

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## FY2007 - FY2011

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## **PLANNING COMMITTEE**

The Worcester Public Library Board of Directors, administration and staff would like to thank the individuals who participated in the six focus group sessions used to collect community information for the planning process. The thoughtful insights of the focus group participants, along with practical experience of the library administration and staff enabled the development of a five-year plan that will help the library make a positive difference in the lives of Worcester residents by meeting their needs for library service. In addition, the library's Annual Patron Survey, taken in February, provided the insights from over 1,100 library users.

## **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

The process of developing a Strategic Plan helps the library board, administration and staff identify library service needs, and their resultant Service Responses and activities. It is important to define the community needs in order to focus limited library resources in the most effective way.

Planning is an ongoing process as community needs change over time. It is recommended that library planning should be undertaken at least every five years. This document is the result of the Worcester Public Library's most recent planning process.

There were extensive discussions about the value of library service. Library Directors, administration and staff are dedicated to providing quality service to Worcester residents.

## **THE WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The Worcester Public Library was created in 1859 when Dr. John Green, a prominent local physician, gave his personal library of 13,000 books and an endowment to the City of Worcester to establish a public library. In its 147 year history, the library has evolved into the largest, in terms of both space and resources, public library in central Massachusetts.

The first library operated in space over a bank on Front Street until the Elm Street library was completed in 1861. The City outgrew this beloved building, and in 1964 a Main Library was constructed at Salem Square. Increased library use combined with the computer revolution and the explosion in publishing pushed that building beyond capacity. In 1996 planning began for an expansion and renovation of the Salem Square facility. Construction was completed in 2001, and the people of Worcester now enjoy a spacious facility with room for future growth and new technologies.

Library service to Worcester's neighborhoods dates back to the late 1800's and early 1900's when the Library brought books to "delivery stations" in factories and neighborhood stores to give people access to books where they lived or worked. This created a demand for libraries close to people's homes, and thus began the tradition of Worcester Public Library branches. Eventually seven branches and a bookmobile brought library services to residents in their neighborhoods. Because of severe budget reductions in 1990, all branch libraries were closed, with the exception of the Great Brook Valley branch, which remained open with funds from the Worcester Housing Authority. In 1993, the Frances Perkins Branch Library at Greendale was reopened. A bookmobile was a successful element of outreach services for more than 50 years. When the last full-sized bookmobile ceased operation in 1981, the vehicle was not replaced because of fiscal constraints. Instead, the library converted a van to bring books directly to senior housing complexes on a tri-weekly basis and called the service "Senior Stop." In 1987 a federal grant allowed the library to add a delivery service to day-care centers and nursery schools called "Kids Stop." When the branch libraries closed in 1990, the library leased a used bookmobile and attempted to provide some semblance of neighborhood service for a year. The bookmobile unit also managed the individual home bound service. All bookmobile and delivery services ended in 1991.

Interest in resurrecting neighborhood library services has remained high. Literacy is the key to social progress. Branch libraries close to people's homes can remove cultural and physical barriers to library access, bringing access to books and computers to everybody. Branch libraries are critical for children, lower income families and senior citizens because people do not need transportation to use a neighborhood library. Branch libraries are responsive to changing populations and provide resources that residents require.

At the current level of service the Main Library is open Tuesday through Saturday and closed on Monday. In FY2006 Sunday hours were offered from January through early May. The two branch libraries are open Monday through Friday, with no weekend hours. People can find library services at a minimum of one of the library's facilities six days a week, twelve hours each weekday and eight and a half hours on Saturday.

### **Library Facilities**

**Main Library:** In October 2001, the renovated and expanded Main Library opened to the public. The 150,000 square foot building is fully handicapped accessible. There is a large municipal parking lot available for public use. There is seating for 360 users.

The Main Library has two public meeting rooms available for educational, literary, philanthropic, and civic purposes. The Saxe Room can accommodate groups of up to 135 people. The Banx Room is a smaller, conference-style room, and can accommodate up to 40 people. There are two study rooms for public use on the third floor.

**Frances Perkins Branch at Greendale:** This Carnegie building began serving its neighborhood in 1914, and the handicapped accessible entrance and restrooms were added in 1996. Perkins Branch is approximately 3,366 square feet. It has a meeting room on the lower level that holds 60 people and was used 58 times in FY2005.

**Great Brook Valley Branch:** Opened in 1981 and relocated twice since, this Branch is approximately 900 square feet. The Worcester Housing Authority generously provides the space and utilities at no charge.

### **Information Technology**

The Worcester Public Library, as of May 2006, has over 270 computers and 43 printers, plus ten switches and more than twenty servers. Over 90 workstations are available to the public at the Main Library running on a Windows XP and Windows 2000 platform, to provide Internet access, word processing, online databases, CD-ROM products, and the online catalog.

Frances Perkins Branch Library at Greendale offers six computers that provide computer catalogs, Internet access, word processing capabilities, and CD-ROMs to the public. Great Brook Valley Branch Library provides four computers to the public, running on Windows XP platform, with Internet and word processing capabilities.

The library was a founding member of C/W MARS (Central/Western Massachusetts Regional Library System) through which it loans materials, maintains user records, and stores its materials database (the online catalog of books, audiovisuals, magazines, etc. owned by the Worcester Public Library.) The Main Library currently has two means of connecting to the Internet: a T1 line at C/W MARS where a direct connection is made to the University of Massachusetts and a Charter cable connection. Internet access at both Frances Perkins and Great Brook Valley branches is by 384 k fractional T1 line provided by the library's membership in C/W MARS. Membership in C/W MARS gives library users easy access to the collections of

### **Youth Services**

The Children's Room occupies the first floor of the addition to the Main Library that opened in October 2001. The children's room offers books, audiobooks, movies, CD ROMs, music, and reference materials for children from birth through approximately age 12. There are computers with learning games and software to prepare homework assignments, online catalog computers and Internet stations. There is a parenting collection of books and magazines, and comfortable seating to encourage families to sit and read.

Story hours, holiday activities, special entertainers, seasonal craft programs, and school vacation specials are offered throughout the year at all three locations. Programs for infants and toddlers and programs for families are particularly popular. The Summer Reading Program is a major focus every year with a large number of children participating.

The Main Library has space specifically for teens with paperback books, books for required summer reading, graphic novels, books with coping themes, and computers. There is a Teen Advisory Group comprised of teens from the secondary schools in the city.

### **General Collections**

The Worcester Public Library offers 1,167 print and 1,020 (electronic) subscriptions. There are more than 634,000 books, 14,500 audio materials, 15,500 DVDs/videos, 120,700 microforms, and more than 17,000 other forms of materials for a collection of nearly 800,000 items.

The Reference Collection is large and varied, ranging from basic encyclopedias and almanacs, to business reference works, art books, atlases, and biographical, literary and historical sets. Worcester is the Regional Reference provider for the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS), which means Worcester staff answer questions for librarians and residents of central Massachusetts.

**Massachusetts and U.S. Government Documents:** The library is the only central Massachusetts library that is designated a state government documents depository. It is also a Federal Depository Library. Having been designated as one in 1859, this is the largest depository of federal documents in central Massachusetts. Both state and federal documents are readily available for residents of Worcester and central Massachusetts.

**Worcester History Room:** This special collection includes print material on the City of Worcester and Worcester County. It also includes information about the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and history of the other New England states. The library has developed an extensive genealogy collection to help people doing family histories.

The **Talking Book Library** for the Blind and Physically Handicapped at the Worcester Public Library is part of the Library of Congress/National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped network. It is the Massachusetts subregional library, serving people with vision problems or physical disabilities in the cities and towns of central Massachusetts. (The Regional Library, which serves eastern and western parts of the state, is located at the Perkins School for the Blind in Watertown.) In addition to recorded books and magazines on audio cassette tape, the Talking Book Library loans large-print books, described video and a limited number of Braille books. While most people receive their materials by mail, they also have access to adapted computers with synthesized speech, screen magnification, Braille translation software, scanners and Braille embossers at the Main Library. In addition to support from the Worcester Public Library, the Talking Book Library receives major funding from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Grants have also been received from the Memorial Foundation for the Blind, as well as donations from Talking Book Library users, their families and friends. Over 64,000 talking books a year are circulated annually to more than 2,000 users. As readership grows, dedicated

staff and volunteers keep the service both efficient and personalized. Their aim is to provide library service to people with disabilities that is as complete and accessible as that available to people without disabilities

### **Networks**

The library is an active participant in the Central Massachusetts Regional Library System (CMRLS). Access to services provided through regional membership includes, but is not limited to, delivery of materials between libraries, interlibrary loan (ILL), online databases, and summer reading program materials. Library staff participate in continuing education and professional development activities provided by the Central Region office. In addition, as Regional Reference provider Worcester staff provide workshops for librarians throughout central Massachusetts.

The library is a member of the C/W MARS network. The C/W MARS online catalog provides access to the library holdings of over 140 libraries in central and western Massachusetts. Network participation also enables the library to provide access to online databases.

The library is a member of NELINET, a member-owned, member-governed cooperative of more than 600 academic, public, and special libraries in New England. This is the regional network for OCLC and offers educational programs and consortium purchasing. OCLC Online Computer Library Center is a nonprofit, membership, computer library service and research organization made up of more than 53 thousand libraries in 96 countries and territories around the world, using OCLC services to locate, acquire, catalog, lend and preserve library materials.

### **Administration**

The Worcester Public Library is a division of the City's Department of Health and Human Services. The twelve member Board of Directors, appointed by the City Council, is the library's governing authority. The Directors are charged with the hiring of the Head Librarian, with the management of the library, its facilities, collections and trust funds, and with promulgating regulations concerning the use of the library. The Board and library administration work closely with city and elected officials to develop and maintain services.

### **LIBRARY VISION STATEMENT**

The Public Library Association (PLA) is a division of the American Library Association. Its *New Planning For Results* recommends that the focus of a vision statement be on the community.<sup>1</sup>

***The Worcester Public Library will be a welcoming destination and the leading provider of resources to inform, enlighten and enrich our diverse community.***

### **LIBRARY MISSION STATEMENT**

The Public Library Association's *New Planning For Results* process recommends that a mission statement inform the community about the library's priorities in clear and easily understood terms.<sup>2</sup>

***The Worcester Public Library provides free information and services that promote lifelong learning and personal enrichment. In all its operations, the library strives to eliminate barriers to the pursuit of ideas.***

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson, Sandra. *The New Planning For Results, A Streamlined Approach*. Public Library Association. Chicago, IL. 2001. p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid. p. 76.

## **PROCESS/PLANNING METHODOLOGY**

In June 2005, the Worcester Public Library began the process of developing a new strategic plan. The Board of Directors retained the services of Vandermark Consulting to facilitate a series of meetings of the Worcester Public Library Board of Directors, administration, and middle management staff. The identification of Worcester library service needs occurred through a series of activities, including a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis of the library undertaken by both the Board of Directors and library administration, and by middle management staff, a series of six community based focus groups, a review of the previous Worcester Public Library Strategic Plan (FY2002-FY2005), a review of comparison library data from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), a review of *Benchmarking and Municipal and Neighborhood Services in Worcester: 2005* by the Worcester Regional Research Bureau, the library's annual customer survey, and state and national library service trends.

Throughout the planning meetings, several consistent themes emerged:

- Worcester residents value the personal service and attention that has been a tradition at the Worcester Public Library.
- Residents are pleased to take advantage of the technological resources available at the library, including remote access to library services, and the level of technological support from the library staff.
- Library services currently available need to be better publicized.

Appendices A through F of this report include compilations and summaries of various activities undertaken during the planning process.

## **COMMUNITY NEEDS FOR THE LIBRARY TO ADDRESS**

*New Planning for Results* encourages library planners to document how the library can contribute to improved community life by meeting community needs. During the planning process a variety of needs surfaced that the Worcester Public Library can address.

The library can contribute to Worcester's quality of life. The library can help support Worcester's diverse population through social, cultural, and educational opportunities so that all residents feel welcome to participate in the community. The following can help to address these needs:

- quality service for diverse library users
- access to needed information
- space for quiet study, tutoring, and reading
- expanded library services to students
- access to computers, software, Internet, and web resources, including wireless capability
- technological assistance and informal training in use of library databases, Internet, and other electronic materials
- wide range of programs

In addition the library needs to address physical space and staffing. The size of the city makes it difficult for all residents to use the Main Library facility. The popularity of the two branch libraries, in particular the Frances Perkins Branch at Greendale, indicates a need for additional branch libraries. The need for additional branches was brought out in several of the focus groups and in the *Benchmarking Municipal and Neighborhood Services in Worcester: 2005*.

Technology offers the advantage of remote access to library services and expands the scope of the library's offerings.

The library can help Worcester residents recognize its value and use its resources by marketing its services and events in newsletters and articles in local newspapers, on its website, on local cable access TV and on radio.

## **WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE RESPONSES**

*Service Responses* are what a library does for, or offers to, the public in an effort to meet a set of well-defined community needs.

After studying ideas from the six focus groups, the Board of Directors, with the assistance of library management staff, selected five *service responses* from a list of thirteen developed by the Public Library Association. These service responses will guide the library in meeting users' needs during the next five years. The goals, rationales, objectives and activities detailed below indicate how *The Worcester Public Library Strategic Plan FY2007-FY2011* will address the selected *service responses*.

During the five years of this Plan, the Worcester Public Library will focus its resources on the following *service responses* from the PLA list of thirteen (described in Appendix B):

- 1. Current Topics and Titles (13)**
- 2. Commons (12)**
- 3. General Information (11)**
- 4. Information Literacy (9)**
- 5. Local History and Genealogy (7)**

The numbers in parenthesis following the selected *service responses* indicate votes from participants in the Long Range Planning process. Because municipalities and their libraries have limited resources, the PLA planning process encourages libraries to limit their selection of service responses to no more than five.

Given the demographics of the community, the Board of Directors and library administration wish to promote an understanding of the rich cultural heritages that flourish in Worcester. While limited resources restrict making this one of the five primary *service responses*, Worcester's cultural diversity will be incorporated in the planning of all services and programs. Additionally a public library is unique in that its services are for all ages, from birth to death, and as such is a center for life-long learning.

Each *service response* is described in the Goal. The Rationale describes why and/or how it is important to Worcester residents. The objectives show in specific terms how the library will meet the Goal. Each is considered a system-wide objective, unless specified for the Main Library, Frances Perkins Branch Library at Greendale or Great Brook Valley Branch Library. Dates for activities are indicated, e.g. FY2007, ongoing. This means that the activity starts in the first year of the Strategic Plan and continues throughout the length of the plan. A single date indicates that the activity is completed in that fiscal year.

### **1. CURRENT TOPICS AND TITLES**

**Goal:** Library users will have access to a collection of popular and current titles (fiction and nonfiction, print and non-print media) and library programs that they need to be well-informed about contemporary culture and society and to make their leisure time more productive and enjoyable through recreational reading, viewing, and listening opportunities.

**Rationale:** Library users want access to new fiction and nonfiction best sellers in a variety of formats. The library needs to expand the audiovisual collection. The library will promote the use

of its collections through programs such as book talks, performances, and exhibits that feature current topics of interest to the community.

**Objective 1: The library will provide materials in the formats and languages that people want and will be chosen on the basis of local interest. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 1.1.1 Revise the library's Collection Development Policy. (FY2007)
- 1.1.2 Monitor pre-publication sources and advertising to anticipate public interest in current topics, use print and electronic sources that list sales of 'most popular' materials in all formats, and make use of selection services. (ongoing)
- 1.1.3 Respond to direct user requests and utilize the annual in-library patron satisfaction survey to assess user satisfaction with current and popular materials. (ongoing)
- 1.1.4 Use data available through its library network, C/W MARS, to identify and target high use and high interest areas for increased purchasing (examples might be best sellers, consumer information, job information, parenting information, literacy materials, and local history). A formula of copies per number of pending user requests will be developed. (ongoing)
- 1.1.5 Increase purchase of bestseller non-print media by 50% of the media budget for the previous year. (ongoing)
- 1.1.6 Experiment with purchasing new formats when appropriate. (ongoing)
- 1.1.7 Train staff in the use of resources to advise people reading for pleasure. (ongoing)
- 1.1.8 Continue to evaluate and weed the collection to maintain currency and subject area coverage. [The weeding process is a standard library process that allows the library staff to remove materials from the collection that are out of date and/or in poor condition. The American Library Association recommends that a minimum of 5% of the entire collection should be weeded out each year.] (ongoing)

**Objective 2: Residents will have access to programs, displays, and exhibits that meet their needs for information about popular cultural and social trends. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 1.2.1 Increase by two the number of library-sponsored programs, public forums or exhibits on topics of current interest each year of the plan at each facility. (ongoing)
- 1.2.2 Identify staff and/or volunteers to develop programs, displays and exhibits. (FY2008, ongoing)
- 1.2.3 Expand data gathering to assist in the development of programs, displays, and exhibits of interest to the community, and collaborate with community organizations to provide programming about popular cultural and social trends. (ongoing)
- 1.2.4 Continue to assess possible ways to fund library services for neighborhoods, e.g., branch libraries, bookmobile, books by mail and implement when feasible. (ongoing)

**Objective 3: Increase public awareness of library resources.**

- 1.3.1 Provide topical displays in the library of materials and resources to promote access to and use of the collections. (ongoing)
- 1.3.2 Promote library materials through the library's website, postings and fliers, and local newspaper, cable TV, and radio. (ongoing)
- 1.3.3 Promote displays and exhibits through the library's website, postings and fliers, and local newspaper, cable TV, and radio. (ongoing)
- 1.3.4 Promote remote access to electronic databases and the C/W MARS catalog by utilizing the library's website, postings and fliers, and the local newspaper, cable TV, and radio. (ongoing)
- 1.3.5 Expand and promote the children and teen pages of the library website. (ongoing)
- 1.3.6 Implement e-newsletter. (ongoing)

**Objective 4: Library users will borrow more materials from the library at a rate of two percent during each year of the plan. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 1.4.1 Promote new materials in all formats through booklists, the library's website and electronic options. (ongoing)
- 1.4.2 Expand number of self-check stations in the Main Library. (FY2007)
- 1.4.3 Explore feasibility of self-check stations at the Frances Perkins Branch Library. (FY2009)
- 1.4.4 Purchase new service desk at the Frances Perkins Branch Library. (FY2007)

## 2. COMMONS

**Goal:** Worcester residents will have opportunities and space to meet with community members and take part in programs, forums and services on community issues and interests. The Library will foster this goal through enhanced communications, a marketing campaign and partnerships with local agencies, academic institutions and other city departments.

**Rationale:** People of all ages in Worcester need a safe, accessible and inviting place where they can meet and interact with others in their community and participate in public discourse about community issues. Focus group participants expressed their appreciation for a place where families and people of all ages could gather in a relaxed environment to share experiences and learn from each other. Many participants in focus groups also believed that the library should be providing additional programs for pre-schoolers, school-aged youth, and adults. Meeting spaces for clubs and other organizations also was mentioned as a community need. Finally, students of all ages need quiet study spaces and group study facilities.

**Objective 1: Library users of all ages will enjoy a welcoming atmosphere and resources that encourage and support a love of reading and make the library a relevant place for them. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 2.1.1 Review space at the Main Library to identify best uses. (FY2007)

- 2.1.2 Develop expanded teen services with input from the Teen Advisory Group (TAG) at the Main Library. (ongoing)
- 2.1.3 Initiate a Teen Advisory Group (TAG) at the Frances Perkins Branch Library. (FY2008)
- 2.1.4 Sponsor book groups for a variety of interests and communities, e.g. underserved populations and seniors. (ongoing)
- 2.1.5 Train staff in excellent customer service practices. (ongoing)
- 2.1.6 Provide a clean and safe environment for library users and staff. (ongoing)

**Objective 2: Provide space for meetings, exhibits, and displays that are accessible, inviting and safe for all. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 2.2.1 Evaluate space within the Main Library with the intention of capturing additional public meeting space. (FY2007)
- 2.2.2 Assess the need for and acquire any equipment and accessories that will support groups using meeting rooms at the Frances Perkins Branch Library. (FY2007)
- 2.2.3 Provide technology to support public meetings at the Main Library. (ongoing)

**Objective 3: Sponsor programs that appeal to diverse populations in Worcester. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 2.3.1 Develop a plan to promote the library to current library users, city employees, local schools, media, businesses, organizations, and the community-at large. (ongoing)
- 2.3.2 Celebrate national events that promote reading and library use such as Banned Book Week, National Library Week, Library Sign-Up Card Month, etc. (ongoing)
- 2.3.3 Increase staff knowledge of the community. (ongoing)
- 2.3.4 Develop and provide summer activities that expand on the state-wide summer reading program to encourage children to read throughout the summer. (ongoing)
- 2.3.5 Develop programs and collections that meet the needs of youth, ages 12 to 14, who are in transition between the Children's Room and the Young Adult Room. (FY2008, ongoing)

**Objective 4: Expand community relations initiatives. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 2.4.1 List events on Worcester's Social Website. (ongoing)
- 2.4.2 Participate in community wide initiatives such as 'Worcester, the City That Reads,' Worcester Youth Summit, etc. (ongoing)
- 2.4.3 Develop and provide a "Welcome to the Worcester Public Library" packet for new residents highlighting library services. (FY2008)

- 2.4.4 Identify appropriate locations such as Union Station and the Parent Place at the Worcester Public Schools to increase awareness of library services. (FY2008)
- 2.4.5 Establish guidelines with high school faculty and administration to provide opportunities for the Worcester Public Library to participate in the community service requirement for high school students. (ongoing)
- 2.4.6 Foster partnerships with local cultural institutions and colleges. (ongoing)

### 3. GENERAL INFORMATION

**Goal:** Library users will find current and accurate print, non-print, electronic resources and the assistance they need to use these resources.

**Rationale:** People use the library to find answers to their questions. In addition, the Worcester Public Library is the Regional Reference Center for the Central Massachusetts Regional System, and in this role, assists librarians in other libraries, leads training for librarians, and answers questions for residents in central Massachusetts.

**Objective 1: The Library will provide print, non-print and electronic resources for information needs. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 3.1.1 Evaluate the use of library materials and consider customer suggestions to build a collection on a wide variety of topics of interest to the general public. (ongoing)
- 3.1.2 Allocate the annual budget for new materials by category based on an assessment of usage and customer suggestions. (ongoing)
- 3.1.3 Purchase books and other materials that reflect the linguistic diversity and cultural mosaic of the City. (ongoing)
- 3.1.4 Explore an electronic method that will allow library users to easily make recommendations on resources they would like in the library's collection. (FY2008)
- 3.1.5 Create booklists and bookmarks to market materials in widely used topic areas. (ongoing)

**Objective 2: Maintain a knowledgeable staff, skilled in determining users' needs and in locating relevant information. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 3.2.1 Provide training for staff in areas of identified needs and enhance staff skills. (ongoing)
- 3.2.2 Explore feasibility of conducting an in-service day for all staff once a year. (FY2007)
- 3.2.3 Improve internal communication by providing email services for all staff and explore electronic means of communicating with all staff. (ongoing)
- 3.2.4 Evaluate and update job descriptions as vacancies occur. (ongoing)

- 3.2.5 Prepare for the transfer of knowledge prior to the retirement of librarians. (ongoing)

**Objective 3: Deliver answers to questions in person, by telephone, by email, via the library's website and live chat reference assistance by qualified librarians. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 3.3.1 Continue to participate in Mass Answers, the live chat reference service available 24/7 via the Internet and expand staffing of this service by training Youth Services librarians. (ongoing)
- 3.3.2 Regularly review the library's website and investigate ways to revise links and information easily. (ongoing)
- 3.3.3 Continue to respond to email questions within 24 hours for central Massachusetts inquiries and define the level of service the library can provide to others. (ongoing)
- 3.3.4 Evaluate reference statistics and explore new ways of delivering reference services. (ongoing)

**Objective 4: Collaborate with agencies in Worcester to meet the informational needs of residents. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 3.4.1 Regularly inform teachers in the Worcester Public Schools about library resources. (ongoing)
- 3.4.2 Develop a web-based assignment form to encourage teachers to notify the public library of school assignments. (ongoing)
- 3.4.3 Continue to collaborate with the Worcester Public Schools on the selection of titles for the Required Summer Reading Lists for Worcester students and continue to provide multiple copies of the books. Reach out to the charter schools to ensure students receive good service from the library regarding their summer reading requirements. (ongoing)
- 3.4.4 Speak at training for Literacy Volunteers of Greater Worcester's volunteer tutors to inform them of library resources. (ongoing)
- 3.4.5 Continue to work with Worcester Public Schools and other agencies to serve the needs of students. (ongoing)
- 3.4.6 Continue to collaborate with local museums and colleges and explore additional partnerships. (ongoing)
- 3.4.7 Work with social service agencies to promote the library's resources with their clients. (ongoing)

**Objective 5: Improve access to information and collections by developing and maintaining a robust technological environment.**

- 3.5.1 Install wireless capabilities so people may access library resources and the Internet with their own computers. (FY2007)

- 3.5.2 Explore staff use of emerging technologies, such as handheld devices and audio communication devices, to enhance service to library users. (FY2008)
- 3.5.3 Expand ways people can access library services remotely, e.g. self-registration for library cards. (FY2008)
- 3.5.4 Remain diligent in insuring that persons with disabilities have access to all collections and services. (ongoing)
- 3.5.5 Provide bibliographic instruction classes for using online catalog and its enhancements. (FY2008, ongoing)
- 3.5.6 Enhance delivery of reference and information services by informing the users effectively and timely as new technologies are adopted. (ongoing)
- 3.5.7 Improve electronic access to library resources by digitizing collections, participating in cooperative ventures, cataloging, etc. (ongoing)
- 3.5.8 Research, evaluate and implement best practices for acquiring, organizing, delivering and preserving information resources in all forms. (ongoing)

#### 4. INFORMATION LITERACY

**Goal:** Worcester residents of all ages will have opportunities to develop the skills required to gain access to and evaluate electronic materials that are required in an increasingly technological world.

**Rationale:** People in Worcester need to know how to locate, evaluate, and use information resources of all types. In addition to giving answers to questions, the library needs to provide training to users on how to find and evaluate information. The staff of the Worcester Public Library will market the availability of access from home computers to library materials. Home access is convenient and important for meeting user needs when the library is closed.

**Objective 1: The library will provide a variety of instructional opportunities to enhance information literacy. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 4.1.1 Provide guidance and instruction for individuals and groups via the library's website, with brochures, signs and booklists and by staff on the use of the: C/W MARS online catalog, online reference databases, Internet, website evaluation. (ongoing)
- 4.1.2 Provide instruction to the public as new technologies are implemented. (ongoing)
- 4.1.3 Promote availability of online reference databases to appropriate communities. (ongoing)

**Objective 2: Provide up-to-date technology for the public. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 4.2.1 Complete a Technology Plan for FY2007-2009, as required by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. (FY2007)

- 4.2.2 Install upgrades for public access computers and provide other enhancements as these become available and as funding permits. (ongoing)
- 4.2.3 Provide additional public access computers and printers as needed. (ongoing)
- 4.2.4 Continue to assess new technologies and provide new services, such as downloadable books. (ongoing)
- 4.2.5 Provide increased bandwidth for Internet access through dark fiber to make possible services such as online program presentations, information retrieval from universities and museums and e-book/e-audio book downloading. (FY2009)

**Objective 3: Encourage self-service by library users to access library materials and information.**

- 4.3.1 Provide focused training to enhance technology skills for groups and individuals. (FY2008, ongoing)
- 4.3.2 Develop partnerships with community agencies to expand training beyond the library. (FY2008, ongoing)
- 4.3.3 Upgrade staff skills in technology and subject-specific topics. (ongoing)
- 4.3.4 Identify and promote tutorial options for library users. (ongoing)
- 4.3.5 Continue to develop library services for remote users who cannot or choose not to visit the library by making as many resources as possible available electronically. (FY2008, ongoing)
- 4.3.6 Ensure that persons with disabilities have access to information by upgrading ADA-compliant workstations as new technology becomes available, as well as designing the library's website for use by persons with disabilities. (FY2008, ongoing)

## 5. LOCAL HISTORY AND GENEALOGY

**Goal:** Worcester Public Library preserves written, oral, and pictorial historical documents and makes them accessible so residents have an opportunity to know and better understand the community's heritage.

**Rationale:** Residents of Worcester want to know about and better understand their personal and community heritage. The library needs to provide a significant collection of materials and other resources that chronicle the history of the community and region and its residents.

**Objective 1: Support community interest in Worcester historic materials. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 1.1.1 Continue to respond to local history and genealogical questions received in person, via email and U.S. mail. (ongoing)
- 1.1.2 Evaluate methods and plan for the preservation of Worcester historical materials in partnership with Worcester historical groups. (ongoing)

- 1.1.3 Continue to offer instruction in genealogical research methods individually and through group programs. (ongoing)
- 1.1.4 Develop a webpage dedicated to helping users find genealogical resources on the Internet. (FY2008, ongoing)
- 1.1.5 Evaluate space needs of the collection. (FY2008)
- 1.1.6 Collaborate with local historical institutions to foster the interest in local history. (ongoing)

**Objective 2: Collect, develop and maintain Worcester historic materials and family records. To meet this objective the library will:**

- 5.2.1 Digitize historic materials. (ongoing)
- 5.2.2 Improve accessibility by completing the cataloging of the Worcester History Collection. (FY2007 - FY2009)
- 5.2.3 Apply for and implement grants to preserve and make accessible Worcester's historic materials. (FY2008, ongoing)
- 5.2.4 Develop a plan and appropriate actions that preserve collections in the Worcester Room and basement. (FY2008, ongoing)

## **EVALUATION**

This plan is for the fiscal years 2007 to 2011. Activities will be developed each year by library staff to attain the objectives. The staff will examine the progress quarterly. The Board of Directors will examine the progress in achieving objectives annually. This process may result in changes to the objectives in response to new developments and opportunities for the library and the City.

**APPENDIX A:  
WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WORCESTER, MA  
HISTORY & DEMOGRAPHICS**

Worcester is the state's second-largest city after Boston and an important manufacturing, insurance, and transportation center. Worcester covers a land area of 37.5 square miles. Biotechnological research is important to the city's economy. The Massachusetts Biotechnology Research Park accommodates research facilities for numerous companies. The University of Massachusetts Medical School, also home to research, is adjacent to the Park. Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) is constructing a new center for its Bioengineering Institute in the Gateway Park just north of Main Street. Scientists from the Worcester Foundation for Experimental Biology developed the birth control pill in the 1950s and Robert Goddard, father of modern rocketry, conducted his first experiments in Worcester in the 1920s. Worcester is an inland port of entry for foreign commerce and major interstate highways (the Massachusetts Turnpike, I-90 offers direct connection to the city and I-290/I-190 run through Worcester). Rail lines traverse the city, including MBTA commuter rail between Boston and Worcester at Worcester's historic and renovated Union Station. Air transportation is through Worcester Regional Airport.

Worcester is noted for its fine educational and cultural facilities. Among the institutions of higher education are Worcester State College, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Assumption College, Clark University, the College of the Holy Cross, the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, Becker College, Quinsigamond Community College and the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, which has opened a new campus downtown. The oldest of these is Holy Cross, which opened in 1843.

The city is also home to the headquarters of the American Antiquarian Society (founded in 1812), with a research library specializing in Americana; the Worcester Art Museum, with a wide-ranging collection of Western and Asian art; and the Worcester Historical Museum, emphasizing the city's industrial achievements. Also of interest are the Higgins Armory, a museum of arms and armor, and the EcoTarium, with collections on the biological and physical sciences. The annual Worcester Music Festival dates from 1858.

The Nipmuc people were living in the region when the first European settlers arrived in the 1670s and created a community they called Quinsigamond Plantation. The community was renamed Worcester in 1684, possibly for Worcester, England, as an angry gesture at King Charles II of England, who had suffered defeat at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. Hostility from the Nipmuc twice forced the abandonment of the settlement; the first permanent colonization came in 1713. Incorporated as a town in 1722, major industrial development began after the opening of the Blackstone Canal in 1828, linking Worcester with Providence, Rhode Island. Worcester was incorporated as a city in 1848.

Worcester played an important role in the political development of the United States. During the American Revolution (1775-1783), it was home to pamphleteer Isaiah Thomas, whose words helped unite opposition to the British. The city was active in Shays' Rebellion (1786-1787), a revolt against excessive land taxation that helped spur the creation of the Constitution of the United States. Residents were also early supporters of reform movements such as the abolition of slavery in the United States. The first national women's rights convention was held in Worcester in 1850.

Worcester was home to industrial innovation, including new methods of making wire, textiles,

grinding wheels, and envelopes, and, as previously mentioned, rocketry pioneer Robert H. Goddard, a professor at Clark University, fired his first liquid fuel rocket in nearby Auburn in 1926.

As of the 2000 federal census, there are 172,648 people, 67,028 households and 39, 211 families residing in the City of Worcester. The population density is 4,596.5 per square mile. The racial make up of the city is 77.11% White, 6.89% African-American, 0.45% Native American, 4.87% Asian, 0.06% Pacific Islander, 7.24% from other races, and 3.39% from two or more races. 15.15% of the population is Hispanic or Latino of any race.

Between 1990 and 2000, Worcester's White population decreased by 10%, while the city's minority population grew: African-Americans by 55%, Asians by 78%, and Latinos by 61%. Worcester's total minority population is 22.9%, which includes all non-white plus Hispanics. Of the 67,028 households, 29.0% have children under the age of 18 living with them, 38.3% are married couples living together, 15.6% have a female householder with no husband present, and 41.5% are non-families. 33.0% of all households are made up of individuals and 12.2% have someone living alone who is 65 years of age or older. The average household size is 2.41 and the average family size is 3.11.

The population is spread out with 23.6% under the age of 18, 13.3% from 18 to 24, 30.3% from 25 to 44, 18.6% from 45 to 64, and 14.1% who are 65 years of age or older. The median age is 33 years. For every 100 females there are 92.4 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there are 88.7 males.

The median household income is \$35,623, and the median family income is \$42,988. Males have a median income of \$36,190 versus \$28,522 for females. The per capita income is \$18,614. 17.9% of the population and 14.1% of families are below the poverty line. Out of the total population, 24.6% of those under the age of 18 and 11.6% of those 65 and older are living below the poverty line.

This data came from the City of Worcester's website, the U.S. Census, 2000 and from a report produced by the Worcester Regional Research Bureau in 2001.

## APPENDIX B:

### WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY WORCESTER, MA SERVICE RESPONSES

The Public Library Association's *Planning for Results* defines a Service Response as what a library does for, or offers to, the public in an effort to meet well-defined community needs. Service Responses are the distinct ways a library serves the public. They represent the gathering and deployment of specific critical resources to produce a specific public benefit or result.

The *Planning for Results* process provides 13 service responses that encompass service areas common to public libraries, areas in which public libraries excel. Three to five responses are typically selected for a strategic plan that covers up to five years.

#### **Basic Literacy**

Addresses the need to read and to perform other essential daily tasks

#### **Business and Career Information**

Addresses a need for information related to business, careers, work, entrepreneurship, personal finances, and obtaining employment

#### **Commons**

Address the need of people to meet and interact with others in their community and to participate in public discourse about community issues

#### **Community Referral**

Addresses the need for information related to services provided by community agencies and organizations

#### **Consumer Information**

Addresses the need for information to make informed consumer decisions and helps residents become more self-sufficient

#### **Cultural Awareness**

Helps satisfy the desire of community residents to gain an understanding of their own cultural heritage and the culture of others

#### **Current Topics and Titles**

**Helps to fulfill community residents' appetite for information about popular culture and social trends and their desire for satisfying recreational experiences**

#### **Formal Learning Support**

Helps students who are enrolled in a formal program of education or who are pursuing their education through a program of homeschooling to retain their educational goals

#### **General Information**

Helps meet the need for information and answers to questions on a broad array of topics related to work, school, and personal life

#### **Government Information**

Helps satisfy the need for information about elected officials and government agencies that enables people to participate in the democratic process

**Information Literacy**

Helps address the need for skills related to finding, evaluating, and using information effectively

**Lifelong learning**

Helps address the desire for self-directed personal growth and development opportunities

**Local History and Genealogy**

Addresses the desire of community residents to know and better understand personal or community heritage

Nelson, Sandra. *The New Planning For Results, A Streamlined Approach*. Public Library Association. Chicago, IL. 2001.

**APPENDIX C:  
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS  
(S.W.O.T.) ANALYSIS OF THE WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
SUMMARY RESULTS FROM BOARD OF DIRECTORS, HEAD LIBRARIAN,  
LIBRARY MANAGEMENT, AND LIBRARY STAFF**

**DEFINITION**

S.W.O.T Analysis is a tool to help the Worcester Public Library analyze the current and future conditions that affect the library and its ability to provide the services it deems necessary.

Strengths and weaknesses normally are discussed in the context of *existing* conditions that the library operates under. The conditions might include current programs, economic factors, staffing, and age of the building. Strengths and weaknesses might include the strength of a well trained, computer literate library staff or the weakness of the lack of availability of an adequate audiovisual collection.

Opportunities and threats are discussed in the context of *scenarios* that may occur in the future. The conditions may include bond referendums, economic recessions, state legislative mandates, and funding issues. Opportunities and threats might include the opportunity to work with the school librarians or the threat of budget cuts that would have a negative impact on collection development.

There were two SWOT groups. The Board of Directors and Library Management composed one SWOT group. Library middle management and staff composed a second SWOT group. Comments from the two groups are summarized on the following pages. An asterisk (\*) refers to a comment or idea exhibiting significant consensus within the two groups.

## LIBRARY STRENGTHS – WHAT DO WE DO WELL?

- Good public access because of new Main Library facility location in the center of city, plus two strong branch libraries with own identities and strong community support\*
- Clean, comfortable facility (Main Library) open to all\*
- Library hours: There is excellent coverage (because the branches are opened some hours the Main Library is closed, resulting in limited duplicated hours) <Please note that a different view about library hours is offered under library weaknesses>
- Worcester Public Library Web site (online resources)\*
- Outreach to the community
- Library investment in technology and resources
- Library resources: " There is very efficient use of resources;" There is quick access to Collections, including genealogy, local history, languages, and English as Second Language (ESL) <Access to the basement collection, un-cataloged in C/WMARS is difficult>\*
- Friends of the Library provide support through book sales, museum passes, purchase of furniture, free film programs, children's and adult programs\*
- Special library services available: Talking book services , Federal Depository of Documents, ("the only one in central Massachusetts"), Grant Resource Center, Email reference, 24/7 reference service
- Technology\*
- Excellent staff\* "Staff is knowledgeable about collections;" "Staff has strong customer service values;" "Staff has a professional attitude;" "Staff is accessible to the public"
- Financial endowments, including both the Library Foundation and Trust Funds
- The Library has the ability to meet needs of diverse constituents\*
- Programs (including computer programming until recently)\*
- The Library has the highest rating for city services by the community, "the Library is highly thought of throughout the city and surrounding communities;" "The library offers services beyond Worcester proper that are highly respected"\*
- Ability to find outside resources; Interlibrary Loan (ILL) \*
- C/WMARS provides access to shared resources\*
- Onsite bookstore \*
- Public Internet Service; free\*
- Meeting Rooms; free \*
- Communication among library staff\*  
<Please note that a different view about communication among library staff is offered under library weaknesses>

## LIBRARY WEAKNESSES – WHAT DON'T WE DO SO WELL?

- Location of the Main Library is not safe
- Lack of service availability (need more hours, different hours, more evenings)\*
- Insufficient funds due to library budget cuts has caused uneven growth with unreliable services for patrons \*
- Lack of funding for new technologies; "there is not enough money for technology, for updating and maintaining equipment, software, keeping up-to-date" \*
- Lack of programming, including computer classes
- Lack of marketing
- Lack of relationship with public schools, local colleges
- Not enough staff \*
- Staff support for some services not available (technology)
- With new technologies there is not enough time for staff to get up to speed, and not enough time to keep up with new technologies \*
- Language barriers (diverse populations)
- Interlibrary Loan (ILL) impacts on collection development; "materials are so easy for patrons to get, staff doesn't consider impact on collection development "
- C/WMARS; all libraries are not willing to try new products and processes
- Allocation of resources, both money and staff is not balanced across departments
- No new hires; "need to balance staff with new hires, the graying of the profession;" "Worcester lacks young librarians"\*
- Parking fees (patrons and staff but not management) have to pay to park \*
- Branches have the following weaknesses: lack of space, not enough Branches, location of the Branches, Branch safety
- Wi Fi technology has caused the library to lose patrons; " college students and kids feel the library is irrelevant"
- Library staff feels there is a lack of knowledge of college assignments
- Lack of communication with other groups and organizations that drive library use
- Lack of advocates
- Lack of time for staff training
- Lack of consistent response and follow through with problem patrons
- Library staff cross trains with Health and Human Resources staff; "this doesn't work in some departments, it causes stress"
- Inconsistent communication within the library (Main and Branches) (e.g. different email systems, staff meetings at times inconvenient for participation)
- Size of the Main Library facility is hard to staff
- Little contact between departments
- Little contact between management and departments

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LIBRARY – WHAT’S HAPPENING THAT CAN BENEFIT US?**

- Strategic Planning Process with input from business community and ethnic groups
- Better collaboration/interaction with the schools
- Partner with other organizations for educational opportunities
- New housing opportunities with increased population provides expanded tax base
- Good service to the public
- Use cutting edge technology (C/WMARS, RFID, and Internet)
- Wi Fi (Wireless access on the Common; library to have wireless access)
- The Main Library as a destination facility for professional and community use; “the facility is inviting with meeting rooms available after hours”
- Expand use of online materials
- Computer Training lab
- On demand formats; print on demand
- Internet/Internet 2
- Develop new service models including mailing library materials and PayPal credit
- New relationship with Health and Human Resources encourages the library to reach out to various constituents including new populations, veterans, etc.
- Work with developers of new City Space. The Main Library encourages new development at City Square as multi-use space, including residential, recreational, and shopping downtown; replaces the Mall\*
- Materials in community languages \*
- City’s Economic Development Plan \*
- Newly renovated Worcester Common has potential use by library
- Expand early childhood and parent programs for older children
- Gas prices become an opportunity because people cannot travel; they will use the library
- New Branch construction
- Potential to reallocate space on third floor
- Hire young librarians\*
- Collaboration with colleges through UniverCity
- Main Library as a safer place; “the Library has better security and is working with police”
- Teen Advisory Group (TAG)
- RFID, technology for self check out, when implemented will free up staff for other services
- Blog for communication
- Email addresses for staff promote culture of communication\*
- Library Foundation has brought in new users to interact with the Library
- Volunteers
- Celebrate the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

**THREATS TO THE LIBRARY - – WHAT’S HAPPENING THAT COULD HURT US?  
(CAN WE TURN THESE INTO OPPORTUNITIES?)**

- Budget cuts have a negative impact on collection development and staffing levels
- Funding is uncertain
- Internet; “patrons think they have the answer to everything without using the library because they have Internet access”
- The political climate of the country is reflected through the Patriot Act\*
- Google\*
- C/WMARS standards (not always flexible enough to try new projects)
- Occasional disruptive behavior of patrons
- Technologies need replacement and are costly to maintain
- Technology moves so fast, it is difficult to maintain old and new formats\*
- Demographics; Boomers, Gamers, etc use library differently
- Age implies format likes and dislikes
- Home technology sometimes is better than library technology and it keeps people from using the Library
- Staff can have reluctance to change, to give up known procedures for new efficiencies
- Public might stop coming to main library because of area and a perceived ‘not safe’ location \*
- “Bookstores duplicate library services plus you can drink coffee” \*
- Students are not learning the value of libraries \*
- On demand formats; print on demand
- Many distractions place demands on people’s time so they have less time for the Library
- Becoming part of Health and Human Resources, an external reorganization, had reduced power for the library
- Cross training results in blurring of the library profession and integrity of departments
- Staff retirements and the transition to new staff

# **APPENDIX D: WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY FOCUS GROUPS RESULTS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In the summer of 2005 the administration of the Worcester Public Library hired Vandermark Consulting to review library services in Worcester as a component of writing a Long Range Plan to meet the 5 years needs of the Worcester Public Library. As one part of the process focus group sessions were held on September 26, 27, and 29, 2005. The focus groups included Senior Citizens, Greendale/Perkins Branch Library Users, Parents of Young Children and/or Providers of Services to Children, Business Representatives, Faith-Based and/or Immigrant Agencies, and Teenagers/Young Adults. The same questions were asked of each group.

Library staff and the Board of Directors invited Worcester residents to participate in the focus groups. Each Focus Group met for approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. The library administration thanks the individuals who participated in the Focus Groups. Their thoughtful insights and comments will help in the further development of a public library that makes a positive difference in the lives of Worcester residents.

After introducing themselves and answering the 'getting acquainted' questions, "How long have you lived in Worcester?" and "Tell us a little about yourself," the focus group participants answered five questions about the library.

## **FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS**

Question # 1: Think of one word that best describes the Worcester Public Library.

Question #2: How do you use the library?

Question #3: What do you think are the barriers that make it difficult for people to use the Worcester Public Library?

Question # 4: What is your experience with customer service at the Worcester Public Library?

Question # 5: Describe your ideal library.

## **INTRODUCTION TO FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES**

Vandermark Consulting has listed the comments from the seven focus group sessions. Occasionally, for emphasis, a comment is presented as an actual participant quote, as indicated by quotation marks (" "). An asterisk (\*) indicates that many focus group participants made the same comment.

Many of the focus group participants have lived in the city a long time; a number were born in Worcester. For example, nearly all residents of the Senior Group and a number of participants from the Perkins Branch User Group have lived in Worcester 25 years or longer. Many of the teenagers were born in Worcester.

Worcester residents mainly use the Worcester libraries. Most of the Perkins Branch Users are inclined to use the branch library rather than the Main Library. Several stated that the Branch Library is friendly and easier to use. Worcester teens are more likely to use the Main Library

because of the technology and additional materials available for school assignments. They like the larger space, the up-to-date surroundings, and better collections. In general, Worcester residents have positive feelings about "our public library."

There were a number of positive comments about the library staff. The staff is knowledgeable, goes out of its way to help library users, and most of the staff is very approachable. Perkins Branch Users raved about the staff at the Branch. Users of the Main Library raved about the staff at the Main Library, especially about the information desk staff. Worcester library staff has been employed by the library for a long time. The long-time experience of the staff was recognized as a positive quality.

Groups identified the importance of computers in the library, especially the Main Library, as being very valuable to immigrants and others who cannot afford to own a 'home' computer. Teens stated that the technology at the Perkins Branch is outdated and frequently 'out of order.'

Focus Group participants want the library to support services to children, especially in learning to use the library for school assignments.

Focus Group participants want additional branch services. They want the library to collaborate with community groups and to be more visible in the community. Suggestions for improved library services are listed in the "Focus Group Sessions Recommendations" section of this report.

## **FOCUS GROUP RESPONSES**

The following responses to the five questions include the most commonly stated opinions. Frequently more than one participant in a focus group made a similar statement, or a similar statement was made in more than one focus group.

### ***Question # 1: Think of one word that best describes the Worcester Public Library.***

Most of the words selected were very positive and a number were used in many of the focus groups. Among the best one-word descriptions of the Worcester Public Library are friendly, welcoming, community-oriented, portal, accessible, open, terrific, attraction, obliging, diverse, service, democratic, and focal point.

Stuck was one word also used to describe the Worcester Public Library. When pressed for an explanation the respondent said, "The Library has too much vested in the Main Library: staff, resources, and services are stuck in the building. The Library needs to reach out to the neighborhoods, to develop a branch system and to collaborate more with agencies and organizations in Worcester."

### ***Question #2: How do you use the library?***

Borrow books, read magazines, borrow videos, DVDs, CDs\*

Attend community meetings in the meeting rooms\*

Interlibrary Loan (ILL) is a wonderful service. "I can get anything I want."\*

C/WMARS with access to many library collections is great, as is the ability to make reserves online\*

Staff is very helpful with research\*

Love the ongoing programs

Summer reading\* and various library programs, including magicians, singers, etc  
R.S.V.P provides funding support for author visits and programs on how to write  
DVDS, fiction movies\*

Main library needs to provide more collections (AV collections poor)

Great parent materials available

"If the Perkins Branch were rearranged it would be safer for kids; the library could fit in more materials." It needs tables and more space\*

Technology allows users to renew books online, make reserves, check holdings

Computers are great; "I always used the library computers until I got one at home"

Access to Internet very important\*

English as Second Language (ESL) needs

***Question #3: What do you think are the barriers that make it difficult for people to use the Worcester Public Library?***

**Library Hours**

Not open enough hours\*

Lack of Sunday hours; being able to use the Main Library on Sunday is really important for students and families.

"Sunday hours are great; good for kids, good for families"\*

Participants realize that this is budget related, but they would love to add hours, staff, and materials

**Immigrants and Language**

Thirty percent (30%) of population as immigrants; library use for non-English speaking users is difficult.

Library staff does not have the language skills to help non-English speaking users. Consider getting volunteers; many willing to help!

Immigrant children are the bridge to American society. In families where English is not the first language parents want kids to have opportunity to learn English

Foreign language materials are not necessary (except perhaps for fiction). Kids must learn English. On the other hand, newspapers in foreign languages are good

For poor families, without transportation, without identification, without home computers for school assignments and other information sources, the public library is the only access for some.

The public library is a stepping stone for many to improved education and economic growth\*

For many immigrants free public library service is an unknown concept

**Safety**

The Main library is perceived as not safe.

"The staff at the Main Library is more suspicious than at Greendale (branch), and in the children's area at the Main Library the bathrooms are locked"

The parking lot and street people are intimidating.

Participants in the focus groups that work downtown say the Main Library is safer now with the new building, and there are more police on foot and on bikes

The perception that the Library is not safe needs to be changed. (Focus group participants recognized that changing perception is very difficult. They are optimistic that as the City's Economic Development Plan is implemented and the downtown has more residents and businesses to draw residents from other city neighborhoods to use these new services and the Main Library, the "not safe" perception will fade.)

The downtown (Main) Library has no entrance toward the Worcester Common; there should be an interface with the library entrance (It was recognized that this might not be possible, but

having the Main Entrance facing the parking lot which is separate from the downtown and the Common is not good)

### **Branches**

It is difficult for many residents to come downtown

Given the size of the city of Worcester, there are not enough branches, especially when measured against the number of branches in comparable cities like Providence, RI, Springfield, MA, and Hartford, CT

The Worcester Public Library needs to make a proposal to City government for branches; make additional branches part of the library budget

### **Technology**

Technology allows users to renew books online, make reserves, check holdings (Even if you don't have your library card you should be able to take out materials; the computer should be able to track materials, names, and addresses.)

Like more digitized materials; (Digitized materials are good for patrons with access to home computers, not for patrons lacking home access)

There should be more titles available as electronic books

Want to use computers; "seems like they are always down" (The participants that made this comment did not appear to be familiar with computers available on the second and third floors of the Main Library)

### **Training**

Instruction on how to find information and other resources on the Internet, use of online databases\*

Students need help finding library materials; they have little understanding of how a library is organized\*

### **The following comments are not linked to a particular concept; however the comments are valuable.**

People don't know what the library has\*

Tremendous number of books missing (1 in 20)

There is competition with Bookstores and Internet

Some patrons want access to college libraries and the library resources; to share resources

Develop interest groups to "support the library"\*

Get sponsorships to help cover costs\*

Consider a community-wide survey to find out library needs of residents

### ***Question # 4: What is your experience with customer service at the Worcester Public Library?***

Incredible (positive) information services\*

Knowledgeable staff\*

The long-time experience of staff (enthusiasm for working at the Worcester Public Library) and the quality of programming valued highly\*

"Kudos to librarians"

Librarians are library's strongest resources; many people still do not have home computers, have limited resources; libraries are critical

Excellent at Perkins Branch\*

Staff not always available at Main Library

Library processes are more difficult at Main Library; sign up, get in queue, have to find 'your' computer; not good

Some staff at Main Library are always grouchy  
The library, through the staff, offers great services; for example: DVDS, fiction movies; the staff is always looking for needs of patrons  
Courteous, helpful, excellent with what they have to work with\*  
Not condescending  
Supportive with research\*  
Generous, very helpful  
At Fremont Street (temporary location while Main Library under construction) which was a very difficult building, staff did a terrific job making library and services comfortable

***Question # 5: Describe your ideal library.***

**General comments**

The current Worcester Public Library is the ideal library\*  
Taxi service or shuttle bus to take you to the library; "Is there transportation to the library?," use as an outing for seniors  
Open 7 days a week, if money were no object. "Open the day closed and on Sunday (Sunday is homework day; the library should be open from noon to 5 pm)" [The Main Library is closed one day a week and some Sundays because of budget cuts]  
Access to the Internet, a portal to information everywhere  
Can order materials from home  
Additional parking (relates to Perkins Branch)  
Excellent staff that is in touch with patrons  
"Change the library to be more like a Barnes & Noble bookstore [can drink coffee, attend storyhours and programs, comfortable seats, stays open late], but you don't have to buy books"\*  
Have a Café\*  
Have couches and easy chairs  
Library is open with all the materials needed, and there is space to collaborate with someone, to meet friends/ relax/ read  
Bring back the bookmobile; it is good for children and staff of the YMCA (an agency the library collaborates with); users can learn about stories, reading, authors and it is cheaper than a branch  
Get parents to bring kids to the library and to understand that reading is FUN  
Book donations made to library; if the library cannot use, give to kids; encourage reading

**Marketing/Outreach**

"Have you seen us lately?" Develop 'punchy' messages, one each month; Get a sponsor for library message  
Take a field trip to the library\*  
"Can I help you?" instead of waiting for person to come up and ask a question, librarians should get out from behind a desk and ask patrons if they need help  
Have a Library card that is good in the region (Library cards for libraries in C/WMARS are regional library cards in the sense that you can borrow materials from C/WMARS libraries no matter where one lives)  
Need to MARKET the library, its strengths and resources; build relationships with others such as community agencies, schools, colleges  
Need to let people know about programs; "I saw information about library programs on Worcester television channel at 4 am"  
Spread the word; newsletters, flyers, library brochures, radio, child care centers, family liaisons, pediatricians, pediatric dentists, community agencies, bulk mailing every quarter, advertise, newspaper, schools, open house for important resource\*  
Worcester "the City Reads" initiative; is library involved?

The Worcester Public Library should be the place to find out about what is going on: Website, Calendar of events, email calendar of events, more informational flyers, regular column in Worcester paper, Mail, Social Web\*

Getting people into the library is the hard part; residents don't know what is available

Marketing issue; bookstores and coffee bars are similar to libraries, browse materials

NOW generation wants information, not background

Generational differences, like books on iPod

The Chamber of Commerce lets people know about the library; the Chamber is often asked about the library; promotes as good

### **Library as place**

Convenient; "have what I am looking for at hours that work for me"

Multifunctional, awareness of services; "what can they do for me?"

Comfort level; to feel free to ask for help, friendly welcoming, knowledgeable, with good customer service\*

The Library as Destination Center, place to find out about what is going on

Interactive and cutting edge services

### **Programming**

More events

Get students from local colleges downtown with events at Worcester Public Library

Expand and/or develop partnerships with local groups resulting in expanded audiences to serve

Take advantage of Teen Advisory Group (TAG)

Participate in other events, such as the Mass College of Pharmacy (Worcester) World Smile Day

### **Branches**

Library in neighborhood; walk to or ride bike; lots of programs for preschool and young children/young families with hours that meet the needs of the branch users; "Friday night, I love it. It is family time for us"

Don't need all the services available at Main Library; it is too expensive to duplicate all services.

Users will do more advanced, book related research downtown [Government Documents, Grant foundation materials, etc]

Investigate branch use; look at demographics. What people are using the library? (When the Main Library was at the temporary location on Fremont Street were there different users than those now using the Main library? Is there a reason to have a branch in Fremont area?)

Springfield has non-profit fundraising for library. People in Worcester could help support the branches

"I love that half the library (Perkins Branch) is for kids, even though it doesn't help me"

Can we do more with school libraries? For example, keep them open in the evening for family use\*

### **Politics**

Worcester has a great library; funding is a political process; the librarians should get political, find out how politicians feel about the library

Let City Hall and T&G know how great the library is!

### **Technology**

Keep up with current technology for the haves and have-nots; everyone needs training;

computers provide accessibility both through digitizing and branches

Want more digitized materials; good for the haves with computer access, not for library users without home access

Want more electronic books

### **Kids use library**

Kids are not library literate; Worcester elementary schools have no librarians; need public librarians to go to schools, show kids how to use library and tell them about library and services  
Provide field trips to the library (too expensive; money will prohibit)

It takes time to teach kids how to find information

Don't see kids in children's area of Main Library; doesn't have a family environment

Computers at home are convenient; but kids aren't learning in school how to do library research\*

Internet and Google aren't always good information\*

With the convenience of the Internet, Google, and more electronic use, how can library compete?

Too few kids have library cards

### **Collaboration**

Community Health Link "Together for Kids" includes YMCA, family liaisons, schools, and day care centers; already partner with library

Library has huge resources, community organizations and agencies should collaborate with library staff, use library space and parking (value added services)

Library is perceived as underutilized. How to get others to collaborate?

Collaboration with colleges though outreach such as book clubs and informational workshops

Students as Lifelong learners; continue education beyond college

Sharing resources should be seamless handoff from one library to another

Need institutional relationships such as ARC Card, used by Worcester area academic institutions

Funding issues can impact borrowing

Examples of partnerships; Worcester Public Library and UMass-Worcester

Collaborations and networks, including Worcester Cultural Coalition

More outreach to schools, brainstorm on ways to collaborate

Develop non traditional collaboration and partners

The Library staff needs to get out of the facility, to use the Common, to exist outside of 4 walls\*

## **FOCUS GROUP SESSIONS RECOMMENDATIONS**

This document includes Recommendations based on the Focus Group Responses that suggest practical future direction for the library administration. Pursuing these Recommendations will help improve library services in Worcester.

The focus groups identified characteristics of library service they would like for Worcester. The various resources and improved capabilities are described in the focus group question responses, particularly those for Questions #3 and #5.

Some of the Recommendations can be implemented without too much difficulty. "Immediate" recommendations can be implemented quickly and easily. "Intermediate" recommendations require additional time and fiscal support for the library. The "Long term" recommendation requires additional library space.

Among the **Immediate Recommendations** are activities that the library can undertake that directly address the focus group participants' need for better understanding of what services the library provides. The Immediate Recommendations also encourage the library to expand and foster collaboration at a higher level. Although the library can undertake these recommendations easily, as staff devotes time to these activities the library will have to reduce time spent on some services currently provided. The library administration can use statistical data and focus groups responses to help decide which services can be reduced to meet the Immediate Recommendations. Immediate Recommendations include:

**MARKETING:** The participants in the focus groups felt that the community did not know what was going on at the library. Because most of the focus group participants noted a lack of public relations and marketing of library services, library administration should develop and implement an ongoing marketing campaign. One aspect of the marketing campaign should include re-educating Worcester residents on the value of the library. A second component should concentrate on the message "The Main Library is safe." Focus group participants suggested that a marketing campaign requires ongoing and improved communication with library users through the local paper, radio, cable television, traditional flyers and mailers, email, and the library website. (Many participants mentioned hearing Penny Johnston, Head Librarian on a weekly radio program)

**WEBSITE:** The library should continue to develop the Worcester Public Library website to convey up-to-date information about the Worcester Public Library, including branch services. The website can be used to support needed marketing and public relations information. The website can be used to support cooperation and collaboration with the schools, both public and academic. The library can announce new library materials and programs. The website can be used to provide training materials for online databases and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). Adding a library blog will encourage interactivity with library patrons. The possibilities are endless.

**COLLABORATION:** There was considerable discussion about the need for expanded cooperation and/or collaboration between the library and other community groups, businesses, agencies, and the colleges. Focus Group participants say the Library staff needs to get out of the facility, to use the Common, to exist outside of the four walls of the Main Library. Although it is acknowledged that the library is already a collaborative participant with some Worcester agencies, the library has many resources that can be used through expanded and new cooperation and collaboration. To expand collaboration the Library should build on current relationships, develop new partnerships, and publicize collaborative action.

The **Intermediate Recommendations** require additional library funding. The library administration can take advantage of the strategic planning process and request added funding for staff to train all Worcester residents, but especially children, in how to use library services. Funding for expanded library hours, especially for consistent Sunday hours at the Main Library, is also needed. Intermediate Recommendations include:

**TRAINING:** The focus groups discussed the need for training to use the automated library services more effectively, including searching the Internet, evaluating resources, and using the online databases. This need is particularly great for school aged children. It was widely recognized by the focus group participants that the lack of school library teachers, especially at the elementary level, is having a negative impact on the development of library skills for Worcester students. Recent national research articulates the critical importance of school library teachers for the educational process.<sup>3</sup> The focus group participants suggest an important role for the public library in providing library skills to Worcester children until the City of Worcester funds school library teacher positions. The need for children to learn how to use the library was strongly stated by almost every focus group.

**LIBRARY HOURS:** Focus group participants would like improved hours of operation. There were many comments about the lack of Sunday hours. Even though Worcester is organized so that the Greendale/Perkins Branch is open hours that the Main Library is closed, and vice versa,

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<sup>3</sup> Loertscher, David V., compiled by. *Keeping Up With the Research Linking School Library Media Center Programs to Achievement*. A Handout: American Library Association Conference June 2005. (Current as of June 21, 2005.

participants said they never know when the library is open. Many users of the Main Library do not use the Branch Library and do not recognize that having the Branch open is a benefit to them. There was recognition that library hours are frequently budget related. However the focus group participants would love for the library to add hours, staff, and materials.

Focus Group responses suggest one **Long Term Recommendation:**

**BRANCHES:** The majority of the focus group participants think Worcester has an excellent Main Library facility. However, there was great enthusiasm for branch services. In a city of 37 square miles, for many residents going downtown to the Main Library is not convenient. Worcester has many fewer branches than comparable cities such as Providence, RI and Hartford, CT. Springfield, a city of 32 square miles, has nine branches. The users of the Greendale/Perkins Branch had many positive things to say about the 'neighborhood' service. Focus group participants want other neighborhoods in Worcester to have similar opportunities. Several focus groups suggested the potential of a shared school/public library space. The Worcester Public Library will have to investigate this option carefully; the mission of school libraries and public libraries is quite different. Focus group participants suggest that the Library develop a plan for branch services and get community support for the 'neighborhood' concept of branches. Closing the branches in the 90s due to budget circumstances was seen as short sighted. Many of the original facilities have been sold and are no longer available for library use. Worcester residents want branches. Now new facilities will need to be found to support a branch system.

The Worcester Public Library provides a number of library services the city wants and needs. By implementing the recommendations of the focus group participants, the library administration would be well on the way to fulfilling community expectations for ideal library services.

**APPENDIX E:  
WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WORCESTER, MA  
BASE DATA**

**INTRODUCTION**

The following information provides a brief overview of the Worcester Public Library. It includes data from FY2005, the last year self-reported compiled statistics are available from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

**RESOURCES**

	<b>FY2005</b>
Total Print Collection	634,661
Children's Collection	87,846
Total Print Subscriptions	1,167
Total Other Subscriptions	1,020
Total Audio Collection	14,562
Total Video Collection	15,594
Microforms	120,766
Electronic	16,063
Misc.	1,345
Print Holdings per capita	3.61
Audio/Visual Holdings per capita	0.17
Internet Workstations	58

**LIBRARY HOURS**

	<b>FY2005</b>
Hours Open per Week	110
Evenings Open	5
Saturdays Open	50
Sundays Open	13

**LIBRARY STAFFING LEVELS**

	<b>FY2005</b>
Excluding PagesE	
Total Number of Employees	76
Number of Part-time employees	5
Number of Full-time Employees	71
Number of Volunteer Hours /week	203.2

## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

In FY2005 the City of Worcester provided an annual budget of \$3,600,306 to the Worcester Public Library. That was slightly less than 1 percent (0.98%) of the entire city budget.

Worcester is one of five (5) municipalities in the 100,000 plus population group. The average library percent of total municipal expenditures for libraries in this population group was 0.97%. The average per capita expenditure for libraries in this population group was \$35.70. Worcester's library percent of total municipal expenditures was 0.98%. Worcester's library per capita expenditure was \$23.51.

There are 351 municipalities in Massachusetts. The FY2005 state average library percent of total municipal expenditures was 1.31%, with an average per capita expenditure of \$30.08

	FY2005
Total Municipal Expenditures for Library Services (FY2005)	\$3,665,156
Total Operating Expenditures	\$4,099,248
Total Salary Expenditures	\$2,991,365
Expenditures on Books, Periodicals, Videos, etc.	\$501,161

## LIBRARY USE

	FY2005
Total Circulation	608,640
Total Holdings	802,991
Circulation of Children's Materials	149,716
Non-resident circulation	114,050
Reference Questions Answered	127,712
Users of Electronic Resources	562,380
Web Page Hits	617,032
Attendance in Library	685,776
Children's Programs/Attendance	358/10,859
Adult/YA Programs/Attendance	181/3,603
Meeting Room Uses at Main Library	1,001
Quiet Study Room Uses (FY2003)	1,208
Interlibrary loan materials borrowed for patrons	20,622
Interlibrary loans provided to other libraries	40,346

## FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY

**The Friends of the Worcester Public Library, with approximately 750 members, provide financial support for 13 museum passes and fund most of the library's adult and children's programs. The Friends Library Book Store is open portions of each day that the Main Library is open. Items sold include used books, gifts, and small items, such as pens and paper.**

## WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY RANKINGS WITHIN POPULATION GROUP

There are 370 public libraries in Massachusetts. Within the population group serving communities of 100,000 plus there are 5 public libraries. Worcester's population in 2004 is 175,966.

The rankings are from the *Massachusetts Public Library Data: 2005 Rankings Report* compiled by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners in February 2006, with 1 being the best/largest ranking.

<b>FY2005</b>	<b>Worcester</b>	<b>Rank among libraries serving populations of 100,000+</b>	<b>Rank in State among all 370 libraries</b>
Size of Population	175,966	2	2
Per Capita Total Operating Income	\$23.51	4	252
Per Capita Total Appropriated Municipal Income	\$20.83	4	240
Per Capita Total Operating Expenditures	\$23.30	4	243
Per Capita Salary Expenditures	\$17.00	3	201
Per Capita Materials Expenditures	\$2.85	4	317
Per Capita Attendance	3.90	3	166
Per Capita Reference	0.73	4	98
Per Capita Holdings	4.56	3	229
Per Capita Total Circulation	3.46	4	333
Average Hours Open per Week	110	4	22

**APPENDIX F:  
WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WORCESTER, MA  
BENCHMARKING MUNICIPAL  
AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES  
IN WORCESTER: 2005  
WORCESTER REGIONAL RESEARCH BUREAU**

**Indicator 2: Library Services**

**Why is it important?**

Free and widespread access to information is vital to our knowledge-based economy and democratic society. Public libraries in this country have a long tradition of providing individuals with free access to information and services that promote life-long learning and personal enrichment. The Worcester Public Library- through its main library located in downtown Worcester and two branch libraries (Frances Perkins Branch in Greendale and the Great Brook Valley Branch)- affords users access to books, journals, videos, music CDs and other media; in-person and online reference services; and computers which provide access to the Internet, computerized databases, and other electronic information sources. Library patrons are able to search the library's database from home or work via the Internet, take advantage of inter-library loan services and programming that includes children's story time, attend computer skills classes, teen-led programs, and language and literacy support classes. Additionally, library facilities are often used for cultural and civic events, and in Worcester, the library's public meeting rooms are regularly used by a variety of local organizations.

Efforts to measure the performance of public libraries can lead to the identification of ways to strengthen them and their contributions to the communities that they serve.

## How does Worcester perform?

**Table 2.1** shows input and performance data for the Worcester Public Library (WPL) and the public libraries in Hartford, Providence, and Springfield.<sup>4</sup> From FY00 to FY04, service hours per week declined for each of the four library systems shown in **Table 2.1**; however, WPL experienced the greatest reduction in hours with a 25% decline (from 129 to 97 hours) during this period. In FY04, Worcester's staffing and service hours were below those of each of the three comparison library systems. It is worth noting that the higher staffing levels and service hours in the comparison cities are likely a function of these cities operating more branch libraries than Worcester. While Worcester operated two branch libraries in FY04, Hartford, Providence, and Springfield each operated nine branch libraries. However, Worcester's staff-to-service-hours ratio was higher than (at least double) each of the other cities, suggesting that during any given service hour, Worcester libraries had more staff on duty than the other libraries.

Despite the reductions in service hours and staffing levels described above, during the past five years, WPL's annual circulation has increased by 47% (from 476,956 to 698,787), and annual reference transactions increased by more than a third, from 102,158 in FY00 to 138,501 in FY04. While Providence and Hartford also experienced increases in annual circulation during the same period, the magnitude of growth was much less, at 12.9% and 7.3% respectively. Springfield was the only city listed in **Table 2.1** to report substantial declines in each of the categories examined.<sup>5</sup> Since FY00, the Springfield

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<sup>4</sup> The Public Library Data Service's annual *Statistical Report* provides financial information, annual use figures, technology-related statistics, library resources, and more. The most recent data collected (in the Spring of 2005) are for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Since July 2004, Springfield has been under a Finance Control Board because of fiscal insolvency. As the Board continues to work to ensure the long-term financial health of the City, it is likely that there could be additional reductions in library services.

library system has experienced a 20% reduction in total operating expenditures (from \$6.2 to \$4.9 million), a 34% reduction in staffing, a 19% reduction in weekly service hours, and annual circulation there has declined by 23%.

The WPL spends less on materials than any of the other libraries, and its materials expenditures of \$2.84 per resident are well below Hartford's (\$5.09), Providence's (\$4.66), and Springfield's (\$4.01).

**Table 2.2** details sources of funding for each of the four library systems in FY04. About 80% (\$3.6 million) of the Worcester Public Library's funding is derived from local tax levy dollars. The remainder of funding comes from state, federal, and other sources, with state funding comprising the largest component (more than \$731,000, or about 16% of total funding). Similarly, Hartford receives 82% of its funding from local sources and Springfield receives a slight higher percentage, 87%, from local tax dollars. The greatest share of Providence's funding (41%) came from *other sources* (e.g. gifts, donations, fines, fees, etc.), followed by local funding (34%) and the state (23%).

### **What does this mean for Worcester?**

In FY04, there were over 701,000 visitors to the Worcester Public Library, and attendance at WPL-sponsored programs was nearly 13,000. More than 475,000 items were viewed using the WPL's subscription services, and more than 31,000 items were loaned to other libraries in the region. While Worcester residents are afforded fewer points of service as well as fewer service hours compared to Springfield, Hartford, and Providence residents, it appears that they are increasingly utilizing the services that are available. After decreasing from FY02 to FY03, Worcester's annual circulation increased from FY03 to FY04, and in FY04, it reached its highest level in five years.

In FY04, WPL expenditures per resident were substantially below the expenditure levels in the three comparison cities. **Table 2.1** also shows that Worcester's per capita total expenditures have consistently been below the national average for all libraries in similarly-sized jurisdictions with populations of 100,000 – 249,999. In FY04, WPL's total operating expenditures were \$4.3 million, or about \$500,000 less than in FY02.

As a result of the approval of funding increases for the WPL in the City's FY06 budget, the WPL will be able to expand its hours of operation at its branches, and the main library will open 17 Sundays during the fiscal year (though it will remain closed on Mondays).

In addition to the input and output measures described here, direct feedback of library patrons is also an important aspect of measuring library performance. The extent to which users are satisfied with the services provided at the WPL will be gauged through the CCPM's annual citizen survey. The latest survey, administered in July 2005, asked Worcester residents how often they used library services, as well as how satisfied they were with the hours of operation, selection of materials, assistance provided by staff, children's programs, and computer resources/online services. The results of this survey will be published later this year.

**Table 2.1: Library Inputs**

		Worcester	Providence (1), (2)	Hartford	Springfield (3)	National Average for all jurisdictions 100,000-249,999
<b>Number of FTE Library Staff</b>	<b>FY00</b>	88.0	159.0	134.0	123.0	72.0
	<b>FY01</b>	80.0	155.4	147.0	126.0	73.6
	<b>FY02</b>	81.0	158.6	112.6	101.0	76.8
	<b>FY03</b>	77.0	152.5	110.3	70.0	76.3
	<b>FY04</b>	77.0	143.0	119.0	81.5	-
<b>Service Hours Per Week</b>	<b>FY00</b>	129.0	437.0	417.0	340.0	286.2
	<b>FY01</b>	129.0	435.5	417.0	340.0	298.0
	<b>FY02</b>	129.0	435.5	472.0	337.0	291.5
	<b>FY03</b>	98.0	435.5	428.0	276.0	282.7
	<b>FY04</b>	97.0	418.5	377.0	276.0	-
<b>Annual Circulation</b>	<b>FY00</b>	476,956	793,693	521,982	755,385	1,028,614
	<b>FY01</b>	611,837	815,544	471,495	848,191	1,054,733
	<b>FY02</b>	687,451	883,979	539,849	783,374	1,133,207
	<b>FY03</b>	662,704	819,982	557,646	579,795	1,186,475
	<b>FY04</b>	698,787	896,214	559,887	585,087	-
<b>Annual Reference Transactions</b>	<b>FY00</b>	102,158	177,314	276,186	145,832	163,194
	<b>FY01</b>	106,606	170,853	341,392	155,590	164,968
	<b>FY02</b>	151,335	178,385	436,761	155,921	168,686
	<b>FY03</b>	177,273	171,798	371,983	105,614	169,678
	<b>FY04</b>	138,501	182,097	573,513	136,922	-
<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>FY00</b>	\$4,136,307	\$7,876,198	\$5,830,100	\$6,200,538	\$3,887,427
	<b>FY01</b>	\$4,225,715	\$8,396,726	\$5,998,229	\$7,122,616	\$4,093,336
	<b>FY02</b>	\$4,813,053	\$8,396,726	\$6,590,877	\$7,139,127	\$4,399,648
	<b>FY03</b>	\$4,782,116	\$8,859,392	\$6,564,005	\$6,151,246	\$4,748,434
	<b>FY04</b>	\$4,301,896	\$9,842,685	\$6,278,472	\$4,988,252	-
<b>Total Expenditures per Resident</b>	<b>FY00</b>	\$23.91	\$45.32	\$46.95	\$40.79	\$25.10
	<b>FY01</b>	\$24.27	\$48.07	\$48.26	\$47.03	\$26.20
	<b>FY02</b>	\$27.48	\$47.78	\$53.02	\$47.00	\$28.14
	<b>FY03</b>	\$27.22	\$50.23	\$52.77	\$40.43	\$30.14
	<b>FY04</b>	\$24.48	\$55.81	\$50.48	\$32.78	-
<b>Expenditures for Materials</b>	<b>FY00</b>	\$565,954	\$835,257	\$585,380	\$723,608	\$584,238
	<b>FY01</b>	\$612,167	\$1,130,371	\$555,400	\$679,183	\$595,708
	<b>FY02</b>	\$555,247	\$1,130,371	\$657,175	\$649,142	\$612,299
	<b>FY03</b>	\$629,236	\$794,233	\$669,010	\$624,406	\$629,989
	<b>FY04</b>	\$498,653	\$821,551	\$633,098	\$609,830	-
<b>Materials Expenditures per Resident</b>	<b>FY00</b>	\$3.27	\$4.81	\$4.71	\$4.76	\$3.77
	<b>FY01</b>	\$3.52	\$6.47	\$4.47	\$4.48	\$3.81
	<b>FY02</b>	\$3.17	\$6.43	\$5.29	\$4.27	\$3.92
	<b>FY03</b>	\$3.58	\$4.50	\$5.38	\$4.10	\$4.00
	<b>FY04</b>	\$2.84	\$4.66	\$5.09	\$4.01	-

Source: Public Library Data Service surveys for FY00-FY04.

(1) The legal jurisdiction of the Providence Public Library is the entire state; for comparison purposes, however, the figures for the City of Providence are used.

(2) Expenditure statistics for Providence were reported exactly the same in FY02 as in FY01.

(3) Springfield's Main Library was closed for renovations during 2003. While its collection was available through the branch libraries, it is not counted in the "Number of Service Points." Three additional branches were completely closed and the remaining branches were open only one day per week.

**Table 2.2: FY04 Sources of Funding**

	<b>Worcester</b>	<b>Providence</b>	<b>Hartford</b>	<b>Springfield</b>
Local	\$3,600,306	\$3,350,000	\$5,135,707	\$4,335,000
State	\$731,763	\$2,272,801	\$20,891	\$438,947
Federal	\$16,285	\$241,618	\$300,459	\$10,280
Other	\$130,659	\$4,070,947	\$821,415	\$204,475
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,479,013</b>	<b>\$9,935,366</b>	<b>\$6,278,472</b>	<b>\$4,988,702</b>

Other: Gifts, donations, interest income, fines, fees, and anything else that does not fall into the other three categories.

Source: Public Library Data Service surveys for FY04.

**APPENDIX G:  
WORCESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY  
WORCESTER, MA  
2006 ANNUAL PATRON SURVEY**

Main Library Annual Survey 963 Surveys completed	2/21-2/26/06	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Satisfied or Very Satisfied
<b>Adult collections and reference services</b>					
Ease of finding materials in the adult department		50%	49%	1%	99%
Satisfaction with reference assistance		59%	38%	3%	97%
Satisfaction when requesting a magazine, newspaper or microfilm		51%	47%	2%	98%
Satisfaction with the Telephone Information Service		51%	46%	3%	97%
Did you get the information you were seeking?		94% - YES			
Was the item you were looking for available?		85% - YES			
<b>Borrowing and returning books:</b>					
Ease of applying for a library card		76%	22%	2%	98%
Efficiency of the checkout and return of materials		71%	26%	3%	97%
Requesting materials from other libraries (Interlibrary Loans)		63%	32%	5%	95%
Renewing or reserving books online		64%	30%	5%	94%
E-mail notifications		64%	30%	5%	94%
Were you treated courteously when borrowing or returning materials		96% - YES			
<b>Youth Services Collections(please skip to #4 if not applicable):</b>					
Ease of finding materials in the Children's Room		71%	26%	3%	97%
Satisfaction with reference assistance by the Children's Room staff		75%	23%	1%	98%
Satisfaction with the quality of children's programming		72%	25%	3%	97%
Ease of finding materials in the teen area		63%	34%	3%	97%
Satisfaction with the quality of teen programming		62%	34%	4%	96%
<b>Library Computers and Access</b>					
Availability of computers for your needs		60%	33%	7%	93%
Internet sign-up		58%	37%	5%	95%
Computer printing, copy machines and microfilm reader printers		55%	38%	7%	93%
<b>Online Services:</b>					
Ease of using the catalog to locate materials		60%	37%	2%	97%
Electronic databases (ex: Infotrac)		58%	37%	5%	95%
E-mail Reference (Ask a Librarian)		57%	39%	4%	96%
Web links to other Internet resources		55%	40%	5%	95%

Website's ease of use	58%	38%	4%	96%
Have you book-marked the library's website?	41% - YES			
<b>Library Facility</b>				
Cleanliness of the building	77%	22%	1%	99%
Comfort of the building	75%	23%	1%	98%
Safety of the building	76%	23%	1%	99%
<b>Overall Satisfaction with Library Services</b>				
	71%	29%	1%	100%

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very Satisfied or Satisfied
<h2 style="text-align: center;">Great Brook Valley Branch Library Annual Survey 2/21/06-2/24/06 40 Surveys completed</h2>				
<b>Adult collections and reference services</b>				
Ease of finding materials	36%	58%	6%	94%
Satisfaction with reference assistance	83%	17%	0%	100%
Did you get the information you were seeking?	89% - YES			
Was the item you were looking for available?	80% - YES			
<b>Borrowing and returning books:</b>				
Ease of applying for a library card	69%	29%	3%	98%
Efficiency of the checkout and return of materials	66%	32%	3%	98%
Requesting materials from other libraries (Interlibrary Loans)	53%	36%	11%	89%
Renewing or reserving books online	32%	56%	12%	88%
E-mail notifications	40%	52%	8%	92%
Were you treated courteously when borrowing or returning materials	97% - YES			
<b>Youth Services Collections</b>				
Ease of finding materials in the Children's Section	83%	17%	0%	100%
Satisfaction with reference assistance by the library staff	74%	24%	3%	100%
Satisfaction with the quality of children's programming	68%	29%	3%	100%
<b>Library Computers and Access</b>				
Availability of computers for your needs	69%	26%	5%	95%
Internet sign-up	65%	32%	3%	97%

<b>Online Services:</b>				
Ease of using the catalog to locate materials	32%	62%	6%	94%
Electronic databases (ex: Infotrac)	45%	48%	6%	93%
E-mail Reference (Ask a Librarian)	36%	61%	3%	97%
Web links to other Internet resources	50%	47%	3%	97%
Website's ease of use	50%	50%	0%	100%
Have you book-marked the library's website?	44% - YES			
<b>Library Facility</b>				
Cleanliness of the building	69%	31%	0%	100%
Comfort of the building	69%	15%	15%	84%
Safety of the building	85%	15%	0%	100%
<b>Overall Satisfaction with Library Services</b>	77%	21%	3%	98%

<b>Frances Perkins Branch Library Annual Survey 2/21/06-2/24/06 155 Surveys completed</b>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very Satisfied or Satisfied
<b>Adult collections and reference services</b>				
Ease of finding materials in the adult department	68%	31%	1%	99%
Satisfaction with reference assistance	84%	16%	0%	100%
Did you get the information you were seeking?	98%			
Was the item you were looking for available?	87% - YES			
<b>Borrowing and returning books:</b>				
Ease of applying for a library card	92%	8%	0%	100%
Efficiency of the checkout and return of materials	88%	12%	0%	100%
Requesting materials from other libraries (Interlibrary Loans)	87%	11%	3%	98%
Renewing or reserving books online	85%	15%	0%	100%
E-mail notifications	79%	19%	1%	98%
Were you treated courteously when borrowing or returning materials	100% - YES			
<b>Youth Services Collections(please skip to #4 if not applicable):</b>				
Ease of finding materials in the Children's Room	76%	24%	0%	100%
Satisfaction with reference assistance by the Children's Room staff	85%	15%	0%	100%
Satisfaction with the quality of children's programming	81%	17%	2%	98%

Ease of finding materials in the teen area	78%	22%	0%	100%
Satisfaction with the quality of teen programming	76%	24%	0%	100%
<b>Library Computers and Access</b>				
Availability of computers for your needs	72%	28%	0%	100%
Internet sign-up	70%	30%	0%	100%
Computer printing, copy machines and microfilm reader printers	71%	24%	5%	95%
<b>Online Services:</b>				
Ease of using the catalog to locate materials	69%	30%	1%	99%
Electronic databases (ex: Infotrac)	68%	30%	2%	98%
E-mail Reference (Ask a Librarian)	83%	15%	2%	98%
Web links to other Internet resources	69%	29%	2%	98%
Website's ease of use	71%	26%	3%	97%
Have you book-marked the library's website?	44% - YES			
<b>Library Facility</b>				
Cleanliness of the building	78%	22%	0%	100%
Comfort of the building	76%	22%	1%	98%
Safety of the building	84%	15%	1%	99%
Parking	76%	22%	2%	98%
<b>Overall Satisfaction with Library Services</b>				
	92%	8%	0%	100%

<b>Worcester Public Library Annual Internet Survey 2/21/06-2/24/06 54 Surveys completed</b>	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	Very Satisfied or Satisfied
<b>Adult collections and reference services</b>				
Ease of finding materials in the adult department	62%	32%	6%	94%
Satisfaction with reference assistance	64%	24%	8%	88%
Satisfaction when requesting a magazine, newspaper or microfilm	62%	31%	8%	93%
Satisfaction with the Telephone Information Service	65%	20%	15%	85%
Did you get the information you were seeking?	90%			
Was the item you were looking for available?	74% - YES			
<b>Borrowing and returning books:</b>				
Ease of applying for a library card	82%	16%	2%	98%

Efficiency of the checkout and return of materials	73%	19%	8%	92%
Requesting materials from other libraries (Interlibrary Loans)	73%	24%	3%	97%
Renewing or reserving books online	74%	21%	5%	95%
E-mail notifications	63%	26%	11%	89%
Were you treated courteously when borrowing or returning materials	88% - YES			
<b>Youth Services Collections(please skip to #4 if not applicable):</b>				
Ease of finding materials in the Children's Room	56%	44%	0%	100%
Satisfaction with reference assistance by the Children's Room staff	63%	31%	6%	94%
Satisfaction with the quality of children's programming	73%	9%	18%	82%
Ease of finding materials in the teen area	73%	27%	0%	100%
Satisfaction with the quality of teen programming	71%	14%	14%	85%
<b>Library Computers and Access</b>				
Availability of computers for your needs	53%	38%	9%	91%
Internet sign-up	57%	29%	14%	86%
Computer printing, copy machines and microfilm reader printers	48%	30%	22%	78%
<b>Online Services:</b>				
Ease of using the catalog to locate materials	71%	27%	2%	98%
Electronic databases (ex: Infotrac)	68%	29%	4%	97%
E-mail Reference (Ask a Librarian)	55%	40%	5%	95%
Web links to other Internet resources	52%	44%	4%	96%
Website's ease of use	50%	45%	5%	95%
Have you book-marked the library's website?	82% - YES			
<b>Library Facility</b>				
Cleanliness of the building	71%	27%	2%	98%
Comfort of the building	58%	38%	4%	96%
Safety of the building	60%	32%	8%	92%
<b>Overall Satisfaction with Library Services</b>	68%	28%	4%	96%

**The extensive written comments that participants provided are available through the Head Librarian's Office.**