

Strategic Plan 2018-2023

Approved by the Jack Russell Memorial Library Board

February 14, 2018

Acknowledgements

This plan would not have been completed without the participation of the community of Hartford and the library and Board sincerely thanks those that offered their ideas and time by completing surveys and attending a community conversation. Their feedback was invaluable to the process and the library hopes this sharing of information and understanding will continue well past the adoption of this plan. Thank you very much!

Thanks are also extended to the Strategic Planning Committee for their time, ideas and commitment to the Jack Russell Memorial Library and the development of this plan. Members of the committee are:

Strategic Planning Committee

Marilee Fuss, Library Board Member

Laurie Hilger, Friends of the Library Representative, Library Board Member

Tom Hostad, Hartford Area Development Corporation Direction (HADC)

Attila Weninger, Hartford Union High School District Superintendent

Barry Wintringer, City of Hartford Council Member, non-voting member of the Library Board

Jennifer Einwalter, Library Director

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The Planning Committee would also like to thank the Library Board for their support of the strategic planning process.

Library Board of Trustees

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Dr. Mark Smits, Hartford Jt. 1 Representative

Barry Wintinger, Aldermanic Liaison

Special thanks to the staff of the JRML for their input and ideas. Lastly, the library would like to thank Melissa McLimans and Bruce Smith from WILS (Wisconsin Library Services) for providing planning process management and facilitation services to develop our strategic plan.

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Introduction

Situated within easy driving distance of Madison and Milwaukee, with a robust business community, many cultural opportunities, and a beautiful location in the Kettle Moraine area, Hartford really is a small town that has it all. The Jack Russell Memorial Library (JRML) is at the heart of the thriving community. With two separate initiatives, the Hartford Area Development Corporation and the Downtown Business Improvement District, focused on growing the downtown and surrounding areas, the JRML understands that it should not only be ready for a changing and growing community, but to be part of the efforts to grow the Hartford area.

In order to ensure that the library understands the needs of the current population and to be prepared for changing needs, the Jack Russell Memorial Library Board formed a strategic planning committee. The committee was made up of library staff, Friends of the Library members, Board members, and members of the community to craft a five-year plan to determine and articulate the goals of the library after careful consideration of the community's needs and aspirations. The planning committee, with the assistance of consultants, began their work in May of 2017 with an introductory meeting. The Committee then used the following sources of information to help determine the goals for the library:

- Annual report data submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for the years 2009-2016.
- Results of a survey of convenience conducted between 6/19/2017 and 7/17/2017. There were 277 total responses.
- Three Community Conversations, the first of which was held 7/20/2107 with 15 attendees, the second on 7/25/2107 with nine attendees, and the third took place on 8/2/2107 with 16 attendees. These conversations were attended by business and civic leaders, educators, office-holders, citizens and library patrons.
- Issues and Needs Questionnaire, completed by members of the Planning Committee.
- Demographics from the American Community Survey and the 2000 and 2010 Census.

The planning committee met on October 2, 2017 to develop the strategic goals and activities outlined in the plan.

Mission Statement

JRML is the community gathering place that fosters education, personal growth, and enjoyment. By connecting the community, the JRML is Hartford's doorway to discovery.

We value:

- the library as a safe, welcoming and inclusive place for all members of our community.
- collaboration with the community and fostering collaboration within the community.
- promoting literacy, learning and the library to impact our community.
- leading everyone's learning journey as the community's trusted source for information.
- an engaged, innovative, friendly, and trained staff that is appreciated, supported and vital to creating and advancing library services

JRML's brand starting in 2018 will be: Community. Learning. Knowledge

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Background

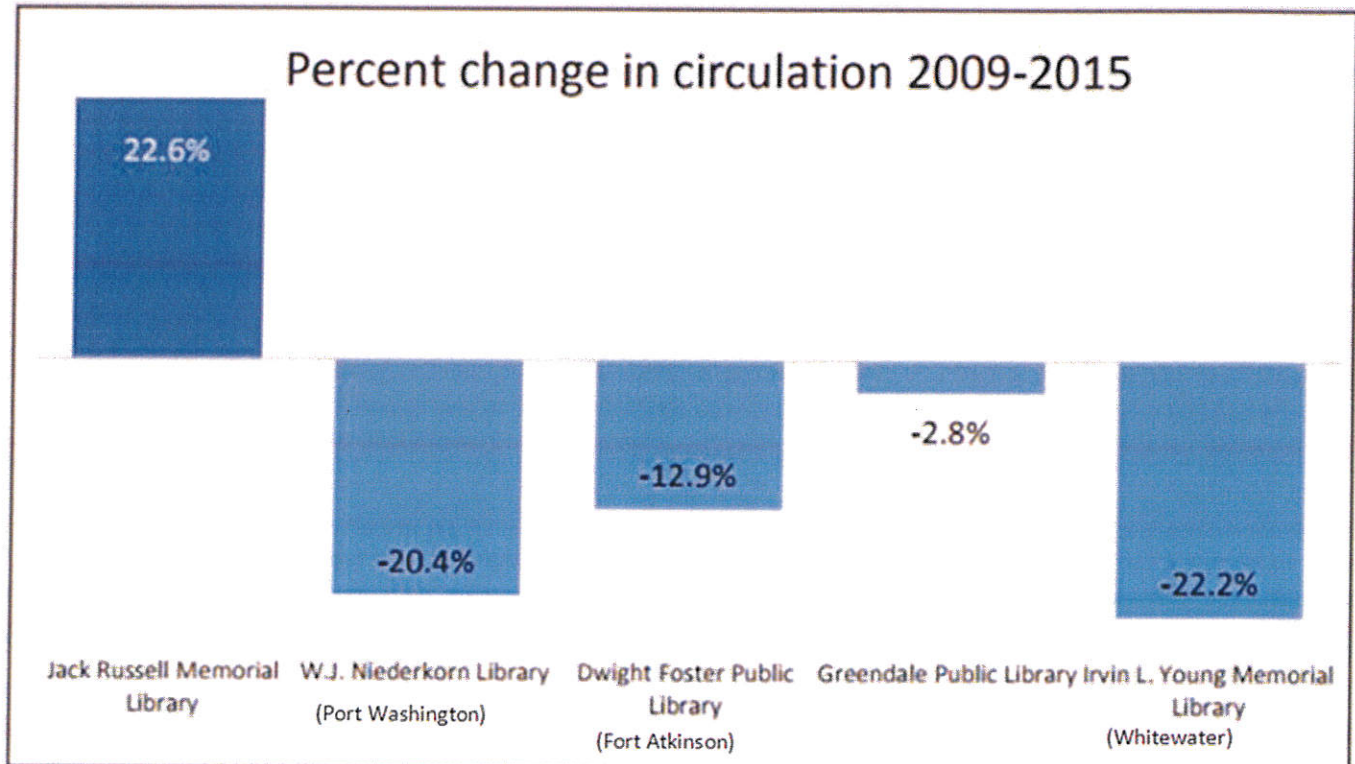
"The Library of today is less of what we have for people and more about what we do for and with people. Public libraries are a life line for people at every key transition during their lives."

American Library Association Libraries Transform Campaign

Located along the Hartford Millpond, the Jack Russell Memorial Library (JRML) is a treasure for Hartford and the surrounding area. The beautiful architecture, outdoor spaces, and views are inspiring, but the collections, services and staff are what make the JRML the doorway to discovery. Throughout the strategic planning process, from data gathered from annual reports, community conversations, a survey, and anecdotes shared by staff and committee members it was shown that the JRML is heavily used by the members of the community as both a learning place and a gathering place. While loaning materials is a large portion of what the library does, there are many additional services the library provides that have grown to be a staple within the community it serves. Room rentals, programs, and PC access are just the tip of the in-demand services the library has cultivated over the years. These services have broadened the scope of what the library offers the community, making it much more than a place one can find books.

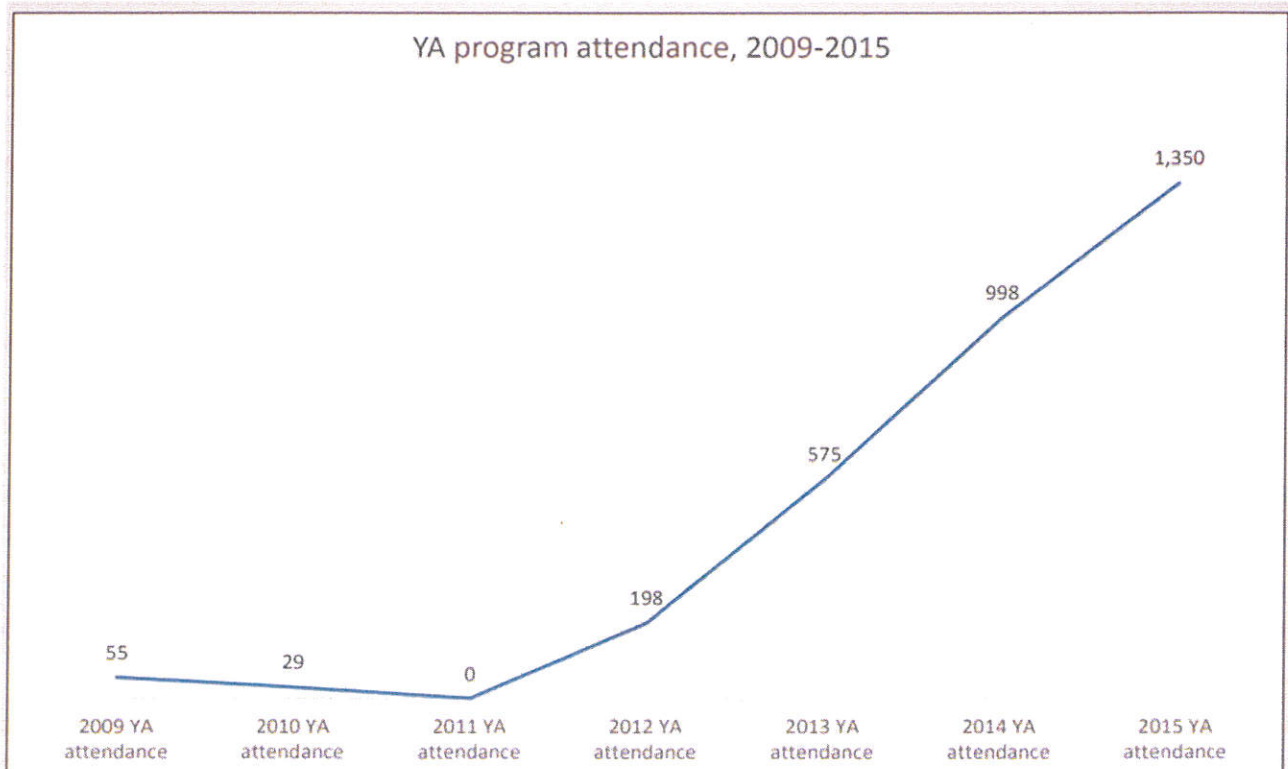
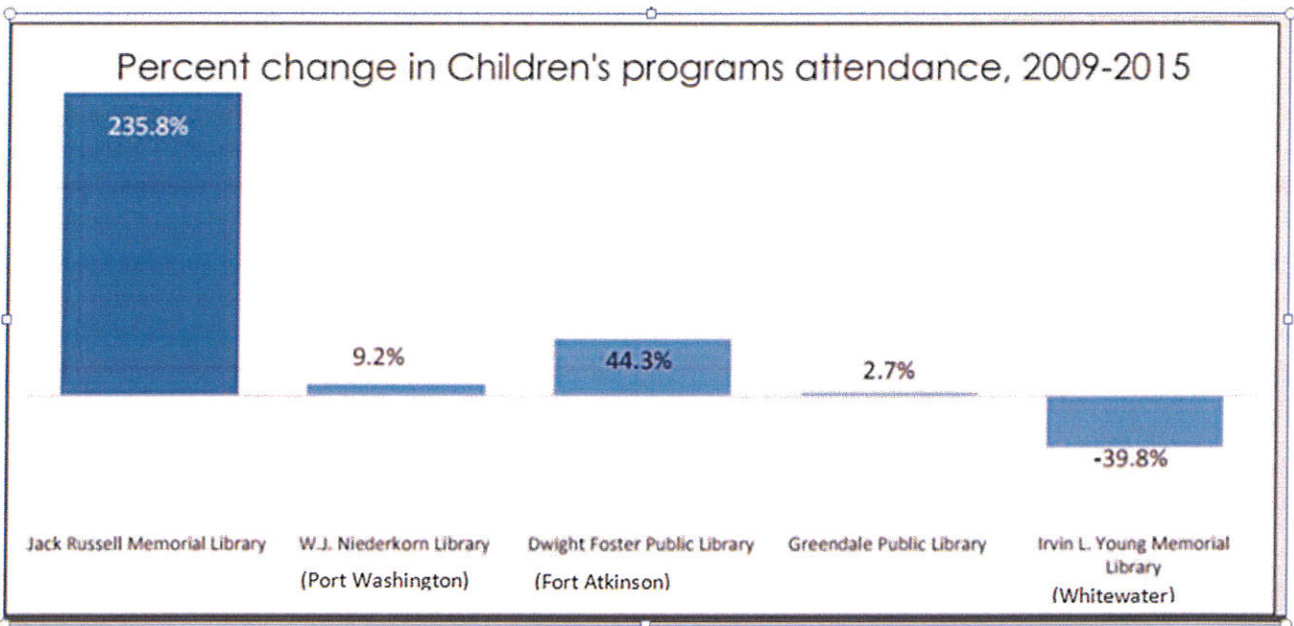
By the Numbers—Circulation

The JRML has seen an increase of approximately 23% in circulation of materials over the last six years—a sharp contrast to peer libraries that have seen a decrease.



Children's & Teen Programming

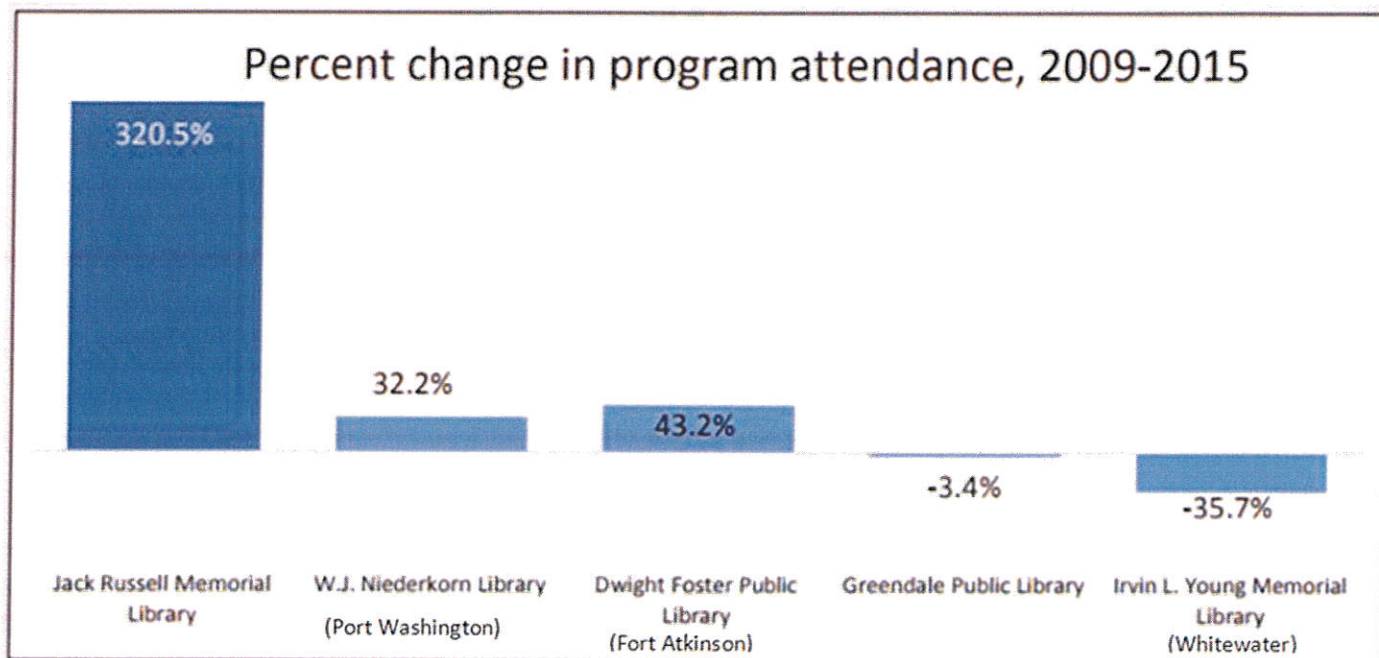
The JRML has a thriving Youth program. With the opening of the new facility in 2011, Youth programming was greatly expanded. Teen programming specifically received a major overhaul as there was little to no Teen programming offered previously. Teen program offerings include crafts, movies, activities, and a Teen Summer Reading Program. Overall, Youth programming increased 434% from 2009-2015. Not only has the Library increased the amount of Youth programs offered, but the public has also positively responded. There was a 235.8% change in Children's programming from 2009-2015. Teen programming has continued to grow from 55 attendees in 2009 to 1,350 overall attendees in 2015.



The JRML is dedicated to consistently re-evaluating, redesigning, and implementing new Youth programs as the community's needs and wants change. The JRML realizes the youth served are the future of the library. The staff's goal is to foster a love for reading, learning, and an overall love of the library.

Adult Programming

While the Youth programs are a major staple of what the library does, the JRML realizes programming for adults is equally important. Like Youth programming, the creation of the new facility allowed library staff to explore and implement more adult programming. Adult programs such as Movies for Grown-Ups, Crafts for Grown-Ups, and an Adult Reading Program were all implemented and positively received by the community. The Friends of the Harford Library (FHL) also planned and sponsored performers and speakers for adults. Many times, these programs were so well attended that FHL members would have to turn away attendees to not break fire code. While the group has done a tremendous job at planning the programs, it was a major time commitment for the FHL, which is made up entirely of volunteers. In 2017, the FHL and the JRML signed a memorandum of understanding regarding programming. Starting in 2018, the library will handle the planning for all the adult performers and speakers. The FHL will sponsor and help staff the programs. It is a partnership both the FHL and the JRML is excited about and confident will help provide the community with more adult programming that caters to adults of all ages. Below is a look at overall attendance between Adult and Youth programming:



Community Room and Study Room Usage

The JRML provides many spaces the public and organizations can utilize. Upstairs, the library has three study rooms as well as one larger conference room. The study rooms vary in size with the smallest holding no more than four people and the largest holding no more than 8 people. The Conference room can accommodate up to 20 people. Downstairs in the main entrance of the library, the facility has a Community room that can accommodate 100 people seated and 150 people standing.

All the meeting room spaces can be reserved up to six months in advanced and are heavily used by the public. Over the years, use of the rooms has more than tripled since the new facility was open. In 2012, there were 687 room reservations from the public. In 2016, there were 2,329, which averages to approximately 45 reservations per week.

Reference Questions

The library is often looked at as the community's personal "Google." Staff answer a range of questions such as, "Do you know the number for the local Wal-Mart," to "Can you help me find information on building my own green house." In 2016, staff answered approximately 13,631 questions from the public. While some may think the Internet has all the answers, the public still needs and believes the library is their trusted source of information.

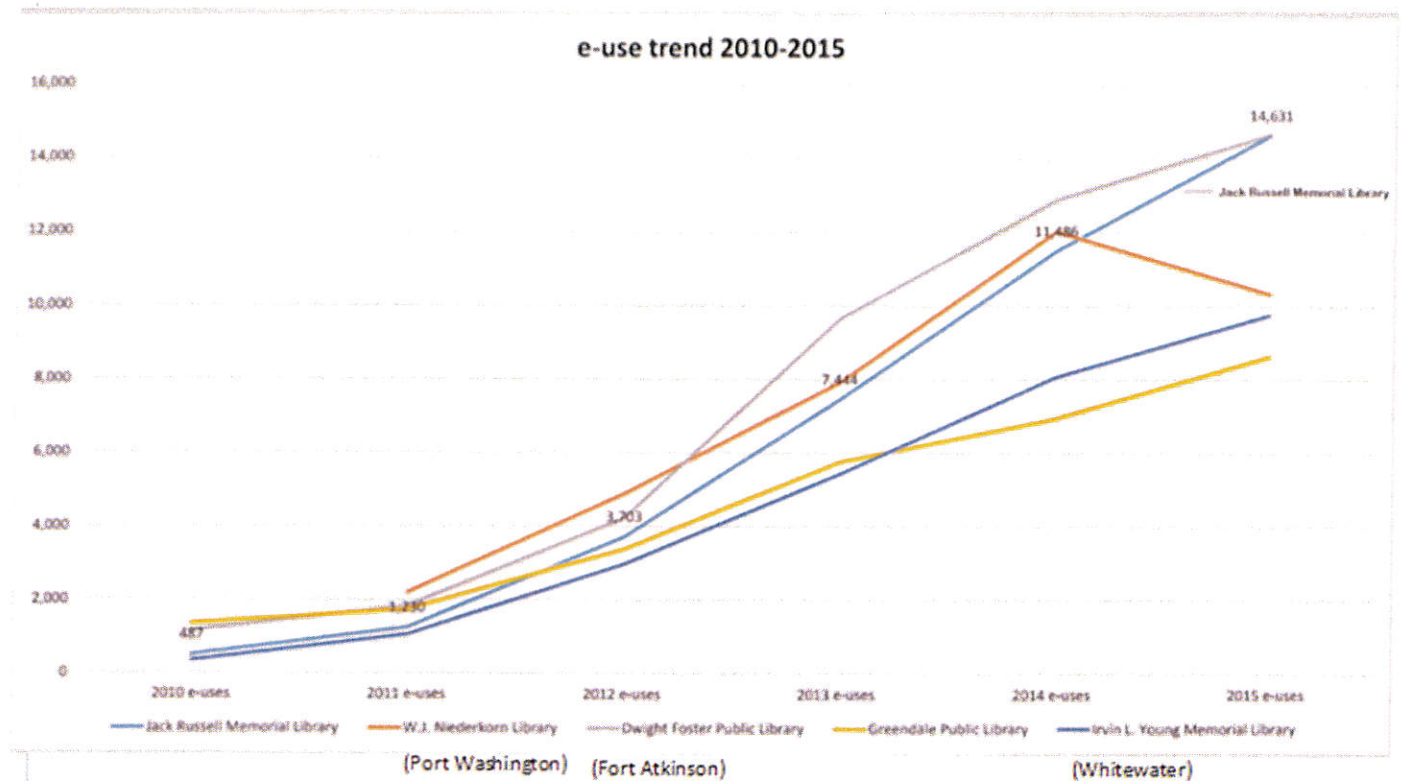
Volunteers

The JRML has a bolstering volunteer program managed by a staff member. Volunteers help complete a multitude of tasks including but not limited to shelving, pulling holds, shelf reading, and completion of special projects as assigned. All volunteer tasks comply with Wisconsin's privacy law, which requires volunteers do not handle any patron's personal and private information. With the help of volunteers, the library has received an additional 33 hours of work per week from 2014 to 2016. For the JRML, the 33 weekly hours of volunteer work is invaluable as it likens to having another part-time staff member. The volunteer program at the library has continued to grow as community member's interest in volunteering has increased. While the library will continue to cultivate and grow its volunteer program, the program is reaching capacity. In addition, the tasks that the library requires more help with are ones that volunteers cannot assist with, they do not comply with Wisconsin's privacy law. As the library moves forward with its services to the community, relying solely on more volunteer help cannot be the only option to support the library's growth.

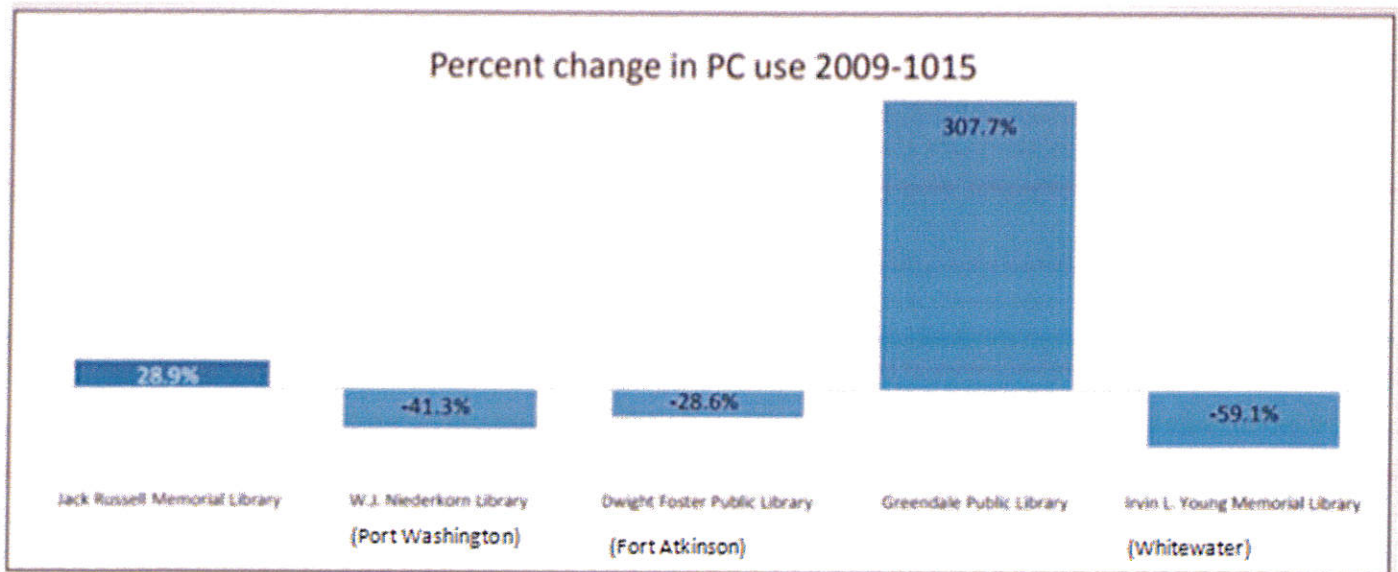
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Technology

Of particular interest is the strong use of and need for technology in Hartford. Electronic book usage has soared with the library's e-uses rising from 487 in 2010 to 14,631 in 2016—a total of 1100%.



Within the library, computer use remains unusually high in contrast to comparable public libraries. Although there has been a small decrease in use since a peak in 2014, collected statistics show an increase of nearly 30% in PC use in the library between the years of 2009-2015. In 2016, collected statistics show 14,237 public computer use logins over 19 stations. On average, this reflects about 273 logins per week or 40 logins per day. In addition, Wi-Fi is also a huge demand at the library with 28,020 wireless logins in 2016.



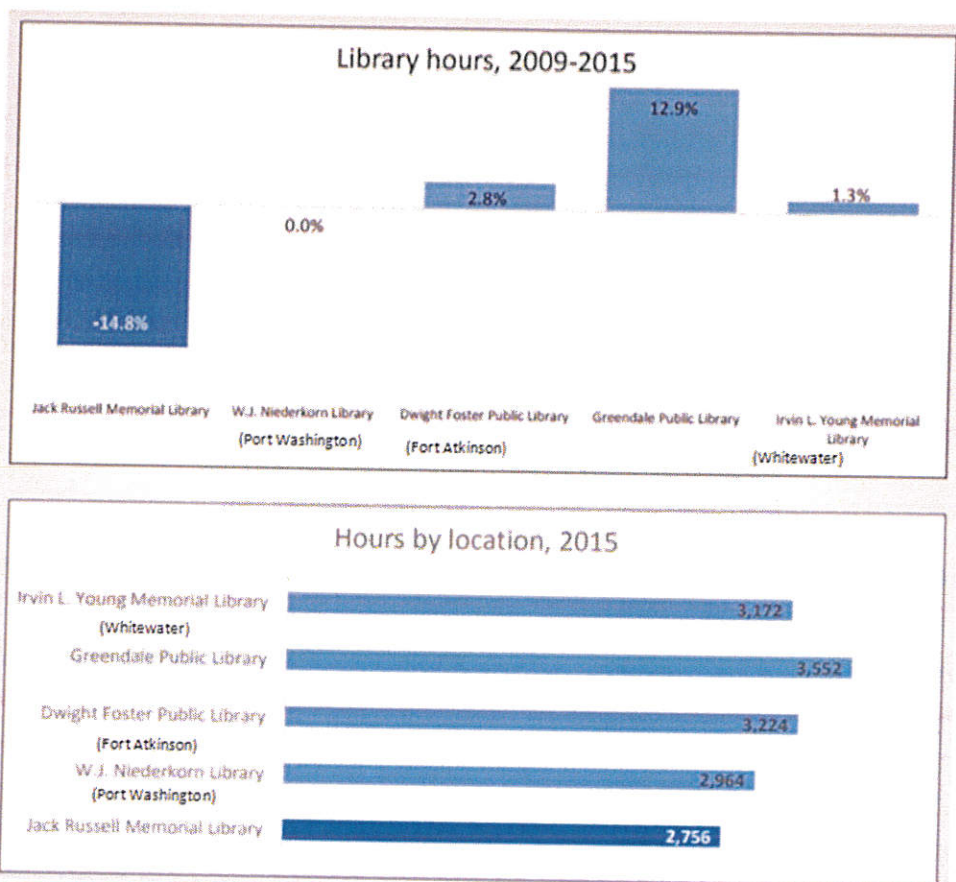
With technology continuing to be a driving force in Hartford and a growing library service the public expects, staff often receive technology related questions. Whether a patron needs help downloading a book to a personal device or learning how to create an email account, the staff are often sought after for help. They are, in many ways, the community's technology help desk.

The area of technology support as well as workforce development is one in which the library will continue to be needed. The development of the downtown area, strong relationships with the schools, and an active business community make collaborations and partnerships possible. At the community conversations, attendees noted the following:

- The library could be a place for business or technical college training, possibly partnering with corporations in Hartford where the library can be utilized for training their employees.
- Providing adult educational opportunities and being a media and/or technology hub for the community is needed as a role the library can fill.
- The library could help with being an education center for technology.

Library Hours

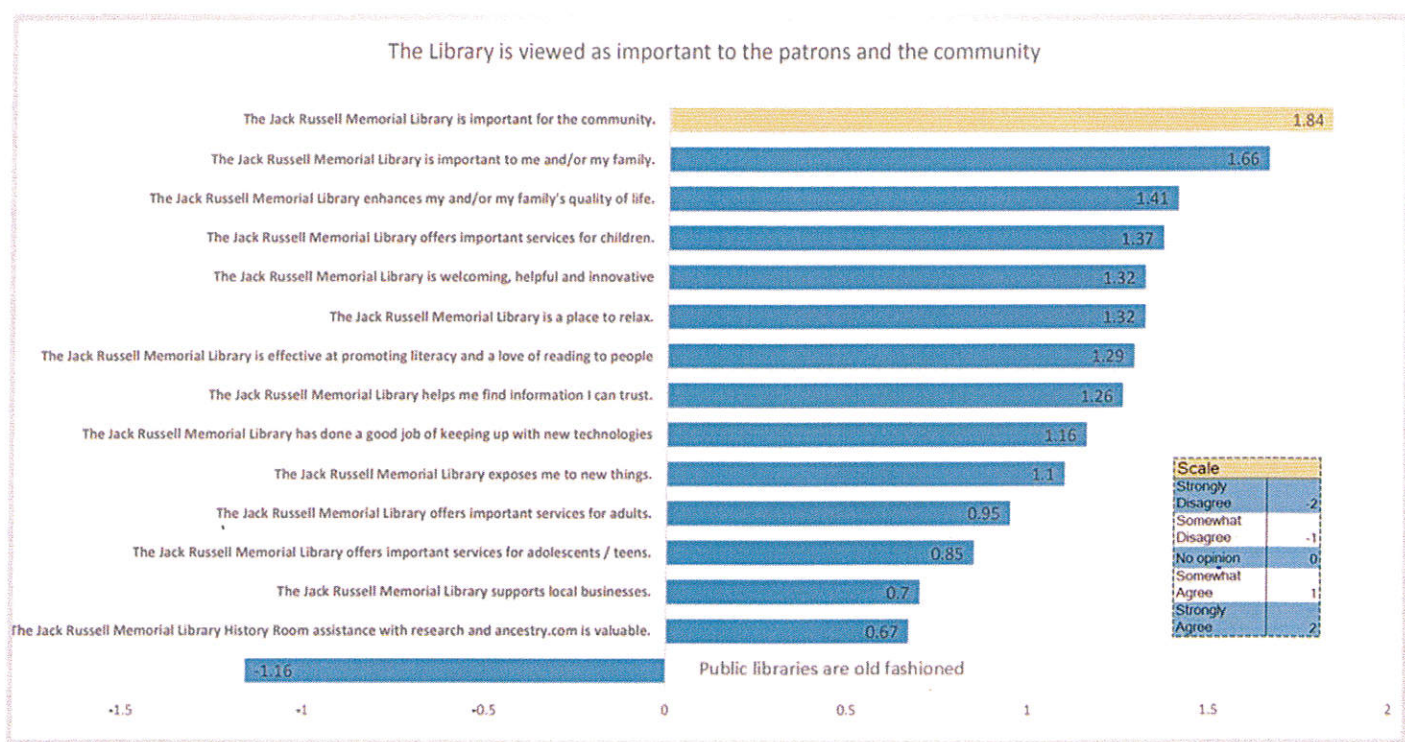
Library hours are another area of interest for the library and its community. In the survey dispersed to the Hartford community and library patrons, 42% of respondents indicated that there was indeed nothing the library could do to increase their use because all their needs were being met. However, 37% responded that the library's hours could be more convenient, which would increase their use of the library. When compared to other similar libraries, the JRML is open to the community fewer hours. The following chart uses data from the library annual reports that are submitted to the Department of Public Instruction and shows the JRML's hours compared to other libraries in the state:



The library is dedicated to reevaluating its hours as the community's needs change. In addition, available staffing and funding will also be taken into consideration to make sure the library is providing the same level of service it was with a lower level of hours. It is important the library does not increase the level of hours at the expense of decreasing the level of service.

Community Awareness and Understanding

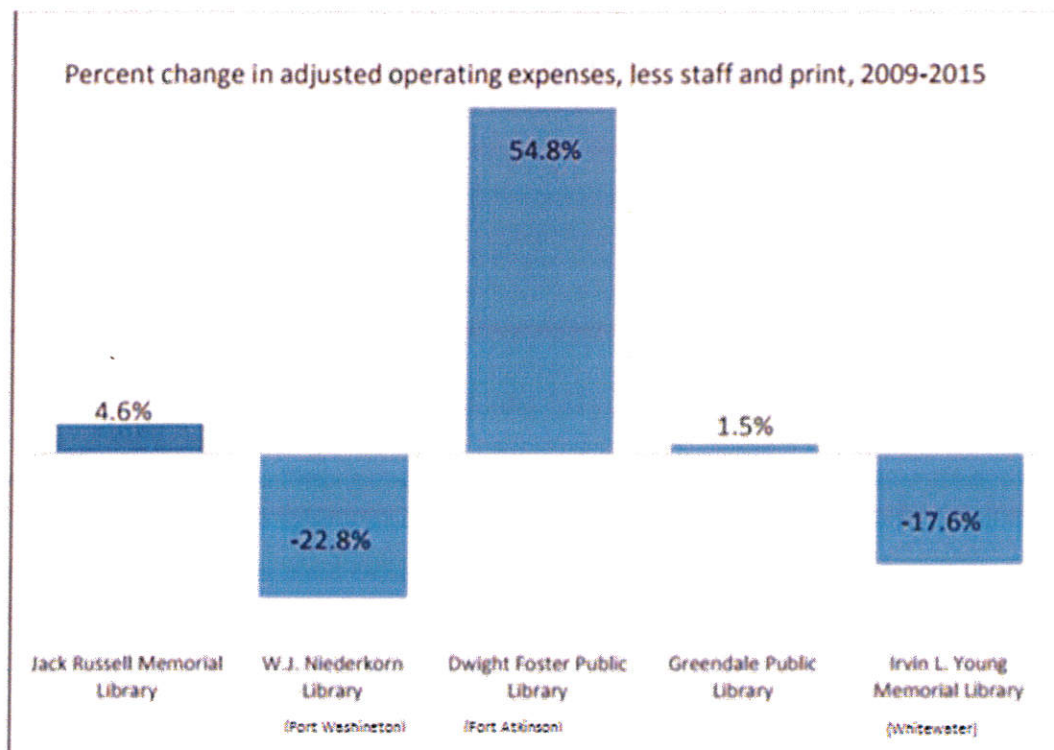
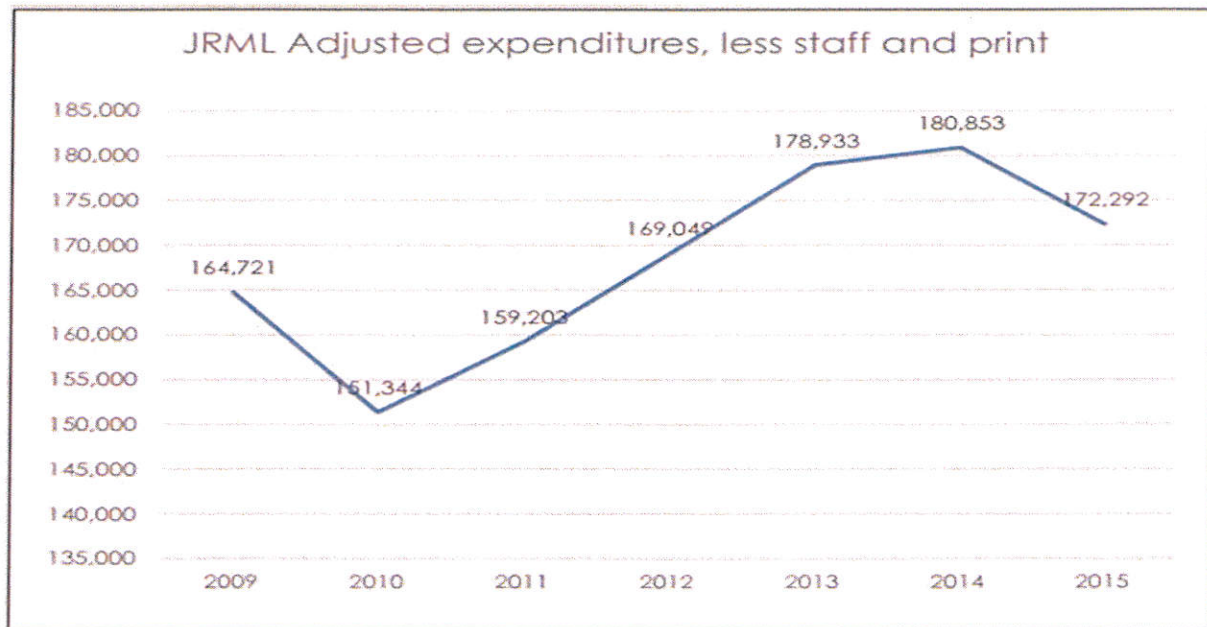
Overall, the library is deeply valued by the community. In the community survey, respondents were asked how they agreed with a series of statements on a numbered scale with 2 being "strongly agree" and -2 being "strongly disagreed." Out of the 223 respondents, the statement, "The Jack Russell Memorial Library is Important for the community," averaged a 1.84. The second highest averaging statement was "The Jack Russell Memorial Library is important to me and/or my family," which averaged a 1.66.



While the library is shown to be an important asset to the community, there are members of the community that do not know about the events, resources, and services the library offers. The library staff recognizes this and is dedicated to increasing community awareness of the library. At the same time, the library staff understands that the community and its needs are constantly evolving. If the library is going to continue to be a fundamental resource for the community, it will need to change as the community changes. The library will work to find the best ways to both enhance community awareness while continuing to understand the community's needs. The library's ideal goal is that every resident of Hartford and its surrounding area will know of the library's invaluable services.

Funding and Staffing

While many of the services and goals listed above are of utmost important to the library's future, the library does recognize that there is a challenge with funding and staffing. In 2011, a new library building was constructed in order provide a sufficient space that would allow future growth. Once the built, the library went from 14,500 square feet to 35,500 square feet. With growth in square footage, the library also received a growth in expenses. However, the library did not receive any additional funding. To not only provide the same level of service it had in the smaller building, but also expand the amount of services it was offering in the new building, the library absorbed a 4.6% cost to operate the building.



With the new facility, the library also grew from one service station—a single circulation desk—to three service stations—a Youth Desk, Circulation Desk, and a reference desk. Due to the lack of funding increase, the library was not able to increase its staffing. While the library has positively managed to both sustain and grow its level of service without increasing staffing, the library's staff workload is at capacity. In order to obtain many of the goals outlined in this strategic plan, the library will need to increase its staffing, which in turn will require a funding increase. The JRML will strive to explore and implement self-funding efforts. In cases where more increased financial support is needed, the library will make the case based on clear community need.

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Strategic Initiatives, Goals and Activities

Strategic Initiative 1: ACCESS

Provide greater access to and expand library services and resources to best meet the needs of the Hartford Community

SERVICE GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

1. **Identify the best hours for the community, including seasonal hours, Sundays, and an earlier opening time**
 - a. Administer surveys to fully understand the needs of the community related to library hours
 - b. Develop an incremental approach through the budgeting process to increase hours and add staffing
 - c. Consider adding Sunday hours seasonally
 - d. Determine metrics in order to assess the impact of any changes
2. **Create a center for business collaboration for workforce development and skill building with the Hartford area**
 - a. Explore the creation of a reverse mentoring program in which younger community members, in particular teens,
 - b. Can provide technology assistance for older members of the community
 - c. Identify and partner with members of the community that have needed skills and that will teach Others
 - d. Develop and strengthen partnerships with the Workforce Development Board
3. **Increase access and expand technology services**
 - a. Develop a one on one technology assistance program for patrons to schedule time for tech help
 - b. Perform an assessment to understand and define community technology needs, in relation to programming and equipment
 - c. Investigate implementing wireless printing
4. **Increase programming for specific adults**
 - a. In cooperation with the Friends of the Hartford Library, manage yearly programming events
 - b. Experiment with “outside the box” programming ideas to reach segments of the community that are infrequent or non-users
5. **Be a hub for the community to utilize current and cutting edge technology platforms and equipment.**
 - a. Hire a dedicated staff member that can provide public service, see the needs of the community and understand the ways in which technology can enhance library services
 - b. Utilize Monarch Library System expertise and staff
 - c. Connect with business and industry community members for vision and trends
6. **Increase community use and connection to the History room**
 - a. Explore hiring a dedicated staff person for the History Room
 - b. Investigate digitization of historical collections
 - c. Allow the History Room to become a connection spot between generations to grow library users and promote community connectedness

Strategic Initiative 2: LIBRARY FACILITY AND SPACES

Adapt existing spaces to increase their functionality for providing innovative services and access to resources

SERVICE GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Improve library spaces to increase functionality and safety

- a. Utilize existing space to create a business incubator and/or a makerspace area
- b. Investigate ways to better utilize the second floor
- c. Investigate better use of the three outdoor spaces for conversion into all season areas
- d. Utilize outdoor green space around the property for community programming
- e. Increase soundproofing in three upstairs study rooms to improve room acoustics
- f. Enhance study rooms by adding whiteboards and other functional collaboration and work tools

2. Identify opportunities to explore revenue generating uses of space

- a. Develop a pop-up store area as a revenue stream for the library and way to create partnerships with community businesses
 1. Identify location in library and policies and processes for this idea
- b. Explore the addition of a café or coffee shop that would enhance library space and provide a revenue stream
 1. Begin with a self-service coffee bar
 2. Explore partnership with existing businesses that could provide services
- c. Leverage and create partnerships in order to create new revenue streams including:
 1. Space rental and/or usage by local for-profit organizations and businesses

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Strategic Initiative 3: PARTNERSHIPS

Develop effective partnerships to increase library capacity and expand library service opportunities

Service Goals and Activities:

1. **Enhance relationships with area schools**
 - a. Have a library presence in the LMC in public schools
 - b. Grow relationships with school library staff
 - c. Explore how to connect school IDs to serve as library cards
2. **Use existing and create new library platforms to facilitate and expand connections and partnerships with other organizations and among the community**
 - a. Partner with organizations to increase library capacity such as Casa Guadalupe, SCORE, and Workforce Development
 - b. In order to act as a catalyst for community growth and gathering, convene a business and industry advisory group utilizing experts in the area, such as Hartford Area Business Networking Alliance (HABNA) and the Chamber of Commerce
3. **Seek other options to develop new funding streams for the library**
 - a. Offer sponsorship of programming and advertisements in the library
 - b. Explore the pathway for the creation of a library foundation in order to create an endowment fund to help operational and capital budget needs

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Strategic Initiative 4: MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Increase awareness of all the library does and improve communication with the community.

Service Goals and Activities:

1. **Explore ways to increase awareness of the library's resources and services**
 - a. Create a 3 year marketing plan
 - b. Investigate working with a local firm to assist with creating a plan and implementation
 - c. Identify communication channels for distributing library information
 1. newspaper articles
 2. paid advertisements
 3. use of City of Hartford utility bills
 4. Constant Contact for email
 5. Town of Erin quarterly newsletter
2. **Increase participation and visibility in the community and outside the physical walls of the library**
 - a. Continue and increase participation in community events:
 1. Maxwell Street Days
 2. Christmas Parade
 3. Iced on Main
 4. Autumn Fest
 5. Downtown Trick or Treat
 6. Farmer's Market
 - b. Have a pop up library to register new card holders and check out materials at events
 - c. Promote and use a Calendar of Events
 - d. Investigate new ways to distribute library information to families through local schools
3. **Work with the Friends of the Hartford Library to help them become the best advocates for the JRML**
 - a. Foster good communication and sharing of ideas

Strategic Initiative 5: STAFFING

Continue to attract and retain high quality staff to serve the library's changing needs

Service Goals and Activities:

1. Continue to support staff through continuing education opportunities
 - a. Hold one staff in service per calendar year
2. Promote a healthy workplace culture
3. Investigate ways to reach the goals of this strategic plan and meet the service needs to the community
 - a. Continue to explore ways to maximize staff hours
 - b. Investigate ways to increase size of paid staff
 - c. Continue to manage current workload capacity

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IMPLEMENTATION

The Library Director and staff, in consultation with the Library Board, will annually prioritize, identify service goals and coordinate activities from this plan. These projects will be determined based on the activities needed to reach long-term goals. Activities will also include projects that will have the most impact for the community and those that can easily be implemented. Available resources and capacities will be a major factor.

The library will develop action plans for the prioritized projects. Action plans may include:

- staff responsibilities and timelines
- necessary resources
- data and information gathering
- assessment of progress communicated to stakeholders

See addendum A for a detailed schedule of service goals.

ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNICATION

The Library Director will regularly update the JRML Board on the progress of implementing the strategic plan. In addition, in March of each year the Library Director will also provide a report to the City of Hartford Common Council reviewing the previous year's activities. The timeline for progress and assessment will be communicated to the JRML Board. The annual review of service goals and prioritization of activities will be as follows:

- **March**—The Library Director and staff provide a verbal report to the JRML Board assessing progress in implementing the current year's priorities from the plan.
- **August**—The Library Director as part of the budget process will assess the implementation of the plan, determine the progress on the plan's service goal, recommend any adjustments to the plan based on changing conditions or new challenges and opportunities and identify and prioritize the activities that will be the focus of the JRML's efforts the next year. This work will be reflected in the budget planning process for the library and reported to the JRML Board throughout the budget development process.
- **December**—The Library Director, with input from staff, will prepare a written update for the JRML Board. This report will include the status of plan implementation from the current year and activities slated for the upcoming year.

*See addendum B for Yearly Activity Tracker
(will be updated on an annual basis)*

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Addendum A

2018 Activities

Administer surveys to fully understand the needs of the community related to library hours

Determine metrics in order assess the impact of any changes

Identify and partner with members of the community that have needed skills and that will teach others

Develop and strengthen partnerships with the Workforce Development Board

Develop a one-on-one technology assistance program for patrons to schedule time for tech help

Perform an assessment to understand and define community technology needs, in relation to programming and equipment

In cooperation with the Friends of the Hartford Library, manage yearly programming events

Utilize Monarch Library System expertise and staff

Investigate ways to better utilize the second floor

Utilize outdoor green space around the property for community programming

Have a library presence in the LMC in public schools

Grow relationships with school library staff

Partner with organizations to increase library capacity such as Casa Guadalupe, SCORE, and Workforce Development

Investigate working with a local firm to assist with creating a plan and implementation

Identify communication channels for distributing library information

Continue and increase participation in community events

Promote and use a Calendar of Events

Investigate new ways to distribute library information to families through local schools

Foster good communication and sharing of ideas

Hold one staff in service per calendar year

Promote a healthy workplace culture

Continue to explore ways to maximize staff hours

Investigate ways to increase size of paid staff

Continue to manage current workload capacity

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Addendum B

Meeting	When	Meeting Info	
Library Management	Monthly	Purpose	Strategic plan and current project progress check in
		Actions	Review activity project plans and current year activity tracker. Adjust both as needed to account for any changes in resource needs, timeline or next steps
			Update or create project plans as needed.
Library Management	January/February	Purpose	End of year assessment of strategic plan progress and current project progress check in
		Actions	Review activity project plans and current year activity tracker. Adjust both as needed to account for any changes in resource needs, timeline or next steps
Report to Board	March	Purpose	Provide end of previous year assessment of progress on strategic plan and current project progress update
		Actions	Share end of year assessment done in previous months.
			Review activity project plans and current year activity tracker as appropriate.
Library Management	June	Purpose	Strategic plan and current project progress check in
		Actions	Current activity assessment - changes in resource needs, next steps, etc. based on assessment of activity's impact to reach goal
			Determine activity priorities for following year as part of budget planning process
			Review activity project plans and current year activity tracker. Adjust both as needed.
Present to board	August	Purpose	Review master activity list to determine if goals and remaining activities are still right for the library. Add or subtract to each as needed.
			Review master activity list to determine priority of goal and activity work for the next year.
			Strategic plan and current project progress update
			Present activity priorities as determined by staff in June/July for following year as part of budget planning process
Library Management	November	Actions	Review activity project plans and current year activity tracker. Adjust both as needed.
			Review master activity list to determine if goals and remaining activities are still right for the library. Add or subtract to each as needed.
			Review master activity list to determine priority of goal and activity work for the next year.
			Share about the progress of plan activities from the current year and inform about the planned activities for the next year
Library Management	November	Purpose	As appropriate review activity project plans (current and those planned to start in the next year) and current year activity tracker.
		Actions	

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