

# Strategic Plan of Babcock Library

## Period 2025 May – 2027 June

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Babcock Library is to provide a welcoming and accessible environment for people of all ages pursuing lifelong education, technical support and knowledge, leisure and social interaction, and enrichment opportunities by offering expertise, resources, services, and experiences in a wide variety of formats.

## VISION STATEMENT

As a hub of the Ashford Community, Babcock Library's resources, services, and programs will continue to support the community through:

- Making a positive impact on people's lives.
- Providing access for the community, families, and individuals in various formats: physical, digital, in-person, and remote.
- Being proactive in maintaining state-of-the-art technology knowledge and skills.
- Staying up to date on contemporary public library trends and developments.
- Providing a positive, supportive, healthy working environment for the library's valuable staff.
- Continuing to be a committed and engaged Board of Trustees.

## VALUES

We will continue to:

- **Access for All:** Provide equal access to our resources, services, programs, and facilities for all.
- **Evolution:** Embrace change and adapt resources, services, programs, and facilities to meet the needs of the Ashford Community.
- **Respect:** Demonstrate positive regard and appreciation for the uniqueness of every person, family, culture, and orientation.
- **Professionalism:** Maintain high customer service standards by recruiting and retaining a highly qualified professional librarian and skilled Library Staff.
- **Collaboration:** Look for opportunities to partner with other community groups and organizations to carry on the library's mission.



## GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- The library administration, in its leadership role, will be responsive to dynamic, emerging patron needs.

## TECHNOLOGY

- Library users and Library Staff will have access to commonly available, state-of-the-art technologies both in-library and, when available, virtual formats

### Objective 1

- Research peer libraries and general library trends to project the technologies to provide to library users.

### Actions / Benchmarks

1. Weight the impact of societal requirements and disruptive technology (AI<sup>1</sup>, AR<sup>2</sup>) on patron technology needs.
  - a. Consider the increased reliance on technology to complete day-to-day activities (banking, passwords, shopping, healthcare, etc.) all Library Staff should be informed on how to provide support in using technology to meet this increasing need.
  - b. Evaluate how increased availability and use of technology at home and personal devices impact how patrons use and access technology;
    - i. Use this evaluation to guide how and what the library provides for support, hardware, and software, both on-site and virtually.
  - c. Document outcomes from a, b for the Babcock Library Board of Trustees.
  - d. Add technical equipment that enables broadcasting from Babcock Library to the public via ZOOM and similar technologies.

### Timeline

- Ongoing, and documented annually in November, to facilitate understanding of the impact on possible budget requests for the upcoming fiscal year.

### Implementation

- Library Director, Library Technology Staff

### Objective 2

- Increase both in-library and virtual access to information and library user support.

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<sup>1</sup> Artificial Intelligence

<sup>2</sup> Augmented Reality

### Actions / Benchmarks

1. Update the design and layout of the library's website to a format that is more user-friendly and has a contemporary design.
  - a. Research funding options and sources for updates or changes to the library's website.
  - b. Consult professional website designers to implement library website changes.
  - c. Update or change the library's website source/software to make it easier for Library Staff to add and update content.
  - d. Implement changes to the library website.

### Timeline

- Start a, b fiscal year 24/25
- Complete c, d fiscal year 25/26

### Implementation

- Benchmarks a, b: Library Director
- Benchmark c, d: Professional website designer

## Objective 3

- Library Staff will have increased efficiency in information management by all library/staff computers having access to the same shared drive.

### Actions / Benchmarks

1. Copy documentation stored on the director's computer to an external source.
2. Network computers to the NAS server.
3. Disconnect from the public server.
4. Cancel subscription for public server.

### Timeline

- Complete the first quarter of the 25/26 fiscal year

### Implementation

- Coordination: Library Director
- Technical/labor: Library technology staff, Bibliotech

## FACILITIES

- Library users and Library Staff will have a safe, well-maintained, useful, and welcoming library facility.

## Objective 1

- Evaluate the building condition and need for continuing maintenance.

### Actions / Benchmarks

1. Assess the status of:
  - a. HVAC, electrical, interior paint, lighting, and flooring conditions within the library interior campus on the second floor of Knowlton Memorial Hall.
  - b. HVAC, electrical, roof, gutters, exterior paint, lighting, and flooring/parking lot/outside patio conditions in and around Knowlton Memorial Hall.
2. Document areas for improvement and communicate with the First Selectperson and the head of the Department of Public Works.
3. Implementation: Coordinate with the Department of Public Works.

### Timeline

- Annually in November to allow for consideration of the impact on the annual budget of both the library and the Town of Ashford.

### Implementation

- Assessment and coordination: Library Director
- Labor resources and funding: Town of Ashford, Ashford Department of Public Works

## Objective 2

- Evaluate the current space allotments with the patrons' needs and demands.

### Actions / Benchmarks

- Empirically analyze how library patrons demonstrate their library resource and space needs
  - a. Analyze by user age group (preschool, homeschooled, middle school, high school, young adult, teen, emerging adult, families, working adults, retired adults; individuals experiencing physical or intellectual disabilities) how each user group physically interacts with Babcock Library.
  - b. Compare Babcock Library's services with those of other public libraries that serve communities similar in demographics to Ashford to determine if there are new and/or niche opportunities for Babcock Library to offer to Ashford.
  - c. Use findings from a. and b. to evaluate where change and/or addition within the library campus is logical and appropriate.
  - d. Document and share with the Babcock Library Board of Trustees.



## Timeline

- Benchmarks a, b: First and second quarter of fiscal year 24/25
- Benchmarks c, d: Third and fourth quarter of fiscal year 24/25

## Implementation

- Library Director with support from Library Staff re: empirical findings

## Objective 3

- Replace unstable library book shelving used in the central area of the children's library.

### Actions / Benchmarks

- a. Determine if replacing only the shelf supports would resolve the problem
- b. Determine how many shelf supports and linear feet will need to be replaced
- c. Explore avenues to replace that may be economical – e.g., are used shelving and supports available
- d. If suitable used equipment is unavailable, the research cost of replacing shelving units with new shelves. Different configurations may be available to consider for updating the current floor plan.
- e. Determine funding for replacement; seek grant opportunities
- f. Remove old equipment, install new equipment

## Objective 4

- Redesign library circulation desk, technical services, and director's office area to enhance workflow and reduce public safety concerns.

### Actions / Benchmarks

- a. Change the formation of the circulation desk to allow for easier egress as could be required during an emergency.
- b. Relocate technical services work from the front of the house to the staff area or into the current Director's office space.
- c. Create space for the Director's office that is near or adjacent to the circulation desk.
- d. Purchase or obtain new furniture as required.

## Timeline

- Research: Fiscal year 25/26
- Determine funding source: First quarter FY 26/27
- Obtain and install replacements: Second quarter FY 26/27

## Implementation

- Benchmarks: a, b, c, d, e: Library Director

- Benchmark f: Library Staff

## COLLECTION

- Provide library resources that reflect the interests of the local community and beyond.

### Objective1

- Enhance access to the content of the library's archive.

#### Actions / Benchmarks

- Locate digital versions of the books and papers available from Babcock Library's archive in the public domain (e.g., through the Library of Congress, Hathi Trust, and Project Gutenberg).
- Copy and store permalinks for each item, plus, if available, the digital image of the cover of the respective item.
- Design and add library website pages dedicated to digital copies of archived items.
- Add links and images to the designated pages.
- Create a finding aid for both the digitally accessible and unique Ashford resources that aren't available digitally.

#### Timeline

- FY 25/26, 26/27

#### Implementation

- Library Director, designated Library Staff

### Objective 2

- Enhance access to the content of the library's archive and reference materials for genealogy research.

#### Actions / Benchmarks

- Locate digital versions of the books and papers available from Babcock Library's archive in the public domain (e.g., through the Library of Congress, Hathi Trust, and Project Gutenberg).
- Copy and store permalinks for each item, plus, if available, the digital image of the cover of the respective item.
- Design and add library website pages dedicated to information to assist with genealogy research.
- Add links and images to the designated pages.



- e. Create a finding aid for both the digitally accessible, physical-only format and industry resources (e.g., “Find a Grave”; U.S. Census, etc.) and unique Ashford resources that aren’t available digitally.

### Timeline

- FY 24/25; 25/26

### Implementation

- Library Director, designated Library Staff

## MARKETING

- Effectively promote the library and its resources and programs with social media.

### Objective 1

- Determine which social media outlets and delivery formats are popular and best to use.

### Actions / Benchmarks

- Research the best social media outlet to use for promotions for each library user group (children, elementary, families, etc.).
- Adopt the use of the best social media outlets.
- Remain diligent in determining the best social media to use.
- Designate a social media role within the ranks of the Library Staff.

### Timeline

- FY 25/26 and thereafter

### Implementation

- Library Director, designated Library Staff

### Objective 2

- Communicate library resources and programs to non-computer users.

### Actions / Benchmarks

- Post library promotional material in multiple community spaces in and around Ashford and the monthly publication - Ashford Citizen.

### Timeline

- FY 25/26 and thereafter

## Implementation

Library Director, Designated Library Staff

## COMMUNITY ACTION

- Bring services to community members who cannot otherwise access the library in traditional ways.

## Objective

- Bring library resources to the nearby senior living campus and the Ashford community.

## Actions / Benchmarks

- Coordinate timeframes and related details with senior living leadership.
- Develop constructive relationships with senior living library users through direct interaction and programs held at the senior living campus.
- Consult with town social service representatives to identify community members to offer personalized library resource sharing in a one-librarian: one-community-member ratio.
- Assign staff members to community members.
- Develop procedures for tracking resources shared with community members.

## Timeline

- Fiscal Year 25/26 and continuing

## Implementation

- Library Director, designated library staff

## LIBRARY LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Provide education leadership opportunities for Library Staff to promote information literacy knowledge and leadership.

## Objective

- Cross-train staff in distinct areas of library knowledge to both enhance their work satisfaction through increased responsibility and complexity and to be capable of providing services in a variety of capacities.

### Actions / Benchmarks

- Research educational opportunities provided through the Connecticut Library Association, the Connecticut Library Consortium, and other outlets on subjects aligned with job-related responsibilities.

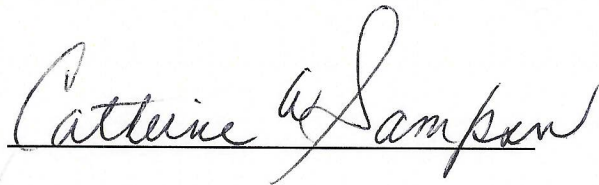
### Timeline

- Fiscal Year 25/26 and continuing

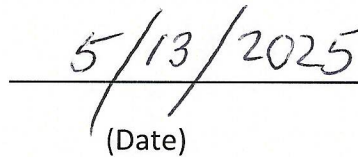
### Implementation

- Research: Library Director
- Participation in educational opportunities: Library Staff

Approved by the Babcock Library Board of Directors



(Board Chairperson's signature)



(Date)



## Actions & Benchmarks

- Research educational opportunities provided through the Connecticut Library Association, the Connecticut Library Consortium, and other outlets on subjects aligned with job-related responsibilities.

## Timeline

- Fiscal Year 25/26 and continuing

## Implementation

- Research: Library Director
- Participation in educational opportunities: Library Staff



Approved by the Babcock Library Board of Directors

8/13/2025  
(Date)

Catherine W. Campbell  
(Board Chairperson's signature)