

Sutton Free Public Library

Long Range Plan

FY17-FY21

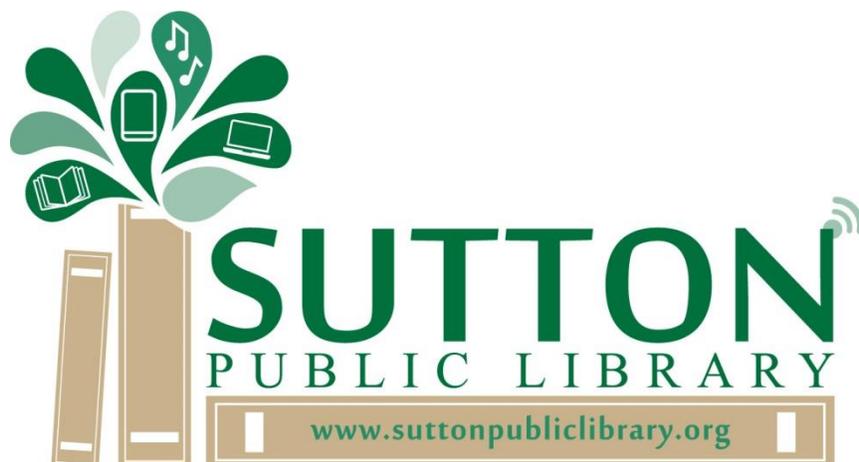


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Introduction

The Board of Library Trustees of the Sutton Free Public Library is charged with the duty of overseeing library facilities and services for the residents of Sutton. It is in this spirit that the Board embarked upon a long range planning process in the spring of 2016.

The world in which we live is continually changing and library services must change with it in order to meet the service needs of the residents of Sutton. It is time for us to look again to be sure that we are using our resources effectively to meet the changing needs of our community, and that we define the ways that we serve the public as we move forward with the proposed construction of a new library facility.

Long range planning is also a requirement of the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC). Submitting a long range plan is a requirement that ensures our eligibility for certification and for direct grants from the MBLC under the federally funded Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), as well as any other state funded library grants.

This Long Range Plan is the result of the process begun several months ago. This document will serve as a custom blueprint for determining library services in Sutton for the next five years. It will guide the Trustees and the staff as they make library service and program decisions in our current facility, as well as determine service priorities at a potential new site. The long range plan will guide the Trustees and Director as they allocate resources, in the form of taxpayer dollars, for the most effective library services possible.

The Sutton Free Public Library gratefully acknowledges the efforts of the Long Range Planning Committee who developed the Goals and Objectives found in this plan.

Committee members:

Elizabeth Fritz-Keyes, Library Trustee
Joanne Geneva, Library Trustee
Brian Hirst, Community Member
Pamela Johnson, Library Staff
Lisa Kane, Library Trustee
Alyssa MacPherson, Community Member
Betsy Rajotte, Library Director

Methodology

In February 2015, the Library Director attended a Long Range Planning workshop held at the Auburn Public Library in preparation for completing a Long Range Plan for the Sutton Free Public Library. The workshop was led by Kristi Chadwick from the Massachusetts Library System.

The Long Range Plan process began with the solicitation of committee members in the December 2015 Library newsletter. The first meeting was scheduled for January 28, 2016 and several community members joined in. A SOAR analysis was conducted to identify the strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results of the library. The Library Director took the results of the SOAR analysis and began to form goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were discussed, debated, deliberated, and re-arranged at the March 3 meeting of the Long Range Plan Committee. At the March 21 Trustees' meeting the Trustees formed a mission statement to guide the Library.

During February, a community survey was conducted. Surveys were available via the library's website, as well as in paper form at the Library. The deadline for completion was March 1, 2016.

The penultimate draft of the Long Range Plan was presented to the committee for final discussion at their April 7 meeting. Small changes were recommended and the final draft was deemed complete by the committee on April 20. The Long Range Plan was accepted and voted upon by the Board of Trustees at their meeting on April 25, 2016.

The Town of Sutton

A quintessential New England Town, Sutton consists of five villages: Sutton Center, Manchaug, Wilkinsonville, West Sutton, and South Sutton. Sutton Center boasts a grassy common surrounded by the Municipal Complex which houses the library, town administrative offices, the police and fire stations; the Congregational Church, and a variety of historic homes and buildings including several farms. The Town of Sutton presents itself well on its robust website, www.suttonma.org. The Community Profile page describes the town as a rural community located in central Massachusetts (Worcester County) along Route 146 in an area known as the Blackstone Valley, minutes from the Mass Pike (Route I 90) and just fifteen minutes from the Rhode Island border, eight miles south of Worcester, thirty miles north of Providence and forty-six miles southwest of Boston. Sutton is governed by a five-person Board of Selectmen and an Open Town Meeting. Under a revised Home Rule Charter, day to day operations are carried out by a Town Administrator.

Vision Statement from Town Master Plan

The Town of Sutton appreciates its open space, cultural and natural assets, its village centers, its sense of community and distinct rural feel. Sutton's open space, vistas, agricultural land, forest, lakes, ponds, historic structures, places, and their ultimate protection are one of the most important aspects to the community.

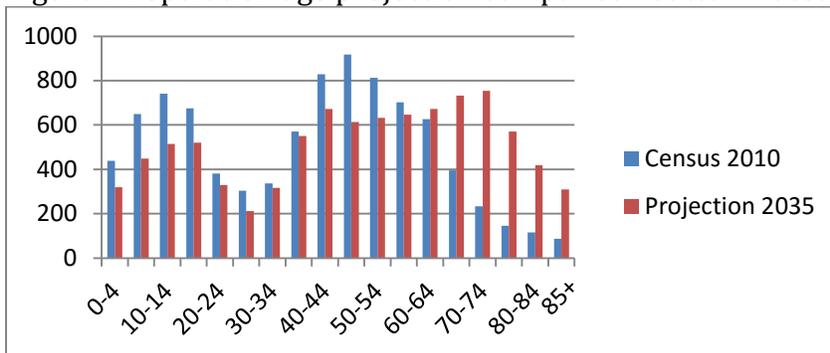
The Town, through this master planning effort, will foster economic growth encouraging local services, job creation and increased tax base that is in balance with the Town's rural character. The strength of the town lies in its past and future planning efforts, and its ability to challenge itself to make organized thoughtful decisions regarding its future.

Ultimately, the Town of Sutton will thrive on its unique balance of growth and rural character that has attracted generations of families. This sustainability will be a model that visitors remember.

Demographics

The Sutton Public Library provides timely and popular resources to a town of some 9,500 residents per the 2015 Town census. The 2010 U.S. Census registered a population of 8,875. Projections by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Council (CMRPC) anticipate that by 2035, the population will be approximately 10,360. The median household income in 2011 inflation adjusted dollars according to the 2010 U.S. census is \$109,130. It is anticipated that the population of Sutton will age over the next 20 years, as is dramatically demonstrated in the following chart. Note the marked decrease in younger citizens in the 2035 projections (red bar) and the significantly higher increase in those over 65.

Figure 1 Population age projection comparison Sutton Massachusetts



A community snapshot of Sutton as of 2012 was prepared by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Council (CMRPC) <http://www.cmrpc.org/>, and is included in the appendix of this document. The 8-page snapshot gives details about the current population, economy, land use, housing, public safety, education, transportation and traffic safety in graphic formats and provides several maps detailing traffic patterns and walking trails. Some information looks back to the 1990 census and other data shows housing and building permitting patterns between 2000 and 2010.

In 2014 CMRPC issued a detailed regional planning report (<http://www.cmrpc.org/sites/default/files/Documents/Trans/Chapter%20II%20Regional%20Characteristics.pdf>) for the Central Massachusetts Region, also referred to as the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning District (CMRPD). The CMRPD is made up of the City of Worcester and the 39 surrounding towns of south-central Worcester County and is

one of thirteen planning regions in the state. Sutton is part of the southeast subregion consisting of Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. The study notes that because the southeast subregion has the easiest access to several of New England's largest cities of all subregions, population is growing faster by number and percent, a trend that is expected to continue.

The Sutton Free Public Library

The Sutton Free Public Library is governed by a three-member Board of Trustees, each elected for a three-year term. The Library is administered by a Director who holds a Master's Degree in Library Science (MLS).

The FY2016 (2015 data) Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) conducted by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) stated that there were three thousand eight hundred registered borrowers, all of whom are Sutton residents. The library is a C/W MARS mini-net member and its cataloging and circulation systems are fully automated using the Evergreen system. Current holdings are seventy-three thousand eight hundred items, with approximately thirty-four thousand tangible items and the remainder in downloadable electronic formats. About two thirds of the collection is devoted to adult and young adult material, and one third to children's resources. Its collection of non-fiction slightly exceeds fiction holdings. The library circulated over sixty-three thousand items in FY2016 in all formats. It circulated more books to children and more videos to adults. Overall circulation to children and young adults exceeded circulation to adults. The library received over seven thousand items via interlibrary loan and lent some ten thousand four hundred items to other libraries.

The library is housed on the basement level of the Sutton Municipal Complex in the Sutton Center. The Complex includes the Town Hall, Police, Fire and Emergency Services Departments. The Library space, measuring 3,100 gross square feet and 2,000 net square feet, is in use for library activities Monday through Saturday. Access to the Emergency Services office space from the ambulance and fire garage is through the library.

The Sutton Free Public Library had its beginning in 1874 when the Sutton Farmers Club created a fund to purchase reading books to be shared over the winter. At the Annual Town Meeting on March 20, 1876, the town accepted the library from the original owners, who had contributed one dollar each to establish it. In 1882 four additional branches, one in each village, were added. The last of those branches closed in 2005, leaving only the Center Library. The Center Library moved to Town Hall in 1957, where it remained until it

was relocated to the nearby General Rufus Putnam Building. In 1982 it moved into the basement of the newly constructed Town Municipal Center because the Putnam Building could no longer support the weight of books. The library space was renovated in 1993 by Larkin and Tenney Architects to enlarge it.

Mission Statement

The Sutton Free Public Library facilitates lifelong learning by connecting people to informational, cultural, recreational and technical resources.

Goal 1: Build and move into a new library facility.

Objective 1: Pursue funding for a new library facility.

Activity: Apply for a construction grant from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Activity: Implement planning and design documentation.

Activity: Form Capital Campaign.

Goal 2: Promotion of programs and services to the community will be increased.

Objective 1: Establish an email newsletter.

Activity: Investigate options for email newsletter services and choose the best fit for the Library's need.

Activity: Promote the availability of the Library's email newsletter.

Activity: Send a monthly email newsletter out to subscribers.

Objective 2: Build and maintain relationships with local print media sources.

Activity: Submit events to the Uxbridge Times every month.

Activity: Submit calendar items to the Millbury-Sutton Chronicle weekly and articles as applicable.

Objective 3: Add more content to local cable access stations.

Activity: Create a monthly mini-show about what's coming up at the Library.

Activity: Create slides promoting programs to run on cable access station.

Objective 4: Increase communication to Sutton School System.

Activity: Twice annually send each teacher in the Sutton Public School system information about library services designed to support teachers and students.

Activity: Submit articles to the *Chalk Talk* newsletter.

Activity: Supply each school with the Library's print newsletter.

Objective 5: Expand interaction with patrons on social media.

Activity: Schedule a weekly 'Did you know?' on Facebook highlighting a service or fact about the Library.

Activity: Schedule a post for each Sunday asking patrons: "What are you reading this week?"

Activity: Increase usage of and patron engagement with the Library's Twitter account.

Goal 3: Add Programs

Objective 1: Expand the programming offered for adults.

Activity: The Library will produce annually at least one program where parents and other caregivers receive information on developing reading skills.

Activity: The Library will offer individual and small-group instruction in the use of on-line resources for adults.

Objective 2: Increase programming for teens to help them acquire access and research skills and encourage connected learning via peer culture, interests, and academic subjects.

Activity: Re-institute the teen published newsletter.

Activity: Enhance book clubs for teens.

Objective 3: Add more programming targeted to tweens.

Activity: Add book groups for this age group featuring additional activities besides discussion (i.e. crafts, trivia, and games.)

Activity: Add drop-in style programming such as crafts, scavenger hunts, etc.

Objective 4: Increase the amount of children's programs offered on nights and weekends.

Activity: The Library will twice monthly offer programs on Saturdays and weeknight evenings.

Goal 4: Collection Development

Objective 1: Maintain the Library's collection at a reasonable level for the space available.

Activity: Remove items from the Library's collection on an ongoing basis to ensure that the collection remains current and enticing.

Objective 2: Assess additional non-print materials to be added to the collection.

Activity: Investigate costs and acquire additional museum passes.

Activity: Research the plausibility of expanding the seed library to include garden tools and soil testers.

Activity: Evaluate the Library's ability to provide e-readers and tablets for circulation.

Goal 5: Review library policies

Objective 1: Annually review policies, identify need for new policies, and identify policies that need to be updated.

Activity: Identify and write new policies as needed.

Activity: Revise current policies as needed.

Goal 6: Technology

Objective 1: Library users will have access to both individual and group instruction in the use of on-line resources provided by the Library.

Activity: The Library will offer at least twice annually age-appropriate group instruction for high school and middle school students in the use of the Library and on-line resources.

Activity: The Library will offer scheduled trainings in eBooks and databases to patrons.

Objective 2: Train the staff to proficiency in using the Overdrive and Commonwealth Collection products.

Activity: Provide in-person or virtual training to all staff in using Overdrive and Commonwealth Collection products.

Objective 3: Promote the availability of downloadable electronic materials.

Activity: Publicize the Commonwealth Collections which offer free access to an expanded eBook collection from across the state that includes popular fiction, non-fiction, academic research, historical documents, etc.

Activity: Increase awareness of Overdrive, a free service through which residents can borrow eBooks, audiobooks, and more from digital collections through the CWMARS system.

Goal 7: Outreach

Objective 1: Collaborate with Sutton Historical Society.

Activity: Research digitization of town archival documents.

Objective 2: Increase outreach to the senior community.

Activity: Establish home delivery services for housebound residents of Sutton.

Activity: Investigate the usage and availability of volunteers to help with program.

Activity: Promote community awareness of program on social media, through flyers, etc.

Activity: Advertise collections of large print books and audiobooks.

Activity: Offer workshops at the Senior Center about the Library's virtual offerings.

Objective 3: Offer programs on site at locations around town.

Activity: The Library will offer story times off site twice a month.

Activity: The Library will work with businesses and organizations in the community to provide programming at their locations.

Activity: The Library will coordinate with pre-schools in town to offer programming at the schools.

Staff Survey

As you may know, we are working on our FY17-FY22 Strategic Plan. As a staff member, your insights and opinions are extremely valuable to the process. Please take some time to answer these questions and help develop our priorities for the coming five years. If you need more space, please use the back of the page. The deadline for completion is 2/29/16. All answers will remain strictly confidential.

1. Thinking five years into the future, what is your vision for the role the library will play?
2. What contributions to the Sutton community would you most like the library to make?
3. What changes do you see happening, related to usage of the library building, participation in programming, usage of the collections, and/or usage of online resources?
4. Are there specific populations you feel need more attention or aren't being adequately served? How could we address that need?
5. Please share your thoughts about the library space (public and staff space).
6. How could the library change or improve current offerings to better serve patrons?
7. What new offerings should we explore?
8. Are there current offerings that we could potentially reduce in the future?
9. Do you feel that you have the tools and training needed to do a good job?
10. What do you find most satisfying about working at the library?
11. What do you find most frustrating about working at the library?
12. Is there anything else you would like to say about the library, your work at the library, services, programs, space, or any other topic?