Collection Development Policy

General
The Library seeks to acquire, organize and make easily available materials, which meet ongoing or anticipated educational, cultural and recreational needs of Burlington’s residents and business community. The goal of collection development is to provide the best possible collection to meet the needs of our patrons with the resources available. Library materials and information come in a wide variety of formats, therefore all formats will be considered in selection.

Basic to the Library’s Material Selection Policy is the Library Bill of Rights and the Freedom to Read Statement adopted by the American Library Association. Both are appended to this document.

Responsibility
Parents, guardians and caretakers have the exclusive responsibility of determining what their child may read, view or hear.

Ultimate responsibility for the Library’s collection rests with the Board of Trustees. Under the direction of the Board, the Library Director manages the collection development and material selection. The Library Director delegates material selection activities to senior members of the staff.

Criteria for Selection
Collection development decisions are made on the basis of staff judgment and expertise, and by evaluating reviews in library reviewing journals and other library selection tools.

In selecting materials for the library collections, librarians use the following general criteria in no particular order.

- Appropriateness to library’s mission and service roles
- Levels of funding and cost of item
- Community interests and needs
- Currency and accuracy of information
- Quality and usefulness of a work’s text, illustrations, photos, maps, index, binding, etc., for the intended audience
- Suitability of format for user’s need and subject including nature of medium, and technical quality of the production for non-print formats
- Reputation of author, illustrator, or publisher
- Contribution to diversity or breadth of the collection
- Historical significance
- Availability elsewhere for costly or specialized materials
- Relationship to materials in other Massachusetts libraries
In no case is the race, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, political or religious views of the author, or as expressed in the content of the material, a basis for exclusion.

The Library will provide, as far as possible, reasoned, well-written materials on all sides of controversial issues. These shall not be proscribed or removed from library shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

Materials on a wide range of subjects are sought rather than exhaustive collections in any one area. General treatments are chosen over those which are specialized, scholarly or for professional use.

The library may choose to accept a copy of a self-published book if it is written by a local author or is about the Burlington area, depending on how it meets the library’s criteria for selection. The library may also acquire self-published books if they fit the scope of the library's collection and meet the selection criteria including a positive review in one or more major review journals such as Library Journal, Booklist or Publisher's Weekly.

The Library does not generally purchase or accept donations of materials which are solely in languages other than English unless community demand deems it necessary. As part of the Library’s long term planning process, surveys are conducted to measure community demand.

Suggestions for Purchase
The library encourages input from the Burlington community regarding the collection. Any library patron may suggest a purchase and each suggestion will be reviewed. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other items and are not automatically purchased or added to the collection.

Gifts
The Library welcomes gifts of materials with the understanding that they will be evaluated for acceptance into the collection under the same general criteria as new materials.

Gift materials not acceptable for the collection will be dealt with in the manner most beneficial to the Library.

The Library does not accept special collections with the condition that they are kept together as a separate physical entity. Valuable items (by independent appraisal) or extensive collections will be accepted only with the approval of the Board of Trustees.

Monetary gifts for memorial purchases are welcome. Library staff will make the selection in consultation with the donor and/or family of the deceased.
Removal/Replacement of Old Materials
To keep the collection up-to-date, useful and appealing, material is removed when it becomes outdated, superseded or unused, or when its physical condition makes it unsuitable for the collection.

Works of local historical value are not subject to the above criteria.

Materials which are lost or withdrawn because of damage or wear are considered for replacement by either title or subject matter under the same criteria as new materials.

Handling Complaints
All complaints concerning library materials must be documented on the Request for Reconsideration of Title or Item form, signed by the complainant and given to the Library Director who will respond in writing within 30 days. If the matter cannot be resolved at this level, the complainant may request consideration by the Board of Trustees. If the complainant meets with the Board of Trustees, the meeting will be subject to the open meeting law.

The Board of Trustees reserves the right to amend this policy, and to rule on situations not specifically covered herein. The Board of Trustees and the Library Director shall review this policy as needed.

TOWN OF BURLINGTON

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES (Collection Development Policy)

_________________________________________ Chairman

_________________________________________ Vice-Chairman

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