

**JACOB EDWARDS LIBRARY  
SOUTHBRIDGE, MA  
LONG RANGE PLAN FY2011-FY2016**

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Submitted to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners  
By Library Director Margaret Morrissey  
&  
Joan Menard, Chairperson, and  
The Jacob Edwards Library Board of Trustees  
January 2011

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Acknowledgement:  
Special thanks to Cheryl Hanson, Director, Charlton Library  
&  
The Charlton Library Board of Trustees  
For the plan design and format



Approved by the Board of Trustees at the September 27, 2011 meeting.

## **LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT**

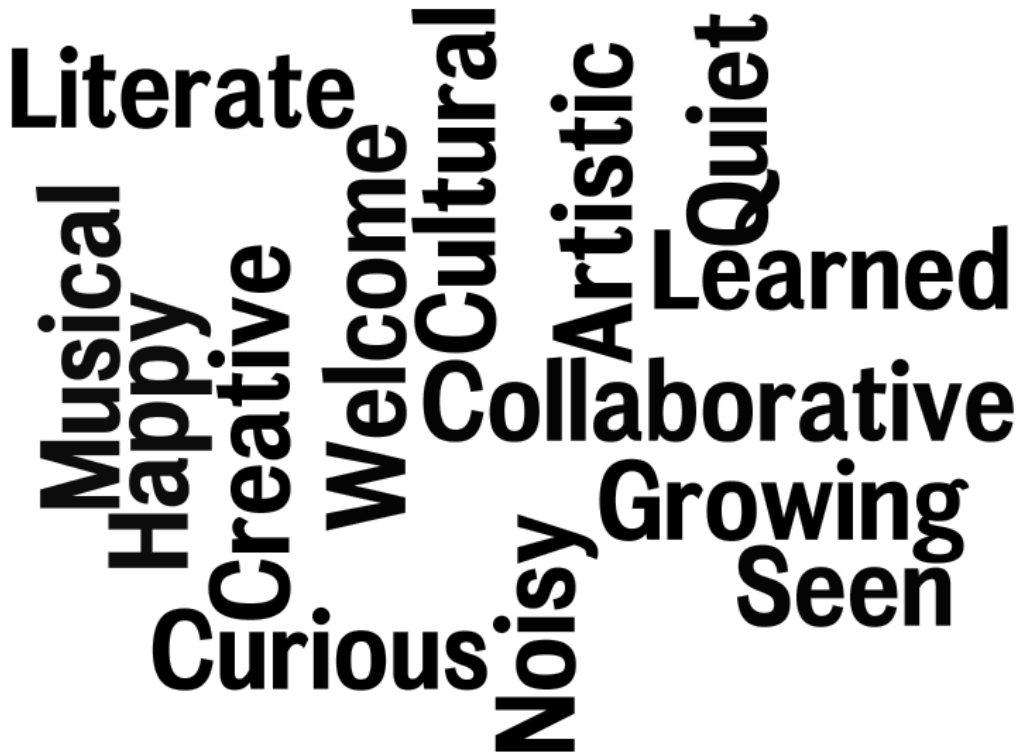
As part of the process in developing the FY2011-FY2016 Long Range Plan, the Trustees, Library Director, and Long Range Planning Committee reviewed the Jacob Edwards Library mission statement. The Mission Statement now reads:

The Jacob Edwards Library enjoys a rich legacy of excellent service and is committed to the promotion of reading, education, literacy, culture, and lifelong learning for persons of all ages in our community.

## **VISION STATEMENT**

The planning meetings provided a forum for open discussion and the exchange of ideas. During the wrap up at the end of the meetings, a unanimous consensus became apparent: our collective vision is that the Jacob Edwards Library be the community hub, the place for any and all of our community's residents to gather, to learn, to discover.

Jacob Edwards Library – The Community Place to Be



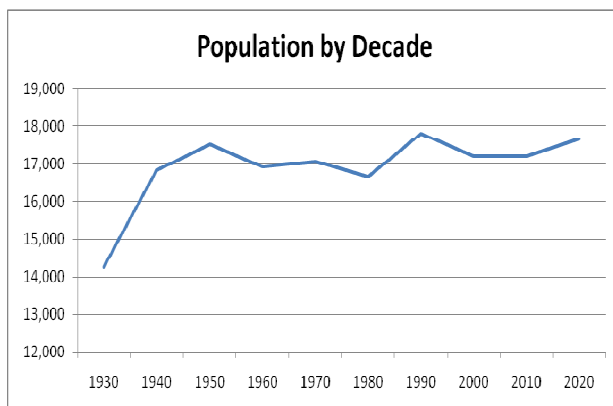
## SOUTHBRIDGE COMMUNITY HISTORY AND PROFILE

Southbridge emerged as a breakaway from the towns of Sturbridge, Charlton and Dudley, centering around the Quinebaug river and incorporated in 1816. The town's initial development was based on the woolen and cotton mills, located in the western part of Southbridge. In 1833, the genesis of what became the world-renowned American Optical Company started in the Hartwell Building on Main Street. By the 1970s, the AO employed about 10,000 workers. Today, the spin off fiber optic businesses are among our main employers. The largest employer at this time is Harrington Hospital, an independent community hospital which has recently been listed as one of the top 10 growing hospitals in Massachusetts.

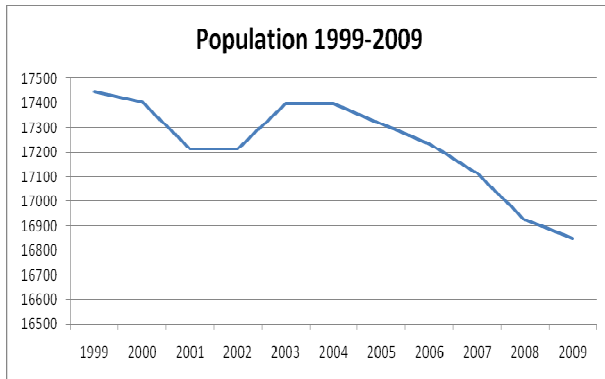
Southbridge is located in the south central portion of the Commonwealth, nearly equidistant from the cities of Hartford, Springfield, Providence and Worcester. Comprised of about 21 square miles, Southbridge is an eclectic blend of hilly and flat land, farmland and developed land, industry and downtown, and suburban, urban, and rural neighborhoods. There is no public transportation around the community or to provide access to city amenities.

Southbridge has a Town Manager/Town Council form of government with five geo-political precincts. The Town Manager reports to a nine-member Town Council and its five subcommittees. The town is served by the Central Massachusetts South Chamber of Commerce, an active Chamber with 400 member businesses. Stonebridge Press produces a five-day-a-week newspaper, the *Southbridge Evening News*, which has 2,706 subscribers, and there is a local AM radio station, WESO (970 AM).

The 2010 U.S. Census reports a population of 16,719. The 2010 Southbridge town census reported a population of 17,205. Current "MA Home Visiting Profiles" data indicates that the Southbridge population is 27.6% nonwhite. This is reflected in the school system, where as of January 2011, over 42.4%<sup>1</sup> of students are Hispanic.



<sup>1</sup> Obtained from School Department 8/22/11



The 65 and older population was 13.7% in 2010, which is slightly higher than the state average of 13.5%. We have an active Senior Center and one nursing/rehabilitative facility, Radius Health Care. The former Armory, located in a residential community ½ mile from Main Street, has been converted to a community center serving both the elderly and youth populations.

The labor force in Southbridge is comprised of over 8,000 individuals. Those who are unemployed in Southbridge are many. In September of 2010, the unemployment figure for Southbridge was 13.1%, compared with the central Massachusetts average of 8%.

Over fifteen percent of Southbridge residents live in poverty compared to a state level of 9.3%. According to Project Bread, the Summer Food Service Program, 85% of Southbridge students are eligible for free or reduced lunches. The income levels negatively affect the community's ability to raise funds for town services, including library services.

Southbridge has five schools, the West Street School (grades 04-05), Eastford Road School (grades Pre-kindergarten-01), Charlton Street School (grades 02-03), Mary E. Wells Junior High School (grades 06-08) and Southbridge High School (grades 09-12). In the 2003-04 school year, the Southbridge School System was identified as an underperforming school and significant resources were applied to rectify that situation. Meanwhile, in 2010, 208 children attended school in neighboring towns, through the "School Choice" program. Students also may attend the Trinity Catholic Academy (grades Pre-kindergarten-08), Montessori Children's House (grades Pre-Kindergarten-Kindergarten), Green Valley Montessori School, Southbridge Christian Academy (grades Pre-Kindergarten-10) and Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School (grades 9-12).

A new public middle school/high school campus is expected to be completed by Fall of 2012. The location is 2 miles from Main Street, which will have the potential to reduce walk-in traffic from students to the library. Outreach services will need to increase to compensate, as will our promotion of digital offerings, particularly to the teen population.

In 2009, Quinsigamond Community College established a remote campus in Southbridge offering a limited number of associate degree programs. Enrollment for the fall semester 2010 was 1000. In addition, Quinsigamond has partnered with Westfield State College to offer a joint degree in Criminal Justice on the Southbridge Campus.

Among Southbridge residents 25 years and older, as per the 2000 census, 71.4% have a high school diploma or higher compared to the state average of 84.4%. 12.5% have a bachelor's degree or higher, and 3.8% have a graduate or professional degree. The percentage of the population with a bachelor's degree or higher is below the state average, which is 33.2%.

Because these residents have less knowledge and skills, they require more assistance from the library to use resources. The Jacob Edwards Library provides an important service by helping Southbridge residents with their daily information needs and personal learning using computers and electronic materials.

Southbridge is fortunate to have a Y.M.C.A., the Quinebaug Valley Council for the Arts and Humanities, an amateur theater group "The Gateway Players", and many active social service agencies.

## **THE JACOB EDWARDS LIBRARY**

Library service has been available to Southbridge residents since the 1860s, in the Globe Village section of the town. In 1904, Jacob Edwards, a native of Southbridge, provided the land and the bequest to build at the current location. Continual services have been provided to the townspeople from 236 Main Street since 1914, except for a two-year hiatus in the Town Hall basement during remodeling and expansion of the building in 1998 and 1999.

The original brick building of Georgian Colonial style was erected in 1914, and included approximately 8,260 square feet of useable space. In 1966 an addition was built, bringing the building to approximately 13,000 square feet of useable space. In 1997, Southbridge was awarded a Massachusetts Public Library Construction grant which increased the total space to 23,000 square feet.

### **Library Facilities**

The library is a municipal building, and the Town of Southbridge has responsibility for its maintenance and upkeep, including landscaping. The library has three levels and 23,000 square feet and is fully accessible. There are 38 dedicated parking spaces plus on-street parking and overflow parking at a local bank during non-business hours. There is seating for 120 patrons.

Jacob Edwards Library public meeting rooms are available for educational, literary, philanthropic, and civic purposes according to the Meeting Room Policy of the Board of Trustees. The Pioppi Room is the library's largest meeting room and can accommodate groups of up to 50 people and has a wide-screen overhead LED projector for video or computer use. The Mills Room is a smaller, conference-style room, and can accommodate up to 12 people. Adjacent to the Children's Room is a room designed for programs. There are two quiet study rooms for public use. In 2010, a periodicals room was repurposed in response to demand, to create an additional conference room/meeting space. In addition, the Raymond Lenti Room was dedicated in 2010, and is currently being used as a staff lounge.

### **Computers**

The library provides free access to the broadband Internet for all ages. There are fifteen Internet workstations on the main level and two in the children's room plus wireless access for patrons' laptop computers throughout the building and to the edges of the property. Patrons are encouraged to consider the WiFi in combination with the website as an after-hours service. Through combined regional, state, and network sources, many online information resources are available for general and specialized research.

### **Children's Services**

The Children's Department offers books, audiobooks, movies, games, music, and reference materials for children from birth through age 12. There is a place to work on computers, an online catalog, Internet stations, and comfortable places to sit and read a book. The library focuses on creative play and includes dress-up clothes and accessories. Separate boys' and girls' rest rooms are located within the children's department. The children's room is located on the ground level of the library.

Story hours, holiday activities, special entertainers, seasonal craft programs, and school vacation specials are offered throughout the year. The Summer Reading Program is a major focus every year with a large number of children participating. Beginning in 2011, the library will be participating in the national summer reading program.

## **General Collections**

There are 99,365 books, magazines, videos, audiocassettes, CDs, and newspapers in the Jacob Edwards Library. In addition to the lending collections, the library subscribes to 123 magazines and newspapers that are available for browsing and reading in the library. Past issues of magazines can be checked out of the library. There are many new books, magazines, CDs, and children's books available in Spanish for readers of all ages.

In line with the trend in public libraries, the Reference Collection is gradually being integrated into the circulating collection. It ranges from basic encyclopedias and almanacs, to business reference works, art books, atlases, and biographical, literary and historical sets. Important and timely topics are updated at least annually. Many of the generous financial gifts the library receives from patrons are used to purchase reference books. Reference assistance is generally available during open library hours.

The Ammidown History Room contains the Ammidown Collection, the Genealogy and Local History collections, and various collections of historic photographs. The Ammidown Collection is an 18th century gentleman's library that belonged to a prominent early citizen of Southbridge. Most of the collection is too fragile to be handled; however, library staff will retrieve reference items from the Ammidown Room for patron use in the library.

## **Networks**

Southbridge is an active participant in the Massachusetts Library System (MLS). In 2010, the Central MA Regional Library System (CMRLS), along with all MA regional library systems, was integrated into a single state-wide system. Access to services provided through membership include delivery of library materials, interlibrary loan (ILL), reference support services, online databases with remote access, and summer reading program materials. Library staff participate in continuing education and professional development activities provided by the Mass Library System, the Network, and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Southbridge is a full, circulating member of the Central Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (C/WMARS) network. The C/WMARS online catalog provides access to the library holdings of over 140 libraries in the Central and Western sections of Massachusetts. Network participation also enables the library to provide access to specialized electronic reference sources such as *Novelist* and the *Encyclopedia of Women's Studies*.

## **Administration**

The Jacob Edwards Library is a department of the Town of Southbridge. The library is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees, three of whom are appointed by the Town Manager and four are Trustees appointed by the Trustee of the Edwards Trusts, according to the terms of The Edwards Trusts established in the 1930's by the heirs of Jacob Edwards. The Board delegates responsibility for library management, collection development, and provision of library services to the public to the library director.

## **LIBRARY-BY-THE-NUMBERS**

The following information provides a brief overview of the Jacob Edwards Library. It includes data from FY2010, the last year self-reported compiled statistics are available from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

## RESOURCES

	<b>FY2010</b>
Total Print Collection	89,992
Total Periodical Subscriptions	123
Total Nonprint holdings	9,373
Holdings per capita	5.68
Adult & Young Adult Internet Workstations	15
Children's Internet Workstations	2

A 2009 national study conducted by the University of Washington, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, found that one-third of Americans age 14 or older used a public library computer or wireless network to access the Internet. During these challenging economic times, people rely on library technology to find work, apply for college, secure government benefits, learn about critical medical treatments, and connect with their communities. In acknowledgement of the importance of public computer access, the Trustees funded the replacement of ten public PCs in June 2010.

## LIBRARY HOURS

	<b>Winter</b>	<b>Summer</b>
Hours Open Per Week	50	46
Number of Evenings Open Per Week	2	2
Evening Hours Open Per Week	6	6
Number of Saturdays Open Per Year	39	0
Number of Sundays Open Per Year	0	0

Evening hours equal 11.6% of total hours

Weekend hours equal 6.3% of total hours

## LIBRARY STAFFING LEVELS

	<b>FY2010</b>
Total Number of Employees	8.5 FTE
Number of Part-time employees	7
Number of Full-time Employees	5
Number of Volunteer Hours /week	10

Educational levels of staff: 2 Master's Degrees and 2 Bachelor Degrees

## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

The Friends of the Jacob Edwards Library is a subscription based organization with approximately 157 members, provide financial support for museum passes for The Worcester Art Museum, The Tower Hill Botanical Garden, Higgins Armory, and The Ecotarium in Worcester, and fund most of the library's adult, teen and children's programs. The group also runs an ongoing book sale, with an Annual Book Sale in March.

## CURRENT LIBRARY SERVICES

Anime Club for teens

Circulating collections of books, videos, etc.

Coffee/Tea café

Copy machine

Cuentos para niños

Generations Online

Inkwell Imaginings writing group  
 Interlibrary Loan service  
 Internet & word processing PCs  
 Knitting with Sonya  
 Library materials in various formats, keeping pace with technological updates and patron demand  
 Literacy Training  
 Local History Collection  
 Meeting Rooms/Quiet Study Rooms  
 Monthly art exhibits  
 Monthly electronic newsletter

Monthly International Film Night  
 Museum Passes  
 Online renewals & account access  
 Preschool programs (stories & crafts)  
 Readers Advisory  
 Reserve requests for materials  
 Reference Assistance  
 Shut- in service  
 Summer reading program for kids, teens, & adults  
 Wide range of programs to reach diverse audiences

## LIBRARY USE

	<b>2010</b>
Number of Registered Borrowers	9,199
Total Circulation	97,969
Total Holdings	99,488
Non-resident circulation	23,206
Attendance in Library	109,773
Children's Programs/Attendance	123/1,928
Adult Programs/Attendance	136/2,058
Teen Programs/Attendance	35/347
Meeting Room Uses	975
Interlibrary loan materials borrowed for patrons	8,161
Interlibrary loans provided to other libraries	14,342

Municipal funding for library programming is in decline. In FY09, \$3,000 was allocated; in FY11, only \$325 is available. The intent is to maintain the level of programming through outside funding sources, like grants and donations.

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The Jacob Edwards Library FY2011 annual budget was \$439,336. Southbridge's library percent of total municipal expenditures was 1.03% and the per capita expenditure was \$25.28.

FY2009 there were 53 libraries in the 15,000-24,999 population group. The average library percent of total municipal expenditures was 1.34%. The average library per capita expenditure was \$36.41. The same year the median library percent of total municipal expenditures was 1.31%. The median library per capita expenditure was \$32.32. Southbridge's library percent of total municipal expenditures was 0.86%. Southbridge's library per capita expenditure was \$20.69. The FY2009 state average library percent of total municipal expenditures was 1.33%.

Given the full-service library that we are, the annual library budget is underfunded by approximately \$150,000. The Director and the Trustees take great pains to creatively stretch the budget and/or obtain funding from other sources.

**Southbridge Public Library Share of the FY2009 Massachusetts Municipal Pie**

2009 Population	Region  *Kind of Community 1985	Total Municipal Expenditures	Total Municipal Per Capita Expenditures	Total Municipal Expenditures for Library Services	Library Percent of Total Expenditures	Expenditures Library Per Capita
17,487	Central C 1	41,961,487	2,399.58	361,743	0.86%	20.69

\* Kind of Community:

Urbanized Centers Manufacturing and commercial centers, densely populated, culturally diverse

**PROCESS/PLANNING METHODOLOGY**

In May 2010, the Jacob Edwards Library began the process of developing a new long range plan. The Trustees selected Trustee Chair Joan Menard to facilitate two meetings of community members. The community participants—composed of residents representing a range of community demographics, five members of the library staff, and six members of the Board of Trustees—identified Southbridge library service needs. The identification of Southbridge library service needs occurred through a structured brainstorming session (see Appendix B).

Throughout the planning meetings, several consistent themes emerged:

- Southbridge residents view the Jacob Edwards Library as “the” central community site
- Southbridge residents expect the latest technological resources to be available at the library, including remote access to library services, and the level of technological support from the library staff
- Library services currently available need to be better publicized

During two two-hour meetings, participants received an overview of the planning process, current library statistics with comparisons to four local libraries, and community demographic data. The groups broke into teams to develop five priorities the library could address, with supporting arguments, from the list of eighteen service responses (see Appendix A). Participants were encouraged to provide additional feedback to the Trustee Chairwoman or to the library director through July 1. A similar request for feedback was posted on the library website. Subsequently, a subcommittee of three Trustees, the library director, and the adult services library met to summarize the planning meetings minutes, evaluate and revise the mission statement and plan next steps. The draft Long Range Plan was presented during the December 2010 Trustees meeting.

**ASSESSMENT OF COMMUNITY NEEDS**

During the May 2010 planning meetings, the groups developed a list of needs and wants that the Jacob Edwards Library can help fulfill. Community needs might be addressed directly by the Jacob Edwards Memorial Library or in collaboration with a partner (such as the Literacy Volunteers, the Southbridge school system, the Chamber of Commerce, Harrington Hospital, the Senior Center, or some other social service agency).

The goals, rationales, objectives, and activities for *The Jacob Edwards Library Long Range Plan FY2010-FY2015* were developed from community input. The Long Range Planning Committee members recognized that they could select only a few Service Responses because the library has limited resources to meet community needs. Service Responses are defined as what a library does for, or offers to, the public in an effort to meet a set of well-defined community needs.

The Trustees' Long Range Plan subcommittee decided that the most important library service responses for Southbridge are:

- 1. SATISFY CURIOSITY: LIFELONG LEARNING**
- 2. LEARN TO READ AND WRITE: ADULT, TEEN AND FAMILY LITERACY**
- 3. CELEBRATE DIVERSITY: CULTURAL AWARENESS**
- 4. VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE: PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL SPACES**
- 5. CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD: PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS**

### **1. SATISFY CURIOSITY: LIFELONG LEARNING**

A library that provides lifelong learning service helps address the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities.

#### **Objective 1: Develop resources and relationships to support educational entities and other community organizations.**

- Library to libraries
- Library to businesses
- Library to schools, including:
  - Southbridge School District, including home school and private schools
  - Bay Path Vocational Technical High School
  - Quinsigamond Community College
  - Bay Path College One-Day-A-Week Saturday Program and Graduate Programs
  - Westfield State University

#### **Objective 2: Expand marketing of the unique aspects of the Jacob Edwards Library**

- Engage The Friends in outreach
- Develop "Welcome Packet" and notification process in conjunction with Town Hall to market value of library to new residents

#### **Objective 3: Make the library a welcoming and relevant place for young adults.**

- Forge connections with Southbridge Community Connections, Rape Crisis Center, Southern Worcester County Educational Collaborative, YOU Inc., other town departments, and other agencies serving youth to plan cooperatively to meet the needs of this age group.
- Continue to develop a Young Adult fiction collection of the best teen books.
- Continue and foster participation in the school-to-career program at the high school, and career day speaking activities at the elementary and high school levels.
- Establish guidelines with high school faculty and administration to participate in the community service requirement for National Honor high school students.
- Provide on-the-job-training for library pages.
- Maintain young adult page on the library website.

**Objective 4: The library will help support community interest in Southbridge historic materials.**

- Partner with the Southbridge Historical Society and Southbridge Historic Commission to plan for the preservation of these important materials.
- Offer assistance, as possible, for in-library use of local history resources for interested patrons.

**Objective 5: The library will provide outreach services to the homebound.**

- Provide library materials for the homebound.
- Market this service through newspapers, churches, community organizations, cable TV, and radio.
- Solicit volunteers to assist with this important service.

**Objective 6: Increase youth library card holders by 2% by 2014.**

- Engage new school administration
- Propose/Initiate a round table for local school and public library librarians.
- Build youth ambassador program

**2. LEARN TO READ AND WRITE: ADULT, TEEN AND FAMILY LITERACY**

Adults and teens will have the support they need to improve their literacy skills in order to meet their personal goals and fulfill their responsibilities as parents, citizens, and workers.

**Objective 1: Provide access to literacy training.**

- Continue to support Literacy Volunteers by providing physical space and working cooperatively with them
- Actively coordinate with Literacy Volunteers to develop and support their strategic plan, goals and objectives by meeting at least twice annually
- Facilitate collaboration between all agencies involved in literacy, GED preparation offerings, and international programs at Clark U. and other schools in our region

**Objective 2: Provide special materials in support of literacy training.**

- Purchase materials for new arrivals
- Monitor usage statistics and make additional purchases as necessary

**Objective 3: Provide adult basic education opportunities.**

- Investigate partnerships with the local community college to provide support materials for adult basic education sessions.
- Provide space for adult basic education sessions
- Advertise adult basic education sessions
- Continue to work cooperatively with the Adult Education Collaborative (QCC, WCAC, LVS)

**Objective 4: Encourage families with children to participate in family literacy opportunities.**

- Promote "Reach Out and Read," a community based reading initiative.

- Provide a series of story hours with an emphasis on the ‘joy of reading.’
- Library staff will offer *Mother Goose Asks Why?* and other early childhood programs that encourage family literacy.
- Library staff will provide ‘reader’s advisory’ services and general support for parents involved in the basic literacy program as appropriate.
- Institute a bilingual program for children

### **3. CELEBRATE DIVERSITY: CULTURAL AWARENESS**

Residents will have programs and services that promote appreciation and understanding of their personal heritage and the heritage of others in the community.

**Objective 1: The Jacob Edwards Library will offer monthly programs and/or showcase exhibits on various aspects of the cultural heritage of our community.**

- Develop and/or maintain relationships with churches and other places of worship.
- Host cultural events that include seasonal and ethnic events, such as Black History Month, Hispanic Heritage Month, etc.
- Apply for grant(s) to increase the mix of programs offered to patrons.
- Maintain a strong connection with the Southbridge Cultural Council.

**Objective 2: Develop Spanish language materials and signage for the Library.**

- The Library will translate library brochures, bookmarks, and literature into Spanish by 2012.
- Assemble a welcome packet, in English and Spanish, containing community information of interest to new residents and immigrants for distribution by 2013.

**Objective 3: Increase multicultural collection.**

- Increase Spanish language and Hispanic culture materials by 2%
- Evaluate community ethnicity statistics and adjust collection development accordingly.

**Objective 4: As a result of marketing services of the Jacob Edwards Library, increase usage by minority population.**

- Develop and/or maintain relationships with churches and other places of worship.
- Develop marketing plan to make library services attractive to the unserved and the underserved in the community.
- Outreach: Develop “Welcome Packet” and notification process in conjunction with Town Hall to market value of library to new residents

### **4. VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE: PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL SPACES**

Patrons need a safe, comfortable place to sit and read, appropriate places to use reference materials and consult library materials, and to confidently navigate the Library’s electronic materials – including the website.

**Objective 1: Create an irresistible Children’s Room to encourage creativity and a passion for reading.**

- Engage design firm to analyze use of existing space and resources and recommend redesign.

- Improve efficiency and maximize flexibility of Children’s Room to be responsive to service demand.
- Provide showcase for children’s creativity/art.
- Cultivate a space that is conducive to creative play.

**Objective 2: Ensure updates to physical plant**

- Coordinate necessary repairs to physical plant (e.g. work with Town DPW to repair ceiling, repave parking lot, etc.)
- Develop ongoing plan for physical plant maintenance
- Protect archives by providing temperature and humidity controlled environment

**Objective 3: Enhance funding sources to support Capital Expenditures**

- Develop and market planned giving and other donor opportunities.
- Continue to pursue grant funding
- Investigate creation of a non-profit foundation for fundraising purposes
- Work with municipality to obtain adequate municipal funding

**Objective 4: Increase utilization of existing space and assets.**

- Engage design firm to analyze use of existing space and resources and recommend redesign
- Increase programming
- Evaluate hours of service to meet community (including college students) needs
- Implement self check out
- Evaluate available space to allow both “noisy” and “quiet” areas

**Objective 5: Increase sustainable practices and resources to be environmentally friendly.**

- Lighting and water usage to be compliant with current sustainable practices
- Initiate change in equipment to be more energy efficient

**Objective 6: Safe Space**

- Work with agencies who are addressing issues such as bullying, discrimination
- Promote the library as a designated Safe Space in the community
- Continue to provide focused programming such as Pride in Southbridge
- Train staff to be more culturally aware and provide sensitivity training to improve customer service.

**5. CONNECT TO THE ON-LINE WORLD: PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS**

Patrons will have access to an increasing amount of Library collections and services 24x7.

**Objective 1: Digitize materials for increased accessibility**

- Attend Digital Commonwealth annual meeting
- Prioritize digitizing the photo collection
- Establish agreement with *Southbridge Evening News* for archiving digital editions

## **Objective 2: Increase online database collection and usage**

- Market database collection through electronic newsletter and outreach to educational institutions
- Add one database

## **Objective 3: Maintain current technology for patron use.**

- Assess new e-Reader technology and acquire established leading product(s) for circulation
- Develop plan to replace existing PCs every five (5) years
- Assist patrons in evaluating and using online information, and offer training sessions throughout the year
- Keep pace with Open Source software developments
- Maintain website for patron access to online services and materials 24x7

## **STAFF NEEDS**

Excellent library service follows from a well-trained staff and it is recognized that changing technology creates a dynamic environment to which staff needs to respond. The library vision of becoming “the place to be” requires that we embrace our community, respond to their needs - efficiently and with a smile. To achieve this, the following objectives are noted:

- Ongoing customer service training
- Facilitate and encourage staff development in general
- Increase the number of Spanish-speaking staff in order to fulfill the goal of having publications and web postings in both languages
- Continue to provide an in-service day (or two half days) for training
- Encourage participation within the library community, including attending conferences, participating in webinars, round table discussions on specific topics, and professional development training opportunities offered
- Perform outreach within the community
- Continue with staff cross-training so that flexibility among departments can continue
- Provide technology training as needed, and encourage staff to keep their skills honed

## **CONCLUSION**

The public library exists to provide access to the means for education, enlightenment, information, and enrichment for all. A self-governing people need education and unbiased, free-flowing information in order to make decisions about their lives as individuals and as members of a democratic society.

In fulfillment of the mission of the Jacob Edwards Library to provide access to the means for self-education and information for the people of Southbridge, the library offers and promotes the use of books, DVDs and CDs, computers, electronic databases, periodicals, newspapers, games, and materials in other formats for all ages and abilities. Additionally, the library offers programming for adults, children and teens on a variety of topics and mediums, from music performances to informational sessions. Library staff also provides individual assistance to patrons to use all the services of the library effectively.

The State requires that the town fund the library budget at a certain level in order to receive State aid to libraries money. The town has been funding the operating budget at the minimal amount to qualify for this State aid. Given the size of our library, the number of patrons we serve, and the quality and frequency of the programs offered, the library is currently under-funded, and the appropriated budget appears inadequate to meet the changing needs of a dynamic community. For example, the Trustees have contributed \$40,000 in each of FY10 and FY11 in order to bring the total annual materials expenditures to a level that is acceptable as defined by the State aid formulas. Many of the goals and objectives outlined in this plan are likely to have an associated cost.

This Long Range Plan will help the library trustees and staff focus limited resources on the most important library services for the Southbridge community. Expenditures, actions and plans will be guided by this plan and only with careful consideration should deviations occur. However, it is a living document and we welcome the opportunity to evolve as the community evolves.

## **APPENDIX A – LIBRARY SERVICE RESPONSES**

1. **BE AN INFORMED CITIZEN: LOCAL, NATIONAL, AND WORLD AFFAIRS**
2. **BUILD SUCCESSFUL ENTERPRISES: BUSINESS AND NONPROFIT SUPPORT**
3. **CELEBRATE DIVERSITY: CULTURAL AWARENESS**
4. **CONNECT TO THE ONLINE WORLD: PUBLIC INTERNET ACCESS**
5. **CREATE YOUNG READERS: EARLY LITERACY**
6. **DISCOVER YOUR ROOTS: GENEALOGY AND LOCAL HISTORY**
7. **EXPRESS CREATIVITY: CREATE AND SHARE CONTENT**
8. **GET FACTS FAST: READY REFERENCE**
9. **KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY: COMMUNITY RESOURCES AND SERVICES**
10. **LEARN TO READ AND WRITE: ADULT, TEEN, AND FAMILY LITERACY**
11. **MAKE CAREER CHOICES: JOB AND CAREER DEVELOPMENT**
12. **MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS: HEALTH, WEALTH, AND OTHER LIFE CHOICES**
13. **SATISFY CURIOSITY: LIFELONG LEARNING**
14. **STIMULATE IMAGINATION: READING, VIEWING AND LISTENING FOR PLEASURE**
15. **SUCCEED IN SCHOOL: HOMEWORK HELP**
16. **UNDERSTAND HOW TO FIND, EVALUATE, AND USE INFORMATION: INFORMATION FLUENCY**
17. **VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE: PHYSICAL AND VIRTUAL SPACES**
18. **WELCOME TO THE UNITED STATES: SERVICES FOR NEW IMMIGRANTS**

## APPENDIX B - PLANNING MEETINGS REPORT

Two focus groups were held at the Jacob Edwards Library on the following dates:

May 20, 2010 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., May 24, 2010 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Of the eighteen library service responses (see Appendix A) mentioned in *The Planning for Results: a Streamlined Approach*, participants in the focus groups specifically described services that fit into all the categories. Below is a list of the thirteen service points in bold type with the actual responses from groups listed below each one. The list does not include every comment, but gives a general outline of desired library services.

The meeting of May 20, 2010 was chaired by Joan Menard and began at 11:30 a.m. and ended at 1:30 p.m. Various Trustees and members of the community were present to participate in forming ideas for long range planning for Jacob Edwards Library. Tammie Darling was also present to record the minutes. Below is a bulleted summary of the ideas that were shared at the meeting:

- Connect to online world-to increase teen access, increase computers, database use, audiobook use and computer literacy
- Job hunt online access for those who don't have access
- Celebrate diversity. Opportunity for volunteers to show their gifts and talents through helping elderly and disabled
- Discovering roots-provide services for new immigrants to stimulated their talents
- Celebrate diversity. Encourage all of the populations in the community to be represented in the library. Break down barriers to entry access. Possibly providing transportation?
- Learn to read/write with adult and teen literacy –patrons can come as a family. Better education leads to better in school, better economic circumstance. Also provides family time.
- Increase Hispanic collection to support non-English speakers in the pursuit of understanding content. Market library services to Hispanic community and improve literacy in any language
- Creating young readers will create lifelong library lovers. Instill a bond to library at early age and foster reading for pleasure through teen years. Utilize popular youth literature to capture teen leadership and creativity. Be enormously approachable. Possibility of creating with religious youth groups
- Evaluate policies to accommodate additional group usage of facilities
- Encourage business in town for jobs and the economy
- Engage businesses to teach seminars and run programs addressed to kids. Possibly partner with chamber of commerce.
- Create and maintain "Mass 211" - 2-1-1 is an easy-to-remember and universally recognizable number that makes a critical connection between individuals and families seeking services or volunteer opportunities and the appropriate community-based organizations and government agencies.

The meeting of May 24, 2010 was chaired by Joan Menard and began at 6 p.m. and ended at 8 p.m. Various Trustees and members of the community were present to partake in forming ideas for long range planning for Jacob Edwards Library. Tammie Darling was also present to record the minutes. Below is a bulleted summary of the ideas that were shared at the meeting:

- Know your community. Once you know your assets and resources you can learn what's missing
- Connect to online world-provide access to internet for those without
- Make informed decisions-teach at a young age that they can succeed. Instill confidence in kids.

- Direct engagement with schools to bring kids into the library.
- Assist patrons in evaluating and utilizing online info and how to access any info
- Lifelong learning. Be “the place” for information. Neutral, safe place. Be the embodiment of the Constitution. Be the conduit of how to succeed – be the hub of Southbridge
- Eliminate barrier to access. Identify barriers and market so everyone knows they can go to library
- Vision. Get a book from another country and have it translated in a language that you can read. Provide translations for materials electronically.
- Free exercise, art, dancing and yoga classes
- Continue and expand cultural programming
- Start young for lifelong users
- Raise awareness of general diversity through workshops
- Teach kids about career options at all age levels
- Be a resource for small business. Reach out to businesses
- Promote children’s creativity/art and showcase
- Promote genealogy services
- Fulfill the need to educate and inform on local, state and national policies
- Create noisy and quiet spaces
- Promote “Reach out and Read” with pediatricians

Focus Group Attendees:

- Trustees
- Friends – Barbara Day, President; Anja Bull, Vice President; Larry Day; John Bull; Evelyn Petrelli; Amelia Peloquin
- Staff – Margaret Morrissey, Ashley Malouin, Lynn Wolstencroft, Corinna Tiberii, Karla Gartsu
- Town Manager, Christopher Clark
- Town Councilors – Denise Clemence, Pamela Regis
- Department Heads, Cassandra Acly & Michael Trombley
- Southbridge School Librarians Mel Blake & Lynn Loftus
- Susan Chaplin, retired library staff
- Jane Cutting, Rehabilitative Resources, Inc.
- Eric Duen, technology professional
- Karen Gemboski, YOU Inc.
- Kathy Joy, Workforce Central
- Kathy Leferriere, Savers Bank
- Lauren McLoughlin, CHNA5 & PTA
- Alexandra McNitt, Central MA South Chamber of Commerce
- Melissa Murray, former library page and recent college graduate
- Elizabeth Peppel, Harrington Memorial Hospital
- Paul Raffa, Southbridge Credit Union
- Jenn Reed, Healthy Families
- Severina Rios and Luz Espino, ASPIRA
- Jocelyn Rodriguez (by letter), teacher
- Nancy Santullo Fors, Literacy Volunteers
- Donna Silverberg, instructor and artist
- Lynne Simonds (by letter), Southbridge Community Connections & CHNA5
- Victor Somma, Quinsigamond Community College
- Fay Fulone Sweeney, Central MA Center for Healthy Communities & LUK
- Evelyn Velez, Worcester County Community Action
- Robin Weber, Kennedy Donovan Center
- Sonya Zegarra, program presenter