

## **LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN**

A Message from the Director:

The Strategic Plan 2011-2015 for the Dobbs Ferry Public Library was adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on March 6, 2012 at its regular monthly meeting. The Plan is based on community priorities and offers a new vision for our Library; including objectives and strategies to accomplish these goals.

I would like to thank the Planning Committee, Library Board, Staff, Friends of the Library, Teen Advisory Group and members of the community, for their input and for devoting many hours, over the past year, creating this document. We will review our Plan regularly, as we move forward.

The Executive Summary is posted, for your review. If you wish to see the entire document, please ask at the Library Reference Desk.

If you have questions about this planning project, feel free to contact me at: [dobdir@wlsmail.org](mailto:dobdir@wlsmail.org) or 914 693-6614

*Jeff Ault, Library Director*

# **DOBBS FERRY PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN 2011-2015**

**~ EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ~**



**“Perhaps no place in any community is so totally democratic as the town library.**

**The only entrance requirement is interest.”**

*Lady Bird Johnson*

# **DOBBS FERRY PUBLIC LIBRARY**

## **2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan**

### **Executive Summary**

#### **Introduction**

In October of 2010, the Dobbs Ferry Public Library embarked on a strategic planning process in order to better align the library's goals and direction with the needs of the Dobbs Ferry community. The strategic planning steering committee consisted of Board members, Friends group members, and staff. Over the past 16 months several milestones have been accomplished. Surveys of the public, staff, Board and Friends have been completed. The data has been analyzed and reported to the strategic planning team. A full day retreat was held for the full Board, Friends group and staff, where the group decided on the four areas of strategic focus that would eventually become the strategic plan for 2011 – 2015. The strategic planning process has been funded through the generosity of the Friends of the Dobbs Ferry Public Library, who will continue to support the plan through its implementation phase.

#### **The Dobbs Ferry Public Library Mission is:**

- **To provide a community-centered environment**
- **Where Lifelong habits of learning, self-improvement, and self-expression are encouraged**
- **Where patrons can meet their educational, informational, and recreational needs**

#### **Dobbs Ferry Strategic Planning Steering Committee**

Eden Anker  
Jeff Ault  
Lynne Black  
Ned Canora  
Jonathan Greengrass  
Betty Gilmore  
Shelli Grogg  
Roma Halatyn  
David Koenigsberg  
Christine Tomasino

## 1. Dobbs Ferry Public Library 2010 Annual Report Highlights

<i>Library Collection</i>		<i>Circulation</i>		<i>Programs</i>	
Catalogued Books	42,019	Books	64,166	Total Programs	350
Audio, CDs & Tapes	3,449	Other	47,356	Total Attendance	4,730
Videos, DVDs	2,615	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>111,522</b>		
Other	8,814			<b>Summer Reading Program</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>52,906</b>	<b>Interlibrary Loans</b>		Children registered	127
		Borrow from	16,036	No. sessions	27
		Loan to	15,320	Total attendance	711
<b>Total Resident Borrowers</b>		<b>5,748</b>			
<b>No. Library Visits</b>		<b>59,222</b>			
<b>No. Public Computer Users</b>		<b>23,309</b>			
<b>No. Visits to Library Website</b>		<b>12,533</b>			

### Levels of use for the last three years

	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
Circulation	102,397	95,549	112,522
Computer Sessions	16,785	22,368	23,309
Reference Questions	14,322	16,782	14,992
Library Programs/Attendance	216/4569	232/4287	350/4730
Library Visitors	52,296	54,956	59,222
Annual Hours of Operation	2,408	2,626	2,626
Children's Summer Reading (registered)	160	140	127
Total Public Support Per Capita	\$61.82	\$69.64	\$71.32
*Population Served – 10,622 (2000 Census)			
** Rank 27 out of 38 Libraries (County average \$81.72)			

## **2.Data Collection**

### **A. Surveys**

- To gather data for the Dobbs Ferry Public Library (DFPL) strategic plan, several surveys and questionnaires were developed. The response rate was extremely high and demonstrated the degree to which community residents are invested in the future of their library.
  - 296 responses to the on-line survey of the public
  - 11 responses to the on-line survey for staff
  - 9 responses to the on-line questionnaires for Board and Friends
  - 14 interviews with business and community leaders

### **B. The Staff Survey**

- The staff responses reflected an opinion different from that of the public and will need to be addressed in future planning

### **C. The Board and Friends Survey**

- The responses of the Board and Friends mirrored those of the public

### **D. The Teen Focus Group**

- The teens are interested in a more inviting and accessible space for them at the library, along with more positive relationships with library staff

### **E. The Business and Community Leader Interviews**

- Greater communication about programs, collaboration with community organizations & institutions, and effective marketing of programs to various constituencies

### **F. The Public Survey**

- *Strengths:*
  - The qualifications of the staff
  - Programs and services for adults and toddlers
  - Reference services
  - The physical plant
- *Areas for Improvement:*
  - Marketing
  - Customer service
  - Technology, including increased use of computers
  - Materials for teens and children
  - Programs and services for school age children
  - Job assistance
  - Volunteer opportunities
  - Availability of free classes and a greater number & variety of adult programs

- *Some of the specific services which Dobbs Ferry residents indicated they wanted to have more of included:*
  - Services for teens and seniors
  - Audio books
  - Online library service
  - DVDs and CDs
  - Downloadable materials
  
- *When asked to envision what the Dobbs Ferry Public Library might look like in the future, the most strongly supported ideas included:*
  - A gathering place for the community
  - Technology
  - A place for families
  - A place for books, movies, music
  - An educational support center
  - A resource for job hunters and business owners
  - A place to discuss and exchange ideas
  - A venue for the arts

### **3.The Dobbs Ferry Public Library Strategic Planning Objectives 2011 – 2015:**

*Please see the attachments for further details relating to each Objective*

#### **A. Marketing and Branding**

During the next 24 -36 months, position the library as a community centered resource that meets the educational and cultural needs of the Village.

#### **B. Technology**

Make current and emerging library technology available to all who want it by 2013.

#### **C. Customer Service**

Meet the needs of the diverse patron groups within the community via programs and resources customized to them.

#### **D. Programs and Services**

To have a sufficient quantity of high quality programs and services that meet the mission of the Dobbs Ferry Public Library.

#### **4. Summary**

The residents of Dobbs Ferry are, for the most part, better educated and more affluent than the residents of New York in general. Keeping the library and its resources current, and having it be seen as more than a physical space to get books will be one of the major objectives addressed by the Dobbs Ferry Public Library.

The Dobbs Ferry Public Library is a strong resource for the residents of Dobbs Ferry. Forty seven percent of people surveyed said they were very satisfied with the role the library plays in the community. There are, however, challenges that the library is facing. Many of them are the same as those facing most public libraries today. The survey determined that most of the Library's users visit the Library to get books.

Libraries everywhere are on the cusp of a great transformation. Changes in how people access and use information, interact with one another, and in the resources, tools, and capabilities needed to operate effectively in today's society, will require the library to espouse new ways of thinking. This strategic plan will provide a road map for the Dobbs Ferry Public Library during a period of internal transition as well as external societal and technological shifts. It will help the library evolve in ways that track both the pace of this change and the diversity of our users, ensuring all members of the community have continued access to the world of ideas.

We would be remiss if we did not recognize the instrumental role of The Friends of the Dobbs Ferry Public Library. They serve as community advocates and continue to provide financial support for library programs, materials, activities that our customers have come to expect. The Board looks forward to a continued partnership with the Friends, and encourages all residents to join our efforts during this exciting period of transition. With everyone's support, the Dobbs Ferry Public Library will continue to play a vital role in the community.