



EAST LONGMEADOW PUBLIC LIBRARY

Strategic Plan for Library Services

FY2019 – 2024

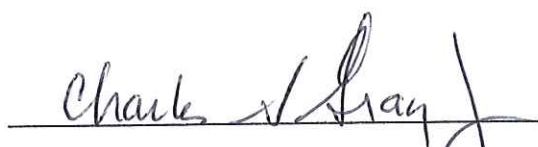
Layla Johnston, Library Director

September 20, 2017

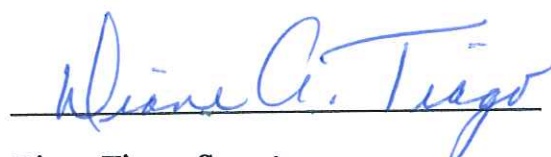
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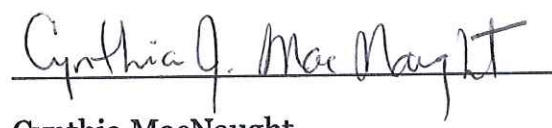
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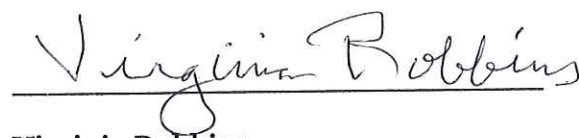
Approved by vote of the Board of Library Trustees on September 20, 2017.



Charles H. Gray, Jr., Chairperson


David Boucher, Vice-Chair


Diane Tiago, Secretary


Cynthia MacNaught


Virginia Robbins


Melanie Mannheim

Mission Statement

The mission of the East Longmeadow Public Library is to provide free and equal access to information, resources, and technology. Its purpose is to help educate and enrich our community in response to the intellectual, educational, and cultural needs and input of its patrons. The library offers an extensive variety of materials for the purpose of study or enjoyment and supports literacy and life-long learning for its town residents.

Acknowledgments

The Board of Library Trustees and Library Director, Layla Johnston, would like to express a sincere “thank you” to all that participated in the strategic planning process. Thank you to the Friends of the East Longmeadow Public Library, library staff, all town residents that completed the library survey, and especially the Strategic Plan Steering Committee. Without the input and participation of our vibrant community, this plan would not have been possible.

Strategic Plan Steering Committee

Diane Tiago—Board of Library Trustees

Darcy Kane—Friends of the East Longmeadow Public Library

Joanne Nichting—East Longmeadow Public Library Circulation Supervisor

Dan Myers—East Longmeadow High School librarian, town resident

Ron Micucci—East Longmeadow resident

Christina Cooper—East Longmeadow resident

Susan Grimaldi—East Longmeadow resident, Lions and Rotary Club member

Karin Decker—Town of East Longmeadow Department Head

Layla Johnston—East Longmeadow Public Library Director

Methodology

Several focus groups, a survey in print and online format, and 3 community meetings were used to gather information from the East Longmeadow Public Library staff, Friends of the Library, and town residents. The survey was made available to all community members from June 16, 2017 through July 19, 2017. The link to the survey was posted on the library website, the library's Facebook and Twitter accounts, and on the Town of East Longmeadow website. An email inviting all subscribers to the library's digital newsletters was sent asking for their participation in the survey. Additionally, paper copies of the survey were made available at all service desks in the library, and bookmarks indicating the direct link to the survey were distributed to other town departments, members of the Town Council, and local businesses. The survey garnered 322 responses, with many residents writing in comments about library services.

Staff and community meetings were facilitated by consultant Deb Hoadley and followed the Massachusetts Library System recommended process for strategic planning. The first meeting of the steering committee used a SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, Results) visioning exercise to assess library services. The second meeting incorporated a community visioning exercise. The third and final meeting of the Strategic Plan Steering Committee analyzed the survey results, and created draft library service goals.

Introduction to the Town of East Longmeadow

East Longmeadow is a suburban community in the greater Springfield region of Western Massachusetts. The greater Springfield region is also known as the Pioneer Valley, which is notable geographically for the Connecticut River watershed, forests, and the Mount Tom and Mount Holyoke mountain ranges.

Total population: 15,270. 94% of the residents of East Longmeadow identify as white, with Latinos representing 2.3% of the town's population. African-Americans constitute 1.9%, Asian-Americans are 2.4% of the population of East Longmeadow.

Median household income is \$81, 655 annually, and 94.5% of adults attain a high school diploma or greater. 5.6 % of residents are considered to be below federal poverty level. 1,385 town residents are veterans of the United States Armed Forces. Households with children make up just over 30% of the town population.¹

The East Longmeadow school district offers K-12 public education for the town's children. There are 3 elementary schools in East Longmeadow: Mapleshade, Mountain View, and Meadowbrook. Birchland Park Middle School and East Longmeadow High School round out the district's K-12 instruction. Bay Path University has a satellite campus in East Longmeadow, offering Master of Science degrees in Genetic Counseling and Physician Assistant Studies, and a Master of Occupational Therapy.

Points of interest include Heritage Park, Center Field, and one of the most dangerous intersections in the United States, the rotary in the center of town.² The Redstone Rail Trail, on the former New York, New Haven & Hartford Armory Branch, is a popular destination for walking, biking, and other outdoor activities. The trail is named in recognition of the numerous red sandstone quarries in the area that gave the town its industrial beginnings. The Council on Aging provides services to the town's senior population, and the Parks and Recreation Department offers summer camps and swim lessons at their Pine Knoll Recreation Area, team sports for youth and adults throughout the year, and family programs such as outdoor movie nights in the summer months.

Local businesses include Cartamundi (formerly the Milton Bradley company), Lenox Saw and Manufacturing, McGill Hose and Coupling, Excel Dryer, Maybury Material Handling, W. B. Hill, Toner Plastics, Northeast Wholesale Lumber, Northstar Recycling, as well as a number of restaurants, cafés, small businesses, and national-brand retail stores.

¹ Town of East Longmeadow demographics (source: US Census Factfinder)

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

² http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2013/11/departments_of_transportations.html

History of the Town of East Longmeadow

East Longmeadow was first settled in 1720 and incorporated as a town in 1894. From the town's website:

The history of the Town of East Longmeadow is one of steady progression. Initially seen as little more than common pastureland during the colonial period, it slowly developed into a community of small farms until red and brown sandstone was found underneath the local soil. The red and brown sandstone became a widely used building material in the latter half of the nineteenth century, leading to its use in buildings and monuments across the United States, including the Smithsonian Institution in our nation's capital. The formation of over fifty sandstone quarries lead to settlement and migration to the area of hundreds of Swedish, French Canadian and Italian stonemasons and stone cutters, a diverse group that enriched and transformed the town's social and cultural framework. The new lucrative industry created an imbalance between the area that now constitutes East Longmeadow (known at that time as the East Village) and that which constitutes Longmeadow (known at the time as The Street), where the East paid one third of the taxes but had two thirds of the population. In 1894, upon a petition by The Street's residents, the State Legislature granted a partition granting 13.4 square mile tract of former Longmeadow land to the new town of East Longmeadow. The new town relied on its quarrying industry to provide its economic backbone until the early 20th century, when the introduction of modern construction techniques such as steel framing and cement emerged, making sandstone, a highly durable fire resistant material, too expensive to use. East Longmeadow shifted its dependence on industry to its role as a suburban community for the nearby City of Springfield. In the twenty-first century, the Town of East Longmeadow has been able to maintain a mix of rural, suburban, industrial and urban elements which form a quilt of a vibrant multi-ethnic and multicultural community, which will continue to grow and evolve.

More detailed sources on the Town History can be found through contacting the Town's Historical Commission, tasked with recording and preserving the town's past.³

The Historical Commission has a local history room, housed in the East Longmeadow Public Library.

³ <http://www.eastlongmeadowma.gov/133/Town-History>

Town Governance

In April 2016, town residents voted to abolish their annual town meeting, dissolve the 3 member board of selectman and town administrator governance, and adopted the “East Longmeadow Home Rule Charter.” The Charter institutes governance by a 7 member Town Council who are elected by residents and a Town Manager who is appointed by the Town Council. This is a major change in the governance of the public library, as well as nearly 20 other town departments. Previously elected boards that held governance over their respective departments such as the Board of Library Trustees, became advisory boards, whose members are appointed by the Town Manager. The one and only exception is that of the School Committee whose members are elected to 3-year terms and whose department is autonomous. The Library Director now reports to the Town Manager, rather than the Board of Library Trustees, and the library facility is governed by the town and not the Board of Library Trustees. Adjustment to this major change is taking time for all town residents.

Library Information

History of the Library

Since its founding in 1896, the East Longmeadow Public Library grew from a couple hundred books on shelves in the Board of Selectmen's office in the town hall to the two-story building it inhabits today. During those years, library users saw the library grow and adapt through many transformations. The library quickly outgrew its space in the Selectmen's office and was moved into a room of its own within the town hall. In 1957, the library moved into a building next to the town hall, and ten short years later, the town purchased, expanded, and renovated the Carlisle's Hardware Store, a building adjacent to the town hall, to use as the library. The role of the public library and the delivery of information changed drastically over the next thirty-seven years, and in 1994 the Board of Library Trustees and concerned citizens began many long years of studies, surveys, plans, and fundraising to create a library that would meet – and grow with – the needs of its community.

A new building, which almost doubled the space of the former library building, was opened to the public in February 2004. The library is conveniently located in the center of town, in a building adjacent to town hall.

Current Library Services

East Longmeadow Public Library is open 53 hours per week, 6 days per week and 3 evenings per week between Labor Day and Memorial Day. A new Library Director was hired in December 2016, and there are 18 total library employees. The library collection consists of nearly 135,000 items: digital and print books, digital and print magazines, newspapers, databases to support research, audio books in CD and digital format, and music for all ages in physical and digital formats. East Longmeadow Public Library also offers public computers for adults and children, 2 meeting rooms for public use, free wireless internet, and a wide range of educational and enriching programs for town residents of all ages. East Longmeadow Public Library has recently begun to offer Chromebooks for in-library use, and lends Kindles and Kindle Fires. Circulation of all items for FY16 was counted at just over 194,000 total items. East Longmeadow Public Library is a member of the Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (CW/Mars) network, and has 10,052 registered borrowers.

Library services for children are by far our most heavily utilized programming resource. For example, in 2016 the Children's staff provided weekly story times for infants through age 6, as well as monthly book groups for children in Kindergarten through Grade 6. In total, six weekly story times served nearly 100 children each week, and six monthly book groups attracted approximately 70 students per month. In addition, the

Children's staff hosted a number of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics (STEAM) programs, children's movie matinees and other themed workshops, weekly Chess Clubs for middle school age children, visits with Reading Therapy dogs to facilitate "read alouds" for struggling elementary students, plus a number of other educational and enrichment programs for students of all ages throughout the year.

Partnerships with regular educational programs from others in the community added to the children's department literacy offerings. A weekly program for infants and their parents called Books and Babies is offered by Pathways for Parents, a division of Massachusetts Department of Early Childhood Education. Expanding and increasing our programs for teens and tweens was a regular request expressed by the respondents to the library survey as well as the steering committee.

Use of the library's two meeting rooms continues to be popular with outside groups. More than 450 local meetings and other non-profit events were held in 2016. The library held some very special and interesting events for adults and families this year, such as a live demonstration of West African musical instruments, talks on medical and health information, and historical presentations. Free classes on downloading digital library books and other resources, as well as workshops for adults were also offered by adult services librarians in 2016.

The Friends of the East Longmeadow Public Library, an Internal Revenue Code (IRC) Section 501(c)(3) charitable organization, is a valued source of support for library programs. The Friends hold ongoing fundraisers, such as mini-golf for families in the library, and an ongoing used book sale. Without the support of the Friends, the library would not be able to offer enriching, entertaining, and educational programs for town residents.

In addition to the Friends, the East Longmeadow Public Library has benefited by having local businesses that support the library's mission. Their contributions have played an important role in the success of the library. Whenever these enterprises have been called upon to be a sponsor for any library program or fundraiser, they have always been generous. Below are the names of just a few of the library's many benefactors:

Shaker Bowl	Fenway Golf	Rocky's Hardware
Pete's Sweets	My Main Squeeze Juice Bar	Starbucks
Interskate 91	Shelbourne Falls Coffee Roasters	Chipotle
Texas Road House	Green/Wich Restaurant	Walgreen's
Cartamundi	Big Y World Class Market	Peoples Bank

Goals for Library Services FY2019 – 2024

Community Needs Assessment: Summary of Planning Process and Results

Survey Results

A vast number of respondents highlighted the positive role the library plays in their success in work, school, and life. Interestingly, over 50% of respondents marked “reference and research services from staff” as the most important resource the library can provide. This is surprising due to the ongoing trend in a decline in reference services in public libraries nationwide. In part, due to their relatively high use of the library collections and facility, respondents expressed a strong desire to be able to access library services on Saturdays year-round. The library currently closes Saturdays between Memorial Day and Labor Day.

Survey respondents overwhelmingly placed a high priority on access to library collections, promoting literacy and reading, and library programs for all ages. Regarding the library facility, many respondents expressed a desire for less noise. The building is a 2-story, open floor plan, with the circulation desk located beneath patron study areas on the second floor. During busy times, noise from standard activity at the circulation desk travels up to the second floor. Options for noise mitigation and reuse of existing space, particularly to provide a space for teens, will need to be explored over the next 5 years.

The following were the top requests from people answering the survey:

1. Open the library on Saturdays year-round.
2. Promote more engagement with online users and digital collections.
3. Address safety concerns about the parking lot with town officials.
4. Address the noise from the open floor plan.
5. Reconfigure existing space to better suit the needs of users.

Examples of written feedback from the survey:

“Please make certain the library is forever available for all of us, and in this context, that it continues to offer up-to-date technological assistance for those who need it.”

“I’ve heard of a Library of Things and I think it’s a great idea. Items to lend could be tools, special occasion cake pans, craft tools, and party decorations. People wouldn’t have to buy these items that they rarely use.”

“There is not enough programming for teens.”

“I would like more Saturday hours. I work full-time from 9 – 5 during the week, and Saturday is the best time for me to visit the library.”

“Please keep Saturday hours in the summer!”

“I love the theme of this year’s summer reading and the programs you have been running on wind power, bringing in the senator (Senator Eric Lesser), a book that all ages can read and discuss. I would love to be involved in this type of coming together, learning, discussing issues and perhaps venture into local action.”

Each of the library service goals incorporated in this plan address community requests and needs. The East Longmeadow Public Library vision is based on retaining popular traditional programs and services and developing innovative strategies to improve the user’s experience. The library will raise awareness of the programs and services it offers, further extending its presence throughout our community. The goals included in this plan were created in a final meeting of the strategic planning committee on July 28, 2017. This meeting was facilitated by Deb Hoadley, consultant, and incorporated survey results and feedback from the strategic plan steering committees’ previous meetings, as well as staff focus groups.

Vision Ideas

*Experience of the user	*Continued Development	*Community Asset
*Life-long learning	*Strengthen what already exists	*Valuable
*Inclusive	*Sustainable	*Relevant
*Classroom for all ages	*Open	*Stays current
*Adaptable	*Flexible	*Non-judgmental
*Welcoming	* “Your Gateway to Everything”	

Vision Statement

The Library will:

- Be a classroom for all ages
- Be a place where everyone is safe, comfortable, and welcome
- Be a valued community asset, and an integral part of the community
- Stay current and responsive to new ideas and technology
- Invest in the user experience

Goals with Objectives

1. Nurture and encourage life-long learning and literacy
 - a. Create young readers
 - b. Implement new ways to connect with readers
 - c. Investigate hiring a staff member dedicated to teen services
 - d. Support multiple literacies, such as digital, information, and technological, for learners of all ages
2. Reduce barriers to access
 - a. Investigate the feasibility of implementing Saturday hours year-round
 - b. Facility and parking: comfortable, safe, welcoming, accessible
 - c. Improve signage and include floor plan directories throughout the Library
 - d. Review policies and update to reflect current standards of service
3. Improve the user experience
 - a. Redesign the library website to incorporate Americans with Disabilities Act standards and update the library's web presence
 - b. Promote virtual and remote services and create new ways to engage online patrons
 - c. Improve services, programs, and spaces for teens
 - d. Redesign the library space to reduce noise distractions and increase accessibility
4. Stimulate imagination – creativity and innovation
 - a. Provide programs and opportunities for intergenerational mentoring and exploration, with a focus on digital tools and technologies
 - b. Ensure staff has basic competencies and skills to keep up with evolving trends and technologies
 - c. Explore a lending “library of things” to support community exploration and experimentation
 - d. Support the curriculum of area schools with up-to-date technology and software
5. Build on community relationships and partnerships
 - a. Increase collaborations with the school district
 - b. Work to strengthen relationships with small business owners and make them aware of library resources
 - c. Encourage staff to be aware of local events and civic organizations and participate when appropriate
 - d. Work to strengthen relationships with other town departments and capitalize on the change in town governance

First-Year Action Plan (Based on Goals & Objectives stated on Page 14)

In FY2019, East Longmeadow Public Library will work towards:

* **Goal 1:** Nurture and encourage life-long learning and literacy

Objective C: Investigate hiring a part-time staff member dedicated to teen services

- Anticipated Review: summer 2018
- Responsibility: Library Director, Board of Library Trustees, Town Manager
- Measures of Success: Programs for teens will double from 4 programs per year to 8 programs. Attendance at programs will increase by 20%.

* **Goal 2:** Reduce barriers to access

Objective A: Investigate the feasibility of implementing Saturday hours year-round.

- Anticipated Review: summer 2018
- Responsibility: Library Director, Board of Library Trustees, Town Manager
- Measures of Success: Visits to the library will increase by 5%. User satisfaction will increase as determined by increased year-round usage.

* **Goal 3:** Improve the user experience

Objective A: Redesign the library website to incorporate Americans with Disabilities Act standards and update the library's web presence.

- Anticipated Review and Redesign: fall - winter 2018
- Responsibility: Library Director, Adult Services Staff
- Measures of Success: Library website visits will increase by 10% and patron navigation will be simplified. Usage of digital collections will increase by 5%.

* **Goal 4:** Stimulate imagination – creativity and innovation

Objective C: Explore a lending "library of things" to support community exploration and experimentation.

- Anticipated Review: fall 2018
- Responsibility: Library Director, Library Staff
- Measures of Success: Increase in circulation and materials by 2%. Anecdotal evidence of new and unique experiences and items at the library.

* **Goal 5:** Build on community relationships and partnerships

Objective D: Work to strengthen relationships with other town departments and capitalize on the change in town governance

- Anticipated Review: summer 2018
- Responsibility: Library Director, Board of Library Trustees, Library Staff
- Measures of Success: Cooperation with other town departments, such as the Council on Aging, Parks and Recreation, and schools will be demonstrated through increased joint programs and other initiatives.

Technology Plan

To supplement our strategic plan, the library created an up-to-date technology plan. The technology plan will be used to assist with ensuring we meet our goals and objectives over the 5 year plan action period.

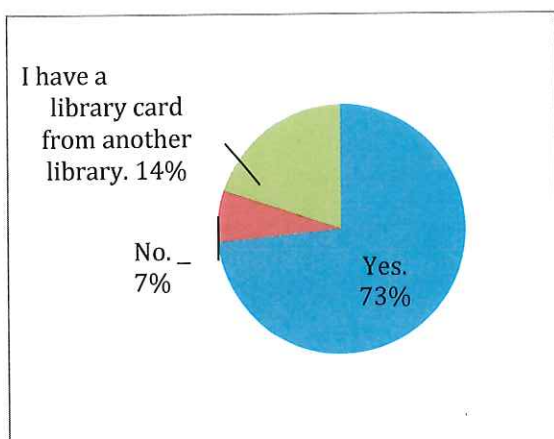
A summary of the survey results is attached in Appendix A. A summary of the staff and community meetings is attached in Appendix B. The library's technology plan is included in Appendix C.

Appendix A: East Longmeadow Library 2017 Survey Results

Survey Details:

- Survey was available June 17 – July 19, 2017
- 322 responses received
- Based on number of people in the population eligible for this survey (12,269), the survey results have a 95% confidence level with a 5.4% +/- margin of error.

Q1: Do you currently have an East Longmeadow Public Library Card? (Check all that apply.)



Q2: On average, how often do you visit the East Longmeadow Public Library?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
At least once a week	28.88%	93
Once every two weeks	23.29%	75
Once a month	22.36%	72
Once every other month	12.42%	40
Once a year	9.01%	29
Never	4.04%	13

Q3: What are your main reasons for using the library?

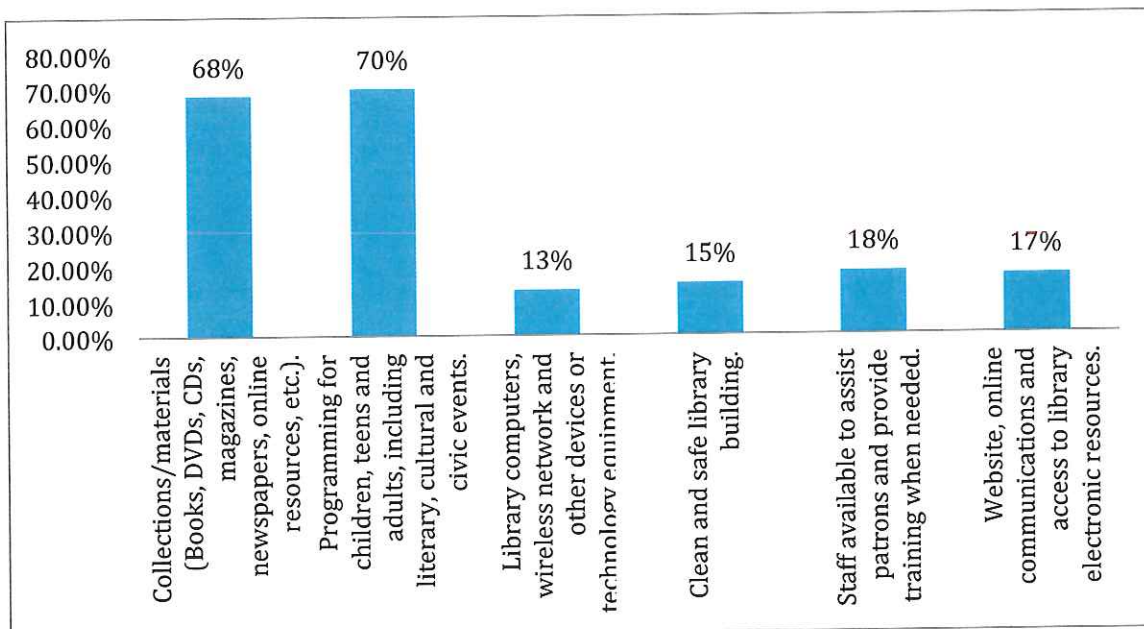
Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Check out books or other materials (DVDs, audio books, magazines, etc.).	83.91%	266
Request books from other libraries.	43.85%	139
Attend children's programs.	34.07%	108
Find a quiet place to work, study or read.	23.66%	75
Attend adult programs.	23.03%	73
Use the copier, printer, and/or fax machine.	18.61%	59
Use Library computers to access the Internet or for other software.	16.09%	51
Get help from Library staff.	15.77%	50
Borrow a museum pass.	12.30%	39
Use restrooms.	11.99%	38
View an exhibit and/or display.	11.36%	36

Attend a meeting not sponsored by the Library (outside organization).	10.09%	32
Use the Library's wireless network.	9.78%	31
Visit with friends.	9.46%	30
Read the newspapers and/or magazines.	7.89%	25
To get information for school.	6.62%	21
View art collection exhibits and/or events.	5.36%	17
Attend teen programs.	3.15%	10
Use historical materials in the History Room.	2.84%	9
Other (please specify)	11.04%	35

Q4: If you do not use the library regularly, why not?

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
I buy my own books and other reading materials.	38.96%	27
Don't need to use it.	35.06%	2
Hours of the library are too limited.	16.88%	13
I use a neighboring town's public library.	14.29%	2
I don't know what the library has to offer me.	11.69%	3
I use the library at my school/college.	6.49%	5
Don't have a library card.	3.90%	11
The library is too far from my home.	2.60%	30
Don't have any transportation.	2.60%	9
Other (please specify)		33

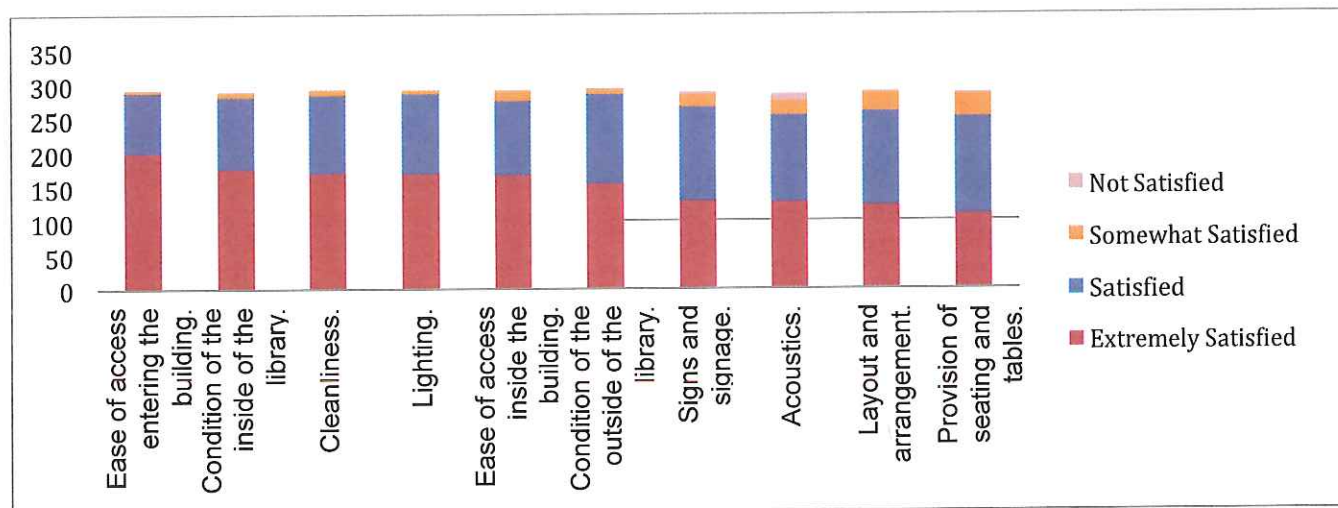
Q5: Overall, where would you most like the Library to focus its resources? Choose up to 2.



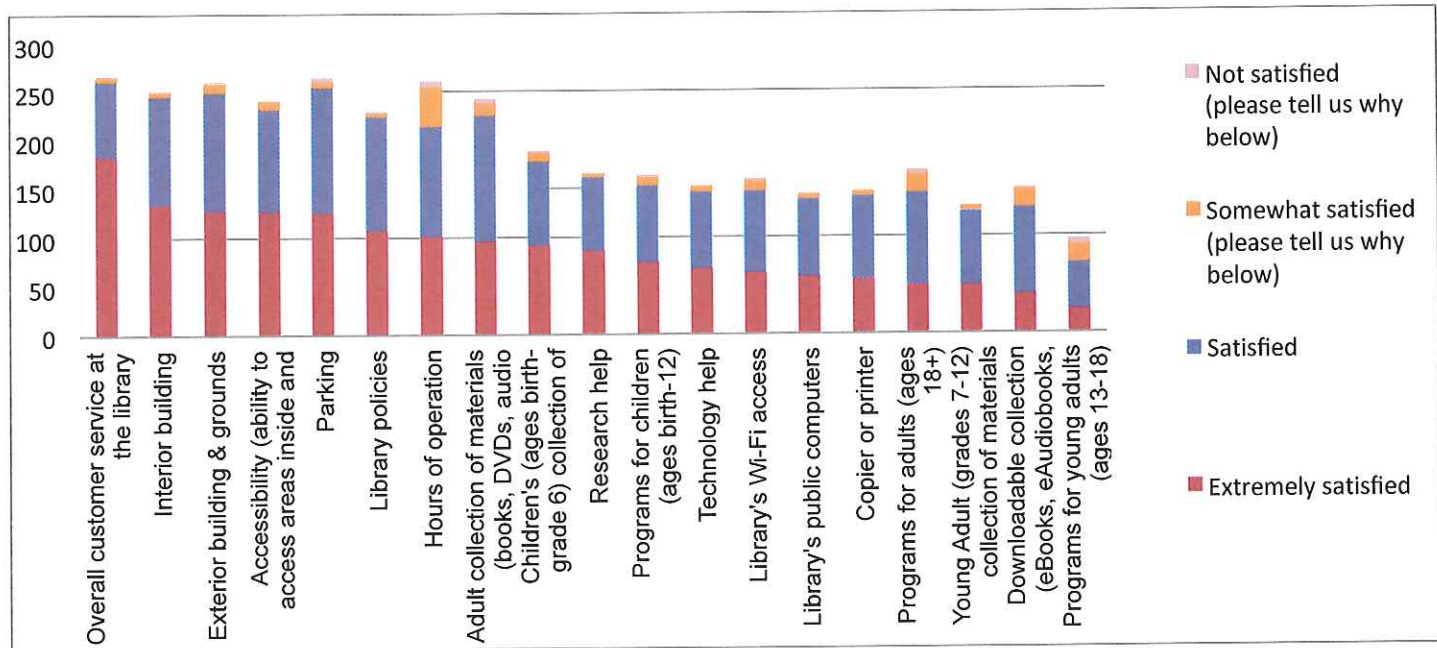
Q6: What do you think the TOP THREE PRIORITIES should be for the library? (Select up to 3)

Answer Options	Response Percent
Programs for all ages.	55.33%
Print and online materials (books, DVDs, magazines, downloadable eBooks, etc.).	45.36%
Promoting literacy and reading.	38.49%
Trained and knowledgeable staff to assist patrons and provide training when needed.	31.62%
Up-to date technology (computers, devices, etc.).	28.52%
Partnerships and collaborations with town, community organizations and businesses.	19.93%
Teen/Tween space, services & programs.	16.15%
Promotion and awareness of library services.	15.81%
Welcoming and accessible building.	14.43%
More space for quiet study and reading.	8.93%
More space for community meetings, and gatherings.	7.56%
ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, training and support.	4.12%
Outreach services.	3.78%
Other (please specify)	3.44%

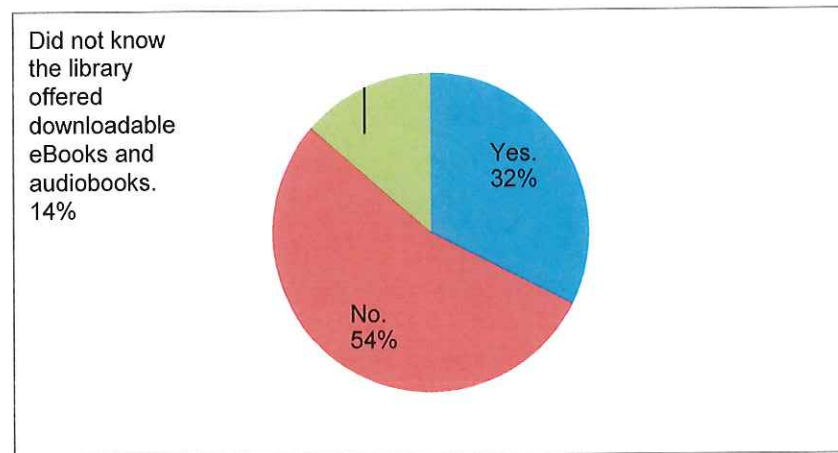
Q7: Please tell us what you think of the library's building.



Q8: How would you rate the following? If you are not familiar or used a service, please leave that rating box blank.



Q9: Do you use the Library's downloadable eBooks, audiobooks and magazines?



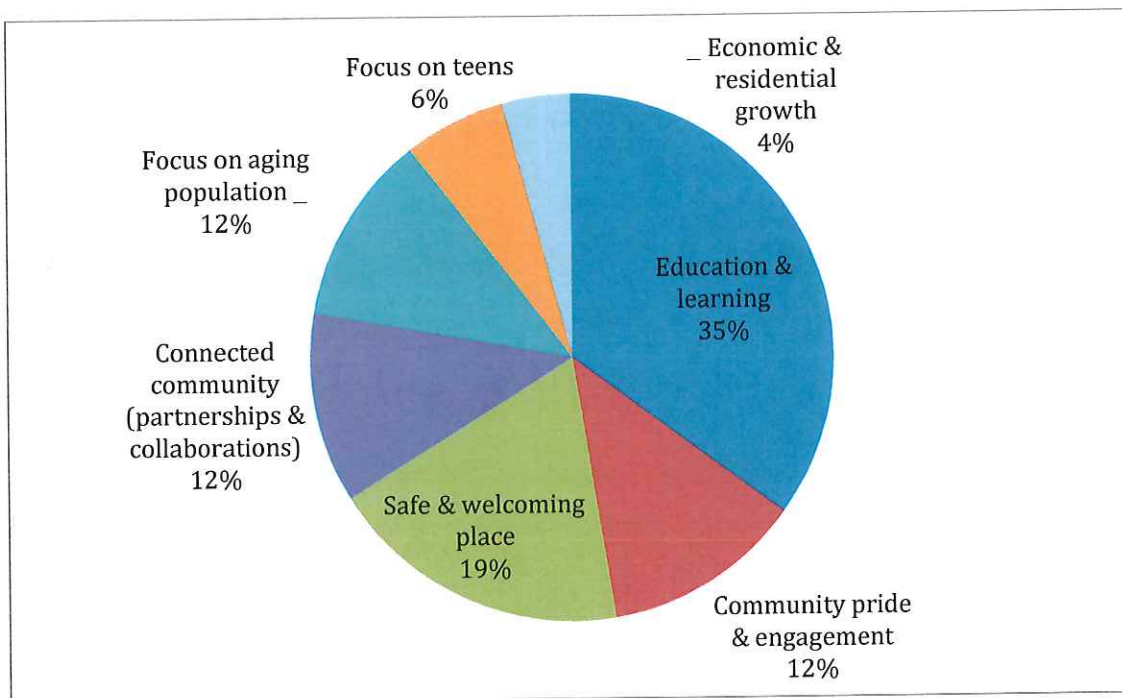
Q10. Which two of the following programming options are most important to you? Choose up to 2.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Activities and educational programs for children and teens.	58.16%
Literary events (author readings and book talks).	35.46%
Consumer health, finance and other how-to topics.	22.34%
Music and/or film series, and other performance arts.	20.92%
Civic engagement and current event presentations and discussions.	18.79%
Art and historical exhibits.	14.54%
None of these are important to me.	6.74%

Q11. Which two of the following types of help from staff are most important to you? Choose up to 2.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Reference and research services.	56.68%	140
Reading recommendations.	52.23%	129
Computer classes and support.	19.84%	49
Homework assistance and support.	13.77%	34
Local history and genealogy assistance.	11.74%	29
Consumer research.	10.93%	27
Access to government services (tax help, citizenship assistance, etc.).	8.10%	20
Job search and small business support.	6.07%	15
ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, training and support.	3.24%	8

Q12. Six (6) themes have been identified as priorities for the community of East Longmeadow. What are your two (2) top choices?



Q13. What would you like to be able to do now that is not currently being done anywhere in the community that the library could help you with?



Q14. Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

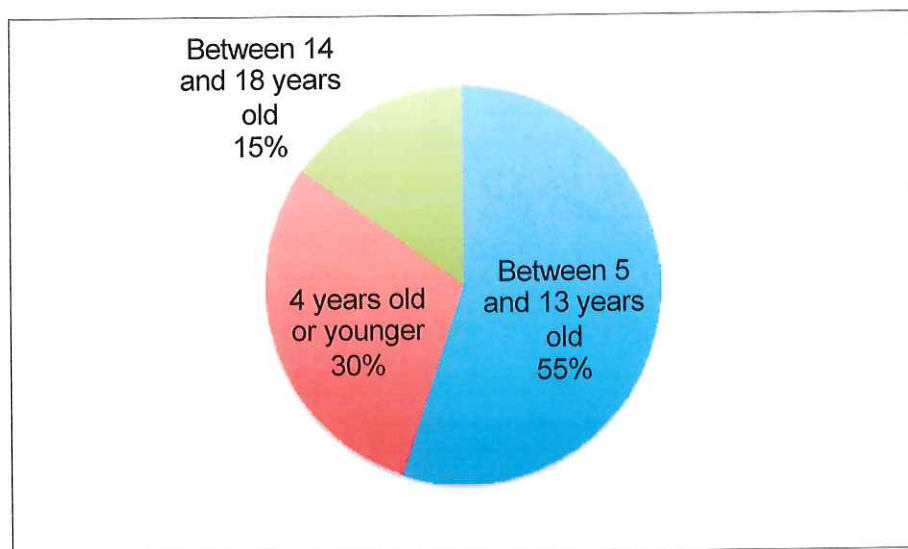


Demographic Information

Q15. Age

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
18 or younger	1.04%	3
19-29	4.51%	13
30-39	22.57%	65
40-49	19.44%	56
50-59	11.11%	32
60-69	20.49%	59
70+	18.75%	54
Prefer not to answer	2.08%	6

Q16. How many children, by age, are currently live in your household?



Q17. How long have you lived in East Longmeadow?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Less than one year.	1.75%	5
1-3 years.	5.24%	15
4-9 years.	12.24%	35
10-19 years.	17.13%	49
20 years or more.	40.21%	115
I do not live in East Longmeadow.	23.43%	67

Q18. Which race/ethnicity best describes you? (Please choose only one.)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.36%	1
Asian / Pacific Islander	2.17%	6
Black or African American	1.09%	3
Hispanic or Latino	0.72%	2
Portuguese	0.72%	2
White	91.67%	253
Multiple ethnicity / Other (please specify)	3.26%	9

Q19. What is your preferred language?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
English	99.65%	284
Portuguese	0.00%	0
Spanish	0.00%	0

Other (please specify)

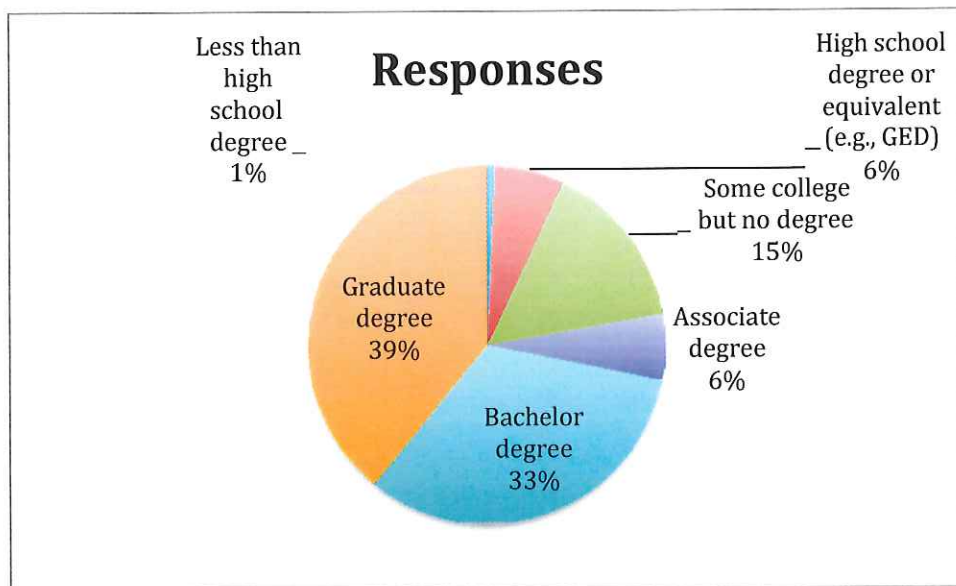
0.35%

1

Q20. Do you currently have internet access at home?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	97.55%	279
No	2.45%	7

Q21. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?



Q22. Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Employed, working full-time	34.27%	98
Employed, working part-time	13.64%	39
Self-employed	5.59%	16
Homemaker	7.34%	21
Retired	32.52%	93
Unemployed, or not working	3.15%	9
Full-time student	1.40%	4
Part-time student	0.70%	2
Other (please specify)	1.40%	4

Appendix B: SOAR Exercises with Strategic Planning Committee

Deb Hoadley, consultant, facilitated this meeting on May 20, 2017. Deb gave a brief overview of the Strategic Planning Process and Layla Johnston, Director, went over the handout with a demographic overview of East Longmeadow and some library statistics. Deb then led the committee members through two brainstorming exercises. The first was the S.O.A.R. (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations & Results). The SOAR was focused on the library. The second was to brainstorm what they envisioned for the community of East Longmeadow in the future. Introductions were also made around the group so everyone could meet each other.

SOAR EXERCISE

Strengths:

- Staff
 - Great attitude
 - Responsive
 - Knowledgeable
 - Can direct patrons to help them with their needs
- Homebound program (volunteers deliver books; social benefit for patrons)
- Programs
 - Number of children's programs
 - Variety of programs
- New mom - 1st social circle as a new mom to meet someone else
- Meeting rooms
 - Available for community use
 - Free for town and nonprofits
 - Projector
- Safe area; well-lit and well-maintained
- DVD Collection (have a lot to choose from)
- Online and reserve ability from other libraries (inter-library loan; C/W MARS network and statewide delivery)
- Location
- Patrons appreciate what the library offers
- Friends support – especially money for programs
- Depth of resources available for all ages
- Newsletter (online & paper) & Weekly emails
- Visual interest of Children's Room
- Partnership with town departments
 - ELCAT (local TV channel)
 - Parks & Rec
 - Schools
 - Council on Aging
- Fun fundraisers
- Study night in June

Opportunities:

- Promotion of library and getting feedback
 - o More promotion of interlibrary loan services
 - o Rotary & Lions groups – guest speaker series; have library speak and get feedback from these groups
 - o Work with town on getting library information out
 - o Communication – back & forth; more feedback; need to balance with what is too much
- Programs
 - o Homebound program expansion – New Moms; promote through Meals on Wheels
 - o Expanding Minecraft passion (Layla) to get kids into the library
 - o Teen mentors with younger kids
 - o Programs for all ages after work hours and weekends
 - o Have children program at the same time as adult program so both can be involved in a program (simultaneous times)
 - o Adults interact with kids on certain program of same interest
- Partnerships
 - o Seniors – social component; partner with Senior Center
 - o Connect with school libraries and getting kids involved as part of something at the library
 - o Parents re-engaged with reading and library use
- Re-engage when teens “come back” – young or emerging adults (ages 24-30) – what do they want and need?
- Space
 - o Use school and other community space for library programs
 - o Analyze space (high usage areas, collections, café area)
- “Suggest It” – recommendations for books & programs – use Facebook or other online tools as connectors
- Self-checkout and self-hold pick up

Aspirations:

- Building & Facility
 - o Spaces – redesigned
 - o Small café – to buy coffee and snacks and place to sit and gather (like Barnes & Noble)
 - o Quiet spaces
 - o Smaller/lower stacks
 - o Flexible work spaces; modular and moveable
 - o Circulation desk – “blown up” – more welcoming
 - o Resources (including staff) in one place
 - o Designated tutor space (especially for special needs)
 - o More study room space
 - o Reevaluate Local History room use
 - o 2nd floor totally closed
- Technology upgrades
 - o Chargers on the tables
 - o Mac computers

o Updated equipment

Results:

- More patrons
- Better patron experience
- Place for all ages – “Community Center”
- Enhanced presence
- More informed citizens
- Value and ROI of library is understood (relevance)
- People feel connected – have a social, and physical experience
- Actual reality vs. online reality – ability for face-to-face interactions
- Increase property values with strong library

Community Vision:

The group reflected on this statement: My hope is to live in a community where:

There were 4 themes/priorities that emerged from all the ideas. The individual ideas are captured under each theme.

1. Education/Learning

- Good school system; standard of excellence
- Produce students who are good citizens
- Adult classes & activities (like painting)
- New high school

2. Community Pride & Engagement

- Progressive town government (with new structure)
- “Age in Place” – over 55
- Continue to have community pride through active and lively civic organizations; structure and things to do
- Instill community pride in teens; increase their role in town; help them be more successful in civic areas
- Balanced diversity of families/singles; young/old; businesses/manufacturing; rural/farms

3. Safe & Welcoming Place (Walkable, accessible, town center with things to do)

- No rotary
- Continued growth of businesses – creating new jobs
- Repurpose and recondition old buildings
- Low crime
- Good police and fire
- More diverse living situations – apartments and affordable housing
- More sidewalks – mobility of walking places, especially if person does not have a car
- Increased bus service
- More restaurants and local shops
- Welcome Wagon

4. Connected Community (through interests and both indoor and outdoor activities)

- More community services offered

- Greater diversity
- Waterpark – fountains; more of a hometown feeling where people come together
- Rotary is going to launch a community trailer with community information
- Find ways to connect with each other
- Expanded Rail Trail to other parts of town
- More outdoor activities

One Word:

The committee was asked to think of one word to describe their ideal, future vision of East Longmeadow.

- Welcoming
- Alive
- Diverse
- Beautiful
- Homey
- Vibrant
- Families
- Warm
- Kid-friendly

Library Role in meeting community vision

Three roles: Priority, Partnership and Supporting

Theme #1

- The library will play a partnership role by working with the schools creating a program that are accessible, and coincide with school projects.
- Priority role by teaching classes on technology and other tech skills. Partner with town IT to teach
- Supporting role with the schools by offering:
 - o Study nights
 - o Offer resources to support school curriculum
 - o Study skills and research
 - o Digital literacy resources
- Partner with ELCAT to:
 - o Produce videos and tutorials for learning
 - o More access through YouTube channel
 - o Use teen volunteers

Theme #2

- Priority role by providing modern, inclusive, broad in what the library offers; be responsive and join in
- Library will be involved in community events
- Partnership role by collaborating with town departments
- Supporting role by hosting a community awareness event (celebrate diversity); invite people, organizations, and groups to a “Connect Fair” – can do the same thing around learning something new (collaboration with schools)

Theme #3

- Priority & Partnership role by doing story walks and programs with Rail Trail
- Priority role in expanding hours for access while out doing things around town
- Priority role in creating a scavenger hunt around town
- Partnership role to do a monthly Dine Out program starting at the library (maybe do this with the teens – get their feedback)
- Priority & Partnership role by providing programs in the community Theme #3 & #4
- Priority role - Seniors – learn what their interests are and offer to teach them something at the Senior Center
- Supporting role – with businesses to:
 - o Create a Welcome Wagon or “passport” idea of stopping at certain businesses who are participating
 - o Expert-led speakers and give information about themselves and their business
 - o Host a showcase or “Meet & Greet”/Networking event
 - o Partner with “local” chamber (focus on East Longmeadow)

Other ideas:

- Library needs to remain relevant while the town continues to grow and maintain its place for services
- Town History – quarry tours; capture what was here once; highlight monuments & interesting things that are unique to East Longmeadow
- Access local history information – what does the library have to share?

SOAR Exercises with Library Staff

Deb Hoadley, consultant facilitated two meetings with the staff in May. One group of staff met in the morning, and the other group met in the afternoon. Deb gave a brief overview of the Strategic Planning Process and Layla Johnston, Director, went over the handout with a demographic overview of East Longmeadow and some library statistics. Deb then led the Staff through two brainstorming exercises. The first was the S.O.A.R. (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations & Results). The SOAR was focused on the library. The second was to brainstorm what they envisioned for the community of East Longmeadow in the future.

Stakeholders:

(This list was mainly created by the morning staff group, and then added to later in the afternoon.)

- Patrons
- Children
- Families
- Seniors
- Adults
- Teens
- Disabled
- Homebound

- Homeless
- Out of work
- Business people –entrepreneurs; at home workers
- Suppliers and vendors
- Students
- Schools – teachers, administration, PTOs
- Town departments and staff
- Town officials
- Volunteers
- Community organizations such as boy scouts
- Homeschoolers
- Tutors
- Performers, speakers, artists
- Staff – staff of other libraries, C/W MARS staff
- Friends group
- Trustees
- Residents
- Out of town residents –Connecticut, and other surrounding MA towns
- ESL – Springfield people

Strengths:

- Programs – for all ages
 - o 353 children programs
 - o Summer Reading Program
 - o Story times
 - o Adult programs have improved over past few years – meeting interest of patrons
- Facility & Space
 - o Openness
 - o Modern-feel
 - o New
 - o Study spaces and rooms
 - o Comfortable family spaces
 - o Resource room in Children’s Room – open to the public for schools and preschools to use
 - o Meeting rooms for community use
- Number of collections – “new items” “things can’t find anywhere else”
 - o DVDs – TV series and documentaries
 - o Large print
 - o Launchpads
- Staff – customer service
 - o Helpful
 - o Friendly
 - o Go out way to help – go above and beyond
 - o Multi-faceted (department crossover)
 - o Serendipitous service
 - o Appreciative patrons – say “thank you”

- o Highly regarded
- Location
 - o Central
 - o Easy to get to
 - o Near CT and surrounding towns
- Up-to-date technology
 - o Devices – Launchpads, Chromebooks
 - o Online resources – digital magazines (new)
 - o Scan, fax, printing
 - o Staff are knowledgeable about technology and run training sessions
 - o Good length of time to use computer
 - o Charging stations
- Volunteers – want to help out
 - o Homebound program
- Outreach to community
 - o Schools
 - o Council on Aging
 - o Recreation Department
- Hours
- Reader's Advisory
- Website

Opportunities:

(If there is an (A) next to an item, it is closer to an Aspiration.)

- Understanding the town and library relationship; reciprocal support; what does the town do to support the library and how does the library support the community/town
- New town government structure – how to capitalize on changes
- More presence in the community
- Cross-training within departments for staff
- More offsite services – bringing the library out to the community
 - o Senior Center
 - o Schools
 - o Lending Library
- Teen/tween (Middle & High School) focus
 - o Programs
 - o Place for teens to hang out (A)
- Technology
 - o Makerspace (A)
 - o 3D printer
 - o Snap circuits and other devices (STEM/STEAM focus)
 - o Computer programs – Photoshop
 - o Virtual Reality Technology
 - o Mac Computers – more devices
 - o iPad stations
 - o One-on-one instructions
 - o More time for classes
 - o Coding classes

- o Self-checkout
- Study room space (A)
 - o More private space
 - o “Phone booth” – people to take cell phone calls
- Policies
- Café
 - o Rename it
 - o Redesign use of space
- Signage
- Partnerships
 - o Collaborations & mentorships with seniors & teens
 - o Collaborations with town departments (Rec)
 - o Collaboration with the plaza – “Block party idea”
 - o Business partnerships
 - o Schools and preschools
- Aesthetics – refresh the interior
- Outdoor Space (A)
 - o Secure area for kids for story times
 - o Staff and patron areas to sit (picnic tables)
- ESL program – restart the conversation circles and classes
- Displays – different ways to display (on the walls, slat walls, bookends)
- Programs – evaluate current ones

Aspirations:

- Teen area
 - o More shelving for books
 - o Bigger area
 - o Teen staff
 - o Programs
 - o Appropriate environment
 - o Redesign space to allow for noise
 - o Get them out of the café area
 - o Engage kids who are just hanging out
 - o Find a place for the Tweens
- Windows that open – Children’s Area
- Bigger activity room for story times
- Tinted skylights
- Circulation desk – needs new countertop and needs to be lower so people can see staff
- Café
 - o New books/new shelves
 - o Friends area
 - o Layout – more things to do in this area
- Computer/Technology Lab – space for everything
- Makerspace – spaces to do “new” things
- Expand 2nd floor across to close open area or raise half wall to ceiling – reduce noise
- More staff for outreach and teen services

- Learning Center
 - o Ongoing programs for life skills (fill gaps not available elsewhere in community)
 - o Job skills
 - o Work with businesses
 - o Expertise in the community – tap the talent
 - o ESL classes
- Create a welcoming environment
 - o Hire space planning consultant to redesign spaces
 - o Circulation area redesigned
 - o Noise reduction
 - o Fixtures
 - o Maintenance & upkeep of building

Results:

- Teens
 - o Teen pride and ownership of their space and the library
 - o Place for teens to be engaged and have positive feelings about library
 - o More programs and services for teens
- Ability to qualify for jobs
- Benefits existing businesses and attracts new businesses
- Positive word of mouth (reputation)
- Patrons would want to stay
- Spark imagination in discovering something new and create and find new things about themselves
- Find new ways of thinking
- New opportunities
- Positive impact on people's lives
- People coming in and using the library as a community place (more patrons) – place to go
- Lifelong library users
- Increase in statistics
- No tax burden
- More staff
- Happier staff
- Happier patrons
- Patrons accomplish more work
- Reach different community members
- Increase programs
- More visibility = more support
- More relevant
- Less noise
- More space
- Increased senior digital literacy
- Reduced patron behavior issues

Community Vision:

- Aging Population
 - Need more elderly services
 - Teen appreciation and relationships with elderly
 - More affordable housing
- Growth – new homes being built
 - Attract more families
 - New services
- Societal pressures – more face to face; less screen time
- New high school – modern and up-to-date
- Look at all the schools
- Importance of education maintained
- Sidewalks – easier to get around
- Continue to develop and revitalize the center of town
- Business growth and opportunities (restaurants and stores)
- Resolve the rotary issue
- Full-time Fire and Police
- Community center
 - Recreation facility updated and better perception of residents
 - “Camp” – YMCA-like alternative
 - Activities for everyone
- Community college satellites
- Expand fields and park – tied to Rail Trail
- Keep strong Senior Center

One Word:

Staff was asked to describe their ideal vision of East Longmeadow sometime in the future, in one word.

- Friendly
- Welcoming
- Homey
- Supportive
- Accessible
- Thriving
- Diverse
- Safe
- Vibrant
- Innovative
- Community

Appendix C: East Longmeadow Public Library 2017 Technology Plan

Mission Statement

The library's technology infrastructure is current and well suited to the needs of the community. Technology is vitally important to the library's mission of supporting the cultural, educational and recreational needs of the East Longmeadow area. Through ongoing assessment, the library will change and adapt to the needs of the community. Keeping abreast of emerging technologies and providing a staff well trained in technology ensures that the library will be able to provide the highest level of service.

Services Provided to the Public

- Library webpage (provides in-library and remote access to online resources)
- Online 24/7 Ask a Librarian Service (form submission)
- Online calendar of events
- Business, General, Periodicals and Genealogy reference databases
- Online language learning program

Goals and Objectives

Technology

- Create a new and vibrant website that provides 24/7 remote access to library resources
- Upgrade library staff and patron computers following a 3 to 5 year cycle
- Increase library inventory of lendable devices – iPads, Kindles, Chromebooks, Launchpad tablets for children
- Explore new apps that allow patrons to checkout their own materials
- Purchase RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) system for self-check-out
- Create an ongoing program of coding classes for children and young adults
- Provide technology classes demonstrating current online resources
- Provide access to basic computer skills training
- Provide staff training in new programs and technologies

Education

- Provide access and instruction in the use of current online education tools
- Provide curated links related to homework help and online research tools
- Provide curated information on college selection, financial aid and scholarships
- Provide online programs geared to improving literacy

Health

- Provide curated content by access to health care providers and prescription drugs
- Provide access to health care portals providing information and services
- Provide library sponsored programs on navigating online health and wellness resources
- Provide access to online medical databases
- Provide training for staff and librarians

Business, Government and Legal Services

- Provide curated links to government portals at the local, state and federal level
- Provide online access to legal services
- Explore business partnerships to provide opportunities for patrons to improve the technology skills required to pursue their careers
- Provide staff training on accessing government forms
- Provide online access to resume building tools.
- Provide training in office productivity software.

Professional Development

Library staff regularly attends Massachusetts Library System (MLS) workshops. Yearly participation in Massachusetts Library Association (MLA) and American Library Association (ALA) conferences is encouraged. In house training will be offered at regular intervals and individually upon request.

Assessment

A. Telephone

Our Voice over Internet Protocol (VOIP) phone system is provided by the East Longmeadow Internet Technology (IT) department. We currently have ten phone extensions.

B. Internet Access

The library has access to the Central/Western Massachusetts Automated Resource Sharing (CWMARS) network and the East Longmeadow town network. The library also has two wireless networks. The CWMARS wireless hotspot provides wireless printing to patrons with laptops. The town network also offers wireless connectivity and is password protected.

C. Hardware

There are 34 computers in the library all with access to the Internet. 12 computers are connected to CWMARS and 22 are connected to the town network. There is a color copier on the second floor (Ricoh) that connects to 16 internet access computers on the second floor. The five computers in the Children's Room connect to two separate Hewlett Packard (HP®) Deskjet printers. The staff computers either print to the color Ricoh copier or various HP® standalone printers. There are 12 barcode scanners and six receipt printers in the building. The library has a ceiling projector that is 10 years old, a digital versatile disc (DVD) player, a DVD cleaning machine and two label making machines. The library uses a Checkpoint security system.

D. Software

We would like to upgrade our Microsoft Office Licenses to Office 2017. Adobe Acrobat Reader would be an extremely useful addition as well.

Evaluation

A web analytics service will be used to track and reports website traffic. Attendance at library sponsored technology programs will be tracked daily to determine popularity and efficacy.

System generated circulation statistics will be used to track usage of electronic devices.

Database statistics will be monitored to determine usage and value.