



Strategic Plan Summary 2024 to 2029



Brunswick Recreation Summer Campers visit our new EV Bookmobile in 2023.

**ADVOCATING for READING, and ACCESS TO INFORMATION
remain key cornerstones of our work in the community.**

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Libraries are leaders and listeners; destinations for learning, gathering or simply being un-lonely. If seeing our community through a digital revolution, the isolation of COVID, and strains on local infrastructure and climate are any indication -- the role of Curtis Memorial Library as a trusted, free resource will only continue to expand in the years ahead. As such, the Cornerstone Strategies presented here for 2024 to 2029 reflect the needs of our ever-changing community.



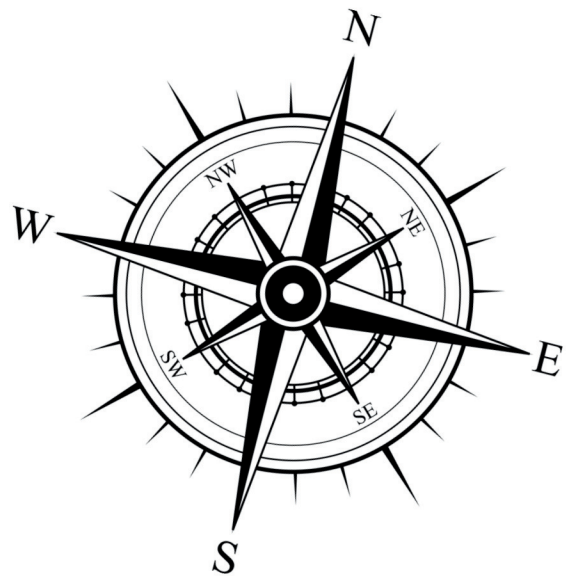
Elisabeth Donnell

OUR MISSION

We enhance the quality of life in our towns by providing community, connections, creativity, information, and ideas.

OUR VISION

To be both a true north - a fixed point in a spinning, changing world - but also a model for productive change, always there to provide the ideas, information, and connections that will help guide our community and allow each person in it to thrive.



CORNERSTONE STRATEGIES FOR 2024 - 2029

Cornerstone strategies are the foundational areas of focus for the Library over the next three to five years. They are a continuation of the Library's current work but they also reflect the need for the Library to change and evolve to meet the new needs of our community.

CORNERSTONE STRATEGY #1

Be a passionate advocate for reading and open access to information.

- Be an advocate for intellectual freedom
- Ensure access for all to ideas and information via tools such as the Library's new EV bookmobile
- Ensure the Library's collection represents diverse identities and viewpoints
- Expand the Library's digital resources in response to community demand
- Foster literacy for all ages
- Maintain a collection (traditional and electronic) that meets/exceeds our community's expectations
- Provide reading resources (beyond books) to support all readers: readers' advisory, book clubs, author talks, etc.



Curtis patron Susan Kinney wrote to us on Facebook to share this photo: "My grandson, Fletcher loves when the bookmobile comes to his daycare!" Kinney says. "Here he is showing off his selection! Thank you so much for making this happen!"

CORNERSTONE STRATEGY #2

Create community.

- Both inside and outside the Library continue to create informal, third-place gathering spaces where relaxed connections can happen between library patrons of all ages; for example, the Youth Services play room, a coffee café, benches within mini-gardens around the Library.
- Continue to provide community-wide events that encourage informal community interactions such as Community Reads, Winter Carnival, How-to Festival, Garth Williams exhibit, the Robert McCloskey exhibit.
- Provide space and resources to support mini-communities of interest that make up the larger community: artists, musicians, historians, seniors, new parents, entrepreneurs, preschoolers, groups doing social justice work around issues such as homelessness and food insecurity.



A full house in the Morrell Meeting Room for a reading by Sal McCloskey in support of the exhibition “Robert McCloskey: the Art of Wonder.” Ms. McCloskey read from a few of her father’s books to a rapt audience that spanned four generations.

“Robert McCloskey: the Art of Wonder” was visited by nearly 80,000 people. 3,500 guests signed our guestbook, coming to Curtis from all 50 states and 23 countries.

CORNERSTONE STRATEGY #3

Help our community develop the tools and skills to thrive in an environment of perma-crisis and constant change.

- Act as a catalyst for conversations about social justice issues and a hub for connecting groups addressing those issues
- Ensure that the Library is able to be available and provide resources (books, Internet, digital programming, charging stations) during periods of community shut-down (pandemic, weather)
- Make the Library buildings living examples of sustainable practices
- Provide community education about technology as it changes and evolves
- Provide programming to educate/inform how community members can live more sustainably and build resiliency into their lives
- Support civic engagement and democracy



“Mid Coast Literacy volunteer Kara Schwartz has been tutoring Victorina, an English language learner, for over a year. When they began, Victorina had very limited English. “Basic communication was much of what we were working on,” said Kara. Now, after working once a week with Kara, Victorina speaks well and is doing more reading and writing at her sessions. She’s able to navigate Brunswick for herself and her three children, attending local events like Story Hour at Curtis Memorial Library.”

CORNERSTONE STRATEGY #4

Demonstrate the Library's commitment to excellence in internal operations and external services.

- Continue to focus on outstanding customer service and the Library user's experience
- Focus on diversity of Board and staff; support staff compensation, training, and job satisfaction
- Maintain and continue to grow financial support for the Library
- Support the care, maintenance and updating of the Library's building and grounds to ensure they are welcoming and enjoyable places to spend time
- Support the evolution of the Library's infrastructure to meet changing needs: e.g. bookmobile parking, lobby renovation, electrical access for digital devices, furniture updates, storage, care for the 1904 Building



Curtis patrons of all ages enjoy the Nancy Bouchard Laffely Children's Garden. Through the efforts of master gardener volunteers, the garden has been certified as pollinator-friendly by the UMaine Cooperative Extension. Butterfly murals by local author/illustrator Olga Pastuchiv surround the space. In 2023, volunteer Jeff Hall designed and built beautiful gates to keep children safely within the walls of the Laffely garden, creating a space for children's programming, including monarch butterfly releases & story times.

CORE VALUES OF LIBRARIANSHIP

Curtis Library subscribes to the core values of librarianship as defined by the American Library Association (ALA). The ALA Core Values were updated in 2024 and are as follows:

Access

Access provides opportunities for everyone in the community to obtain library resources and services with minimal disruption. Library workers create systems that ensure members of their community can freely access the information they need for learning, growth, and empowerment regardless of technology, format, or delivery methods.

Equity

Library workers play a crucial role in fostering equity by actively working to dismantle barriers and create spaces that are accessible, welcoming, and beneficial for all. This is accomplished by recognizing and addressing systemic barriers, biases, and inequalities to create inclusive library environments where everyone can benefit from the library's offerings and services.

Intellectual Freedom and Privacy

Intellectual freedom empowers people to think for themselves and to make informed decisions while respecting each individual's dignity and independence. Library workers encourage people to cultivate curiosity and form ideas by questioning the world and accessing information from diverse viewpoints and formats without restrictions or censorship. The right to privacy is a crucial safeguard to this freedom, ensuring everyone has the right to develop their thoughts and opinions free of surveillance.

Public Good

Public good is working to improve society and protect the rights to education, literacy, and intellectual freedom. Libraries are an essential public good and are fundamental institutions in democratic societies. Library workers provide the highest service levels to create informed, connected, educated, and empowered communities.

Sustainability

Sustainability means making choices that are good for the environment, make sense economically, and treat everyone equitably. Sustainable choices preserve physical and digital resources and keep services useful now and into the future. By supporting climate resiliency, library workers create thriving communities and care for our common good for a better tomorrow.

DEI POLICY

The Board of Directors of Curtis Memorial Library recognizes and affirms the dignity of the library's employees and all those the library serves. The people who use, work, and volunteer at Curtis Memorial Library come from all walks of life. Therefore, it is important that we make diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging a priority in planning, programming, decision making, staffing, staff training, collection development, and services. We strive to provide a safe, respectful space for diverse voices and perspectives and to be effective advocates for all people in our community.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS - 2024

Lisa Botshon - *Chair*

Tahnthawan Coffin Gartside - *Vice Chair*

Beth Eisman - *Secretary*

John Gillespie - *Treasurer*

Keith Bisson

Kristin Jhamb

Candace Kanen

Karl F. Lauenstein

Dave Millar

Shiloh Theberge - *Past Chair*

Rick Wells

John Wright

Ex Officio

Elisabeth Doucett, *Executive Director*

Julia Henze, *Acting Town Manager*

Ronald Poulin, *President, Curtis Friends*