

# New Rochelle Public Library Long-Range Plan, 2005 – 2009

## Background

In 2004, the New Rochelle Public Library Board of Trustees and administrative staff met to review and revise the Library's existing long-range plan that was developed in 1999. Since that time there have been significant changes both in the Library's financial structure and in the technology so essential to library operations. The Library has been recognized to be a school district library and therefore is required to present its budget to the public for approval. In 2003, the Library gained title to the Main Library from the City of New Rochelle Council and the Children's Library is now a branch within the Library system. It should be noted that the City of New Rochelle retains title to the building housing the Children's Library, but the Library Board has full responsibility for its management and operations.

## Significant Accomplishments 1998 - 2003

The last long-range plan, adopted in 1999, targeted five major goals:

- ***Enhance the Library's financial strength***
- ***Renovate the Main Library***
- ***Promote and encourage library use throughout New Rochelle***
- ***Offer an array of information technologies***
- ***Develop knowledgeable, technically competent and customer focused staff***

## Accomplishments in the last five years include:

- ***Separation from the City: ownership of building***
- ***Approval of Library Budget by Voters***
- ***Establishment of the Handelman Business Opportunity Center in 2001***
- ***Creation of a Local History Room***
- ***Established ESL program with Westchester Community College***
- ***Newly renovated cafe***
- ***Introduction of Wireless Internet access***
- ***Increase in training for the public on Internet and computers; increase in number of on-line databases***
- ***Increase in circulation and reference***

## ***New Rochelle Public Library Long-range Plan***

### **The Vision for Change**

The New Rochelle Public Library Board of Trustees sees the Library as a vital component in making New Rochelle a better place to live and work. We will continue to work with the City in ongoing efforts of economic revitalization and education development and we will be a champion of quality of life issues. Our development of this positive image of the Library should further encourage City residents to become the Library's advocates.

A revitalized, dynamic and readily accessible library will cause New Rochelle residents to think differently about the Library. Everyone in the community will feel that they have a stake in the Library and ownership in its programs and services. Long-term, the Library will serve specific geographic areas and/or particular interest groups with programs and collections individualized to meet specific needs and interest. The Library will also offer selected programs to neighborhood associations or other community organizations." New Rochelle residents will come to the Library to interact with their neighbors, enjoy cultural programming, receive assistance with information technology, and borrow from a diverse collection.

To accomplish this, the New Rochelle Public Library will cultivate support from a combination of private and public resources that will enable it to expand its services and become an even more vital player in the economic revitalization of New Rochelle.

### **The New Rochelle Public Library Mission**

***The New Rochelle Public Library is a community resource that seeks to improve the life of every citizen in our city. It is dedicated to encouraging learning in all stages of life, to protecting intellectual freedom and to providing fair and equal access to information.***

**A healthy and vibrant public library is a critical partner in a dynamic New Rochelle. To preserve this role, the Library must offer:**

- A comprehensive collection that includes retrospective and current materials
- Up-to-date technology by which information can be accessed
- A wide range of community services and programs tailored to a diverse audience.
- Professional, knowledgeable and courteous service to our patrons

**To accomplish this mission, the Library provides:**

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- Current materials, technology and varied information resources
- A well rounded program of community services
- Professional, knowledgeable and courteous services to all of its patrons

### **Library Needs in the Current Environment**

While the New Rochelle Public Library has a number of strengths that will support it as it attempts to redefine its future, there are also a number of needs that must be addressed to ensure that the Library has the basic building blocks to ensure the successful implementation of this long-range plan.

Needs include:

- Attention to the overall collection to ensure that it reflects the diverse interests of the community and that there is an ample supply of materials to meet patron demand
- Monitoring surrounding parking to maintain the current number of spaces.
- Development of a focused image campaign.
- Constant evaluation of library programs to determine if they accurately reflect current community needs, interests and tastes
- Attention to physical improvements that will make it easier for people to use the Library
- Increased staffing to provide the level of personalized service that will allow everyone using the Library to receive high quality, consistent customer focused service
- Better methods for increasing general community awareness about the Library and what it has to offer

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

#### **Goal One:**

**Financial Strength** -- Enhance the Library's financial strength to ensure that it is capable of providing programs and service that respond to the needs of the community.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

1.1 Increase the level of per capita support for the Library to equal to the County median.

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1.2 Support the New Rochelle Public Library Foundation to help achieve its fundraising and endowment targets for 2005-2009.

### **ACTION PLAN:**

- Develop a working paper on a multi-year budget.
- Identify sources of funding at the county, state and federal level.
- Monitor state legislation affecting the level of funding for public library programs.

## **Goal Two:**

**Improved Facilities** -- Renovate the main Library to create a more attractive, inviting and easy to use environment for users

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- 5.3 Maintain accessible parking for Library staff and patrons for the long-term at least at its current number of spaces
- 2.2 Expand the auditorium and community meeting rooms
- 2.3 Upgrade the bathrooms

### **ACTION PLAN:**

- Work with the New Rochelle Public Library Foundation to secure funding needed for Library improvements
- Provide new furniture for adult reading area on the first floor
- New entrance from Lawton Street and onto Library Green (would need County approval)

## **Goal Three:**

**Community Building** -- Promote, encourage and support library use among all segments of the New Rochelle community by working closely with all of the Library's patrons.

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- 3.1 Consider the diversity of New Rochelle's population and offer library programs to meet needs

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- 3.2 Expand the school/public library partnership to all school district schools at all grade levels
- 3.3 Review the marketing plan for the Library
- 3.4 Maximize the number of hours the Library is open
- 3.5 Expand the nature, variety and size of the collection

#### **ACTION PLAN:**

- Offer library programs that focus on cultural themes
- Work with the business community and emerging new population groups to identify needs for library service and design programs to specifically meet these needs
- Establish ad hoc citizen committees as the need arises. These committees may have seven members on them with each Board member appointing one member. These committees will work with the Library Director, and the chairperson of the committee can give reports to the Board on the committees' progress.
- Library Board members will try to be more visible to the public at city and library events.
- Board members will write reports to be included in the E-newsletter

#### **Goal Four:**

**Emerging Technologies --** Offer an array of information technologies that broaden content and make library services more accessible to users

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- 4.1 Maintain an up-to-date technological infrastructure
- 4.2 Utilize adaptive technologies to provide services to people with disabilities
- 4.3 Expand the Library's access to a variety of content and media

#### **ACTION PLAN:**

- Identify and employ new technologies
- Identify adaptive technologies and secure funding to support their installations in the Library
- Work with the Westchester Library System to identify online databases and negotiate licenses

#### **Goal Five:**

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**Staffing** -- Support the delivery of library services with a knowledgeable, technically competent, and customer-focused staff

### **OBJECTIVES:**

- 5.1 Have sufficient and appropriate staff needed to address growing demand for evolving services
- 5.2 Have the resources and a plan in place for providing staff training and professional development skills, reflective of the Library's focus on customer-service and information technology
- 5.3 Attract the most competent candidates in the marketplace and retain valued employees and strive to Reflect the diversity of the community is doing so

### **ACTION PLAN:**

- Offer as competitive a compensation package as possible
- Be mindful of those areas that improve employee morale
- Foster an open dialogue between employees and director and employees and Board
- Invite staff members to address the Board meeting regarding their work, responsibilities and goals
- Establish an employee recognition program
- Determine the amount and type of staffing required to provide high quality service