



E. C. Scranton Memorial Library

Strategic Plan

2025 - 2030



Photo credit Bob Gundersen

Adopted May 2025 by the Scranton Library Board of Trustees

Message from the Strategic Plan Committee Chair

The previous Strategic Plan had guided the library through a pandemic and a major renovation and relocation. For a Strategic Plan to remain relevant through disruptions on that scale, I found it really inspiring and daunting when I was asked to guide the development of its successor.

Fortunately, once we took it on, we found we had a group of brilliant, dedicated people who understood the mandate and knew how to make it happen. Over 15 months, we surveyed the town, spoke with the civic organizations, ran focus groups, and held an in-house retreat of the entire Board of Trustees facilitated by Maureen Sullivan, an expert in library strategic planning. While distilling all of the input, we discovered recurring themes we called “Pillars,” with specific goals and objectives in service of them. The resulting five-year Strategic Plan was formally adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 12, 2025.

In retrospect, that was all the easy part. Now comes the work of doing what we laid out in the Strategic Plan. We look forward to taking on this challenge for the future of the library.

Paul D. Sprague

Strategic Direction Committee Chair, E.C. Scranton Memorial Library



2024-2025 BOT Members:

Strategic Direction Committee Members are listed in bold

Christine Beirne

Mary Didiuk

Laura Downes

Michelle Flynn

Mary Beth Forshaw

Anne Hering

Keith Luckenbach, President

Ken Nolan, Treasurer

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John Muller

Charles Reese

Chris Ryan

Cindi Schneider, Vice President

Doreen Shirley, Secretary

Paul Sprague, Chair Strategic Direction

Bill Stableford

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Katy Webb

Nicole Wiles

2024-2025 STAFF Members:

Allison Murphy, Library Director

Tim Kellogg, Head of Public Services

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Scranton Library Mission

Our mission is to improve the quality of life for all Madison residents by providing access to information, fostering lifelong educational and cultural learning, and cultivating relationships among our residents through the exchange of ideas.

We strive to embrace all the ways that people are unique. This includes the diversity of ideas, backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences. Moreover, diversity encompasses several themes of identity, including race, ethnicity, disability, age, gender, class, religion, types of family, and sexual orientation. We treat all people fairly, respectfully, and with dignity and compassion.

All are welcome here!

Scranton Library Board of Trustees (as of 2026)

- Cindi Schneider, President
- Mary Beth Forshaw, Vice President
- Kenneth Nolan, Treasurer
- Doreen Shirley, Secretary

2026/2027 Trustees

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|
| • Christine Beirne | • Kathleen A. Mahoney |
| • Kathleen Dess | • Renee Purdue |
| • Mary Didiuk | • Charles Reese |
| • Laura Downes | • Christopher Ryan |
| • Laura Francis | • Paul Sprague |
| • Jennifer Friedman | • Tod Van Kirk |
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History of Scranton Library

We are grateful to Laura Downes, former Interim Director, for her extensive research and time spent curating the history of the library. Laura worked with Madison's Historical Society, Town Historian Henry Griggs, and Charlotte L. Evarts Memorial Archives (CLEMA), among others, to formulate a thoughtful rendition of Scranton Library.



The earliest known library in the area was the Four Town Library, founded in 1737. The first local library was formed in East Guilford in 1792 and later became known as the Farmers' Library. The Farmers' Library cabinet, which now stands in the Scranton Library, was a gift to the Library from the Wilcox family. Members of the Wilcox family served as librarians in the late 1800s.

In July 1900, Mary Eliza Scranton opened the Scranton Library with 1,200 books. By 1926, the number of volumes was 13,811. Now, our collection is over 100,000 volumes. After studying librarianship in New York City, Mary Scranton Evarts was the first librarian of the Scranton Library.



Henry Bacon designed the library with the architectural firm Brite & Bacon. Bacon also designed the Lincoln Memorial which was built in 1914. Francis Edwin Elwell, world-renowned sculptor, made the busts of Shakespeare and Dante located at the front of the building.



In 1965, the Library added a two-story wing to the north and renovated the original building. In 1989, construction added space for fiction and nonfiction collections, seating, computers, and renovated the building to create an upstairs children's area.



The 2020 expansion and complete renovation doubled the size of the Scranton Library to 34,000 square feet, providing complete ADA accessibility and a parking lot with over 40 spaces. Energy-efficient features include geo-exchange HVAC and solar panels. New community space, additional meeting rooms, private study spaces, along with comfortable seating and natural light, provide space for increased and flexible use.



Scranton Library Statistics for FY 2025-26

142,121 Physical Materials + 56,215 Digital Materials = **198,336** Items Borrowed

927
NEW
library
cards

1,500
PROGRAMS

39,366
PROGRAM
Attendance

50,950
COMPUTER/
Wifi Use

Trending Up

- 2nd highest lender of e-audio in our consortium
- 1,131 library mobile app users

121,089
Visits to Library

Tech Help
Consultations

5 days/week

Materials Added

5,377

Questions
Answered

7,384

Tech Help Meetings
3,005

New in 2026!

*Hired a
Development
Director!

*Created Madison
Memories podcast!

Rooms Reserved

3,922

Patrons Using Rooms

12,597

Scranton Library
FY 2025- 26



Thank you for supporting the library!

Strategic Plan Dateline and Phases



Survey and Focus Groups

How We Obtained Feedback for the Strategic Plan

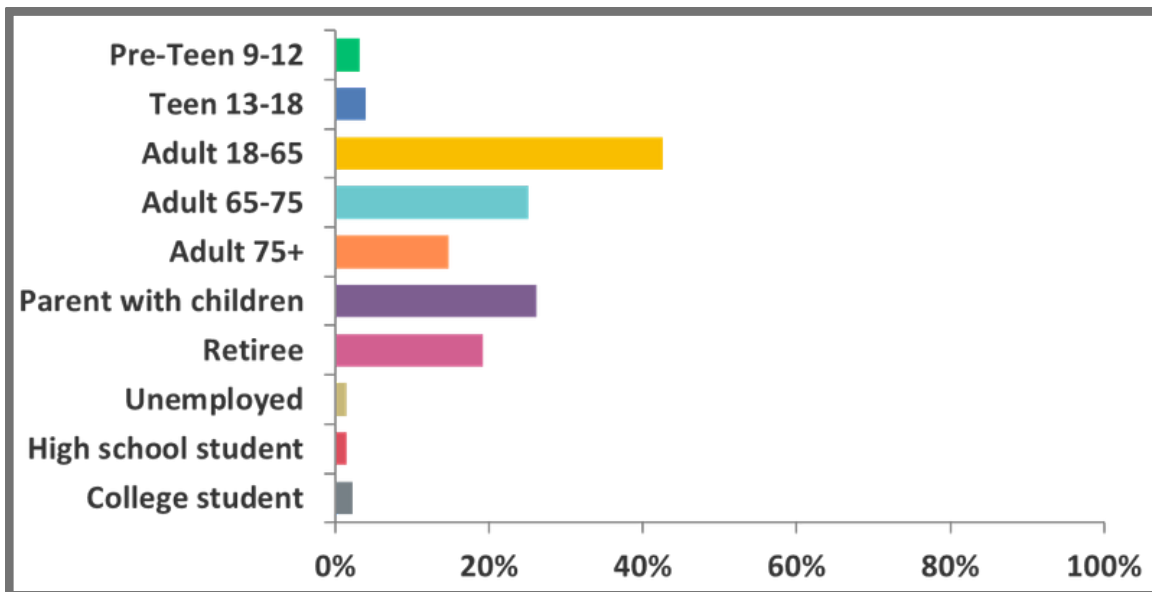
To develop an effective strategic plan for the E. C. Scranton Memorial Library, it was important to reach out to the various constituencies to gather feedback about the library. The Strategic Planning Committee gathered information in several ways. First, a comprehensive survey was created and disseminated both digitally and in hard copy. The survey was made up of 19 questions with a menu of responses, as well as additional open-ended questions. An impressive **716 surveys** were completed.

Also, members of different organizations in town, as well as the Scranton Library staff, were asked eight questions in focus group interviews, which allowed for open conversation beyond the scope of the questions. In addition to the focus groups, anyone from Madison could drop into scheduled Community Conversations at the library to voice an opinion.

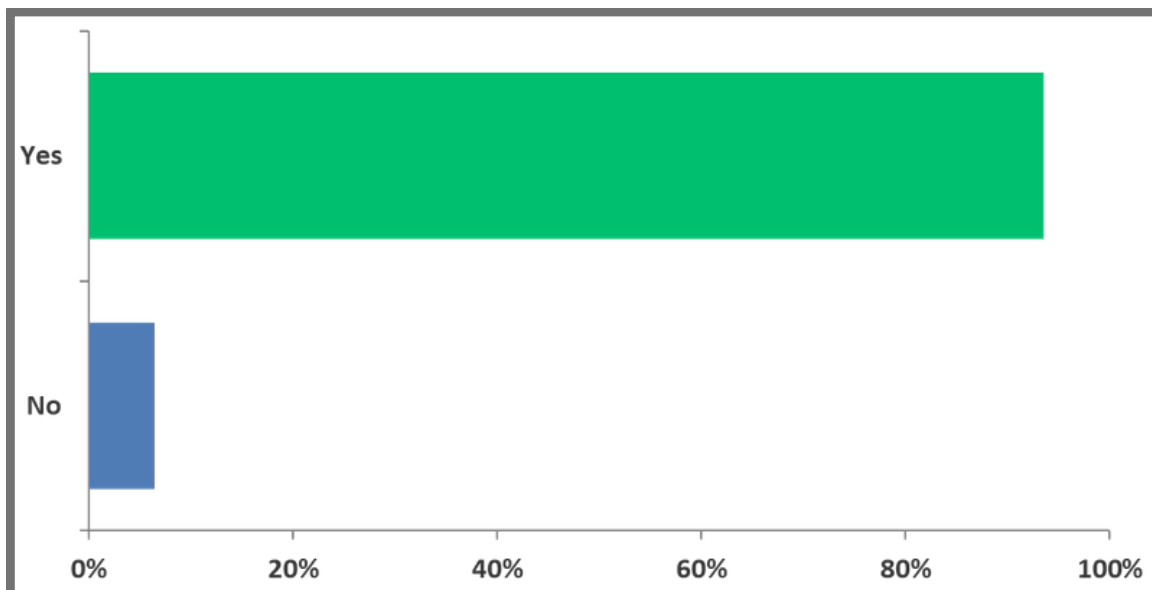
Each sub-committee of the Board of Trustees contributed feedback by completing a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) from the perspective of the committee. The President of the Board of Trustees gathered comments from the town government, and the Director of Scranton Library was in contact with the Connecticut Library Association for additional information. All of the feedback gathered was compiled into all-inclusive documents, then sorted by topic and analyzed for common themes. This information was integral to determining the “pillars,” or focus areas, that will be used to develop the goals for the library.

Survey Questions: 716 responses

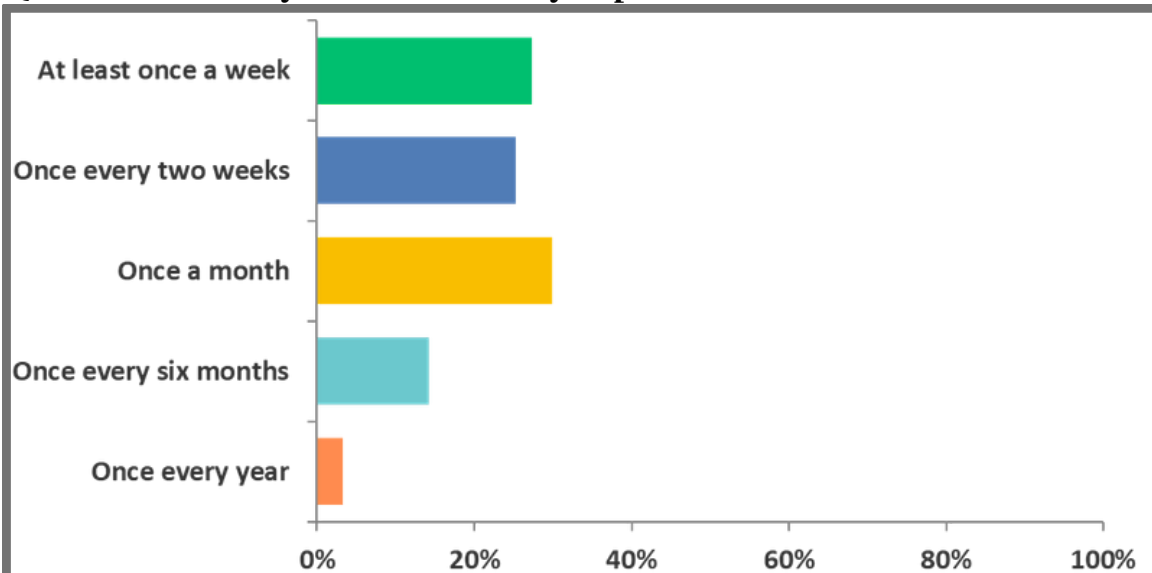
Q1: Which of these types of library users best describes you?



Q2: Do you use the E.C. Scranton Public Library?

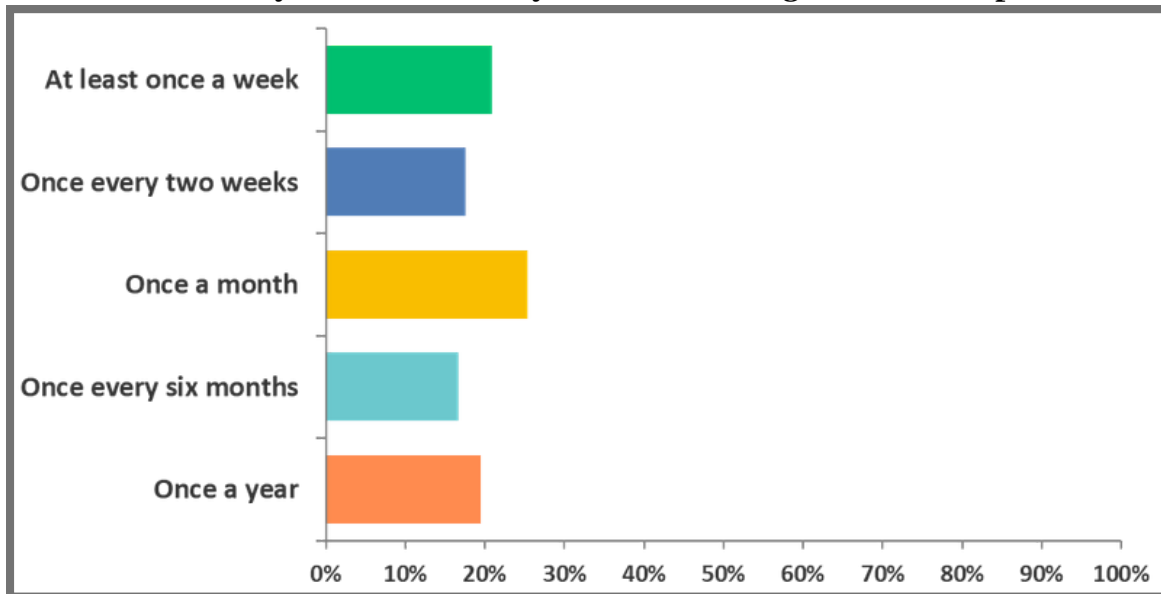


Q3: How often do you use the library in person?

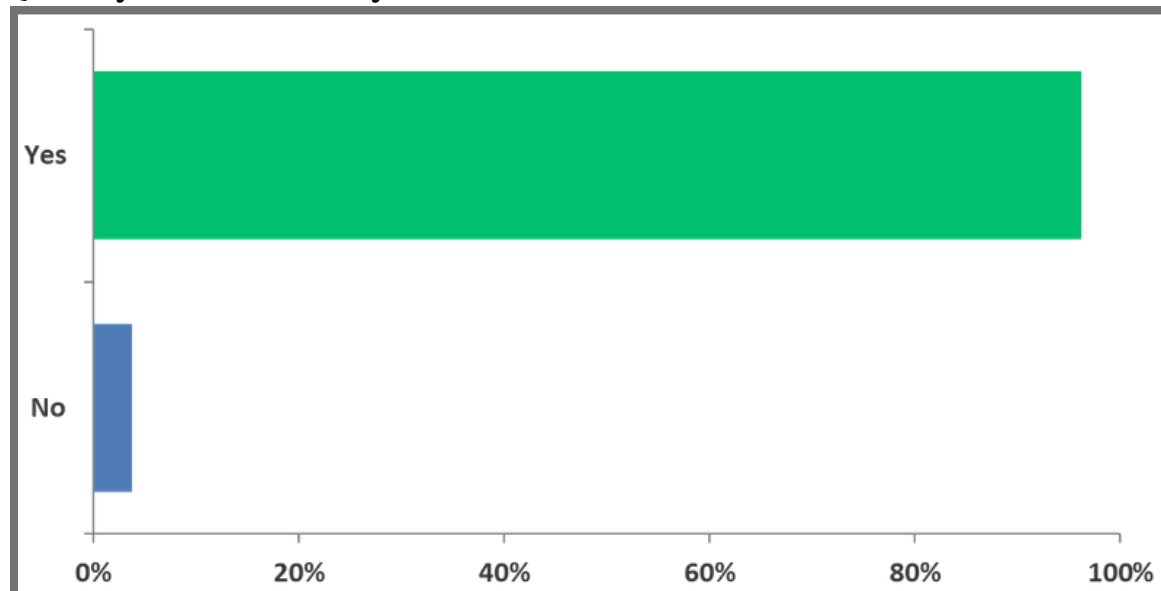


Survey Questions, continued

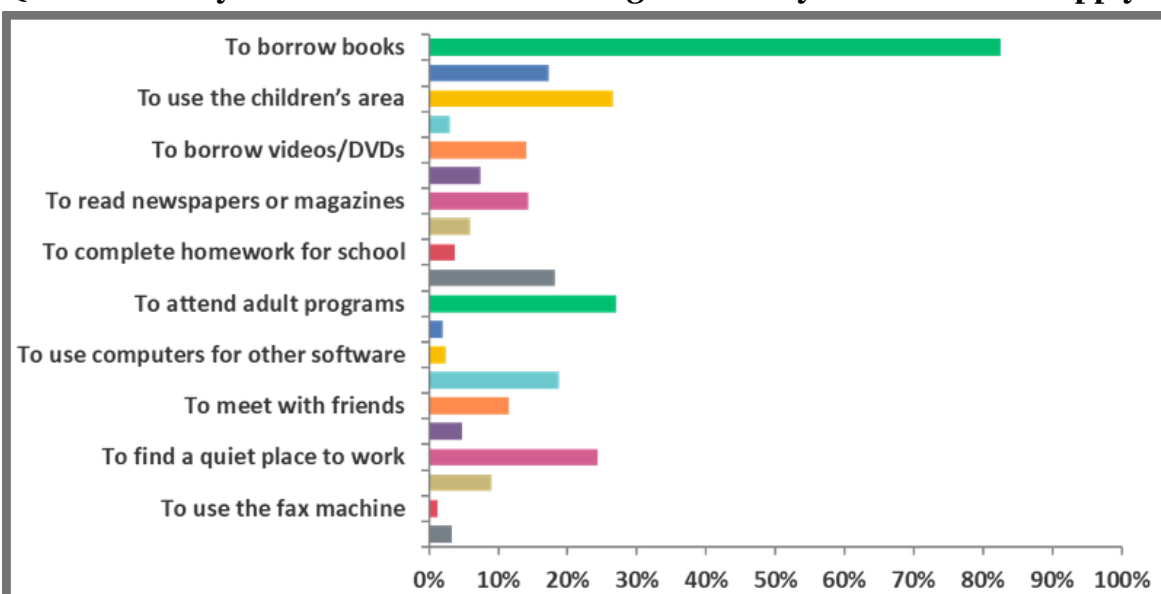
Q4: How often do you access library material through its online options?



Q5: Do you have a library card?

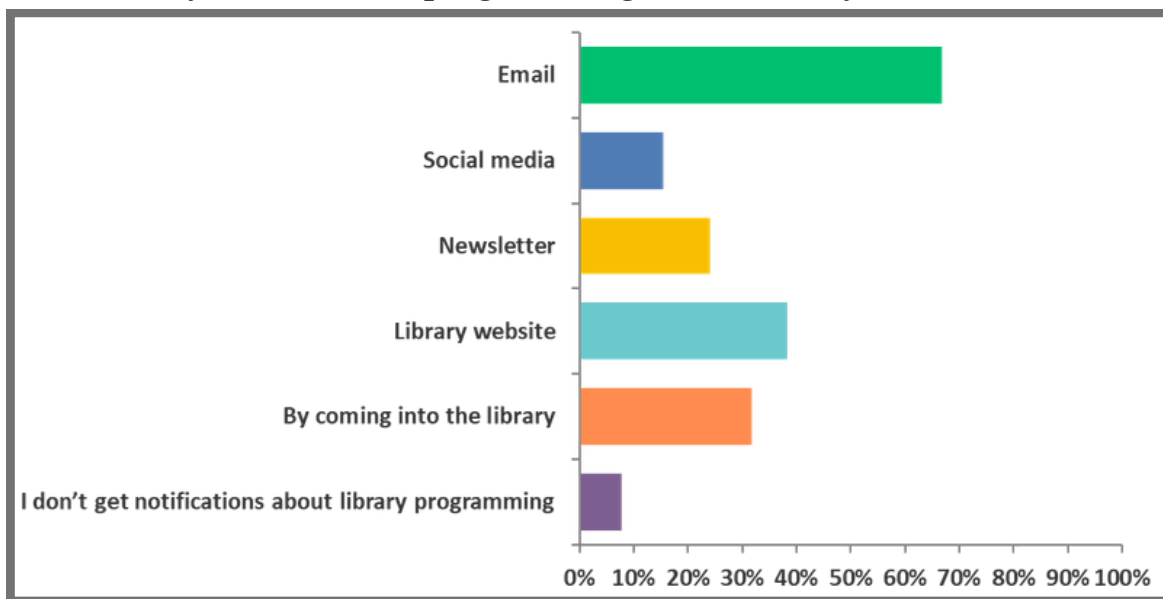


Q6: What are your main reasons for using the library? Check all that apply



Survey Questions, continued

Q7: How do you hear about programming for the library?

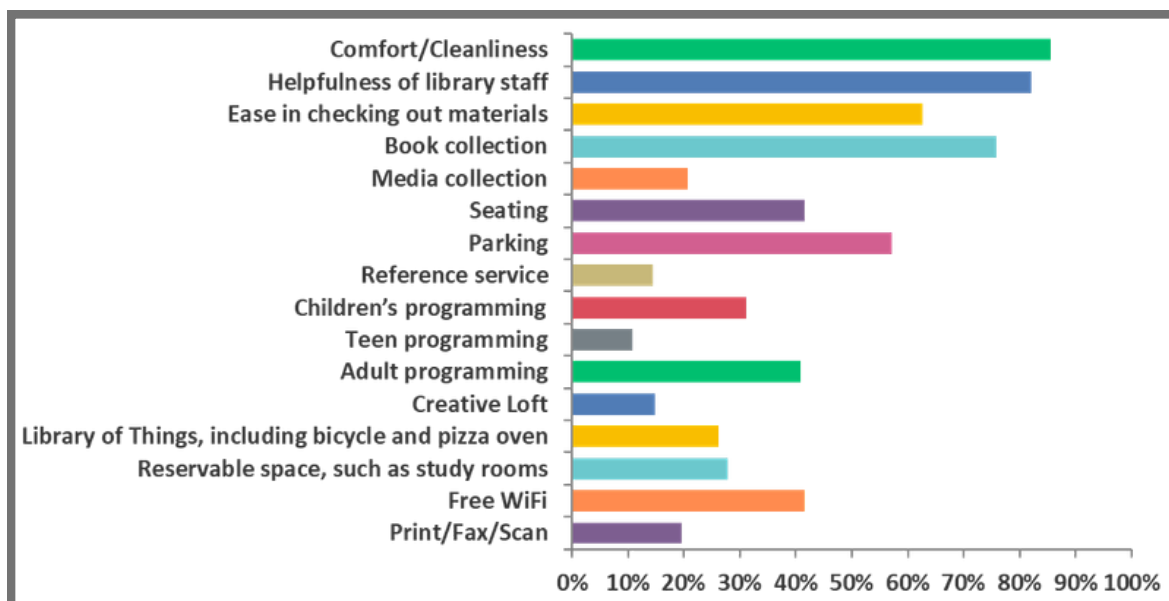


Q8: Which of the items listed below would be of value to you and your family in the next few years? Check all that apply.



Survey Questions, continued

Q9: Which of these services or features of the library are important to you?
Select as many as you wish.



Write-In Response Survey Results

Q10 If you use other libraries, which libraries do you visit, and what draws you to them?

cozy craft teen options close times children s d find atmosphere work Scranton
 children s room inviting selection books great new Old Saybrook Blackstone
 adult programs North Branford convenience staff reading Essex resources
 children s area need love small Branford go collection children s section
 book collection engaging toys quiet Guilford Free Library
 one play comfortable Guilford Library Madison kids
 Carter Hull Library books Public Library Clinton excellent
 Guilford better selection library Killingworth
 programming selection children adult area bigger
 good things Clinton library great children s Durham section
 Henry Carter Hull larger use proximity also friendly book selection
 availability room well many Atwater new books Hull Library
 children s programming lectures location something activities available
 Guilford Branford nice space materials n always HCH meet play area items old sales
 lot different

Q11 What keeps you coming back to the E.C. Scranton Memorial Library?

environment borrow local excellent atmosphere s local library Ease live town
 Helpful staff helpful friendly work friendliness puzzles pleasant quiet welcoming also feels
 room area wonderful friendly helpful staff clean selection books children s play
 nice facility meeting available resources book clubs adult programs
 live Madison close hometown library collection book group use family
 kids comfortable Convenience comfort space
 children s room programs Proximity home library
 check books books children programs Location people
 staff new love visit children Scranton great Borrowing books
 Proximity Helpfulness staff good close home friendly staff classes
 town adult s computer Convenient see place Convenience location
 town library really community beautiful services many selection activities come
 exhibits read convenient location availability quiet place beautiful space Picking books
 easy check materials always friends music home go

Write-In Survey Responses, continued

Q12 What makes it difficult for you to use library services?

schedule computers children s options pick books books want Open hours online finding time
even activities t right Sometimes seem need na new space room work programs
Sunday area close enough People children children s area use
children programs kids lack parking hours love books play
parking reserve Nothing read library reference
time parking limited N book selection Lack easy limited early staff waits
selection computer available wish really access come rarely better school None
fact Closed Sundays also long open Sundays difficult go library many working full time adults
children s room great search

Q13 What would you most want to see at E.C. Scranton Memorial Library in the next few years?

exhibits children s section take programming ages book clubs new books make
Better parking collection titles travel moved selection technology Keep lot teens
opportunities etc services interest parking great summer town Open Sundays
room seating much many music days community example read open
work things toys people classes play areas space maybe
adults also kids author programs increase
books place library learn children options Better
children s area adult programming feels Continued going
club check area nice children s especially activities friendly
evening book sales use well groups magazines see related think come
events drop children s room environment Expanded STEAM current crafts
offerings robust games guest speakers available teen programming
library things activities children s need something speakers computers

The Focus Groups Included:

Scranton Library Staff
Friends of Scranton Library
Madison Historical Society
Shoreline Men Over 60
Madison Teens
PTOs
Madison Public School Library Coordinator Representative
Women's Club
SARAH
Vista
Newcomers Club
Two open community meetings

Focus Group Questions:

1. What do you like most about the library? What services or resources do you use most often?
2. As the Library continues to grow and as we map out our future with the strategic plan, what would you most like to see happen at the library? Any new directions you would like to see us go?
3. What future programming would you like to see from the library?
4. What are your or the community's biggest barrier to using the library or to using it more?
Are there any barriers to using the online/digital services (ex: website)?
5. How aware do you think the community is of the library and the services we provide?
How would you raise awareness of the library and our services?
6. Are there any special populations that the library serves or could serve? What additional services could the library provide for those patrons?
7. What, if anything, would you like to see changed or improved in the library building?
(Ex: study rooms, social areas, signage) The physical and digital collections? The library technology? (Ex: virtual programs, computers in the library)
8. If you could change or add just one thing to the library in the next 3 – 5 years, what would that be?

High-Level Summary of Focus Group and Survey Feedback:

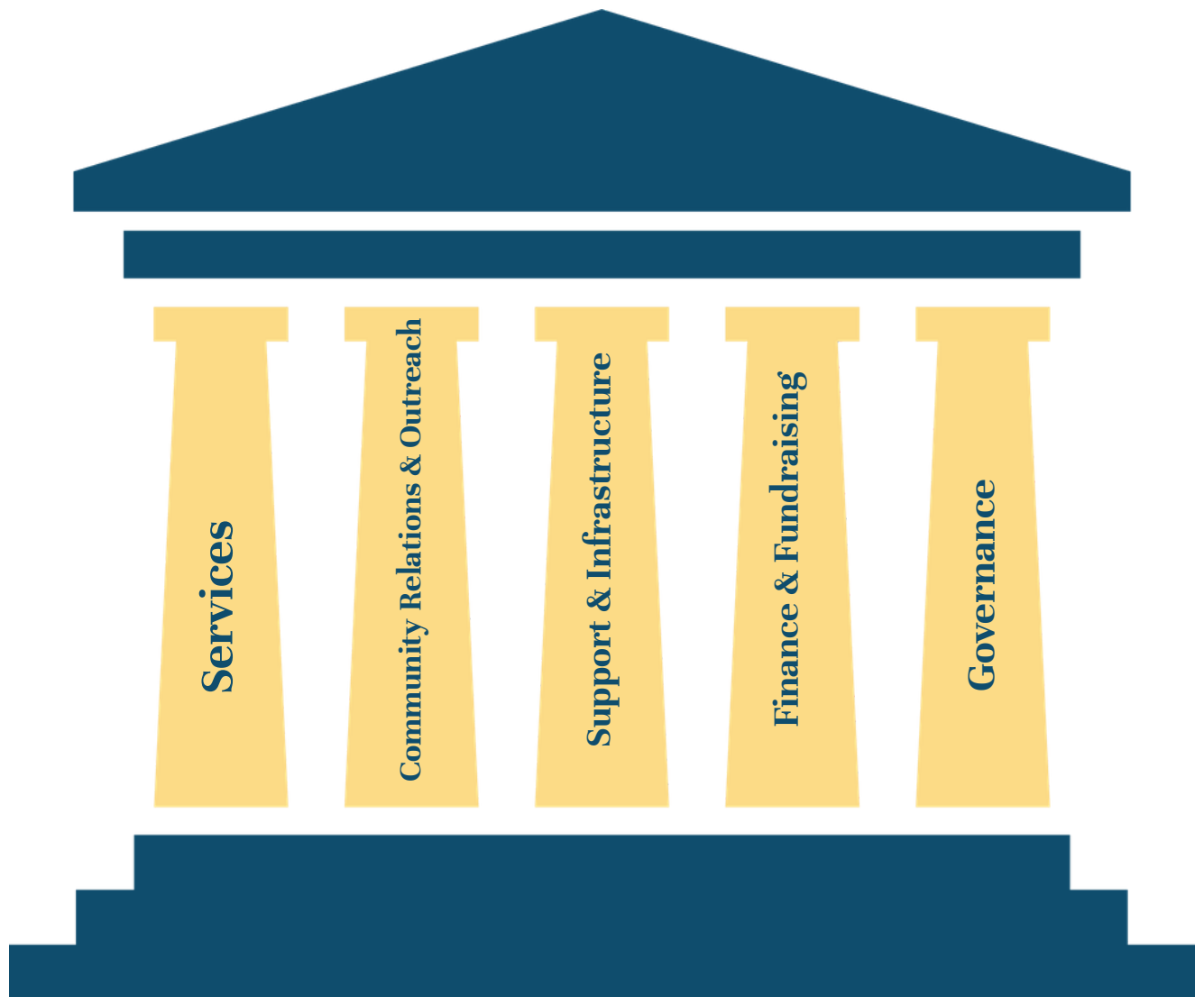
- There is strong loyalty to the library, at least among library users.
- There is demand for more seating, private study and meeting space to facilitate remote work and socialization.
- There is interest in more and varied programming.
- Because the library reopened during the pandemic, open houses and tours could help increase community interest and use.
- Expanding library hours (staying open later and opening on Sunday) would accommodate working patrons and families juggling afterschool schedules.
- Books are the driver of library involvement, and there is a demand for more new releases and best sellers.
- Expanding partnerships with other community groups would assist the library in marketing its services, fostering community support, and cost-effectively providing additional programs.

Strategic Plan Engagement

This is a snapshot of the engagement and outreach process for the Scranton Memorial Library Strategic Plan. The feedback came from both internal sources (Board of Trustees and Scranton Library staff) and from the Madison community.



Strategic Plan Pillars



Pillars of the Scranton Library Strategic Plan:

- Services
- Community Relations and Outreach
- Support and Infrastructure
- Finance and Fundraising
- Governance

Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Pillar One: Services

Goal 1:

Assess ways to increase the availability of library services.

Goal 2:

Enhance the commitment to and collaboration with Madison's schools (public and private).

Goal 3:

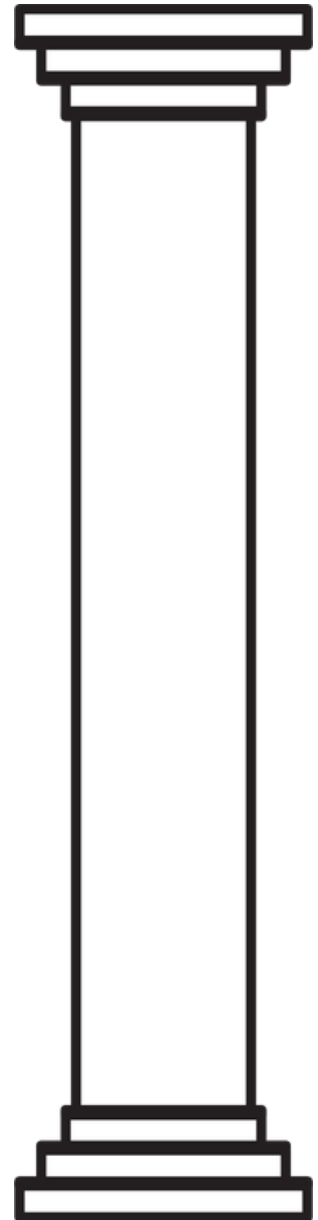
Acquire materials that support the community's needs.

Goal 4:

Enhance programs for all age groups.

Goal 5:

Develop a mechanism to research & evaluate community needs.



Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

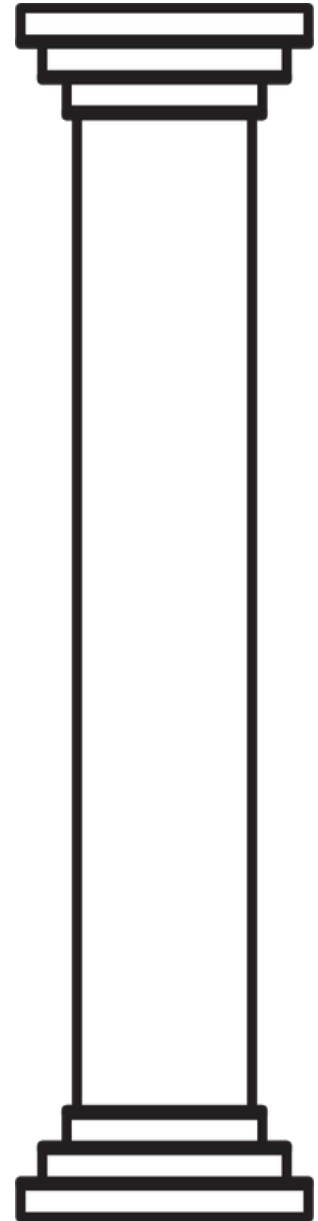
Pillar Two: Community Relations and Outreach

Goal 1:

Expand the number of users of the library year over year.

Goal 2:

Create a Public Relations Plan within two years.



Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Pillar Three: Support and Infrastructure

Goal 1:

Review the staffing and organizational structure of the library on an ongoing basis.

Goal 2:

Assess the compensation of library employees.

Goal 3:

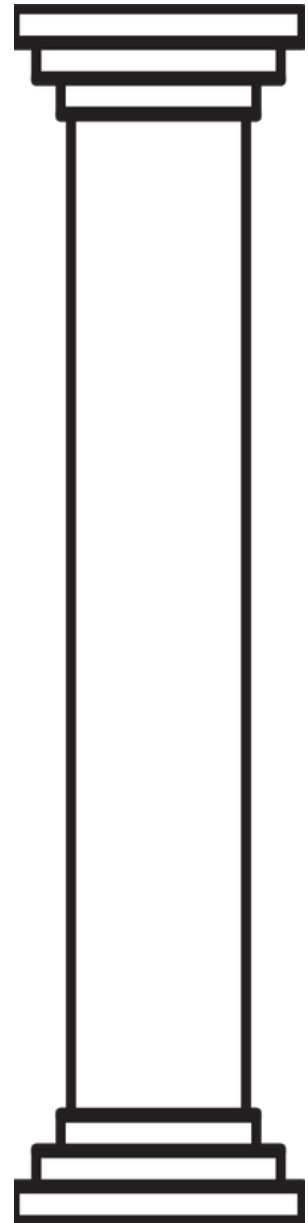
Enhance professional development for staff.

Goal 4:

Assess current usage patterns for environmental sustainability.

Goal 5:

Determine the best use of all library facilities and spaces.



Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Pillar Four: Finance and Fundraising (Board of Trustees)

Goal 1:

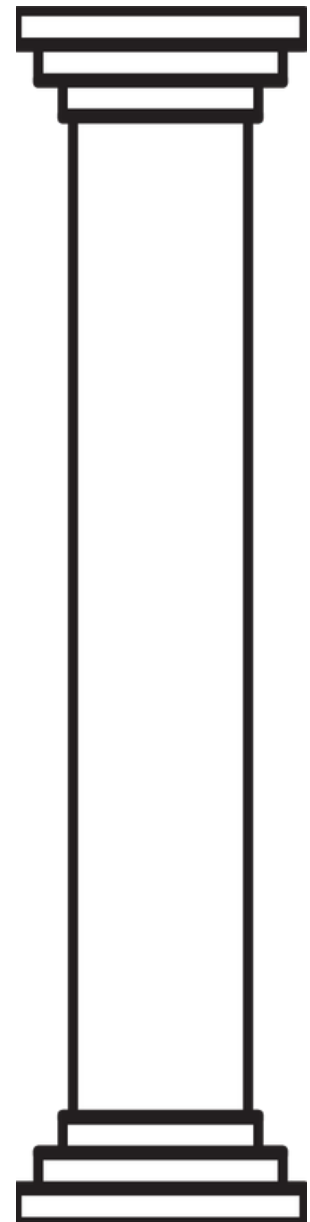
Formulate a plan that will ensure the library's financial needs are met.

Goal 2:

Establish a Development Plan to generate continuing financial support for the library.

Goal 3:

Analyze possible futures for 24 Wall Street in the next year.



Strategic Plan Goals and Objectives

Pillar Five: Governance (Board of Trustees)

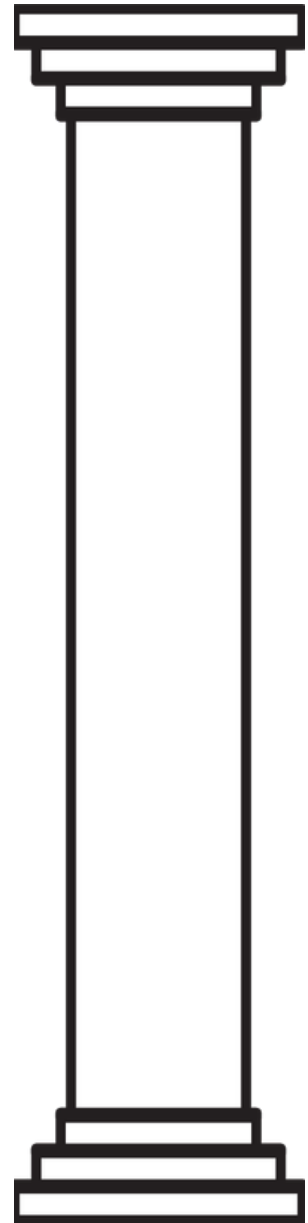
Goal 1: Create a BOT function to address risk management and compliance by 6/30/26.

Goal 2: Strive for a Board that represents all town constituencies.

Goal 3: Establish management plans for Board and subcommittee development and succession.

Goal 4: Develop a continuing education program for BOT members.

Goal 5: Discuss collaboration with and support of the Scranton Library Friends.



Strategic Plan Conclusion

Thank you to the Strategic Plan committee, Scranton Library staff, and everyone who participated in the Focus Groups and Survey.

We listened to your thoughts, ideas, and suggestions and have made adjustments to many of our services. There are more bestselling, newly released titles on the shelves in the main hall. We are offering more programs for children at additional hours, such as later in the afternoon. Our adult programs feature current subjects of interest like artificial intelligence, learning new languages, forest bathing, and music concerts. Our staff is providing outreach to many areas of the community to meet patrons where they are.

This strategic plan is a living document and will continue to guide us through the years ahead. We look forward to working with our community and to providing the best service possible to you.

Sincerely,

The Strategic Plan Committee and Board of Trustees

