



# **DOROTHY ALLING MEMORIAL LIBRARY**

*Your Home for Lifelong Learning*

## **STRATEGIC PLAN 2014-2019**

Plan completed September 2013  
Approved October 2013

This strategic plan was created with the idea that it will encapsulate the most pertinent information needed for planning the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library (DAML) services. It is general enough to make it pertinent to the fast paced changes that we see in technology and to community needs. At the same time, it makes clear what we want to focus our attention on from this point forward. Specific suggestions from the community have been gathered separately for the staff to use in day-to-day operations and are not included in this document.

We wish to thank the community of Williston for their continued support of the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library. This plan was the work of many people. It could not have been done without the feedback from people who completed our surveys, who willingly gave up their evenings for meetings and those who worked to create a plan from a wealth of gathered information.

In particular we wish to thank the following people:

Amy Howlett-- Consulting Librarian, Vermont Department of Libraries

*Community Planning Committee:* Mark Akey, Cale Bombardier, Mal Boright, Diane Downer, Stephanie Joseph, Deb MacDonald, Nicole Malon, Steve Mease, Jim Moran, Walter Nardelli, Julia Nesbit, Linda Preziose, Cindy Thurston, Sophia Trigg, Cal Workman, Will Workman.

*Executive Planning Committee:* Kathy Fernee- Chair, DAML Trustee, Jude Hersey--DAML Trustee, Esther Perelman--Friend of DAML, Deb Roderer--Assistant Director, DAML, Kathy DeLuca--Patron Services Librarian, DAML, Marti Fiske--Director, DAML

### **Town of Williston**

It is noted that Williston is one of the oldest towns in Vermont and one of the fastest growing. The residents protect this dual character through active citizen participation which includes the ongoing support of the Dorothy Alling Memorial Library (DAML). The town slogan, “old town charm, new town spirit,” supports this perception by maintaining a treasured sense of the “old” as well as embracing the “new” with its desire to grow with the times. This deep respect for Williston’s heritage is depicted in its village structure and the utilization of smart growth management that keeps the commercial development apart from the historic village. The population has a growing diversity of cultures and an increase in senior communities, but it maintains a deep commitment to the education and development of its youth. Williston is widely recognized for its conservation efforts that encourage agricultural sectors, preserve wildlife corridors, expand transportation options, embrace environmental technologies and continue development of the town-wide trail system for the enjoyment of its citizens.

## Library Profile

Libraries are places where privacy is protected and information is made available without restrictions. As we write this strategic plan, public libraries all over the nation are in a state of change. The mechanics of information delivery are constantly fluctuating and evolving, with a variety of electronic methods bringing content directly to consumers. The technologies we use have become essential parts of our lives.

A key item that we address in this plan is the role DAML expects to fulfill for our community within the context of change. The DAML has been and continues to be a vital part of the community. Library usage continues to increase, and 54% of Williston and St. George residents hold library cards. Two examples of changes at DAML are how people access the internet at the library and library programming. The cost of internet accessible devices has decreased while their portability has increased. People are still using the library to access the internet, but more of them are now using DAML's wifi on their own devices. Library programs, especially continuing or supplemental educational programs, are more sought after than previously. DAML, like libraries nationally, is constantly evolving its services to best meet the community's needs.

### DAML Library Statistics

	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>% Changed</b>
Circulation (all materials)	108,160	117,716	9%
Patron Visits	52,498	59,544	13%
Reference assistance	6,262	6,774	8%
Internet users on DAML computers	9,780*	6,643*	-32%
Website page loads	17,705	71,824	306%
Programs offered	299	344	15%
Program attendance	7,401	9,429	27%
Interlibrary Loans	1,185	1,239	5%
Staff hours (Full-time equivalent)	7.1	7.1	0%
Operating Expenditures	\$454,766	\$559,692**	23%
Per Capita Expenditures	\$50.63	\$60.17**	19%

\*Does not include wifi usage, collected starting 2012

\*\*Estimated

	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2013</b>
<b>Total Registered Patrons*</b>	<b>5,060</b>	<b>5,157</b>
Williston	4,773	4,913
St. George	186	192
Out of Town/Other	96	52
Temporary	5	0

\*Does not include patrons from the HomeCard reciprocal borrowing libraries, 1,110 patrons in FY2013

### **How We Gathered Information**

The Planning Committee sought input about how the library is perceived by the community, what the library does well, and what goals and aspirations the community has for the library. During the summer of 2013, information was gathered in two four-hour meetings of community members, two staff retreats and a community-wide survey. The community meetings were attended by representatives from staff, volunteers, Trustees, Friends, business owners, youth, education, and general users. Meetings were facilitated by Amy Howlett from the Vermont Department of Libraries.

The information gathered showed a broad belief that the library serves the community well. There were many positive comments by both the staff and the community groups about the existing library services and relationships with the community. These included:

- The library is the center of the community.
- The staff takes customer service seriously and enjoys it. This is recognized by the community.
- The building is welcoming, especially the youth area and art exhibits.
- Offerings are kept current.
- Excellent volunteer support.

## **Our Focus For The Future**

The community group's responses were examined for themes and commonalities. The group voted on possible service responses using a list developed by the New Jersey State Library Trustee Institute and decided what the top three areas for major focus in the coming years would be. (Listed below in order of priority) Then the Executive Planning Committee developed a new, shorter mission statement which will also be used in the library's advertising.

**Mission:** Dorothy Alling Memorial Library, your home for lifelong learning.

*Satisfy Curiosity: "Lifelong learning." Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn through their lives.*

- Offer an expanded variety of programs, co-sponsoring with local organizations whenever possible
- Provide access to adult education through online sources, video-conferencing and other resources
- Provide an up-to-date non-fiction collection in a variety of formats; print, audio, video, and electronic
- Create and support wikis and blogs in areas of local resident interests.
- Develop website bibliographies to help patrons find information

In every discussion, it was agreed that supporting lifelong learning is the core of the library's mission. This begins with encouraging children, at as early an age as possible, in the habit of coming to the library and continues through to our senior citizens with special catering to those who are less mobile. People mentioned the high quality of the book, DVD, local history and audio collections available at DAML.

In looking forward, ideas include offering programs on topics that will appeal to wider interests and age ranges; continuing the program of student volunteers and high school students working at the library, evening movies, more teen programs, and continue support of the summer reading program. The library needs to look for new ways to reach the 25-45 year old demographic and encourage them to use the library resources more. Possible programs for this demographic include evening programs on a variety of subjects that are both interesting and useful, including career topics and cultural programs with music.

***Connect to the Online World:*** “Public internet access” Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the internet.

- Offer up-to-date public access computers & printers with a wide variety of software programs, browsers and search engines
- Provide high-speed internet access
- Provide wireless access to the internet

Connecting to the online world is inescapable in today’s digital age. The nature of public libraries is constantly evolving, and must be flexible enough and cognizant enough of new trends and resources to keep library services and assets current. It is essential that the library maintain state of the art technology by purchasing bestselling, most requested, and important new technologies.

People suggested more staff training in technology and methods of teaching different groups in using these technologies. The library could offer the use of newer or specialty hardware such as iPads to borrow on site and offer more classes on software use. Library users might want to know how to search efficiently to make the best use of time and how to evaluate sources for credibility. Other classes might include teaching people how to be safe in the digital world with privacy issues, what is safe to disclose, avoiding fraud, and identifying Phishing schemes. The library might offer class on problem-solving or troubleshooting research online, such as how to diagnose a problem with your car.

***Visit a Comfortable Place:*** “Physical and virtual spaces.” Residents will have safe and welcoming physical spaces to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.

- Provide comfortable seating throughout the library
- Have meeting rooms for public use
- Have gallery/exhibit space
- Create and maintain library events web page
- Create blogs, wikis and other opportunities for social networking
- Provide performance space

Having a comfortable space is important to a feeling of safety and welcome. It ranges from the first impressions when someone enters the library to feeling relaxed and sheltered as the patron moves through the library and utilizes what it offers.

People stated that the entry spaces could be more welcoming and brighter – perhaps cleaner and less cluttered. The many flyers for announcements need to be simplified and decreased to provide more focus for the readers. The groups agreed that the picture book room and children’s

area are relaxing and attractive. For the adult areas, suggestions were to increase the number of comfortable seats; reconfigure the front computer room space to make it cozier; have a casual discussion room or space with comfortable furniture, loveseats, newspapers or magazines; and offer online forums or focus groups.

The discussions were wide-ranging, and several ideas arose which could be actions for the coming five years but are not tied to one of the service areas above. These included:

- improving marketing by updating the logo and advertising the mission statement
- creating an annual community forum which includes volunteers and all community constituencies to gather information on how people get their information as well as likes and suggestions concerning library services
- increasing interactive communications with the community (such as blogs, software that allows programs to “pin” to personal e-calendars, take suggestions)
- increasing partnerships with other groups for programs and staff training
- increasing staff hours
- improving communication with community members especially targeting new patrons and 16-45 year olds.

### **For More Information**

Please contact the library if you have questions or comments on this plan. The library’s past strategic plans are available for review and provide historical information beyond the scope of this plan. Extensive information on the communities of Williston and St. George can be found in the 2010 U.S. Census, available at <http://factfinder2.census.gov> .

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