

explore

discover

connect



HOPKINTON PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN

FY2022 - FY2027

*Approved by the
Hopkinton Public Library Board of Trustees
January 21, 2021*

*Hopkinton Public Library
13 Main Street
Hopkinton, MA 01748*

LIBRARY DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY



Welcome to the Hopkinton Public Library's FY22-27 Strategic Plan! I am pleased to share this new vision for the library's future with our community.

At our building reopening ceremony in 2017, I spoke about the library as the "heart of the community." It has been a joy to watch the organization and its staff grow in that role over the last three years. Even amid the challenges of 2020, when Covid-19 dramatically affected the services we could safely provide, we have continued to work hard to connect, support, and sustain our community as much as possible.

I am gratified to report that one theme in the feedback gathered during this planning process was that we have largely succeeded in our efforts. Thank you to the nearly 400 community members who filled out our survey, as well as our focus group participants! Your overall message was clear: **Hopkinton greatly values what its library is already doing - and you want to see us do more.**

"We love our library and staff" ❤️❤️❤️

You expressed appreciation for...

- the warm and welcoming environment created by library staff
- the opportunities the library provides for learning, entertainment, and quiet work
- the ways the library facilitates social connection, community collaboration, and interpersonal engagement
- the resources and programming the library provides for children and teens

You also asked for...

- enhanced access to library resources, including expanded hours of service
- expanded collections across multiple formats and languages
- the continuation and expansion of new services launched during the pandemic
- more events for all ages
- greater community engagement, including better communication about library services, resources, and upcoming events
- more active and visible engagement with diversity, equity, and social justice
- creation of a makerspace and/or areas for creative work in the library

We used your valuable input, combined with additional feedback that we had collected in 2018, to re-envision our mission statement and identify five strategic priorities.

We are at an uncertain time, as we try to envision a "new normal" in the face of a world in pandemic and social upheaval. This plan will be a clear guide for the library as we move forward through changing circumstances. It is designed to be flexible: its focus on key themes and priorities enables us to maintain alignment with core principles while reshaping library services on the fly in response to new and unexpected situations. For the next five years, all of our work will be guided by the priorities defined in this document. Each year, library staff will create action plans describing specific steps we intend to take to move forward in our priority areas.

Thank you to the Hopkinton community, Strategic Planning Advisory Group members, library staff, and members of the Friends of the Library, Hopkinton Public Library Foundation, and Board of Library Trustees for your thoughts and guidance during this process. I am also deeply appreciative of consultant Ruth Kowal for her efforts, without which this project would not have gotten across the finish line. Finally, we are grateful to the library's Friends and Foundation for their continuing support, especially the Hopkinton Public Library Foundation for its generosity in covering the consulting costs associated with the creation of this Strategic Plan.

Being the "heart of the community" also means that the library depends on community support. Thanks to the input and hard work of many people, we now have a strong plan that will guide us in providing exceptional services, managing our resources effectively, and sustaining our vital role within the Hopkinton community. I am excited to see what we will accomplish together.

Heather Backman

Library Director

January 2021

LIBRARY MISSION



We inspire exploration, discovery, and engagement
as we enrich and strengthen the social network
of our diverse community.



“*It's such a great resource!*

We depend on the library to stay engaged, informed and entertained.

LIBRARY PRIORITIES



1 Connecting our community

We are a community gathering place, bringing Hopkinton together through shared spaces as well as resources, programs, and events that inform, educate, and entertain.

- We will sustain and increase current levels of collaboration and communication with residents, community groups, and other Town entities (such as the schools, other Town departments, and Town boards and committees) to support, cultivate, and expand library services.
- We will facilitate community discourse to ensure an informed citizenry.
- We will continue to support residents' engagement with their community's past, present, and future by providing access to Hopkinton governmental and historical resources.
- We will encourage each library staff member to build deep community relationships and knowledge, and will leverage these connections to expand and enrich our users' lives.

"I appreciate that you are constantly looking for ways to engage the community, whether through lectures, meetings, or community events... Please continue!"



2 Providing access to education, arts, culture, and knowledge

We reaffirm our commitment to the library's fundamental focus on reading, learning, and personal exploration. We serve as a trusted source for accurate information.

- We will maintain a resource collection that is broad-based, up to date, and factually accurate.
- Our collections, in a wide variety of formats, will continue to evolve in response to both traditional and emerging community needs and interests.
- Our technology resources - equipment, digital collections, and staff knowledge and expertise - will support patrons in successfully accessing, evaluating, and using resources and information beyond the library's print collections.
- We will contribute to the community's vibrant intellectual and cultural life through events that promote a love of reading, stimulate personal development, educate, and entertain.
- We will pursue new ways to promote community use of the library's collections, programs, and resources.



“I love my library and I've missed you so much during this time!!! Being able to take out books on interlibrary loan is essential to my work[...] I use that service ALL the time!”

Creating an inclusive, welcoming, and safe environment for all

3

We are a community destination providing spaces, resources, and experiences that are welcoming, comfortable, safe, and respectful for the entire Hopkinton community and beyond. Our doors - physical and virtual - are open to all.

- Our services and resources will embody a broad range of perspectives and experiences, reflecting our community while also providing opportunities to learn about other ways of being in the world.
- We will engage with members of our community who are not currently library users and identify ways to better meet their needs.
- We will identify and address racism and other biases, systemic injustice, and inequity in the community and in our delivery of library services.
- We will actively seek community partners for broadened benefit to and inclusion of all.
- We will continue to adhere to the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, the Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read Statement, which provide a firm foundation ensuring privacy and respect for all users' library interactions and transactions.

“ ————— ”

Lastly, but so important, the librarians are amazing!

They are so friendly, polite, and helpful. They make the library such a warm and welcoming place.

————— ”

4

Strive to deliver an exceptional, customer-focused user experience

We are committed to continual improvement. We aim to provide top-notch customer service that responds effectively to changing community needs.

- We will recruit, train, and retain a knowledgeable, service-oriented, and creative staff in active pursuit of innovative approaches to service delivery.
- We will promote our offerings in new and different ways to ensure that as many residents as possible are aware of library resources and services.
- Our facility will be clean, comfortable, easy to navigate, accessible, and responsive to a variety of potential uses.

“

The library is a tremendous resource to this community.

My kids are older now but having the library as an after school or sport place to study [...] was vital to a working parent.

”



Stewarding and obtaining resources to accomplish strategic priorities

5

We leverage available financial and other resources to their fullest. We advocate for and seek out additional support as needed to enable us to fully meet community expectations.

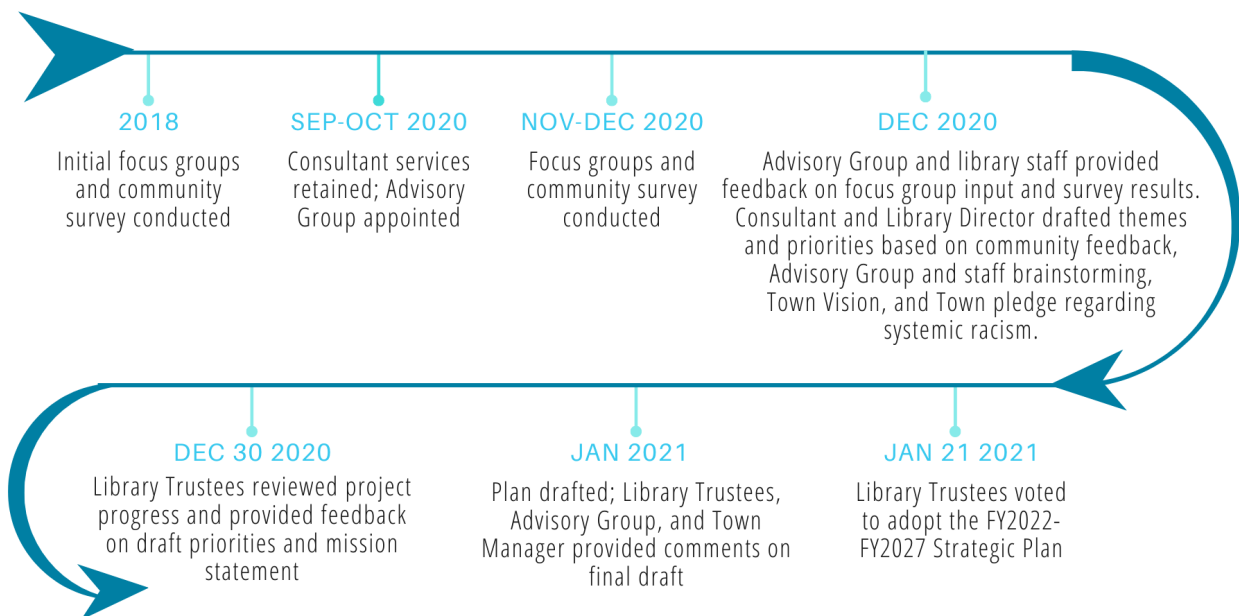
- We will continue to practice sound, efficient management of available resources to align our mission, priorities, and action plans with the Town's finances.
- We will actively seek robust financial, personnel, and other support from the Town and other sources to provide enhanced and expanded library services in response to community needs and interests.
- We will sustain, build, and further define the relationships between the library, the Friends of the Library, and the Hopkinton Public Library Foundation, enabling these affiliated organizations to continue and expand their activities in support of the library's key objectives.



PROJECT PROCESS DESCRIPTION



In 2018, under the guidance of a 14-member Advisory Group and the library Trustees, extensive community input was gathered through eleven focus groups and a community-wide survey as the first phase of developing a new Strategic Plan for the library. Progress with data analysis and planning moved ahead gradually, but was completely halted early in 2020 due to the Covid-19 virus. The decision was made to continue work on the Plan in late 2020, and the services of a library consultant were retained to assist with the project. A new 8-member Advisory Group, including representatives of the Library Board of Trustees, Library Foundation, and the Friends of the Library, as well as community members, was created to provide project guidance and advice to the library director and the consultant. Four additional focus groups and a community survey were conducted to validate the data collected in 2018. The Library Board of Trustees was updated on progress at their monthly meetings, and held a special meeting on December 30, 2020 to review the proposed themes and priorities for the new strategic plan and to discuss possible new mission statements. The final draft of the Strategic Plan was presented to the Trustees at their January 21, 2021 meeting, at which it was approved for adoption and submission to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.



OUR COMMUNITY & LIBRARY



The Town...



Hopkinton is a town in Middlesex County, Massachusetts, less than 30 miles west of Boston. The town is best known as the starting point of the Boston Marathon, held annually on Patriots' Day in April, and as the headquarters for the enterprise-oriented Dell EMC.

Hopkinton's population is growing rapidly. According to the UMASS Donahue Institute, between 2010 and 2019 the town's population increased by 3,561, from 14,909 to 18,470. That 23.9% growth, which has set Hopkinton as the fastest growing community in the Commonwealth, is projected to continue at a reduced rate over the next 20 years.

United States Census Bureau data for 2019 reports that median household income is high, \$157,353 compared to \$81,215 for the Commonwealth, and residents are highly educated with 71.9% of the population holding a Bachelor's Degree or above, compared to 42.7% for the Commonwealth. 3.6% of the population represent Persons in Poverty, compared to 9.4% for the Commonwealth. Community Race and Origin show a predominantly white population (84% (compared to 80.6% for the Commonwealth)); 1.9% Black or African American (9.0% for the Commonwealth); 11.4% Asian (7.2% for the Commonwealth); and 3.2% Hispanic or Latino (12.4% for the Commonwealth). The Town's Asian community has been growing significantly in the last several years, and there are now active cultural nonprofits representing Southeast Asian and Chinese-American residents.

The Town is governed by a Select Board and Annual Town Meeting, with a Town Manager overseeing day-to-day operations. The Select Board and community have high expectations for municipal service provision, and pursue a conservative approach to fiscal management.

...The Library

Services of Hopkinton Public Library are delivered from a building located on Main Street in the heart of downtown Hopkinton. The building, which was substantially expanded and renovated in 2016/2017, comprises two historic structures dating to 1895 - the original library building and a church which was annexed to the library in 1967 - as well as the 2017 addition.



The library belongs to the C/W MARS resource sharing network, a consortium of 150 public, academic, school and special libraries located throughout Central and Western Massachusetts. The C/W MARS network extends the library's in-house collections to some 8.1 million items held by member libraries.

Since the reopening of the renovated building (and prior to Covid-19, which impacted traditional service provision), the library has seen substantial increases in use.

Compared to pre-renovation use, as of FY19:

- Foot traffic was up by 50%, to nearly 68,000 visitors annually
- Circulation and number of registered borrowers had both increased by 18%
- Program attendance had nearly tripled
- Computer usage had increased by 84%
- The library's physical collections were 54% larger (grew from 38,000 to 58,000 items)

New amenities include both small study rooms and community meeting/event rooms, which have been collectively used nearly 6,000 times (not counting library events) since the renovated building opened.

Library hours have also expanded since the renovation: The library began offering services on summer Saturdays in 2018 (Saturday hours had previously been September-May only) and added eight evening hours to its weekday operating schedule in fall 2019. Plans to open on Sunday afternoons in 2020 were postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Beyond the traditional library collection of books, magazines, CDs, and DVDs, as well as some unusual items such as a circulating telescope, the library provides access to a range of digital materials for leisure, informational, and educational use by all ages. Use of the digital collections, already steadily increasing over the past several years, soared in 2020 while library services were limited due to the Covid-19 virus outbreak. The library also launched a variety of new virtual/remote services during the pandemic, including virtual events, curbside materials pickup, chat-a-librarian, and "quick picks" book bundles.

The library receives an annual appropriation of approximately \$600,000 (as of FY21) from the Town of Hopkinton. This appropriation primarily funds salaries for 6 full-time and 10 part-time staff (10 FTE) and about half of the library's annual collections spending. More robust services are made possible by more than \$80,000 spent each year from trust funds (C/W MARS consortium membership, programming expenses, collections, technology), the Friends of the Library (programming expenses, Adventure Passes, staff training and morale, miscellaneous special projects), the Hopkinton Public Library Foundation (special projects), State Aid (collections, technology, staff training, programming, and any items not funded by other sources), and gifts (collections, programming, donor interest).

SURVEY RESULTS



TOP 10 Important Services

- 1 Books, DVDs, CDs, etc to borrow
- 2 Museum passes
- 3 Programs & classes for children
- 4 Library staff help with finding new things
- 5 Partnerships with community organizations
- 6 Digital books, music, movies, etc. to download
- 7 Space for meeting & interacting
- 8 Programs and classes for teens
- 9 Services for individuals with visual/auditory/physical impairment
- 10 Internet access



Desired Service Enhancements

Desired Events

- More arts & cultural events**
62% of respondents
- Regular special events as part of ongoing "traditions"**
54% of respondents
- More events for children**
50% of respondents
- More events for adults**
39% of respondents
- Forums for public discussion & civic engagement**
36% of respondents
- Simultaneous live & virtual event**
32% of respondents
- More events for teens**
31% of respondents

DESIRED COLLECTION ADDITIONS

- More availability of new and bestseller titles in print/physical format.
64% of respondents
- Items for hands-on learning and fun in the library, or to borrow for home use.
47% of respondents
- More availability of new and bestseller titles in digital format.
44% of respondents
- Technology tools to loan.
35% of respondents

Resources & Services Wishlist

- More STEAM programming & resources for children and teens
58% of respondents
- Maker-/creative space & materials for arts and crafts
44% of respondents
- More curriculum-related resources & homework help for school-age children
34% of respondents
- Online learning opportunities for adults
34% of respondents
- Workspace for mobile workers & entrepreneurs
34% of respondents
- Delivery of library materials to homebound
30% of respondents
- More early literacy programs to help young children prepare for school
30% of respondents
- Online learning opportunities for children
28% of respondents
- Online learning opportunities for teens
25% of respondents

SURVEY RESULTS



How do People use Hopkinton Public Library?

In-Person Library Visits

- 91% Borrow books, DVDs or other materials
- 43% Attend library programs/events
- 41% Read in the library or browse
- 31% Spend time with my children
- 26% Get help from the library staff
- 24% Use meeting rooms
- 17% Use the library wifi
- 13% Study/homework
- 12% Use study rooms
- 10% Visit with friends
- 10% Research/use special collections
- 8% Use computers or access the internet



“Other” responses included: faxing/photocopying/printing, work on computer, pickup Adventure (museum) passes

Library Website Visits

- View/search library catalog 73%
- Account Login 72%
- Learn about programs & events 51%
- For hours, directions & general info 44%
- Download digital books, music, movies, etc 35%
- Access other electronic resources 12%
- Book a meeting room 12%
- I don't use the library website 8%
- Ask a librarian a question 7%



“Other” responses included: getting information on Adventure (museum) passes

THANK YOU



2020 Advisory Group

Alyndra Canty
Katie Davenport
Ellen Deutsch
Russell Ellsworth
Saibhaskar Gudempati
Meena Kaushik
Jane Lu
Nicole Simpson

*Alternate designees from the Trustees, Friends, and
Foundation:*

Janice Barry
Jessica McCaffrey
Lindsay McDermott
Beth Mezitt

2018 Advisory Group

Laura Barry
Barbara Champney
Beth D'Alleva
Katie Davenport
Russ Ellsworth
Hayley Glassburn
Kelly Grill
June Harris
Susan Mello
Olivia Ozmun
Susan Porter
Ruta Upalekar
Kris Waldman
Sheri Zeng

Library Trustees 2018-2020

Janice Barry	Mike McNamara
June Harris	Susan Porter
Meena Kaushik	Stan Pulnik
Jessica King	Margaret Wiggin
Jessica McCaffrey	

Library Staff

Heather Backman, <i>Library Director</i>	Khyati Kuvadia, <i>Substitute</i>
Nancy Baker-Fowler, <i>Senior Library Assistant</i>	Jessi McCarthy, <i>Adult Services Librarian</i>
Erin Bassler, <i>Senior Library Assistant</i>	Alannah Miller, <i>Substitute</i>
Cailin Chenelle, <i>Senior Library Assistant</i>	Eleri Schutte, <i>Substitute</i>
Andrea Conboy, <i>Children's Librarian</i>	Ann-Marie Speicher, <i>Reference Librarian</i>
Linda Connelly, <i>Senior Library Assistant</i>	Uma Storm, <i>Substitute</i>
Danielle Cook, <i>Reference/Technology Librarian</i>	Anne Thie, <i>Young Adult Librarian</i>
Nia Gallagher, <i>Senior Library Assistant</i>	Sara Tomaino, <i>Substitute Reference Librarian</i>
Sara Hunter, <i>Senior Library Assistant</i>	Kristen Webb, <i>Senior Library Assistant</i>

2020 Consultant

Ruth Kowal

Thank you, as well, to all of our focus group participants and survey respondents.