are meant to provide this vision and focus.

When we started our research more than a year ago, we felt it was important to create a process that gave citizens from all across the City an opportunity to discuss their view of their Library and what it might become. The rich and often complicated discussions that arose during the process shape this plan. In addition to the more standard elements of a strategic plan, it identifies the values that enliven our work and make us who we are. Based on our interviews with internal and external stakeholders, the plan also presents a vision for the future designed to guide FPL’s strategic initiatives over the next five years. In addition to clarifying our existing approaches to public service

and creating the internal capacity to build upon the best of what we do, this vision incorporates new ways of engaging residents and tailoring services to the particular needs of our neighborhoods.

Mark Contois
Mark Contois,
Library Director
2006-2010 and 2012-2020

Lena Kilburn
Lena Kilburn,
Library Director
August 2020 - present



The Framingham Public System consists of the Main Library, the Christa McAuliffe Branch, and the Bookmobile, as well as our activities throughout the City.

Award winning Christa McAuliffe Branch Library



Lena Kilburn and Mark Contois

COVID-19: FPL Responds

In times of crisis and challenge, the community turns to its public library for critical information, resources, and connection. As the coronavirus caused a global pandemic in the winter of 2020, the City of Framingham, along with the entire world, faced one of the greatest challenges it had ever seen. City officials, residents, and patrons turned to the Framingham Public Library and we implemented a COVID-19 Response Plan designed to maximize positive impact on our community.

The public library provides invaluable access to life-changing education, opportunity, and information, even in the best of times. But it is in times of crisis when we really see some of the most profound impacts it can make. Because the library is a truly free community resource that serves everyone, and because we are always prepared to meet the needs of our patrons, directly and nimbly, we were poised and ready to respond to the coronavirus pandemic and the challenges it posed for our community. With our buildings closed, this meant making significant changes to the ways we worked together as a staff, to how we prioritized projects and services, and to our approach to serving the public.

In March of 2020, the committee that wrote this plan was close to finalizing and unveiling it to our community. Although we had to put its completion on hold so that we could focus on our coronavirus response, we were eager to return to it.



When we did, we were pleased to find that, although so much had changed in the collective mindset and perspective since the pandemic took hold, the plan remains just as relevant and viable as it ever was. We have our community to thank for that. This plan was written with your input and your needs prioritized. And as such, we are proud and excited to begin to implement it with our Year One Action Plan, which, by prioritizing actions of particular importance, relevance, and value during this challenging time, will fulfill the goals and initiatives set forth herein.

Above all else, the Framingham Public Library values equal access to its resources. Our goal every day is to ensure that we are providing the best and most relevant materials, learning experiences, and opportunities for enrichment, and that we reflect our community’s needs. It is this basic tenet that informed the creation of this Long Range Plan.



Mission and Vision

Mission

The Framingham Public Library provides an open, unbiased environment and upholds the public's right of equal access to information and services. We encourage and contribute to the civic, intellectual, and cultural pursuits of the community. Through guidance, resources, programs, and outreach we meet the diverse needs of individuals and groups using traditional and innovative technologies. The Library provides a friendly environment that serves as a community meeting place, encouraging curiosity, free inquiry, and lifelong learning. As it is a vital asset, we recognize our responsibility to actively and broadly promote awareness of the Library's and the City's resources and services within our community.

Vision

The Framingham Public Library will anticipate and meet the changing needs of our community. We will deliver excellent customer service and strive to be the first choice for information and a community gathering center. We will embrace the diversity and ever-changing landscape of the City of Framingham and provide equitable access to our facilities, programs, and collections.

Values

- We value free, open, and unrestricted access to our collections and services.
- We value equitable access to information and lifelong learning opportunities.
- We value intellectual freedom and unbiased representation of all viewpoints in collections, programs, and services.
- We value patron-first service developed with patron feedback to ensure the best experience every time.
- We value a spirit of innovation and growth in our approach to our development of staff, collections, programming, services, and spaces.
- We value the power of collaboration.
- We value the contribution of Library staff in helping patrons navigate a world overflowing with information.
- We value connecting with our community in the Library buildings, via the Bookmobile, around the City at public events, and on the internet.



Kids connecting with technology



Literacy Unlimited students and tutors

Goal

Uniting & Growing Community

A strong community moves forward together. The Library is uniquely positioned to make a United Framingham a reality.





Objectives

Uniting & Growing Community

Discovery

Actively reach out to support and encourage library exploration, ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to discover what the Library holds for them.

Connection

Be a central source of City information for residents, municipal departments, and elected and appointed officials.

Diversity

Reflect the richness of the people and communities of Framingham in everything we do.

Spaces

Create and maintain welcoming, flexible, safe, and accessible spaces to gather, learn, and collaborate.

How can we meet this goal?

Establish the Library as a welcome center for new residents of the City of Framingham.

Advance diversity in everything we do.

Create flexible gathering and work spaces to support the creative economy and meet municipal demands.

Be present in City neighborhoods by attending and presenting at neighborhood groups and association meetings, exploring using neighborhood venues for library programming and satellite collections, and seeking resident input on library initiatives.

Work with City and community agencies to provide the community with ready access to resources and forums on mental health awareness.

Compile resources and information in one location as an aid to navigating City resources.

Programs

Deliver entertaining literary, educational, and cultural programming through a variety of media to enrich our community.



Dance demonstration

“I called the other day to ask if someone in the Children’s Department could grab a stack of books for us because the process of choosing books for the kids online is difficult for us... we like a little bit of everything! Lucy was kind enough to explain that the Children’s Department is offering BOOK BUNDLES! This is a life saver. I filled out the form online and picked up a bag full of books today! I’m telling you, it is like Christmas in this house! We are so excited to have a fresh selection of books! Thank you so much Lucy and the team for making such great selections!”



Family time at the Library



Your Place to Learn

Everyone deserves the opportunity to enrich
their quality of life.

Spark your **creativity** and **innovation**.





Objectives

Your Place to Learn

Access

Provide equitable access to desired information and resources, and bridge the technology gap—for all ages.

Literacy

Expand basic literacy instruction and English Language Learning for adults, and support those seeking citizenship.

“Reminds us what a central and important place the Library is! So much information today is so biased, learning about critical thinking and other perspectives is so important and having all that available at the Library is irreplaceable.”

“The Adventures in Lifelong Learning classes have been wonderful. I have been participating for several years. These classes are a great contribution to the community.”

Collaboration

Share school and library resources to maximize the impact of technology, collections, and programming.

Skill-building

Provide opportunities to explore new interests and training to build and enhance skills through all stages of life.

How can we meet this goal?

Continue to support the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham, Homework Center, and Framingham State University Partnership for Adventures in Lifelong Learning.

Work with Framingham Schools to ensure that every student has a library card.

Structure and schedule classes and instructional programming to meet patron needs.

Increase access to Wifi hotspots, laptops and other important technologies and digital resources to encourage success and connection at all stages of life.

Create a computer lab classroom at the Main Library.



Learning English at the Library



Space to read, relax and restore



Patron-First Culture

Your needs are changing.
Your Library is responding and we're putting you first.





Objectives

Patron First Culture

Experience

Create a positive and welcoming environment that focuses on user experience and removes barriers to collections, technology, spaces, and other library services.

Dialogue

Encourage civility and empathy by providing a safe space for the open exchange of ideas.

Outreach

Champion the needs of the underserved and most vulnerable members of our community.

Identity

Be the Library the community wants.

Preparedness

Be ready to respond and inform in emergency situations.

How can we meet this goal?

Continue to shape Bookmobile services to serve those who need it most and assess capacity for homebound delivery services.

Work with the City to explore elimination of all late charges for borrowed library materials.

Create a universal signage and wayfinding system accessible to all.

Evaluate and revamp policies and procedures to ensure the user is always at the forefront and center of all we do.

Employ a variety of techniques to solicit patron feedback including surveys, program evaluations, etc.

“The Bookmobile is AMAZING! We loved visiting it at the Farmer’s Market today! Thank you for providing it to the community! You make the world a better place!”

“I like the Library because I get to relax there. As a teenager, almost everything is too much to deal with and I have so much to think of. All teenagers go through it. When I’m at the Library, I feel better...especially with events that are free and just for us to feel safe and happy.”



Your Library on Wheels



Community Health and Wellness Fair



Economic & Community Partnerships

Framingham is expanding its possibilities.
By working together, we will cultivate the
landscape of our collective future.



Objectives

Economic & Community Partnerships

Support

Serve as a catalyst for small business, entrepreneurship, and the creative economy by providing research expertise, technology, services, collections, and spaces.

Growth

Leverage our physical location to support development of a vibrant downtown.

Vitality

Create a library presence across the city, reinforcing the fabric of Framingham’s neighborhoods.

Employability

Provide resources for entry into the job market and support career development.

Relationships

Foster meaningful and active collaborations with community, municipal, and business organizations.

How can we meet this goal?

Partner with Framingham State University (FSU) Entrepreneur Innovation Center and establish FSU satellite classes at the Main Library.

Actively participate in Downtown Framingham Inc. initiatives and advocate for a seat on the board.

Create a co-working space that provides meeting and networking opportunities for businesses, job seekers, and entrepreneurs.

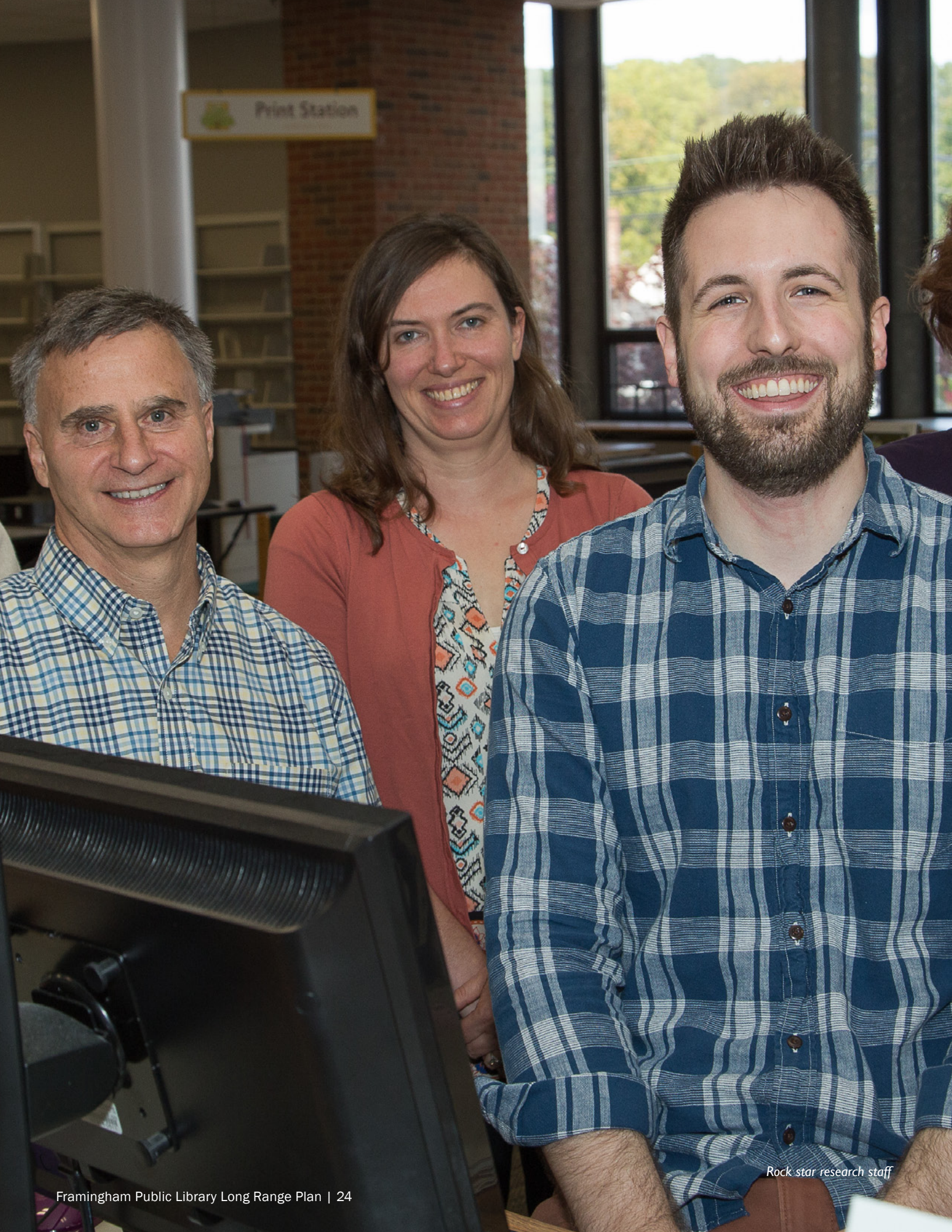
Become the research headquarters for municipal government.

Create an interdepartmental computer lab classroom at the Main Library.



Outdoor spaces for neighborhood gatherings

“We so appreciate everything the Library does. We LOVE being at the Library! The Reference Department is always so helpful and knowledgeable. Recently they found an obscure textbook for me—that was just ‘way beyond the call of duty’! I love having access to the whole Minuteman System for things I want. It’s like a candy store! Thank you and please extend our sincere and deepest thanks to your colleagues, for all you do at the Library.”



Rock star research staff

Goal

Operational Focus

Our community has entrusted us to continually advance our organization.

Building upon our strong foundation, we will move our journey forward.





Objectives

Operational Focus

Responsibility

Underscore our commitment to efficient and responsible use of the Library budget and continue to seek additional funding opportunities outside of municipal appropriations.

Personnel

Inspire and enable staff to develop a variety of traditional and non-traditional abilities to meet the needs of an ever-changing society.

Facilities

Commit to environmental responsibility and the ongoing maintenance of buildings and equipment for the safety of all.

Marketing

Effectively publicize who we are and what we do.

How can we meet this goal?

Review all library spaces for ADA standards and invest in furnishings that assist all patrons with ease of use.

Deliver to City Chief Financial Officer a multi-year capital project plan.

Develop innovative marketing plan designed to reach all users and potential users.

Refresh the Main Library interior and exterior spaces to enhance accessibility, patron comfort, foster flexible and adaptive usage, and encourage discovery and social connection.

Provide clear and accessible avenues and opportunities for staff and Library Trustee professional development, and ensure staff stays current in cultural awareness and social sensitivity.

Advocacy

Emphasize the relevance of the Library's capabilities and resources to city government and other stakeholders.

“We are BIG fans of the Library!! We follow all your Instagram posts and there are so many wonderful things there. We love it! All the poetry, all the motivational and inspirational and witty things on there—it’s everything we need right now!”

“I just LOVE this library! You guys are so creative, constantly coming up with great ideas to get both kids and adults to enjoy their library!”



Mayor Yvonne Spicer creates with a young maker in the Spark Lab at the Framingham Public Library

Imagine the Possibilities

The activities in this plan are intended to be a sampling of possibilities that the Library may pursue over the next five years. Our yearly action plan will draw from this list and additional activities as needs arise.



Key

- 1 Uniting & Growing Community
- 2 Your Place to Learn
- 3 Patron-First Culture
- 4 Economic & Community Partnerships
- 5 Operational Focus

Collaborate with patrons and staff to grow a dynamic and relevant Library of Things.

2 3

Evaluate and revamp policies and procedures to ensure the user is always at the forefront and center of all we do.

3 5

Continue to offer and expand innovative, educational, enriching programming for children and families.

1 2 3

Sustain and expand Lifelong Learning opportunities for seniors.

1 2

Create and develop a “reservable” Library of People to encourage connection, learning, and discourse in our community.

1 2 3 5

Structure and schedule classes and instructional programming to meet patron needs.

1 2

Review, refresh, expand business collection in all formats.

2 4

Grow and develop intergenerational programming and opportunities.

1 2 3

Work with the City to explore elimination of all late charges for borrowing library materials.

1 3

Create a universal signage and wayfinding system accessible to all.

1 3 5

Connect with and provide programming and services for adults under 40.

1 2 4

Explore creating access to certain areas of the buildings off hours to maximize patron usage.

1

Commit to hosting book and author events including local authors and continue offering Framingham Reads Together in collaboration with community organizations.

1 2 3 4

Continue to shape Bookmobile services to serve those who need it most and assess capacity for homebound delivery services.

2 3 5

Create a co-working space that provides meeting and networking opportunities for businesses, job seekers, and entrepreneurs.

1 4

Create flexible gathering and work spaces to support the creative economy and meet municipal demands.

1 3 4

Refresh the Main Library interior and exterior spaces to enhance accessibility, patron comfort, foster flexible and adaptive usage, and encourage discovery and social connection.

1 3 4 5

Review all library spaces for ADA standards and invest in furnishings that assist all patrons with ease of use.

1 3 5

Deliver to City Chief Financial Officer a multi-year capital project plan.

5

Compile resources and information in one location as an aid to navigating City services.

1 3 4

Seek city appropriations to support Literacy Unlimited and the Citizenship Corner.

1 2 3

Become the research headquarters for municipal government.

1 3 5

Participate in the City’s Government Academy.

1 5

Support seniors in the use of emerging technologies and devices by offering hands on instruction.

1 2 3

Create a computer lab classroom at the Main Library.

1 2

Expand our 24/7 approach to include online registration, live program streaming, and mobile technology.

1 2 3

Increase access to Wifi hotspots, laptops and other important technologies and digital resources to encourage success and connection at all stages of life.

1 2 3 4

Mirror appropriate technology and software platforms with that of the schools to ensure all students have the necessary tools for academic success.

1 2 5

Create a position dedicated to developing, building, and managing a tutor and volunteer base that meets community and Library needs. Create a home space for their activities at the Library.

1 2

Create a Library Futures Group – Boldly go where no Library has gone before.

1 2 3 4 5

Develop an innovative marketing plan designed to reach all current and potential users.

1 5

Participate in Massachusetts Library System, Massachusetts Library Association, Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Minuteman Library Network, and Massachusetts State Legislative events.

5

Explore bringing public transportation to the Library.

3 4

Seek new position in the Information and Research Department for a Business Librarian.

2 4 5

Produce and widely disseminate an annual report outlining the state of the Library.

5

Reach out to residents of new multi-family buildings to ensure they know all the Library has to offer.

1 2 3 5

Develop a system wide rebrand that unifies visual communication, language, and patron experience.

1 3 5

Publish our major publications in multiple languages.

1 3 5

Work with city and community agencies to provide the community with ready access to resources and forums on mental health awareness and social emotional learning for children and families.

1 2 3 4

Work with Framingham Schools to ensure that every student has a library card.

1 2 3 4

Partner with Framingham State University (FSU) Entrepreneur Center Innovation Center and establish FSU satellite classes at the Main Library.

2 4

Continued on the next page

Possibilities continued

Continue to support the Early Childhood Alliance of Framingham, Homework Center, and Framingham State University Partnership for Adventures in Lifelong Learning.

1

2

3

Partner with the Learning Center for the Deaf and Perkins School for the blind to maximize our relationships with students and faculty and ensure that services to our sight- and hearing-impaired patrons are current.

1

2

3

4

Continue building the activities of our Spark Lab at Framingham Public Library makerspace to provide a robust set of hands-on learning experiences for all ages.

1

2

3

Be present in city neighborhoods by attending and presenting at neighborhood association meetings, exploring using neighborhood venues for library programming and satellite collections, and seeking resident input on library initiatives.

1

3

4

Establish the Library as a welcome center to residents new to the City of Framingham.

1

2

3

Employ a variety of techniques to solicit patron feedback using surveys, program evaluations, online reviews, polls, etc.

3

4

5

Actively participate in Downtown Framingham Inc. initiatives and advocate for a seat on the board.

4

Continue to work closely with the Framingham Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Framingham Public Library.

1

4

5

Be the initiator and leader in harnessing the energy of the creative economy.

1

4

Explore partnerships with the Callahan Senior Center, the City of Framingham Health Department, and other local agencies to address loneliness and isolation in our community.

1

3

4

Advance diversity in everything we do.

1

3

Develop a coordinated and complementary partnership with Framingham Parks Department.

1

4

5



Storytime where it all begins

Methodology

New Design

This newly designed plan was developed over the past year, for the benefit of the reader. It lays out goals and objectives that reflect the needs and desires of the community.

Action Plan

Our yearly Action Plans will reflect the goals and values described in previous pages.

Contributions

The committee thoughtfully considered all of the input that we received through our interviews and community outreach. Here’s what we did. We conducted:

- Online, paper, and in-person surveys; community forums.
- Interviews with 24 community leaders and subject matter specialists.
- Group sessions with City Council, school librarians, and Library staff.





Framingham
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Look here first.

Main Library

49 Lexington Street
Framingham, MA 01702
508-532-5570

McAuliffe Branch Library

746 Water Street
Framingham, MA 01701
508-532-5636

www.framinghamlibrary.org



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