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# Long Range Strategic Plan for the West Bridgewater Public Library

2018 – 2023

80 Howard Street  
West Bridgewater, MA 02379  
508-894-1255  
[info@westbpl.org](mailto:info@westbpl.org)  
[www.westbpl.org](http://www.westbpl.org)

Ellen Snoeyenbos, Library Director

June 16, 2018



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## Vision Statement

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*“West Bridgewater Public Library is a community resource where all generations are brought together in a safe, inclusive, and welcoming environment. We aspire to foster innovation, creativity, and participation in life-long learning.”*

## Mission Statement:

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“West Bridgewater Public Library is a place where people can find reliable information and develop many different types of literacies and competencies. The evolving needs of the community are met through collections, programs, services and an ever-present building of community across gender, cultural differences, age, and abilities.”



## Methodology

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On Saturday, September 23, a group of twelve library patrons, staff members, Trustees, and Friends of the Library met with a MLS consultant, Kristi Chadwick, to take part in the S.O.A.R. exercise to help define values with regard to the West Bridgewater Public Library's Long Range Strategic Plan. We explored the library's strengths, weakness, opportunities, challenges and aspirations. This became the basis for the library's Long-Range Plan.

On Wednesday, November 1<sup>st</sup>, the library staff participated in the same exercise.

On Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, the Trustees also performed the S.O.A.R. exercises. The results of these three exercise sessions can be found in the addendum of this report.

On Saturday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, the Strategic Planning Committee meet again, reviewed the results of all three groups' SOAR exercises, and developed a Mission Statement and developed five goals that will become the framework of all that we do in the next five years.

Using the Boston Public Library's patron survey as a model, the director, Ellen Snoeyenbos, created a ten question adult survey on Survey Monkey. Then, with the help and the thoughtful work of two West Bridgewater High School students, Valerie and Elise Puliafico, another ten question survey was created to be filled out by West Bridgewater Middle and High School students which was hosted on Google Docs. The surveys were active on the [www.westbpl.org](http://www.westbpl.org) web site and the school site for the months of December and January. Print copies were available at the Main Desk and at the Senior Center. The results of these surveys can be found in the User Needs Assessment section of this document.

On Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> the library staff spent time to flesh out Objectives and Actions for the Five Goals stated, with the added insight of the results of the User Assessment. On Wednesday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, the Trustees did the same. The resulting ideas were combined into one document and can be found in the Main Section of this report.

The Strategic Planning Committee met one last time on Saturday, June 16, 2018, to do a final review before submitting it to the Board of Library Trustees for final approval.

# Demographic Data



**WB Population in 2016: 7,048.**

**Population change since 2000: +5%**

**Labor Force (2015): 3,761**

**Males:** 3,400 49.2%  
**Females:** 3,516 50.8%  
**Median resident age:** 43.9 years

**Massachusetts median age:** 39.2 years

**Estimated median household income in 2015:** \$75,543 (\$55,958 in 2000)  
**West Bridgewater:** \$75,543  
**MA:** \$70,628

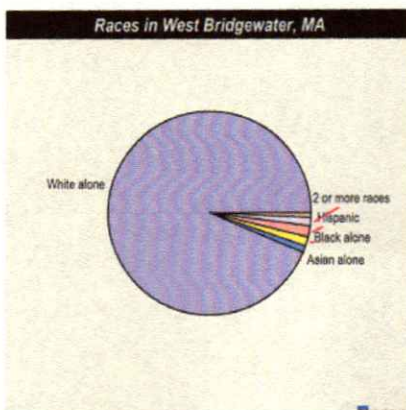
**Estimated per capita income in 2015:** \$35,283 (\$23,701 in 2000)

**Estimated median house or condo value in 2015:** \$334,728 (\$171,600 in 2000)

**West Bridgewater:** \$334,728 **MA:** \$352,100

[Recent home sales, real estate maps, and home value estimator for zip code 02379](#)

Races in West Bridgewater detailed stats: ancestries, foreign born residents, place of birth



- 6,476 (93.6%) White
- 121 (1.7%) Hispanic
- 101 (1.5%) Black
- 93 (1.3%) Two or more races
- 75 (1.1%) Asian
- 43 (0.6%) Other race
- 7 (0.1%) Native American

March, 2016 cost of living index in West Bridgewater: 145.6 (very high, U.S. average is 100)

<http://www.city-data.com/city/West-Bridgewater-Massachusetts.html#ixzz4pkAcL9fQ>

<http://www.towncharts.com/Massachusetts/Demographics/West-Bridgewater-town-MA-Demographics-data.html>



# User Needs Assessment



Two separate surveys were drawn up, one for the general public and one for the students at the West Bridgewater Middle-Senior High School.

## I. SURVEY OF GENERAL PUBLIC:

**When was the last time you visited the West Bridgewater Public Library or used the web site?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
<b>Within the week</b>	<b>44.20%</b>	<b>99</b>
In the last month	36.16%	81
Never	1.34%	3
More than a year ago	2.68%	6
Sometime in the last year	15.63%	35
<b>Answered</b>		<b>224</b>

**What are the reasons that you do not use the West Bridgewater Public Library?  
More than one answer is okay.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
<b>Not applicable - I use the library</b>	<b>71.36%</b>	<b>152</b>
Location of the library	0.94%	2
I get everything I could get from the library elsewhere	7.98%	17
Hours	5.63%	12
Selection of materials	2.82%	6
Other (please specify)	15.49%	33
<b>Answered</b>		<b>213</b>

**Which two of the following services offered by the library do you think are most important?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
<b>Providing books, DVDs, CDs, streaming services, downloadable books, audiobooks, music, movies</b>	<b>79.46%</b>	<b>178</b>
<b>Promoting literacy among children and adults</b>	<b>37.05%</b>	<b>83</b>
Providing technology and online resources	19.64%	44
Offering access to research materials and local history collections	14.29%	32
Offering a community gathering place	12.95%	29
Hosting events, programs, and exhibits	26.79%	60
Other (please specify)	2.68%	6
<b>Answered</b>		<b>224</b>

**If library hours could be added, which of these would be your top priority?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Later weekday hours	36.91%	55
<b>Longer hours on Saturday</b>	<b>49.66%</b>	<b>74</b>
Sunday hours	13.42%	20
<b>Answered</b>		<b>149</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>75</b>

**What do you usually do when you visit the library?**

**More than one answer is okay.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
<b>Check out materials</b>	<b>71.95%</b>	<b>159</b>
<b>Read or Browse</b>	<b>41.63%</b>	<b>92</b>
Do research	10.86%	24
Get help and training from staff	9.05%	20
Study / do homework	6.33%	14
Use the restroom	13.57%	30
Use the library computers	14.48%	32
<b>Attend programs</b>	<b>21.72%</b>	<b>48</b>
Use the library's wireless network	6.33%	14
Spend time with my children	15.38%	34
Visit with friends	4.07%	9
Other (please specify)	9.50%	21
<b>Answered</b>		<b>221</b>

**On average, how often do you visit the West Bridgewater Public Library website: [www.westbpl.org](http://www.westbpl.org)?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Once a year	10.80%	23
<b>Monthly</b>	<b>38.03%</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>Weekly</b>	<b>28.64%</b>	<b>61</b>
Daily	2.82%	6
More than once a day	0.00%	0
Not sure	19.72%	42
<b>Answered</b>		<b>213</b>



**How do you find out about the WB Library's programs and services?  
More than one answer is possible.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
<b>Library in-house displays, flyers, and bookmarks</b>	<b>37.14%</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Library web site</b>	<b>37.62%</b>	<b>79</b>
Word of mouth	14.76%	31
Library staff	26.67%	56
Library Facebook page	15.24%	32
<b>WBPL email blast</b>	<b>55.71%</b>	<b>117</b>
Newspapers	4.76%	10
The West Bridgewater Hub on Facebook	22.86%	48
Twitter	0.00%	0
The Buzz Around West Bridgewater email	8.10%	17
Cable TV promotions and shows	1.43%	3
Other (please specify)	3.81%	8
<b>Answered</b>		<b>210</b>

**When using the Library's computers, what types of activities do you do?  
More than one answer is okay.**

Answer Choices	Responses	
<b>Accessing the library catalog</b>	<b>39.36%</b>	<b>74</b>
<b>Internet searching</b>	<b>34.57%</b>	<b>65</b>
Using the library databases and subscriptions such as Ancestry, Lynda.com, Photoshop, Adobe Creative Cloud, Tinkercad	10.64%	20
Email	8.51%	16
Word processing	2.66%	5
Other (please specify)	30.85%	58
<b>Answered</b>		<b>188</b>

**What is your age?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
<b>65 or over</b>	<b>30.56%</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>50 - 64</b>	<b>26.39%</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>30 - 49</b>	<b>35.19%</b>	<b>76</b>
18 - 29	3.24%	7
Under 18	4.63%	10
<b>Answered</b>		<b>216</b>
<b>Skipped</b>		<b>8</b>



## II. STUDENT (GRADES 7 – 12) SURVEY

**Q1: What is your role in the West Bridgewater High School Community?**

Answer Choices	Responses	Percent
7th Grader	93	22.1%
8th Grader	66	15.7%
9th Grader	85	20.2%
10th Grader	66	15.7%
11th Grader	58	13.8%
12th Grader	48	11.4%
Faculty	5	1.2%
Total:	421	

**Q2: Do you live in West Bridgewater?**

Answer Choices	Responses	Percent
Yes	309	73.4%
No	112	26.6%
Total	421	

**Q3: Which two of the following services offered by the library do you think are the most important?**

Answer Choices	Responses	Percent
Providing books, CDs, DVDs, downloadables	205	48.7%
Promoting literacy among children and adults	131	31.1%
Providing technology and internet resources, and online resources	202	48%
Offering access to research materials and local history collections	172	40.9%

Offering a community gathering place	113	26.8%
Hosting events, programs, and activities	74	17.6%
Other		

**Q4: If library hours could be added, which of these would be your top priority?**

Answer Choices	Responses	Percent
Later Weekdays	281	66.8%
Sundays	70	16.6%
Longer Saturdays	62	14.7%
Question Left Blank	8	1.9%
Total	421	

**Q5: What do you usually do when you visit the library?**

Answer Choices	Responses	Percent
Check out materials	44	10.5%
Read or browse	54	12.8%
Do research	49	11.6%
Get help from library staff	3	0.7%
Study/do homework	100	23.8%
Use the restroom	39	9.3%
Use library computers/access internet or other software	16	3.8%
Attend programs	2	0.5%
Use the library's wireless network	12	2.9%
Spend time with siblings	4	1%



Visit with friends	63	15%
Other (I don't)	22	5.2%
Other (General)	10	2.4%
Other (All of the Above)	3	0.7%
Total	421	

**Q6: On average how often do you visit the West Bridgewater Public Library website, [www.westbpl.org](http://www.westbpl.org)?**

Answer Choices	Responses	Percent
Daily	10	2.4%
Weekly	12	2.9%
Monthly	61	14.5%
Once a Year	89	21.1%
Not Sure	249	59.1%
Total	421	

**Q7: How do you find out about the Library's programs and services?**

Answer Choices	Responses	Percent
Library in-house displays, flyers, and bookmarks	47	11.2%
School Announcements	148	35.2%
Library Website	21	5.0%
Word of mouth	77	18.3%
Library Staff	24	5.7%
WBPL email blast	6	1.4%

Newspaper	1	0.2%
West Bridgewater Hub on Facebook	32	7.6%
Twitter	9	2.1%
Other (I don't)	40	9.5%
Other (friend/family/teacher)	11	2.6%
Other (General)	5	1.2%
Total	421	

**Q8: How would you like to find out about events?**

Answers	Responses	Percent
Email	49	11.6%
School/School Announcements	115	27.3%
Online/Social Media/Phone	50	11.9%
Word of Mouth	5	1.2%
Signs/Flyers	23	5.5%
I Don't Know/Care	70	16.6%
Left Blank	82	19.5%
Teacher/Friend/Family	11	2.6%
Library Staff/In the Library	6	1.4%
Happy How It Is Now	2	0.5%
Other	8	1.9%
Total	421	



**Q9: When using the Library's computers, what types of activities do you use them for?**

Answers	Responses	Percent
Accessing the Library Catalog	95	22.6%
Internet Access	158	37.5%
Special Library Databases	38	9.0%
Email	23	5.5%
Word Processing	9	2.1%
Other (don't use them)	71	16.9%
Other (printing)	19	4.5%
Other (homework/research)	6	1.4%
Other (games)	2	0.5%
Total	421	100%

**Q10: Overall, where would you most like the library to focus its financial resources?**

Answers	Responses	Percent
Purchasing Materials	125	29.7%
Staff Availability	24	5.7%
Programming for all ages	39	9.3%
Technology	147	34.9%
Clean Welcoming Building	74	17.6%
Other (longer hours)	2	0.5%
Other (hangout space)	1	0.2%
Other (no change)	2	0.5%
Other (I don't know)	7	1.6%
Total	421	100%

**Q11: What are the reasons you do not use the West Bridgewater Public Library?**

Answers	Responses	Percent
Location	34	8.1%
Get Things Done Elsewhere	193	45.8%
Hours	73	17.3%
Selection of Materials	42	10.0%
Other (I don't know)	31	7.4%
Other (staff)	5	1.2%
Other (not allowed to)	3	0.7%
Other (I love the library)	12	2.9%
Other (too busy)	25	5.9%
Other (annoying kids)	3	0.7
Total	421	100%



# Goals, Objectives, Actions

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## **GOALS:**

- 1. *Be a Community Cultural Resource***
- 2. *Broaden Collections***
- 3. *Expand Patron Base Through Programs and Services***
- 4. *Be a Place Where Technology is Explored***
- 5. *Provide Opportunities for Fun and Recreation***

## **Goal # 1: Be a Community Cultural Resource**

**Objective – Rebrand the library to more closely describe modern library services**

Actions:

- Change or add to library name: (Ex: West Bridgewater Public Library Technology and Cultural Center)
- Market meeting room capabilities for community groups to use

**Objective - Improve usage of existing building space**

Actions:

- Analyze foot traffic and patron use behaviors, and arrange library layout accordingly
- Hire ergonomics expert (free service provided by MLS) to assess both public and staff areas to leverage greater efficiencies and improve space utilization

**Objective - Provide opportunities for *experiential learning***

Actions:

- Schedule regular lectures on wide ranging topics
- Host live musical performances
- Expand offerings of *hands-on* programs (ex. Silk scarf making) potential collaboration with Cultural Council
- Pursue grant opportunities to fund initiatives of cultural benefit
- Establish more *self-run* groups (ex. Knitters, genre book clubs, foodie groups)

**Objective - Develop stronger communication with town organizations & schools**

Actions:

- Get members of the various organizations on newsletter recipient list
- Exercise regular outreach and off site visits to various schools and organizations

**Objective - Make spaces more attractive and functional**

Actions:

- Replace aging and/or worn down furniture and equipment
- Provide dedicated areas for specific activities (ex. Digital Media Lab, Maker Space, Game Area, Reading Area, Meeting Space)
- Build outdoor multi-purpose adult seating area
- Create *curb appeal* of library campus with landscaping and re-purposing of outside areas (ex. Picnic tables, flag-pole, garden, patio area)
- Re-furbish gallery space to better meet a wider variety of needs: art shows, yoga classes, etc.



## **Goal # 2. Broaden Collections**

**Objective - Increase foreign language items (specifically French, Spanish & Portuguese)**

Actions:

- Increase use of the BPL Deposit Collection to borrow collections for patron use

**Objective - Increase offerings of non-traditional items and kits.**

Actions:

- Stay abreast of emerging technologies and assess which items have most potential to affect our patrons
- Implement staff training regimen on new consumer technologies and all new circulating items added to collection

**Objective - Create a synergy between library collections and programming to increase circulation, cross promote different aspects of library resources and support events**

Actions:

- Develop a programming schedule that will allow for parallel collection development

### **Goal # 3. Expand user/patron base through programs and services**

#### **Objective – Adjust operating hours in response to community needs**

Actions:

- Develop personnel and funding plan for expanded hours on evenings and weekends, longer evenings, longer Saturdays, Sunday hours

#### **Objective – Expand services beyond traditional library functions**

- Get staff members trained and certified as Notary Public
- Become a passport processing center

#### **Objective - Provide a wider variety of winter activities for families and adults**

- Reboot TED Talk showings
- Encourage Friends of the Library to host indoor events such as Mini-golf, Polar Express Party, etc.

#### **Objective - Expand community awareness of diversity**

Actions:

- Provide programs, lectures, and events that will expose patrons to different cultures and ideas including LGBT issues

#### **Objective - Prioritize underserved populations**

Actions:

- Reach out to special education at schools to make them aware of the resources we can provide
- Develop collection and opportunities for ESL Learning
- Provide staff training
- Acquire and utilize language assistance technologies such as translation apps
- Offer regular *Sensory Story-times* and spectrum friendly versions of popular programs
- Make accommodations for differently abled patrons during regular programs (ex. Opening up activities 1 hour early for autistic children or intellectually disabled)



**Objective - Provide opportunities for “empty nesters” and individuals in need of socialization activities**

Actions:

- Expand the variety of regular crafting groups. (ex. knitting, sewing, quilting, jewelry making, needlepoint, whittling, etc.)
- Organize/Host/Sponsor social events within the community. (ex. Trivia Night)
- Offer classes and programs teaching practical skills (Ex. Adulting classes)
- Host Opposing Viewpoints Discussions
- Movie Nights

**Objective - Bring library out beyond the physical walls of the building into the community**

Actions:

- Maintain a library presence at local events (Farmer’s Market, etc.)
- Organize activities out in the community (Trivia Night, etc.)
- Increase outreach and collaboration with Senior Center
- Utilize Mobile Circ. app to increase patrons by issuing library cards remotely (train station, grocery stores, Farmer’s Market, etc.)
- Film and air regular short library commercials for local cable access TV
- Host a library card sign-up table at town events and at Town Meetings
- Offer a “Single night” at the library

## **Goal # 4. Be a Place Where Technology is Explored**

**Objective - Expand technology offerings and stay up to date on emerging technologies**

Actions:

- Expand WiFi network to include outdoor areas on library campus
- Develop a long-range technology plan to ensure library hardware and infrastructure is continually upgraded in a timely fashion
- Forge connections with tech companies and tech related businesses
- Avenues to Explore: VR, A.I., 3D Printing and other additive manufacturing processes, Entrepreneur Incubator, Drones and their legal/privacy ramifications
- Reframe the definition and purpose of a Maker Space (Define a problem, build a solution, focus on A to Z process)
- Schedule hands on staff training on emerging technologies, and all patron accessible tech within the library
- Create lectures and events around technology topics of interest in important to the public (e.g., partnering with Bridgewater Savings Bank on cyber-security session)

## **Goal # 5. Provide opportunities for Fun and Recreation**

**Objective – Build fun, repeatable activities into the library calendar for all ages**

- Provide “After Hour” events at least once per quarter in conjunction with the Friends of the Library
- Provide “Adult-ing Classes” (i.e. opportunities to develop competencies/life-skills)

**Objective - Showcase Local Talent**

Actions:

- Host Open Mic nights
- Implement a local musician series (live performances)
- Increase artist displays/gallery showings both with local professional authors and students/children





# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people who served on the **West Bridgewater Public Library 2017-18 Strategic Planning Committee**:

Agapi Kouvlis  
Mahi Kouvlis  
Stephanie Churchill  
Mary Adams  
Meredith Anderson  
Laurette Polen  
Nanette Ryan

Elise Puliafico  
Valerie Puliafico  
Christopher Lawrence  
Marian Goode  
Moe McCarthy  
Michelle Sheehan

The **entire 2017-18 library staff** who brainstormed goals, objectives and actions:

Jed Phillips  
Nanette Ryan  
Gail McCarthy  
Ashley Warren

Michelle Sheehan  
Apryl Edlund  
Beth Awalt  
Karen Wilbur

Ellen Snoeyenbos

Working with Kristi Chadwick, from the Massachusetts Library System, got us off on the right track and I think I can safely say that the whole process was inspiring and productive.

With their signatures, the **West Bridgewater Board of Library Trustees** hereby sign off on this plan as a working document to use when moving forward throughout the next five years.

Jerry Lawrence, Chair

Deborah Lancaster, Vice Chair

Marian Goode, Secretary

David Church

Scott Ames

Kristine Roberts

Handwritten signatures of the West Bridgewater Board of Library Trustees in blue ink over horizontal lines. The signatures are: Jerry Lawrence, Deborah Lancaster, Marian Goode, David Church, Scott Ames, and Kristine Roberts.



# Addendum



**Results from S.O.A.R. exercises: Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results**

**Participants: Strategic Planning Committee, Staff, Trustees**

<b>STRENGTHS</b>		
<b>Community</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>Trustees</b>
Friendly, forward-thinking staff, "rolling with the community"	Friendly staff, going the extra mile, staff accepts change	Staff gives great customer service
3D printer	Patrons acceptance of change	Wide array of materials
Location of library - near schools	Proximity to schools	Timely programming
Sense of energy	Technology - free to all	Supportive Board of Trustees
Collections, Digital resources, selection of new titles, museum passes	Great collections: print, movies, magazines, kits	Great building re-organization
Providing information to the schools	Downloadables: Hoopla, Ancestry, Gale, Overdrive, etc.	Space is comfortable and inviting
Inviting space and atmosphere	Vision of how library fits into community	Serves a wide range of age groups
Involves community - digital media lab	Staff innovative ideas	
Specialized events	Close staff ties	
Variety of things for each age		
Ideas are welcome		
Physical building		
Good with publicity		



## OPPORTUNITIES

Community	Staff	Trustees
More integration with elementary schools	More community involvement	More programs in evenings
Growing PR - where is it not reaching? Senior Center?	More technology and staff to keep it up	Better service to commuters -hours, schedule, materials
Access for shut-ins	Tech training - 1-on-1 and group	Get a handle on after-school behavior issues
Utilize the outdoor space available	Upstairs space wasted	Café services - coffee in the mornings
Reaching more diverse community	Upgrade staff training	Re-do icky bathrooms
New athletic groups/activities in town - outreach	More inclusive environment for all abilities	Signage for bathrooms
Promotion of non-fiction collections	More contact with schools	
More displays / Change and Rearrange display spaces	Latch-key services / struggle with after school behavior	
Partnering with other non-profits	Taking advantage of small town scale	
More comfortable seating	More diversity - collection, services, programs	
More technology planning	Looking into the future as to what public needs	
Collaborative work areas		
Other lending opportunities - collections		
Baby area near adult work stations		
More promotion to teens		
More tech trainings - one-on-one / scanning help		
Staff or high school volunteers assigned for work-tutor times		
Stronger Friends Group		



## ASPIRATIONS

Community	Staff	Trustees
Finish upstairs space / build out for more space	Be able to verbalize all the progress made so we are accountable	More space
Functional kitchen for programming	Quiet rooms	Larger parking lot
Library pet program / exhibit	Technology rooms	Larger gallery
Actual screened outdoor area / Picnic tables/shaded outdoor space	Better use of outdoor space	Study rooms / study areas with windows and white boards
Quiet study space during exam weeks when schools close early	Re-do meeting room to be more inviting	Larger meeting room
Additional larger meeting space	Bathroom re-do with ADA compliance	Better electrical system - update and more outlets
More parking	Café / Starbucks-type set-up	More hours / Sundays
Solar panels	Friends of the Library increased membership and help	
Open and available for diversity	Reaching out to untapped demographics	
Coffee/café area Vending machines	More active, more diverse Trustees	
Community calendar		
Movie & book cub		
No fine library / no Dewey		
Fully funded budget		
Bookmobile		
More volunteers / more staff hours		
Extended hours		
Lifelong learning experience		
Library precepts		



## RESULTS

Community	Staff	Trustees
Educated and informed community	See the library as more than just a repository but rather a community center	More diversity of patrons and staff Evening activities for 20-30 somethings
More technology understanding	Relevant collection	
More communication and outreach	Expanding patron-base	Meet-ups
Intergenerational connection	Adult social programs - wine-tasting, etc.	Place for people to meet others with similar interests
Everyone knows the value of the library	Re-branding the library, FOL, Trustees, school/town connections	Life-long learning
Information hub for the town	Be seen as innovative	Newcomer outreach
More library patronage - physical & digital		Family programming
More diversity		
"Not just about reading"		
More partnerships		
Funding easier - create a Foundation?		
Library is the "place to be"		
Library supports the community		