



*Long Branch Free  
Public Library is*

# THE HEART OF THE COMMUNITY



2011- 2013

Long Branch Public Library  
Strategic Plan

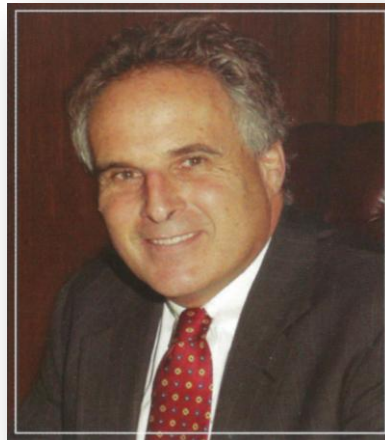


## ***Long Branch Public Library City Officials***

Adam Schneider, Mayor  
Dr. Mary Jane Celli, City Council  
Joy Bastelli, City Council  
Kathleen Billings, City Council  
John Pallone, City Council  
Michael Sirianni, City Council

## ***Long Branch Public Library Board of Trustees***

Michael Salvatore  
Arlene Fritz  
William Fritz  
Mary George  
Barbara McGlennon  
Kelly Rance  
Kathryn Tarantino  
Linda Toye



**Adam Schneider, Mayor**



**Dr. Mary Jane Celli**



**Michael Sirianni**



**Joy Bastelli**



**Kathleen Billings**



**John Pallone**

**Long Branch City Council**

## Letter from the Board of Trustees President

Dear Community Members of Long Branch

Libraries have always been a portal to the past and a gateway to our future. From medieval manuscripts on yellowed parchment and papyrus, to the classics, including those yet to be unearthed, libraries offer the experience not only to embrace the written word but also to provide knowledge and opportunity upon entry. As we move forward with new initiatives and services, we recognize the high value you place on these traditional services but also acknowledge the needs of the modern day library user.

Long Branch residents have generously taken their time to answer a user survey and city leaders have allowed us to interview them so we can decide how to best move our library forward to meet the growing, changing needs of this community.

As we move forward in this current difficult economic climate, we evaluated and assessed our services and programs to ensure we solidify the public library as a vital, relevant city institution and community center. We have taken your shared visions and suggestions into account every step of the way. One thing you made clear: The library is needed now more than ever.

Moving forward, we drafted a new strategic plan that takes into account the desires you expressed for a library that has up-to-date technology, convenient hours and a warm, welcoming efficient staff. We accepted your charge to continually find ways to keep up with changing technology and maintain a strong online presence around the clock to better serves your information needs. To obtain these objectives, we'll explore options for diversified staffing and funding.

The Strategic Planning Committee worked hard to develop a new plan that sustains most of our current services while seeking to secure the future vision and hopes for our library that you shared. I would like to thank the Strategic Planning Committee, trustees, staff, and all of the community members that participated for their hard work to ensure the creation of a successful strategic plan.

Kathryn Tarantino, President

# Long Branch Public Library: Our Background

## Our Mission

The Long Branch Free Public Library mission is to provide the diverse population we serve with popular books and materials, public access to technology and computers, basic literacy instruction and a community center for life-long learning.

## Our Vision

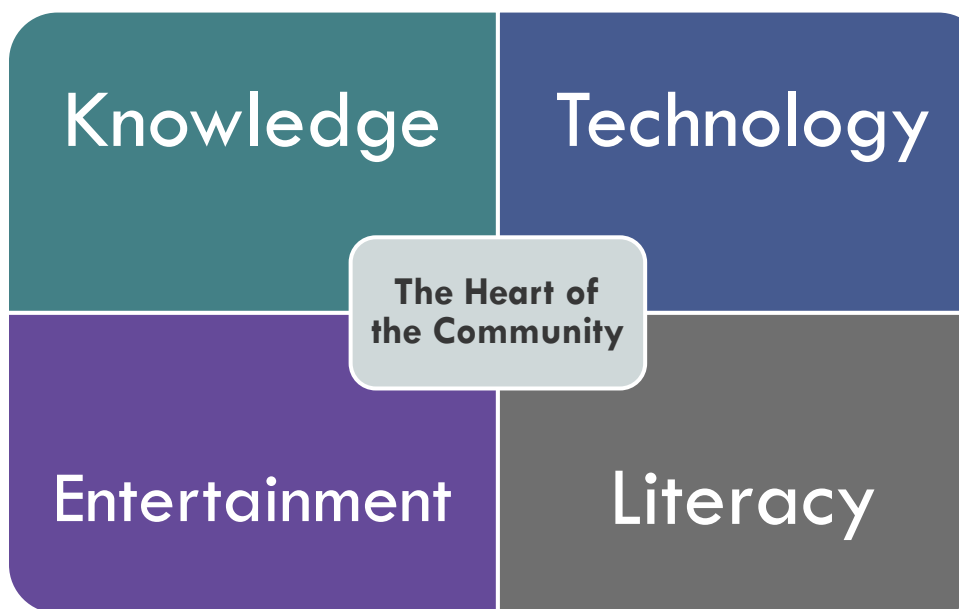
We envision, at the heart of the Long Branch community, two beloved libraries – one in the Broadway Area, the other in the Elberon section – connecting people to each other, our city, our country and the world.

## Population:

- Long Branch city had a total population of 33,000. The median age was 35.3 years. Twenty-one percent of the population was under 18 years and 11 percent was 65 years and older.
- For people reporting one race alone, 66 percent was White; 14 percent was Black or African American; 1 percent was American Indian and Alaska Native; 3 percent was Asian; less than 0.5 percent was Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander and 11 percent was some other race. Twenty-seven percent of the people in Long Branch city were Hispanic.
- In 2005-2009 there were 12,000 households in Long Branch city. The average household size was 2.6 people. Families made up 59 percent of the households in Long Branch city.
- Thirty percent of the people living in Long Branch city in 2005-2009 were foreign born. Among people at least five years old living in Long Branch city in 2005-2009, 42 percent spoke a language other than English at home. Of those speaking a language other than English at home, 55 percent spoke Spanish and 45 percent spoke some other language; 60 percent reported that they did not speak English "very well."
- 81 percent of people 25 years and over had at least graduated from high school and 23 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Twenty percent did not graduate; they were not enrolled in school and had not graduated from high school.
- 14 percent of people were in poverty. Twenty-four percent of related children under 18 were below the poverty level, compared with 12 percent of people 65 years old and over.

The median income of households in Long Branch city was \$52,456. Eight-one percent of households received earnings and 15% received retirement other than Social Security. Twenty seven percent of the households received Social Security.

## ***Long Branch Public Library: The Heart of the Community providing free...***



- ***40% of Americans lack internet access at home***
- ***32 million+ adults have very low literacy skills***
- ***Demand is steadily increasing for early childhood literacy***
- ***Over 72% of libraries now name job seeking services as their priority service***

# Creating the Strategic Plan

## Members of the Strategic Plan Committee

Tonya Badillo, Chair  
Janet Dudick  
Jerry Hamlin  
Barbara McGlennon  
Kay Raab

Barbara Coats  
Avery Grant  
Kathryn Hamlin  
Audrey Palmatier  
Linda Wurzel

## The Strategic Planning Process

The Board of Trustees, Strategic Planning Committee, library staff and community members contributed a great deal of time and effort to the planning process. We started the plan with the belief that a successful strategic plan must be based on the real needs of the community. Therefore we gathered together a planning committee comprised of community members, staff and Board of Trustee members to meet and explore concerns and suggestions. Next, we invited thirty community members to a working breakfast. We subdivided into five focus groups to discuss and identify strengths as well as areas in need.

We discussed the results via an online wiki as well as face to face meetings.

## The Key Steps of the Plan

Online and In-person Surveys  
Community Leader Interviews  
Best Practices/Review of Trends  
Strategic Planning Wiki  
Group Coordination & Meetings

# Long Branch Public Library

## Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

### GOALS AND OBJECTIVES TO ACHIEVE THE VISION FOR THE LIBRARY;

#### ■ Goal One: Keeping Pace with Technology

Objectives: The Long Branch Public Library will continue to increase the ability to satisfy its technology needs and preferences of community residents

Action Steps:

- Assess and meet the technology needs of the community
- Provide training and support for staff and community
- Provide adequate bandwidth
- Explore technology trends such as text message services
- Position technology to reach teens, young professionals and customers with 24/7 needs, such as establishing a virtual branch

#### ■ Goal Two: Sustaining Services and Staff

Objective: Long Branch Public Library customers will encounter a welcoming, warm and inviting library space as well as a courteous and knowledgeable staff who support the library's mission and vision while satisfying community needs

Action Steps:

- Create quiet study areas in the library and minimize noise levels at service desks
- Train and assess staff to ensure superior customer service
- Increase connections with diverse populations by providing trained staff to assist our diverse customers and new English speakers
- Expand service hours to meet customers' needs
- Ensure that optimal staffing is available at Elberon Branch at all times

## ■ Goal Three: Board Development

Objectives: The Long Branch Public Library Board of Trustees will continue to demonstrate its commitment to serving the community and supporting the staff by providing opportunities to increase the visibility and participation of the Board.

Action Steps:

- Hold an annual Board Self-Assessment Meeting
- Create ownership through innovate projects such as creating Board of Trustee READ posters
- Hold semi-annual mini-trainings before Board meetings
- Identify more occasions when Trustees can interact directly with the community on behalf of the library
- Establish clear communication channels among trustees, staff and city officials

## ■ Goal Four: Diversified Funding

Objectives: The Long Branch Public Library will research and generate funds from diversified sources

Action Steps:

- Strengthen Friends of the Library
- Research and publicize endowments, memorials& planned giving
- Investigate Shared Services with area nonprofits and departments
- Fundraising
- Special programs and events
- Grants

## ■ Goal Five: Branding and Marketing

Objectives: Realizing the importance of our visibility, the Library will develop an initiative to market library programs and services, ensuring a unified message and recognized brand of service.

Action Steps:

- Establish a budget to accomplish marketing goals
- Increase the number of active card holders
- Improve internal and external signage
- Promote what we do well by offering presentations to local organizations
- Use the City logo on all flyers and publicity to maintain a consistent image and identify us as a valuable Long Branch resource

Thank you to the wonderful staff of the Long Branch Free Public Library that works tirelessly to ensure we move forward as the heart of the community, to ensure quality services, up to date technology and diverse programs.