

# Bellingham Public Library



*Connecting our community with each other and the world*

**READ • LEARN • MEET • DISCOVER**



**Strategic Plan  
2013-2017**



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Strategic Plan 2013 - 2017**

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The resources used and data gathered during the planning process are available on the library's website at [www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org](http://www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org):

- a. "Confronting the Future: Strategic Visions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Library" by Roger Levien, ALA Office for Information Technology Policy, Policy Brief No. 4, June 2011
- b. Institute for Museum and Library Services: Creating a Nation of Learners, Strategic Plan, 2012-2016
- c. Stakeholder Retreat Executive Summary
- d. Stakeholder Retreat Summary
- e. Strategic Planning Survey Results Summary
- f. "myDowntown" survey: library comments, March 2012
- g. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis from board, staff, public
- h. Additional Open House comments
- i. 2012 Bellingham Public Library Annual Report
- j. City Population and Library Use Comparison
- k. City of Bellingham Legacies and Strategic Commitments

# Introduction

## Opening

We are pleased to present the *Bellingham Public Library Strategic Plan, 2013 - 2017*. Our fresh new mission reflects the guiding principles **READ** ▪ **LEARN** ▪ **MEET** ▪ **DISCOVER** and the goals focus on the library's role in connecting our community with one another and the world.

We consulted other libraries, researched best practices, and used documents such as "Confronting the Future: Strategic Visions for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Public Library" by Roger Levien and the Institute for Museum and Library Services' new Strategic Plan, "Creating a Nation of Learners" to guide our process.

Technology, education, and economic changes confronting us are profound and the very idea of a public library is changing in new and exciting ways. Today's libraries are places where the community connects with one another and with the world. They are cultural centers, gathering places for discussions, and yes, still places where you'll find books - but also eBooks, movies, educational toys, and so much more.

Over 3,300 survey respondents and 40 Library Stakeholders provided extensive input to shape this plan. Library staff and trustees followed up with personal phone conversations to 134 people. In addition to the library survey responses, the City of Bellingham's Planning Department recorded many unsolicited library-related comments during its "My Downtown" survey in March 2012. During public Open Houses we received feedback about library programs and collections. Finally, library staff and the Library Board of Trustees met regularly during 2012, developing elements of the plan as public feedback came in.

"Why do we need libraries when everything is available on the internet?" is a familiar question, and yet as we considered library and learning trends, we heard from our community that the Bellingham Public Library is an essential physical institution for our town, here to stay. We understood from you, however, that the key to a dynamic public library is to provide services that our community wants and needs for today's world.

The community inspired us to develop library programs and services that are unique to Bellingham and that represent our community's dreams. This plan provides a framework for meeting those needs and achieving that vision.

## **Looking back**

While the Bellingham Public Library did not sustain budget reductions for 2013, it experienced several years of cutbacks beginning in 2009 that resulted in losing a dozen staff members and a 40% reduction in the library books and materials budget. Most of these cutbacks have not been restored. Library open hours were drastically reduced as a result of the staff reductions. The materials budget cut is an especially significant loss, given all the new formats and technologies that have emerged in recent years which require additional resources.

With the staff and open hours reductions our remaining staff have very limited ability to advance more innovative services and programs desired by our community, and we are unable to provide open hours to meet demand. When compared to many library industry standards, our library now falls below "basic" with many of its measures, such as open hours, staff resources, and library materials funding.

What about plans for a new Central Library? Many of you may remember that in January 2007 the Library Board voted to build a new facility on the current site, and forwarded this recommendation to the City Council where it was unanimously approved. Beginning in June of that year, the library went through an extensive process to develop a Building Program for a new Central Library. The process included public open houses and multiple public meetings, culminating with the "Bellingham Public Library: Community Analysis, Library Needs Assessment, Central Library Building Program Statement and Cost Analysis" in January 2008. Shortly thereafter, we experienced the recession. The building plan was not implemented for many reasons, primarily economic, and it needs to be redrafted based on the new realities.

## **Sustainable funding strategies**

To fulfill the goals outlined in this plan, including restoring open hours, focusing on lifelong learning programs, and yes, a new re-envisioned Central Library, Bellingham Public Library requires a sustainable funding plan. Without it, the goals outlined here cannot be fully realized, and the library cannot fully succeed in its mission.

We recently established funds at the Whatcom Community Foundation so that private contributions can be made to support library services and facilities. But we may need to look beyond the City's General Fund for our operating budget. An example of a sustainable funding strategy is a voter-approved library operating levy such as that which was recently passed in Seattle and Spokane to support city library operations.

Identifying and implementing funding strategies to ensure Bellingham Public Library's essential role in our community will be a priority for the Library Board of Trustees in the coming years.

## Looking ahead

Despite - and perhaps because of - the reductions of previous years, our staff and Board of Trustees have become very resilient in the face of change. We revamped essential library procedures to become more efficient; we automated to improve the customer experience and streamline staff resources; and, where possible, we shifted spending to purchase contemporary products and services that our customers want.

In the coming years there is so much more to do. In fact, soon we will start developing objectives for each goal, specific to 2014. This plan outlines where your library is headed based on what we heard from you. We invite you to continue letting us know what you think as we work together on these goals and specific work plan objectives.

Please keep in touch!

### Bellingham Public Library Board of Trustees

- Faye Hill, Chair
- J. Gordon, Vice-Chair
- David Edelstein
- Rachel Myers
- Marilyn Mastor

### City Council Liaison to the Library Board

- Stan Snapp

### Library Director

- Pamela Nyberg Kiesner

And the entire Library Staff



## Executive Summary

### Planning Process



The Bellingham community was invited to participate in the planning process in a variety of ways. Stakeholders, for instance, were asked to describe community aspirations for the Bellingham Public Library. Should the library focus on providing virtual library services as well as physical facilities? Is service to individuals as important as serving the broad community? How important is the library's materials collection and should the library provide the means for our community members to create content? Is our library more of a portal to information, or does it serve as an archive?

People who took the library's survey answered questions about the importance of the Bellingham Public Library in their lives, satisfaction with library services, frequency of library use, and more. We received over 2,700 write-in suggestions for improving library services in areas such as hours, parking, library facilities, and collections. We also heard many compliments about the library and the staff.

Open House attendees helped list the library's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges. They also helped us understand what services they would like from the library today and in five years.

Bellingham Public Library's fresh new mission incorporates the important concepts we heard from the public when we asked questions and listened to feedback about what the library means to the Bellingham community. It is:

*Connecting our community with each other and the world*

**READ ■ LEARN ■ MEET ■ DISCOVER**



## Strategic Directions and Goals

**READ** ▪ **LEARN** ▪ **MEET** ▪ **DISCOVER** are strategic directions that emerged from our conversations with the public, and will guide the library for the next several years. Goals are listed under each direction, and the trustees and staff have developed objectives to help achieve each goal. The staff and trustees will develop annual action steps.

Highlights of the goals the library hopes to achieve in the next several years are described below.

### **READ** Inspire Bellingham to read, view, and listen.

Reading is the brand most associated with public libraries, even today with all the available technologies. Local interest in reading is high; Bellingham Public Library continues to be one of the highest circulating libraries in the nation for a community its size. Our broad goals include becoming our community's favorite place from which to borrow books, films, and music. We will also strive to provide patrons of all ages enhanced opportunities for reading, viewing, and listening by broadening our partnerships with community organizations and individuals.



### **LEARN** Promote Lifelong Learning from birth through adulthood.



Our public library is a vital educational institution in our community for all ages, birth through adulthood. Promoting learning for all ages is our business. Our efforts during this plan period are to establish the library as the leading community "center" for Early Learning through educational play spaces, programs and materials. We invite families to read, play, and learn together at the library. Our goal is to develop a lifelong love of learning starting with the very young.

Other ways we will promote learning is by offering an active



calendar of programs that highlight library and community resources on issues of interest to the community. The library can effectively take the role as "convener" for educational and social community issues, and position itself as a community center. We heard from the community that the library's work with individuals is also important; we will increase personalized library services to meet individual needs for research, information, reading suggestions, and important today - technology assistance.

## **MEET** Create thriving spaces where the community connects, accesses library resources, and shares their stories.

The library, as a physical community presence, is important to the people who live and work here. This strategic direction was very clear as we gathered community input. In this plan, we focus on improving public access to our libraries by increasing open hours and restoring those lost in recent budget reductions. We also focus on improving our virtual presence so that those who access library resources and services online will have a welcoming and successful experience.

Central Library replacement is high on this community's radar - we received many survey comments and unsolicited comments about a new building throughout the planning process. This plan addresses replacing the 62-year-old facility which serves as the central hub and supports the rest of the city library system.



We want to ensure that a replacement Central Library is included in the city's Master Plan, that we develop a building program that will meet our community's needs well into the future, and that we effectively strategize funding the construction and long-term operations of the facility. Another goal for the Library Board is to ensure that the city completes the seismic retrofit and historic renovations needed at the Fairhaven Branch Library. We will also explore the feasibility of providing additional library service outlets within the city.

## **DISCOVER** Provide library collections that introduce ideas, build skills, support lifelong learning, and spark creativity.

Library materials collections in all formats, both housed in the library and available through the library, are a central and vital library service. The library's goal is to provide more library materials for the public, including new and emerging formats. To achieve

this goal, the library will seek to increase the materials budget to a recommended level of 15% of the Library's total budget.



Other aspirations include digitizing key collections, providing easier access to other digital collections, and promoting our unique local digital content. To do this, the library will collaborate with area agencies and seek corporate or grant funding for digitization projects.

### **Library Helps Achieve City of Bellingham Goals**

The library plays an important part in achieving the City of Bellingham's Legacies and Strategic Commitments approved by the City Council in 2009. As you review the plan, you will note that many of the library directions for the next five years contribute directly to these Legacies and Commitments:

- "Vibrant Sustainable Economy"
  - Foster vibrant downtown & other commercial centers
- "Sense of Place"
  - Support sense of place in neighborhoods; Preserve historic & cultural resources; Support people-to people connections
- "Access to Quality of Library Amenities"
  - Maintain & enhance publicly owned assets; Foster arts, culture & lifelong learning; Provide recreation & enrichment opportunities for all ages & abilities
- "Quality, Responsive City Services"
  - Deliver efficient, effective & accountable municipal services; Use transparent processes & involve stakeholders in decisions; Provide access to accurate information; Recruit, retain & support quality employees
- "Equity & Social Justice"
  - Provide access to problem-solving resources; Support services for lower-income residents

## **Conclusion**

The *Bellingham Public Library Strategic Plan, 2013-2017* is a guide that prioritizes the work library staff and trustees will do in the coming years. It was developed over a year's time with careful consideration of the feedback we received from the community.

The plan is shaped with the understanding that change is inevitable, and that the library will remain flexible and adapt its goals as warranted. In such a rapidly-evolving world, we presume that our action steps will look very different from year to year. At the same time, we will maintain our core values, measure all we do against our mission, and remain focused on serving the community.

## **Acknowledgements**

Thank you to the many community members who contributed to this strategic plan. Our stakeholders, representing the City of Bellingham staff, the City Council, our Friends of the Library organization, our partner libraries, the Bellingham Public Schools, former library board members, and many business and community leaders were invaluable in providing guidance and feedback.

We are especially appreciative to all the members of our community who took the time to answer a survey, talk with us on the phone, or attend an Open House. This plan is for you and your ideas were essential.

Special thanks to Brian Burton, Dean of the College of Business and Economics at Western Washington University who served as our planning facilitator, and J. Gordon, Library Trustee, who helped facilitate the Stakeholder Retreat and an All Library Staff meeting. Thanks as well to members of the Steering Committee, including trustees Rachel Myers and J. Gordon, Brian Burton, Chris Cox (former Dean of Libraries, WWU), and library management team members Beth Farley, Bethany Hoglund, Christine Perkins, and Madeline Sheplor. Wendy Jenkins, library Administrative Assistant, deserves big thanks for all the note-taking, phoning, and making meeting arrangements.

We also thank the entire library staff. Everyone participated in planning meetings or in being "on desk" so others could attend meetings. Each staff member will be integrally involved in implementing this plan, and we are grateful for their input, interest, professionalism, and passion for the Bellingham Public Library. They make our library a vital community asset and a wonderful place to work.

## Summary of Strategic Planning 2012 Survey Results

In the summer of 2012, Bellingham Public Library conducted an online survey which ran from June 15 to July 9. People could complete the survey from their own computers or by using public internet workstations at our libraries. Outreach Services patrons received paper copies of the survey, in large type format.

In all, 3,363 people responded, a 15% increase versus our 2009 survey. This time, we paid \$176 to purchase Facebook ads to promote the survey. These ads were seen by 110,886 people over 893,000 times!

A majority of the survey respondents were female (71%) with 66% age 45 or older. A minority (31%) had children in their household. It is not surprising that respondents were regular library users: 32% use the library monthly, 36% use it weekly, and 12% use it several times a week.

In terms of library locations, 67% said they use the Central Library the most often, 10% use Fairhaven the most, 10% use the website the most (to download eBooks and eAudiobooks, for example) and 6% use Barkley the most. When asked about using multiple locations, 73% use Central and 50% use the website. Of the survey respondents, only 16% said they would use a north side branch; 45% say they would not use a north side branch while the rest remained neutral.

Reasons for using different locations varied:

- 54% use a location most often because its located near where they live
- 41% use a location most often because it offers a broad selection of materials
- 24% use a location most often because the hours are convenient
- 18% use a location most often because it's located near where they work

Overall, feelings about the Bellingham Public Library were extremely positive. Over 85% rated BPL 8 or higher in importance to their lives; 65% said BPL is "very important". Satisfaction was rated as 8 or higher by 80% of the respondents. The largest percentage (34%) said they are "very satisfied". Respondents were very happy with library staff; 93% agree that staff are courteous and friendly, and help them find what they need.



Most respondents said they use the library to check out materials (95%). Other library services used included:

- 66% use the library website
- 55% browse materials on the shelves
- 36% buy Friends books
- 34% consult a librarian
- 30% get free books
- 26% check out eBooks

Given that checking out books is a top use of the library, it's no surprise that 96% of survey respondents selected "provide a variety of books" to be the top essential service. The next popular were:

- Provide free and equal access to information 94%
- Provide a library located in the downtown/civic core 88%
- Provide storytimes 87%
- Provide librarians 86%



When asked for their most important issues regarding the library, 96% said they want to have access to a wide variety of materials. Visiting a clean and attractive library was favored by 92% of respondents, and updating

facilities to adapt to new technology and stay efficient came in at 87%.

The survey garnered nearly 4,000 write-in responses to various questions. Certain themes were raised repeatedly: a need to restore open hours, parking issues at the Central Library, interest in improving and/or replacing the Central Library, adding eBooks, and increasing safety at the Central Library.

In addition to the write-in responses, 953 people indicated they would like to be contacted for a more information. If we spent 10 minutes speaking to each person, it would have taken 158 hours to speak to them all. Instead, we called 134 people and had conversations totaling 22 hours, still no small feat! These conversations generally supported the data gathered via the survey, and gave context and richness beyond what the numbers alone could provide.

Statistical results of the survey can be found online at

<http://www.bellinghampubliclibrary.org/News/images/surveyresultssummary.pdf> .

## Core Values

Bellingham Public Library's core values are principles that guide the library's daily and strategic actions.

### ***We Value...***

#### ***Relationships:***

**With the public**, by providing friendly, professional staff, and personalized outstanding customer service at all times to all members of the diverse Bellingham community.

**With the Library Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library, and other volunteers** who dedicate their time, energy, and experience to help improve library services and connect us with the community.

**With co-workers**, by respecting each other's contributions and working together to foster efficiency, innovation, and creativity.

**With the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County Library System, other educational institutions, and community organizations**, to collaborate and achieve common goals.

#### ***Responsiveness:***

**To the changing needs of Bellingham Public Library patrons**, as we develop services, programs, and locations to maintain relevance and a sense of place in the Bellingham community.

**To new materials and changing formats and technologies** as they emerge.

**To the changing and challenging world** around us and how this shapes delivery of library and information services.

#### ***Sustainability and Responsible Stewardship:***

**Through thoughtful and efficient use of resources and public funds** with the mandate to provide free basic library service.

#### ***Intellectual Freedom and Privacy:***

**The rights of every individual** to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction; the right to confidential use of the library; and the right to privacy.

Approved by Library Board of Trustees (July 11, 2012)

# **Strategic Plan**

## **Goals and Objectives**



# READ

## Inspire Bellingham to read, view, and listen.

**GOAL 1:** Bellingham Public Library is everyone's favorite place to borrow books, films, and music, with help from knowledgeable, friendly staff.



### Objectives

- a. Provide our readers the best possible reading guidance by training staff and providing them with the tools they need to be successful readers' advisors.
  - Dedicate one librarian to focus on adult reading (Farley: Q1)
  - Subscribe to *Novelist*, a reader's advisory database (Farley: Q1)
  - Develop a staff continuing education plan (Management Team Committee: Q2)
  - Provide semi-annual staff booktalk training (Farley: Q2 & Q4)
  - Explore ways to use various reader's advisory tools such as Pinterest, blogs, and Good Reads (Farley: Q4)
- b. Help patrons locate and discover library materials by experimenting with new collections grouped by topic.
  - Pilot two mini-collections such as Travel, Cookbooks, Easy Fiction, or integration of children's paperbacks and hardbacks; monitor circulation to see if usage increases (Farley/Hoglund: Q3)
- c. Enhance the patron experience and encourage library users to linger at the library by improving furnishings and seating.
  - Re-upholster damaged chairs to maximize available seating at the Central Library (Perkins: Q1)
  - Collaborate with the Friends of the Library to re-organize and refresh the entrance area at the Central Library (Perkins/Kiesner: Q1)
  - Include new furnishings at the Fairhaven Branch as part of the Wilks Estate funding (Perkins/Sheplor: Q2)

- Explore ways to increase seating comfort in Lecture Room (Assistant Director: Q4)

**GOAL 2:** Enhance reading, viewing, and listening opportunities through broadened library partnerships, programs, and promotions.

### **Objectives**

- a. Encourage new people to take advantage of library services by getting library cards.
  - Hold a fall Library Card Campaign that coincides with the American Library Association's "Library Card Sign-Up Month" (Assistant Director: Q3)
  - Partner with city schools and local retailers to make sure "Get a Library Card" is on every school supply list (Hoglund: Q2)
  - Reach out to students and families by attending ten Back-to-School Fairs and New Student Orientations (Hoglund: Q3)
  - Conduct "bring a friend to the library" Facebook campaign (Assistant Director: Q3)
- b. Provide a welcoming environment for people who are not using the library, especially non-English speakers.
  - Develop and conduct a survey of non-users within Bellingham (Assistant Director: by Q4)
  - Present a minimum of six programs to local organizations about library services (Kiesner/Management Team: Q4)
  - Translate Welcome Brochure and library card application into Spanish (Assistant Director: Q4)
  - Distribute brochures and card applications to twelve organizations that serve non-English speakers (Hoglund/Farley: Q3)
  - Add a phone message option in Spanish (Assistant Director: Q4)
  - Add a page to the library website in Spanish that contains the same "welcome brochure" information (Assistant Director: Q4)
- c. Promote the enjoyment and value of reading, viewing, and listening by "book talking" and leading book discussions.
  - Make contacts at all city schools to discuss establishing a "Book Talking in Schools" program (Hoglund: Q2)

- Develop a schedule and curriculum for children's and teen staff to visit each school twice a year, fall and spring, starting fall 2014 (Hoglund: by Q4)
- Coordinate six annual adult reading events in the community (Farley: Q4)
- Host four book discussions at non-library locations (Farley: by Q4)
- Produce a "2013 Staff Favorites" guide for all age levels (Farley/Hoglund: Q3)

## LEARN

### Promote Lifelong Learning from birth through adulthood.

**GOAL 1:** Establish Bellingham Public Library as the leading community center for Early Learning, where families read, play, and learn together.



#### Objectives

- Provide a welcoming, exciting environment for early learning by creating parent and child interactive play spaces in all physical library locations.
  - At Central Library, complete the Early Learning Center transformation (Hoglund: Q1)
  - Seek alternative funding to support Early Learning spaces and activities (Hoglund: Q2)
  - Explore and evaluate space options at Barkley and Fairhaven branch libraries (Hoglund: Q3) and implement (Hoglund: Q4)
- Support parents, families, and caregivers in their early learning efforts by increasing staff expertise and knowledge of Early Learning.
  - Provide all-staff training of Early Learning theory and best practices (Hoglund: Q2)

- c. Increase the library's ability to meet the community's early learning goals by developing our partnerships and alliances in the Early Learning community.
  - Continue to be active in Whatcom Early Learning Alliance and the Early Learning Public Library Partnership (Hoglund: Q4)
- d. Increase parent and caregiver education and training on Early Learning by providing classes, conferences, and collections.
  - Present three training or information sessions, collaborating with the county library system on curriculum and presentations (Hoglund: Q4)
  - Use displays and other promotions to highlight the Parent and Teacher Resources Collection (Hoglund: Q1)
  - Develop *Parent and Teacher Library Guide to Resources* (Hoglund: Q4)
- e. Increase family participation in Early Learning programming by developing and providing programs for families at multiple times, locations and in relevant languages.
  - Survey families to explore times and locations for Early Learning programming that better meet the needs of families (Hoglund: Q3)
  - Develop a plan for using additional staff for programming (Hoglund: Q3)

**GOAL 2:** Inform and delight our community with a varied calendar of programs.

### Objectives

- a. Meet community needs for programming by developing and implementing a programming plan.
  - Identify and target community issues, interests, and audiences
  - Target goals identified in the library's strategic plan
  - Include additional children's, teen, and adult programs during evenings and on weekends





- Collaborate with a variety of community partners, including developing new programming relationships (Assistant Director: Q4)
- b. Offer the community more programs by expanding volunteer hours to help support those programs.
  - Prepare supporting data and materials to present to a fourth quarter Labor Management Council meeting (Kiesner: Q4)
- c. Support programming with corporate and other alternative funding (Assistant Director: Q4 2014)

**GOAL 3:** Increase personalized services to meet individual needs for research, information, reading suggestions, and technology assistance.

### Objectives

- a. Optimize patron's ability to get informed technology assistance by increasing staff technological competencies through updates at monthly staff meetings (Farley/Sheplor: Q4)
- b. Provide convenient library training, including Book-a-Librarian sessions, in four community locations outside the library (Farley: Q4)
- c. Explore ways for patrons to contact the library via a chat-based answer service in partnership with the county library system (Farley: Q4)
- d. Highlight instructional video links on how to use library tools and services, such as downloading eBooks (Farley: Q2)





# MEET

**Create thriving spaces where the community connects, accesses library resources, and shares their stories.**

**GOAL 1:** Improve public access to library services by increasing library open hours to meet community demand.

## Objectives



a. Meet community expectations for open hours by developing a schedule for library facilities based on local demand and state and national standards

- o Research standards, best practices, and recent survey responses and develop a schedule (Kiesner: Q2)

b. Develop a staffing plan to support proposed library open hours

- o Assess current staff resources and develop a plan that effectively deploys current staff and proposes necessary additional staff resources (Kiesner: Q3)

c. Prepare a report for the Mayor and Council including rationale for library open hours and a 2014 budget proposal for necessary staff (Kiesner: Q3)

d. Reinstate Sunday and evening open hours at the Central Library (Kiesner: Q1 2014)

e. Reinstate open hours at branches (Kiesner: Q1 2014)



**GOAL 2:** Optimize the public's ability to use the library 24/7 by enhancing our full-service, interactive virtual branch.

### Objectives

- a. Encourage increased use of the library's website by improving its functionality and promoting its usefulness to the community
  - o Offer staff webmasters a minimum of one training opportunity per year related to website development (Assistant Director: Q3)
  - o Develop and implement a schedule to highlight and promote online library resources (Farley: Q2)
  - o Confirm annually that the library's website continues to be ADA compliant, including peripherals (Assistant Director: Q4)
  - o Include an online library card application on the website (Sheplor: Q4)
- b. Improve the public's access to and use of the library's online catalog
  - o Purchase and promote a mobile app for the library catalog (Sheplor: Q3)
  - o Promote the features and functionality of the library catalog (Sheplor: Q4)
- c. Expedite borrowing library materials from other libraries by implementing new Interlibrary Loan software (Sheplor: Q3)
- d. Engage online users via social networking tools (Farley/Hoglund: Q2)
- e. Provide access to high demand electronic formats as possible within our budget (Farley/Sheplor: Q4)
- f. Explore ways for the public of all ages to receive homework help by evaluating online services (Farley/Hoglund: Q3)





**GOAL 3:** Replace the 62-year-old Central Library, the hub which supports the entire Bellingham Public Library system, so that we may better serve our community.

**Objectives**

- a. Activate a Facilities Committee of the Library Board of Trustees  
(Kiesner/Trustees: Q1)
- b. Ensure that a new Central Library is included in the City of Bellingham Facilities Master Plan  
(Kiesner/Trustees: Q2)
- c. Explore potential partners for co-location of library services  
(Kiesner/Trustees: Q4)
- d. Secure funds to develop a revised Library Building Program  
(Kiesner/Trustees: Q3)
- e. Develop a Library Building Program to meet current and future vision and requirements for the Central Library (Kiesner: Q4)
  - o Hire consulting help to assist trustees and staff in developing the building program (Kiesner: Q4)
- f. Develop a staffing plan and operations budget for the new facility  
(Kiesner: Q3 2014)
- g. Develop funding strategies for building and operating a new Central Library (Kiesner: Q4 2014)
  - o Work with Whatcom Community Foundation to develop a Capital Giving Campaign including Naming Opportunities (Kiesner/Trustees: Q4 2014)
- h. Restart the site selection process and select a site



**GOAL 4:** Ensure the city completes the seismic retrofit and historic renovations at the Fairhaven Branch Library.

**Objectives**

- a. Ensure that the seismic retrofit and historic renovations are included in the city's Facilities Master Plan (Kiesner: Q2)
- b. Update and publish a case statement describing the need for the seismic retrofit and historic renovations at the Fairhaven Branch Library (Kiesner: Q4)
- c. Work with the city (including Administration, Finance, Public Works, and Planning departments) to identify funding sources for the project, including incorporating it in the Central Library bond (Kiesner: Q2 2014)



**GOAL 5:** Meet community demand for convenient library services by exploring options to provide additional library service outlets within the city.

### Objectives



- a. Survey users and non-users about interest in additional library service outlets (Assistant Director: Q2 2014)
- b. Evaluate all current Bellingham Public Library Connections for efficiency and effectiveness and implement necessary adjustments (Assistant Director: Q2 2014)
- c. Conduct a needs assessment for additional library services outlets; consider population, survey results, and distance to existing services; estimate potential operating costs (Assistant Director: Q4 2014)
- d. Identify a minimum of two potential partners in providing Bellingham Public Library services; for example: a local business or developer, Bellingham Public Schools, or other educational institutions (Assistant Director: Q4 2014)

# DISCOVER

**Provide library collections that introduce ideas, build skills, support lifelong learning, and spark creativity.**

**GOAL 1:** Offer the community a greater number and variety of library materials by increasing the materials budget to achieve the recommended library guideline of 15% of the Library's total budget.

## Objectives

- a. Deliver presentation for City Council about library services, including the materials collection and budget (Kiesner: Q3)
- b. Encourage public supplementation of the materials budget by including a prominent *Donate* button on the library's website (Farley: Q3)



**GOAL 2:** Increase the quantity of library materials in new and emerging formats.

## Objectives

- a. Partner with the county library system to provide an online magazine collection (Farley: Q1)
- b. Evaluate new formats as they become available, such as for online music or video services or alternative eBook services; join purchasing consortiums whenever possible (Farley: by Q4)

**GOAL 3:** Provide public access to unique local content through digitizing local collections and promote access to other digital collections.

**Objectives**

- a. Pursue StoryCorps grant funding to collect personal memories of life in Bellingham and, if funded, include these oral histories on library's website (Sheplor: Q1)
- b. Design a portal page on the library's website with links to digital local history resources (Sheplor: Q3)



- c. Identify and prioritize local content that would benefit from digitization such as local high school and college yearbooks and environmental impact statements (Sheplor: Q4)
- d. Seek grant or corporate funding to support digitization (Sheplor: Q4)
- e. Collaborate on digitization efforts with local agencies such as the Whatcom Museum, the Center for

Pacific Northwest Studies, Washington State Archives, Western Washington University Special Collections, and Whatcom County Library System (Sheplor: Q4)