

Carpenter-Carse Library



**Strategic Plan
2016-2020**

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Introduction

Strategic Planning Process

In February 2014, a small group of library trustees, community members and the library director started meeting to discuss creating a Strategic Plan for the next five years.

They developed an on-line survey for residents with the goal of spreading the word at Town Meeting on March 3, 2014. The survey was open for a month on line, and paper copies were available at Town Meeting, at the library, and at Town Hall for anyone without internet access. 209 people answered the survey questions. In addition, two attempts were made to hold Focus Groups, but there was no attendance beyond the core group. Finally, the group requested and received input from library staff.

The group reviewed the current mission statement (see below) and decided it was still applicable and appropriate, and that no changes were necessary.

Results from the survey were shared with the trustees and staff. These results were summarized and became the starting point for the strategic plan.

In August 2015 the trustees requested that the strategic plan committee create a draft plan for review prior to the submission of the 2016/2017 budget, while considering additional staff input. The draft plan was reviewed by the committee and presented to the trustees for review at the November 18, 2015 meeting, where additional edits were agreed to. Following final review, the trustees approved the plan at the December 16, 2015 meeting.

Mission Statement

The library's mission is to offer people of all ages the equal opportunity to read and learn in a bright, welcoming environment that serves as a community gathering place. We collect materials of both current interest and lasting value in response to the needs and preferences of our patrons. The library provides encouragement and diverse resources to parents and caregivers to help instill a love of reading in all young children. We supply the reliable information resources necessary for lifelong learning and are committed to the informed and free exchange of ideas through discussion and speaker programs.



From the yearly art show of HCS student art

History of Hinesburg's Libraries

In 1810, over one hundred residents created the Literary Society of Hinesburgh. Members met once a month or more in people's homes until moving the collection to Hinesburgh Academy. After the Society disbanded in 1860, the collection remained housed at Hinesburgh Academy until voters established the Hinesburgh Public Library at Town Hall in 1902. Circulation of books was robust and in 1917 two "branch libraries" were formed, one in Mechanicsville.

In 1947 the Sarah Carpenter Memorial Library was erected on the site of the former Academy. A Hinesburg native, Leonard E. Carpenter, donated the funds to create the library, which was dedicated to his mother, Sarah Degree Carpenter, on Mother's Day in 1947.

The Sarah Carpenter Memorial Library served the community for 50 years. In 1996, Henry Carse, farmer, state senator, library trustee and beloved neighbor, donated the former Green Mountain Hardware building to the SCM Library, Inc. This generous gift was followed by fundraising and tax support to make the renovation possible. The library's new name, Carpenter-Carse Library, is a reflection of the dedication and generosity of Leonard Carpenter and Henry Carse, who demonstrated their deep appreciation for their hometown and for the importance of libraries.

Library Profile

The following table summarizes basic library statistics since the last Strategic Plan in 2006.

	FY 2006	FY 2015	% Change
Circulation	32,095	44,724	+39.4%
Patron Visits	17,301/*18,512	23,280/*24,885	+32.0%
Internet Users	84	52	-38.1%
Programs Offered	121	**151	+24.8%
Program Attendance	1,886 Youth: 1448 Adults 438	**2,353 Youth: 2168 Adults: 185	+24.8%
Staff Hours	145/wk.***	158/wk.***	+9.0%
Operating Expenses	\$144,400**** (Tax allocation: \$139,400)	\$216,318**** (Tax allocation: \$200,318)	+49.8%

Notes:

*Patron Visits: 1st figure represents total library patron visits; 2nd figure also includes use of the Community Room by outside groups (VT Dept. of Libraries includes this in their database)

**Programs offered/attendance: In FY 2015 months, between April 15th and June 30th, the library had no adult program librarian, and thus no adult programs.

***Staff Hours: The numbers listed (for both 2006 and 2015) include 5 hrs./week for cleaning of the facility done by a staff member.

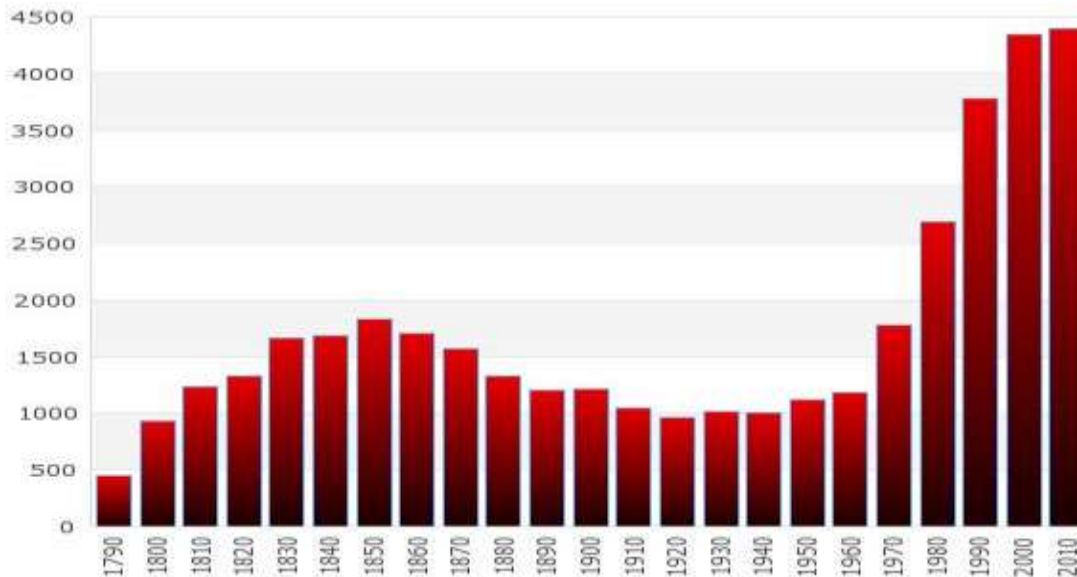
****Operating Expenses: This figure includes other income such as rent, endowment, and donations.

In addition to the above data, the VDOL public library database provided the following comparisons:

- The majority of the budget (74%) is for staff expenditure. This is typical of other libraries in the county and state.
- Our hours of operation and volunteer hours are in the lower third of Chittenden county libraries
- Our per capita tax support is in the upper third of Chittenden county libraries.

Town of Hinesburg Demographics

Population

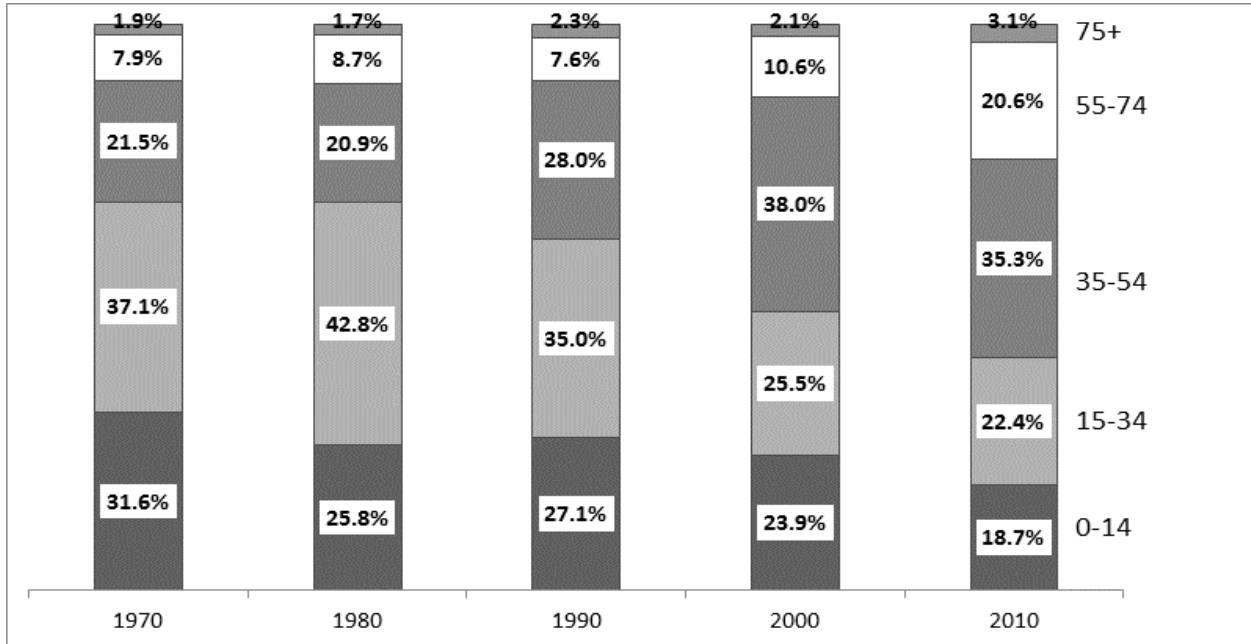


Source: Census Data, Center for Rural Studies, VT Indicators Online - <http://www.uvm.edu/crs>

After several decades of significant growth in the 60's through the 90's, the population leveled off during the first decade of the 21st century, with 2010 population at 4396. Current population estimates for the town continue this trend with 2013 population estimated at 4427 and 2020 estimated to be 4551 (from VT Agency of Commerce and Community Development). Similarly, Chittenden South Supervisory Union (CSSU) K-8 student population projections for Hinesburg show modest growth from 2015 (540) to 2020 (580), and flat or declining enrollment thereafter.

However, these projections are based only on trends and do not reflect the possible approval of three specific proposed property developments in the town center, namely Haystack Crossing, Hinesburg Center Phase 2, and NRG which would significantly increase the town’s population.

Age Distribution - 1970-2010



Source: US Census

Our town’s population is aging, with 23.7% of the population aged 55 or older.

Outline

Based on the input described above, the committee defined six topics that we felt should be included in the strategic plan. These are:

- Technology
- Facility (including hours)
- Programming
- Materials
- Marketing/Branding
- Staffing (including volunteers)

While there is significant overlap in these topics, the intent is to provide a clear, organized structure to the strategic plan. Each topic includes some background information followed by specific goals that can be measured and tracked.

Technology

Information technology is changing so rapidly that ongoing training is needed for patrons to take full advantage of the available content. With current technology the amount of material that is available to patrons free of charge is phenomenal and there is potential for significant growth in usage.

Goals:

- Promote and facilitate digital literacy competence of all Hinesburg residents.
- Library staff to offer more opportunities to teach patrons to use e-books. Currently through ListenUp Vermont, but may include other services in the future.
- Similarly, access to and training for other digital technology services (streaming video, periodical databases, podcasts, language and other education services, etc.) should be actively encouraged.
- Align technology capabilities with VDOL Strategic Plan
- Assess demand and make e-readers available for lending as needed.
- Provide staff training as needed to support the above goals

Facility

Building

We have made numerous major repairs/upgrades to the library in recent years:

- 2014 – Parking Lot Paving
- 2014 - Exterior painting, Trim/siding/gutter upgrade
- 2012 – Replaced HVAC Units
- 2012 – Replaced Carpet
- 2011 – Connected to town water and sewer
- 2010 – Converted Heating from propane to natural gas
- 2010 – Replaced Roof

We included a deferred maintenance line item in our budget starting in FY 2009/2010. This has covered some but not all of the cost of the repairs listed above. The board had to use endowment funds to cover the shortfall. Now that most of the major predictable maintenance items have been recently completed, we expect the deferred maintenance fund to grow so that when future major maintenance is needed (in 10, 15, 20 years) there will be adequate funds available.

We feel the facility is in good physical condition, and the single floor design and grade level access are very desirable attributes. We currently rent about 17% of the space to the CVU LIFE program during the school year. We do not have a long term lease on this space. If future space is needed for the library collection, this would be the obvious space to expand into.

Goal:

- Investigate use of east end roofed area (possible three-season, screened-in space).

Location

Several people have expressed a desire to have the library move to a new location so it would be walkable from the village. The committee takes this feedback seriously, but does not plan to explore moving the library in the foreseeable future. Current development patterns are essentially expanding the town towards the library. Also, there is already a sidewalk connecting CVU to the library, which extends to town via Mechanicsville Road. While not a direct route, this does none the less provide walking access to the library. If there is development in the proposed Haystack Crossing site, the library will advocate for a sidewalk.

Goals:

- Support efforts to construct sidewalks along Route 116 to allow more direct walking access from housing centers in town.
- Support efforts of the Town Trails Committee to provide connectivity to Geprag's Park.
- Explore use of Little Free Library boxes in more distant parts of town.

Hours

Many library patrons would support increased hours of operation, citing the confusion resulting from different hours on different days. Specifically respondents suggested more evening hours and more days when the library is open after school. Hours have been adjusted in an attempt to best serve our community and to increase hours as much as possible within our budget constraints.

Goals:

- Continue to find ways to optimize and maximize our open hours.

Programming

As more and more content traditionally found only in a library becomes available electronically, the library as a physical structure takes on a more important role as a community meeting place. Providing a wide variety of programs at convenient times helps encourage this. Several children's programs offered recently were well received, including Lego Club, Crafternoon, Story Time, Café Make, and Read with Charlie.

Goals:

- Continue to offer creative children's programs like those mentioned above.
- Re-establish a consistent schedule of adult programs.
- Increase program attendance measurably.
- Increase opportunities for interactive programming.
- Encourage additional use of library facility by outside groups.

Materials

The library's collection of materials is vitally important; to many patrons, it is the primary purpose of the library. It is essential that our staff strive to keep the collection current and robust. The survey provided lots of specific feedback about the quantity and types of materials patrons are interested in. While it is important to satisfy as many patron requests as possible, it remains a core competency of the library staff to select works that are thought provoking, diverse, informative, interesting, and timely.

Goals:

- Increase patron awareness and understanding of inter library loan and homecards.
- Continue to use the annual proceeds from the investment of Guarino Funds for materials.
- Consider Annual fundraising campaign to increase materials line in the budget.
- Increase use of collection by:
 - Designing, installing and curating end displays.
 - Establishing a "New to Us" display.
- Continue to cull collection of outdated material.



Marketing/Branding

While the library enjoys broad and enthusiastic support among its patrons, we know there are many town residents that simply don't use the library on a regular basis. Several staff, trustees, and community members believe the library should do more to market itself to the broader public, thereby increasing use of library services and participation in library programs.

Goals:

- Develop a Carpenter Carse Library Logo.
- Develop a Carpenter Carse Library Slogan or Saying.
- Develop marketing plan (including an on line calendar) to promote programs and services of the library.
- Investigate revival of the Friends of the Library group.

Staffing

Succession

Staff turnover is inevitable, so the library must plan for these events so that replacement staff is adequately trained, service is consistent during the transition, and “institutional memory” is preserved.

Goals:

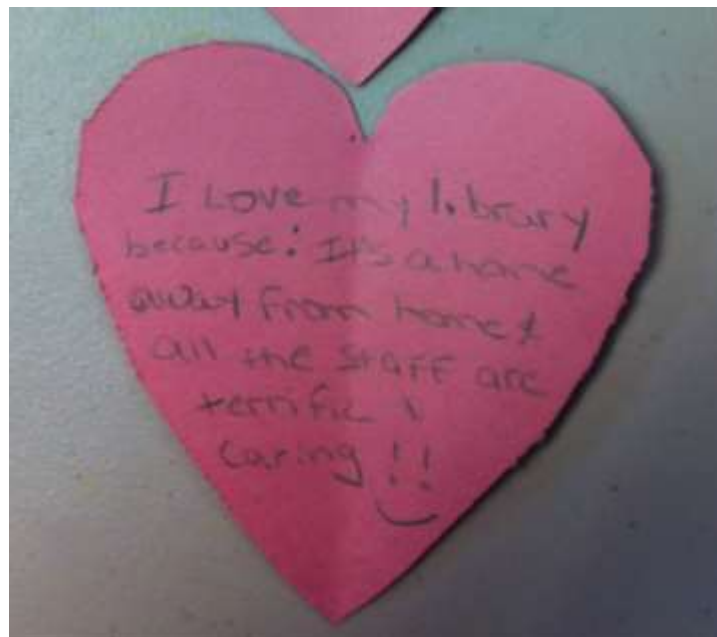
- Create a succession plan.

Volunteers

Volunteers enhance the library in many ways, far beyond the specific tasks they are asked to perform. They increase awareness of library services and programs among community members, provide feedback to the library on how services can be improved, advocate for continued funding of the library, and increase the sense of shared ownership of the library as a valuable community resource.

Goals:

- Working with staff, create a volunteer program plan including responsibilities, schedule, and training.



Acknowledgements

Survey Coordinator: Susan Abell

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Strategic Plan Committee: Mariana Holzer, Heather Roberts, Jim Jarvis, Ed Sengle

References

Census Data: <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

Chittenden South Supervisory Union (CSSU) Projections:
<http://cssu.org/cms/lib5/VT01000775/Centricity/Domain/64/October%202014.pdf>

Survey Results:

[Survey Data.pdf](#)

[Survey Written Responses.pdf](#)

Vermont Department of Libraries (VDOL) Strategic Plan:
<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/AboutUs/FY2015%20Strategic%20Plan%20%209.13.14.pdf>

VDOL Database of Public Libraries:
<http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/PublicLibraries/Statistics/plstats%202015.xlsx>