Weston Public Library

Strategic Plan
2020-2022

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1. Mission Statement

The mission of the Weston Public Library is to provide a broad range of informational, educational, technological, social and recreational resources to serve the diverse needs of the community. *Adopted 1993; Reaffirmed 2002; Revised February 3, 2015; Reaffirmed February xx, 2020*

2. Vision Statement

The Weston Public Library aspires to be a vibrant and meaningful physical and digital destination that supports the evolving needs of our patrons in the 21st century.

3. Values Statement

Our values include:

- Fostering traditional and technological literacies
- Nurturing lifelong learning and personal growth
- Encouraging opportunities for social and cultural interaction and discovery
- Building a strong sense of community in Weston
- Maintaining a physical library space that continues to meet patron needs
- Leveraging our knowledgeable staff to support diverse initiatives for our patrons
- Providing professional development opportunities for staff to remain current as libraries evolve

4. Town of Weston, CT

The Weston Public Library serves a population of approximately 10,000 people. Due to the nature of the community, the population is not expected to increase significantly. The demographic breakdown of the Town according to United States Census data is as follows:

Age	2000 Census	2010 Census	2017 Community Survey
Under 5	8.0%	4.1%	4.6%
5-14	20.8%	21.8%	20.4%
15-24	7.1%	12.8%	11%
25-44	25.5%	17.2%	13.9%
45-64	29.0%	33.2%	37.3%
65+	9.7%	11%	12.9%

According to the U.S. Census 2017 Community Survey, over 80% of the population age 25+ has a bachelor's degree or higher. Over 85% of the working age population commutes to work with a mean commuting time of 40.2 minutes. The median household income in Weston is $219,868, which is significantly higher than the median household income for Fairfield County ($89,773) and for the State of Connecticut ($73,781).[1] The Town supports a K-12 school system that is recognized as one of the top school systems in the state.

The 2010 Town Plan of Conservation and Development noted a recurring "desire for additional services and places to gather as a community."[2] The plan also notes that 45% of participating residents desired additional resources and services at the Library, while only 26% did not favor additional resources, 14% had no opinion, and 11% did not use the Library. The Town Plan of Conservation and Development is scheduled to be re-done in 2020, at which time that information will be considered for a new Library strategic plan.

The 2018 Citizen Survey shows a high level of satisfaction (73.9%) with the Library and 64.5% of respondents view the Library as important to the community. This information, in coordination with the demographic data from the United States Census, reflects a community that values education, lifelong learning, and the library specifically. [3]

5. Weston Public Library - History

The Library is a central resource for all Weston residents. The hallmarks of the Library are its location and the friendly, small-town feel the staff creates for residents.

The Weston Public Library was founded in 1935 and was housed in the basement of the Horace C. Hurlbutt, Jr. School. In 1950, the Library was moved to a larger room on the first floor of the school where it continued to support the school and the general public. The current Library building was completed in 1963 and has had two subsequent additions. The original Library consisted of 6,742 sf (including a small mechanical basement and mezzanine). Expansion projects in 1985 and 1994 increased the total square footage to 14,152 sf. In 2016, the Library underwent an extensive $1.5 million renovation. Changes and enhancements to the building were based on the community needs assessment and focus groups conducted as part of the strategic planning process for 2015-2018. The renovation has been a success with gate counts increasing by 14%, summer reading participation increasing by 84%, traditional circulations increasing by 28% and digital circulations increasing by 76%. In 2018, the Library received an additional State Library Construction Grant to renovate the Children's Room, which was not addressed during the initial renovation due to expected staffing changes.

6. Strategic Plan - Information Gathering: Process and Results

With the Offutt Center for Innovation and Arts soon to become a reality, the Library Board of Trustees has opted to revise and renew its 2015-2018 Strategic Plan into a 2-year interim plan. The Library Board reinforces that it is critical at this time of great potential growth to take into account existing staffing limitations as well as the cost of operating and maintaining the existing facility. This revised plan will focus on the themes identified in the prior strategic plan that were not directly addressed by the renovation. These themes are:

Themes

- Improved physical and digital collections
- Increased community outreach
- Additional educational and recreational services and programming

The Library Board established a Strategic Planning Committee to develop the plan based on these themes. The Committee used these themes to prioritize and provide focus to the strategic plan, and identified the following categories in order to develop a plan of action (see Appendix for greater detail):

I. Resources
II. Education
III. Community

7. Strategic Plan – Prospective Evaluation and Management

The Strategic Planning Committee intends to monitor the plan outlined in the Appendix. The Committee will update the Board of Trustees on the status of the plan, including associated accomplishments and/or issues that have emerged. This update will transpire annually or on an as-needed basis.

From a longer-term perspective, the Library Board will conduct a user satisfaction survey at the conclusion of the two-year plan in order to inform future strategic planning activities as well as to gather additional input/feedback from our patrons.

It should be highlighted that given the rapidly changing nature of libraries, this plan is meant to serve as a framework that will guide, but not limit, the Library's services. Staff will evaluate emerging trends, services, and equipment and recommend any new technology or services to the Strategic Planning Committee, Technology Planning Committee, and the Library Board as appropriate.

The Library Board recognizes that within its current budget and at its current staffing level, both of which have seen additional strain with increased Library use following the 2016 renovation, it is constrained with respect to the breadth of services that may be provided at this time. The Library Board and the Director will continue to monitor staffing levels. When the Offutt Center for Arts and Innovation becomes a reality, the overall level of WPL staffing required both programmatically an administratively will need to be increased.

It should be noted that due to the types of services the Library provides, quantitative measurements do not always accurately depict the impact of programs and services. This plan will work to implement measures to collect qualitative data to complement traditional statistics.

Appendix - Weston Public Library Goals and Objectives

I. Resources

- **Goal R1 – Patrons will find enhanced and expanded technology that improves access to the Library's educational and recreational resources.**
  - ✓ *Objective T1A - Patrons will have 24/7 access to an up-to-date collection of high quality educational and recreational electronic resources through the Library website.*
    - Measurement T1A – Increased usage statistics of the Library's website and individual digital resources over time.
  - ✓ *Objective T1B - Library staff will investigate, evaluate, and receive continuing education in electronic resources available to public libraries to ensure that the Library offers patrons resources that meet the educational and recreational needs of the entire community within the budget framework. Key to success in this area will be staff support for patrons in the use of their own and the Library's electronic resources.*
    - Measurement T1B – Increased use of electronic resources and reference inquiries over time.

- **Goal R2 - Provide technology-related library services that meet the needs of patrons and local organizations.**
  - ✓ *Objective T2A - The Library will continue to promote and market collaborative learning and co-working through resource sharing and presentation technology that can be used by all members of the community, including students for projects, residents for businesses or personal endeavors, and local groups for meetings.*
    - Measurement T2A – Increase in reservations for meeting spaces by the indicated groups over time.
  - ✓ *Objective T2B - Staff will investigate and evaluate trends in library technology of interest to patrons, in order to determine the possibility of implementation within existing budget and staff constraints.*
    - Measurement T2B – Increase in access to technology for patrons and attendance in individual and group technology-related educational programs.

- **Goal R3 – Evaluate traditional physical collections to insure that collection development strategies meet the needs of patrons.**
  - ✓ *Objective R3A – Library staff will review circulation statistics to insure that items purchased meet the needs of the community.*
    - Measurement R3A – Stability of circulation statistics over time.
  - ✓ *Objective R3B – Library staff will review collection organization to insure ease of access for patrons and increase serendipitous finding of similar materials.*

- Measurement R3B – Stability of circulation statistics over time and greater user satisfaction.

✓ *Objective R3C – Library staff will investigate new collection types for consideration of addition to the collection, as funds allow.*

- Measurement R3C – Greater patron satisfaction with collection over time.

II. Education

➢ **Goal E1 - The Library will connect community members of all ages with creative learning opportunities and workshops on new technologies.**

✓ *Objective E1A - Patrons who are seeking to educate themselves will find relevant and current print and digital materials and will have the necessary support from a well-informed staff.*

- Measurement E1A –Stability of collection use and reference inquiries over time.

✓ *Objective E1B - The Library will continue to support the educational, recreational, and cultural programs the Friends provide patrons and will supplement them within existing budget and staff constraints.*

- Measurement E1B – Increase in the number of formal (group) and informal (one-on-one) educational programs offered at the Library over time.

✓ *Objective E1C – Patrons of all ages will have access to a broader range of programs, classes, seminars, performances, and workshops through Library partnerships with Town and community agencies and organizations.*

- Measurement E1C –A wider range of programming with an associated increase in attendance over time.

✓ Objective E1D - *Library staff will review little-used services and eliminate those no longer needed by the community while staying abreast of trends and innovations for additions to services.*

- Measurement E1D – Increased attendance at programs over time as programs align more closely with patrons needs.

✓ **Goal E2 – Develop a system to evaluate user experience at programs to provide qualitative measurements and to direct limited resources towards programming of most impact to the community.**

- *Objective E2A – Library staff will be provided with qualitative data to help inform future programming decisions and best use of limited resources.*
  - Measurement E2A – Increased attendance at programs over time and qualitative data to supplement quantitative data for reporting purposes.

III. Community

- **Goal C1 – Patrons will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by the Library and other community agencies and organizations, as resources permit.**
  - ✓ *Objective C1A – Patrons will have access to information about community educational, recreational, and cultural events. A synergistic relationship among Library and Town organizations/agencies will forge a Library character that is central to the identity of Weston.*
    - Measurement C1A – Increase in visits to the Library website over time with the community viewing the Library as the central place for information.
  - ✓ *Objective C1B - The Library will continue its marketing efforts through available print and electronic resources and investigate new methods of marketing electronically to patrons.*
    - Measurement C1B – Increase in resource use, program attendance, and activity on social media and marketing platforms.

- **Goal C2 - The Library will serve as the intellectual and social hub of the community.**
  - ✓ *Objective C2A – Patrons will continue to experience exceptional, personalized customer service and Library staff will heed patron comments, interests, and concerns when building the collection and adding services and resources.*
    - Measurement C2A – Increase in patron base and satisfaction with services.
  - ✓ *Objective C2B - The Library will continue to provide a venue for community organization meetings and programs and will seek ways to enhance community events by providing additional resources and services that will facilitate the creation and sharing of ideas.*
    - Measurement C2B – Increase in room reservations and requests for technology and resources over time.
  - ✓ *Objective C2C – Patrons will be encouraged to use the café and seating areas in formal and informal meetings and gatherings to encourage learning and social experiences.*
    - Measurement C2C - Higher gate counts over time due to increased foot traffic and increased patron satisfaction as the Library grows as a comfortable and welcoming community destination.

Footnotes

1 Statistics provided by the U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder
http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.
2 *Town of Weston 2010 Plan of Conservation and Development*
http://www.westonct.gov/media/file/TownPlanPostSubmissionv4-6-21-10WebVersion.pdf.
3 Town of Weston 2018 Citizen Survey
http://www.westonct.gov/media/file/WestonTownSurveyReport_010619results.pdf