# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Overview and Summary .................................................. 1  
Methodology ........................................................................ 2  
Findings and Rationale:  
  Library Assessment & SWOT Analysis .................................. 3  
  Library Trends ..................................................................... 5  
  Demographic Assessment .................................................... 6  
  Community Survey .............................................................. 7  
  Qualitative Inputs ............................................................... 8  
  Investigative Phase: Major Drivers ...................................... 9  
Goals & Strategies ............................................................... 11  
Conclusion ............................................................................ 12  
Appendices:  
  A. Stakeholder Committee Members  
  B. Community Forum Notes  
  C. 2015 Resident Library Survey  
  D. Assessment of Current Library Environment  
  E. Assessment of New and Emerging Trends in Library Services  
  F. Strategic Planning Retreat Participants  

**Credits:** The draft version of this document was completed by Library Strategies Consulting Group. Final edits to the major drivers, goals and strategies sections of this plan were completed by Washington County following library staff review and a six week public comment period.  

**Special Thanks:** Washington County extends a special thanks to the 17-member Library Stakeholder Committee, 7-member Washington County Library Board, 85 community forum attendees, 63 retreat participants, 392 formal survey responders, 184 community questionnaire responders, and city elected officials and administrators for their time, guidance and feedback throughout the development of this plan.
Overview & Summary

This report was commissioned as part of the Washington County Library strategic planning process conducted by Library Strategies. The report reflects the comprehensive activities of a nine-month process that included extensive assessment, data analysis and trend research as well as a deliberate and focused attention on gaining community input through various channels to identify residents’ needs and vision for library service. The data analysis, trend research, and community input provided a foundation for the planning process, which culminated in two all-day planning retreats with community members from across the county. This report is the result of the Washington County community working with Library Strategies to develop a strategic plan that reflects the community’s vision and direction for their library.

The Washington County Library is highly valued by County residents who are generally pleased with the level of library service they receive. Yet there is a growing desire to access new and different types of services to accommodate new populations, new ways to learn, and new ways to do business. The goals and strategies that have emerged from this planning process are focused on six specific areas:

- mission and vision
- programming for targeted populations
- public awareness and library marketing
- space and facility needs
- resources and partnerships
- staffing models

These six goals, and the strategies designed to achieve them, will be carried forward in a forthcoming Implementation Plan which will include specific activities, timelines, accountabilities, outcome measures, as well as annual staff and resource implications.

This is an important time for Washington County, especially with the hiring of a new Library Director, to anticipate and develop enhanced library service across the County. This report, generated by and for the residents of Washington County, will provide a roadmap for the Library and County leaders to effectively and efficiently address the changing needs and desires of its residents for more and different library services.
Methodology

Washington County requested a planning process driven by data analysis and extensive community input. Library Strategies also employed the Rapid Results Planning™ (“RRP”) retreat component to engage the community in co-creating the strategic plan.

The scope of work included the creation of a 17-member Stakeholder Committee to oversee and assist with the strategic planning process. A sub-group of this Committee helped to identify participants representing a broad profile of the county to invite to participate in the RRP planning retreats. (See Appendix A: Stakeholder Committee membership list.)

At the onset of the process, a Library Strategies consultant conducted independent interviews with each of the Washington County Commissioners to gain background, perspective and expectations. A series of three community forums were conducted between May and July in Cottage Grove, Stillwater and Forest Lake, to provide an opportunity for citizens to express their needs and desires for future library services (see Appendix B: Community Forum Notes).

Meanwhile a resident survey was mailed to 1,500 households designed to capture current library satisfaction, usage and perceptions as well as projections of future library needs and usage. (See Appendix C: Washington County Library 2015 Residential Survey report.) Also, an online questionnaire was made available to the public on the Washington County Library website page. Approximately 200 residents responded to this questionnaire, providing additional community input.

Concurrent to the summer’s community input activity, Dr. Anthony Molaro, a Library Strategies consultant and assistant professor in the Master of Library and Information Science program at St. Catherine University conducted an assessment of the current Washington County Library environment with comparisons to five peer libraries as well as to the Twin Cities metro area libraries (with the exception of St. Paul and Hennepin County). In addition, Dr. Molaro conducted a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats) analysis with library department staff. (See Appendix D: Washington County Assessment of Current Library Environment.)

Dr. Molaro also conducted research on new and emerging library trends to provide forward thinking perspective on the evolution of library service. In addition to this research, demographic and trend data were also used to provide a residential profile of Washington County for this report. (See Appendix E. Washington County Assessment of New and Emerging Trends in Library Services.)
To provide further insights into community-level needs and environment, a questionnaire was sent to the elected officials of the 33 communities and townships within Washington County. Also, a meeting was held with city administrators of these communities to discuss current and future community issues that could be impacted by library services.

Finally, two all-day retreats were held in September and October in Woodbury and Forest Lake. These retreats attracted 30-50 people - current users and non-users of the Library - who represented specific targeted populations of the County. (See Appendix F: RRP Retreat Participants.) These retreats were designed to put a framework on the strategic plan and identify key themes from which to develop goals and strategies. The retreats were also designed to increase dialogue and introduce potential partnerships with organizations throughout the County.

The outcome of the above activities includes this strategic plan report as well as a forthcoming Implementation Plan that will be developed with library staff following approval and acceptance of the strategic plan.

**Findings & Rationale**

As part of the investigative portion of the strategic planning process, Library Strategies, with the assistance of County staff, examined a wide variety of qualitative and quantitative data and inputs in preparation for creation of the strategic plan. Many of these assessments and analyses have been presented to the County previously in comprehensive reports. Presented here, in much abbreviated form, are the major findings from these analyses, and in particular, the assessments that contribute to various rationales included in the strategic planning goals.

**Library Assessment, Comparative Data and Staff SWOT Analysis**

Library Strategies conducted an assessment of the Library system, looked at peer data from comparable library systems across the country, and did a “Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis with library department staff. These assessments were fully documented in separate reports to the County. Here are the major findings from these three assessments:

- Washington County Library, in comparison to comparable library systems, is an average to good system. Overall, the Library fares better in comparison to national peers, whereas it lags somewhat behind metro area library averages.
- The Library is highly efficient and provides good value to residents per taxpayer dollar.
• The Library is very dedicated to customer service, and overall, receives high satisfaction marks from residents.
• The current mission and vision of the Library/County do not appear to be widely embraced by staff, nor are they driving a direction for the Library.
• In comparison to peer libraries, the Washington County Library is funded at a rate of $77,000 less annually than national peers, and $410,000 less annually than metro area peers.
• Washington County uses a system where the Library department pays rent to the County for its facilities. This is an appropriate system, but the peer libraries in the metro area do not have this added, substantial fee. With this rent payment accounted for, the Library’s operational resources are even lower in comparison to its metro area peers.
• The lower funding level translates primarily into fewer staff. The Library has fewer staff on average than peers, and there is some indication of staff burnout, as well as a need for increased professional development opportunities for staff.
• In comparison to national and Twin Cities peers, the Library is below average in cardholder penetration, number of programs and program attendance. (The disparity in cardholder penetration may be due to Washington County’s active purging to remove inactive cards. Other libraries may not manage their cardholder lists in this manner.)
• In comparison to national and Twin Cities peers, the Library is somewhat above peers and recommended indicators for purchase of print materials. For all collections (including downloadable) it is average to below average in collections budget per capita.
• In addition to some of the above areas, the SWOT analysis indicated opportunities for more partnerships, expanded programming, and improvements in outreach. Threats and weaknesses included lack of space, internal communication challenges, and splintering off of city libraries outside of the system.
• The associated but independent libraries in Stillwater and Bayport provide quality library service primarily to the residents in those communities as well as to other County residents. This arrangement is a positive for all County residents but there is disparity of service between these libraries and the rest of the County libraries in the system.
• Community libraries exist in Newport and Marine-on-St. Croix but are not fully associated libraries. These libraries are supported by the County with the addition of “Express Library” locker services.
• Lake Elmo has an independent library that is not affiliated with the County system and is not part of the County’s taxing district.
• The associate and independent libraries in Washington County present challenges in the public’s understanding of the library as well as disparities in library service standards.
Library Service Trends
An examination and report on New and Emerging Trends in Library Services was also conducted by Library Strategies in an attempt to project possible future directions for the Library. A summary of those trends and key findings follows:

- Reading remains as popular as ever in the Internet Age, but the formats on which people access the written word is varied and changing rapidly. Specifically, eBooks and digital content usage is expected to climb, while use of print materials may remain flat or decline very gradually.

- The “Internet of Things” – or the network of objects embedded with computer or digital technology will increase dramatically. Further, technology devices and usage are changing very rapidly, and the pace of change is not expected to decrease. This is an opportunity that is being embraced by many libraries who are emerging as the “go to” place for technology training and internet literacy.

- “Maker” technologies are a significant trend in libraries. These creative “makerspaces,” primarily based in technology, are becoming a standard service offering in many public libraries.

- Internal library systems technologies (as opposed to technology service offerings to patrons) are not expected to see significant changes in the foreseeable future.

- Despite reductions in print materials in many cases, libraries are not getting smaller. Instead, more space is needed for meeting rooms, programs, separate teen areas, quiet spaces, and other specialized activities. Libraries increasingly focus on flexible space that can be easily altered in the future.

- Various software technologies exist to assist in staffing and other internal efficiencies, such as in scheduling for example.

- The use of more powerful data analytics offer libraries increasing opportunities for improving service and being more efficient. These technologies are becoming more affordable and accessible.

- Many public libraries have adopted primary missions beyond books, such as lifelong learning and other education services, programming and cultural events, early literacy advancement, technology training, some social service functions, and more, depending on community needs.

- For many communities, public libraries are playing an increased role in economic and workforce development.

- Marketing services to the community is increasingly a part of library operations. Easy-to-use and attractive websites are a both a core service and a critical marketing tool. (Note: The Library receives low marks and satisfaction levels for its current website.)
Some libraries are challenging traditional organizational structures (such as technical services, adult services, and children's services), and moving to management and staff structures designed to achieve strategic goals (advancing literacy, economic development, outreach, partnerships, etc.) This may include functional reorganization based on programs and populations served rather than on geography. The strategic goals in this report could drive reorganization around core priorities in service delivery and program development.

**Demographic and Other Trends and Factors in the County**
A wide variety of federal, state, county and regional data sources and reports were examined as part of the investigative phase to project major trends for the County that would affect Library service:

- The County is expected to experience significant population growth by 2040, with a current population of approximately 248,000 increasing to 338,000 – an increase of 90,000 or 36%.
- The largest percentage population increases are expected to occur in the Hugo and Lake Elmo areas, with significant growth in total numbers also occurring in Woodbury, Cottage Grove, and Forest Lake.
- The percentage of households with seniors is expected to see the largest increase.
- Based on recent trend reports from the U.S. Census and American Community Survey, the total number of children and teens is not expected to grow significantly – but will remain more or less stable at current levels. (For the past eight years, the percentage of total population under 19 years has decreased from 28.9% to 27.8% but the total number has gone up and down and ultimately grown slightly by about 3,000 individuals.)
- There will be significantly more diversity in the County’s population, expected to rise to 20% or more non-white in the coming decades.
- Based on recent U.S. Census trend reports, the County will likely experience an increased number of households at higher incomes, while simultaneously seeing a growth in under-resourced households. (Median household income increased from $66,305 in 2000 to $80,748 in 2013. Meanwhile, the percentage of households in poverty during this same period increased from 2.9% to 5.8% and has not recovered since the Great Recession.)
• Washington County residents are highly educated, with 96% obtaining a high school graduate degree or higher. In addition, around 40% of its population has bachelor’s degree or higher, up from 26% in 1990. Educational achievement and higher household incomes both correlate positively with library usage and reading.

• A relatively large percentage of employed Washington County residents do not currently work in the County and are likely accessing services elsewhere.

• Transportation within the County is a major issue and concern for a high percentage of households that are under-resourced, a portion of the senior population, and teens.

• According to Metropolitan Council reports, expanded public transportation is needed along I-94 to Woodbury and beyond, south toward Cottage Grove and Hastings (across the border in Dakota County), along Highway 36 to Stillwater, and north parallel to I-35E to Hugo and Forest Lake.

Community Survey
Under Library Strategies’ guidance, Rainbow Research conducted an independent, confidential, random sample survey of 1,500 residents of Washington County regarding Library service, both current and projected into the future. The margin of error for the survey was + or – 2.5%. The primary findings from the survey report were:

• The survey responses were weighted toward people 40 and older, so while still valid, it should be noted that service to children and young adults is probably under-represented in the results.

• The Stafford Library in Woodbury is the most popular library for respondents. Other heavily used libraries, in order, were Park Grove in Cottage Grove, Hardwood Creek in Forest Lake, Stillwater Public, Oakdale and Wildwood.

• The Library is used first and foremost on-site for physical resources (i.e., checking out books), as well as remotely for many resources, and on-site for meetings or space. Use of the Library for courses or education, and for technical resources showed lower use. Patterns of use were surprisingly similar for all age groups, except the 75 and older population.

• The Library is used at least every other month by 64% of respondents.

• Nearly 25% of respondents also use another public library outside of Washington County – a particularly high figure.

• Respondents show a high satisfaction level with all current services, and 75% strongly agree that they feel welcomed at the Library.

• The highest use of the Library remains checking out books, followed by browsing collections, getting help from a librarian, and checking out DVDs or CDs.
In terms of projecting use 5 years in the future, the highest increase in expected use by respondents is “Visiting the Library in person,” followed by “Use of on-line resources,” “To read or study,” and “Take a class or learn a new skill.” Virtually all other Library services also showed expected increases, but at a lower percentage or rate.

Respondents think the Library is an important gathering place for their community, and the physical location matters to them.

61% of those responding to the question agree or strongly agree that they are willing to pay additional taxes for expanded Library services and hours.

Qualitative Inputs: Community Voices, Municipal Administrators Meetings, Forums, Retreats

Qualitative data and input into a strategic planning process is often richer and more meaningful in providing directions on community needs and desires than various “hard” data. Community voices enrich the conversation, and provide much needed balance and perspective in the process. Library Strategies and the Library conducted a wide range of offerings and venues for County residents to share qualitative input into the process (see Methodology, page 2), all of which provided rich data that will be useful to Library administration in looking at detailed provision of service. Here, however, we summarize the major themes and findings heard across these processes:

- Washington County residents highly value their public libraries, and would like to see enhanced services and facilities.
- There is not clarity among Washington County residents as to what are Washington County libraries versus associated libraries or community libraries. Most people associate with the library nearest to them rather than the system.
- Increasing and enhancing services to seniors is a priority, particularly in outreach, technology training and support, and programming and lifelong learning activities.
- Enhancing services to teens, at least in some areas of the Library system, is desired. Creating dedicated, vibrant teen spaces in some of the system libraries seems to be the major focus or need.
- Early literacy is a concern across the County, however, most agree that the Library has good early literacy services currently and the major area for improvement is in outreach and public awareness.
- Increased and enhanced programming and educational activities for all ages is desired. It was widely noted, however, that the Library should not duplicate other offerings in the community, particularly activities offered by community education programs.
• The Library’s website is not user friendly and users would like to see a major overhaul and upgrade. This message was heard in virtually all venues.

• Respondents want the Library to maintain strong print collections, but also increase downloadable and digital materials.

• Respondents would also like to see the Library keep up-to-date with technology, but are more concerned about technology training and assistance than hardware/software.

• Increased or enhanced services to under-resourced, diverse, and special needs households and individuals was heard widely. Major strategies or concerns in this area centered around outreach, transportation issues, and lack of awareness among these varied populations.

• There was substantial interest, although not universal, in the creation of “makerspaces” or other creative areas in some of the libraries.

• Although not shared in all of these qualitative venues, there was significant interest in advancing the Library’s mission around workforce and economic development.

• Advancing partnerships in the community was a regular theme, both to increase resources and connections for the Library, but also as a public awareness and community advancement tool more broadly. Stronger partnerships with schools was desired across all of these forums, although many noted that it will be a challenge working across multiple, diverse school districts.

• Increasing use of volunteers for more diverse tasks was a common theme.

• Stronger marketing, public relations, and public awareness of the Library and its services was widely desired.

• In the community retreats, and to some extent in the other qualitative venues, most people expressed a preference for larger, full service libraries rather than small community or neighborhood libraries. This was not universally expressed, but was the preponderance of the direction for the majority of those in attendance.

• There was significant agreement that more space was desired for the current library facilities – for meetings, programs, training and educational offerings, community gathering – and that additional facilities or expansions are also likely needed in the future. Respondents strongly agreed that there should be an emphasis on flexible, changeable space in any renovations or expansions in the future.

**Investigative Phase: Major Drivers**

All of the above findings and rationales listed above must be considered in shaping the Library’s strategic directions and goals, balanced, of course, by resource, geographic and other realities. However, the short list of major drivers that must be accounted for in shaping the strategic plan include:
1. Significant projected population growth for the County.

2. The increasing diversification of the County’s population, especially seniors, non-white populations, and under-resourced households.

3. Current and future funding and staffing levels for the Library. More particularly, realistic capital and operational budgets must be factored into any major directional changes.

4. Use of the Library is gradually shifting from use of hard copy materials to digital materials and access to resources, educational offerings and training, programming, and community gathering spaces.

5. The Library is a diversified system, offering facilities ranging from full-service, large libraries to small libraries and express locker systems, and that diversity of facilities is likely to continue in the future. Upgrades and renovations are needed at a number of current Library facilities. A one-size-fits-all approach to facilities is unlikely to serve the range of needs and desires among County communities and residents.

6. Relationships with and provision of services at associate and community libraries in the County must be accounted for in the Library’s strategic directions. To maintain the strength and effectiveness of the County Library system, additional associate libraries shall not be approved.

7. Lack of transportation, particularly for households and individuals without easy access to cars, is a significant barrier to use of the Library for many residents. In parallel, a large percentage of County residents currently work outside of the County.

8. Increasing community partnerships and private support are significant trends in increasing support for public libraries.

9. Nationwide, library staffing structures and management models are changing to better fit service needs and directions, and community goals.

10. There is an opportunity to further advance awareness and use of Library services among County residents.
Recommended Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Deliver extraordinary programs, services, and collections

**Strategy 1:** Expand outreach services to underserved populations.
**Strategy 2:** Support the growth and development of youth and families.
**Strategy 3:** Cultivate lifelong learning opportunities for adults.
**Strategy 4:** Align library collections to meet changing needs.
**Strategy 5:** Demonstrate value and advocate for resources.

Goal 2: Expand Public Awareness of the Library

**Strategy 1:** Revise and refresh the Library Mission Statement.
**Strategy 2:** Overhaul the Library’s website.
**Strategy 3:** Create a three-year marketing and promotions plan.
**Strategy 4:** Increase dedicated marketing and promotions resources.

Goal 3: Improve Library Facilities

**Strategy 1:** Update existing space and plan for new facilities.
**Strategy 2:** Explore opportunities to rework current space to meet evolving community needs.
**Strategy 3:** Develop a capital improvement plan.

Goal 4: Cultivate Partnerships

**Strategy 1:** Create a community engagement plan which includes partnerships with area organizations, businesses, and schools.
**Strategy 2:** Expand use of volunteers to support and advocate for current and future library needs.
**Strategy 3:** Work with fundraising and advocacy groups and other community partners to increase support for the Library.

Goal 5: Serve as a Community Technology Hub

**Strategy 1:** Enhance public technology training opportunities.
**Strategy 2:** Champion emergent technologies.
**Strategy 3:** Provide ongoing information technology training for staff.
Conclusion

Based on the research, analysis, and community input and participation in defining a vision for the future of library service in Washington County, Library Strategies presents this report with recommendations for clear and direct goals and strategies to guide the Washington County Library for the next three years. Many of the strategies outlined above have staff, space and budgetary implications that will require further discussion and consideration. An important next step is the creation of a detailed, internal Implementation Plan with Library staff to carry the goals and strategies forward with specific activities, accountabilities, annual budget implications and outcome measurement processes.
Library Strategic Planning Stakeholder Committee (2015)

1) Polly Blom, Central Park Recreation Specialist, Woodbury
2) Judy Bull, Chair, Library Board
3) Katherine Cram, Library Board
4) Lynne Bertalmio, Stillwater Library Director
5) Dean Zuleger, City Administrator, Lake Elmo
6) Shayla Syverson, Parks Planner, Hugo
7) Tom Triplett, Library Board Member, Marine
8) Jo Bailey, Business Representative and Library Advisory Committee, Newport
9) Dennis Johnson, Rasmussen College
10) Ryan Laager, Stillwater Schools, Executive Director of Curriculum and Secondary Education
11) Curt Geissler, Business Representative
12) Brian Zeller, Business Representative and former Library Board member
13) Jill Tammen, Community Representative
14) John Keilholz, Community Representative
15) Renee McGivern, Community Representative
16) Bill Sullivan, Community Representative
17) Jean Oswald, Community Representative
WASHINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
COMMUNITY FORUM NOTES
May 27, 2015
Cottage Grove

The following suggestions and comments were expressed by the attendees at the Cottage Grove Community Forum on Thursday, May 27, 2015. Attendees were asked to write down their wishes and desires for the future of the Washington County Library System under the following themes. Their comments were recorded according to the following themes:

PROGRAMS (Adults, Teens, Children)

**Seniors:**
- Services for seniors
- Services to seniors
  - Delivery of sets for book clubs
  - Classes on how to use ebooks, and computers for research or news or email
  - Bookmobiles
- Outreach to senior housing

**Children:**
- Facilitate finding books for kids – make it easier for a 6-12 year old reader to find a book in which he/she can be excited
- Increase early childhood programs (ages 4-5)
- Keep up good programs in Cottage Grove for ages 3-5 (storytime and learning programs)
- Programs to enhance awareness of being a Global Citizen, i.e. educating kids to create thirst to learn about the world outside of Washington County

**Teens:**
- Teen space needed at Park Grove
- More directions for teen readers
  - Teen Council
  - Teen Book Club
  - Teen involvement
- Book clubs for teens
• Outreach for teens – are they part of this process?
• Increase availability of interesting ways for teens to share ideas – teen book clubs and also to use and develop skills in creative ways – service projects (e.g. read story time do puppet theater, create videos which inform or entertain such as video a story for younger kids)

**Volunteer Opportunities:**
• Educate/outreach to community about volunteer opportunities at the library
• Provide books and volunteers to serve the homebound

**Overall Programming and Program Space:**
• Expand classes and learning opportunities for all ages and all locations
• Keep the breadth of services offered now – call-in reference, homework help, how to use ebooks tutorials, children’s services, teen spaces
• Coffee shop for readers
• Need separate:
  o Early literacy space
  o Teen space
  o Quiet space
  o Sharing space

**COLLECTIONS: Print, Media, Downloadable**

**Books:**
• Get “new releases” (books) on the day released
• Keep lots of children’s/early learning books available
• Maintain access to current collections (print, media, downloadable) with access to additional materials (newspapers, reference materials)
• Keep collections as they are
• Books! Maintain books for children, teens, adults
• I know ebooks were supposed to be the next big thing, but my grandkids are reading Books. I like access to Bayport, Stillwater, etc. in the County, the ability to request and hold books there.
• Keep books – show this as an option for children
• Coordinate with local historical organizations for collection in the library system

**eBooks:**
• Be a part of the Minnesota ebook collection
• Keep expanding ebook titles. Figure out a way around the number of titles available so people don’t have to wait for an ebook.
• Expand ebook collections
• Keep the 3-M and Washington County downloadable books.
Specific Collections and Formats:
- Keep print magazines as well as electronic
- More directions for teen readers
  - Teen council
  - Teen book club
  - Teen involvement
- More access to historical and American music
- Provide digital resources for learning
- Increase ability/availability of resources to borrow besides books – such as technology to create DVDs, or to transfer older audio/video media to digital
- Plan to embrace new forms of materials
- Provide opportunities for people to access music onsite, at home and share knowledge with others

TECHNOLOGY
Access:

- Higher speed internet access
- Embrace technology!
  - Provide for ease of access
  - Provide educational opportunities
- Make technology accessible and less intimidating to seniors
- Keep MN Link – a fabulous resource
- Maintain and enhance technology, services and resources
- Balance between people with money and those with limited resources
- The library should be a place where everyone in the community can access the most current technology, keep it current
- Keep copiers, printers and public stations. Anyone might need them on any given day, even if they have one at home.
- I don’t like having to log into the wi-fi every time I enter the library.
- There needs to be a balance between technology and printed materials.
- I don’t see how libraries can keep up with changing technology. It changes constantly and I think you should leave that to Best Buy as far as hardware goes. Kids have their own tablets and laptops so the plug-ins may be a necessity.
- Automation whenever possible (i.e. self check in/out). What else can be done in this direction?
- Bring back Washington Library County independent website with increased links to interesting avenues for learning and gathering information. New York Public Library, for example, has excellent podcasts. Brainpickings.org discusses interesting, current ideas using books available from public libraries.
- What about school-library duplication of services?
- Do we integrate with the district school technology?
**Education and Training:**
- Provide funds and training for a service like Woodbury’s “reserve police”. Train volunteers 16 years and up to provide technical and library assistance
- Cross-generational meeting to trade ideas or new electronic gadgets and services
- Makerspaces

**TRAINING AND CLASSES**

**Training/Class content:**
- Need more lifelong learning programs
- Training and programs for various age and talented groups
- Classes offered should be based on community requests and needs
- Provide digital training and a dedicated room with funding
- Provide classes on how to research topics
- Musical instruments
- Health training (exercise, diet, blood pressure)
- How to sort through and organize online data services
- Give more classes on utilizing technology not just for elders but younger age groups for them to see the potential

**Concern for Duplication with Community Ed:**
- Leave training classes to community education for the county
- Needs are currently met with community education programs
- Do we think the library can handle this better than other options? Why are the other options not offering training and classes?
- Leave training and classes with community ed
- Community ed. type classes should not be duplicated
- Community ed. classes are not free

**COMMUNITY GATHERING**
Some meeting space is needed
- Initiate mentoring/learning between generations and demographics
- One central place in the community where all age groups are free to gather.
- Yes - small, medium and large gathering spaces
- A community gathering room is great for author visits, non-profit groups to gather, and Book Clubs!
- As public spaces, libraries should have meeting rooms available for community groups without charge.
- This is important to maintain
- Should be educational/literacy related (book clubs, author visits, etc.)
- Need a mission statement. Is the library the best option here?
• Libraries as gathering place to share ideas, learn and discuss – keep this! Book clubs, places to meet for Toastmasters, clubs and much more
• Making/keeping libraries open for community activities and encouraging more
• Have the main space of the library be for social interactions and energy and have dedicated quiet rooms for reading
• Community programs get bumped from school spaces if the students need the space – sometimes without enough notice
• Access to meeting rooms is difficult
• Make any public library space “nice”. It does not have to be cinder block and boring.
• Woodbury style space is appreciated.

FUNDING
• Prioritize county funding to maintain hours and days of being open
• I would pay more taxes for access to a library in my community.
• Raise taxes for better libraries
• I will pay more to keep libraries open and staffed!
• We get the quality we pay for – we should spend more public dollars whatever we do
• The funding and staff to keep daytime and nighttime hours for 7 days a week at Stafford Library is a #1 priority
• Provide bookmobiles to communities
• A blend of taxes and private funding
• Help encourage a robust fundraising organization

STAFFING
• Provide staffing to assist with technology
• More libraries and more training for staff
• Make use of volunteers
• The current model seems to work well.

VIRTUAL SERVICES
• Yes!
• Provide virtual meetings via phones for groups to use
• More promotion for existing databases

OUTREACH
• Bookmobiles – time for a return
• Books-on-wheels – like meds-on-wheels home delivery
• Expand outreach to schools, elderly neighborhoods, classes
• Online and bookmobile
• Reach out to county and city planning groups – bring plans to the library
• Provide tours of regional libraries and other county libraries
• Better coordination of volunteer services – delivering books to seniors, reading to preschoolers, literacy volunteers. What else can volunteers do through the local library?
• Please reach out to non-served county residents in all communities.
• Articles in the local newspapers about what the libraries offer or are doing (Watershed districts do this.)

LOCATION

Space Suggestions:
• Provide funds and staff for a meeting room for groups and a sound-proofed “music room” for all ages to meet and to play instruments together.
• Provide meeting rooms

Access:
• Keep libraries in lower economic areas accessible – perhaps utilizing technological accessible kiosks
• Provide circulation/transportation (for lower economic areas) for library hubs
• Coordinate with current transit discussion in this region to improve access and ease for all residents to local and regional libraries
• Locate near other civic buildings that have reasons to be points of gathering and service – a one stop shop.
• Facilities and capital planning for libraries

Specific Locations:
• Come visit the Lake Elmo Library
• Add teen room space at Woodbury
• Expand and enhance community spaces, meeting rooms, and parking at Woodbury
• Inadequate parking at Woodbury
• Park Grove needs to stay in the same location even if a new building is needed. That location serves a low-income area, specifically teens and kids.
• Keep Park Grove library at current location. Update the current library.
• Work with the City of Cottage Grove to expand the trail system from Oakwood Park and the surrounding area to the library.
• City of Newport is separate – tie in with Washington County and South Washington schools, churches and social services
• Coordinate better with independent libraries, especially on the website

OTHER
• People should talk freely in the library – have rooms for quiet study.
• Mixed age spaces
• Animation is too fast for young brains
• Library card should be incorporated into driver’s license so one card not two
• Keep emphasis on books (not all technology)
• Real wood tables, checkout counters, etc.
• Stained glass windows and chandeliers
• No scents in the library – put signs in the restrooms – no perfumes – clean air
• Establish formal planning with schools
• Wish List: Open longer hours and a coffee shop
• We need a mission statement: What do we want the library to do?
• Need to make sure there are quiet areas in all libraries.
• Long-term plan coordination
• We have gorgeous facilities. Can they be open longer so that the community has access when schools, etc. are not open?
• Accessible services – resources for people of all abilities
• Develop a facilities upgrade and maintenance plan
• Dampen outside sounds within the library
WASHINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
COMMUNITY FORUM NOTES
June 4, 2015
Stillwater

The following suggestions and comments were expressed by the attendees of the Community Forum held on June 4, 2015 at the Washington County Government Center in Stillwater, MN. Attendees discussed the current services of the library and were asked to write down their wishes and desires for the future of the Washington County Library System. Their comments were recorded according to the following themes:

PROGRAMS (Adults, Teens, Children)

**Seniors:**
- Senior health programs (Tai Chi, etc.)
- More programs for seniors
- Better large print books, elderly classes for resource gathering
- Encourage seniors to volunteer to assist with literacy for you and for immigrants.

**Children:**
- Tap into seniors, parents, and teens for reading readiness activities: cross-generational stuff is great.
- Early childhood education such as 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten; summer reading for children in conjunction with school
- More storytimes like programs for 0-10 year old kids
- More programs for kids (preschool, elementary & teens):
  - author reads,
  - issue discussions (teens),
  - how to do something (elementary age)

**Teens:**
- Book clubs for teens
- Be a champion of youth summer reading
- Teen space for homework and brainstorming (community service projects)
Adults:
- Programs for adults: authors, poets, musicians
- Local and national authors
- More author visits
- Love the White Bear Historical Society programs
- Partnership in sustainability with local businesses
- “How to use the library” classes, i.e. the special books room, what’s in the archives?

COLLECTIONS: Print, Media, Downloadable

Print Books:
- The Stafford library has a good print collection. I hope this will not be reduced by other proposed changes.
- Print books: for browsing, theme-based display of print books, research/STEM magazines
- Keep print copies. As virtual books increase, we need to retain some of the tradition
- Large print books
- Keep books. (I agree!)
- Keep print books: charge $1 for extra copies of those on demand, charge 5 cents for each overdue book per day
- Update book club kits more frequently
- Have enough books in the collection for book clubs
- More equitable new materials for smaller libraries

Other Materials/Formats:
- I enjoy the magazines
- More movies available for checkout (not everyone affords cable or Netflix or streaming)
- Love being able to check out DVDs and CDs but the collection is pretty minimal and outdated

eBooks:
- Use public domain books to improve the ebook holdings
- More ebooks. Continue to not charge a late fee for overdue books. Checkout period of 3 weeks not 2 weeks. Continue to increase the paperback print collection of new books.

TECHNOLOGY

Access:
- Strong wi-fi is a must. Physical computers and keyboard needed for those who don’t have them.
- One week checkout for Kindles, ebook readers (with sample book checkout) to try out (once in 3 months)
- Advertise/publicize databases
- Offer access to new technology that people cannot afford yet – be ahead of the curve.
- Experimental technology pads/spaces
- Co-operative style spaces people reserve, pay for beyond # number of hours per month.
- MetroNet: County does not use, Ramsey and Hennepin do
- Tap into services of MetroNet
**Operations:**
- Automatic checkout burns the human relation
- Use fingerprint checkout technology – become cardless
- Checkout books with a cell phone
- Assigned library card numbers are too long and complicated – simplify!

**TRAINING AND CLASSES**
- Support for entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Training: continue computer classes for seniors
- Adult classes on technology and current interests
- Technical training: computers, ebooks, etc. that comes to us (Marine)
- Senior focus: basic technology introduction classes
- Classes on writing
- Classes on writing ebooks
- Establish the OLLIE (Lifelong Learning classes) at Washington County libraries for nominal sum (as Florida and Arizona do) U of M costs too much.
- Serve as the “people’s university” (life skills, child development)
- Facilitate adult and children ESL tutoring or classes

**COMMUNITY GATHERING**
- Remote office: spaces, power sockets, robust and secure wi-fi, secure desks and coffee makers
- More = Better. Stillwater’s “terrace” is a good example and provides a potential revenue stream (weddings, etc.). In MN, indoor options are preferred as well (e.g. Stafford/Central Park)
- Have some school ceremonies at the libraries to get more people in them.
- Keep community meeting spaces
- Define “library”. Much of the 5 points in the slide presentation could be defined as jobs of the school districts or county social services.
- Small libraries can be vital gathering spaces
- Revitalize depressed downtowns

**FUNDING/RESOURCES**
- Increase per capita library support to position WCL at least at mid-point of metro libraries
- Raise the library levy!
- Higher taxes for better libraries that make our community more valuable
- We may be well season readers but we pay the taxes.
- Open library on nights and weekends – pay for this by eliminating expense of teens, technology, training and classes
- Volunteers are low cost and community building
- Charge $1 per visit for adults
- Start charging overdue fines and 25 cents a day for new, popular releases (St. Paul does this I think.)
STAFFING

Open Hours:

- Keep libraries open on weekends
- Sundays please.
- Open Sundays for families with small children and teens and adults who work all weekdays and have family care issues
- Weekend and evening hours
- Keep library open on Sat/Sun please!
- I would like to see Sunday afternoon open time.
- Need evening hours at least once a week for working families
- Open when people can use the library – Sat. & Sun. or even Friday evenings
- Make sure there is someone in charge of each branch. Also don’t rotate staff. Let them stay in one location to learn the people and collection.
- Keep Staff. 1) they link us to books, 2) they provide community for seniors and other patrons, 3) they introduce books to young and teen patrons who don’t have parents who do this.
- Retraining of staff librarians; new title for “librarians”
- Get the staff away from the help desk and out into the library encouraging patrons
- Keep friendly and professional librarians on staff.
- Some of the staff at the Stafford Library are very knowledgeable about literature. That is extremely important to maintain.
- I visit the library weekly and don’t have any interaction with the staff, other than when the checkout equipment doesn’t work. What do all of those staff do? Can the library be open with fewer staff?
- Use volunteers – they connect with the library patrons
- Give responsibility to volunteers – it will improve the library and could lower the staffing needs. Need people to reach teens.

VIRTUAL SERVICES

- Centralized web site so all branches are aware of all events, services and programs at all libraries in Washington County
- A library website has different needs than a county website. Beef up the library website!
- User-friendly web services and website needed
- Website that works for the average user. Currently it is challenging to use.
- County website is not user-friendly and needs to be redesigned. Google county library and first screen does not even have log-on capability.
- Libraries need to figure out how to reach those users who never come into the branch – the virtual users.

OUTREACH

- Door-to-door delivery of books to elderly/disabled adults or children or drop-off locations such as CUB food stores or other places
- Deliver books to seniors and shut-ins – senior population will grow and they need to be served
- Visiting/outreach to low-income housing – esp. seniors or young families
- Bookmobiles? New pods/lockers, services for “shut-ins” and disabled individuals
- Use volunteers! Needed, great help, and promote community and support
• Continued and enhanced collaboration with outlying community libraries – we share goals for access and experience of the library
• Continuing collaboration with outliers
• Establish/maintain community partnerships at county and local library level
• Faster response to book circulation. Keep people informed about programs.
• Have community library days like have community service days.

LOCATION/FACILITIES

Space Suggestions:
• I like the large meeting space and quiet study spaces
• Use local artists to display rotating artworks for 1-2 month periods. No cost! Community involvement!
• How about outdoor reading gardens?
• Revamp all facilities so they are compatible with 21st century technology. In some branches, need more outlets, so simple yet.....
• Recharging stations!!
• I love Wildwood Library
• Provide a community room in each branch
• Have space for gathering with coffee, juices, etc. to bring people together
• As the U.S. moves toward small businesses and telecommuting, libraries should support that with space and technology.
• Offer services like video conferencing and interview rooms and small work rooms

Location:
• We need a library in all towns – not just Woodbury
• Co-location: there are so many options
• Most any “major” or big library with multiple functions/spaces are within 20 minutes from most residents, which seems reasonable. How does this distance ratio compare to other high-quality systems? What about “world class” systems?
• Need renovated increased space in lower St. Croix Valley
• Create specialty locations in the smaller branches, so the newest and best of everything is spread around.
  Library can be the heart of a community – need them in small towns as well as big towns/cities such as Woodbury and Forest Lake
• The area north of Highway 36 makes up at least 35% of the geographical area but it is not served by the County in a proportion that is equitable.

OTHER
• The only way to improve communications is to make sure the person in charge of marketing/communication is part of the senior management team.
• New title for library: Learning Center?
• Maintain personal touch – readers suggest book purchases, librarian knows your name
• Make sure when customers walk into a library it looks like a library. I walked into one and all I saw was computers – I felt lost!
• Exploit 3M’s library knowledge
• Maintain library networks for mobile Washington County residents who use multiple libraries.
WASHINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM
COMMUNITY FORUM NOTES
July 30, 2015
Forest Lake

The following suggestions and comments were expressed by the attendees at the Forest Lake Community Forum on Thursday, July 30, 2015. Attendees were asked to write down their wishes and desires for the future of the Washington County Library System under the following themes. There was very modest attendance at this community forum.

PROGRAMS (Adults, Teens, Children)

**Adults:**
- Author programs

**Children and Teens:**
- More collaboration with schools
- YSB collaboration with teens at the library

COLLECTIONS: Print, Media, Downloadable
- More copies of books for book clubs
- More book bags for book clubs

TECHNOLOGY
- More express library locations (lockers)
- Electronic access to the internet

TRAINING AND CLASSES

**Training/Class delivery:**
- Provide list of trainers for various topics and technology to support training
- Provide the ability to send class information to those that would like it emailed
- Need availability of training space with technology for volunteer groups
COMMUNITY GATHERING
- More small meeting rooms
- More space for activities
- More meetings rooms
- More small rooms/areas in the library

FUNDING
- MORE: You get what you pay for.
- Cooperation between public entities (schools, city, library) for staff and facilities

STAFFING
- Share program staff with schools and community ed
- Add community outreach/organizer staff position
- More staff
- Community planning/sharing/organization
- More strong staff

VIRTUAL SERVICES
- More training for use of virtual services

OUTREACH
- Show up at the Senior Expo on Aug 13, 2015
- Show up at the YMCA Board meetings
- Support bus services between the library and all Forest Lake schools and the senior center
- Provide transportation services to the library for those unable to drive to the library
- More senior outreach

LOCATION
- Would be great to resolve Lake Elmo situation. It would be a bad precedent to allow them to become an associate branch.

OTHER
- Increased support of volunteer groups such as AARP Tax Aide – room and technology
APPENDIX C

Washington County Library System
2015 Resident Survey

Prepared and Submitted to
Library Strategies Consulting Group and Washington County
August 24, 2015
Acknowledgments
Rainbow Research would like to acknowledge the contribution of Library Strategies staff, Karen Rose and Stu Wilson; and Washington County staff, Molly O’Rourke, Kevin Corbid and Keith Ryskoski and June Mathiowetz.

We would also like to thank the advisory group members and their colleagues for review of the survey questions.

Washington County Resident Survey Advisory Group
Judy Bull                      Curt Geissler
Katherine Cram                Brian Zeller
Lynne Bertalmio               Jill Tammen
Dean Zuleger                  John Kielholz
Shayla Denaway                Renee McGivern
Tom Triplett                  Bill Sullivan
Dennis Johnson                Jean Oswald
Jo Bailey                      Polly Blom
Ryan Laager                   Joyce Schneider

Report Prepared by:
Mary McEathron, PhD, Rainbow Research
Amanuel Medhanie, PhD, Parsimony

RAINBOWRESEARCH helping organizations effectively reach their goals
621 West Lake Street, Suite 300    Minneapolis, Minnesota 55408    612.824.0724    rainbowresearch.org
# Table of Contents

## BACKGROUND 1

## METHODOLOGY 1

## WHO RESPONDED TO SURVEY? 2
- Age 2
- Household Composition 2
- Gender 3
- Race/Ethnicity 3
- Residency in Washington County

## PRESENTATION OF SURVEY RESULTS 4
- Reasons for Non-Use 4
- Most Frequently Used Library 5
- Types of Library Use 7
- Patterns of Library Use by Age 8
- Satisfaction and Overall Experiences 9
- Projected Use in Five Years 10
- Open-Ended Responses 10

## APPENDICES
- Appendix A: Response Frequency Tables
- Appendix B: Survey Protocol
Washington County Library System
Report on 2015 Resident Survey

Conducted by Rainbow Research, Inc. on behalf of Library Strategies Consulting Group

Background

In 2015, Washington County began a process to develop a strategic plan for the future of the Washington County Library System, assisted by the Library Strategies Consulting Group. An important component of the planning process was to hear from residents about their perceptions and experiences with the library system. Resident feedback was solicited through a variety of means including in-person meetings, community forums and a survey. This report presents the results of the county-wide survey, which was conducted by Rainbow Research, Inc. Rainbow Research, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1974 with a mission to improve the effectiveness of socially concerned organizations through capacity building, research, and evaluation.

Methodology

The survey was developed with extensive input from Washington County Library staff, Library Strategies staff and county staff, including a review of the survey draft by Washington County Commissioners.

Washington County provided a mailing list of all households located in the county. A random sample of 1500 households was selected, divided equally between the five districts in the county (300 surveys per district). The sample size was determined in consultation with Washington County based on the current population (245,000), an acceptable margin of error (+/-2.5%) and a proportion of 50% for a given response category.

The original plan was to contact each selected household three times; however, the mailing service inadvertently neglected to provide postage for the return envelope sent in the first mailing of the surveys; therefore, they agreed to resend the entire packet with a self-addressed, stamped return envelope. In both cases, the packet included a letter signed by the chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners encouraging residents to complete and return the survey. Washington County staff also decided to send one final reminder postcard to encourage more responses. Table 1 describes the five correspondences with selected households and approximate dates of delivery.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Approximate Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-notification Postcard</td>
<td>Indicated that they had been selected and briefly described the purpose of the survey</td>
<td>End of May</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Included a letter from Washington County, the survey and a return envelope addressed to Rainbow Research</td>
<td>End of first week in June</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reminder Postcard</td>
<td></td>
<td>June 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-send Survey</td>
<td>Included letter and survey plus stamped, self-addressed return envelope</td>
<td>June 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Reminder Postcard from Washington County</td>
<td></td>
<td>July 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1] Rainbow Research Inc.
A unique identifier was printed on the return envelope to prevent multiple submissions. Rainbow Research also created an online version of the survey for those participants who preferred using online tools. The postcards and letter provided the website for the online survey along with instructions how to use the unique identifying number. The response rate across districts was very similar as can be seen in table 2. This response rate of 26% is considered a reasonable response rate for the purpose of this study.  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Number Mailed</th>
<th>Number Returned or Completed Online</th>
<th>Response Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 5</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who Responded to the Survey?
Age of respondents

Household Composition
31% reported having at least one child age 17 or younger in the household, 71% reported having at least one adult under the age of 65 in the household, and 36% reported having at least one adult age 65 or older in the household.  

1Given a population of 245,000, a sample size of 392, and a 95% confidence level, most estimated percentages have a margin of error of 5% or less.

2| Rainbow Research Inc.
household.

Gender
68% identified as female, 28% identified as male, and 0.3% identified as transgender.

Race/Ethnicity
Table 3 presents the frequency and percentage of the reported race/ethnicity of the respondents.

Table 3: Ethnicity of respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaskan Native</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino or Hispanic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Length of Residency in Washington County

Figure 2: Length of Residency
Employment
Table 4 presents the frequency and percentage of the reported employment status of the respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed Full-time</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Part-time</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker/Primary Caregiver</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Presentation of Survey Results
The first question of the survey asked if the respondent visited or used any of the services provided by a library in Washington County, either in person or online. 82 indicated that they did not and completed the survey with demographic information about themselves; 308 indicated that they did and completed the entire survey.

Table 5 presents the reasons cited for not using Washington County libraries and the percentages for those responses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am physically unable to do so</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not have access to necessary transportation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to buy my own books or other materials</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use a library outside of Washington County</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library does not have the materials I need or want</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library hours are not convenient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library locations are not convenient</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For those respondents who used the library system, Figure 3 shows which libraries respondents most frequented.

Respondents indicated how frequently they visited that library: 56 (14%) visit very often (4 or more times a month), 93 (24%) often (1-3 times a month), 97 (25%) sometimes (approximately every other month) and 60 (15%) visit rarely (1-2 times a year).

Since library privileges are reciprocal across county boundaries in Minnesota, respondents were asked if they used other libraries in the area: 82 (20.9%) indicated that they did, with Ramsey County being the most frequently used (14%), followed by Hennepin County (3%), St. Paul (3%), and Other (3%). These responses and their frequencies appear in Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anoka County</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chisago County</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakota County</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hennepin County</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsey County</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How Are the Libraries Currently Used?

The survey asked about a number of possible ways residents might use library resources both on-site and remotely via online platforms. In developing the survey, five distinct categories of use were identified. These are listed below with the components that were queried in the survey.

1. On-Site Use of Physical Resources
   (a) Check out books
   (b) Check out DVDs or CDs
   (c) Read magazines or newspapers
   (d) Browse collections

2. On-Site Use of Technical Assistance from a Librarian
   (a) Get help from a librarian (in general)
   (b) How to conduct online searches
   (c) Filing tax or other forms
   (d) Accessing other legal resources
   (e) Medical/Health research
   (f) Employment searches
   (g) Business start-ups
   (h) How to download eBooks
   (i) How to use technology

3. On-site Courses or Programs (presented or organized by library staff)
   (a) Children's Teen and Adult Programs
   (b) Learn about a topic or skill with others

4. On-site Provision of Space and Facilities
   (a) Access to computers
   (b) Access to internet/WiFi
   (c) Photocopying/Printing
   (d) Meeting rooms for events not organized by the library

5. Remotely Accessible Online Resources
   (a) Library website to check out or renew books
   (b) eBooks collection
   (c) Downloadable materials (e.g., eMagazines or articles)
   (d) Library website for other information
While checking out books was the most frequent use—approximately 61% of the respondents indicated they check out books sometimes, often or very often—other uses were also selected. Getting general help from a librarian, browsing collections and checking out DVDs or CDs are used sometimes, often or very often by approximately 36% of respondents (See Figure 4).

Figure 4: Percentages of Use

Please note that a respondent might select "Never" for a variety of reasons that can range from not being aware of a service to not being interested.

In order to compare the five components as well as to see how use might differ across age, the questions with each group were scored and added together to arrive at total scores that reflect usage overall. The total scores for each group were then put on the same scale to allow for comparing between different types of usage.\(^2\)

\(^2\)After total scores were created, the total score was then divided by the highest possible total score for that group of questions and the resulting value was multiplied by 4.
Figure 5 was created in order to examine whether age groups differed in terms of how they use library services (e.g., are younger respondents more likely to use remotely accessible resources over on-site physical resources compared to older respondents). This figure shows that the general trend is similar across age groups. Specifically, the most common use is on-site use of physical resources, followed up by use of remotely accessible online/web-based resources, then use of on-site provision of space and facilities, and finally, courses or programs and use of technical resources. This pattern was consistent across age groups. Subsequent statistical analyses confirmed this result in that the statistical analyses revealed that the use of on-site physical resources was statistically significantly more common than any other type of service and that age groups did not have significantly different patterns in use.
Satisfaction and Overall Experiences

Overall, those who used the different services—whether onsite or online—indicated that they were satisfied or very satisfied with that service (See Appendix B for specific frequencies and percentages).

When asked about their overall experiences with the Washington County Library system, nearly 75% agreed or strongly agreed that they felt welcomed at their library. Respondents indicated that they thought the library was an important place for community to gather and that the physical location mattered. They also indicated that they would be willing to pay additional property taxes to provide expanded library services or hours.

Figure 6: Willing to pay additional property taxes

Among respondents who provided a response to the questions about their overall experiences with the library, on average 92% said they agreed or strongly agreed with the positive statements.
Projected Use in Five Years

When considering how they might use the library in five years, the areas that showed the most potential increase were to visit the library in person to check out materials (70%), use online resources (61%), and read or study (42%).

![Projected use in five years](chart)

Open-Ended Responses

There were two questions on the survey that allow respondents an opportunity to share additional thoughts. The following sections present the major themes for each question along with examples of the comments provided.

1. What do you value most about Washington County libraries?
2. What would you like Washington County libraries to improve?

The following presents the responses grouped by major ideas or themes. Verbatim comments that illustrate the themes or variation in responses are provided in bulleted lists. Of the 392 surveys completed by both users and non-users of the library system, 235 responded to Question 1 and 219 responded to Question 2.
Location, Convenience and Accessibility
Approximately 67 respondents indicated that what they valued most was the location and convenience of the libraries they visited.

- The convenience of place; it is connected to the YMCA.
- Wildwood is perfect location for community.
- Close to my home.
- Like current location for Park Grove- would decrease use if moved to new city hall site.

However, 40 respondents also indicated that they wanted improvements in the location and convenience of the library system. In particular, they often noted a desire for expanded hours.

- Better library in Lakeland; would be nice to have a comfortable library closer to home.
- I would like the library to be open on Sundays.
- Make the hours of operation more accessible to people who work during the day. In other words, improve hours of operation.
- Maintain or increase hours.
- I would like more hours available. As much as our property taxes increased this last year(!) there should be funding.

Facilities
Approximately 25 respondents indicated that they value the physical space and facilities that are currently offered.

- I value the fact that the Woodbury library is near my home, and that the Stillwater and Bayport libraries are charming to visit. Stillwater, particularly, has great programs.
- The clean welcoming space for the whole family. A quiet place to study.
- I love the space and the children's play area.
- Resources our family uses, welcome and safe spaces for homework (teens) and proximity to home/YMCA.
- They are just fine! I love the option to use our Stillwater library when I choose to. I’m very proud of our wonderful library.

Respondents also provided suggestions for facility improvements.

- The Park Grove library feels a little rundown. I’ve been to the Woodbury library and that feels new. I think Park Grove just needs to update a few things.
- Have you been to the Roseville Library? More like that! The Oakdale library where I go needs more comfy furniture.
Materials Available: Books, DVDs or CDs
Approximately 65 respondents wrote that they valued the ability to check out books, DVDs or CDs and, in some cases, also indicating that they appreciated both the selection and different formats available (such as audio or ebooks).

- Wide choice of books; ability to put books on hold.
- Usually the book I'm looking for is available for check-out!
- Libraries can help me with book request that I don't see in the database. Very good selection of books.

However, 41 respondents indicated that they would like to see improvements in the selection of books, DVDs, and CDs. Another 24 comments requested improvements in ebook selections in particular.

- Good books but a lot of repetition, kids have read those books a few times. Need a bigger collection.
- Many of the VHS movies I used to use for school were removed from the library collection and never replaces with a CD of the same program or series- which left a gap in my curriculum
- Replace old books on CD. Clean them- very dirty from people getting food on them.
- Waiting lists are way too long on some books. I've waited months to loan out a book.
- Larger books collection. We can often find books in the Wisconsin system that are not available in Washington County Library.
- I would like to be able to rent current movie releases like the patrons of Ramsey county library system can.
- Increase selection of e-books and have a line showing when available if it is currently checked out.
- Please, make the downloading of ebooks and audio books easier! I have to run over to the library every time to get help.
- More ebooks available with less waiting lists.
- Increase ebook selection so that you don’t have to be on hold for so long especially with new and/or popular books.

A few respondents noted that they valued the ability to access books through inter-library loans.

- I really like that I can reserve materials from other libraries and have them delivered to my local library. Very convenient.

Technology and Online Access
While some respondents (25) indicated that they were satisfied with the current online system, others wanted to see improvements.

- Hold system online is easy to use so no need to increase collection.
- Their online ebook checkout! If not able to sleep, I go to the library!
- Once I get to the library website it’s easy to find my way around, but it’s a pain to get to it. Also, the “my account” link should be more high-profile, because it's easy to miss.

12| Rainbow Research Inc.
• Online library app book selections: offer more titles, improve software and make more user friendly.

• Website and app: add the ability to store multiple cards. I have a card and so does my daughter. I would like to not hunt down both cards every time I renew.

• Continue to update technology; simplify access to databases.

Staff Assistance
In the survey responses, most respondents indicated that they had not used the particular assistance from a librarian that was asked about (such as filing tax forms or accessing legal resources or medical information). However, 33 comments indicated the use of and appreciation for help received from a librarian in general.

• The staff is always helpful and friendly

• The eagerness of a very knowledgeable staff to help answer questions.

Some respondents (11) offered suggestions for improving staff interactions.

• Staff more outgoing, less pretentious and pompous.

• More personal suggestions for book choices. Many times I have been at the library with no one to ask for help.

• The librarians/staff at the library are knowledgeable, but not friendly or approachable. They seem to not want to be approached as if visitors are a bother. Almost every person I’ve brought with me to the library had commented on this (without any input from me). A smile would be nice. When our 3 year old son gathered enough courage to approach a librarian behind the children’s desk, she was abrupt and rude. He does not want to ask a librarian a question at this time after that went.

Civic Role of Libraries
Approximately 24 respondents indicated that they valued the role the library played in their community, both as a gathering place and for the free resources made available to all residents.

• Libraries are a ‘must have’ for a strong community. I have gone to the library since I was a little girl and can’t imagine not having one as vibrant resource for our community.

• It’s history (Carnegie). It’s role in the community (access to information). It’s architecture.

• Availability of resources for all in the community – great gathering hub for learning

• That they are community centers where many activities other than book checkouts occur all thru the month.

• Being able to read books without purchasing.

• Accessibility and availability of resources.

• Great place to access books, magazines, read, get book club bag and find other information.
Communication
Perhaps as a counterpoint to the appreciation of opportunities and resources available at the library mentioned above, respondents also suggested improved communication so that more people could be better informed or aware of these resources.

• Visibility to the events! Maybe posters around town and emails or mailers on a quarterly basis. If more people knew what was offered,....

• I have had a busy life, but will probably use the Library more. Would be nice to have an idea of the services now offered at the library.

• I think more public information for the services would be helpful to me. You mention [in survey] services offered that I am not aware that you offer such as printing and photo services or learning skills or adult programs.

Programming
Twenty-eight respondents indicated how much they valued the current selection of children’s materials and programming. A number of people also indicated that they wanted more programming for adults (7), Teens (4) and children (5).

Extended Comments
A few comments provided extended or specific feedback.

• You got rid of late fees but then had some sort of restocking fee when I kept a few books I checked out too long. I seldom use the library then and needed the material for help in coping with kids and divorce. Instead I end up not being able to use the library because of these unpaid restocking fees. My teenage daughter had same experience and fees. So we chose not to use the library any longer. It's been about 7 years now. I oppose all library funding because this type of manipulation isn't why I pay taxes. I should be able to use a library and not have to pay hidden fees. I would understand if I had lost the items, but basically just socked with a hidden late return fee.

• I don't feel qualified to answer with specifics. Addressing the ever changing technologies and the aging population demographic, along with budgetary considerations will be delicate. Luck!

• Refocus: Times have changed, needs have changed. Students get everything they need online. All ages get books, etc. online. Redesign libraries as educational centers for first time moms and helping retired people with taxes or close them and reinvest tax dollars to local schools.

• It is unfortunate that the Washington County Libraries took away e-book privileges from Lake Elmo residents. I hope these libraries can cooperate in the future and more hours of service!

• Do not let Lake Elmo Library keep our tax dollars to fund their coffee shop library.

• The Woodbury library NEEDS to be updated, expanded, and improved, with adequate parking. It serves most of the county residents, and looks and is tired and obsolete compared to other counties, and even city libraries in small towns. More meeting rooms would be helpful. Many times, I cannot get a room because ESL programs use them most of the times. We need more and a better selection of ebooks, and an improved library website. The county template is not user-friendly for libraries, and certainly NOT interesting. We deserve more direct access to the library site, and a more welcoming presentation. The events should be better organized for easier access and to provide better information. It would also be nice if the 3M digital portal would be meshed to the county library’s website, and a more direct link provided for MNLink. Allow ebooks to be renewed rather than the disappearing without notice after 2 weeks. Same
for the 3M books, which at least allow 3 weeks. More outreach into neighborhoods, senior facilities, and
closer collaboration with schools. I would also like a wider range of adult programs. DO NOT reduce hours
or close days of the week, as the County did a few years back. EVER! What were you thinking? You definitely
need a better budget process that does avoids "across the board" cuts. What about transportation one or
two days a week to bring folks TO the library? Would love to see a vibrant volunteer and donor community,
like the St. Paul Library.

No Improvements or Changes
Twenty-eight people indicated in their responses to Question 2 that they thought the Washington library system
needed no changes or improvements.

- Doing great!
- No need for improvement. They do a great job!
- I'm happy. The Stillwater Library is a community treasure. I'm happy to support it with my taxes.
- NOTHING!!! I only wish I had more time to enjoy them! WHAT A FABULOUS RESOURCE AND BENEFIT TO
  OUR COMMUNITIES!!! LOVE, LOVE, LOVE ALL LIBRARIES!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
Washington County
Survey Response Frequencies

Survey Question Results
This section provides descriptive information about the Washington County Library survey responses. Each of the survey questions are presented along with the count and percentage of respondents who responded accordingly.

1. Do you visit or use any services in person or online provided by a library in Washington County?
   (a) 78.6% (308) answered “Yes” to this question.

2. If you rarely or never use the services of a library in Washington County, why not? Select all that apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am physically unable to do so</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not have access to necessary transportation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I prefer to buy my own books or other materials</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I use a library outside of Washington County</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library does not have the materials I need or want</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library hours are not convenient</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library locations are not convenient</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Because the question allows for multiple selections, percentages do not add up to 100%

3. Which library or library express do you visit most frequently in Washington County? Select one

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bayport Library</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hardwood Creek Library in Forest Lake</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugo City Hall Express</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I only use the libraries online services</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Elmo Library</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine Community Library</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newport City Hall Express</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oakdale Library</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Grove Library in Cottage Grove</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.H. Stafford Library in Woodbury</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>25.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillwater Library</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Library in Lakeland</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wildwood Library in Mahtomedi</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. How often do you visit that library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely (1-2 times a year)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes (Approximately every other month)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>24.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often (1-3 times a month)</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>23.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very Often (4 or more times a month)</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>14.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Do you visit or use public libraries in any other Minnesota County?

(a) 20.9% (82) answered “Yes” to this question.

(b) If yes, Please indicate which county or city library you use. Select all that apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anoka County</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chisago County</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dakota County</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hennepin County</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ramsey County</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Paul</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Because the question allows for multiple selections, percentages do not add up to 100%

6. Over the last year, how often did you do the following at the library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access the Internet/WiFi</td>
<td>119 (30.4)</td>
<td>147 (37.5)</td>
<td>44 (11.2)</td>
<td>40 (10.2)</td>
<td>19 (4.8)</td>
<td>23 (5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Childrens Program (e.g., Storytime or special events)</td>
<td>116 (29.6)</td>
<td>202 (51.5)</td>
<td>26 (6.6)</td>
<td>30 (7.7)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>12 (3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Teen Program (e.g., Book clubs or summer events)</td>
<td>116 (29.6)</td>
<td>249 (63.5)</td>
<td>15 (3.8)</td>
<td>7 (1.8)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>4 (1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend an Adult Program (e.g., Author talks or special events)</td>
<td>113 (28.8)</td>
<td>205 (52.3)</td>
<td>36 (9.2)</td>
<td>27 (6.9)</td>
<td>4 (1.0)</td>
<td>7 (1.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browse collections</td>
<td>116 (29.6)</td>
<td>84 (21.4)</td>
<td>47 (12)</td>
<td>77 (19.6)</td>
<td>44 (11.2)</td>
<td>24 (6.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check out books</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>17 (4.3)</td>
<td>38 (9.7)</td>
<td>78 (19.9)</td>
<td>60 (15.3)</td>
<td>100 (25.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check out DVDs or CDs</td>
<td>115 (29.3)</td>
<td>84 (21.4)</td>
<td>57 (14.5)</td>
<td>70 (17.9)</td>
<td>32 (8.2)</td>
<td>34 (8.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get help from a librarian</td>
<td>105 (26.8)</td>
<td>53 (13.5)</td>
<td>93 (23.7)</td>
<td>87 (22.2)</td>
<td>33 (8.4)</td>
<td>21 (5.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about a topic or skill with others</td>
<td>119 (30.4)</td>
<td>214 (54.6)</td>
<td>39 (9.9)</td>
<td>13 (3.3)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>5 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read magazines or newspapers</td>
<td>118 (30.1)</td>
<td>136 (34.7)</td>
<td>55 (14)</td>
<td>48 (12.5)</td>
<td>24 (6.1)</td>
<td>10 (2.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read or study</td>
<td>116 (29.6)</td>
<td>133 (33.9)</td>
<td>56 (14.3)</td>
<td>40 (10.2)</td>
<td>25 (6.4)</td>
<td>22 (5.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a meeting room for a community, business or informal event</td>
<td>116 (29.6)</td>
<td>211 (53.8)</td>
<td>36 (9.2)</td>
<td>21 (5.4)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use computers</td>
<td>112 (28.6)</td>
<td>131 (33.4)</td>
<td>64 (16.3)</td>
<td>53 (13.5)</td>
<td>20 (5.1)</td>
<td>12 (3.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use online resources such as databases</td>
<td>115 (29.3)</td>
<td>142 (36.2)</td>
<td>46 (11.7)</td>
<td>47 (12)</td>
<td>22 (5.6)</td>
<td>20 (5.1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Over the last year, how often have you received assistance or training from a librarian to learn about

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accessing other legal resources</td>
<td>172 (43.9)</td>
<td>210 (53.6)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business start-ups</td>
<td>107 (27.3)</td>
<td>268 (68.4)</td>
<td>12 (3.1)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloading eBooks</td>
<td>103 (26.3)</td>
<td>223 (56.9)</td>
<td>30 (7.7)</td>
<td>25 (6.4)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>5 (1.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment searches and job seeking skills</td>
<td>107 (27.3)</td>
<td>260 (66.3)</td>
<td>16 (4.1)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filing tax, unemployment or insurance forms</td>
<td>106 (27)</td>
<td>264 (67.3)</td>
<td>16 (4.1)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to conduct online searches</td>
<td>101 (25.8)</td>
<td>210 (53.6)</td>
<td>34 (8.7)</td>
<td>34 (8.7)</td>
<td>11 (2.8)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to use technology (e.g., smartphones, eReaders, iPad's)</td>
<td>104 (26.5)</td>
<td>250 (63.8)</td>
<td>20 (5.1)</td>
<td>13 (3.3)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical or health research</td>
<td>107 (27.3)</td>
<td>255 (65.1)</td>
<td>16 (4.1)</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
<td>5 (1.3)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 | Rainbow Research Inc.
8. Please check how satisfied you are with the following aspects of the library you visit most frequently

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Do Not Use</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Programs</td>
<td>101 (25.8)</td>
<td>224 (57.1)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>50 (12.8)</td>
<td>14 (3.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area where computers are located</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>144 (36.7)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>5 (1.3)</td>
<td>113 (28.8)</td>
<td>31 (7.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Collection</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>24 (6.1)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>14 (3.6)</td>
<td>193 (49.2)</td>
<td>61 (15.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childrens Programs</td>
<td>101 (25.8)</td>
<td>210 (53.6)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>49 (12.5)</td>
<td>30 (7.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer availability</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>154 (39.3)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>9 (2.3)</td>
<td>105 (26.8)</td>
<td>25 (6.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD and CD Collection</td>
<td>102 (26)</td>
<td>97 (24.7)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>30 (7.7)</td>
<td>134 (34.2)</td>
<td>27 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hours open</td>
<td>93 (23.7)</td>
<td>9 (2.3)</td>
<td>7 (1.8)</td>
<td>21 (5.4)</td>
<td>183 (46.7)</td>
<td>79 (20.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access</td>
<td>98 (25)</td>
<td>167 (42.6)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>93 (23.7)</td>
<td>28 (7.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library databases</td>
<td>102 (26)</td>
<td>135 (34.4)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>116 (29.6)</td>
<td>35 (8.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines and newspapers</td>
<td>111 (28.3)</td>
<td>130 (33.2)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>120 (30.6)</td>
<td>29 (7.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting rooms or group learning spaces</td>
<td>97 (24.7)</td>
<td>185 (47.2)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>76 (19.4)</td>
<td>30 (7.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and photocopying services</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>193 (49.2)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
<td>69 (17.6)</td>
<td>21 (5.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and study areas</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>137 (34.9)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>11 (2.8)</td>
<td>108 (27.6)</td>
<td>37 (9.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff helpfulness and assistance</td>
<td>100 (25.5)</td>
<td>33 (8.4)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>122 (31.1)</td>
<td>132 (33.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff knowledge</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>45 (11.5)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>117 (29.8)</td>
<td>128 (32.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology assistance and training</td>
<td>102 (26)</td>
<td>199 (50.8)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>66 (16.8)</td>
<td>23 (5.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Programs</td>
<td>102 (26)</td>
<td>249 (63.5)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>26 (6.6)</td>
<td>10 (2.6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Over the last year, how often did you use the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downloadable materials (e.g., eMagazines or articles)</td>
<td>103 (26.3)</td>
<td>223 (56.9)</td>
<td>26 (6.6)</td>
<td>18 (4.6)</td>
<td>12 (3.1)</td>
<td>10 (2.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eBooks collection</td>
<td>101 (25.8)</td>
<td>169 (43.1)</td>
<td>29 (7.4)</td>
<td>33 (8.4)</td>
<td>28 (7.1)</td>
<td>32 (8.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library website for other information</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>123 (31.4)</td>
<td>47 (12)</td>
<td>70 (17.9)</td>
<td>28 (7.1)</td>
<td>25 (6.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library website to check out or renew books</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>79 (20.2)</td>
<td>29 (7.4)</td>
<td>47 (12)</td>
<td>58 (14.8)</td>
<td>83 (21.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile library app</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>248 (63.3)</td>
<td>12 (3.1)</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
<td>12 (3.1)</td>
<td>13 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Please check how satisfied you are with the library's online resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Do Not Use</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Downloadable materials</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>219 (55.9)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>7 (1.8)</td>
<td>51 (13)</td>
<td>15 (3.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eBooks collection</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>175 (44.6)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>19 (4.8)</td>
<td>71 (18.1)</td>
<td>25 (6.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library website for other information</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>151 (38.5)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>110 (28.1)</td>
<td>28 (7.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library website to check out or renew books</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>85 (21.7)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>112 (28.6)</td>
<td>91 (23.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile library app</td>
<td>100 (25.5)</td>
<td>250 (63.8)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>29 (7.4)</td>
<td>9 (2.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N/A (%)</th>
<th>Do Not Know (%)</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Disagree (%)</th>
<th>Agree (%)</th>
<th>Strongly Agree (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel welcomed and comfortable at the library</td>
<td>90 (23)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>136 (34.7)</td>
<td>157 (40.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I value the classes and training I receive at the library</td>
<td>101 (25.8)</td>
<td>217 (55.4)</td>
<td>5 (1.3)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>39 (9.9)</td>
<td>27 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I value the learning communities at the library people who want to learn about a similar topic</td>
<td>100 (25.5)</td>
<td>179 (45.7)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>68 (17.3)</td>
<td>39 (9.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would be willing to pay additional property taxes to provide expanded library services or hours</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>51 (13)</td>
<td>33 (8.4)</td>
<td>64 (16.3)</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>52 (13.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy for me to get to the library</td>
<td>90 (23)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>7 (1.8)</td>
<td>125 (31.9)</td>
<td>164 (41.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library resources are available to everyone, including those with disabilities</td>
<td>94 (24)</td>
<td>60 (15.3)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>130 (33.2)</td>
<td>105 (26.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library has the type of spaces that I am interested in using</td>
<td>101 (25.8)</td>
<td>89 (22.7)</td>
<td>2 (0.5)</td>
<td>11 (2.8)</td>
<td>135 (34.4)</td>
<td>54 (13.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is an important place for the community to gather</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>57 (14.5)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>110 (28.1)</td>
<td>122 (31.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library website is useful to me</td>
<td>95 (24.2)</td>
<td>75 (19.1)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>132 (33.7)</td>
<td>86 (21.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The physical location of the library is important to me</td>
<td>98 (25)</td>
<td>5 (1.3)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>152 (38.8)</td>
<td>130 (33.2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
12. Please mark how you think you will use the following Washington County Library services in the next 5 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>N/A</th>
<th>Do Not Use (Now/Future)</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Stay the Same</th>
<th>Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access Internet/WiFi</td>
<td>98 (25)</td>
<td>147 (37.5)</td>
<td>5 (1.3)</td>
<td>85 (21.7)</td>
<td>57 (14.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Childrens Program</td>
<td>95 (24.2)</td>
<td>191 (48.7)</td>
<td>13 (3.3)</td>
<td>49 (12.5)</td>
<td>44 (11.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Teen Program</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>227 (57.9)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>35 (8.9)</td>
<td>28 (7.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend an Adult Program</td>
<td>95 (24.2)</td>
<td>154 (39.3)</td>
<td>6 (1.5)</td>
<td>67 (17.1)</td>
<td>70 (17.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read or study</td>
<td>101 (25.8)</td>
<td>125 (31.9)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>104 (26.5)</td>
<td>59 (15.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a class to learn a new skill or topic</td>
<td>98 (25)</td>
<td>140 (35.7)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>61 (15.6)</td>
<td>90 (23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a meeting room for a community or business event</td>
<td>98 (25)</td>
<td>181 (46.2)</td>
<td>3 (0.8)</td>
<td>83 (21.2)</td>
<td>27 (6.9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use computers</td>
<td>99 (25.3)</td>
<td>142 (36.2)</td>
<td>7 (1.8)</td>
<td>107 (27.3)</td>
<td>37 (9.4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use online resources</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>57 (14.5)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>122 (31.1)</td>
<td>116 (29.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use tutoring/homework help</td>
<td>98 (25)</td>
<td>231 (58.9)</td>
<td>4 (1)</td>
<td>35 (8.9)</td>
<td>24 (6.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit library in person to check out books, DVDs or CDs</td>
<td>96 (24.5)</td>
<td>12 (3.1)</td>
<td>8 (2)</td>
<td>176 (44.9)</td>
<td>100 (25.5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13. How do you learn about events at Washington County Libraries? Check all that apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>County Website</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Website</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>36.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library employee</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspaper/Magazine</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>30.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Because the question allows for multiple selections, percentages do not add up to 100%

14. What do you value most about Washington County libraries?

Given the open-ended nature of this question, it is not reported here. See Washington County Library System Report on 2015 Resident Survey for analysis of open-ended questions.

15. What would you like Washington County libraries to improve?

Given the open-ended nature of this question, it is not reported here. See Washington County Library System Report on 2015 Resident Survey for analysis of open-ended questions.

16. How long have you lived in Washington County?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 2 years</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 5 years</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>9.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 to 15 years</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 to 20 years</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 20 years</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
17. Which of these contains your age?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-64</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to respond</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18. I identify my gender as

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>68.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>28.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer not to respond</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. How would you describe yourself? check all that apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaskan Native</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino or Hispanic</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>89.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Because the question allows for multiple selections, percentages do not add up to 100%

20. Which of the following best describes you?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employed Full-time</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed Part-time</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker/Primary Caregiver</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>9.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>37.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

21. How many of each of the following, including yourself, live in your household?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mean/Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adults age 65 years and over (number)</td>
<td>1 (0.8)</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults under age 65 (number)</td>
<td>1.9 (0.9)</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children age 17 years and under (number)</td>
<td>1.3 (1.2)</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6| Rainbow Research Inc.
Dear Washington County Resident,

Washington County is conducting a planning process to develop a strategic plan for the future of the **Washington County Library System**. Your participation is completely voluntary but we hope you will take a few minutes to fill out and return this survey using the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope. You may also complete the survey online at https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WashingtonCityLibrary. Your unique code for completing the online survey can be found directly above your name on the outer envelope. Thank you!

1. Do you visit or use any services—in person or online—provided by a library in Washington County?
   - NO (Please go to Question 2)
   - YES (Please go to Question 3)

2. If you rarely or never use the services of a library in Washington County, why not? (Select all that apply)
   - Library hours are not convenient
   - Library locations are not convenient
   - I prefer to buy my own books or other materials
   - Library does not have the materials I need or want
   - I do not have access to necessary transportation
   - I am physically unable to do so
   - I use a library outside of Washington County

   **If you answered Question 2 and do not currently use a Washington County Library—In person or online—Please go to Question 15 to complete the survey.**

3. Which library or library express do you visit most frequently in Washington County? (Select one)
   - Bayport Library
   - Hardwood Creek Library in Forest Lake
   - Hugo City Hall Express
   - Lake Elmo Library
   - Marine on St. Croix City Hall Express
   - Newport City Hall Express
   - Oakdale Library
   - Park Grove Library in Cottage Grove
   - R.H. Stafford Library in Woodbury
   - Stillwater Library
   - Valley Library in Lakeland
   - Wildwood Library in Mahtomedi
   - Law Library in Stillwater
   - I only use the library’s online services

4. How often do you visit that library?
   - Very Often (4 or more times a month)
   - Often (1-3 times a month)
   - Sometimes (Approximately every other month)
   - Rarely (1-2 times a year)

5. Do you visit or use public libraries in any other Minnesota County?
   - NO
   - YES

   **If yes, please indicate which county or city library you use:** (Select all that apply)
   - Anoka County
   - Dakota County
   - Ramsey County
   - Other
   - Chisago County
   - Hennepin County
   - St. Paul
The following questions are about the things you may do when you visit the library.

6. Over the last year, how often did you do the following at the library?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Check out books</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Check out DVDs or CDs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read magazines or newspapers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Browse collections</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read or study</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get help from a librarian</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use computers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access the Internet/WiFi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use online resources such as databases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a meeting room for a community, business or informal event</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Children's Program (e.g., Storytime or special events)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Teen Program (e.g., Book clubs or summer events)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend an Adult Program (e.g., Author talks or special events)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn about a topic or skill with others</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7. Over the last year, how often have you received assistance or training from a librarian to learn about:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How to conduct online searches</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filing tax, unemployment or insurance forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accessing other legal resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical or health research</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment searches and job seeking skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business start-ups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloading ebooks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to use technology (e.g., smartphones, ereaders, iPads)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Please check how satisfied you are with the following aspects of the library you visit most frequently:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Do Not Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hours open</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVD and CD Collection</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magazines and newspapers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff helpfulness and assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff knowledge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting rooms or group learning spaces</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading and study areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Children's Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Programs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area where computers are located</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer availability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and photocopying services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet access</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library databases</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technology assistance and training</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These questions are about the library's website and other online resources.

9. Over the last year, how often did you use the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library website to check out or renew books</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eBooks collection</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloadable materials (e.g., eMagazines or articles)</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library website for other information</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile library app</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10. Please check how satisfied you are with the library's online resources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Very Unsatisfied</th>
<th>Do Not Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library website to check out or renew books</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eBooks collection</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloadable materials</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library website for other information</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mobile library app</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These question is about your overall experiences with the library.

11. Please mark how much you agree or disagree with the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Do Not Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel welcomed and comfortable at the library</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is easy for me to get to the library</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library website is useful to me</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library is an important place for the community to gather</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I value the classes and training I receive at the library</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I value the learning communities at the library – people who want to learn about a similar topic</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library resources are available to everyone, including those with disabilities</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The physical location of the library is important to me</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I would be willing to pay additional property taxes to provide expanded library services or hours</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The library has the type of spaces that I am interested in using</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. Please mark how you think you will use the following Washington County Library services in the next 5 years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Increase</th>
<th>Stay the Same</th>
<th>Decrease</th>
<th>Do Not Use (Now/Future)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visit library in person to check out books, DVDs or CDs</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use online resources</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a meeting room for a community or business event</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Children's Program</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a Teen Program</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend an Adult Program</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access Internet/WiFi</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use computers</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read or study</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use tutoring/homework help</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take a class to learn a new skill or topic</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
<td>o</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. How do you learn about events at Washington County Libraries? (Check all that apply)
   ○ Library employee ○ Twitter ○ County Website ○ Newspaper/Magazine
   ○ Facebook ○ Library Website ○ Poster ○ Other

14. What do you value most about Washington County libraries?

15. What would you like Washington County libraries to improve?

These questions will help us know a little more about you.

16. How long have you lived in Washington County?
   ○ Less than 2 years ○ 11 to 15 years
   ○ 2 to 5 years ○ 16 to 20 years
   ○ 6 to 10 years ○ Over 20 years

17. Which of these contains your age?
   ○ 18-24 ○ 55-64
   ○ 25-34 ○ 65-74
   ○ 35-44 ○ 75+
   ○ 45-54 ○ Prefer not to respond

18. I identify my gender as:
   ○ Male ○ Gender non-conforming
   ○ Female ○ Prefer not to respond
   ○ Transgender

19. How would you describe yourself? (check all that apply)
   ○ American Indian or Alaskan Native ○ Latino or Hispanic
   ○ Asian, Asian Indian or Pacific Islander ○ White or Caucasian
   ○ Black or African American ○ Prefer not to respond

20. Which of the following best describes you?
   ○ Employed Full-time ○ Retired
   ○ Employed Part-time ○ Student
   ○ Homemaker/Primary Caregiver ○ Unemployed

21. How many of each of the following, including yourself, live in your household?
   □ □ (number) Children age 17 years and under
   □ □ (number) Adults under age 65 years
   □ □ (number) Adults age 65 years and over

   Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 1
SWOT Analysis 3-6
Assessment of Mission/Vision/Strategic Priorities 7-8
Statistical Comparison:
  Revenue 10
  Basic Library Usage 12
    Circulation 13
    Library Visits 14
    Hours 15
    Programs 16-18
    Basic Library Usage Rankings 18
Staffing 19-21
Collections 22
  Print Materials 23-24
  Databases 25
  Serials 26
  Electronic Collections 27
  Total Collections 28-29
Efficiency Ratios 30
Executive Summary

This report was commissioned to examine and assess the current Washington County Library environment as part of the Washington County Library strategic planning process.

Methodology

This report relies on interviews, content analysis, ratio and benchmarking analysis as the core methods to reach findings and draw conclusions.

Key Findings

Washington County Library excels in several strategic areas. The Library is highly efficient. The staff, fulfilling County values, are extremely sound stewards of the resources entrusted to them by taxpayers. The Library has a strong commitment to the residents of Washington County and accomplishes its mission through a dedication to customer service.

Many resident surveys indicate strong satisfaction with services and resources provided by the Library. Lastly, the Library has made great progress in achieving its 2010 strategic plan. The priorities outlined in that plan were: engage young readers, provide entry to the online world, promote informed, knowledgeable users, and inspire curiosity. Overall, Washington County Library ranks 5th on average compared to the other nine libraries reviewed in this report. In other words, Washington County Library is an average or good library. Washington County Library’s average performance – as opposed to excellent or superior - is primarily the result of being under-resourced, both financially and in the availability of staff.

Two groups of libraries are used for comparison – nationwide peers per capita, and area members of Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA), excluding Hennepin County and City of Saint Paul. The investigation revealed that Washington County Library is funded at a rate of $77,000 less than peer libraries and a rate of $410,000 less than area
libraries. As a result, the Library's staffing level falls short of averages of peer and area libraries.

The funding and staffing levels lead Washington County Library to perform at below average levels in some benchmarking areas compared to peer and area libraries. Of note, the Library has the lowest cardholder penetration in the area, and ranks low in terms of programs, adult program attendance and visits compared to other libraries. However, the Library performs very well in terms of circulation and staff efficiency compared to the same libraries.

An examination of the Library through a SWOT analysis, as well as a mission, vision, values and strategic objectives inspection uncover a variety of issues. The analysis revealed some very positive strengths, however there is a lack of clarity around the mission and vision of the Library. These guiding documents are meant to inform decision making of Washington County Library. There are opportunities for improvement for the Library to explore in this arena.

**SWOT Analysis**

Anthony Molaro, a consultant with Library Strategies, interviewed selected staff and management of Washington County Library on June 11 and June 17, 2015. Each session lasted approximately 3.5 hours in length. Both groups were asked identical questions to gather information on the library's current mission, vision, values, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weaknesses</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong stewardship of</td>
<td>Small staff size and high staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>taxpayer dollars</td>
<td>burnout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong customer service focus</td>
<td>Lack of professional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>development and staff training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication challenges</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Opportunities</strong></th>
<th><strong>Threats</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify strategic partnerships</td>
<td>Splintering off of city libraries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>and future implications for county</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>services as a whole</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve outreach activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strengths

Strong stewardship of taxpayer dollars
The staff and management team highlighted their strong stewardship of the resources entrusted to them by the County. This is confirmed by efficiency ratios highlighted in the statistical comparison of the Library. This indicates that dollars invested in Washington County Libraries have a bigger return for the residents of Washington County than a similar investment in other library systems.

Strong customer service focus
The SWOT sessions uncovered a strong commitment and organizational focus on customer service. This is confirmed by residents' satisfaction as indicated in the 2013 Washington County, Minnesota: Residential Survey and the Washington County Library 2014 Impact Survey Results. Customer service seems to be enmeshed and engrained in the culture of the Library, and serves as its most important value.

Weaknesses

Small staff size and high staff burnout
Staff were unanimous in identifying staff shortages as the biggest weakness of Washington County Library. This is confirmed in the statistical comparative analysis. Using 2013 figures, Washington County Library staff per 1,000 residents is 20% less than metro libraries and 28% less than peer libraries. Current staffing levels hinder the nimbleness, flexibility and innovative ability of the Library. The strong commitment to service and passion for their work results in staff experiencing increased burnout.

As the library proceeds with the strategic planning process, talent acquisition, management and personnel development should be addressed as potential strategic priorities moving forward. To align Washington County Library with area libraries, although it would still fall below the average for peer libraries, the Library should have a staff size of .35 FTE per 1,000 residents, or 74.5 FTE staff based on recent population size.

Lack of professional development and staff training opportunities
Washington County Library does not have a systematic or strategic talent development process. Libraries, so heavily reliant on information technology, digital media and the Internet, evolve at lightening speeds. Staff feels they have no way to learn new skills or learn new tools to improve efficiency or improve services to the public. This is evident in the Washington County Employee Engagement Survey conducted in 2013.
Lack of space
The common library standard used for square feet resident is from the Kentucky Public Library Standards which indicates three levels of space recommendations per resident: essential is .6; enhanced is .8 and exemplary is 1 square foot per resident.¹ Washington County Library has its own benchmark set forward in its Master Facility Plan which calls for .45 minimum with aspirations of .6 square feet per resident. The Library currently has .41 square feet of space per resident, which falls short of the .6 square feet per resident standard and the .45 square feet Washington County benchmark.

The lack of space is more challenging in a County with high population growth. Washington County grew 27.5% between 2000 and 2010 and is projected to grow another 24% between 2010 and 2020. The lack of space in general, as well as insufficient updates, presents challenges for current and future library services. For example, most of the Library facilities do not have space dedicated to teens nor classroom space to help foster a more informed and digitally savvy citizenry.

Communication
Staff and management discussed communication as a major issue for the library both internally and externally. The Washington County Employee Engagement Survey conducted in 2013 confirms this. Staff feel that they have no avenue to express ideas, provide cost saving suggestions, or improve services. Moreover, the issue of communication is more prevalent between the Library and the County. Staff and management often felt that communication between units (north, central, south) were especially challenging.

Opportunities
Identify strategic partnerships
Strategic partnerships should support the Library’s mission and strategic goals as well as County-wide strategic objectives. Strong partnerships are necessary for a successful library to achieve its mission. Washington County Library does not have a systematic approach to identifying and forming partnerships within the County. There are partnerships, but they vary by branch and organization.

**Expanding programming capacity**
The time to view the library as primarily a distribution point for books is long past. Programming allows the Library to attract new users, educate the community, and foster a sense of community. Washington County Library does not allocate any resources for programming outside of Legacy dollars. Nor does Washington County Library have the staff or space to support a robust programming agenda. Focusing energy on programming and programming capacity will help Washington County be a great place to live, work and play. Libraries typically spend 1% of their levy budget on programming, which for the Washington County Library would mean allocating $70,000 more to programming.

**Improve outreach activities**
Outreach differs dramatically from partnerships and programs. Outreach activities are designed to foster relationships with residents outside of library facilities. Outreach activities include things like delivering books, programs and services to area senior centers. Bookmobiles and at-home services are also examples of outreach activities. Outreach activities are designed to improve the lives of residents, particularly residents who have difficulty coming into a physical location. Washington County Library has not strategically or systematically engaged in outreach activities.

**Threats**

**Splintering off of city libraries and future implications for county services**
Washington County Library has the most complex organization of metro libraries. No other county in the metro area has as many city-operated libraries as Washington County. This threatens the efficiencies, economies of scale, and services for residents that a more fully coordinated system can provide.

**Funding**
Washington County Library has low funding levels compared to both area and peer libraries. This low funding level hinders the Library’s ability to offer effective services to area residents. Low funding levels have resulted in fewer hours of operation, which have implications for typical library metrics (gate count, circulation, etc…). Washington County Library is unique to both peer and area libraries in paying a rent to the County for facilities. A rent is when the County charges a Library for the space it occupies. This may include utilities, maintenance, or a fee for space. This artificially decreases the purchasing power of Washington County Library compared to other libraries examined because of resources they devote to rental fees. Moreover, this rent makes an apple-to-apple comparison difficult.
Assessment of Mission/Vision/Strategic Priorities

Mission
The mission of the Washington County Library is to enrich both the individual and the community by assisting people in their search for information, ideas, education and recreation. Mission statements are of fundamental importance to ensure an organization stays on track. When asked, neither the staff nor the management team could state or paraphrase the current mission of the Library.

Hennepin County Library uses its mission statement (nourish minds, transform lives, and build community together) to evaluate public programs and services. Washington County Library should consider adopting a similar evaluation metric, and to make other attempts to internalize the Library’s mission into day-to-day operations.

Vision
It appears that the Library has adopted the County’s vision statement as its own. That vision statement is Washington County – a great place to live, to work and play – today and tomorrow! While it is advisable that the Library’s vision support the County’s stated vision statement, the Library should adopt a vision statement of its own focused specifically on how the Library achieves community goals.

Both Andy Stanley and Bill Hybels have argued that vision “leaks”, meaning that employees forget the vision communicated to them within a few weeks of hearing it. Vision needs to be communicated frequently, and in multiple modes. Washington County Library should communicate its vision through all formal communications to the public and staff, including newsletters, on the website, at every meeting, and on promotional materials.

Tagline
The Library’s slogan or tagline is Read, Learn, Enjoy. Some of the management team could identify the Library’s tagline extemporaneously. However, taglines are generally more memorable and experience oriented than the Library’s current tagline. For example, the Happiest Place on Earth, Just Do it, Think Different, I’m Loving it, Can You Hear Me Now are examples of memorable and experience oriented taglines. Most of the above taglines evoke the brand, company or feelings associated with the tagline.
Strategic Priorities
When asked, leadership could loosely identify some of the strategic priorities of Washington County Library. The current strategic priorities are: Engage young readers: Provide entry to the online world, Promote informed, knowledgeable users, and Inspire Curiosity. Mission, vision, and strategic planning are meant to underlay guiding documents and philosophy to inform the Library’s decision-making process. Neither management nor staff have internalized most of these documents.

Statistical Comparisons
Below is a statistical comparison of Washington County Library to area libraries and peer libraries using 2013 data, as it is the most current data available on all libraries. After an extensive search, the following county libraries were selected as peers based on demographics (median income, ethnicity, poverty level, etc.), population, budget, and collection:

- Forsyth County, GA;
- Jackson County, OR;
- Mohave County, AZ; and
- St. Johns County, FL.

The management team of Washington County Library approved the peer comparisons libraries. The peer libraries used in this report differ from what the library has used for comparisons in the past, primarily identified for comparisons based on collections budgets. The peer libraries chosen for this report reflect an overall operations comparison. Each of the peer libraries is served by a regional or state library organization that facilitates resource sharing and joint purchasing. Note that none of the peer libraries have associate libraries.

This associate library phenomenon is unique to Minnesota and particularly MELSA. Minnesota has 12 regional library systems. There are two types of regional library systems. The first type is a consolidated system. A consolidated system operates as a single library and typically spans multiple counties. There are six consolidated systems within Minnesota.A federated system, on the other hand, operates differently. Instead of actually running the libraries, a federated system basically offers support to the member libraries. MELSA is an example of a federated system. There are six federated library systems in Minnesota. The vast majority of members in the other five federated systems are city public libraries. As a result, they do not have associate members.
For MELSA comparison area libraries, five county libraries are included: Anoka, Carver, Dakota, Ramsey, and Scott. Both St. Paul and Hennepin County are excluded as their size, and more intense urban populations, makes comparisons relatively useless.

Comparisons between Washington County Library and other libraries reflect data without Stillwater, Bayport or Lake Elmo. Washington County Library has been reporting the Law Library in it statistics to the State Library Services, but it is such a small library it has a negligible impact on the data. Unless otherwise indicated, the data contained herein is compiled from the Public Libraries in the United State Survey gathered annually by the federal agency, Institute of Museum and Library Services using 2013 data.

Revenue

Washington County Library revenue is $31.80 per capita, which is below the average $32.16 of peer libraries and is $1.92 short of the $33.72 metro average. This level of investment negatively impacts many of the metrics, such as circulation and number of library visits, used to evaluate the Washington County Library. Cost of living differences impact the per capita revenue and expenses of the library.
Basic Library Usage

Cardholder penetration
Cardholder penetration measures the percentage of library cardholders compared to the population of the library’s area. In other words, cardholder penetration = active cards / population as reported to the State Library Services, Minnesota Department of Education. In some cases libraries exceed 100% because of the high number of cards issued to residents of other counties. Cardholder penetration can only be measured against metro libraries because the data is not required to be made public. Washington County Library has the lowest cardholder penetration of area libraries.²

² While library cardholder penetration is an often used library metric, some libraries do not keep best practices for patron data cleanup. As a result, some libraries have over exaggerated cardholder penetration.
Circulation

Circulation measures the number of items checked out at a public library. In order to measure across libraries, libraries routinely use circulation per capita as a benchmark. Washington County Library outperforms peer libraries in terms of circulation and is in the middle of the pack for area libraries.
Library Visits (Gate Count)
Library visits, sometimes referred to as gate count, measures the foot traffic of a library. As with other metrics, we use a per capita basis to allow for comparison across libraries. Washington County Library exceeds the average foot traffic compared to peer libraries but is shy of the 5.0 visits average of metro libraries. This may be impacted by average hours the library is open.

Library Visits Per Capita

Library Visits per Capita
**Hours**

The average number of hours that a library branch is open per week strongly impacts library staffing and expenses. As you can see in the graphs below, average library hours vary greatly by library. One reason for this is the number of branch locations. While Jackson County has many less hours per week, on average, per location, they have 15 locations, almost three times the number of locations as Washington County Library.

---

**Average Number of Weekly Public Service Hours Per Outlet**

- Washington County Library, MN
- Washington with Stillwater & Bayport
- Forsyth County Public Library, GA
- Jackson County Library Services, OR
- Mohave County Library District, AZ
- St. Johns County Library System, FL

---

**Average Number of Weekly Public Service Hours Per Outlet**

- Washington County Library
- Anoka County Library
- Carver County Library
- Dakota County Library
- Ramsey County Library
- Scott County Library System

---

13
Programs

Today, library programs serve as the heart of a library’s operation. In regard to programming, Washington County Library is in the middle of the pack compared to peer and area libraries. This is especially true of adult programs. In fact, 85% of program attendance at Washington County Library is attendance at children’s events. The average of peer libraries is 68%. Looking at benchmark libraries, Washington County Library does not offer a comparable number and variety or programs for adults.
Basic Library Usage Rankings

Libraries are ranked nationally according to four metrics, circulation per capita, visits per capita, program attendance per capita, and public computer usage. *Library Journal*, the only current organization ranking American libraries, uses these four metrics to award 5-star, 4-star, and 3-star status to libraries that exceed baselines for all four categories. While average in comparison to many peer library systems, in order for Washington County Library to achieve 3-star level, it will need to double circulation, improve library visits 2.5-fold, and increase program attendance more than 4-fold.

Staffing

As mentioned in the SWOT analysis, Washington County Library has a staff shortage compared to peer and area libraries. As the staff figures below suggest, Washington County Library spends the smallest percentage of total expenditures on staffing of the area libraries and is in the middle compared to peer libraries. The Library is the lowest in its peer group and low compared to area libraries in terms of the number of staff per 1,000 residents.
The benchmark for public libraries for percentage of budget devoted to staffing is between 60-65%\(^3\). To meet this standard, Washington County Library would have a staff size of .35 FTE per 1,000 residents or 74.5 FTE staff based on recent population size to remain competitive to area and peer libraries. Minnesota Library Standards defer to the Illinois Library Standards and provide guidance for 60 staff plus .25 per 1,000 for minimum, .5 per 1,000 for growing, .75 per 1,000 for established or 1.0 per 1,000 for advanced.\(^4\) To meet the minimum standard of 60 plus .25 staff per 1,000 would translate to a staff size for Washington County Library of 113.25 FTE.

---


Collections

Library collections make up the second largest percentage of most library budgets; staffing being the largest. The recommended percentage of a library budget devoted to collections is between 11% and 12%\textsuperscript{5}. Washington County Library exceeds this benchmark by between .25 and 1.25%.

Below you will see the Library Journal study of materials purchased by libraries for 2014.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MATERIALS</th>
<th>2008 %</th>
<th>2009 %</th>
<th>2010 %</th>
<th>2011 %</th>
<th>2012 %</th>
<th>2013 %</th>
<th>2014 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PRINT BOOKS</td>
<td>66.5</td>
<td>64.9</td>
<td>63.8</td>
<td>61.6</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>59.5</td>
<td>59.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIA*</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>24.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DVDs / Blu-ray titles</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>11.7**</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloadable movies</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audiobooks</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>9.0**</td>
<td>8.0**</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Downloadable audio</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music CDs / Downloadable music</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>3.3**</td>
<td>2.8**</td>
<td>2.2**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBOOKS</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELECTRONIC PRODUCTS (including reference)</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Noted media (audiobooks, DVDs, downloadable movies & music CDs)

**Physical and downloadable counted together.

SOURCE: LJ materials Survey 2015

**Print Materials**

The print materials line represents the money invested in physical books. Washington County Library exceeds the average of peer libraries but is under the area libraries average. As will be noted below, Washington County Library spends less money on electronic materials than both peer and area libraries. Washington County Library spends $2.60 per person on physical items. The national average, according to Library Journal's Materials Breakdown study, for libraries of Washington County's size is to devote 53% of total collections to print materials. The overall budget for collections is low considering the educational needs of the county and a growing educated workforce.

---

Databases

Databases are the number of databases that a library subscribes to in order for residents to access journals, newspapers and magazines online. As you will see, Washington County Library is heavy on database subscriptions.\(^7\)

---

\(^7\) MELSA and the State of Minnesota provide the Library with 69 of the databases it subscribes to.
Serials

Serials are the newspapers and magazines that a library subscribes to in print form. In order to evaluate serials we look at subscriptions per 1,000 residents. Here we see the Library exceeds the average of both peer and area libraries.

Current Print Serial Subscriptions per 1,000 Population - 2013

Current Print Serial Subscriptions per 1,000 Population - 2013
**Electronic Collections**

Electronic collections typically include eBooks and downloadable audio and video collections. Washington County Library is low in terms of the percentage of its total collections budget devoted to electronic materials. As the demand for these materials will likely increase, Washington County Library may consider increasing the investment in these materials.
Total Collections
Washington County Library's total collections budget exceeds the average of peer libraries but is under the average of metro libraries. As mentioned above, the benchmark for library collections is between 11% and 12% of the library's total budget.

Also of note, Washington County Library offers fewer video units per 1,000 residents than most area and peer libraries. Furthermore, Washington County Library does not provide video game collections at all. As both of these collections have a higher circulation average than books, should the Library expand videos and add video games, we would expect to see improvements to circulation and visits.

Library Journal's 2015 material breakdown article indicates that libraries are increasing the percentage of collection dollars devoted to DVDs. In 2012 and 2013 it was 11.7% and in 2014 it represented 12.1%. Moreover, the circulation of these materials is up. In 2014 DVDs represented 22.5% of total circulation\(^8\). Video game boost book circulation as well. Houston Public Library noted that lending video games has increased their book

circulation between 15 and 20%. While streaming services provide some content, they simply cannot match the breadth and width of a library's collection. Moreover, many publishers of video content do not open their holdings to services like Netflix.

## Efficiency Ratios

Libraries do not routinely use efficiency and operational ratios like the corporate world does. While these ratios have not been validated, they do demonstrate efficiency of library usage of resources and staff.

Washington County Library is generally more efficient than peer libraries but less than area libraries. Overall, the Library operates at a high level of efficiency, especially considering its size and budget constraints. However, this high level of efficiency may also be negatively affecting usage or service levels in some areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Library Name</th>
<th>Budget/ Circulation (lower is more efficient)</th>
<th>Inventory Turnover (lower is more efficient)</th>
<th>Budget/ Visits (lower is more efficient)</th>
<th>Budget/ Program Attendance</th>
<th>Print Materials Budget/ Circulation (lower is more efficient)</th>
<th>Staff Efficiency Circulation (higher is more efficient)</th>
<th>Staff Efficiency Program Attendance (Higher is more efficient)</th>
<th>Staff Efficiency Gate Count (Higher is more efficient)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WASHINGTON COUNTY LIBRARY, MN (Library of Interest)</td>
<td>2.764</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>7.193</td>
<td>177.966</td>
<td>0.254</td>
<td>35,130.127</td>
<td>613.404</td>
<td>13,500.725</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FORSYTH COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM, GA</td>
<td>4.186</td>
<td>0.138</td>
<td>15.659</td>
<td>303.433</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>27,447.913</td>
<td>409.536</td>
<td>7,337.928</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JACKSON COUNTY LIBRARY SERVICES, OR</td>
<td>2.738</td>
<td>0.313</td>
<td>5.835</td>
<td>100.158</td>
<td>0.341</td>
<td>27,143.890</td>
<td>978.831</td>
<td>12,735.684</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOHAVE COUNTY LIBRARY DISTRICT, AZ</td>
<td>7.296</td>
<td>0.221</td>
<td>7.945</td>
<td>215.178</td>
<td>0.482</td>
<td>8,439.306</td>
<td>294.776</td>
<td>7,750.367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ST. JOHNS COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM, FL</td>
<td>2.917</td>
<td>0.180</td>
<td>4.792</td>
<td>52.810</td>
<td>0.255</td>
<td>23,668.583</td>
<td>1,448.153</td>
<td>14,407.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANOKA COUNTY LIBRARY, MN</td>
<td>2.614</td>
<td>0.183</td>
<td>7.290</td>
<td>217.847</td>
<td>0.222</td>
<td>30,938.912</td>
<td>415.704</td>
<td>11,092.440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CARVER COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM, MN</td>
<td>3.174</td>
<td>0.206</td>
<td>5.923</td>
<td>137.052</td>
<td>0.307</td>
<td>27,649.960</td>
<td>729.620</td>
<td>14,815.714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAKOTA COUNTY LIBRARY, MN</td>
<td>2.274</td>
<td>0.137</td>
<td>5.603</td>
<td>165.724</td>
<td>0.287</td>
<td>36,207.210</td>
<td>538.218</td>
<td>16,693.902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RAMSEY COUNTY LIBRARY, MN</td>
<td>1.969</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>5.304</td>
<td>137.016</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>46,298.831</td>
<td>786.925</td>
<td>17,188.859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOTT COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM, MN</td>
<td>3.500</td>
<td>0.255</td>
<td>5.827</td>
<td>125.173</td>
<td>0.336</td>
<td>23,491.913</td>
<td>741.857</td>
<td>14,110.290</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average of peer libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4.284</th>
<th>0.213</th>
<th>8.557</th>
<th>167.895</th>
<th>0.306</th>
<th>21,674.923</th>
<th>782.824</th>
<th>10,557.828</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparison to peers</td>
<td>-1.520</td>
<td>-0.036</td>
<td>-1.365</td>
<td>10.072</td>
<td>-0.052</td>
<td>13,455.204</td>
<td>-169.420</td>
<td>2,942.897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average of metro libraries</td>
<td>2.706</td>
<td>0.178</td>
<td>5.990</td>
<td>156.552</td>
<td>0.260</td>
<td>32,917.365</td>
<td>642.465</td>
<td>14,380.079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison to metro libraries</td>
<td>0.058</td>
<td>-0.001</td>
<td>1.203</td>
<td>21.404</td>
<td>-0.006</td>
<td>2,212.762</td>
<td>-29.061</td>
<td>-879.354</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E

a report to the

Washington County
Library System

Assessment of New and Emerging Trends In
Library Services
September 15, 2015
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary 3

General Trends:
- Readership 4
- Technology 5
- Library Operations Technology 7
- Data Analytics 8
- Economic Development 8
- Services 9
- Spaces 10
- Organizational Structure 10

Washington County Trends:
- Readership 12
- Community Engagement 12
- Information Technology 13
- Access to Technology 13
- Funding and Revenue 13
- Marketing 14
- Programming 14
- Learning Experiences 15
- Staffing 15
- Spaces 15
Executive Summary

This report was commissioned to examine and assess new and emerging trends in libraries and how they impact Washington County Library as part of the Washington County Library strategic planning process.

Methodology
The primary methodology of this report relies on a literature review of library services, technology, and a content analysis of Washington County Library.

Key Findings
In looking at national library trends, the key findings are:

- Reading among adults remains strong and constant among all age groups, although more people read on digital formats. The decline in use of print materials is slow.
- Technology is changing rapidly. Libraries need to keep pace, but are increasingly playing the role of helping individuals use various devices and access materials on those devices.
- Behind-the-scenes technology for operating libraries is not expected to change significantly.
- Analysis of library data will become more prevalent and allows libraries to offer better and more efficient service.
- Public libraries are playing key roles, in many different ways, in the economic development of communities.
- The range and array of library services is evolving and expanding.
- Libraries increasingly are serving a role in providing community or common space for residents.
- Organizational models and staffing patterns for libraries are changing to match evolving services and community needs.
General Trends

Readership Trends
Reading still remains very popular in the Internet age. Americans read an average of five books in 2013. More than 69% of Americans read at least one print book in 2013. On the other hand, 28% read an eBook and 14% had listened to an audio book. Readers tend to be women. Readership is strongly correlated to both education and income. Readership remains constant by age bracket, but younger people are significantly more likely to have read at least one eBook in the past 12 months1.

Reading habits have been tracked over time. From 1976 to the present, Americans have read roughly the same number of books per year. In other words, contrary to popular belief, the Internet has not had an adverse effect on reading habits2. This is evident in the extremely strong circulation numbers that libraries report year-after-year.

Simultaneously, eBooks and digital content usage continues to climb. More than half of adult Americans own an eReader or tablet. More than 33% of smartphone owners have used their device to read an eBook. While the demand for digital content continues to climb, and reshape the landscape of bookselling, public libraries are challenged to provide content on par with print resources. Publishers of digital content have not created a consistent purchasing system for libraries. Some publishers do not sell digital content to libraries at all. Other publishers sell without restriction but charge 3-4 times what the general public would pay. Yet other publishers remove the content after one year or a certain number of loans have taken place.

Reading, books and digital content remain a fundamental and vital part of American life. Moreover, providing access to these resources continues to remain a core service of libraries. As libraries continue to diversify their service offerings, focus on content will continue to be a pressing matter.

---

1 Pew Research Center (2014), Snapshot of Reading in America in 2013.
2 Pew Internet and American Life Project (2013), The Rise of eReading.
Technology Trends

Technology is changing at a pace that disrupts industries, communities and libraries. This section will briefly discuss technology trends in general and specific library-related trends. The common thread in all advancements in technology is the demand on libraries to provide support, service and education. For the vast majority of Americans, the public library is the only technology help center they can easily access.

The three major trends to affect American lives are: 1) the Internet of Things and wearable devices, 2) Devices, and 3) Maker technology.

1) The Internet of Things is the network of physical objects embedded with computer, software and Internet technology. These include Internet connected thermostats and appliances, to city garbage cans that send a notification when full. The philosophy behind the Internet of Things is to improve productivity and efficiency, while reducing human error. Self-driving cars are one major Internet of Things device that will have deep impact on American habits. There are several companies including Google and Apple working on self-driving cars.

A major area of growth in the Internet of Things is in wearable technologies. These include devices like activity trackers (FitBit) to wearable smart watches. Wearable devices provide push notifications for things like email, texts, and social media. They also provide a way to interface with a phone when the phone is out of sight, or in another location. These devices also allow for improved biofeedback and tracking of health measures such as heart rate or blood glucose monitoring for diabetes. Lastly, these devices provide yet another screen to explore content.

Wearables, like the Internet of Things devices, put pressure on libraries to provide education and guidance. When residents need assistance in selecting or using these devices they often turn to libraries for help. Moreover, libraries will need to consider providing library content (renewal notices, for example) as well as book content to these devices.

2) Devices are also changing at a rapid pace. The iPod was released less than 15 years ago, and the first iPhone (often considered the first smart phone) is less than 8 years old. These two devices have drastically altered how we communicate and consume content. The "ownership" of music has been replaced by subscription streaming services. Tablets, eReaders, and portable computers have all been created or altered over the same time period.
Much like with the Internet of Things and wearables, libraries have seen an explosion in requests for help, education and selection assistance for these devices. Many libraries around the country teach classes on accessing eBooks, digital content and apps from devices. The role of library as community technology support will continue to rise as the plethora of devices continues to evolve.

America is also on the cusp of two new devices changing the technology landscape. Augmented reality and virtual reality headsets already exist in early forms, and will likely garner higher market share penetration over the next five years.

Augmented reality is the interface between the physical world and the digital world. While Google Glass was not intended for a mass market, Microsoft’s Hololens is designed for mass consumer use. This device is expected to be released within quarter 3 of 2015. Initial applications for augmented reality deal with location based services, shopping and games.

Virtual reality differs from augmented reality through its immersive nature. While you still see and interact with the physical world with augmented reality, in virtual reality you eliminate the physical world. Virtual reality will likely be used to consume and interact with content, from movies to video games. Oculus Rift is the primary product in this arena. Their device will be released in 2016.

The impact of both of the reality altering devices on libraries is yet to be determined. One may speculate that community education and assistance will be required. Moreover, there will be content implications as well. Libraries that provide access to movies may need to purchase multiple formats in order to meet the demand of various devices.

3) **Maker Technology** is the last trend discussed here. Maker technologies are the devices that allow regular people to have access to the means of production. From 3D printers and laser cutters, to inexpensive digital creation tools, soon people will be able to make just about anything. Of the three trends listed, maker technology is the most difficult for public libraries, though many libraries have begun purchasing, providing access to and training on making devices. A particular challenge for library users is to understand they must learn a new software or program language in order to make each device create what they want.
Chicago Public Libraries Innovation Lab is one of the most recognized spaces for maker technology. Residents of Chicago can go to this lab to learn about and use 3D printers, CNC lathe machines, laser cutters and a variety of other pieces of equipment. This type of equipment is also useful for small businesses, companies that need to rapid prototype products, and creators who sell their wares on sites like Etsy.

One of the most touching stories about using this equipment comes from Johnson County Library, KS. Robotic prosthetic hands are seldom purchased for children because the $50,000 price tag is cost prohibitive for person who will outgrow the device in months. However a teen that regularly uses the library heard the plight of a child who just wanted to fit in and have a functioning hand. This teen created a working hand by 3D printing the parts and using basic robotics to create a hand for a few hundred dollars.

Libraries can play an increased role solving the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) skill shortage in America by providing services, programs and trainings for children and teens on these exciting tools. "Libraries offer powerful experiences that engage children and young adults in a wide variety of STEM fields." For example, many public libraries run coding clubs and camps or robotics clubs for teens. The outcome of these programs is increased interest in STEM fields, particularly for women and minorities.

**Library Operations-Related Technology**

Library operations technology has entered a sustaining phase. There is not much expected change to library technologies, from how patrons locate books and check them out, to how patrons log on and use public access computers. Behind the scenes, automated material sorters and inventory tracking are significant investments for systems and will be expected to fill their purpose for many years. However, we have seen the industry change in two key ways. First, many of the companies in this sector are owned and operated by private firms. These firms have gone through, and continue to go through massive merger and acquisitions.

This has impacted competition and service levels for libraries and their public. This is counteracted through the creation of open source software.

---

A Library of Washington County’s size could expect to spend well over $150,000 annually for licenses for library-related software. From integrated library systems, print management, PC reservation systems, proxy services, etc..., libraries need to continue to explore models, vendors and software that meets the needs of their residents both in terms of price and service level.

**Data Analytics**
Libraries, like other industries and organizations, struggle to make use of big data. From better understanding of reading habits and making smart suggestions, to understanding market segmentation, big data presents many opportunities for libraries to serve their residents more effectively and efficiently. However, big data presents challenges for libraries too. Libraries strive to keep patron records private and confidential, but using big data can, at times, conflict with those values. Saint Paul Public Library has begun tracking patron metadata, using Gale’s Analytics on Demand. Big data and data analytics will play a key role in the success of libraries in the future.

**Economic Development**
Public libraries are continuing to recognize the key roles they play in local economic development. From resources provided, to space, programs and classes, the local public library continues to focus on improved partnership and support of small businesses. While many libraries measure their return on investment, as Washington County Library has, that will not be the focus of this section. However it is notable that Washington County Library generated almost $60 million in value to county’s residents.1

Many libraries support the educational and technological needs of small businesses. For example, Arlington Heights Public Library, IL provides a series of classes for small businesses. These include the standard Microsoft productivity software, but also include Photoshop, social media for marketing, audio and video editing, and graphic design. They also provide businesses with the tools and technologies to print compelling graphics, brochures, and fliers.

---

Carson City Public Library, NV has taken a different spin on economic development. Tesla Motors is building a new factory near Carson City Public Library. Carson City, like so many other locales, does not have the workforce capable to handle advanced manufacturing. Carson City recognized this issue and worked to create the first advanced manufacturing certificate program funded and facilitated by the library. The Pacific Standard (July 27, 2015) confirms the role libraries will play in the future of manufacturing in an article entitled “Libraries are the Future of Manufacturing in the United States.”

Libraries also support the space needs of businesses. Group rooms for conference and high technology rooms that allow for video conferencing are becoming commonplace. Libraries also provide co-working facilities. These shared work environments not only drive down startup costs for small businesses, but they also provide a network that allow for enhanced collaboration between businesses. This trend has even been covered by business trade publications. For example, Fast Company stated, “Over the past decade, dozens of reading rooms have been reincarnated as de facto co-working spaces. Some, including D.C.’s Digital Commons and Scottsdale, Arizona’s Eureka Loft, cater expressly to startups by helping them find funding, mentors, and other resources to advance their business plans”.

**Services**

Libraries, as previously mentioned, continue to add to their core services. Libraries are much more than book distribution points. The mission of libraries has evolved to include education and social services. As mentioned elsewhere, libraries have adopted many educational and learning experience roles.

Libraries have also increasingly become social services agencies for the public, as the result of funding cuts to other organizations. Some libraries have even gone as far as hiring social workers and teachers to provide services for patrons. What we are seeing is that the basic library mission has evolved to keep up with the demands of new technology, cuts to other agencies, and demand of the public, which they serve.

---

2 Fast Company (2014), *The Public Library Wants to be Your Office*
Spaces
Libraries have begun to adapt to how they create, fill and provide space. Libraries are often touted as the "third space" or the "safe space" or the "community space". In many ways the library operates as the space people go to when not at work or home.

The library also serves as common space. From politicians kicking off campaigns, to current event clubs, the Library is one of the first locations citizens turn to for accessible, free, safe space. This is more evident when crisis happens, as was the case in Ferguson, MO. When the city erupted after long tension, the town library served as the only "calm" and "serene" space for residents.

Some libraries have turned to joint use facilities as a way to collaborate with governmental agencies or organizations, as a way to reduce facilities cost, and as a way to improve services. These spaces run the gamut in terms of operations. San Jose Public Library and San Jose University share a space but are operated as two distinct organizations. This structure is similar to the structure of the R.H. Stafford branch of Washington County Library.

However, another interesting model is one in which the non-library organization outsources space and resources to the public library. In essence, the public library creates a single library that serves the patrons of both organizations. For example, in 2013 Chicago Public Library co-located a Chicago Public Library branch in the Back of the Yards College Preparatory High School. The library is totally owned and operated by Chicago Public Library with a licensed K12 library media specialist provided by the school to provide specialized services for the student population. These types of joint use facilities allow for maximum efficiency in terms of resources and service levels.

Organizational Structures
Library organizational structures have changed very little over the last century. This is rather surprising considering the staff, service, and processes of libraries have changed so drastically over the same time period. Libraries have typically organized structurally around technical services, adult services, children services and administration. This model has had trouble adapting to technology, focus on teens, and the role of programs, outreach, partnerships and social services. Yet some libraries are examining and challenging their traditional library structural model.
Libraries have begun to reorganize their structures and departments around core strategic goals. For example, Skokie Public Library conducted a strategic planning process in 2013. From this process, Skokie Public Library determined its three core functions were providing access to materials, fostering learning, and helping build a stronger Skokie community. As a result their organizational structure looks like this:
Washington County

This section will explore trends as they directly relate to Washington County Library.

Readership
Washington County, as it continues to evolve as a suburban county, has witnessed its population increase, become more highly educated, and increase their income. The percentage of Washington County residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher has risen from 33% in 2000 to 40.5% in 2013. Furthermore, household income has risen from $66,305 in 2000 to $81,540 in 2013. Both of these factors correlate strongly with reading habits and library usage, and indicate increased demand in the future.

Community Engagement
As mentioned in the SWOT analysis, there are many opportunities for Washington County Library to increase its impact via interfacing with other organizations. Washington County Library has some partnerships, but they tend to be inconsistent from branch to branch. This is likely the result of two forces. The Library currently does not have designated staff with adequate time to foster relationships in which each partner is able to trust the other will carry out its commitments. Moreover, there may be County policies that staff perceive as inhibiting the Library’s ability to foster partnerships. For example, Library staff have the perception that they are prohibited from attending certain types of meetings.

The three most important partnerships for the Library to pursue in order to support both Library and County mission are: K12 schools, workforce development centers, and community education organizations. Other smaller partnerships could be with area historical societies and STEM related organizations.3, 4, 5, 6

6 Adkins, D., & Bala, E. (2004). Public Library Outreach as a Function of Staffing and Metropolitan Location. Library and Information Science Research, (26)3
Information Technology
The staff, management and community forum attendees all mentioned the low functionality of the Library’s website. While many area libraries rely on county information technology infrastructure and support, many also have websites that are standalone from the County site. These websites need to be created using responsive design so that the website scales appropriately to whatever device a resident is using.

Access to Technology
Computer access and Internet access still remain fundamentally important needs for Washington County residents. This is particularly highlighted in the County’s Economic Development Strategic Plan. The economic and educational development of the County depends on high-speed Internet infrastructure, reliable and new computers, and other technologies to support the economic and educational needs of the community. The library uniquely provides this access free of charge to the community.

Funding and Revenue
As has been mentioned elsewhere, the Washington County Library has financial constraints in meeting the needs of residents. Beyond increasing County support of the Library, the Library should consider expanding revenue streams. For many years, libraries relied on taxpayer dollars, fines, and occasional grants including grants from local library foundations. Libraries are now beginning to explore revenue streams that also improve services to the public. All of these for-fee services can generate significant income while also making life better for residents.

Ela Public Library in Lake Zurich, IL provides passport services for residents. Lake Zurich is a village of approximately 20,000 residents. Residents prefer using the library, as opposed to the post office, for two main reasons: the library has longer hours, and more importantly, the library provides better customer service. Significantly, the residents can make use of other library services at the same time. In other words, passport services at the library are more convenient than the post office. This single service generates over $100,000 in revenue for the library annually.
**Marketing**

Marketing has become increasingly important to public libraries as it is now necessary to compete for anyone’s attention in the "information age". Many libraries have created marketing departments, sometimes as standalone departments, other times attached to outreach or programming. Numerous studies indicate the average American doesn’t know what services their library offers. For example, in 2012 only 31% of people knew that libraries provided access to eBooks. If a Library wishes to be recognized as a vital service, it must intentionally overcome challenges to that understanding. Libraries have begun to battle the lack of library services awareness by creating marketing departments.

Libraries prefer in-house marketing departments for several reasons. In-house marketing departments generally operate faster and have quicker turn around times. This would help the Library support the County value of responsive service. Moreover, in-house marketing expertise is needed when considering "merchandising" book displays. For example, the “Queens Borough (New York) Public Library found that "merchandizing the collection" - promotion of the circulation of library materials via advertising or display – resulted in a 137 percent increase in circulation over a period of seven years".

Las Vegas-Clark County Library, just a few weeks ago, created an executive level Branding and Marketing Director position to oversee branding, communications, marketing, promotions, social media, and website strategies. Beyond proving strong brand and marketing messages to the general public, a major benefit of adding a department like this is improved, streamlined, and effective communication both within and outside of the library.

**Programming**

Across the country, programs have become vital in building successful, well-used libraries. Programs provide entertainment, educational, and shared community experiences for patrons improving quality of life and developing an educated and engaged community. Moreover, programming serves as the strongest method for the Library to reach out to non-library users. As mentioned in the SWOT section, Washington County Library provides less than the average number of programs for its constituents, particularly for adults.

---

Learning Experiences
Many libraries have begun offering technology, software, health and financial classes. For example, St. Johns County Library (a peer library) offers courses on Understanding and Improving Your Credit Score, Health Screenings, DIY Craft Clinic, Restorative Yoga and Fitness Pole Walking. These are all examples from one week at the St. Johns County Library. As residents of Washington County Library continue to hear about exciting learning experiences conducted at area libraries, demand for unique and robust programming will increase.

Due to a self-identified lack of classroom space and staff availability, Washington County Library offers few learning experiences for residents of Washington County. During the SWOT analysis, the staff and management generally agreed that they would offer more learning experiences if they had lab space and staff to do so.

The Library should consider Community education programs as a strong potential partnership and collaborator for library learning experiences. While some duplication of programs may occur, because the Library can offer programs free of charge and at times that community education cannot, the Library should look to collaborate more than compete.

Staffing
Libraries have adapted staffing models to further the library’s work towards achieving its mission. From Community Engagement librarian (Anoka County), to Outreach Services librarian (Hennepin), to School Coordinator (Lisle Public Library), libraries have created positions to fulfill library goals for outreach, programming, and education. Once the Library finalizes its strategic planning process, the Library should consider creating additional staff and units to support its strategic priorities.

Spaces
For many years libraries believed that space preference for patrons was driven by personality, however, we now understand that it is less personal preference and more task driven. Libraries need to provide private-alone; private-together; public-alone; and public-together spaces to meet the needs of residents.
As mentioned elsewhere, Washington County Library does meet the minimum space required by various library standards. Not only does the Library need an additional 39,000 square feet to meet today’s basic standards requirements, the Library is short on particular space needs in several areas. Washington County needs spaces dedicated to teens, to small business owners and classroom/lab and meeting space.
Appendix F

Washington County Library
Strategic Planning Retreat Participants

Retreat #1
Heidi Bardwell
Anna Barker
Elizabeth Bell
Lynne Bertalmio
Karla Bigham
Sharna Braucks
Judy Bull
Majel Carroll
Katherine Cram
Shayla Denaway
Megan Gryzwa
Bill Hargis
Jane Hetlund Stevenson
Denise Koller
Brian Kraft
Dawn LaBrosse
June Mathiowetz
Renee McGivern
Doug Menikheim
Sara Meyer
Pete Orput
Jean Oswald
Trina Patterson
Mary Planten-Krell
Michael Reeves
Jean Rozinka
Steve Ryan
Keith Ryskoski
Joyce Schneider
Marie Skinner
Sue Swanson
Jill Tammen
Mary Ann Thelen
Marissa Vette
Lisa Weik
Norma Wilson
Skylar Wolfe

Retreat #2
Jo Bailey
Judy Bull
Kevin Corbid
Gina Gamniss
Laura Helgason
Girish Jorpurkar
Alyssa Kruzel
Chad Lubbers
June Mathiowetz
Anne McManus
Fran Miron
John Norton
Molly O'Rourke
Aaron Pozzini
Kieth Ryskoski
Joyce Schneider
Jessi Schulte
Amy Stenftenagel
Ken Stone
Gail Theisen
Jennifer Tolzmann
Tom Triplett
Amy Worwa
Jane Young
Susan Young
Brian Zeller