Milford Town Library Long-Range Plan
FY2017-2022

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Methodology

As the Town of Milford and society in general continues to grow and change library services and programs also need to evolve to keep pace with these changes. In 1998, 2004 and 2011, Long-Range Plans were drawn up to guide the Milford Town Library through Fiscal Year (FY) 2016. In FY12, an updated Action Plan was filed with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

To craft a new Long-Range Plan for FY2016 through FY2022 the Library Director and the Board of Library Trustees invited community members to serve on a Long-Range Planning (LRP) Committee. One member of the LRP Committee is a member of the town's Finance Committee.

The LRP Committee used the standard public library planning process, *The New Planning for Results*, as the framework to develop the new library long-range plan. The Committee reviewed the library's Mission Statement and previous plan, and gathered current data from multiple sources to formulate a new set of goals and objectives. A review of the previous Plan determined those items not completed and the set of needs determined at that time. The Committee then provided inputs on what areas required updated or new information based on changes in the town and library environment. The environmental information included town growth, major changes in the town and library including town education levels, ethnic groups, special needs including handicapped aids, and internal library needs made necessary by the library renovation in 2007.

The LRP Committee created a survey and distributed it, via insertion in a local newspaper, to all households and businesses in town as well as making it available on the Internet and publicizing the link to access the survey online. In addition, Spanish and Portuguese language versions of the survey were posted online.

Survey results, as well as data from the following sources were analyzed and utilized:

- US Census Data (2010 Federal Census)
- American Communities Survey 2013
- Community Health Profiles 2012
- Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Profile for Milford
- Milford Public Schools Report Card/Profile from the Massachusetts Department of Education
- Milford Youth Center Program's and Services (to reduce duplication of services)
- Mass Board of Library Commissioner's, MBLC, State Aid and Data Coordination Unit's Public Library Data
- Library Statistics including numbers of visits, circulations, attendance

The Long Range Planning Committee met 4 times during the development of the plan. Library consultants Nancy Rea and Deborah Hoadley facilitated the first three meetings. The Committee discussed library needs and developed goals and activities. The committee met one final time August 6, 2015 to review the plan. The Long Range Plan was presented to the Board of Library Trustees at the August 13, 2015 meeting for review. Adjustments were made and presented at the Library Trustees September meeting for final approval. The Board of Trustees approved the plan on September 9, 2015 and submitted to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) for approval.

Highlights of FY2011-2015 Long Range Plan

Accomplishments

- Developed and implemented a long-range facility maintenance plan.
- Developed a five-year capital plan to enable facility and structure improvements.
- Provided staff opportunities to attend educational training and participate in library organizations.
- Upgraded the current literacy program for greater applicability to local needs.
- Developed and implemented environment for Internet-based learning and exam proctoring.
- Explored and developed alternative funding sources and applied for local, state, and federal grants that expanded current programs and offerings.
- Began to translate library brochures, bookmarks, and specific information literature into Spanish and Portuguese.
- Investigated, recommended, and implemented technology advances that will assist in the handling and referencing of all material.
- Maintained and enhanced the wireless and local area access to the Internet
- Provided continuous awareness and availability of new and emerging media formats.
- Determined optimum plan to encompass the internal facilities layout and structure to enable improved patron utilization of all services.
- Determined the computer capability and availability needed to enhance current and future programs.

Works in progress

- Develop a program to familiarize seniors with the changing material formats.
- Identify and develop productive outreach and assistance programs at the Senior Center.
- Establish an e-newsletter with access through the library website.
- Evaluate and provide adaptive technologies to enable full access to services by vision and hearing impaired patrons.
- Evaluate the best means of fund raising to support Youth Services programs and activities.
- Determine and implement expansion or resizing of the current parking facility.

Description of the Community – Milford Massachusetts

Milford is located in Worcester County, approximately 30 miles southwest of Boston, 18 miles southeast of Worcester and 32 miles north of Providence, RI. Situated in the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor, it is bordered to the north by Hopkinton, to the south by Hopedale, the west by Upton and the east by Holliston, Medway and Bellingham.

Originally called "Wopowage" by local Native Americans and "Mill River" by the early settlers, Milford was part of the Town of Mendon until its incorporation in 1780. Strategically located in the Blackstone Valley corridor, Milford became an important manufacturing and transportation hub. Two of the largest boot factories in the nation were located in Milford. The number of businesses helped to establish the Town as an early stop on the fledgling Boston and Albany Railroad. Milford is also well known for its granite quarries. Granite was discovered in the early 1800s and the fine-grained "Milford Pink" was sought after and widely used in the original construction of landmarks such as the Boston Public Library, the Grand Central and Pennsylvania Railroad Terminals in New York City, the Corcoran Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. and the base of the Statue of Liberty.

Post-World War II through the end of the 1900s, Milford began to evolve into less of a manufacturing town and more of a bedroom and retail community. Today, its largest employers are the Milford Regional Medical Center, which serves Milford and 15 area communities, and the Waters Corporation, which offers analytical system solutions, software, and services for scientists.

In the 1800s and 1900s, the granite quarries and manufacturing provided employment for many immigrant groups. Some of the major immigrant groups were the Irish, Italians and Portuguese. Later groups who made Milford home in the early 2000s have been from South America, Asia, and the Middle East.

The 2010 US Census lists Milford's population as 28,061. The 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) raised that number slightly to 28,252. Currently 81% are American born and 19% foreign-born. The Town is approximately fifteen (15) square miles in area, having 11,446 households with an average size of 2.6 people.

Statistics from the five-year ACS estimates show that 49.3% of the population is male and 50.7% is female. Also based on these estimates, the various age groups are shown in the following chart.
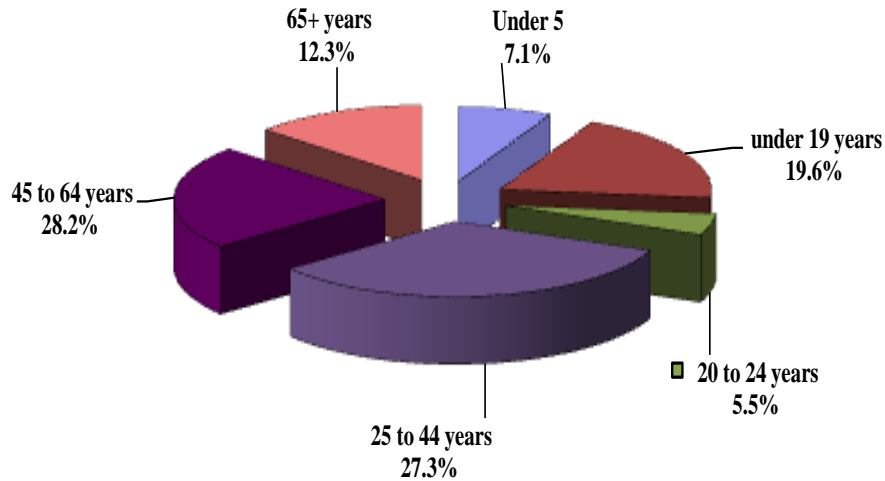
Milford Age Distribution

Race and ethnicity statistics show 89% of the Town's residents identify themselves as White, 8.2% as Hispanic, 2.9% as Asian, 3.0% as Black or African-American and 0.1% as Native American. The estimates additionally show that 27%, of Milford's population, speak a language other than English at home.

Approximately 77% of the land use is for residential purposes with 12% for commercial and 7% for industrial. Milford is classified as an Urban Center. There are two major industrial parks in Milford, Granite Park and the Bear Hill Industrial Area, both located near the town's two exits off Interstate Route 495. Major employers in the area are Waters Corporation with approximately 1,200 employees and the Milford Regional Medical Center with 1,000 employees. There are 10 companies from various industries and services that each employs more than 100 employees. In the last 25 years, there has been a shift from traditional manufacturing jobs to management, technology and service-related employment.

The Milford public school system has three (3) elementary schools, Pre-K to grade 4, with 1,671students; two (2) middle schools with grades 5 to 8, with 1237 students; and, one (1) high school, grades 9 to 12, with 1,127 students. The total number of students enrolled in 2013-2014 was 4,182 in grades pre-K to 12. Public school enrollment has remained relatively stable during the past few years.

An important change is the number of students who speak another language at home. More than 20% of the district's students indicate English is not their first language. Overall, 8.8% of the students are considered English language Learners (ELL).

The 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) listed 9% of Milford residents having attained a graduate or professional degree, 22% having attained a bachelor's degree, 8% having attained an associate degree and 32% a high school or equivalent diploma. Eleven percent had less than a high school diploma.

In 1992, a Youth Center was opened in the former armory in Milford and is undergoing a $5-million renovation in 2015. The handicapped accessible facility offers young people 8 to 18 various services and activities including a gymnasium, batting cages, physical fitness activities, nutrition classes, various indoor sports, physical fitness, tutoring and mentoring, a homework club, crafts and games. Approximately 140 young people are using the center daily.

The *Milford Daily News*, the *Milford Town Crier*, local radio station WMRC-AM and two public access television channels on Milford TV all provide local media coverage. High-speed broadband Internet access is available through Comcast, Verizon and satellite vendors. The web site Milford Patch (milford-ma.patch.com) was launched in 2010 to cover local news and events.

The handicapped accessible Memorial Hall, which once housed the Town Library, was renovated in 2002-2003 and has been converted for cultural use. It is home to the Milford Historical Society, and is often used for community use programs. Claflin Hill Music Performance Foundation, Inc. creates and supports musical, cultural, and educational activities in the community. The Greater Milford Community Chorus, Milford Concert Band, Milford High School Theater Workshop, and The Milford Theatre Guild also provide the community with entertainment and culture. The handicapped accessible Ruth Anne Bleakney Senior Center offers cultural, social and health programs, as well as a variety of other programs, to the growing senior population. Other active community organizations include the Milford Area Chamber of Commerce, the Lions Club, the Rotary Club, the Masonic Lodge, the Greenleaf Garden Club and the Junior League of Women.

Description of the Library – Milford Town Library

The Town of Milford established the Milford Town Library on August 30, 1858. It existed in various locations between 1858 and 1886, at which time it moved into the Memorial Hall building. The library remained in this Civil War memorial building for the next 100 years.

Library Building

A new facility was authorized by a vote of the Town Meeting on June 13, 1983. The $2.6 million appropriated by the Town was combined with $512,200 in Libraries Services Construction Act (LSCA Title II) federal grant money awarded by the MBLC. The current Milford Town Library building opened its doors to the public on January 13, 1986.

A major, $1.6-million renovation was undertaken in September 2006 and the Library reopened in November 2007 with ongoing renovation until January 2009. The renovation rearranged the internal space and provided additional collection and community space. New carpeting, efficient lighting systems, and increased shelving space also were part of the project.

The current facility has two levels. The main floor covers 17,445 square feet and includes the Circulation Desk; Information/Reference Desk; the Paul Raftery Children's Room; Paul E. Curran Historical Reference Room; all audiovisual, periodical and book collections; reference office; and public restrooms. The Children's Room has a program room adjacent to it that is used for children's programs and by community groups for meetings and special activities.

The lower level, measuring 9,555 square feet, houses the administrative offices, Technical Services, storage space, maintenance space, mechanical rooms, meeting rooms, staff lounge, and restrooms. The meeting rooms have a capacity of 125 and are used for library programs and by community groups. Placing the Young Adult Room, ESL Room and meeting rooms on the lower floor has allowed the upper floor to be utilized solely as a quiet zone for patrons for research, materials selection, and reading. This reconfiguration provides improved utilization of space.

The building provides handicapped accessibility that was updated with the renovation to meet state and federal standards. The two levels are connected by stairs and by an elevator. The front entrance has automatic sliding doors. A parking lot that accommodates 21 spaces, including one (1) space restricted for handicapped use, is supplemented by approximately 25 on-street parking spaces in front of the Library.

The library building will celebrate its 30-year anniversary in 2016. Several projects have been undertaken in the past five years to maintain its functionality. Capital funding was approved during FY2011-FY2015 for building infrastructure maintenance and environment: In FY2012, the air conditioning unit was replaced and in FY2013, funds refurbished the Young Adult area and furniture replacement in the Children's Room. Additionally, in FY2014, a new roof was installed. Electrical upgrades, improved signage and new computer furniture in the adult areas were completed in FY2015. Attention still needs to be paid to the heating system, which is nearly 30 years old.

Staffing

The Milford Town Library has a staff of 24, totaling almost 20 full-time equivalents (FTE). This staff includes the Director, Assistant Director/Supervisor of Technical Services, Supervisor of Youth Services and three (3) professional reference librarians. In 2006, funding was approved for an Assistant Director's position by adding a stipend to an existing department supervisor salary. In FY2009, the stipend was used to pay for a part-time assistant librarian (additional staff in the newly added Young Adult room). The stipend was added back into the FY2015 budget and an Assistant Director/Department Supervisor was promoted. The position of Supervisor for Adult Services has not been filled since August 1990. The position of Supervisor of Circulation was upgraded from Assistant Librarian to Librarian level in 2010.

There are three (3) other Librarian positions. These positions primarily work at the Reference Desk, but also provide coverage in other library departments. The Youth Services Department consists of Department Supervisor, 3 full time Assistant Librarians and a 15 hours per week Assistant Librarian. In FY2012, funding was added to make a part time Assistant Librarian full time. One 15-hour part time Assistant librarian was added in FY2008 to provide additional coverage in the newly created Young Adult room. All staff members provide coverage at all public desks.

There are five (5) full-time Associate Librarian positions and three part-time library clerk positions. In FY2015, the two full time library clerk positions were upgraded to Associate Librarian. The upgrade enables staff to be cross-trained in the circulation and technical services departments. The three part-time clerk positions are 20 hours/week, 19 hours/week. Four (4) pages, at 10-6 hours/week each, shelve the collection and keep it in order. The After-school Monitor Associate Librarian position has remained vacant since 2002. The maintenance staff consists of a Junior Custodian and a Senior Custodian who provide janitorial support during operation hours.

The Board of Trustees also employs a part-time recorder to take its meeting minutes. Library Staff is represented by the Milford Town Library Staff Association (MTLS-AFT-AFL-CIO), which is responsible for contract negotiations. Review of job descriptions is done periodically to make sure they are adapted for changing technology and skills needed for efficient management of library operations. Staff members have the opportunity to attend classes and workshops through the Massachusetts Library System (MLS), Central Western Resource Sharing Library Network (C/WMARS) and other locally available seminars and workshops.

Hours of Operation

The Milford Town Library is open 65 hours/week from September through mid-June and 57 hours/week during the summer. Normal hours are Mondays through Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m., Fridays from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., and Saturdays from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. The Library is closed on all legal holidays and Saturdays during July and August.

Collection

The Milford Town Library collection now includes items within the physical library and the digital items that are provided by outside entities. In the previous LRP, the majority of the collection of all types of formats was housed locally within the library. In FY2015, the library collection consisted of 138,274 items, which was a 9% increase since FY2010. The ratio between books to non- book formats (DVD, Video Games, Audio Books) has remained about the same. In FY2015, print materials comprise 83% of the collection and digital formats comprise 17%. Magazine subscriptions have seen a 5% decrease in titles due to cessation in print or lack of interest.

With the increase of digital e-books, patrons have the capability to borrow outside the physical library. The growing knowledge base for mobile devices is impacting patron choices. Every year more patrons want increased access to digital materials that can be streamed directly to smart phones and tablets. C/WMARS provides access to over 40,044 additional titles through the online digital catalog. These items are purchased jointly by library network members through the Overdrive Digital Catalog. The titles are available to accommodate the growing number of devices, streaming audio and video. The trend towards streaming and mobile device usage will increase and the physical collection will reflect this in the next long-range plan.

Accessing the collection and using the available databases has changed. Patrons are relying more on the website to locate and make requests for materials. In FY2013, the C/WMARS Library Network migrated to a new integrated library system (ILS) Evergreen. Evergreen is an open source system which allows for more personal customization of the local online catalog and patrons can create virtual reading lists and request materials without physically being in the library.

Circulation

During the most recent recession, the library experienced a significant increase in circulation. Many patrons relied on the library for access to the Internet and other materials to replace or supplement their research or entertainment. With the improving economy, there has been a slight drop in circulation. The average of the last three fiscal years (FY2013, FY2014 and FY2015) is 192,355. The percent of materials circulation has remained the same. Books still comprise 61% of the circulation, DVDs being 26% and Audio Books making up 8%. Video games have seen a 1% increase yearly. Currently, 3% of the circulations are for video games. The remaining 2% consists of magazines, educational kits and other small collections.
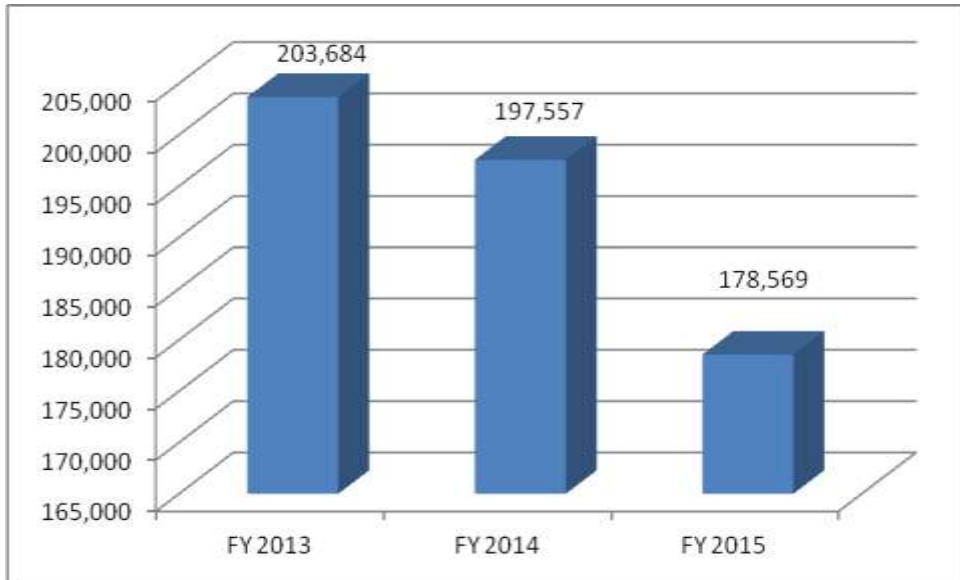
Annual circulation increased during the "great recession" and has changed slightly with the improving economy.

Circulation for items not located in the library has grown. From FY2013-FY2015, circulation of e-books and streaming audio and video has increased to 4.9% of library and Overdrive circulations combined. The items that might have been borrowed from the library's physical collection are now being borrowed from the digital catalog.

FY2014

Video Games - 2.4%
Audio - 7.4%
eBooks/downloads - 3.8%
DVDs -26.1%
Books - 60.3%

FY2015

Video Games - 2.2%
Audio - 7.6%
eBooks/downloads - 4.9%
DVDs -24.0%
Books - 61.3%
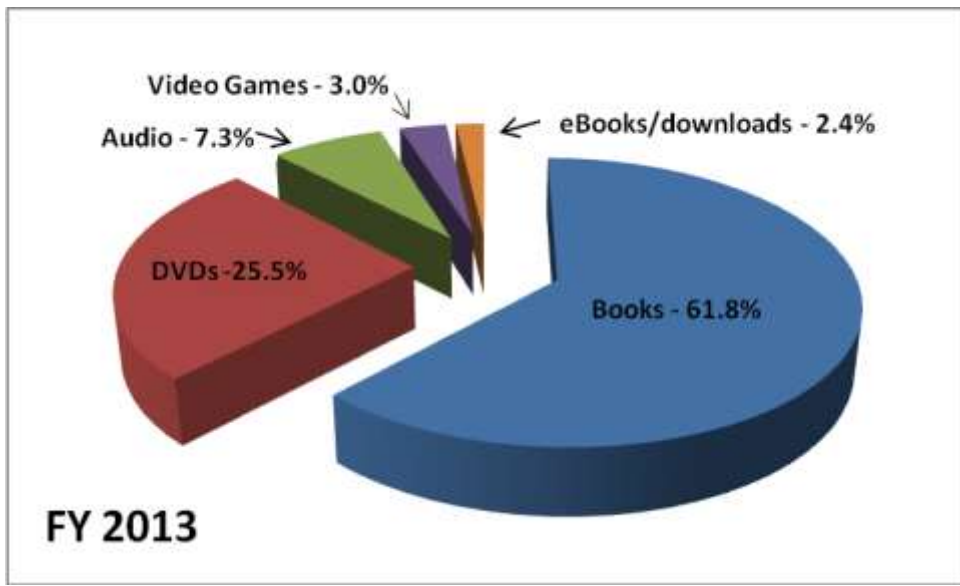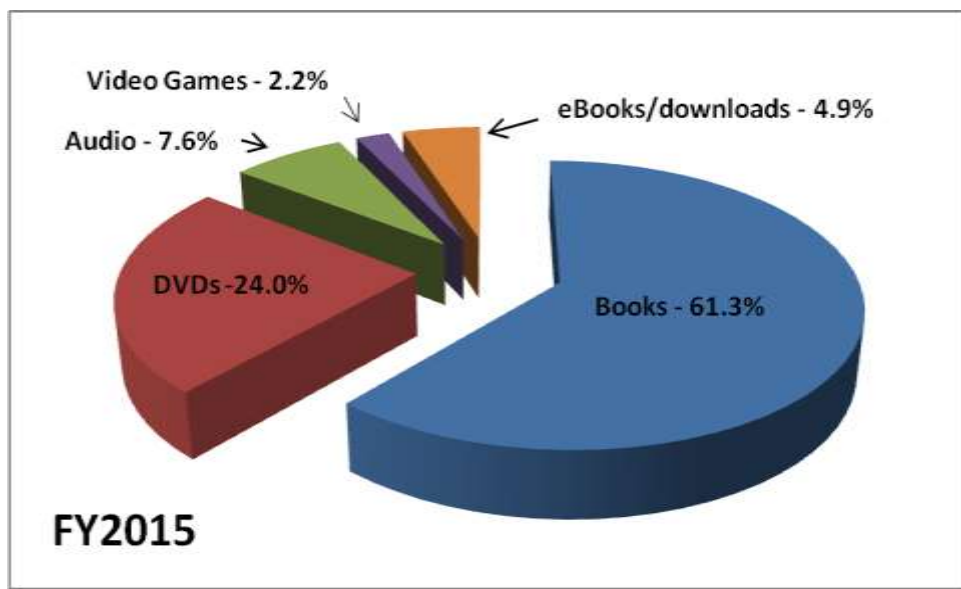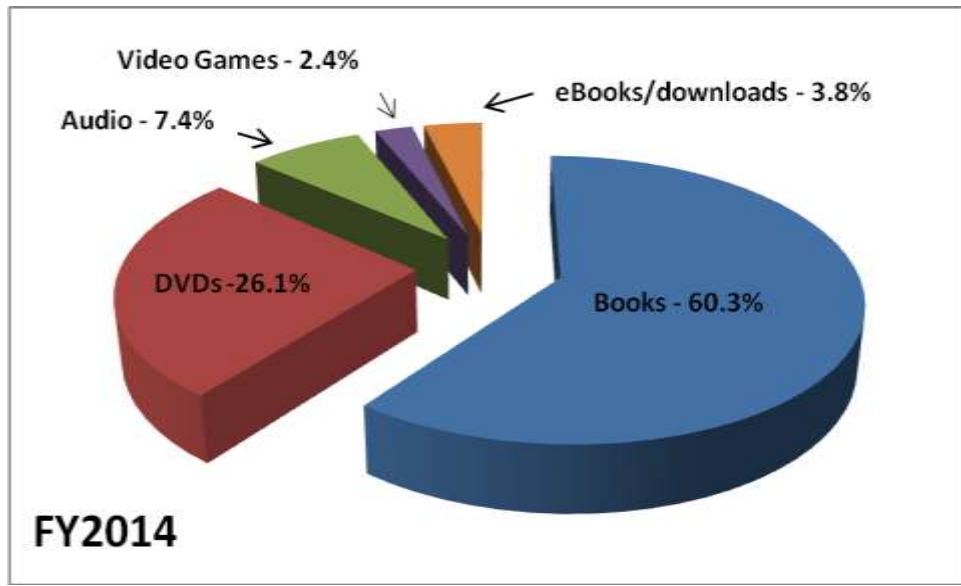
Reference Services

The level of patron interaction with the reference desks is a very important part of research success. The level of activity has not changed, but location of resources has changed. A small static reference collection is available for research. Between the Milford Town Library, C/WMARS and MBLC, there are a wide range of research database available to patrons within the library and remotely.

The Milford Town Library provides access to Cypress Language, a resume creating database; Mango Languages modular database for languages; Heritage Quest and Ancestry, two genealogy databases; and, Learning Express, which provides research for students for reports and GED review. The MBLC, through the statewide database program, provides access to the Gale

Cengage Suite of research databases. Database for academic research and general research are included.

Non-traditional learning is changing reference duties. Reference staff is asked to serve as proctors for long-distance learners about 10 times a month.

Library Technology

Mobile computing and cloud storage are impacting library technology decisions. The library has to provide sufficient support for existing technology within the library and, at the same time, support new technologies.

In FY2009, town funding approval of $30,000, plus an additional $60,000 in FY2010, allowed the Library to lease an internal network infrastructure with new client/server architecture. New technology thin-client computers replaced the standard PCs for both staff and patron usage. The monitors were additionally upgraded from a cathode ray tube (CRT) version to flat screen capability. When the lease ended in FY 2012, a new direction was taken. It was decided that a thin client environment was not the best for staff functions. Staff needed more computing power and all of the 16 staff thin clients were replaced with standard personal computers. All staff computers are now connected to the photocopier located in the Technical Services area and scanning of documents is available.

Userful Inc was selected to replace the current thin client patron workstations. Userful software and support is an improvement, and the system has suffered very little downtime. The number of workstations remains at Reference Area: 8, Young Adult: 4, and Children's Room: 3, plus two catalog-only workstations in the reference Area and the Children's Room. Realizing the trend towards mobile computing, a decision was made to not expand the current local area network and improve access for mobile computing within the library. More electrical outlets and computer furniture were added throughout the library. Additional electrical outlets and USB port charging stations have been added in the Reference and Young Adult areas. The library invested in barcode readers for the Circulation Department to read barcodes scanned into mobile devices. To accommodate mobile users, additional spaces have been added to the Children's department. Wireless usage has increased dramatically: There are two antennas which provide coverage for the entire building. The antennas provide patrons with 40 sessions. In FY2015, there were over 10,000 sessions with the wireless hotspot, and 859 sessions per week with the in house patron workstations.

Continuous staff education is very important with technology. The library purchased tablets to familiarize library staff and provide assistance. The library currently owns two (2) iPads, two (2) Sony eReaders, two (2) HD Amazon Fire tablets and three (3) Kindle ebook readers.

Web Presence

Online presence has grown to include the website and a Facebook page. The importance of the website and Facebook page cannot be overstated. The website is the primary access point to the library's information and online catalog. The website is constantly being revised and new information about programs and events are posted. The Facebook page reaches more than 400 people and is growing in popularity.

Specialized Programs

The Library began a literacy, tutoring program in 1986, shortly after the opening of the new Library facility. Initially, the program focused on basic adult literacy rather than ESL (English as a Second Language). After several years the program focus changed to ESL literacy to accommodate a new influx of non-English speaking residents from South America, the Middle East and Asia. In recent years, the number of ESL students has far outnumbered individual tutor volunteers, leaving a waiting list for the program. To alleviate this problem, the Library began offering drop-in conversation classes three nights a week in 2003. Training classes for new ESL tutoring volunteers are held twice per year. The ESL room was recently renovated to provide a classroom experience. Local artist Mary Owanesian has painted a mural depicting the goal of education and new chairs and tables have been added.

The Milford Room was renamed the Paul E. Curran Historical Collection Room in April 2010. The room is a unique and valuable source of local history. The room is open to the public during normal Library hours. A local historian is available on a regular basis during specified times and upon pre-arranged appointment. The scope of the collection includes historical information on Milford and other Massachusetts cities and towns, and genealogical materials. Materials pertaining to New England are kept only if they contain information on Milford or surrounding towns.

Paul E Curran bequeathed his personal collection to the library upon his death in January 2015. Mr. Curran's collection contains photos, letters and newspaper columns, which contain significant information about the town of Milford History. Mr. Curran's collection is just the first of many personal collections promised to the Milford Town Library, and a plan is needed to properly care for these valuable collections. Grants are being sought to help with the evaluation and preservation of the Paul E. Curran Collections Room and develop a digitization plan for the materials.

Youth Services

The mission of the Youth Services Department is to provide an environment, which encourages community participation and educational enrichment. It works with families and educators to promote literacy from birth through young adulthood. On an average day, 40 to 70 youths participate in Youth Services activities supervised by the Young Adult Librarian, staff and volunteers.

The Young Adults (YA) population includes students in grades 7 through 12. Middle School students (grades 5 through 7), or "Tweens," also participate in YA activities. A Teen Advisory Committee (TAC) meets regularly to make recommendations on programs and activities. The Youth Services staff is responsible for the selection of Juvenile and YA collection materials and works collaboratively with the School Department to foster improved relationships with teachers and students and to develop programming for teens.

Collaborative programs for children and parents, with special emphasis on family literacy, are the result of proactively networking with local and state agencies serving youth and families. This includes the Massachusetts Library Association Youth Services Section, the Milford School Department, the Family Network Project, day care centers, and other town departments. The Youth Services Department was awarded a STEM Grant through the MBLC Commissioners in 2015 to bring programs to grades 5-7 on how science is used in everyday lives. Two telescopes were added to the collection to promote the study of astronomy and family participation.

The Summer Reading program is an important annual collaboration between the Library and the Milford School Department. Reading and other study materials related to the requirements are provided at the library. Borrowing material from other C\WMARS member libraries is a major asset is that ensures all students the opportunity to complete the required coursework. This service is a key mission of the Milford Town Library. Milford students also participate in MBLC annual summer reading programs.

Budget

The Milford Town Library weathered the last recession without losing state accreditation. From FY2009 – FY2012, the Library experienced small increments to the budget and was able to meet annual certification in the Municipal Appropriation Requirement (MAR). From FY2013 through FY2016, the library is able to meet the requirements, but the budget must be monitored closely to avoid future funding gaps that can impact certification.

Attaining certification greatly benefits the Library and Milford residents as it allows the Library to qualify for State Aid and ongoing state and federal grants. Maintaining certification enables Milford residents to borrow materials from other certified libraries providing larger material selection availability for our patrons at less overall cost. State Aid to Public Libraries that could be impacted without certification includes the Library Incentive Grant (LIG) and the Municipal Equalization Grant (MEG). Additionally, the library receives state funding as part of the Non-Resident Offset program.

The Library relies on the State Aid obtained through certification to supplement municipal funding, and cuts in this funding creates the risk of not meeting certification requirements in the materials area. This aid is provided through the MBLC to provide additional funds outside the municipal budget for the support of library services. State Aid for all public libraries was severely cut in FY2011. That year, Milford suffered a 13% cut in State Aid, which made it difficult for the town to meet the materials requirement. State Aid is slowly being restored, but as materials cost rise, monitoring needs to be done to ensure the operating budget grows to meet all State Aid requirements.

The Library currently has no endowment. The Library does have a Gift Account where monies can be deposited and used to purchase items. There is an active Friends of the Library that provides support for the museum pass program and other community-oriented programs. The Raftery Trust Fund provides $325 per year for the purchase of Children's materials. The library staff actively seeks grants and outside funding for programs and materials. Community partners such as UniBank, Rockland Trust, Milford Regional Hospital and the Milford Area Rotary provide periodic support. More emphasis is needed to have a more organized approach for soliciting grants and donations.

Needs Assessment

Collection Management

Library resources are no longer confined to physical location. Patrons expect increased digital global access to materials and local special collections. Support of new learning tools and remote learning also impacts the purchasing and management of collections. Traditional reference resources and other materials are no longer available in print. Funds earmarked for printed materials are now being used to purchase databases, e-books and other digital formats.

There are still many patrons who rely on the Library's physical collection for research and entertainment. Funds diverted to digital collections impacts the funds available for the collection. The Library will have to find a balance that allows for the building of a strong digital collection while continuing to provide access to relevant local materials.

Programming

The Library programming reflects the community. Youth Services Department in conjunction with Friends of the Milford Town Library host programs, which educate and entertain. The Teen Advisory Board gives young adults the opportunity to suggest possible programs focused on their interests. The Friends of the Milford Town Library do adult programming with specialized programming done by the Reference Department. These programs cover a variety of topics and entertainment.

Recognizing up to 27% of Milford's population English is not their primary language. As the result the Library has sponsored classes to learn English. Staff and volunteers have worked to provide a comfortable learning environment. The Library and the School Department have started orientation nights to help parents and students learn about Library programs and services. To remain a vibrant and relevant community resource, the Library must keep its commitment to seek out programs and services, which benefit the entire community.

Technology Support

There is a constant need for the Library to ensure accessibility to collections and the external resources. Long distance learning, digital resources, new devices and software applications make it critical for the Library to have sufficient funding for hardware, software and network upgrades. Adaptive technologies must be part of the technology plan to ensure all users have access to library programs and services. Staff training is a critical component to the user experience. Staff members need the skills and technology tools to assist users in using traditional and digital resources.

Collaborative Partnerships

Collaboration between Town departments and local business continues to be very important. These partnerships allow the Library to understand the community's needs, to support learning, and recreational activities. The Library has developed strong relationships with the Senior Center, Youth Center and the School Department. These relationships allow the library to support Town departments through educational, recreational programs and curriculum support.

Fostering relationships with community organizations and businesses is ongoing. The library cannot provide all programs without assistance from the community. Two successful partnerships are with Milford Regional Hospital and Edward M. Kennedy Center. The Library needs to seek out partnerships that can support or supplement Library services.

Environmental Needs

The current Library building was constructed in 1985 and opened its doors to the public on January 13, 1986. The Library underwent a 1.5 million dollar renovation from September 2006 - January 2009. A five year maintenance plan was developed and using Capital Planning funding, in FY 2012 the air conditioning unit was replaced, FY2013 new furniture was purchased for the Children and Young Adult areas and in FY2014 the Library roof was also replaced. In 2015 funding was used to add electrical outlets to the Reference and Young Adult areas and new computer furniture was purchased to finish the project. The heating system is nearing 30 years old and must be monitored to be replaced.

The parking lot has 21 spaces and is supplemented with 25 on-street parking spaces in front of the Library. Limited patron parking during school release times limits patron accessibility. Additionally, conferences and major activities held at the Library tend to utilize the majority of parking lot spaces. Parking is a long ongoing issue with the Library, Stacy Middle School and Memorial Hall. A fresh approach done as a group will help ease the parking problem.

Communication Needs

The Library uses a variety of media to communicate with various populations. Radio and print media is still an important component for reaching patrons. Patrons who do not use online services rely on the traditional media to learn about Library services and programs. The Library has a weekly column in the *Milford Daily News* and places announcements in the twice-monthly *Milford Town Crier*. The website and Facebook have become very important communication tools. Patrons use the website to access the online catalog to place "holds," and to download content without stepping into the Library. More of a push is needed to create content for these users.

Staffing Needs

Investment in staff is an important component in the success in the delivery of Library services. Providing relevant training helps both staff and users to get the most out of Library offerings.

Allowing staff to grow within their positions is also very important. The Library recognizes the important of ongoing staff training and having a talented workforce to meet the constantly changing work environment.

Budget Needs

Funding impacts every part of the Library. Funding has been sufficient to meet certification, but in the growing digital environment, there are users who rely on the Library for access for daily activities. Collaboration, savvy budget management and the understanding of the importance of the Library as a community resource will help to keep the Library a vital organization.

Mission Statement

The Milford Town Library supports the whole community to promote personal growth. The library provides a welcoming setting that inspires learning and recreation through resources, services and programs, while maintaining a comfortable and confidential environment.

Vision Statements

- The Library will strive to provide innovative technology to enhance curiosity and digital literacy.

- The Library will continue to evolve as a place where the community connects to local, national and global resources.

- The Library will continue to promote diversity to explore a variety of experiences to create and enhance inter-generational enrichment for all ages.

- The Library will be relevant, responsive, and foster collaborative partnerships with community organizations to continue building a legacy for our community.

Goals, Objectives and Activities

Collections

Goal 1: To develop, maintain and preserve collections in a variety of formats and locations.

Objective A: Monitor trends to be aware of changing formats and needs.

Activity 1: Provide information and training for staff to learn about changing content and formats.

Activity 2: Review Collection Development Policy on a yearly basis to reflect changing formats.

Activity 3: Ensure patron awareness and usage of new media formats.

Activity 4: Develop instructional guides for staff and patrons on how to use new formats and devices.

Objective B: Maintain physical collection.

Activity 1: Continue to assess and weed the collection for relevancy and currency.

Activity 2: Review physical layout and shift collections to make them more appealing and provide the best access.

Objective C: Preserve and improve accessibility to specialized collections.

Activity 1: Investigate and seek out grants for preservation of local collections.

Activity 2: Investigate options for digitization.

Activity 3: Prepare and organize local collections for digitization and improved accessibility.

Objective D: Promote patron awareness of access to multilingual collections available at the library, as well as from other libraries outside the local network.

Activity 1: Locate and request relevant materials from available collections.

Activity 2: Find vendors for foreign language materials.

Activity 3: Translate library promotional materials and use social media to promote the collections.

Programming

Goal 2: To provide programming to meet and reflect the community, focusing on diversity and bringing the whole community together across the ages.

> **Objective A:** Investigate programs that will attract diverse and inter-generational audiences, and attracts and maintains a multi-generational diverse interest and engagement.
>
> > **Activity 1:** Seek funding and grants to provide programs that enhance diversity and allow inter-generational experiences.
> >
> > **Activity 2:** Promote new and existing programs through the website, newsletter, traditional and new social media outlets.
> >
> > **Activity 3:** Outreach and engage conversations with communities who traditionally do not use library services to learn more about their needs.
>
> Objective B: Seek partnerships to provide special programming opportunities.
>
> > Activity 1: Create an opportunity for community partners to discuss possible programs enhancing diversity and inter-generational opportunities.
> >
> > Activity 2: Continue working with schools and families to build on existing relationships.

Services

Goal 3: To provide services which enhance and incorporate both traditional and innovative methods to attract a wider audience to the library.

> **Objective A:** Continue to work with schools and other community groups to introduce all families to library services.
>
> > **Activity 1:** Collaborate with teachers and other community leaders to provide services at the library.
> >
> > **Activity 2:** Promote resources and services available, including English as Second Language (ESL) classes.
>
> **Objective B**: To develop and maintain partnerships and relationships with other town departments and organizations.
>
> > **Activity 1:** Work with finance committee and advocate at town meeting to maintain library certification and keep town officials informed of the benefits of certification.

Activity 2: Continue collaboration with town departments and community groups to develop services benefiting all ages.

Activity 3: Seek out new community partnerships.

<u>Technology</u>

Goal 4: Implement technology that will improve patron experience and library operations.

Objective A: Maintain level of technology for accessibility to library collections and other resources.

Activity 1: Evaluate trends in current technology and change as environment dictates.

Activity 2: Expand wireless network to accommodate higher demand.

Activity 3: Work with finance committee to provide adequate funding for technology upgrades.

Activity 4: Maintain and upgrade internal network to meet staff needs.

Objective B: Provide adaptive technology to improve access to library programs and services.

Activity 1: Investigate technologies that enhance experience for hearing and vision impaired.

Activity 2: Provide training and assistance for both staff and patrons in the use of adaptive technology.

Objective C: Develop and implement programs for the learning of new formats and research tools for patron.

Activity 1: Appraise the needs of the community for technology programs.

Activity 2: Hold training workshops to teach new technologies.

Activity 3: Approach high schools and other potential teaching partners for additional teachers and resources.

Activity 4: Find funding to support technology programs and services.

Facilities

Goal 5: **Maintain and improve library facilities to continue to create a pleasant, secure, and accessible environment.**

> **Objective A:** Expand parking options.

>> **Activity 1:** Investigate purchasing land adjacent to library property.

>> **Activity 2**: Discuss with town administrator use of Memorial Hall grounds for parking.

>> **Activity 3**: Collaborate with the school department to look for joint parking options.

>> **Activity 4:** Hold focus group to discuss available options.

> **Objective B:** Upgrade public areas for ease of use and accessibility.

>> **Activity 1**: Refurbish circulation area.

>> **Activity 2:** Add self-checkout at circulation area.

>> **Activity 3**: Review and update library signage.

>> **Activity 4:** Meet with staff periodically to review library design.

Staffing

Goal 6: **To recruit and cultivate outstanding library staff.**

> **Objective A**: Provide learning opportunities for career development.

>> **Activity 1**: Encourage staff to attend workshops, conferences and seminars offered by library organizations.

>> **Activity 2**: Investigate courses for further career development and encourage staff to participate.

>> **Activity 3**: Allow staff time to reflect and share what they have learned from attending workshops, conferences and other educational opportunities.

Objective B: Review current job descriptions to reflect changing library environment.

Activity 1: Compare current job descriptions with actual job responsibilities.

Activity 2: Work with the union to update job descriptions to reflect current job duties.

Activity 3: Enable staff to update skills according to changes in job duties.

Objective C: Develop programs for the learning of new formats and research tools.

Activity 1: Learn about the latest educational tools used by students.

Activity 2: Evaluate trends and demands of the community as well as offerings in other libraries.

Activity 3: Hold training workshops to learn how to use new technologies.

Activity 4: Use training offered through MLS and CWMARS.

Activity 5: Recruit and encourage staff with diverse background and language skills in an effort to broaden outreach to all communities.

Action Plan

The following Activities shall be performed and completed by the listed dates to fulfill the goals and objectives of the Milford Town Library Long Range Plan. A review shall be conducted by the Trustees each July and January to monitor and evaluate progress, and to reschedule or redefine any activity based upon more current needs, or to eliminate any activity that has reduced in schedule urgency or is unneeded.

The following Activities will be pursued and completed by FY 2017

- ➢ Investigate options for digitization.
- ➢ Locate and request relevant foreign language materials from available collections.
- ➢ Promote programs and services through the web site, newsletter, and traditional and new social media outlets.
- ➢ Promote English as Second Language classes and available collection.
- ➢ Refurbish circulation area.
- ➢ Investigate technologies that enhance experience for hearing and vision impaired.
- ➢ Hold training workshops for patrons to learn how to use new technologies.
- ➢ Provide information and workshops for staff to learn about changing content and formats.
- ➢ Compare current job descriptions with actual job responsibilities
- ➢ Investigate purchasing land adjacent to library property
- ➢ *Outcome-Plan for the preservation and improved accessibility to special collections*
- ➢ *Outcome-Install adaptive technology for hearing impaired at public desks*
- ➢ *Outcome- 50% revision of job descriptions to reflect current job duties*
- ➢ *Outcome-5% improvement in visibility of ESL Program and collection*

The following Activities will be pursued and completed by FY2018

- ➢ Investigate and seek out grants for preservation of local collections.
- ➢ Seek funding and grants to provide programs and services.
- ➢ Translate library materials and use social media to promote the collections.
- ➢ Provide training and assistance in the use of adaptive technology.
- ➢ Approach high schools and other potential teaching partners for additional teachers and resources.
- ➢ Expand wireless network to accommodate higher demand.
- ➢ Add self-checkout at circulation area.
- ➢ Discuss with town administrator to use Memorial Hall grounds for parking.
- ➢ Work with the union to update job descriptions to reflect current job duties.
- ➢ *Outcome-10% increase in educational opportunities for patrons and staff.*
- ➢ *Outcome- Two new partnerships for technology training.*
- ➢ *Outcome- 5% increase in the grants and other funding*
- ➢ *Outcome-5% increase in patron self –checkout use*

The following Activities will be pursued and completed by FY2019

- Prepare and organize local collections for digitization and improved accessibility.

- Evaluate trends and demands of the community as well as offerings in other libraries.
- Continue to work with schools and other community groups to introduce all families to library services.
- Translate library materials and use social media to promote the collections.
- Outreach to communities who traditionally do not use library services
- Use training offered through MLS and CWMARS.
- *Outcome-30% increase in digital access to local special collections.*
- *Outcome-10% increase in families using library services.*
- *Outcome- 5% increase in translated materials available.*

The following Activities will be pursued and completed by FY2020

- Learn about the latest educational tools used by students.
- Appraise the needs of the community for technology programs
- Continue to attend workshops and seminars offered by library organizations.
- Review and update library signage.
- Collaborate with the school department to look for joint parking options.
- Investigate courses for career development and encourage participation.
- *Outcome-50% increase participation of all staff members attending training workshops.*
- *Outcome- Learning of new educational tools.*
- *Outcome- Replacing library signage to reflect environment.*
- *Outcome-10% increase in patron and staff parking.*

The following Activities will be pursued and completed by FY2021

- Find vendors for foreign language materials
- Seek out new community partnerships
- Maintain and upgrade internal network to meet staff needs.
- Meet with staff periodically to review library design.
- Review physical layout to provide the best access to collection.
- Enable staff to update skills according to changes in job duties.
- Hold focus groups on parking options.
- *Outcome- 5% increase in foreign language collection materials*
- *Outcome-Three new community partnerships.*
- *Outcome-Update floor plan.*

The following Activities shall be completed by FY2022

- Weeding and shifting to keep the collection appealing and accessible.
- Evaluate trends in current technology and change as environment dictates.

- Ensure patron awareness and usage of new media formats.
- Continue collaboration with town departments and community groups to develop programs which highlight their programs and services
- Work with finance committee and town meeting to maintain library certification and keep town officials informed of the benefits of certification.
- Recruit and encourage staff with diverse background and language skills in an effort to broaden outreach to all communities.
- *Outcome-20% weeding of the collection.*
- *Outcome-Update technology and training programs.*
- *Outcome-2% increase in diverse workforce.*
- *Outcome- Meet certification requirements.*

Appendix I

Survey Results

The Milford Town Library conducted a services survey from June 26 to July 2015 as part of the development of the Strategic Plan FY2017-FY2022. Milford residents were given opportunity to provide feedback on library programs and services. Nearly 12,000 surveys were distributed with the Milford Town Crier. The survey was available on the library's website and in the Spanish language.

The Milford Town Library, Milford Town Hall, and Senior Center. Hannaford, Shaws and Stop & Shop also volunteered to serve as drop off locations. There were 305 responses to the survey.

Responses:

How often do you visit the Milford Town Library?

➢ Fifty three percent of the respondents visited the library weekly with 37% a few times a month. Thirteen percent of the respondents indicated using library's web site to access library resources.

What areas of the Milford Town Library do you and your family visit?

➢ The heaviest used areas of the library are the Adult Area 60%, and Youth Services 40%. Within the Youth services department, the Young Adult Room visits were 20%. Community Rooms and Historical Collection each were 9% of the visits.

What services used the most?

➢ The book collection has the heaviest use 70% followed by DVD 32%, Audio books 20% and Internet 22%. Video games and wireless are at 10%.

Attend English as Second Language Classes

➢ Only three of the respondents attended classes. The survey was also done in Spanish and the three responses were from the Spanish language survey.

How are you informed about programs at the Milford Town Library?

➢ Respondents use a wide variety of outlets. Traditional media outlets are still important with 50% using the library web site, 48% newspapers, 15% local radio and 12% used social media.

Please rate which services will be important to you and your family in the next 5 years?

- ➢ Respondents still very interested in the physical collection: Books 70%; DVD30% and Audio Books/Music 20%. Parking is a major concern 47%. Internet access and increase access to digital materials is still 22% but will grow in the future.

Comments about programs and services you would like to see at the Milford Town Library?

- ➢ Satisfaction is very high especially with the physical collection and the ability to use the C/WMARS Library Network.
- ➢ Increase access to digital materials especially e-book offerings.
- ➢ Strong support of Library staff and services
- ➢ Increase Youth Services programming on Saturdays
- ➢ Parking is still an important issue and needs to be addressed.