

# Abbott Library Strategic Planning

Final Report, December 28, 2020

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## Executive Summary

In February 2020 the Abbott Library partnered with Empower Success Corps to complete a strategic plan that would provide direction for the Library over the next three years. The Strategic Planning process included three phases: 1) Environmental Analysis, 2) Community Workshop & Goals, 3) Strategies and Implementation.

### Phase 1: Environmental Analysis

The environmental analysis included a review of national, external views on the current role of public libraries, and an overview of how the Sunapee community views the Abbott Library. Community input was sought on how the Library does and can contribute to meeting community needs.

Review of external trends in the role of public libraries in our changing world included guidance for the “Library of the Future”. The Aspen Institute Report notes:

*Public libraries that align their people, place and platform assets and create services that prioritize and support local community goals will find the greatest opportunities for success in the years ahead.*

For Sunapee community perspectives and input, ESC completed in-person or phone interviews with 22 community members and Library stakeholders, followed by a survey mailed to all households in Sunapee. Community members could respond to the survey either online or by returning the paper survey.

Interviews revealed that the Library has the respect of the community and is a valuable and credible resource for the community, a finding confirmed by survey responses. In addition, a range of new programs were suggested by survey results, especially with a focus on young children, on community members with financial and physical challenges, and on teens and young adults. Retirees showed high interest in lifelong learning programs; younger families, in home school learning resources; and middle-aged learners, in skills and job-related programs. While a third of all survey respondents felt well informed about what is currently offered by the Library, for over 50% there is opportunity for improved communication about programs.

## Phase 2: Community Workshop and Goals

Six themes emerged from the environmental analysis. In August over 20 Sunapee community and Library staff members were asked to share their ideas about these themes during a two evening Zoom workshop. The group addressed Improving Communication, Community Multi-Purpose Space, Teen Engagement, Enhancing Volunteer Support, Gateway to Learning Resources and the Library of the Future.

The Strategic Planning Committee identified five goals to address in this three-year strategic plan:

1. Improve Communication
  - a. within the Community.
  - b. with Library Partners (Friends, Foundation, Director and Staff)
2. Clarify the Role and Responsibilities of Abbott Library Trustees to further the effectiveness of the Board.
3. Expand Learning Opportunities to meet the needs and interests of the broader patron community, including specific hard to serve populations.
4. Increase Community Engagement through volunteerism with the Abbott Library
5. Determine the need for and type of multi-purpose spaces that will best benefit the Sunapee Community

## Phase 3: Strategic Plan Development and Implementation

A workplan was developed to address these six goals over the next three years. For each, a Trustee (or Alternate) and staff member were identified to lead the effort. A method to measure success was also identified.

The Committee assumes that the Library Trustees, the Director, and staff will together carry the load to implement this plan. Leadership from both Trustees and Director will maximize opportunity for successful implementation.

Given the out-of-the-norm COVID-19 experience throughout much of 2020 and the limited public access to the Library, the committee agreed when success measurements are compared to earlier years, data from 2019, not 2020, should be used. The committee noted the uncertain times in which we currently live during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is possible that adjustments may need to be made to the strategic plan, particularly to the timeline for plan actions, due to the pandemic.

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# Abbott Library Strategic Planning

In 2017, the Board of Library Trustees and Library Director started the strategic planning process with the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee. This committee met throughout 2018 and developed a mission statement for the Library and a goals and objectives document by soliciting inputs from the Library Director, Library staff and through a survey of residents.

Empower Success Corps (ESC) was contacted in July 2019 to discuss the need for a strategic planning consultant to assist with the strategic planning process that had begun in the preceding year. After additional research and preliminary meetings with ESC, in January of 2020, Abbott Library Trustees voted to hire ESC and agreed to assemble a strategic planning workgroup to work with ESC to create a three-year strategic plan to move the Library to a successful future position. The Trustee workgroup members are: Peg Lesiak, (Trustee and Committee Chair), Carol Brudnicki, (Chair, Board of Trustees), Scott Rapoport (Trustee) and Mindy Atwood (Abbott Library Director). The Abbott Library ESC team includes Niraj Agarwal, Rebecca Hutchinson and Carol Ann Moore.

This committee convened in late February in-person and expected to complete its work approximately six months later. Just as ESC began Phase 1 with interviews of members of the community, the COVID-19 pandemic hit. After a brief pause, the project continued, with all meetings of the committee and a “retreat” with many more community representatives, all being held by Zoom. The committee convened bi-weekly or weekly throughout the rest of 2020, completing its work in December. The longer project timeframe was needed due to a combination of the decision to survey the entire community with an on-line and paper survey and the challenge the pandemic presented.

The following report details the Abbott Library history and governance, and the Strategic Planning project as facilitated by ESC. This includes the three phases of the project: Phase 1 – Environmental Analysis, Phase 2 – Community Workshop and Goals, Phase 3 – Strategic Plan Development and Implementation. An Appendix with project documents is also provided.

## History of Abbott Library

The Abbott Library in Sunapee, NH was initially established through a perpetual trust as the outgrowth of the will of Martha H. Abbott on October 8, 1917. In 1925, through the combined use of funds from the Abbott Library Trust fund and the town of Sunapee in a roughly 4:1 ratio, construction was started on the old Abbott Library located at the intersection of Main Street and Route 11. The Library was opened to the public in June of 1926 and comprised 2,200 sq. ft including a basement. By 1984, the Library collection was nearly 9000 volumes and series were

expanded to include large print books, audio books, children's story time, summer reading program, puppet shows, interlibrary loans, and copying services.

By 1984, the Library's collection had expanded to 13,600 volumes and the Mabel Davies wing was added to the original structure, expanding the Library's space by about 1,100 sq. ft. to a total of 3,304 sq. ft. This addition was funded by a combination of private donations and public funds. In 1996 the Town of Sunapee paid for the construction of a ramp for handicap access.

With town population and demand for services increasing, a Library expansion was needed. After years of planning and help from countless citizens and the Abbott Library Foundation, in June 2014, construction began on a new library building, funded by a combination of private donations and public funds. The public funds were approved by two thirds of voters in 2016.

The new Library opened its doors in November of 2014. The building provides 7200 square feet of access to books, periodicals, audiobooks, DVDs and learning kits. There are two rooms that are available for use by the public and used for library programming, sitting areas and 7 computers for public use. In addition, the library provides publicly accessible Wi-Fi 24/7 and seasonally available outside seating.

## Library Governance

The Abbott Library is governed by an elected seven-member Board of Library Trustees. Members of the Board of Trustees are elected for three-year terms. The Library Director is hired by and is directly responsible to the Board.

## Internal Partners

The Abbott Library has two affiliated organizations which support the Library's mission:

**The Friends of the Abbott Library**, a 501(c)3 non-profit which provides support for the Library. The Friends of the Abbott Library fundraise throughout the year with most of their donations resulting from an annual appeal letter that is sent in the late spring. The organization provides support for the summer reading program, programming above and beyond what is included in the Library's town appropriation, access to databases and on-line services and purchase of museum passes. They also provide one-time funding for special projects and volunteer their time to plan programming for Library patrons to enjoy.

**The Abbott Library Foundation**, a 501(c)3 non-profit, was created in 2011 to support the continued growth and development of the Abbott Library, its resources, services, and facilities so

that the Library remains a vibrant community-supported environment. The Foundation's support is to be in addition to that which is derived through the normal budgetary process.



## Phase 1: Environmental Analysis

During Phase 1, ESC consultants reviewed national, external trends in library activities and how libraries are responding to existing and changing needs in the communities they serve. In this context, ESC analyzed Abbot Library's current activities, reputation, and stakeholders' and community needs.

### Review of External Trends

"Every community needs a vision and a strategic plan for how to work with the public library to directly align the library and its work with the community's educational, economic and other key goals. It must have input from all stakeholder groups in the community."

[Re-envisioning Public Libraries - Aspen Institute Report](#)

The Aspen Institute report represents some of the best thinking about the relevance of the library:

1. *Providing access and connecting knowledge to the needs of individuals and the community have always been at the center of the mission and purpose of libraries. Public libraries can be [...] a trusted community resource and an essential platform for learning, creativity, and innovation in the community in the digital age. Public libraries are highly trusted institutions rooted in the neighborhoods that they serve.*
2. *Innovations built on the old, distributed model of the lending library will not suffice. The time has come for a new vision of public libraries [...] as communities' needs continue to change. Expanding access to education, learning opportunities and social connections for all is one of the great challenges of our time.*
3. *[Certain] principles have always been at the center of the public library's mission— equity, access, opportunity, openness, and participation. They connect individuals to a vast array of local and national resources and serve as neutral conveners to foster civic health. They facilitate learning and creation for children and adults alike.*
4. *[Members of the community are] not merely consumers of content but creators and citizens as well.*
5. *Key steps in building community leadership to support the public library include improving communications with community leaders, developing community champions, strengthening intersections with diverse communities and communities of color, reaching out to and engaging with young-professional organizations and demonstrating the collective impact of partners working together.*

6. *Public libraries that align their people, place and platform assets and create services that prioritize and support local community goals will find the greatest opportunities for success in the years ahead.*

Additional observations and insights from research into the landscape of public libraries comes from [Pew Research on Libraries](#):

1. Libraries must find a fit on the continuum with the shift that is happening.

Totally Physical	?	Totally Virtual
Individual Focus	?	Community Focus
Collection Library	?	Creation Library
Archive	?	Portal
Everything/everyone	?	Specialized Niche

2. Libraries can become the “first place” to meet. Fill in niche needs like ESL, pre-school space, small business space, veteran’s programs, innovation test beds
3. Library users see themselves as lifelong learners. Key motivations for them are to make their own lives more interesting and to help others.
4. Library has high trust. Millennials (age 18-35) use public libraries more than any other age group. 87% of millennials use libraries to find trustworthy information and 85% to learn new things.

Following review of external trends, the Abbott Library Strategic Planning Committee in consultation with the ESC Consultants, agreed upon a two-stage approach to obtaining Sunapee Community input to the strategic planning process. The focus was on inclusion of representatives from a broad range of interests in the community. The objective was to identify the needs in the community where the Abbott Library could contribute positively to meeting those needs.

## Interviews with Community Representatives

First, an interview study was undertaken. This study involved either a face-to-face (pre COVID-19 restrictions) interview or phone interview with key representatives of different Sunapee Community constituencies for the Abbott Library. The Abbott Library Strategic Planning Committee identified the representatives to be interviewed and invited them to participate in the interview study.

During March and April 2020, the ESC Consultant team followed up on the Committee’s invitation and scheduled a time to interview the participants. Participants included representatives of the schools, town offices, businesses and professionals in the community, nonprofits, the Library Foundation, Friends of the Library, Library Trustees, young parents, high

school students, retirees, and part-time residents. In total, 22 individuals were interviewed for approximately 30 minutes. The same six questions were asked of each:

1. From your perspective, what has been noteworthy about the Library in the last few years?
2. How has the Library helped you?
3. What would you like the Library to offer that is not offered currently?
4. Who is the Library not reaching/engaging now and how could the Library improve that?
5. What do you see as needs in the community?
6. What should the Library look like in the future?

Findings were summarized from two broad perspectives. The first, *Noteworthy and Helpful*, focuses on the CURRENT state of the Library and Library activities and qualities that strongly resonate with the community (Questions 1 & 2). Then, *Themes and Ideas* focuses on shaping the FUTURE of the Library, with three key themes emerging (Questions 3 to 6).

Overall, the Library today is seen as ***Noteworthy and Helpful***. The staff is highly valued. The Library has the respect of the community and is a valuable and credible resource for the community. It offers excellent programs for both youth and adults; is a good resource for all, regardless of means; provides a welcoming environment; is community focused and has been personally helpful to the patrons interviewed.

Looking to what the Library can offer the community in the future, three major ***Themes and Ideas*** emerged in the interviews:

- Education and Learning
- Engaging Teens
- Communications and Outreach.

## Education and Learning

The Library is viewed as an educational partner and a place for learning at all ages. As such, the Library has an opportunity to be a central force in adult education, from teens to seniors, perhaps especially in vocational and professional development, occupational guidance, and lifelong learning. It can be a vital portal to educational opportunity and e-learning for the community. The Library can also be an important resource and environment for home schooling. In all, the Library is an equal access learning resource regardless of demographics and can be a valuable partner in development of community learning initiatives.

## Engaging Teens

Greater attention to and more effective engagement of teens in Library and community activities are desired. Teens are, however, a difficult demographic to engage, and several approaches to engaging teens in Library activities were suggested, including group learning opportunities with other teens in hands-on activities, and mentoring programs with local professionals and businesses.

## Communications and Outreach

Throughout the interviews, there was an observed gap in awareness of the variety of the programs and services the Library offers, particularly specific programs available to the community. Often suggestions of new programs and activities were prefaced by uncertainty about whether these were currently offered. Programs for younger families seemed the best-known of programs offered. Ideas for enhanced communication were suggested.

The findings from these interviews with community representatives became a valuable resource in designing a larger and broader survey of Community needs and interests. A report and notes summarizing interview findings in greater detail are available in the Appendix.

## Survey of the Sunapee Community

Second, a broader, community survey of the needs and interests of the Sunapee Community was conducted. In designing the community survey, the Abbott Library Strategic Planning Committee and ESC Consultants were guided by the findings of the Interview Study, which identified a host of opportunities for the Library to provide services to specific constituencies or patron groups.

During the late spring and early summer, preliminary versions of the survey were developed, discussed, and evaluated by the Abbott Library Strategic Planning Committee and ESC Consultants. In early July 2020, a nearly final draft was pilot tested by the Strategic Planning Committee with a couple participants in the Interview Study. The final survey was launched on July 15 and data collected through August 4. There were 12 survey questions, most with a list of possible answers to rate as well as a write-in option.

## Survey Questions and Process

Questions addressed what Library services and activities are most valued and how well the Library provides these services and activities, what other programs the Library should offer, especially to teens, and whether the Library should be instrumental in actively connecting the community to learning opportunities. In addition, respondents were asked how well informed

they felt about what the Library currently offers, how they learn about offerings, and whether the website is easy to use. Finally, they were asked if they would like to volunteer at the Library. The full survey questionnaire is available in the Appendix.

To reach all community members, a paper version (see Appendix) was sent to every Sunapee household. Community members receiving the mailed survey and everyone in their household were invited to respond to the survey. They could respond by filling in and returning the prepaid postage paper copy received in the mail or by filling out the SurveyMonkey questionnaire online. All survey responses – hardcopy or online – were anonymous. Of the 2,194 surveys mailed to Sunapee Community households, 139 completed surveys were received, which represents a 6% return rate. This is low, but typical of such large community surveys.

### What We Learned

Findings from the survey supported and expanded upon the informal information gained through the earlier interviews. A summary is presented here, with a report reviewing survey findings in detail provided in the Appendix.

Interview findings that the Library has the respect of the community and is a valuable and credible resource for the community were confirmed by survey responses. Eighty-three percent (83%) of survey respondents rated the Library 5 out of 5 in how well it functions as a local library. Most valued is the knowledge and responsiveness of the staff, and the collection of books, magazines, audiobooks, DVDs, etc. offered, followed by technology access and support, kids' after-school programs, and meeting and event space. Rating of how well the Library provides these services was similar, with 82% to 97% of respondents rating these valued services as 4 or 5/5. However, there is opportunity for expansion in volunteering opportunities, adult learning programs, and book or movie club discussions.

A range of new programs were suggested by survey results, especially with a focus on young children, on community members with financial and physical challenges, and on teens and young adults. Some ideas for engaging teens are group and individual learning experiences, such as internships, volunteering opportunities, tutoring, mentoring, SAT preparation, and continuation of the GaLS program.

The Library has the potential to be a gateway to learning opportunities across demographics, with some variations by age group or stage in life. Retirees showed high interest in lifelong learning programs; younger families, in home schooling learning resources; and middle-aged learners, in skills and job-related programs. A broader range of online learning opportunities is desired. In addition, some respondents suggested that learning programs for school-aged learners could be offered in conjunction with town schools.

While a third of all survey respondents felt well informed about what is currently offered by the Library, for over 50% there is opportunity for improved communication about programs. The

top three channels for learning about current Library activities and resources are the website (63%), newsletter (55%), and at the Library (51%).

Finally, the survey study provided an opportunity to gauge the level of interest in the community for volunteering at the Library. About 50% of survey respondents were interested in some level of volunteering. They are most interested in helping with the Library's annual book sale (66%) or volunteering at the Library (49%). Some are interested in teaching an educational program (29%), participating in Friends of Abbott Library (27%), or organizing events at the Library (20%).

Interview and survey findings, along with the review of external trends, set the stage for the Phase 2 Strategic Planning Orientation and Workshop on September 9-10, 2020.

## Phase 2: Community Workshop and Goals

Upon completion of Phase 1, the Environmental Analysis, the Strategic Planning Committee moved on to Phase 2 which, before COVID-19 restrictions, was to include a one-day retreat attended by representatives of the Board of Trustees, staff, Friends of the Library, the Abbott Library Foundation, volunteers, and representatives of the school district. The afternoon portion of the retreat was to focus on high-level issues and goal setting. With the belief that an in-person event would be notably more effective, a strong effort was made to try to create an in-person event in the late summer of 2020. However, with regret, it was decided that a Zoom format would be the safest and a two session Zoom workshop was held. The Foundation, Friends and community were well represented at these two sessions.

ESC consultant Niraj Agarwal provided an overview of the Phase 1 findings at the first session held in early September. This overview emphasized the findings that the Abbott Library currently enjoys great respect and credibility in the community, that the staff is a strong asset and patrons value resources and programs currently available. The PowerPoint slides from this presentation are included in the Appendix.

During the second session, held the next evening, the participants were asked to brainstorm suggestions regarding the six different themes identified during Phase 1. The participants were assigned to three breakout rooms to address the following:

- > Improving communication
- > Community multi-purpose space
- > Teen engagement
- > Enhancing community/ volunteer support
- > Library as a gateway to learning resources
- > Library of the Future

### Improving Communication

Improving communication with the community at large and the internal partners was discussed. Consideration was given to several community populations that currently utilize the Library less than others and it was concluded that more research is needed to identify the best way to reach hard-to-serve groups in town.

Other ideas expressed to reach the Sunapee community included:

- ~ single calendar of all events on website or other outlets (Kearsarge Shopper, etc.)

- ~ use volunteers to communicate library events
- ~ website could be easier to navigate

To enhance communication with the Library's internal partners, the Friends of the Library and the Foundation. it was suggested that there be more opportunity for the various partners to attend common meetings, perhaps annually and/or share meeting minutes among the partners. With regard to increasing communication with and support for the Director and staff, it was suggested that the roles and responsibilities of Trustee members could be more clearly defined.

### Community Multi-Purpose Space

There seemed to be agreement that the Library should take the lead in helping the community identify if there is a need for additional community space in Sunapee.

Other ideas expressed included:

- ~ whatever library space is considered must be in keeping with Library's mission
- ~ community collaboration is a priority. Great example is the School/Library partnership during the summer
- ~ COVID-19 experience with many more people working from home suggests there will be different requests of the Library, post-COVID-19. (ex: expect requests for Library small study areas with WIFI space, video conferencing capability)

### Teen Engagement

Participants had several ideas about how to improve teen engagement:

- ~ give them a voice by forming a teen advisory board
- ~ social engagement desired by teens
- ~ become creation place with equipment they don't have at home
- ~ be a source for community internships, such as police department, trades (electrician, plumber, etc),
- ~ Internet cafe

### Enhancing Community/Volunteer Support

It was suggested that the Library reach out to individuals who have expressed interest in volunteering at the Library to identify how their interests and skills could be utilized. The Library could also create a description of the types of volunteer opportunities that are currently available.

## Library as Gateway to Learning Resources

Participants suggested that the Library strive to provide blended learning experiences, combining both in-person and on-line learning whenever possible.

Other suggestions included:

- ~ engage community as resource for knowledge and expertise (ex: job seeking skills)
- ~ support home-schooling – provide resources for parents
- ~ rekindle “Learning Tuesdays”

## Library of the Future

Abbott Library is already much more than a place to access books and publications. Continuing this commitment to be much more, to be a “library of the future”, Abbott will want always to offer opportunities for studying, tutoring, meeting, accessing the internet, working remotely and remote learning. It will want to be a safe place for people to meet – physically safe and welcoming of all members of the Sunapee community.

## SWOT Analysis

The Strategic Planning Committee took these ideas under consideration and created a SWOT analysis to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats facing the Library. Typically, strengths and weaknesses are viewed as attributes which the organization currently has, while opportunities and threats are likely coming from the outside and could impact the organization as it moves forward.

## Abbott Library Strategic Planning SWOT Analysis

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Strengths</b> (Organization currently)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ AL has respect and credibility</li> <li>➤ Staff knowledgeable, helpful, engaging</li> <li>➤ Offers strong, varied programming</li> <li>➤ Community focused and flexible (Ex: COVID-19 response)</li> <li>➤ Collaborative relationships with police, school</li> <li>➤ Physical space is inviting and offers various separate spaces for adults and children</li> <li>➤ Strong partnership and collaboration with Friends of the AL</li> <li>➤ Highly rated for value and quality of programs</li> <li>➤ Creativity and ability to flex with changing environment</li> <li>➤ Reserve of goodwill built up in community</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Weaknesses</b> (Organization currently)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Gap in awareness of programs and services</li> <li>➤ Currently no way to contact community about AL programs unless individual opts in for newsletter, website, or Facebook</li> <li>➤ Communication between AL Friends, Foundation and Trustees inconsistent</li> <li>➤ Staff does not experience consistent support from Trustees</li> <li>➤ Website not easy to navigate</li> <li>➤ Building not big enough for large community meetings</li> <li>➤ Staff is stretched</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Opportunities</b> (Future possibilities)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Become central force in adult education by enhancing current offerings</li> <li>➤ Enhance conduit to online learning</li> <li>➤ Bundle online learning with in-person events</li> <li>➤ Enhance resources for home schooling</li> <li>➤ Significant community interest in volunteering</li> <li>➤ Use physical space to support learning, working, telecommuting (rooms, work desks)</li> <li>➤ Increase options for teens, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ advisory board</li> <li>➤ vocational internships “day in life of”</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Become creation space with equipment teens do not have in their homes</li> <li>➤ New partnerships with community groups</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Threats</b> (Future challenges)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Some community members concern about new spending; current building is enough</li> <li>➤ Teen population not easily accessible</li> <li>➤ Use of volunteers must not run contrary to state employment law</li> <li>➤ Revenue stream is not controllable</li> </ul>

## Goals for Abbott Library

After much effort to identify and prioritize goals, the strategic planning committee identified five goals for the three-year strategic plan.

### **Goal 1: Improve Communication within the Community and with the Abbott Library's Partners**

The environmental analysis identified that, despite considerable current efforts, more targeted effort is needed to ensure that community members know about all the Library has to offer. The Library will identify what is currently working, what could be strengthened and where there are gaps in the Library's communication methods with the community.

Additionally, more effort could be made to ensure that the Friends and the Foundation are aware of Library activities and are clear about how they can contribute to the Library's success. The Library will engage with each Partner on ways to improve communication

### **Goal 2: Clarify the role and responsibilities of Abbott Library Trustees to further the effectiveness of the Board.**

Feedback during Phase 1 suggested that the Library could be strengthened by clarifying and strengthening the role of the Library Trustee. The Library will identify, define, and document the role of the Abbott Library Trustee. A more formal "on-boarding" process will be created for newly elected Trustees, providing specific guidance regarding their responsibilities. The Trustees and the Library Director work collaboratively to identify how best to support the Director and the staff.

### **Goal 3: Expand Learning Opportunities to meet the needs and interests of the broader patron community**

Some community populations are currently better served than others. The Abbott Library will gather information about new programs, items or services that will meet the needs and interests of the broader patron community. It will specifically identify at least two populations which currently do not utilize the Library extensively and plan programs and outreach for them.

### **Goal 4: Increase Community Engagement through volunteerism with the Abbott Library**

The surveys and outreach during Phase 1 uncovered significant interest in volunteering by community members. Abbott Library will utilize existing community knowledge and experience as a resource for a variety of Library related roles, programs, and events.

**Goal 5: Determine the need for and type of multi-purpose spaces that will best benefit the Sunapee Community**

Abbott Library will initiate an effort to identify the existing physical, publicly accessible space options in the community and will collaborate with other community groups to determine if there is a need for more or differently configured spaces.

# Phase 3: Strategic Plan Development and Implementation

## Overview

The initial action steps, reflecting the top priorities of this strategic plan, focus on improving communication regarding Library activities and offerings with the community, enhancing communication among all the partners, (Trustees, Friends and Foundation) and creating greater understanding of the role and responsibilities of the Trustees. These efforts can begin immediately, upon approval of the Plan by the Trustees.

The remaining three goals focus on increasing learning opportunities, increasing the use of volunteers and identifying the existing accessible community space options in the community to determine if there is a need for more or differently configured spaces. Regarding learning opportunities, the Library staff will focus on at least two populations which currently do not utilize the Library extensively. The activities to achieve these goals are spread out through the three-year plan.

Various strategies will be used to reach the plan goals including implementation of pilot communication efforts, a training session for Library Trustees and outreach to and collaboration with various community groups. A step-by-step schedule to implement the plan is available in the Appendix.

This plan assumes that the entire Trustee Board, along with other internal partners and interested volunteers will collectively undertake the work required to carry out this strategic plan. The Director and Library staff should not be expected to carry the entire load of actions needed to move the Abbott Library forward.

## Conclusion

The Strategic Plan will be a regular agenda item for Trustee meetings in order to assure that progress is made. Any strategic plan should be revisited on a regular basis and with the unique experience of the pandemic, it may be that there will need to be adjustments that can't be foreseen at this stage. The strategic plan is a living document; while the goals and strategies likely will remain constant, specific action steps and timing of action steps may be adjusted.

With an "all hands on-deck" commitment, Abbott Library will successfully move from good to great and continue to be a valuable community resource in Sunapee.