



COVENTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY

LONG-RANGE PLAN

2025-2030

Approved by the Coventry Public Library Board of Trustees, 7/2025

LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Coventry Public Library is to educate, inform, entertain, and enrich the lives of all our patrons by offering free and equal access to collections and services.

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Development of this plan is based on input from staff and patrons as well as current library trends. Today's library is a community center and technology hub that fosters literacy, lifelong learning, and social connection in the community. Use of the library changes rapidly and we are always finding new, unique ways of meeting our patron needs and wishes. Because space constraints continue to be problematic, the library has increased its offerings of digital materials and is reaching out even further into the community to offer outreach and programs at other venues while still maintaining our traditional roles.

Thank you to the Coventry Public Library community, Board of Trustees, and staff for providing their time, talent, and energy creating the Long-Range Plan.

STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

COVENTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE:

- Glenn Underwood, Chair
- Colleen Duffy-Golec
- Jason Farber

COVENTRY PUBLIC LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION

- Lauren Walker, Director
- Jessica Carsten, Assistant Director

2024-2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The following are the action items from the 2024-2029 Long-Range Plan that were accomplished in the past year.

GOAL 1: PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE LIBRARY SERVICES TO ALL TOWN RESIDENTS

Completed actions:

- Upgraded the library's restrooms to be more hygienic, welcoming, and accessible to all with a Champlin grant-funded renovation.
- Performed a signage audit and created a unified appearance of all in-library signage. The new signage reduces visual clutter and better directs patrons to services offered. It also ties in with the library's logo/branding for an overall cohesive appearance.
- Designed and planned for the library's space in the Community Learning Center at the Town Hall Annex. Evaluated the needs for the space and how to meet those needs. Developed a plan for how to best utilize this space and what changes may result within the main library building.
- Recertified with the State Department for passport acceptance.
- Reviewed and revised current policies with input from department heads.

GOAL 2: FOSTER COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Completed actions:

- Coventry Public Library's Outreach Librarian position was made full-time, allowing for expanded outreach services.
 - The Outreach Librarian brought library services to preschools, daycares, and after-school sites in Coventry as well as the Coventry Housing Authority and Senior Center.
 - The Outreach Librarian also visited the special education class at Coventry High School in June 2025 to sign teens up early for Summer Reading.
- In order to teach kids how to cook a healthy meal, library staff used the Book Caddy trailer to transport the Charlie Cart (*both purchased using funds from the Governor's Learn365 initiative in 2024*) to Coventry Meadows (a Housing Authority site).
- Youth Services and Greene staff attended open houses at Blackrock Elementary, Washington Oak Elementary, Western Coventry Elementary, and Coventry Middle School. They also visited Blackrock Elementary, Father Doyle Elementary, and Western Coventry Elementary for Reading Week, Coventry Middle School for Community Resource Night,

and Coventry High School's Young Adult Literature class. Youth Services staff represented the library at several Town events, including Parks & Recreation's Grandparents' Day, Trunk or Treat, and Easter Egg Hunt events and the Coventry Land Trust Days.

- Distributed a quarterly Youth Services newsletter through the Coventry schools as well as preschools and day care agencies in the town of Coventry.
- Increased efforts to collaborate with other town agencies to strengthen the community through programs and services.
 - Outreach partnerships with the Coventry Housing Authority and Senior Center
 - Program collaboration with Coventry Housing Authority, Paine House Museum, Nathanael Greene Homestead, Coventry Human Services Dept., Coventry DPW, Coventry Land Trust, Coventry Historical Society, and Literacy Volunteers of Kent County (LVKC).
 - Promoted local museums by offering museum passes to the Paine House Museum and Nathanael Greene Homestead
 - Offered opportunities for students at public and private Coventry schools to display art work, poetry, stories, etc. in the Young Adult area of the library
 - Library staff liaison on the Town EMA and Town Safety Committee
 - Expanded collaboration with town departments and organizations to coordinate displays in the display case
- Greene Library staff created a cookbook with recipes from staff, patrons, community members, and Farmers Market vendors to raise funds for the Greene Association.
- Provided donated library materials to local schools and hospitals for their use.
- Partnered with Black Oak Kitchen & Drinks and ACE Entertainment to co-host two trivia nights – one in April for National Library Week and one in September for National Library Card Sign-Up month – to promote library services to more members of the community.

GOAL 3: MARKET LIBRARY SERVICES

Completed actions:

- Wrapped the library's outreach vehicle with the library logo to improve visibility in the community and promoted outreach services with a ribbon cutting ceremony for the completed vehicle at the Coventry Housing Authority. The ceremony was attended by community members, Town and library staff, and members of Town Council. It was featured on the front page of the Kent County Daily Times.
- Expanded marketing of library programs by posting flyers at other locations in the community and submitting events regularly to the Coventry Patch.
- Added photos of department heads to the contact page of the library's website to present a friendlier image to the public and highlight the library's wonderful staff.

- Improved engagement with the library's social media by posting programs on Facebook as "events" in addition to the usual image posts.

GOAL 4: STRENGTHEN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Completed actions:

- Added to the Library of Things, including auxiliary cords (to be borrowed with a Playaway to play it in a vehicle), a blood pressure monitoring kit, a CD player, a Cricut Maker 3, a Cricut Easy Press Mini, a cordless drill, a DVD/Blu-ray player, and a travel power adapter. A sewing machine was also added to the Library of Things at the Greene Branch.
- Worked with the Town Solicitor to create an updated waiver for the use of any Library of Things items that carry a potential risk, such as power tools, sports equipment, and health monitoring devices.
- Evaluated, re-cataloged, and created a shelf list for Special Collections.
- Added Wonderbooks (read-along books) to the Youth Services collection.
- Signed up for an Overdrive Advantage account in Libby, which allows the library to purchase extra copies of e-books and audiobooks that will go to Coventry patrons first before being made available to other patrons across the state.
- Reviewed materials budgets in order to reallocate funds in accordance with demand, keeping in mind space limitations.

GOAL 5: INCREASE LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

Completed actions:

- Youth Services began the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program. Children who complete the program receive a free book to keep, generously donated by the Pawtuxet Valley Rotary Club.
- Shifted adult programming focus more toward crafts and community-based informational programs, in collaboration without other Town departments and outside organizations. This has been very successful and adult program attendance is now back up to pre-pandemic numbers.
- Strengthened the library's partnership with Coventry Parks & Recreation by collaborating on the Winter Wonderland event.
- Restored operation of the basement restroom at the Greene Branch to improve accessibility for programs.
- Cleaned and organized the basement storage at the Greene Branch to allow more room for programming and ease of locating programming materials.

- Offered several programs teaching children how to cook healthy meals using the library's Charlie Cart (*purchased in 2024 with funds from the Governor's Learn365 initiative*).
- Began offering babysitter training course programs through a new, more cost-effective vendor, which allows the library to increase the number of sessions while decreasing the cost per patron by 72%.
- The Greene Library added a new Murder Mystery Book Club and a Homeschool Club in response to patron requests.
- Increased passive programming by holding drop-in game and craft times in Youth Services and adding adult coloring pages and supplies at the Reference Desk.
- Began planning for a local authors' event at the library.

GOAL 6: IMPROVE STAFFING & TRAINING

Completed actions:

- The Director, Assistant Director, and Technical Services Librarian all attended the RILA conference in May 2025. They attended trainings on copyright basics, the Palace Project e-resource app, censorship prevention, library advocacy, programming, the First Amendment, and collection development.
- Implemented and completed annual evaluations of library staff including department heads and administration.
- Reference staff attended a training session for Interlibrary Loan (ILL) using the library's recently updated ILL Procedures. All Reference staff are now trained to process ILLs.
- Reviewed job postings/requirements to ensure that they are equitable and will attract qualified, diverse candidates.

GOAL 7: EXAMINE TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION

Completed actions:

- Procured a MacBook for the library, which will allow patrons to use a Mac computer instead of a PC. This will be helpful for accessing files that only work on a Mac (e.g. Pages files) and also opens up opportunities for future Mac-specific programs and services.
- Greene Library began offering regular drop-in tech help times to assist patrons with their technology questions.
- Offered a series of technology instruction classes and assessed the demand for instruction in different programs and technologies.

2025-2030 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In order to best serve the community and execute the library's mission as effectively as possible, the Coventry Public Library Strategic Planning Committee has identified eight core goals for the Long-Range Plan. The goals are as follows:

- 1. Optimize space and explore expansion opportunities**
- 2. Provide comprehensive library services to all town residents**
- 3. Foster community relations**
- 4. Market library services**
- 5. Strengthen library collections**
- 6. Increase library programming**
- 7. Support staff development and training**
- 8. Examine technology instruction**

The Long-Range Plan breaks each of these goals down into action items to facilitate and track progress.

GOAL 1: OPTIMIZE SPACE AND EXPLORE EXPANSION OPPORTUNITIES

Actions:

- Upon completion of the Town Hall Annex Community Learning Center, begin using the space to accommodate additional programs and storage that cannot be accommodated in main library building.
- Investigate options for dampening sound in library.
- Explore the possibility of adding a soundproof "pod" that patrons could use to meet, do virtual job interviews, or make telehealth calls in the library.
- Assess the existing layouts of the Coventry Public Library and Greene Branch to identify any potential improvements that can be made to optimize the use of the space.
- Evaluate current Town library facilities and investigate ways to update and/or expand the existing library building or construct a new building.
- Repaint the interior of the library to coordinate colors with the new signage and complete the library's more cohesive look.
- Monitor the library's heating and cooling system and determine its viability and cost effectiveness going forward. Coordinate with the Town if updates need to be made.

GOAL 2: PROVIDE COMPREHENSIVE LIBRARY SERVICES TO ALL TOWN RESIDENTS

Actions:

- Maintain notary and passport services and support the staff members who provide these services.
- Evaluate the library's website for ease of access and locating information.
- Stay current with library best practices within the Ocean State Libraries (OSL) consortium and beyond.
- Work with Town Safety Committee to maintain and improve conditions and procedures for staff and patrons, always keeping safety and security in mind.

GOAL 3: FOSTER COMMUNITY RELATIONS

Actions:

- Work with the Town Clerk to create a welcome packet for new Coventry residents that will contain information on the library and other Town departments and resources. These packets will be made available at locations like the Town Hall, Town Hall Annex, Senior Center, and Library that new residents visit for voter registration, school registration, library card sign-up, etc.
- Donate books to the Coventry Public Schools' Child Outreach Coordinator so that each child/family seen will leave with a book of their own and information about the library.
- Support the library's thriving volunteer program for young adults and revise the volunteer policy to reflect the changes that have been made to the program.
- Renew partnership with Washington Annex (a work study program for developmentally challenged students at Coventry High School).
- Make the Long-Range Plan and Annual Report available to view on the library's website in order to keep the community informed about the library's plans and accomplishments.
- Research opportunities to increase awareness of and participation in library outreach programs.
- Evaluate the collection of young adult books in the Town Teen Center and donate new additions to their collection.
- Collaborate with other Town and State departments, agencies, and organizations to strengthen the community through programs and services, including:
 - Exploring more opportunities for Coventry public and private school students to display art work, poetry, stories, etc. in the library.
 - Sustaining outreach visits to Coventry Housing Authority properties and donating books and other materials to their community room libraries.

- Expanding relationships with homeschool groups in Coventry.
- Continuing to provide donated library materials to local schools and hospitals.

GOAL 4: MARKET LIBRARY SERVICES

Actions:

- Promote the “dollars saved” feature available in the library’s statistics. This feature uses the replacement cost of each borrowed item listed in the library’s database to show patrons how much they have saved borrowing items from the library instead of buying them.
- Make an effort to highlight the library’s wonderful staff and the services they offer, especially on social media and in press releases.
- Distribute press releases to local newspapers on major projects and events – especially those on which the library collaborates with other Town departments.
- Investigate marketing the library through informational signs on the Town’s Greenway, at local campgrounds, and other potential locations around the community.
- Explore the use of targeted advertising, such as a commercial, to market library services.
- Increase the impact of the Coventry Public Library Foundation by inviting an interested staff member to join the Foundation and exploring new options for fundraising with promotional items for sale.
- Assess the efficacy of the digital display outside the library’s entrance.
- Continue to promote library services through monthly newsletters, social media, and local publications while investigating new ways to market the library.
- Maintain efforts to improve engagement with the library’s social media.

GOAL 5: STRENGTHEN LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

Actions:

- Analyze use of databases and electronic resources to ensure that library funds are spent in the most effective way. Utilize the library’s new Overdrive Advantage account to address high numbers holds on popular e-books and audiobooks in Libby.
- Formulate a Special Collections policy for the Greene Branch to address Greene’s unique Special Collections needs, which differ from those of the Main Branch.
- Evaluate the popularity of the library’s graphic novel collection for adults.

GOAL 6: INCREASE LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

Actions:

- Explore creative ways to increase programming in spite of space constraints, including taking advantage of the front lawn for outdoor programming when weather permits and investigating locations for off-site programs.
- Plan a local authors' fair at the library.
- Strive to plan and promote library-wide themes encompassing all departments. Decorate the library, implement programs, and create displays in conjunction with the determined theme for all age levels.
- Investigate a potential partnership between LVKC and local historical sites to help English language learners feel connected to their community and American history.
- Offer programs that feature the library's digital offerings such as Kanopy, Hoopla, etc.
- Collaborate with local organizations (garden club, historical society, etc.) to present programs of interest at the library.
- Maintain the Homebound Program for patrons who are unable to visit the library in-person.
- Collaborate with LVKC to offer English Language Learner (ELL) and Basic Literacy (BL) services to those patrons in need.
- Investigate new ways to bring programs and materials further into the community.
- Proceed with engaging, educational, and entertaining programs and assess which programs are of the greatest interest to the community.

GOAL 7: SUPPORT STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

Actions:

- Establish a summer internship for those in 11th or 12th grade or freshmen in college to foster community engagement while improving staffing during the busy summer months.
- Improve staffing at service desks to maximize service availability and prevent staff burnout.
- Encourage and advocate for all staff to attend additional training opportunities. Include records of these trainings in staff files and evaluations to recognize professional development. These may take the form of webinars, online classes, or meetings/workshops in or outside the library including:
 - Statewide meetings and trainings offered through OSL and the RI Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS).

- Attendance at professional conferences: RILA, NELA, PLA, and ALA.
- Resume annual all-staff meetings to provide all staff members with support and instruction regarding policy/procedure updates, library news, best practices, training, and team-building.
 - Include a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) Analysis exercise at the annual all-staff meeting to improve teamwork, elicit feedback from staff, and allow all staff to contribute to the Long-Range Plan.
- Foster a greater sense of connection and teamwork between the Main Branch and Greene Branch.
- Review employee evaluation forms and tailor them to library-specific benchmarks.
- Develop monthly staff updates to keep all staff up-to-date on library news.
- Develop succession plans and department head handbooks to ease transitions in the event of staff turnover.
- Continue to hire staff with exceptional technology and social networking skills.
- The Library Director and department heads will continue to review and revise all current policies and develop new policies as needed.

GOAL 8: EXAMINE LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY & TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTION

Actions:

- Improve WiFi connectivity in the Library.
- Set up a Mac station in the Library and coordinate with the IT Director to explore related software, service, and program opportunities.
- Review and update the Technology Plan with the IT Director.
- Ensure that all library computers and software are updated regularly.
- Offer technology instruction programs and examine one-on-one tech help possibilities.
- Encourage patrons to use the library's electronic materials on their various mobile devices.
- Recommend that the IT Director attend applicable library technology meetings and OSL trainings, and network with technology librarians at other libraries.
- Keep abreast of technology standards set by OSL and all necessary updates so that patrons may enjoy a full range of digital products within the library.

EVALUATION

Annually

- The Board of Trustees and the Library Director will review the Long-Range Plan and identify which specific goal(s) and action item(s) to focus on over the course of the next year.
- Other important library documents such as the Disaster Plan and Technology Plan will be checked for revisions annually or more often as needed.

Bi-Annually

- The Board of Trustees and the Library Director will review the Long-Range Plan, adding, deleting, or modifying goals and actions as accomplished or needed and will evaluate the format of the plan to optimize readability and effectiveness.