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Acton Memorial Library

Long Range Plan

FY 2014 – FY 2018

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1 Executive Summary

The Acton Memorial Library's FY2014-FY2018 Long Range Plan was developed through a series of meetings, data collections and activities that took place between June 2012 and November 2013. Information was solicited by means of: interviews with library staff by committee members; the creation, distribution, tabulation and interpretation of a survey that was made available online and in hard copy, both at the library and included as part of a larger municipal mailing to nearly every homeowner in Acton; and citizen participation in a community workshop, which was organized and led by committee members and facilitated by an independent professional.

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

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

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

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

Methodology and data collection activities are briefly summarized within the text. Related appendices provide a documentation of the data collected.

The Acton Memorial Library Board of Trustees approved the FY2014-FY2018 Long Range Plan on December 10, 2013.

2 Committee Members / Trustees

2.1 Long Range Planning Committee Members

David Barrat
Ann Chang
Phil DeCesar
Thomas Dunn – Co-Chair
Sandra Hinds
Paulina Knibbe
Pamela Lynn
Marcia Rich, Library Director
Carolyn Sager
Sampada Salunkhe – Co-Char
Suzanne Shanahan (Recorder)
Nancy Tavernier
Jane Wang
Hongfang Yang

2.2 Acton Memorial Library Board of Trustees

Dennis Ahern
David Barrat, President
Ann Chang, Vice President
Thomas Dunn
Joseph Glannon
Miriam Lezak, Secretary
Sampada Salunkhe
Suzanne Shanahan
Robert Surdel

3 Introduction

In October 1994, the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners mandated that libraries must have approved Long Range Plans to apply for Federal funds.

The Acton Memorial Library immediately prepared its first of a series of Long Range Plans. Subsequently, the library was able to receive Federal and State Grants which helped with building expansion, a Chinese language collection, and web-site start-up.

In May 2012, the Board of Trustees appointed a Long Range Plan Committee to develop a document to guide the library for the five years beginning July 1, 2013. The committee was charged with identifying how the library serves the community and ways to improve the library services. This was a challenge given the many changes in library use and technology in recent years.

The committee followed guidelines described in *The New Planning for Results*, American Library Association, 2001.

4 Methodology

The methodology for the plan was essentially that of the library's FY2009-FY2013 Long Range Plan, which was based on *The New Planning for Results, A Streamlined Approach* by Sandra Nelson.

The first step was to reach out to the community to recruit a committee reflecting the diversity of Acton. Once that was accomplished, the Long Range Planning (LRP) Committee, under the auspice of the Acton Memorial Library Trustees, established the tasks to be accomplished and a timetable.

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

The community survey was made available to citizens both as a questionnaire mailed to all homeowners and through the library's website. Questionnaire results were keyed into an electronic analysis program, SurveyMonkey. Results from the 499 responses representing 1214 people were analyzed (Appendix 8.3)

In addition, meetings with library staff were conducted and their suggestion and opinions documented (Appendix 8.4).

The LRP Committee conducted a community workshop, composed of citizens selected to represent a broad range of community organizations, interest groups, ages, and concerns (Appendix 8.5).

After a brief general sessions, the 50 workshop participants were divided into groups and were asked three questions:

1. What is the role of the Acton Memorial Library in our community? How do you see it evolving over the next 5 – 10 years?
2. How do the CURRENT services provided by the AML meet your needs? What might be improved?
3. What NEW services or features would you like to see in the future?

After the workshop, the responses were grouped under three topics: 1) Services; 2) Materials; and 3) Facility. The results provided citizens' perceptions of current services and desirable future resources and were discussed extensively by the Long Range Plan Committee. Many of the comments made during the workshop inspired plan activities.

The Mission Statement was discussed extensively; ultimately it was decided to reaffirm the statement from the previous plan. Six goals, with their related objectives and activities were developed and decisions made as to which should be accomplished first.

A draft of the goals was presented to the trustees to ensure that there was agreement between the Board and the LRP committee. The plan was finalized and approved by the trustees on December 10, 2013.

5 Mission Statement

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

6 FY 2014 – 2018, Goals, Objectives and Activities

6.1 Library Collections

GOAL

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

6.1.1 Objective 1

Update and maintain the Collection Development Policy.

Activities

1. By December 2013, draft a Collection Development Policy which addresses:
    a. Responsibility for Collection Development
    b. Selection criteria
    c. Reference collection
    d. Collections for specific age groups
    e. The availability of popular items in all formats
    f. Audio-visual materials
    g. Purchase of e-content
    h. English as a second language (ESL) items
    i. Large Print collection
    j. Historical and Genealogical collections
    k. Foreign Language collection
    l. Periodicals
    m. Gifts
    n. Deselection/Weeding
    o. Controversial materials/Intellectual Freedom
    p. Request for reconsideration of materials
    q. Frequency of policy review
2. Review periodically according to schedule stated in the policy

6.1.2 Objective 2

Maintain the Circulation Policy revised in July 2013

Activities

1. Review the policy during the summer of 2015.
2. Include a frequency of policy review clause in the policy.

6.1.3 Objective 3

Improve the visibility of items of particular interest

Activities

1. Continue displays of "best picks".
2. By December 2013, develop and maintain a list of turret space display ideas.

6.1.4 Objective 4

Improve access to the collections.

Activities

1. Weed the collections on a defined schedule.

2. Periodically evaluate the number of kick-stools to ensure easy shelf access.

6.2 Facilities

GOAL

Ensure that the interior of the library will continue to function smoothly as a building that meets the needs of the community for the next ten years.

6.2.1 Objective 1

Improve the function of the building's interior.

Activities

1. Hire an architect who specializes in libraries to assess the current situation, suggest changes, and estimate the costs of the changes.
2. Assist the architect as appropriate in the creation of a draft report.
3. Architect does a presentation on the report to the Board of Trustees and other interested parties.
4. Working with the architect, the trustees develop a priority list and timetable for implementation.
5. Timetable in 4 is accepted; funding sources identified.

This objective and the attendant activities should be accomplished within two years after acceptance of the Long Ranger Plan.

6.2.2 Objective 2

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

Activities

1. Review the placement, height and accessibility of the shelving.
2. Review the layout of the Children's Department.

6.2.3 Objective 3

Improve the appearance and comfort of the library.

Activities

1. Identify and setup a comfortable gathering area where patrons can meet, have conversations and work collaboratively.
2. Investigate the feasibility of permitting and/or providing beverages that can be consumed in specified areas of the library.
3. Review the layout and condition of all restrooms and proceed accordingly.
4. Review all furniture for wear and develop a timetable for replacement/repair.
5. Develop timetables for replacement of carpet and painting.

6.2.4 Objective 4

Balance expected/known technology changes with layout and furnishings.

Activities

1. Review space needs and changes in the reference area.

2. Review the quiet study areas; investigate/identify areas for conversation and group study.

6.3 Staffing

GOAL

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

6.3.1 Objective 1

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

Activities

1. Using priorities generated by the planning process and with the involvement of department heads within the library, brainstorm potential realignments of roles and responsibilities/changes in positions by December 2013.
2. Reach out to other libraries as appropriate with questions about their organizational structure by March 2014.
3. Using the information and ideas gathered in Activities 1 and 2, decide whether changes in roles and responsibilities/positions is beneficial to the organization by July 2014.
4. Depending on the results of Activity 3, present information to the Board of Trustees by September 2014.
5. Pursue the changes decided upon by working with the Town Human Resources Department.

6.3.2 Objective 2

Ensure that job descriptions for existing positions are up to date and in the current format.

Activities

1. By January 2014, identify job descriptions which have not been updated in more than five years.
2. Working with the Town Human Resources Department, department heads within the library, and position incumbents, revise any job descriptions identified in Activity 1 by June 2014.
3. By July 2014, identify any job descriptions that have not been updated in the last 1-5 years.
4. Working with the Town Human Resources Department, department heads within the library, and position incumbents, revise any job descriptions identified in Activity 3 by January 2015.
5. After all job descriptions have been updated in Activities 1-4, review all job descriptions annually.

6.3.3 Objective 3

Ensure that pay scales are competitive with comparable public libraries in the state.

Activities

1. Using data collected annually by the Mass. Board of Library Commissioners, assess the competitiveness of pay ranges with against other libraries' ranges by March 2014.

2. Identify pay ranges which are less than 95% of the average for comparable positions by May 2014.
3. Working with the Town Human Resources Department, endeavor to raise the pay grades of those positions by September 2014.
4. Assess the frequency and amount of pay differentials for evening and Saturday hours by December 2015.
5. Depending on the results of Activity 4, work with the Town Human Resources Department to implement as appropriate by July 2015.

6.4 Technology

GOAL

6.4.1 Objective 1

Provide basic technology support and training to library users.

Activities

1. Offer six classes quarterly in basic/introductory computer skills.
2. Provide as-needed training and support for such AML systems as the online catalogs, museum pass reservation software, public computers, reference databases, digital catalog, reference iPad, and others.
3. Offer 3 workshops or programs a year on technology topics such as social networking, internet security, Ebay, Etsy, etc.
4. Offer drop-in computer help sessions at least 6 times a year.
5. Provide self-paced learning opportunities through AML website links to free online tutorials.
6. Maintain an up-to-date collection of consumer technology related books in print and electronic formats.

6.4.2 Objective 2

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

Activities

1. Continually assess opportunities to increase access to e-books, whether through the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) or other sources.
2. Assess the need for an expanded e-audiobook collection quarterly.
3. Continue to monitor usage and potential expansion of electronic reference materials and databases.
4. Monitor opportunities to offer new electronic formats such as streaming video or downloadable periodicals.
5. Implement downloadable music through Freegal during the first quarter of FY 14 and assess quarterly the opportunities to increase access to downloadable music through the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) or other sources.

6.4.3 Objective 3

Provide user-friendly access to electronic resources.

Activities

1. Facilitate the selection and downloading process of eBooks and e-audiobooks through the production and maintenance of printable guides.
2. Continue to provide feedback to MLN and vendors about the users' experience of the digital catalog.
3. Evaluate the continued need for an eBook reader loaner pool at least twice a year and replace or upgrade its equipment accordingly.
4. Work with MLN to monitor and enhance the MLN catalog if the opportunity arises
5. Raise public awareness of the wide variety of electronic and technological resources available through classes, online FAQs, handouts, and promotion of specific online catalog capabilities 4 times a year.
6. Evaluate public use computers and related equipment at least twice a year.
7. Work closely with the Town IT Department to maintain up-to-date software on all public computers.
8. Purchase, maintain, and provide user support for an upgraded public scanner.
9. Work with the IT Department to provide wireless printing for the public.
10. Continue to expand the library's social media presence with tools such as Facebook, Pinterest, and Constant Contact.
11. Work with the IT Department to ensure adequate staffing is available to introduce and maintain new and existing technologies at AML.
12. Launch the redesigned website and take advantage of the opportunities it offers, such as Bookletters custom book lists, blogging, form submittal, etc.

6.4.4 Objective 4

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

Activities

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

6.5 Foreign Languages

GOAL

Strengthen the role of the library as a welcoming gateway to all ethnic groups.

6.5.1 Objective 1

Increase quantity and quality of foreign language resources.

Activities

1. Review local, state and federal census counts for ethnic group identification.
2. Request demographic information about ethnic student group counts from School Administration.

3. Increase print books in foreign languages by 75 titles a year each year of the plan.
4. Increase music recordings featuring various cultures by 20 titles each year of the plan.
5. Add e-books in foreign languages when available.
6. As noted in Goal 1, Objective 1, include Foreign Languages as a topic in the Collection Development Policy.
7. Increase awareness of the availability of these resources.
8. Survey patrons periodically using same rating system as for Long Range Plan.

6.5.2 Objective 2

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

Activities

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

6.6 Community and Cultural Center

GOAL

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

6.6.1 Objective 1

Continue and increase children's programs and events and increase their cultural diversity.

Activities

1. Hold 10 special programs annually.
2. Continue to offer 2 year-old story time sessions during the school year.
3. Continue to offer 2 story times a week for 3-7 year olds throughout the year.
4. Include a story, song, or activity from another culture in story hours 3 times a month.
5. Show a movie with a multi-cultural theme or setting at Family Movie Nights 3 times a year.
6. Offer 3 special programs a year which include elements (songs, stories, etc.) from another culture.
7. Review museum pass options annually in regard to adding ones showcasing the arts or other cultures.
8. Increase awareness of the availability of these resources.
9. Survey participants periodically using same rating system as for Long Range Plan.

6.6.2 Objective 2

Increase the quantity and cultural diversity of adult programs and events.

Activities

1. Hold 25 to 30 programs annually for adults.
2. Show 6 movies annually featuring multi-cultural themes or settings.
3. Present 3 programs annually highlighting aspects of other countries.
4. Continue to offer author talks and programs on history.
5. Review museum pass options annually in regard to adding ones showcasing the arts or other cultures.
6. Increase awareness of the availability of these resources.
7. Survey participants periodically using same rating system as for Long Range Plan.

6.6.3 Objective 3

Increase the effectiveness of Art Exhibits.

Activities

1. Continue to have 7 juried exhibits annually.
2. Supplement displays with complementary programming, such as discussions with artists and critics or art classes.
3. Coordinate exhibits with community events or piano concerts.

6.6.4 Objective 4

Improve planning and diversity of piano concerts.

Activities

1. Determine frequency of concerts (quarterly, semi-monthly or monthly).
2. Determine timing of concerts (during operating hours or off-hours).
3. Create annual program reserving dates and promoting events well in advance.
4. Infuse culture into programs by featuring diverse music and performers.
5. Coordinate musical themes with cultural holidays, e.g., Chinese music during Chinese New Year.

6.6.5 Objective 5

Support community groups in their use of the library and its resources.

Activities

1. Implement the online room reservation system for the conference room and meeting room.
2. Create and publicize a list of titles with culturally diverse themes suitable for book groups by March 2014.
3. Support local book groups by working with them to make books available for their members and communicate the same.
4. Identify a book group resource for the library to facilitate information sharing among the various book groups that use the library's services.
5. Coordinate AML activities and displays with related activities offered by other local groups, such as: Chinese New Year and the Chinese Language School, or spring and the Acton Garden Club.

6.6.6 Objective 6

Continue the library's role as an Information center by collecting, collating and distributing information that is requested by the community.

Activities

1. Continue to expand the local history collection.
2. Save the W. R. Grace Superfund Site reports in easy to access media.
3. Provide easy access from the library to the town information.
4. Provide community information (posters, programs, brochures, etc.) to patrons in a manner that is easy to access and has increased visibility.

6.6.7 Objective 7

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

Activities

1. Provide targeted communication to schools.
2. Provide targeted communication to CoA (Council on Aging).
3. Double the email addresses on file in Constant Contact.
4. Annually evaluate the categories available to people signing up for Constant Contact so the emails can be more targeted.
5. Explore an increased variety of mediums for communication of services.
6. Continually improve the website.

7 Action Plans

7.1 FY14 Action Plan

COLLECTION

1. Create a comprehensive Collection Development Policy.
2. Develop and maintain a list of Turret space display ideas.

FACILITIES

1. Hire an architect or designer who specializes in libraries to assess the current situation, suggest changes, and estimate the costs of the changes.
2. Assist the architect as appropriate in the creation of a draft report.
3. Have the architect do a presentation on the report to the Board of Trustees and other interested parties.
4. Work with the Municipal Properties Director to develop timetables for replacement of carpet and painting.
5. Investigate the feasibility of permitting and/or providing beverages that can be consumed in specified areas of the library.

STAFFING

1. Brainstorm potential realignments of roles and responsibilities/changes in staff positions.
2. Reach out to other libraries as appropriate with questions about their organizational structure.
3. Decide whether changes in staff roles and responsibilities/positions are beneficial to the organization.
4. Identify job descriptions which have not been updated in more than five years.
5. Working with the Town Human Resources Department, department heads within the library, and position incumbents, revise any job descriptions older than five years old.
6. Identify any job descriptions that have not been updated in the last 1-5 years.
7. Assess the competitiveness of pay ranges with against other libraries' ranges.
8. Identify pay ranges which are less than 95% of the average for comparable positions.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Implement downloadable music through Freegal during the first quarter of FY14.
2. Purchase, maintain, and provide user support for an upgraded public scanner.
3. Work with the IT Department to provide wireless printing for the public.
4. Launch the redesigned website and take advantage of the opportunities it offers, such as Bookletters custom book lists, blogging, form submittal, etc.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

1. With the help of foreign language speaking volunteers, provide map and guide to the library, translated into multiple languages.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER

1. Determine frequency of piano concerts (quarterly, semi-monthly or monthly).
2. Determine timing of piano concerts (during operating hours or off-hours).
3. Create and publicize a list of titles with culturally diverse themes suitable for book groups.

7.2 FY15 Action Plan

FACILITIES

1. Working with the architect, develop a priority list and timetable for implementation.
2. Identify funding sources for building changes.
3. Identify and setup a comfortable gathering area where users can meet, have conversations, and work collaboratively.
4. Review the layout and condition of all restrooms and proceed accordingly.
5. Review all furniture for wear and develop a timetable for replacement/repair.
6. Review space needs and changes in the reference area.
7. Review quiet study areas and investigate/identify areas for conversation and group study.
8. Present information on possible changes in staff roles and responsibilities/positions to the Board of Trustees.

STAFFING

1. Work with the Town Human Resources Department to pursue any changes in staff structure decided upon.
2. Working with the Town Human Resources Department, department heads within the library, and position incumbents, revise any job descriptions that are less than 5 years old.
3. Working with the Town Human Resources Department, endeavor to raise the pay grades of positions making less than 95% of the average for comparable positions.
4. Assess the frequency and amount of pay differentials for evening and Saturday hours.
5. Depending on the results of the assessment re: differentials for evening and Saturday hours, work with the Town Human Resources Department to implement as appropriate.

7.3 FY16 Action Plan

COLLECTION

1. Review the Circulation Policy.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Implement the online room reservation system for the conference room and meeting room.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER

1. Identify a book group resource for the library to facilitate information sharing among the various book groups that use the library's services.

7.4 Ongoing Activities

COLLECTIONS

1. Continue displays of "best picks."
2. Weed the collections on a defined schedule.
3. Periodically evaluate the number of kick-stools to ensure easy shelf access.

STAFFING

1. After all job descriptions have been updated, review all job descriptions annually.

TECHNOLOGY

1. Offer six classes quarterly in basic/introductory computer skills.
2. Provide as-needed training and support for such AML systems as the online catalogs, museum pass reservation software, public computers, reference databases, digital catalog, reference iPad, and others.
3. Offer three workshops or programs a year on technology topics such social networking, internet security, Ebay, Etsy, etc.
4. Offer drop-in computer help sessions at least six times a year.
5. Provide self-paced learning opportunities through AML website links to free online tutorials.
6. Maintain an up-to-date collection of consumer technology related books in print and electronic formats.
7. Continually assess opportunities to increase access to e-books, whether through the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) or other sources.
8. Assess the need for an expanded e-audiobook collection quarterly.
9. Continue to monitor usage and potential expansion of electronic reference materials and databases.
10. Monitor opportunities to offer new electronic formats such as streaming video or downloadable periodicals.
11. Assess quarterly the opportunities to increase access to downloadable music through the Minuteman Library Network (MLN) or other sources.
12. Facilitate the selection and downloading process of eBooks and e-audiobooks through the production and maintenance of printable guides.
13. Continue to provide feedback to MLN and vendors about the users' experience of the digital catalog.
14. Evaluate the continued need for an eBook reader loaner pool at least twice a year and replace or upgrade its equipment accordingly.
15. Work with MLN to monitor and enhance the MLN catalog if the opportunity arises.

16. Raise public awareness of the wide variety of electronic and technological resources available through classes, online FAQs, handouts, and promotion of specific online catalog capabilities four times a year.
17. Evaluate public use computers and related equipment at least twice a year.
18. Work closely with the Town IT Department to maintain up-to-date software on all public computers.
19. Continue to expand the library's social media presence with tools such as Facebook, Pinterest, and Constant Contact.
20. Work with the IT Department to ensure adequate staffing is available to introduce and maintain new and existing technologies at AML.
21. Quarterly evaluate the equipment staff needs to help the public learn new technologies.
22. Quarterly evaluate what applications the staff needs to help the public learn new technologies.
23. Work closely with the Town IT Department to maintain up-to-date software on staff computers.
24. Regularly train AML staff in the use of technologies appropriate to their responsibilities.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

1. Review local, state and federal census counts for ethnic group identification.
2. Request demographic information about ethnic student group counts from School Administration.
3. Increase print books in foreign languages by 75 titles a year each year of the plan.
4. Increase music recordings featuring various cultures by 20 titles each year of the plan.
5. Add e-books in foreign languages when available.
6. Increase awareness of the availability of these resources.
7. Survey patrons periodically using same rating system as for Long Range Plan.
8. Annually ask ESL tutors to recommend training materials for library collection.
9. Continue to provide meeting space for tutoring, training and conversational groups.
10. Open up other small areas in the library and make them available for limited ESL activities.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL CENTER

1. Hold 10 special children's programs annually.
2. Continue to offer 2 year-old story time sessions during the school year.
3. Continue to offer two story times a week for 3-7 year olds throughout the year.
4. Include a story, song, or activity from another culture in story hours three times a month.
5. Show a movie with a multi-cultural theme or setting at Family Movie Nights three times a year.
6. Offer three special programs a year which include elements (songs, stories, etc.) from another culture.

7. Review museum pass options annually in regard to adding ones showcasing the arts or other cultures.
8. Increase awareness of the availability of these resources.
9. Survey participants periodically using same rating system as for the Long Range Plan.
10. Hold 25 to 30 programs annually for adults.
11. Show six movies annually featuring multi-cultural themes or settings.
12. Present three programs annually highlighting aspects of other countries.
13. Continue to offer author talks and programs on history.
14. Review museum pass options annually in regard to adding ones showcasing the arts or other cultures.
15. Increase awareness of the availability of these resources.
16. Survey participants periodically using same rating system as for the Long Range Plan.
17. Continue to have seven juried exhibits annually.
18. Supplement displays with complementary programming, such as discussions with artists and critics or art classes.
19. Coordinate exhibits with community events or piano concerts.
20. Create annual program reserving dates for piano concerts and promoting events well in advance.
21. Infuse culture into programs by featuring diverse music and performers.
22. Coordinate musical themes with cultural holidays, e.g., Chinese music during Chinese New Year.
23. Continue support local book groups by working with them to make books available for their members and communicate the same at least twice a year.
24. Coordinate library activities and displays with related activities offered by other local groups, such as: Chinese New Year and the Chinese Language School, or spring and the Acton Garden Club.
25. Continue to expand the local history collection.
26. Save the W. R. Grace Superfund Site reports in easy-to-access media.
27. Provide easy access from the library to Town information.
28. Provide community information (posters, programs, brochures, etc.) to patrons in a manner that is easy to access and has increased visibility.
29. Provide targeted communication to schools.
30. Provide targeted communication to CoA (Council on Aging).
31. Double the email addresses on file in Constant Contact.

32. Annually evaluate the categories available to people signing up for Constant Contact so the emails can be more targeted.
33. Explore an increased variety of mediums for communication of services.
34. Continually improve the website.

8 Appendices

8.1 Community Profile

8.1.1 Overview

Acton is a suburban community located twenty-five miles northwest of Boston. Although Acton's population has almost tripled in the last three decades, the town has retained much of its rural New England character, as evidenced by the traditional town center and green, fine examples of historic architecture, stone walls, and tree-lined country roads.
Acton offers a full range of services to its residents and businesses, including an active volunteer-based town government, professionally managed municipal departments, quality library services, full time professional police and fire departments, and local and regional school systems that are ranked among the top in the state.

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

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

8.1.2 Acton at a Glance

Form of Government	Town Manager Selectmen Open Town Meeting
2011 Population	22,012
2011 Labor Force	11,750
2011 Unemployment Rate	4.5
2010 Per Capita Income	$41,901
2010 Median Household Income	$91,624
2010 Number of households	8415
2009 Population Per Square Mile	1,063.29
2009 Housing Units Per Square Mile	384.58
2009 Road Miles	120.52
2010 Number of Registered Voters	13,767

Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, September, 2011

8.1.3 Population

Acton's population growth has slowed since 2000 but is still positive. Acton grew rapidly from 1950 to 1970, doubling each decade. Since 1970 growth has slowed during each decade to 19% in 1980, 2% in 1990, 14% in 2000, and 7% in 2010. Population forecasting is done by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), the regional planning agency for 101 cities

and towns around Boston. Acton's population is expected to continue to grow relatively slowly as it has in the recent past because it is running out of prime developable land and has wastewater disposal constraints. The Acton Town Census for 2011 reports a population figure of 22,012 which represents a 7% growth since 2000.

8.1.4 Age Composition of the Population

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

Total population 2000	20,331	100.0%	Total population 2010	21,924	100.0%
Male	10,020	49.3	Male	10,754	49.1
Female	10,311	50.7	Female	11,170	50.9
Under 5 years	1,507	7.4	Under 5 years	1,140	5.2
5 to 9 years	1,784	8.8	5 to 9 years	1,770	8.1
10 to 14 years	1,831	9.0	10 to 14 years	2,105	9.6
15 to 19 years	1,155	5.7	15 to 19 years	1,611	7.3
20 to 24 years	593	2.9	20 to 24 years	718	3.3
25 to 34 years	2,222	10.9	25 to 34 years	1,597	7.3
35 to 44 years	4,173	20.5	35 to 44 years	3,295	15.1
45 to 54 years	3,581	17.6	45 to 54 years	4,423	20.2
55 to 59 years	1,087	5.3	55 to 59 years	1,604	7.3
60 to 64 years	697	3.4	60 to 64 years	1,250	5.7
65 to 74 years	997	4.9	65 to 74 years	1,367	6.2
75 to 84 years	515	2.5	75 to 84 years	741	3.4
85 years and over	189	0.9	85 years and over	303	1.4
Median age (years)	37.9		Median age (years)	41.9	

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

8.1.5 Households

The number of households grew by about 1% per year, from 7,495 in 2000 to 8,415 estimated in 2010. Household size is expected to continue to decline, a trend that has been observed since 1990. There are 343 lots ready for residential construction. Potential demand estimates for housing units by 2020 (213 new units) suggests that all new forecast units can be accommodated on lots already approved.

8.1.6 Household Size Distribution

1 Person	14%
2-3 Person	49%

4-5 Person	35%
6 or More Person	2%

8.1.7 Household Income Levels

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

8.1.8 Household Income Households

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

8.1.9 Education

Acton's population is highly educated. Forty-one percent of residents over age 25 have completed an Associate's or Bachelor's degree while 35% hold graduate degrees. Twenty percent have high school diplomas or some college while only 1% has less than a high school education.

8.1.10 Ethnicity/Race

Acton's population shows increasing diversity in its ethnic/racial composition. While 83% is white, the Asian population has been growing steadily and is now 14% of the total. Other minority groups constitute the remaining 3%.

"White" is by far the predominant racial/ethnic category at 83%. The Asian population has, but while the "white" population increased by only 0.4%, the Asian population increased by 61.8% between 2000 and 2010 and is now 14% of the total. The number of people of Hispanic or Latino origin is estimated at 482 in 2010. It is the second largest minority group but is considerably lower that the Asian population of approximately 3100. The primary groups for the Asian population are includes Asian Indian, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese.

8.1.11 Language spoken in the home 2010

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

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

8.1.12 School Enrollment

A decline in births and move-in's has led to projections of a decrease in school enrollment over the next decade. The elementary schools will drop gradually with big drops occurring in 2016 and 2017 based on birth projection rather than actual births. The Junior High School will continue to drop and the Senior High School should begin to decline from its peak as well. Total Acton enrollment is projected to drop 315 students over next five years (6.6% decline)

PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT PROJECTIONS, 2012 to 2022

Elementary Schools (Acton only)
2012 K-6 Total 2396
2022 K-6 Total 2122
Change -11.4%

Junior High School (Acton and Boxborough)
2012 7 & 8 Total 913
2022 7 & 8 Total 768
Change -15.8%

Senior High School (Acton and Boxborough)
2012 9-12 Total 1943
2022 9-12 Total 1663
Change -14.4%

Source: Acton Boxborough Regional School District, October 2011

8.1.13 Disabilities

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

8.1.14 Employment

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

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

The average weekly wage in Acton establishments was $938 in 2009, but it ranged widely from $226 for used merchandise stores to $2,346 for scientific research and development services. In September, 2010 Acton had a labor force of 11,757 (Acton residents who hold jobs anywhere). The largest number of Acton residents are employed in the high wage/high education categories of

management, computer/mathematical, educational/training/library, sales related, and office/administrative support. In September, 2011 3.7% of Acton's labor force was unemployed. This is considerably lower than the current statewide rate of 6.3% and the national rate of 8.2%. Acton's lower unemployment rate results from its well educated and highly skilled labor force.

8.1.15 Businesses

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

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

8.1.16 Community Organizations and Cultural Resources

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

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

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

and many ethnic groups such as the Chinese School and the Latino Family Network.
Further information on these groups can be found at the Acton Memorial Library: http://cid.minlib.net/author/act/, Acton-Boxborough Community Education: http://comed.ab.mec.edu/, and the Acton Recreation Department: http://www.acton-ma.gov/index.aspx?nid=304.

8.1.17 Conclusion and Trends

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

8.1.18 Sources:

MA Department of Housing and Community Development, Community Profile
Massachusetts Department of Revenue, Division of Local Services, September, 2011
Acton 2020 Housing and Population Inventory
U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2010 American Community Survey
MOVOTO Real Estate
Acton Boxborough Regional School District, 2011

8.2 Library Profile

Acton Memorial Library is a heavily used community resource. During FY12, over 261,000 people came through its doors, checking out more than 645,000 items. The 184 storytimes and other special programs were attended by 3529 children. Forty-seven programs and library-sponsored book discussion groups for adults drew 475 people. Meeting rooms were used 750 times.

The collection contains approximately 170,000 items, including books, large print materials, DVDs, recorded music and books, downloadable audiobooks and e-books, e-readers, a literacy collection, museum passes, kill a watt meters, Wii games, CDs for learning foreign languages, and college courses on CD and DVD. Resources include local history and genealogy collections with a large Civil War exhibit and online historical documents. There is an extensive, multi-format Chinese language collection and small Portuguese, Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil, Russian, Spanish, French and Korean collections. There are 229 magazine and newspaper subscriptions.

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

The library is a member of the Minuteman Library Network (MLN), which has over 6,600,000 holdings among 42 members.

Library services include:

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

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

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

In FY12 (July 1, 2011-June 30, 2012), Memorial Library's circulation per resident was 29.49 items, 17th highest in the state. However, its materials funding per capita was $8.51, 84th in the state.

The circulation per FTE (Full Time Equivalent staff) is 31,315, 10th highest in Massachusetts.

The library makes considerable use of volunteers, ranking 51st in volunteer hours in the state when Acton's population is 90th in Massachusetts.

8.3 Community Survey

The Long Range Planning Committee, as part of the planning process, conducted a community-wide survey. There are 14,530 library card holders in Acton. A total of 499 surveys were returned representing 1,214 people, giving a return rate of 8.4%.

The survey contained 14 questions and many opportunities to provide comments. While the Community Survey does not include all comments made, it does include summaries where comments were categorized thus providing the means to present aggregate findings. A complete set of all individual comments have been provided to the Long Range Planning Committee, the Library Director, and the Library Trustees.

In developing the Long Range Plan for the Acton Memorial Library, the Long Range Planning Committee worked with the Library Director in the creation of a survey to be sent to the citizens of Acton. To achieve wide spread distribution and a high response, the survey was provided to:

- Acton Residents with a printed copy mailed in their quarterly tax bill,
- Patrons with a printed copy at the Library's circulation desk, and
- Patrons via a link on the Library's website.

The data was captured via Survey Monkey and the data summaries are presented on the following pages.

ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY PLANNING SURVEY

The Acton Memorial Library is conducting this survey as part of its planning process for 2014-2019. Please fill out this survey and **return it to the library at 486 Main St. by October 19**; estimated time to fill out the survey is 10 minutes. You may attach an extra sheet for extended comments. The survey is also online at: WWW.ACTONMEMORIALLIBRARY.ORG

1. **Are you filling the survey out for** _____ self only _____ spouse and self ____ whole family ____ # in family

2. On average, how often do you come into the library? (check one)
   ____ **once a week or more** _____ **several times a month** _____ **once a month**

   ____ **several times a year** _____ **less than several times a year** _____ **never**

3. **On average, how often do you use the library's website? (check one)**
   ____ **once a week or more** _____ **several times a month** _____ **once a month**

   ____ several times a year _____ less than several times a year _____ never

4. **Please rate the following:**

LIBRARY COLLECTIONS	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know/ don't use	Comments
Adult Fiction						
Adult Non-Fiction						
Reference Databases						
Reference Books						
Large Print Materials						
Foreign Language Materials						
Newspapers/Magazines						
Downloadable Audiobooks						
Downloadable E-books						
Books on CD and Playaways for Adults						
DVDs for Adults						
Recorded Music						
Books for Gr. 9-12						
Children's Books up through Gr. 1						
Children's Books Gr. 2-6						
Children's Books Gr. 7-8						
Books on CD and Playaways for Children						
Children's DVDs						
Museum Passes						

LIBRARY SERVICES	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know/ don't use	Comments
Circulation Desk						
Interlibrary Loan/Delivery Service						
Adult Reference and Information						
Adult Programs/Events						

Children's Reference and Information						
Children's Programs/Events						
Meeting Rooms						
Computer and Internet Access						
Hours						
Building Cleanliness and Maintenance						
Noise Level and General Atmosphere						
Art Exhibits						
Library Website						

5. **How would you rate the library staff for helpfulness and courtesy?**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know/ don't use	Comments
Circulation Staff						
Reference Staff						
Children's Staff						
Administrative Staff						

6. **Please put a check mark by the 5 most important CURRENT resources to you**

Adult Fiction	_____	Children's CDs, DVDs, and Recorded Books	_____
Adult Non-Fiction	_____	Children's Books	_____
Online Databases	_____	Children's Programs	_____
Adult CDs, DVDs, and Recorded Books	_____	Young Adult (Gr. 9-12) Materials	_____
E-books and E-Audiobooks	_____	Magazines and Newspapers	_____
Adult Programs/speakers	_____	Internet Computers	_____
Foreign Language Collections	_____		

7. **Please indicate how interested you are in each of the following POTENTIAL library services or resources.**
(5= extremely interested; 1=not at all interested)

	5	4	3	2	1	Comments
Additional adult programs/speakers						
Public fax machine (fee-based)						
Laptops for in-library use						
Additional computer classes						
Blu-ray DVDs						
Downloadable music						
Programs for students in gr. 9-12						
Additional small study rooms						
Additional Internet computers						
Additional programs for children under 3						
Additional programs for children ages 3-7						
Additional programs for children ages 8-14						

8. **How would you rate the space in the following areas?**

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know/ don't use	Comments
Children's Room						
Lobby						
Young Adult (Gr. 9-12) Area						
New Book Area						
Magazines and Newspapers						
Computer Room						

Reference Study Area						

9. **How do you learn about library services and events? (Check all that apply)**
   ____ in the library ____ library website ____ print newspaper ____ online news
   ____ posters in community ____ library email list ____ word of mouth ____ other

10. **Do you download e-books _____ (Y/N) and/or audiobooks _____ (Y/N) from the library's website?**
    If not, why not? (Check all that apply)
    ___ doesn't have what I want ___ wait is too long ___ too hard to use
    ___ didn't know I could ___ don't have the equipment ___ not interested

11. **How often should the Fitzgerald Piano (near the new book area) be played for concerts <u>during library hours</u>?**
    ___ Monthly ____ 4-6 times a year ____ 1-3 times a year ____ Never/should only be played after hours

12. What do you value most about the Acton Memorial Library?

13. What would you like to see changed/improved at the library?

If you would like to participate in a community workshop on the long-range plan, please join us:
Town Hall on Saturday, November 17, 2012, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

If you want to receive emails about library news and programs, please **PRINT** your email below:

Email Address: _____

Acton Memorial Library Survey
Summary Results

Overview

In the fall of 2012, the Library Long Range Planning Committee worked with the Library Director in the development of the Community Survey. The goal was to capture feedback and solicit input. Below is a summary of this:

1. Survey Population:

Total of 499 surveys representing 1,214 people.

Who are you filling the survey out for? (select one)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Total People
Self	39.3%	196	196
Spouse and self	17.8%	89	178
Parent and one child	1.4%	7	14
Family of three	10.0%	50	150
Family of four	24.6%	123	492
Family of five	5.8%	29	145
Family of six	1.0%	5	30
Other (please specify)		9	9
answered question		499	1214
skipped question		0	

2. Frequency of Library Visits

Of the respondents, 80% of the respondents indicated they visit the library at least monthly, and over 97% visit the library.

On average, how often do you come into the library? (select one)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Cumulative Percent
once a week or more	28.1%	140	28%
several times a month	36.7%	183	65%
once a month	15.2%	76	80%
several times a year	13.8%	69	
less than several times a year	3.6%	18	
Never	2.6%	13	
answered question		499	
skipped question		0	

3. Use of Library Website

Of the respondents, 63% visit the Library's website at least monthy and over 86% use the Library's website. A wide range of services are available on the AML website. These include:

- Access to the Acton Memorial Library/Minuteman Library Network Card Catalog
- Announcements of upcoming events

On average, how often do you use the library's website? (select one)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count	Cumulative Percent
Once a week or more	22.5%	110	22%
Several times a month	27.6%	135	50%
Once a month	12.5%	61	63%
Several times a year	15.1%	74	
Less than several times a year	9.2%	45	
Never	13.1%	64	
	answered question	**489**	
	skipped question	**10**	

4. Rating of Library Collections

Overall, most collections were rated favorably (70% or higher) with the Adult Fiction receiving a response of 94% stating the collection was Excellent or Good. The percentages below present the respondents who rated that collection. Four collections received a less favorable rating, these being "Recorded Music" 61%, "Downloadable Audiobooks 52%, "Foreign Language Materials" 55%, and "Downloaded E-Books" 41%.

Please rate these library collections:

Answer Options	Excellent/ Good	Poor	Ratio	Don't know /don't use	Response Count
Adult Non-fiction	301	1	301	92	394
Museum Passes	238	4	238	257	499
Newspapers/Magazines	174	0	174	239	413
Children's Books up through Grade 1	167	4	167	257	428
Reference Databases	159	0	159	109	268
Reference Books	155	0	155	254	409
Children's DVDs	133	11	133	238	382
Books on CD and Playaways for Children	90	4	90	287	381
Recorded Music	78	7	78	159	244
Books for Grades 9-12	73	5	73	308	386
Adult Fiction	329	1	55	311	641
Downloadable Audiobooks	52	10	52	250	312
Children's Books Grades 2-6	154	3	31	248	405
DVDs for Adults	176	6	44	339	521
Books on CD and Playaways for Adults	125	5	42	318	448
Large Print Materials	66	0	13	292	358
Downloadable E-books	48	24	12	327	399
Children's Books Grades 7-8	92	1	8	189	282
Foreign Language Materials	33	8	8	359	400
Comments					79
				answered question	**467**
				skipped question	**32**

5. Rating of Library Services

Overall, AML received high marks for the all services provided. The two areas receiving the lowest marks were 'Adult Programs/Events' and 'Children's Programs/Events'. This is consistent with responses for 'potential' services where respondents cited their desire for more programs/events.

Please rate these library services:

Answer Options	Excellent /Good		Fair /Poor		Don't know /don't use	Response Count
Interlibrary Loan/Delivery Service	379	99%	5	1%	64	384
Building Cleanliness and Maintenance	430	98%	10	2%	16	440
Circulation Desk	411	96%	16	4%	29	427
Noise Level and General Atmosphere	406	93%	29	7%	16	435
Adult Reference and Information	224	93%	17	7%	189	241
Meeting Rooms	163	91%	16	9%	242	179
Library Website	335	91%	33	9%	65	368
Art Exhibits	267	89%	32	11%	134	299
Computer and Internet Access	212	88%	29	12%	188	241
Hours	361	86%	61	14%	22	422
Children's Reference and Information	147	85%	26	15%	247	173
Adult Programs/Events	113	80%	28	20%	280	141
Children's Programs/Events	99	73%	37	27%	279	136
					90	0
					answered question	**468**
					skipped question	**31**

6. Rating of Library Staff

Of those respondents who rated the Library Staff, three areas received ratings above 90%.

Please rate the library staff for helpfulness and courtesy.

Answer Options	Excellent /Good	%	Fair /Poor	%	Don't know /don't use	Response Count
Reference Staff	315	97%	11	3%	134	460
Circulation Staff	416	94%	26	6%	26	468
Administrative Staff	159	92%	13	8%	263	435
Children's Staff	210	86%	33	14%	194	437
Other (please					42	42
					answered question	**472**
					skipped question	**27**

7. Rating of CURRENT Resources Most Important to You

The top three resources are all in the Adult collections

5 CURRENT resources most important to you.

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Adult Fiction	75%	346
Adult Non-fiction	67%	308
Adult CDs, DVDs, and Recorded	60%	275
Children's Books	41%	190
Online Databases	39%	180
Magazines and Newspapers	33%	151
Children's CDs, DVDs, and Recorded	29%	135
Adult Programs/speakers	20%	94
Materials for Grades 9-12	19%	86
Children's Programs	18%	82
More Internet Computers	17%	77
E-books and E-Audiobooks	8%	36
Foreign Language Collections	8%	36
answered question	***460***	**460**
skipped question	***39***	**39**

8. Interest in POTENTIAL library services

For potential library services, 66% were most interested in additional adult programs/speakers. 54% are interested in Downloadable Music, and other Massachusetts libraries provide some service in this area. There are several challenges including licensing, cost, tracking, and determining music categories to provide. The third and fourth most interested potential library services are Programs for students in grades 9-12 and children 8-14.

Interested in each of the following POTENTIAL library services.

Answer Options	Most Interested (5,4,3)		Least Interested (2,1)		Response Count
Additional adult programs/speakers	270	66%	142	34%	412
Downloadable music	213	54%	181	46%	394
Programs for students in grades 9-12	161	42%	221	58%	382
Additional programs for children ages 8-14	161	42%	224	58%	385
Blu-ray DVDs	153	39%	243	61%	396
Public fax machine (fee-based)	145	36%	260	64%	405
Additional internet computers	145	37%	246	63%	391
Additional small study rooms	136	35%	251	65%	387
Additional computer classes	134	33%	268	67%	402
Additional programs for children ages 3-7	122	32%	264	68%	386
Laptops for in-library use	107	27%	285	73%	392
Additional programs for children under 3	86	22%	297	78%	383
Comments:					27
answered question					**437**
skipped question					**62**

9. Rating of Space in the Library:

While the data below shows favorable ratings of library space, library staff and many patrons have indicated that some areas need to be addressed. The most notable is the Children's section on the lower level where space is quite crowded.

While increasingly materials are becoming available in electronic form, the printed materials are still increasing and the shift to electronic is not so rapid that it might help address space issues.

Answer Options	Excellent / Good		Fair /Poor		Don't know /don't use	Response Count
Lobby	348	87%	53	15%	34	435
Magazines and Newspapers	265	94%	18	7%	145	428
New Book Area	249	82%	53	21%	120	422
Children's Room	219	87%	32	15%	109	360
Reference Study Area	214	91%	21	10%	194	429
Young Adult (Gr. 9-12) Area	161	82%	35	22%	223	419
Computer Room	109	73%	40	36%	275	424
Other (please specify)					43	43
answered question					***451***	**451**
skipped question					***48***	**48**

10. How do you Learn about Library Services and Events?

How do you learn about library services and events? (select all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
In the library	80.3%	367
Library website	44.0%	201
Print newspaper	36.8%	168
Word of mouth	25.2%	115
Posters in community	16.4%	75
Library email list	11.2%	51
Online news	8.1%	37
Other (please	3.9%	18
answered question	***457***	**457**
skipped question	***42***	**42**

11. eBooks & Audio Books:

While only 1 in 5 patrons currently download e-Books and Audio Books, it is expected that demand for this will increase rapidly as tablet computing (iPad, Android, Kindle, etc) and eReaders continue to become more prevalent. The number of these devices purchased is increasing exponentially. Each month, many newspapers and periodicals are shifting many subscribers to electronic formats. The Acton Memorial Library must plan for this shift to accommodate the needs of its patrons.

In addition to planning for this shift, the Library and the Minuteman Library Network need to address the current technological delivery issues ("Too Hard to Use") cited and address the demand for an expanded collection ("Doesn't Have What I Want").

An objective/goal for the Acton Memorial Library is to continue to monitor the shift to electronic and make the needed recommendations to provide cost-effective solutions for its patrons.

Do you download E-BOOKS from the library's website?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	19.9%	91
No	80.1%	366
	answered question	457
	skipped question	42

If not, why not? (select all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Don't have the equipment	34.9%	129
Not interested	28.4%	105
Didn't know I could	25.7%	95
Other (please specify)	14.1%	52
Too hard to use	9.5%	35
Wait is too long	8.6%	32
Doesn't have what I want	7.8%	29
	answered question	370
	skipped question	129

Do you download AUDIOBOOKS from the library's website?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Yes	8.6%	38
No	91.4%	405
	answered question	443
	skipped question	56

If not, why not? (select all that apply)

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Not interested	39.5%	153
Didn't know I could	26.4%	102
Don't have the equipment	24.5%	95
Too hard to use	10.1%	39
Other (please specify)	8.5%	33
Wait is too long	6.5%	25
Doesn't have what I want	6.2%	24
	answered question	387
	skipped question	112

12. The Fitzgerald Piano:

In response to whether the Fitzgerald Piano should be played during Library hours, 353 responded that it should. This is 78% of the respondents (42%+16%+20%). Only 79 responded that it should not be played during Library hours (22%).

How often should the Fitzgerald Piano near the new book area be played for concerts DURING LIBRARY HOURS?

Answer Options	Response Percent	Response Count
Monthly	42%	147
4-6 Times a year	16%	56
1-3 Times a year	20%	71
Never/should only be played when the library is closed	22%	79
		353
Comment:	10%	41
	answered question	394
	skipped question	105

13. What Respondents Value Most About the Library

377 Respondents provided a response to the question "What do you value most about the Acton Memorial Library?" The response to this open-ended question was either a single item or multiple items. In reviewing the data, the categories listed below were created to cluster the responses in some way.

The 377 Respondents provided a total of 753 responses since some respondents cited multiple items.

To illustrate, 158 replies stated that they value the Collection of books. 19 replied they value the Museum Pass program.

To see the actual data, see the document "Appendix A" listing the specific responses by Category.

What do you value most about the Acton Memorial Library?

Of the 377 Respondents, the breakdown by category is:

158	Collection
143	Minuteman Library /InterLoan
112	"Atmosphere" Community Space
85	Staff
50	CDs / DVDs
45	Hours
45	Location
36	Magazines/Periodicals
31	Programs
29	Other
19	Museum Passes
753	**Total Reponses since many indicate more than one thing they valued**

14. What Respondents Would Like to See Changed/Improved

300 Respondents provided a response to the question "What would you like to see changed/improved at the Library?" The response to this open-ended question was either a single item or multiple items. In reviewing the data, the categories listed below were created to cluster the responses in some way.

The 300 Respondents provided a total of 364 responses since some respondents cited multiple items.

To illustrate:

- 92 indicated "environmental" changes/improvements. This category refers to the layout, location of collections, etc. This count of 92 would be reduced if the replies regarding "playground" and "snow removal", and other items not under AML's responsibility were removed from the category. For this preliminary analysis, these responses are included.
- 44 stated "Nothing" meaning that they are very satisfied and there isn't anything that needs changing or needs to be improved. One can infer that of the 499 total respondents, the 199 (499 total-survey-respondents minus the 300 respondents to this question) also saw that "nothing needs to be changed or improved.

What would you like to see changed/improved at the library?
Of the 300 Respondents, the breakdown by category is:

92	Improve Environmentals
47	Improve eBooks / AudioBooks
44	Nothing
39	Improve Book Collection
37	Improve Programs
31	Improve Hours
31	Other
22	Improve DVD / CD
21	ImproveStaffing
364	**Total Reponses** (many indicated more than one thing they would like to see changed/improved)

8.4 Library Staff Comments

Over multiple sessions, members of the Acton Memorial Library – Long Range Planning Committee met with the Acton Memorial Library (AML) staff. Nancy Tavernier, Sampada Salunkhe, Ann Chang and Pamela Lynn interviewed three reference librarians, Young Adult librarian, Assistant Director, two circulation desk staff, children's librarian & tech services. The staff members were provided with a questionnaire prior to the meeting. The focus was on immediate needs and long term needs. The staff members were able to elaborate the immediate needs. The idea that anyone could predict the needs of the AML 10 years hence was discarded because of the rapid changes in the electronic delivery of materials

8.4.1 Reference

- There is an immediate need to have more meeting room space where students/adults/tutors can have conversations without disturbing others.
- There is also a need to have conversation space where small groups of 3 to 5 people can talk. Many patrons request this.
- The direction is that electronic databases will replace printed reference books. This should free-up space for meeting rooms.
- Wireless printer and another Express computer for printing is high on list of immediate needs
- Website redesign is in progress, that will promote library services and help patrons find what they need. The website should allow Online chats for reference questions and/or ability to submit questions for reference on the website. There is discussions about adding social media to website
- Some library patrons request FAX services at the reference desk. The library should determine the appropriate response to these requests which could include options such as: helping patrons use the scan and email services as a FAX substitute, purchasing FAX machines, or developing a Business Center in the library. If the business center option is selected, additional staff would be required.
- The trainings conducted by the reference staff are very popular. Due to limited number of computers, the class size is small and the sessions have to be repeated. A suggestion is to have laptops available for training that will use less space and we can accommodate larger number of students per class. The library can aim to be a teaching center for technology skills. There is a possibility of using high school students as volunteer technology helpers and teachers. Even though the training sessions are in progress, the ability to manage larger classes can be developed over a longer duration.

- Over time, there is a need to digitize some of collection, e.g. Town annual reports
- There is a need to develop more programs with book groups open to public, writers' groups, town reading program. This can be implemented immediately.

8.4.2 Young Adult (YA)

- The YA department needs to have a place that is clearly designated for HS students---there was discussion of adding a wall with the bottom portion being book shelves & the top glass.
- The YA area tends to get noisier than the rest of the library, especially during exam time. There is a need to have walls to contain the noise to the YA area.
- The structural changes need to be planned over time.
- An immediate need for the YA is to setup picture molding, beams across ceiling to display YA art. The idea is to invite revolving exhibits from the school
- Space and organization is a general concern.

8.4.3 Children's

- Children's room is just too small especially with all the new electronic materials now available
- Some staff members feel that it would be appropriate to move the Teen Book section for grades 7 and 8 upstairs to the Young Adult department. This would create more space in the Children's Room. However, current patrons of the Teen Book section like the location in the turret and don't object to travelling through the Children's Room to get to it. In addition, the content of the books in the Young Adult Department is broader and may not be as appropriate for this age group. More evaluation of the tradeoffs is necessary.
- This space redesign can be part of a larger organization plan.
- There is a need to develop the library as a destination for families. We need to have more programs to make it special. This is something that can be implemented immediately
- Increase electronic collection, more video players of books, DVD's reading picture books, books on CD's, iPads to replace books. This is also something for the long term plan.

8.4.4 Circulation

- The layout of the circulation room results in several real problem areas---around the back door where the books are brought in on the van; Friends

books are stacked; mail boxes; etc. There is also the shelf where the children's books rest prior to being sorted & placed on the cart.

- Returned books are handled 6 times before they go back to the shelf. This is something that needs to be re-evaluated as part of the workflow.
- Expansion of home delivery services---cooperate with COA nursing or other town organizations. Perhaps even setting up a network of volunteers to do delivery (This was in recognition of the ageing population)
- There is an immediate need to evaluate the circulation work-flow. An external consultant could help redesign the workflow and to assess the space usage to make it more efficient.
- Possibly eliminate popular DVD's, keep non-fiction and documentaries. People stream movies at home, no need for DVD movies. This is a long term possibility and we need to have periodic checks for this.

8.4.5 Parking

- There was a common concern about the safety of the front door & having a child hit by a car in the parking lot
- Patrons also complain the lack of parking space

8.4.6 Piano

- Library Staff are concerned that usage of the piano during Library hours can be disruptive to library patrons. The plan should evaluate policies about the usage of the piano that facilitate the public value of the piano while minimizing the disruption to library patrons.

8.4.7 Recommendations

- The AML hire a specialist consultant to come in & review the circulation workflow and the space arrangements and make recommendations to make it more efficient.
- The library is used as a center during natural emergency like snow storms, heat waves, electrical black-outs etc. Many patrons visit the library during such times in order to recharge their electronic devices as phones and laptops. We need more electrical outlets to support this need. A short term solution is to have power strips available that can be quickly plugged in to charge multiple devices at once. The electrical system should be evaluated to ensure that such a setup will be supported by the current system and will not cause overload.
- Look into wireless printing and Express Computers

8.5 Focus Group

This document is a draft of the results of the Focus Group that met on Nov 17th, 2012. The focus group was attended by approximately 50 people. This document summarizes the major themes that emerged from the focus group meeting.

The participants in the focus group were divided into small groups and were asked three questions:

1. What is the role of the Acton Memorial Library in our community? How do you see it evolving over the next 5 – 10 years ?
2. How do the CURRENT services provided by the AML meet your needs? What might be improved?
3. What NEW services of features would you like to see in the future?

The reflections have been sorted into the following categories: materials, services, and facility.

8.5.1 What is the role of the Acton Memorial Library in our community? How do you see that evolving over the next 5 – 10 years?

Materials
The AML provides access to a diverse range of materials and services of interest to a people with a range of ages, abilities, languages. (Multiple languages, traditional media, new media, print, video, audio, computers, age focused collections). The AML provides access to information, technology and cultural resources to everyone regardless of income.

Services
The AML provides users with information, technology and cultural resources for learning about our community and our world. The AML provides opportunities to connect disparate groups in our town (different ages, different interests, different cultures) and opportunities to connect to the larger world outside of town.
Services include:

- Computers
- Historical displays
- Art displays
- Concerts
- Lectures
- Films

Facility
The AML functions in some ways as a community center. The AML is an accessible, welcoming place with a mix of quiet spaces and more collaborative spaces where people can access information resources.

The AML provides free meeting room space that is used by a wide variety of governmental and nonprofit organizations.

The AML also provides a place to house historical artifacts and information.

8.5.2 How do the CURRENT services provided by the AML meet your needs ? What can be improved?

Materials
Continue to invest in both traditional media and new media. This balance may shift over time but it is important to maintain traditional collections as well as developing electronic collections. Many areas of the current collection were mentioned positively:

1. Minuteman Network Access
2. Children's Books
3. Adult Books
4. Reference Materials
5. Historical Displays
6. Audio Books
7. eBooks
8. computers

Some suggestions for improvements:

1. Research materials (encyclopedias and databases) should transition away from paper and toward electronic media as they are evolving rapidly.
2. Provide more e-books and audio books (with training in their use).
3. Continue to build the world language collections. Evaluate the Spanish / Portuguese collections to determine if they should be increased.
4. Continue to support the school system with materials needed by students in their classwork.
5. The microfilm collection should be moved to a different media that is more accessible and more likely to be readable in the future.

Services

The following services were mentioned frequently:

1. internet access to request books (from both AML collection and Minuteman Network).
2. email notifications of overdue books
3. children's programming. Consider scheduling some children's programming so it is more accessible to families with working parents.
4. museum passes. It would be nice to know usage patterns to help decide if more copies of some passes would be appropriate.
5. adult programming. more requested. more cultural programming (concerts, art, history)
6. librarians (especially research librarians) were viewed as providing essential support service.
7. improve communications. Almost every group had comments about improving communications. There are resources in the library and events sponsored by the library that library patrons do not know about. Ideas included:
    a. Inside the library
        i. improve signage in the library
        ii. possibly a handout that includes a map describing the areas of the library. many patrons only know one or two sections of the library.
        iii. Occasional "greeter" offering a tour or explanation of new services or acquisitions
    b. Electronic Communication
        i. improve the web page.
        ii. email list for newsletter. many library patrons did not know that they could sign up for an email newsletter
    c. Liaison Connections
        i. consider creating volunteer liaison positions for specific groups in town (schools, COA, Acton Family Network, Discovery Museums)

Facility

Free Meeting Space at the library is very popular and is used extensively. More free meeting space is needed townwide. Investigate an integrated scheduling mechanism for free meeting space across multiple locations. Special 'theme' sections in the library are popular (new books section, staff picks, newly returned material).

Consider re-purposing the microfilm room as a room where small groups of people can work collaboratively. Consider changes to the Jr High section to

make it more attractive to the Jr High population. Provide linkage to let students know about the young adult section when it is appropriate for them to transition to that section of the library.

8.5.3 What NEW services or features would you like to see at the AML?

Services

1. Explore methods to increase linkage between AML and other organizations in town. Consider creating volunteer 'liaison' positions for COA, schools, Discovery Museums, AFN, Historic Groups, etc.
2. Consider having an 'older adult librarian' position similar to the 'young adult librarian' to focus on service to that demographic.
3. Consider working with the town shuttle(s) to schedule trips from COA to the library. Consider allowing seniors to request books from the AML at the COA and deliver them there.
4. Consider creating a Technology Center that is staffed (possibly with volunteers) and provides technology training. Possibly in co-operation with Community Ed.
5. Create a library book club. Provide book club assistance
6. Support a community reading event

Facility

1. Consider extending hours during school exam times
2. Consider creating a welcoming lounge area with comfortable seating for small groups to talk about books and socialize.
3. Consider creating a 'coffee shop' type area where people can read and/or socialize. (This could include partnering with a vendor who would sell beverages OR people could bring beverages from outside. Keep in mind that students would not necessarily have cars so vendor should be walking distance.)
4. Continue to provide traditional quiet library space and add more spaces where collaborative work is appropriate