

Acton Memorial Library

Long Range Plan

FY 2020 – FY 2024

Table of Contents

- 1. Executive Summary 3
- 2. Committee Members / Trustees..... 4
 - 2.1 Long Range Planning Committee Members 4
 - 2.2 Acton Memorial Library Board of Trustees 4
- 3. Introduction..... 5
- 4. Methodology 5
- 5. Mission Statement..... 6
- 6. FY 2020 – 2024, Goals, Objectives and Activities 7
 - 6.1 Library Collections 7
 - 6.2 Facilities 8
 - 6.3 Staffing..... 10
 - 6.4 Community and Cultural Center 11
 - 6.5 Technology..... 13
- 7. Action Plans..... 14
 - 7.1 FY20 Action Plan 14
 - 7.2 FY21 Action Plan 15
 - 7.3 FY22 Action Plan 15
 - 7.4 Ongoing activities..... 16
- 8. Appendices 18
 - 8.1 Community Profile..... 18
 - 8.2 Library Profile 24
 - 8.3 Community Survey 26
 - 8.4 Library Staff Survey and Interviews 35

1. Executive Summary

The Acton Memorial Library's (AML) FY2020-FY2024 Long Range Plan was developed through a series of meetings, data collections and activities that took place between February 2018 and October 2019. Information was solicited by means of interviews with library staff by committee members; the creation, distribution, tabulation and interpretation of a survey that was made available online and in hard copy, both at the library and included as part of a larger municipal mailing to nearly every resident (homeowner and renter) in Acton. A survey was also conducted for the Library staff members to provide their feedback and recommendations.

All the data collected was examined to identify those goals considered to be most important to strengthen and improve the library's services, while continuing to respond to the changing needs of a diverse population and to evolving technology.

The goals identified as the focus over the next five years fall into the following six categories:

1. Library Collections
2. Facilities
3. Staffing
4. Technology
5. Foreign Language and Culture
6. Community Experience

This document defines and describes the selected goals, establishes the objectives that must be met to accomplish each goal, and identifies the activities necessary to accomplish the objectives. The committee developed an action plan for each of the next three years.

Methodology and data collection activities are briefly summarized within the text. Related appendices provide details of the process and analysis of the data collected.

The Acton Memorial Library Board of Trustees approved the FY2020-FY2024 Long Range Plan on October 22, 2019.

2. Committee Members / Trustees

2.1 Long Range Planning Committee Members

Danielle Savin, Library Director, Co-chair
Megan Warren, Assistant Director
Tom Lemire
James Fox
Clare Seaton, Staff Librarian 2
Carol Knowles
Sampada Salunkhe
Suzanne Shanahan, Co-chair
Miriam Lezak, Secretary

2.2 Acton Memorial Library Board of Trustees

Harvey Berliner, Secretary
Ann Chang
Thomas Dunn
Joseph Glannon
Carol Knowles
Miriam Lezak
Pamela Lynn
Sampada Salunkhe, President
Suzanne Shanahan

3. Introduction

In October 1994, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners mandated that libraries must have approved Long Range Plans to apply for federal funds. Since then, the Acton Memorial Library has adopted a series of plans to qualify for federal and state funding.

The Long Range Plan (LRP) provides guidance from various stakeholders on library functions as the Acton Memorial Library moves forward in providing service to the community.

This Long Range Plan is a continuation in the series accounting for changes in Library function, staff and technology. It includes feedback from staff and the community.

4. Methodology

The Board of Trustees of Acton Memorial Library assembled a Long Range Plan Committee from members of the board, the library staff and interested library users.

Initial steps of data collection included the development of a community profile ([Appendix 8.1](#)), and a library profile ([Appendix 8.2](#)) and conducting a community survey ([Appendix 8.3](#)).

The community survey was made available to citizens through paper and electronically. The questionnaire was available through the Library website, email campaigns, and several social media sites. Paper forms were available at the library as well as at Council on Aging office. SurveyMonkey, an electronic survey tool, was utilized to administer the survey. Results from the 499 responses representing more than 1,800 people were analyzed.

In addition, meetings with library staff were conducted and their suggestions and opinions documented ([Appendix 8.4](#)). A survey was also conducted for the staff to solicit input and feedback.

The Mission Statement of the Library remains unchanged from the previous Long Range Plan. The Long Range Plan committee developed five goals, with related objectives and activities. The committee created action plans for implementation for the first three years.

A draft of the goals was presented to the Board of Trustees to ensure that there was agreement between the Board and the Long Range Plan committee.

5. Mission Statement

The mission of the Acton Memorial Library is to serve the informational, educational, and recreational needs of Acton residents of all ages and backgrounds. Recognizing the diversity of the community and the high level of demand, the Library supports the mission by developing collections in a variety of formats to meet known and anticipated community needs; strives to make residents aware of its services and collections, and to make those resources as accessible as possible both on-site and through electronic means. The Library strives, also, to use the Library resources of staff, technology and building accommodations to ensure their most efficient possible use.

6. FY 2020 – 2024, Goals, Objectives and Activities

6.1 Library Collections

GOAL

Improve library collections (including non-print materials), including visibility and access to materials.

6.1.1 Objective 1

Maintain the Collection Development and Circulation Policies.

Activities

1. Review and update the Collection Development Policy according to the schedule stated in the policy.
2. Review and update the Circulation Policy according to the schedule stated in the policy.

6.1.2 Objective 2

Improve the visibility of items of particular interest.

Activities

1. Continue displays of “best picks” e.g. staff picks, thematic books or topical book collections.
2. Continue the usage of the turret space to display various books, posters or other collections for patrons to peruse or borrow.

6.1.3 Objective 3

Improve access to the collections.

Activities

1. Continue to weed the collections on a defined schedule.
2. Reevaluate the layout for the collections to effectively use available space.

6.1.4 Objective 4

Maintain and improve the electronic collection to the extent feasible under licensing and budgetary constraints.

Activities

1. Continually assess opportunities to increase access to e-books, whether through the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) or other sources.
2. Assess the need for expanded e-book and e-audiobook collections annually.
3. Continue to monitor usage and potential expansion of electronic reference materials and databases.
4. Monitor opportunities to offer new electronic formats such as streaming video or downloadable periodicals.

6.1.5 Objective 5

Work with other town departments to create a reference list or direct resource of archives of records and materials available for public use.

Activities

1. Hire an archivist to create records for the Acton Memorial Library.
2. Work with other town departments and propose a committee be formed for this purpose.

6.2 Facilities

GOAL

Ensure that the interior of the library will continue to function smoothly to meet the needs of the community for the next ten years.

6.2.1 Objective 1

Improve the function of the building's interior.

Activities

1. Hire an architect to continue the facilities work already started, make additional recommendations, and provide estimates.
2. Assist the architect as appropriate in the creation of a draft report.
3. Request that the architect provide a presentation on the report to the Board of Trustees and other interested parties.
4. Working with the architect, have the trustees develop and approve a priority list and timetable for implementation.
5. Identify and secure funding sources.
6. Look for opportunities to upgrade the storage and preservation of materials.
7. Evaluate opportunities for grants to subsidize the cost of preservation of materials.

A plan, blueprints, and a timetable for implementation should be in place two years after the acceptance of the Long Range Plan. Some higher priority items should be completed.

6.2.2 Objective 2

Ensure the library complies with the architectural tenets of Universal Design.

Activities

1. Review the placement, height and accessibility of the shelving.
2. Review the layout of the Children's Department.
3. Review the layout of the lobby to reduce clutter.
4. Review the layout of the Circulation Department.
5. Review the feedback from the ADA Compliance report and work with the Town Offices to determine a plan to eliminate any gaps and other recommendations.

6.2.3 Objective 3

Reevaluate layout of staff spaces to facilitate efficient use of space.

Activities

1. Review the materials in the attic space and other storage spaces to identify appropriate storage spaces for items.
2. Ensure materials are protected from the elements.
3. Reevaluate the storage and sorting areas for the Friends of the Acton Libraries to efficiently manage the space and the process.
4. Clean and organize the 1890 building balcony area and evaluate the possibility to use it for orderly storage of materials.
5. Review space needs and changes in the reference study area.

6.2.4 Objective 4

Improve the appearance and comfort of the library.

Activities

1. Evaluate and identify additional opportunities for gathering areas where patrons can meet, have conversations, study as a group, and work collaboratively.
2. Review the layout and condition of all restrooms and proceed accordingly.
3. Review all furniture for wear and develop a timetable for replacement/repair.
4. Develop timetables for replacement of carpet and painting.
5. Review the quiet study areas.
6. Review the teen and tween areas and evaluate opportunities to increase usage.
7. Clean all public spaces in the library.

6.2.5 Objective 5

Create a safe, uncluttered and comfortable working environment for all employees.

Activities

1. Reevaluate the staff areas in Reference, Circulation and Children's Department to ensure the safety and comfort of all employees.
2. Reevaluate the staff spaces in the Technical Services and Administration areas to ensure efficient use.
3. Evaluate the condition and use of staff furniture and replace as needed.
4. Evaluate the need for new equipment for staff to streamline their work.

6.2.6 Objective 6

Promote Library's interest in the Asa Parlin upgrade initiative.

Activities

1. Strive to be a member on the Asa Parlin upgrades initiative planning committee.
2. Advocate for library's use of the space.

6.3 Staffing

GOAL

Prepare for anticipated staff changes to maximize the opportunity for organizational improvement and minimize disruption to services.

6.3.1 Objective 1

Ensure adequate staffing of the library to support all activities needed for regular functioning of the library.

Activities

1. Fill key open positions in a timely manner to avoid impact to service.
2. Evaluate using part-time staff to give department heads and other key staff off-desk time.
3. Evaluate using para-professionals for Children's Department and Reference Desk as part of the job description.
4. If the proposal for the merger with the West Acton Citizens Library is approved, evaluate the additional work that may be required by the staff.

6.3.2 Objective 2

Use potential staff openings as an opportunity to consider reconfiguration of roles and responsibilities.

Activities

1. Actively look for opportunities to reconfigure jobs.
2. Brainstorm potential realignments of roles and responsibilities/changes in positions as opportunities arise. Use priorities generated by the planning process with the involvement of department heads within the library.
3. Pursue the changes decided upon by working with the Town Human Resources Department.
4. Revise any job descriptions as needed to support the staffing changes, working with the Town Human Resources Department, department heads within the library, and position incumbents.

6.3.3 Objective 3

Provide training and resources to staff, as is appropriate to their responsibilities, to enable them to assist library users with technology.

Activities

1. At a minimum, annually evaluate the equipment staff needs to help the public learn new technologies.
2. At a minimum, annually evaluate what applications the staff needs to help the public learn new technologies.
3. Work closely with the Town IT Department to maintain up-to-date software on staff computers.
4. Regularly train AML staff in the use of technologies appropriate to their responsibilities.

6.3.4 Objective 4

Continue the focus on staff development.

Activities

1. Continue to hold staff meetings at regular frequency with small and large groups ensuring all staff members are able to attend regularly depending on their schedules.
2. Encourage staff to visit other libraries and organize inter-library visits for the staff.
3. Encourage staff to attend off-site development opportunities and conferences.
4. Encourage all staff to create and track annual goals.

6.4 Community and Cultural Center

GOAL

Strengthen the role of Acton Memorial Library as a vibrant, culturally diverse, community resource and gathering place.

6.4.1 Objective 1

Continue the frequency and diversity of programs and events for all age groups.

Activities

1. Continue the variety of Children's programs available and add different time options to support working parents.
2. Continue the variety of Adult programs available such as offering author talks and programs on history, genealogy and other topics of specific interest.
3. Add special programs for Young Adults such as mental wellness, stress reduction or any other special topics of interest.
4. Add special programs for children ages 8 to 14.
5. Promote these programs through various channels including social media and in the library.
6. Improve in-library signage and information broadcasting using electronic boards.
7. Review museum pass options annually in regard to adding ones showcasing the arts or other cultures.
8. Support community groups in their use of the library and its resources.
9. Implement an online room reservation system for the conference room and meeting room.

6.4.2 Objective 2

Continue the art exhibits and concerts.

Activities

1. Continue to have six juried exhibits annually in the meeting room.
2. Coordinate Adult programming to align with various exhibits, community events, or piano concerts
3. Maintain the frequency and diversity of concerts.

6.4.3 Objective 3

Provide space and materials to support the training of volunteers who teach basic reading and writing skills to adult learners for whom English is not their primary language.

Activities

1. With the help of foreign language speaking volunteers, provide a map and guide to the library, translated into multiple languages.
2. Ask ESL tutors to recommend training materials for the library collection.
3. Provide meeting space for tutoring, training and conversational groups.
4. Open up other small areas in the library and make them available for limited ESL activities.

6.4.4 Objective 4

Increase quantity and quality of foreign language resources.

Activities

1. Review local, state and federal census counts for ethnic group identification.
2. Request demographic information about ethnic student group counts from the school administration.
3. Increase foreign languages materials featuring various cultures as needed.
4. Add e-books in foreign languages when available.
5. Work with Minuteman Library Network to ensure foreign language resources are accessible in the catalog.
6. Provide information to patrons to assist searching in other languages.
7. Increase awareness of the availability of these resources.

6.4.5 Objective 5

Participate in activities around the proposal to merge Acton Memorial Library and West Acton Citizens Library.

Activities

1. Participate in the needs assessment study to ensure viability of the proposal based on financial considerations, benefit to patrons, and operational efficiency.
2. Support the evaluations in conducting stakeholder meetings to solicit various points of view.
3. Support the evaluation by providing information and recommendations on operational, administrative and staffing process changes.

6.4.6 Objective 6

Improve the communication provided to the community about library resources, services, and events.

Activities

1. Provide targeted communication to schools and the Council on Aging based on age groups to promote services targeted for them.
2. Explore an increased variety of mediums for communication of services. Use social media and other avenues for promotion of the library such as Facebook and Constant Contact.

3. Create a unique logo and other visual identification for the library.
4. Provide consistent information and signage across all information channels – print, phone and digital.
5. Train the customer-facing staff so they can promote additional library services.
6. Promote other town department events and activities such as town meeting schedules etc.
7. Promote availability of emergency services such as heat, air conditioning, and power during storms or other weather emergencies.
8. Promote the availability of transportation to the Library by supporting organizations.

6.5 Technology

GOAL

Use technology for promotion, information dissemination and efficiency of library services.

6.5.1 Objective 1

Expand technology offerings to support changing patron needs.

Activities

1. Continue to offer a rotation of classes in basic/introductory computer skills.
2. Provide as-needed training and support for such AML systems as the online catalogs, museum pass reservation software, public computers, reference databases, digital catalog, reference iPad, social networking, internet security, Ebay, Etsy etc.
3. Provide self-paced learning opportunities through AML website links to free online tutorials.
4. Maintain an up-to-date collection of consumer technology related books in print and electronic formats.
5. Install additional RFID workstation for the staff.
6. Work with the Town Departments to upgrade the wi-fi bandwidth available at the library.

6.5.2 Objective 2

Provide specific technology support for tech-savvy patrons.

Activities

1. Evaluate the possibility to provide makerspace and open classroom space.
2. Offer higher level or advanced technology resources and trainings for a variety of patrons.
3. Support local STEAM program initiatives such as Girls who Code and others.

6.5.3 Objective 3

Provide user-friendly access to electronic resources.

Activities

1. Continue to provide feedback to MLN and vendors about the users' experience of the digital catalog.
2. Work with MLN to monitor and enhance the MLN catalog if the opportunity arises.
3. Raise public awareness about the wide variety of electronic and technological resources available through classes, online FAQs, handouts, and promotion of specific online catalog capabilities four times a year.
4. Evaluate public use computers and related equipment at least twice a year.
5. Work closely with the Town IT Department to maintain up-to-date software on all public computers.

7. Action Plans

7.1 FY20 Action Plan

COLLECTION

1. Reevaluate the layout for the Children's room collections to effectively use available space.

FACILITIES

1. Look for opportunities to upgrade the storage and preservation of materials.
2. Evaluate opportunities for grants to subsidize the cost of preservation of materials.
3. Clean and organize the 1890 building balcony area and evaluate the possibility to use it for orderly storage of materials.
4. Strive to be a member on the Asa Parlin upgrades initiative planning committee and advocate for library's use of the space.
5. Review all furniture for wear and develop a timetable for replacement/repair.
6. Develop timetables for replacement of carpet and painting.
7. Reevaluate the staff areas in Reference, Circulation and Children's Department to ensure the safety and comfort of all employees.

STAFFING

1. If the proposal for the merger with the West Acton Citizens Library is approved, evaluate the additional work that might be required by the staff.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER

1. Add special programs for Young Adults such as mental wellness, stress reduction or any other special topics of interest.
2. Promote these programs through various channels including social media and in the library.

3. Improve in-library signage and information broadcasting using electronic boards.
4. Implement an online room reservation system for the conference room and meeting room.
5. For the West Acton Citizen's Library proposal, participate in a needs assessment study to ensure viability of the proposal based on financial considerations, benefit to patrons and operational efficiency.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Install an additional RFID workstation for the staff.
2. Offer higher level or advanced technology resources and trainings for a variety of patrons
3. Support local STEAM program initiatives such as Girls who Code and others.

7.2 FY21 Action Plan

COLLECTIONS

1. Reevaluate the layout for the Audio Visual collections to effectively use available space.
2. Hire an archivist to create records for the Acton Memorial Library.

FACILITIES

1. Hire an architect to continue the facilities work already started, make additional recommendations, and provide estimates.
2. Assist the architect as appropriate in the creation of a draft report.
3. Request that the architect provide a presentation on the report to the Board of Trustees and other interested parties.
4. Review the materials in the attic space and other storage spaces to identify appropriate storage spaces for items.
5. Reevaluate the staff spaces in the Technical Services and Administration areas to ensure efficient use.

STAFFING

1. All librarian level staff and department heads attend at least one conference by end of FY21.

COMMUNITY CENTER

1. Investigate the possibility of creating unique a unique logo and other visual identification for the library.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Evaluate the possibility to provide makerspace and open classroom space.

7.3 FY22 Action Plan

COLLECTIONS

1. Reevaluate the layout for the Young Adult and Adult collections to effectively use available space.
2. Work with other town departments to create a reference list or direct resource of archives of records and materials available for public use.

FACILITIES

1. Reevaluate the storage and sorting areas for the Friends of the Acton Libraries to efficiently manage the space and the process.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER

1. For the West Acton Citizen's Library proposed merger:
 - a. Participate in the needs assessment study to ensure viability of the proposal based on financial considerations, benefit to patrons and operational efficiency.
 - b. Support the evaluations in conducting stakeholder meetings to solicit various points of view.
 - c. Support an evaluation by providing information and recommendations on operational, administrative and staffing process changes.
2. Implement a unique logo and visual identification.

7.4 Ongoing activities

COLLECTIONS

1. Review and update the Collection Development Policy according to the schedule stated in the policy.
2. Review and update the Circulation Policy according to the schedule stated in the policy.
3. Continue displays of "best picks" e.g. staff picks, thematic books or topical book collections.
4. Continue the usage of the turret space to display various books, posters or other collections for patrons to peruse or borrow.
5. Continue to weed the collections on a defined schedule.
6. Continually assess opportunities to increase access to e-books, whether through the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) or other sources.
7. Assess the need for an expanded e-book and e-audiobook collections annually.
8. Continue to monitor usage and potential expansion of electronic reference materials and databases.
9. Monitor opportunities to offer new electronic formats such as streaming video or downloadable periodicals.

STAFFING

1. Actively look for opportunities to reconfigure jobs.
2. Brainstorm potential realignments of roles and responsibilities/changes in positions as opportunities arise. Use priorities generated by the planning process with the involvement of department heads within the library.

3. Pursue the changes decided upon by working with the Town Human Resources Department.
4. Revise any job descriptions as needed to support the staffing changes, working with the Town Human Resources Department, department heads within the library, and position incumbents.
5. Continue the focus on staff development.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER

1. Continue the variety of Children's programs available and add different time options to support working parents.
2. Continue the variety of Adult programs available such as offering author talks and programs on history, genealogy and other topics of specific interest.
3. Continue to have six juried exhibits annually in the meeting room.
4. Coordinate Adult programming to align with various exhibits, community events, or piano concerts.
5. Ensure there are art exhibits in the meeting room throughout the year.
6. Coordinate exhibits with community events or piano concerts.
7. Maintain the frequency and diversity of concerts.
8. Provide space and materials to support the training of volunteers who teach basic reading and writing skills to adult learners for whom English is not their primary language.
9. Increase quantity and quality of foreign language resources
10. Promote other town department events and activities like town meeting schedules etc.
11. Promote availability of emergency services such as heat, air conditioning, and power during storms or other weather emergencies.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Provide self-paced learning opportunities through AML website links to free online tutorials.
2. Continue to provide feedback to MLN and vendors about the users' experience of the digital catalog.
3. Work with MLN to monitor and enhance the MLN catalog if the opportunity arises.
4. Raise public awareness of the wide variety of electronic and technological resources available through classes, online FAQs, handouts, and promotion of specific online catalog capabilities four times a year.
5. Evaluate public use computers and related equipment at least twice a year.
6. Work closely with the Town IT Department to maintain up-to-date software on all public computers.

8. Appendices

8.1 Community Profile

8.1.1 Overview

Acton is a suburban community located twenty-five miles northwest of Boston. Although Acton's population has almost tripled in the last three decades, the town has retained much of its rural New England character, as evidenced by the traditional town center and green, fine examples of historic architecture, stone walls, and tree-lined country roads.

Acton offers a full range of services to its residents and businesses, including an active volunteer-based town government, professionally managed municipal departments, quality library services, full time professional police and fire departments, and local and regional school systems that are ranked among the top in the state.

Commerce thrives in Acton due in large part to its prime location along Routes 2, 27 and 111, the commuter train stop, and its proximity to Route 495. A wide range of retail stores and services can all be found in Acton. In addition, Acton has several museums and community theater groups that add to the cultural diversity of the town.

Population growth has slowed in recent years. There have been and will continue to be significant shifts in the age and ethnic structures in Acton. Acton's population is highly educated.

8.1.2 Acton at a Glance

Form of Government	Town Manager Selectmen Open Town Meeting
2017 Population	23,549
2017 Labor Force	12,650
2017 Unemployment Rate	2.9
2015 Per Capita Income	\$61,285
2010 Median Household Income	\$131,099
2010 Number of households	8638
2009 Population Per Square Mile	1,103.6
2018 Road Miles	123.3
2017 Number of Registered Voters	14,984

Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, November, 2018
U.S. Census Quick Facts 2012-2016

8.1.3 Population

Acton’s population growth has slowed since 2000 but is still positive. Acton grew rapidly from 1950 to 1970, doubling each decade. Since 1970 growth has slowed during each decade to 19% in 1980, 2% in 1990, 14% in 2000, and 7% in 2010. Population forecasting is done by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the regional planning agency for 101 cities and towns around Boston. Acton’s population is expected to continue to grow relatively slowly as it has in the recent past because it is running out of prime developable land and has wastewater disposal constraints. The Acton Town Census for 2011 reports a population figure of 22,012 which represents a 7% growth since 2000.

8.1.4 Age Composition of the Population

There have been significant shifts in the age composition of Acton’s population. These shifts are important because they indicate what types of services, facilities, and housing will be needed in the future. There is an increasing proportion of older people in both the 55 to 64 and the 65 and over age categories. This has implications for housing size (smaller units needed in terms of numbers of bedrooms) and the need for more senior services and facilities (senior centers, health and transportation services). The declining age category of 35 to 54 indicates that additional larger homes (in terms of numbers of bedrooms) will not be needed. A declining school age population indicates a reduced need for new school facilities and added personnel.

The age of the population over 60 continues to increase. Based on the Town Census the FY17 population of 60+ residents is 4,870 which is up 15 % from 4,210 in FY13.

Total population 2010*	21,924	100.0%	Total population 2016^	23,209	100.0%
Male	10,754	49.1	Male	11,659	50.2
Female	11,170	50.9	Female	11,550	49.8
Under 5 years	1,140	5.2	Under 5 years	991	4.2
5 to 9 years	1,770	8.1	5 to 9 years	1,452	6.2
10 to 14 years	2,105	9.6	10 to 14 years	2,242	9.6
15 to 19 years	1,611	7.3	15 to 19 years	1,771	7.6
20 to 24 years	718	3.3	20 to 24 years	816	3.5
25 to 34 years	1,597	7.3	25 to 34 years	1,788	7.7
35 to 44 years	3,295	15.1	35 to 44 years	3,223	13.8
45 to 54 years	4,423	20.2	45 to 54 years	4,688	20.2
55 to 59 years	1,604	7.3	55 to 59 years	2,067	8.9
60 to 64 years	1,250	5.7	60 to 64 years	1,215	5.2
65 to 74 years	1,367	6.2	65 to 74 years	1,633	7.0
75 to 84 years	741	3.4	75 to 84 years	941	4.0
85 years and over	303	1.4	85 years and over	382	1.6
Median age (years)	41.9		Median age	43.4	

			(years)		
--	--	--	---------	--	--

*U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2010 American Community Survey

^2012-2016 Census Bureau, American Community Survey

8.1.5 Households

The number of households grew by about 2.65%, to 8,638 in 2010. Average family size is estimated to be 3.17.

8.1.6 Household Size Distribution

1 Person	14%
2-3 Person	49%
4-5 Person	35%
6 or More Person	2%

8.1.7 Household Income Levels

There is a wide range of household incomes in Acton, contributing to its diversity. Acton can be an expensive place to live, requiring relatively high household income to maintain the quality of one’s home, cover transportation costs, and pay the property taxes needed to support good quality town facilities and services.

8.1.8 Household Income Households

Less than \$35,000	898	10.6%
\$35,000 to \$74,999	1,632	19.3%
\$75,000 to \$149,999	2,737	32.5%
\$150,000 or More	3,149	37.0%

8.1.9 Education

Acton’s population is highly educated. An estimated 36.4 percent of residents over age 25 have completed an Associate’s or Bachelor’s degree while 46% hold graduate degrees. Fifteen percent have high school diplomas or some college while only 1% has less than a high school education.

8.1.10 Ethnicity/Race

Acton’s population shows increasing diversity in its ethnic/racial composition. While 72.3% is white, the Asian population has been growing steadily and is now estimated 23.4% of the total. Other minority groups constitute the remaining 4%.

“White” is by far the predominant racial/ethnic category at 83%. The Asian population has, but while the “white” population increased by only 0.4%, the Asian population increased by 61.8% between 2000 and 2010 and is now 14% of the total. The number of people of Hispanic or Latino origin is estimated at 482 in 2010. It is the second largest minority group but is considerably lower than the

Asian population of approximately 3100. The primary groups for the Asian population are includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese.

8.1.11 Language spoken in the home 2010

Total Population	20,300
Speak English Only	15,376
Chinese	1,348
Korean	650
Portuguese	350
Spanish	350
Other Indic language	250
Hindi	200
Japanese	165
Arabic	116
Russian	97

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2006-2010 American Community Survey

8.1.12 School Enrollment

Total Acton enrollment is projected to increase by 2.4% students over next 10 years. Projections of school enrollment over the next decade are expected to increase modestly at the elementary and junior high levels. The high school is projecting a small decrease in enrollment.

PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT 2018 and PROJECTIONS to 2028

Elementary Schools (Acton and Boxborough)

2018 K-6 Total 2,703

2028 K-6 Total 2,850

Change +5.4%

Junior High School (Acton and Boxborough)

2018 7 & 8 Total 923

2028 7 & 8 Total 970

Change +5.1%

Senior High School (Acton and Boxborough)

2018 9-12 Total 1,837

2028 9-12 Total 1,772

Change -3.5%

Source: Acton Boxborough Regional School District, October 2018

8.1.13 Disabilities

The 2010 U. S. Census shows a total of 1,507 individuals out of a population of 21,562 with a disability. This represents 7.0% of the population, a slight decrease over 2000. Of these 1507, there are 417 (27.6%) with hearing difficulty, 130 (8.6%) with vision difficulty, 770 (51%) with cognitive difficulty, and 530 (35%) with ambulatory difficulty.

8.1.14 Employment

Employment has grown steadily in Acton when viewed over the long term. It is

expected to continue to grow. Acton is an important employment center in its nine town sub-region, made up of Acton and its surrounding towns. The town accounts for 18.5% of total employment in the sub-region. In 2010, on average, 11,248 people were employed in jobs located in Acton

Major categories of employment in Acton are retail trade, government including public schools, health care and social assistance, computer systems design and related services, education services (not including public schools), and eating and drinking establishments.

The average weekly wage in Acton establishments was \$938 in 2009, but it ranged widely from \$226 for used merchandise stores to \$2,346 for scientific research and development services. In September, 2010 Acton had a labor force of 11,757 (Acton residents who hold jobs anywhere). The largest number of Acton residents are employed in the high wage/high education categories of management, computer/mathematical, educational/training/library, sales related, and office/administrative support. In September, 2011 3.7% of Acton's labor force was unemployed. This is considerably lower than the current statewide rate of 6.3% and the national rate of 8.2%. Acton's lower unemployment rate results from its well educated and highly skilled labor force.

8.1.15 Businesses

There were 795 establishments in Acton in the second quarter of 2010, according to data from the Massachusetts Office of Workforce Development. The number of businesses has varied by about 10% in recent years although the number in 2009 is about the same as in 2001 (780). In addition there are about 500 home based businesses in Acton.

Acton is a town of small businesses, with an average of 12 employees per business in 2009; this included only businesses recognized by the Department of Workforce Development. The value of retail sales in 2007 in Acton was \$644,864,000. Motor vehicle and parts dealers and food and beverage stores accounted for 58% of all retail sales in 2002 and 64% in 2007. Acton has the most retail employment and retail sales of any of the nine communities but it is apparent that considerable retail purchases by Acton residents are made out-of-town. While some Acton retailers attract out-of-town shoppers, all of Acton's retailers capture less than half of in-town resident's retail purchases. Most of Acton's commercial development is located along its numbered highways (Routes 2, 2A and 27) and in its village centers.

8.1.16 Community Organizations and Cultural Resources

Acton is a highly engaged community with volunteer organizations being a strength in the town that helps create its unique character. Over 70 organizations exist to meet the many interests and needs of the community. In the performing arts area the Acton-Boxborough Cultural Council and Acton Recreation Department list a variety of cultural events – ethnic, musical, film festivals, theatre, arts and crafts, storytelling, and dance. Theatre III, the Theatre with a Twist, and the Open Door Theater are non-profits dedicated to promoting the performing arts through education and high-quality, reasonably priced

performances.

Acton has a variety of museums including the Discovery Museums – a science discovery museum and a children’s discovery museum; the Iron Work Farm in Acton is a non-profit, historical corporation founded in 1964 that operates two historic houses, the Jones Tavern and the Faulkner House; and the Acton Historical Society operates the Revolutionary War-era Hosmer House.

There is a significant number of organizations to support every major sports activity, children through adults; there are groups that monitor the environment and enhance its “Green Community” status; there are active groups such as the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and Lions Clubs; there are civic groups such as the League of Women Voters, Democratic and Republican Town Committees; and many ethnic groups such as the Chinese School and the Latino Family Network.

Further information on these groups can be found at the Acton Memorial Library: <http://cid.minilib.net/author/act/>, Acton-Boxborough Community Education: <http://comed.ab.mec.edu/>, and the Acton Recreation Department: <http://www.acton-ma.gov/index.aspx?nid=304>.

8.1.17 Conclusion and Trends

Acton population growth has stabilized and is not expected to climb dramatically in the next five years. A reduction in school-aged children and an increase in individuals over the age of 65 may cause a shift in the focus of some town services, especially human services. Library services will need to keep pace with these needs. In addition, an increasingly ethnically diverse population will create a need for materials in a full range of languages and cultural resources for these residents.

8.1.18 Sources:

MA Department of Housing and Community Development, Community Profile
Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, September, 2011

Acton 2020 Housing and Population Inventory

U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2010 American Community Survey, 2012-2016

American Community Survey

MOVOTO Real Estate

Acton Boxborough Regional School District, 2011, 2018

8.2 Library Profile

LIBRARY PROFILE

Acton Memorial Library is a heavily used community resource. During FY17, almost 238,000 people came through its doors, checking out almost 540,000 items. The 255 story times and other special programs were attended by 6422 children and their caregivers. Seventy-nine programs and library-sponsored book discussion groups for adults drew 1098 people. Meeting rooms were used 1017 times.

The collection contains approximately 264,000 items, including books, large print materials, graphic novels, DVDs, recorded music and books, downloadable audiobooks, e-books and video, a multi-format literacy collection, museum passes, Wii games, CDs for learning foreign languages, college courses on CD and DVD, hotspots, birding kits, telescopes and a microscope. Resources include local history and genealogy collections with a large Civil War exhibit and online historical documents. There is an extensive Chinese language collection and small Portuguese, Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil, Russian, Spanish, French and Korean collections. There are 247 subscriptions in various formats.

The oldest part of the library was given to the Town in 1890 in honor of residents who had served in the Civil War. A substantial addition extended the building in 1967 and the facility was renovated and added onto again in 1998. It is accessible under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The library is a member of the Minuteman Library Network (MLN), which has over 6,225,000 holdings among 42 members.

Library services include:

- Reference, technology, and reader's advisory assistance
- Story times and craft times for several age groups plus special children's programs, and a monthly Family Movie Night
- Minuteman Online Public Access (OPAC) display in Chinese, Korean, Japanese and Russian
- Mobile version of the catalog
- Multiple public computers with internet access and support for international language scripts, including Russian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese and a number of Indian languages.
- Public printers, color photocopiers, microfilm reader/printer, scanner, and typewriter
- Online databases for adults and children, including resources for learning foreign languages
- Technology classes and presentations
- Wireless internet throughout the building
- Online request and renewal of materials

- Online payment of fines and for lost materials
- Self-check-out
- Library notices via email or text messaging
- Database of community groups plus event notices and brochures
- Art exhibits, including permanent display of works by local artist Arthur Davis
- Online reservation of museum passes
- State and federal tax forms
- Summer Reading Program for children
- Book discussion group
- Speakers on a range of topics and other adult programs
- Book sales
- Small study rooms
- Large print computer display and assistive devices for the hearing impaired
- Interlibrary loan
- Website with event calendar and links to online resources, including new materials lists
- Meeting space for community groups
- Delivery of materials to the homebound
- Volunteer opportunities
- Reserve collections for school assignments
- Support for ESL tutoring, tutor training, student assessment, and conversational practice groups
- Visits to schools
- Presentations to community groups
- Repository for documents from both the Environmental Protection Agency and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection on Superfund and other environmental cleanup sites in Acton

The library is open 67 hours a week from early September through mid-June. The schedule includes four weekday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays.

In FY17 (July 1, 2016-June 30, 2017), Memorial Library's circulation per resident was 23.03 items, 32nd highest in the state. However, its materials funding per capita was \$10.24, 75th in the state.

The circulation per FTE (Full Time Equivalent staff) is 25,469, 13th highest in Massachusetts.

The library makes considerable use of volunteers, ranking 61st in volunteer hours in the state when Acton's population is 84th in Massachusetts.

8.3 Community Survey

The Long Range Planning Committee, as part of the planning process, conducted a community-wide survey. A total of surveys were returned representing more than 1,800 people. The survey contained 15 multiple choice questions and 3 open questions with the opportunity to provide comments. While the Community Survey does not include all comments made, it does include summaries where comments were categorized thus providing the means to present aggregate findings.

A complete set of all individual comments has been provided to the Long Range Planning Committee, the Library Director, and the Library Trustees. In developing the Long Range Plan for the Acton Memorial Library, the Long Range Planning Committee worked with the Library Director in the creation of a survey to be sent to the citizens of Acton.

To achieve wide spread distribution and a high response, the survey was provided to patrons with a printed copy at the Library’s circulation desk and to patrons via a link on the library’s website. The data was captured via Survey Monkey and the data summaries are presented on the following pages.

8.3.1 Acton Memorial Library Survey Summary Results Overview

In the spring of 2018, the Library Long Range Planning Committee worked with the Library Director in the development of the Community Survey. The goal was to capture feedback and solicit input. Below is a summary of this:

1. Survey Population:

Total of 644 survey responses.

Are you filling out the survey for:		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Self only	298	46.56%
Self and spouse or significant other	49	7.66%
Family	305	7.66%
Total: 640		
Skipped: 4		

2. Family Size

The respondents represented at least 1,800 people based on their household counts.

If 'Family,' how many people, including adults, are there in the family?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
2	79	19.80%
3	77	19.30%
4	172	43.11%

5	56	14.04%
6	13	3.26%
More than 6	2	0.50%
Total: 399		
Skipped: 245		

3. Frequency of Library Visits

Of the respondents, 82.14% visit the library at least once per month.

On average, how often do you come to the library?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More than once per month	390	62.20%
10-12 time a year	125	19.94%
3-9 times a year	85	13.56%
Less than 3 times a year	27	4.31%
Total: 627		
Skipped: 17		

4. Use of Library Website

Of the respondents, 68.06% visit the library’s website at least once per month and about half of respondents visit the library’s website more than once per month. A wide range of services are available on the AML website including the Minuteman Card Catalog, a variety of databases, events calendar, and library updates.

On average, how often do you visit the library’s website?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More than once per month	326	52.58%
10-12 time a year	96	15.48%
3-9 times a year	101	16.29%
Less than 3 times a year	97	15.65%
Total: 620		
Skipped: 24		

5. Rating of Library Collections

When a collection was used it was rated favorably (excellent or good). DVDs for adults and Museum Passes were the only items that have about 10% of a negative rating (fair/poor). Both DVDs and Museum Passes do not have a high usage. About 50% of respondents said they do not use adults DVDs and about 30% of respondents said they do not use Museum Passes. Even though over 80% of respondents do not use Foreign Language materials a high number of respondents (42) rated this collection favorably.

Please rate the following						
ANSWER CHOICES	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know don't use	Total
Adult Fiction	35.19% 183	35.96% 187	4.62% 24	0.38% 2	23.85% 124	520
Adult Non-Fiction	31.78% 164	36.63% 189	5.81% 30	0.19% 1	25.56% 132	516
Reference Databases	19.03% 98	18.06% 93	4.47% 23	0.19% 1	58.25% 300	515
Large Print Materials	7.17% 37	8.11% 42	3.67% 19	0.58% 3	80.50% 417	518
Foreign Language Materials	2.30% 12	5.95% 31	4.22% 22	3.84% 20	83.69% 436	521
Newspapers/Magazines	12.67% 66	17.27% 90	5.18% 27	0.19% 1	64.68% 337	521
Downloadable Audiobooks	9.09% 47	14.31% 74	6.19% 32	0.97% 5	69.44% 359	517
E-Books	12.36% 64	18.34% 95	7.14% 37	1.74% 9	60.42% 313	518
Books on CD and Playaways for Adults	9.86% 51	12.77% 66	5.42% 28	0.58% 3	71.37% 369	517
DVDs for Adults	11.74% 60	22.50% 115	10.37% 53	1.57% 8	53.82% 275	511
Recorded Music	5.22% 27	11.41% 59	3.68% 19	0.97% 5	78.72% 407	517
Books for Young Adults (Gr. 9-12)	10.68% 55	17.28% 89	3.88% 20	0.39% 2	67.77% 349	515
Children's Books up through Grade 1	24.51% 126	19.84% 102	3.11% 16	0.58% 3	51.95% 267	514
Children's Books Grades 2-6	20.35% 105	20.16% 104	4.46% 23	0.19% 1	54.84% 283	516
Children's Books Grades 7-8	10.45% 53	13.21% 67	2.76% 14	0.79% 4	72.78% 369	507
Books on CD Playaways for Children	7.59% 39	9.53% 49	5.06% 26	1.56% 8	76.26% 392	514
Children's DVDs	9.39% 48	17.22% 88	8.81% 45	1.37% 7	63.21% 323	511
Museum Passes	29.01% 150	28.43% 147	9.09% 47	1.16% 6	32.30% 167	517
Total: 533						
Skipped: 111						

6. Rating of Library Services

Overall, respondents rated library services that they use favorably (excellent or good). Potential areas for improvement are the library's website, where about 10% of respondents gave a negative rating (fair or poor) and adult programs, where about 7.5% of respondents gave a negative rating.

Please rate the following						
ANSWER CHOICES	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know don't use	Total
Circulation Desk	60.28% 305	28.85% 146	3.95% 20	1.19% 6	5.73% 29	506
Interlibrary Loan/Delivery Service	60.75% 308	21.30% 108	1.78% 9	0.79% 4	15.38% 78	507
Adult Reference and Information	33.33% 167	19.76% 99	2.99% 15	0.40% 2	43.51% 218	501
Adult Programs/Events	22.68% 115	22.29% 113	6.51% 33	0.99% 5	47.53% 241	507
Children's Reference and Information	23.00% 115	16.40% 82	3.20% 16	1.60% 8	55.80% 279	500
Children's Programs/Events	12.72% 64	17.50% 88	6.96% 35	3.58% 18	59.24% 298	503
Meeting Room Booking	7.95% 40	10.74% 54	3.38% 17	0.40% 2	77.53% 390	503
Internet Access	30.54% 153	22.95% 115	3.19% 16	1.00% 5	42.32% 212	501
Self-Checkout Stations	47.31% 237	21.56% 108	1.20% 6	0.40% 2	29.54% 148	501
Public Computers, Printers, Scanners and Color Copies	20.63% 104	19.84% 100	4.76% 24	0.40% 2	54.37% 274	504
Art Exhibits	25.20% 127	30.36% 153	6.15% 31	0.20% 1	38.10% 192	504
Library Website	35.79% 180	43.34% 218	9.15% 46	1.39% 7	10.34% 52	503
Total: 519						
Skipped: 125						

7. Rating of Library Staff

Staff is one of the library's biggest strengths. Of the respondents who know about and use different staff departments, 90% rated them favorably (good or excellent). Very few respondents gave staff a negative rating.

Please rate the following						
ANSWER CHOICES	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know don't use	Total
Circulation Staff	65.01% 327	24.65% 124	5.37% 27	1.19% 6	3.78% 19	503
Reference Staff	52.30% 261	17.23% 86	3.21% 16	0.60% 3	26.65% 133	499
Children's Staff	40.53% 199	14.46% 71	3.87% 19	1.43% 7	39.71% 195	491
Administrative Staff	33.00% 163	12.55% 62	2.23% 11	0.31% 3	51.62% 255	494

Total: 503
Skipped: 141

8. Rating of Library Space

Overall, library space usage is down; most areas of the library patrons do not know about or do not use. The areas more than 50% of respondents use are the lobby, Children’s Room, New Book Area, and Magazine/Newspaper area. Reference Study rooms and the Computer Room were the least known about/used by respondents. Three of the most used spaces, Children’s Room, Lobby, and New Book Area, received a negative ranking (fair or poor) from 10% or more of respondents. Space is an area the library can work on improving in the future.

Please rate the following						
ANSWER CHOICES	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know don't use	Total
Children’s Room	26.01% 129	27.62% 137	8.06% 40	3.23% 16	35.08% 174	496
Lobby	32.80% 164	45.20% 226	16.20% 81	1.40% 7	4.40% 22	500
Young Adult (Gr. 9-12)	13.33% 64	19.79% 95	6.25% 30	1.04% 5	59.58% 286	480
New Book Area	26.41% 131	32.86% 163	11.90% 59	1.41% 7	27.42% 136	496
Magazine and Newspaper Area	20.97% 104	25.00% 124	4.64% 23	1.01% 5	48.39% 240	496
Computer Room	9.16% 45	13.44% 66	4.89% 24	0.41% 2	72.10% 354	491
Reference Study Room	10.32% 51	11.54% 57	3.44% 17	0.81% 4	73.89% 365	494
Meeting and Conference Room	16.50% 81	24.85% 122	5.30% 26	0.41% 2	52.95% 260	491
Total: 506						
Skipped: 138						

9. Digital Resource Usage

Overall, respondents utilize the library’s digital resources. The only digital resource respondents do not use is music. At the time of this survey, the library subscribed to the music service Freegal. The library no longer offers Freegal, but patrons can use the service Hoopla for music as well as e-books and audiobooks.

Do you use the library's digital resources? (check all that you use)		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
E-Books	185	59.87%
MLN Mobile App	120	38.83%
Movies/video	118	38.19%
E-Audiobooks	111	35.92%
Music	46	14.89%
Total: 620		
Skipped: 24		

10. Digital

Most respondents do not use digital resources either because they are not interested or because they did not know they could use the resources. The library can work to advertise digital resources, especially the MLN Mobile App.

If you do not use some of the library's digital resources, why not? (check all that apply)								
ANSWER CHOICES	Didn't know I could	Too hard to use	Don't have the equipment	Wait is too long	Doesn't have what I want	Don't have time	Not interested	Total
E-Audiobooks	16.86% 59	8.00% 28	9.14% 32	3.43% 12	6.86% 24	14.86% 52	46.86% 164	350
E-Books	13.61% 40	10.20% 30	12.24% 36	7.14% 21	7.48% 22	17.35% 51	41.84% 123	294
Music	23.24% 89	3.95% 15	4.74% 18	0.00% 0	3.68% 14	12.63% 48	53.95% 205	380
Movies/ video	28.00% 91	3.08% 10	4.92% 16	1.54% 5	7.69% 25	19.08% 62	39.38% 128	325
MLN Mobile App	33.55% 104	3.87% 12	7.10% 22	0.00% 0	1.29% 4	10.97% 34	44.84% 139	310
Total: 442								
Skipped: 202								

11. Library Communication

Most respondents learn about services and events from in the library, website or emails. Communication in the library is very important and should be improved.

How do you learn about library services and events? (Check all that apply)		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
In the library	334	68.30%
Email from the library	288	58.90%
Library website	278	56.85%
Word of mouth	115	23.52%

Print newsletter	81	16.56%
Facebook	72	14.72%
Online news	62	12.68%
Outside bulletin board	46	9.41%
Posters in the community	39	7.89%
Other (please specify)	33	6.75
Acton TV	7	1.43%
Twitter	6	1.23%
Total: 489		
Skipped: 155		

12. What additional tools could the library use to communicate? (Open response)

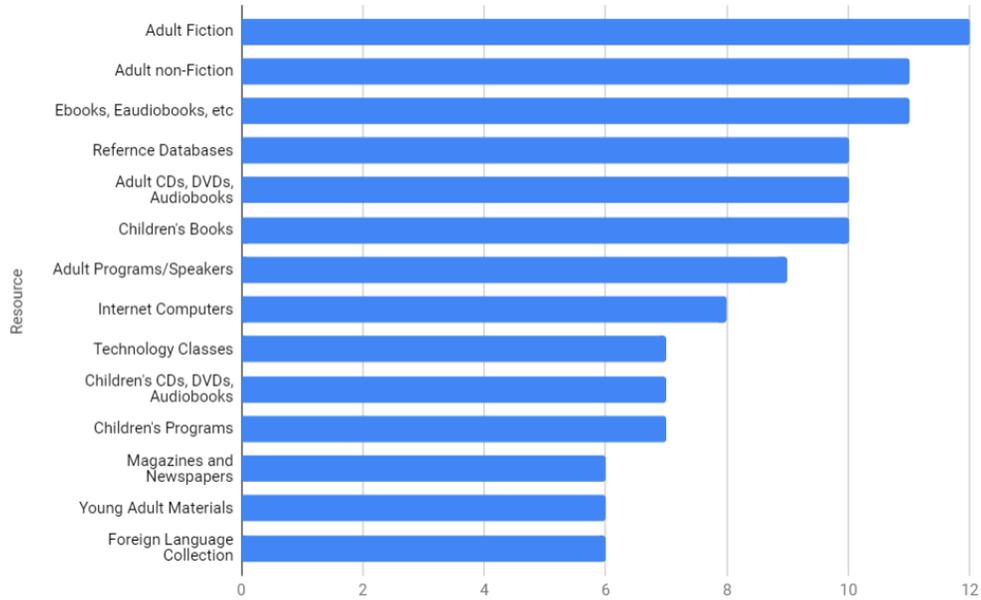
There were 83 written comments that fell into the following categories:

CATEGORY	RESPONSES
Satisfied with current communication	21
More posters/information in the community; digital and physically	8
Other technology suggestions (podcast etc)	7
Instagram	6
Texting	6
Communication in schools	5
Mail	1

30 of the responses suggested communication that we already offer, including Facebook, e-newsletter, and a mobile app. The library should improve advertisement for our social media and newsletters. Two patrons noted the importance of posters in the library and recommended electronic posters (on a TV). One patron also recommended a consistent program schedule that is easy to remember.

13. Please rank the FIVE most important CURRENT resources to you.

Respondents' answers are portrayed in the following chart. 464 patrons responded to the question, 180 patrons skipped this question.



14. Potential Library Services

Overall, respondents are interested in more technology in the library/technology assistance and programming for children ages 3 and older, especially programs for late elementary and middle school students.

ANSWER CHOICES	Interested	Total
Wireless printing	34.86% 145	416
Additional programs for children ages 8-14	34.14% 141	413
E-magazines	33.74% 139	412
3-D printing	32.05% 133	415
Additional technology classes	30.8% 130	422
Additional programs for children ages 3-7	28.75% 119	414
Programs for students in grades 9-12	28.26% 117	414
Public fax machine	18.37% 79	430
Additional programs for children under 3	17.24% 71	412
Laptops for in-library use	16.28% 68	430

15. Potential library programs

Overall, respondents are interested in a variety of programs for adults.

What kinds of programs are you most interested in? (check all that apply)		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
History	196	48.28%
DIY Workshops	192	47.29%
Ecology & Environment	165	40.64%
Movies (Adult)	161	39.66%
Music (Adult)	151	37.19%
Arts and Crafts (Adult)	139	34.24%
Arts and Crafts (Children)	137	33.74%
Music (Children)	122	30.05%
Movies (Children)	108	26.60%
Board Game Events	108	26.60%
Story Tellers for Adults	91	22.41%
Other	51	12.56%
Total: 406		
Skipped: 238		

16. Library of Things

Patrons were asked if they would be interested in borrowing several different items from the library. The items are: stencil kit, kill-a-watt meter, ukulele, soil tester, pedometer, underwater camera, engraving kit, portable office scanner, stud finder, knitting needles/crochet hooks, thermal leak detector, cassette tape to digital converter, blue-ray player, special occasion cake pans, calligraphy pens, Go-Pro camera, head lamps, first aid kit, and other.

Survey participants were less engaged with this question; 289 participants skipped the question. Of the list of 19 items, only 6 of the items received a response of 20% or more. These items and percentages are listed below.

Would you be interested in borrowing the following items from the library? (check all that apply)		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Go-Pro camera	123	34.65%
Cassette tape to digital converter	113	31.83%
Underwater camera	102	28.73%
Thermal leak detector	99	27.89%
Special occasion cake pans	96	27.04%
Engraving kit	71	20.00%

8.4 Library Staff Survey and Interviews

Members of the Acton Memorial Library Long Range Planning Committee Staff Survey Subcommittee (Miriam Lezak, Carol Knowles, James Fox, and Tom Lemire) created a staff survey for all staff and met with selected staff for more detailed discussions. Members of the Staff survey Subcommittee interviewed seven staff members who represented: reference, children's, circulation, social media, and tech services. We had open-ended discussions with the interviewees. For other staff members, we sent out an online survey that asked a wide range of open-ended questions. Most staff members, both full-time and part-time, responded anonymously.

Looking at both the surveys and interviews, a number of themes emerged:

- **Space:** Lack of space and how space is used was a recurring theme. The Children's department doesn't have enough space for books. Tweens need to walk through the Children's section to get to the Teen section. There isn't enough quiet space or meeting space. There is a need for archive space. Some of these issues might be resolved by rearranging the library or making alternate use of existing space.
- **Parking** was cited by nearly everyone as an ongoing concern. While the parking lot is the domain of municipal properties, there should be a plan to address this problem.
- **Outreach** to the community was raised in several interviews in a variety of contexts:
 - Schools (kindergarten and elementary school visits, collaboration with the high school)
 - Elderly and housebound (book delivery)
 - Young adults without children
 - Businesses (how can the library help them; how can they help the library)
 - Non-profits
 - Homeschooling families
- **Facility maintenance:** The facilities are really showing their age; especially bathrooms, HVAC, carpeting, and staff room counters.
- **Outdated Technology:** A number of staff noted that their computers are slow and old. Updated computing resources might take the form of newer computers or a centralized virtualized. Faster Wi-Fi for patrons and additional RFID equipment was also mentioned in several interviews.
- **Staff:** There was an acknowledgement that the library was short-staffed at the time of the surveys and interviews, but the feeling is that even at full staffing, we could use more help. Several people noted that the library is generally understaffed by comparison to other comparable libraries.
- **Training:** Staff mentioned training repeatedly. They would like to have access to the following:
 - **Safety and emergency preparedness training:** Staff noted that emergency situations impact everyone at the library; staff and community. A plan and training for modern world concerns should be developed and implemented.

- **Customer service training:** Staff would love more training in dealing with difficult patrons, and customer service generally.
- **Young Adult Librarian/Programming:** There seems to be a divide between whether YA programming is needed as there is little apparent demand (based on the community surveys). The exception to this is open study hours during exam periods.

8.4.1 Recommendations

- Upgrade staff computers. They are old and slow.
- Hire more staff for children's, reference, technical services.
- The public access to the internet is limited by a slow, out-of-date Wi-Fi system. This should be updated to accommodate modern data rates and the usage by the community. One possibility is to create a corporate partnership with a local company such as Cisco, IBM, or HPE to update computer services.
- Update HVAC and bathrooms, especially the downstairs women's room.
- Move toward an automated public meeting room reservation system for the library. In the longer-term, more meeting space is needed in town.
- Provide more staff training, in customer service, dealing with difficult patrons, mental health issues, and other subjects.
- Consider a way to deliver books to homebound patrons (possibly through Visiting Nurses Association or Meals on Wheels).
- Conduct an annual safety review.

8.4.2 General comments

- For both the interviews and surveys, one of the highlights was how much the staff like working at the Acton Memorial Library and how the staff respects and enjoys working with one another.
- Space is an issue for people, materials, public meetings, parking, and programming.
- There are daily comments about lack of parking from both patrons and staff.
- Volunteers are essential.
- Consider having name tags for the staff

8.4.3 Possible long-term projects

- Update book classifications to make it easier for patrons to find books (updates to Dewey Decimal system).
- Reorganize archives and expanding the archive to digitize and add old town records, such as church records.

8.4.4 Specific comments by department

8.4.4.1 Children's

- Space is an issue for people, materials, and programming.
- With more children's staff, they could provide more programming; staffing is low in comparison to other similarly-sized libraries.
- The staff needs to provide very specific job roles for student pages and volunteers.

- Improve layout of the children's room so tweens don't need to walk through children's room.
- Explore joint programming with the Discovery Museum.
- Provide more outreach to all lower grades, including preschools.
- Develop a more creative summer reading program.

8.4.4.2 Circulation

- Circulation workspace is cramped, especially where deliveries are received.
- Provide services to aging and home-bound population.
- Provide expanded staff training in conflict resolution and customer service.
- Create integrated room booking with Town Hall (and the Public Safety Building).
- Provide more passes to museums and other cultural activities (such as zoos, Davis farmland).

8.4.4.3 Reference

- Add an archivist and create an archive room.
- Reach out to private collections (such as church records).
- Use the Boston Public Library service to help digitize bound materials.
- Refresh website and integrate with Civil War website.
- Provide outreach to housebound residents.
- Provide more public meeting space, but keep quiet zones.

8.4.4.4 Social Media

- Provide some kind of social media interaction daily – Twitter, Instagram, FB, email blasts.

8.4.4.5 Tech Services

- More staff – it's hard to envision big projects with the current two P/T staff members. Volunteers are vital.
- Library of Things brings new challenges and careful planning for issues such as loan rules, packaging/storage, instruction, and check-in.
- Determine better way to catalog non-Roman foreign language materials (Chinese, Hindi, etc.).
- Create better archive facilities.
- Collaborate with other departments to determine where the public expects a book to be.