

Adopted by the Coburn Free Library Board of Trustees 2/15/2024 – Five Year Plan
**Coburn Free Library Long Range Plan
2024-2029**

Mission:

The mission of the Coburn Free Library is to continue and perpetuate a free, public, circulating, and reference library to promote literacy, lifetime learning, and community engagement to the residents of the Village of Owego and the surrounding area.

Vision:

We strive to advance our library as a welcoming, accessible, and responsive hub for resources in our community. We support our mission statement by providing top-tier materials, programs, and services.

General Description:

Our library is located in the county seat of Tioga County, NY, in a village whose downtown has been named a National Historic District. The library is chartered to serve the Village of Owego (population 3,654 as of the 2020 census), but in fact, serves a wide geographic area including much of Tioga County and Western Broome County.

Long Range Planning Committee:

Our long-range planning committee is comprised of members of our Board of Trustees, the Executive Director, and responses from public surveys.

Structure:

The purpose of the CFL Long-Range Plan is to guide the development and actions of the library over the next 5 years. This plan addresses the structural, operational, service, and educational goals of the library and the actions necessary to meet those goals.

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 approval by a vote of the Board of Trustees. This current plan and its previous iterations will be available on the Library's website (www.coburnfreelibrary.org) or upon request.

Key for Action Item Codes:

C=Completed, IP = In Progress, H=on hold, OG = ongoing, N=new, NS=not started

Major Planning Areas

- 1) Building and Grounds
 - a. **Goal:** Provide an accessible, safe, comfortable, welcoming, and attractive environment for patrons and staff.
 - i. Repair the pothole in the east library entrance. C
 - ii. Update the flooring on the main level of the library, the staff bathroom, and the main staircase. Replace carpet with tile to reduce allergens and enable better sanitization. Funding was provided by insurance due to flooding/boiler malfunction in January of 2021. C
 - iii. Add shelving to the new annex closets and organize/move/declutter items stored under the main level stacks. C
 - iv. Complete the new reading/study carrell area in the mezzanine level. C

- v. Add shelves to the newly renovated mezzanine section. Move the YA collection to this area. C
- vi. Paint the exterior window trim and explore options for funding. IP
- vii. Maintain/upgrade existing landscaping as needed and install landscaping in the rear of the building around the new accessibility annex entrance. OG
- viii. Add a pollinator garden and reading area on the back lawn. C
- ix. Upgrade the unused kitchenette with new appliances to return this to usable space. C
- x. Paint the main floor, mezzanine, and meeting-room floor interior walls. Return paint colors to early-1900s period-appropriate color scheme. N
- xi. Repair windows in/out as needed and explore options for funding. OG
- xii. Review available space in the building and reconfigure/renovate as necessary for programming and storage. OG
- xiii. Explore and implement security measures as needed and as funds allow. OG

2) Collections and Services

- a. **Goal:** To provide timely, relevant programs and to increase the level of service provided to patrons so that they leave the library empowered with a lifelong interest in reading, learning, and intellectual inquiry.
 - i. Continue to support technological literacy through one-on-one or small group sessions. Instruct patrons on the use of technology (computers, smartphones, email, google docs, etc). OG
 - ii. Develop partnerships within the community to create new programs sponsored by the library. OG
 - iii. Optimize space usage and appearance of collection through reduction of items that are unused, out-of-date, or in poor physical condition. (Specific areas of need are the YA, non-fiction sections and large print). OG
 - iv. Target annual spending to reduce wait times for popular materials. OG
 - v. Be an advocate in the community for early literacy by offering a variety of educational programming, publicizing early literacy techniques, and by keeping an engaging array of picture books and learning materials. OG
 - vi. Continue the efforts to build services for teens and young adults through outreach and programming such as STEAM, Lego Club, Crafts, games, etc. OG
 - vii. Continue the efforts to build services for adults through outreach and programming such as book clubs, educational programs, crafts, game nights, etc. OG
 - viii. Continue to provide a successful Summer Reading Program for all ages using collaboration, outreach, and enriching programs. OG

3) Outreach and Marketing

- a. **Goal:** Increase awareness of and use of the library through various brand-building, marketing, and communication channels.
 - i. Rebrand and re-introduce the library as a multi-faceted institution via a new logo and slogan. (I like the idea of “where lifelong learners grow”) IP
 - ii. Update website to increase brand recognition, improve user experience and navigation, and ensure responsive design for fixed and mobile platforms. OG
 - iii. Develop press releases to promote activities, programs, and other news at the library. Continue to notify local media of regular programs and special events. OG
 - iv. Continue to correspond with the staff at OACSD to inform teachers of services, resources, and programming provided by the library for children and families. OG
 - v. Continue to utilize the website and social media as appropriate to post and update upcoming events and new services/materials in the library. OG

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- vi. Promote specific segments of the collection using “Collection highlights” displays, posts, or flyers so that borrowers with specific needs are aware of the library’s offerings. (examples: Large print, picture books, local authors, new in braille, plant-based diet, self-help, etc) OG
- vii. Develop awareness of library resources in the community via partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, Schools, County Agencies, and nonprofit organizations (Family Reading Partnership, Tioga County Health Department, OA Schools, etc) OG
- viii. Create a student library card program to include focused annual card drives for all OA students. C
- ix. Seek community feedback via patron surveys and respond to meet the needs of the community. OG

4) Grants and Development

- a. **Goal:** Increase financial support for the library through a range of development and fundraising strategies.
 - i. Continue to research **new** grant and funding opportunities- applying and pursuing those that are aligned with the library’s goals. OG
 - ii. Apply annually to known local and regional foundations and organizations for program, technology, and capital improvements grants. OG
 - iii. Coordinate with the fundraising efforts of the Friends of the Coburn Free Library. OG

5) Board of Trustees

- a. **Goal:** Recruit and retain a skilled and engaged Board of Trustees to provide effective oversight of the library.
 - i. Review all Board policies every 5 years. Revise policies as needed to ensure compliance with applicable regulations and best practices. Guidance is provided by the Finger Lakes Library System staff. OG
 - ii. Ensure all trustees attend required training and are familiar with accepted best practices, New York State and Federal laws about non-profit organizations, and NYSED requirements for libraries. This training is provided in the trustee handbook and supplemented by trainings offered by the Director of the Finger Lakes Library System. OG
 - iii. Make efforts to recruit trustees with suitable skills and experience, including legal, financial, business, buildings/grounds, and leadership. OG

6) Personnel

- a. **Goal:** To support the Executive Director in building and maintaining a team that meets the needs of our patrons while fostering a work environment that encourages excellence.
 - i. Beginning 2022, complete annual evaluations of the Executive Director. This evaluation will be completed by the Board of Trustees. OG
 - ii. Beginning 2021, complete annual staff evaluations. To be completed by the Library Executive Director. OG
 - iii. Create and approve an employee handbook including all policies and necessary HR documents for personnel. C
 - iv. Create and approve job descriptions for each library role. C
 - v. Review and revise training and orientation procedures for new employees. OG

7) Technology

- a. **Goal:** To utilize and provide technologies that will allow the library to achieve its mission and its patrons to be successful in the current era.
 - i. Continue sustainable replacement of public-use and circulation computer technology. Pursue funding sources to supplement the budget allocation for this line item. OG

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- ii. Maintain internet services with sufficient speed and bandwidth to accommodate current digital needs for public use and internal library operations. OG
- iii. Continue assessment of necessary upgrades to the security system. OG

8) Financial

- a. **Goal:** Secure sufficient funding to enable the library to carry out its mission and support improvements in library services and programs with a focus on long-term sustainability.
 - i. Create and approve a financial policy for the running of the Coburn Free Library's finances. C
 - ii. Submit a proactive annual funding request to public funding sources to maintain or increase the current level of funding. (Tioga County, Village of Owego, Town of Owego) OG
 - iii. Annually, submit request letters for bullet funding through the local legislators. OG
 - iv. Develop an annual fall fundraising letter to CFL supporters via physical mailings and/or email. The annual appeal will be penned by a member(s) of the Board of Trustees and should briefly re-cap progress made in the current year. OG
 - v. Continue to improve financial processes and procedures among roles of treasurer, executive director, and accounting office. OG