Hustisford

Community Library

Strategic Plan

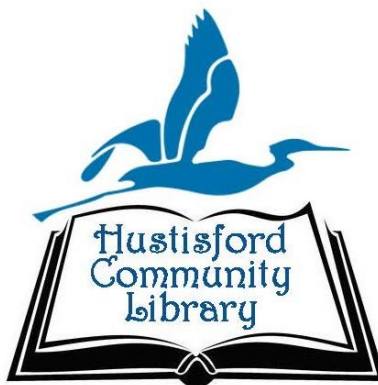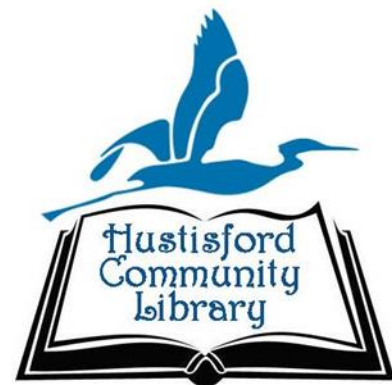## 2025 - 2030

Hustisford
Community
Library

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INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

The Hustisford Community Library, situated on beautiful Lake Sinissippi, is a pillar of two communities, the Village of Hustisford and the Town of Hustisford. The Hustisford Community Library began as a joint library in 1986 and has served the community for almost 40 years.

The community quickly outgrew the existing space, and in 1994, a space needs study determined that a facility of 6,062 square feet would be the optimal size for a new facility. In 2001, building began in April and was completed by that December. The current library facility officially opened on December 3, 2001.

The Hustisford Community Library is ready to start the next chapter. To ensure that the library provides the most effective services and resources, the library embarked on a strategic planning process in November of 2023. This strategic plan will help ensure that the library matches the mission of the library and focuses our efforts on what the community needs.

The Hustisford Community Library formed a Strategic Planning Committee composed of library staff, Library Board trustees, and community members. Under the direction and guidance of strategic planning consultants, the following sources of data and information were gathered and analyzed from December 2023 to March 2024.

- Demographic and economic data from the U.S. Census and Applied Population Lab & UW Extension.
- Results of a community survey conducted between February 1 and February 15 2024, garnering a total 158 responses.
- A series of community conversations, both at the library and at the Village and Township board meetings.
- Annual library operations and service data submitted to the Wisconsin State Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and comparison study of Hustisford library to similar sized communities and libraries.

Acknowledgements

We want to thank the more than 150 community members who responded to our survey or came to the library with their invaluable feedback. The focus of our strategic planning process has been to engage residents to ensure our services, programs, and resources align with the needs of those we serve. The information gathered from the community has been invaluable.

We also want to thank the library staff, who played an essential role in our strategic planning process. We acknowledge and thank them for their efforts.

Katelyn Stark, Cataloging/Circulation Manager
Erica Castillo, Children's Librarian
Max Bosshart, Library Assistant
Samantha U., Page

The library director is grateful for the time and passion of the Strategic Planning Committee. Their commitment and thoughtfulness were instrumental in the development of this plan.

Furthermore, thank you to the Friends of the Library for your enthusiastic support of the library. We appreciate all the feedback during this project, as well as the continued financial and volunteer support you provide the library.

We would also like to acknowledge the Greater Watertown Community Health Foundation for their $2,940 grant, which fully covered the costs of this project.

Thank you to WiLS, particularly Laura Damon-Moore and Rebecca Rosenstiel, for all the support throughout the Small Library Strategic Planning Cohort and data analysis. The planning process management and facilitation services were indispensable.

2023/2024 Strategic Planning Committee

Nicole Mszal, Library Director
Anne Roberson, Library Board Trustee
Jay Huncosky, Village Board Trustee
Pam Grant, Hustisford Business Association

Hustisford Library Board

Dave Margelofsky, Library Board President & Town Board Chairman
Anne Roberson, Secretary
Rebecca Glauvitz, Financial Secretary
Cynthia Stroessner, Village Board Trustee
Heather Cramer, Superintendent of Schools
Judy Key, Township Representative
Sandy Uecker, Village Representative

Feller Family

Hundt Family

Bogenschneider Family

2023 Memorial Endowment Projects
Thank you!

Brugger Family

STRATEGIC GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Mission Statement

To enrich the lives of the community by empowering its citizens' personal, educational and professional growth. The library is dedicated to advancing literacy and fostering life-long learning.

Overview of Findings

"Our library is a great gem for our community." ~Community survey comment

We learned from our community survey that almost 90% of respondents strongly agreed that the library is important for the community, whether they used the library frequently or not. This was a common theme throughout our survey and data gathering process: the library is an important asset to the community. Improving library spaces, expanding communications and program offerings, and supporting local initiatives were all areas where we could improve. These areas of improvement are reflected in the 5 strategic goals established in this plan, which are:

1. Facilities
2. Marketing & Outreach
3. Programming & Resources
4. Organizational Structural Support
5. Culture of Planning

Using the data from our survey, we found most respondents were regular users of the library:
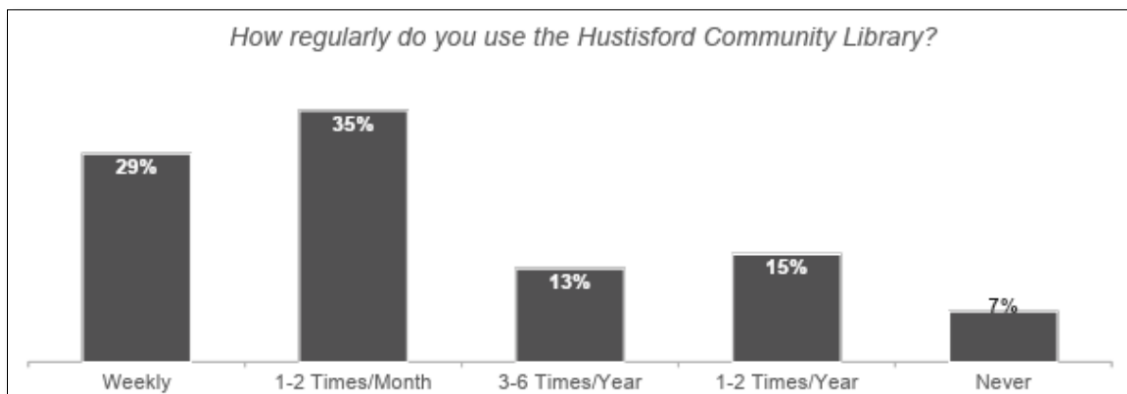
While not all respondents were users, many indicated how important the library is to the community, as seen in the next graphic:

| Library Perception Statement	Weighted Average
The library is important for the community.	4.80
The library is important to me and/or my family.	4.68
The library creates learning opportunities for people of all ages.	4.63
The library is effective at promoting literacy.	4.58
The library provides a safe place for people to spend time.	4.56
The library exposes people to new things.	4.38

Scale: Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5)

The library is a valued resource to the community and many residents utilize the current offerings at the library. Most respondents wish to see even more offerings at the library, including, but not limited to:

~ Increased coordination with local schools
~ Increased community partnerships
~ More digital tools
~ More private work/study rooms and areas
~ A dedicated teen space
~ More programming for all ages

For those respondents that do not use the library or are infrequent users, the most common issues were lack of hours, programming or location.

Both infrequent library visitors and people who have never visited reported that better hours for them and more programming of personal interest might motivate them to visit the library.

24%

14%

7%

Better Hours For Me | More Programming of Personal Interest | Better Location For Me

However, according to the Department of Public Instruction data on other comparable libraries, our library is already open longer than most other libraries, with the same amount of staffing as seen elsewhere. This also holds true when comparing our library to others in the Dodge County area. Possible solutions could include but are not limited to, offering after-hours outdoor hold pickup lockers, little free libraries, or outdoor storybook walks around the community. It is important to find a way to engage new and current users, while bringing awareness of the limitations that the library faces. The following goals and processes will become the bridge that will guide the library and community for enhancing services in the future.
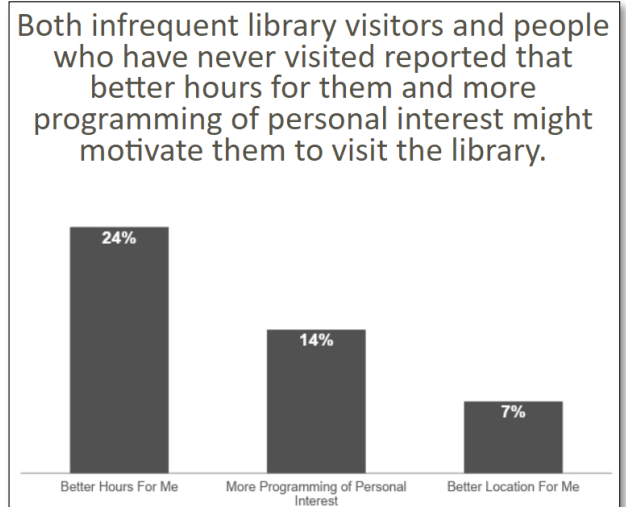
1. FACILITIES

Goal: Provide library spaces that meet the evolving needs and desires of our community, making the library a place for the community to gather and thrive.

Objectives

- Assess the current space and identify potential solutions.
  - Complete a Public Library Space Needs Assessment to determine if a facilities planning process is needed.
  - Invite outside building design experts to assess and make recommendations on how to reconfigure the existing space to better reflect the needs of the community.
- Address current demands from community stakeholders identified in the community survey.
  - Create a play/gathering area for pre-teens and teens that is a safe and welcoming environment for self-guided activities.
  - Refurbish outdoor areas for an extension of indoor space to encourage quiet reading spaces and/or gathering places.
  - Create an extension of indoor space in the meeting room during library hours for quiet reading spaces when outdoor areas are unavailable due to inclement weather.

Why?

During the data gathering process, one of the main concerns was the lack of utilization by teens and young adults. When the current facility was created in early 2000, the main goal was to establish a stand-alone library facility that could house the needed space for collections and have a community room for programming. Current library trends have shown that libraries have become community centers, and that free spaces for people of all ages to work and play are desirable. Currently, the library has no study rooms, conference spaces, or quiet reading areas for any age. The currently dedicated teen space is a table with two chairs and no other accommodation. However, the library has 2.7 acres which can be utilized, and could entail either a building expansion or renovation of outdoor areas so the needs of the community could be met. Further assessment must be made to explore these options.

"We love visiting the library. My kids love to pick out books, read in the tree, and play in the play area with the kitchen, puzzles, etc. We love especially coming on rainy, cold days when taking a break from the outdoors." ~Community Survey Comment

2. MARKETING & OUTREACH

Goal: Increase community awareness of the library's resources, services and policies through clear, consistent and engaging communications designed to reach all community members through dissemination of marketing materials and activities outside of the library.

Objectives

- Increase visibility of the library and awareness of what the library offers to infrequent or non-library users.
  - Create an e-Newsletter (through the Monarch Library System electronic services) and branding strategy.
  - Create a marketing plan and schedule to consistently reach out to stakeholders within the village/township and the surrounding rural communities.
- Develop new and existing community partnerships.
  - Increase in visits between schools and library (field trips to the library, story times at the schools, etc.).
  - Develop partnerships with youth organizations (scouts, 4H, etc.) as well as connections with homeschool families and support groups.
  - Increase partnerships with local businesses promoting local events and event collaborations at the library (such as the Community Easter Egg Hunt).
- Build community involvement both in the library and outside of the library.
  - Increase interactions at local events by having a library station (Founder John's Day, Starry Night on the Marsh, Lake Fest, etc.).
  - Increase usage of library facilities as a gathering space for groups and other local activities.
  - Create a communication and advocacy plan highlighting the current capacity of the library and identifying future needs through conversations with stakeholders.

Why?

The community survey highlighted the gaps in awareness of certain library services in both new and regular users. Many of the services requested are already available at the library but are being underutilized. The top 3 areas where community members learn about local events are from social media, word

How do you learn about events and activities happening in and around the community? (Check all that apply.)

Social Media	90%
Word of Mouth	53%
Community Signage	40%
Local Newspaper	10%
School District	10%
Community Calendar	10%
Other	7%
Local Radio	3%

of mouth, and community signage. Currently, the library only uses Facebook, which is not the
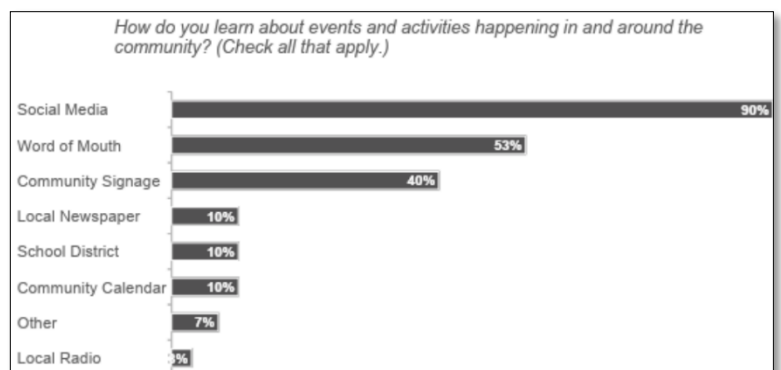
only type of social media that could be utilized, and signage is not always consistent due to various factors. Therefore, developing a marketing strategy, potentially in conjunction with other local groups, would help spread more information about what the library has to offer. For regular users, library signage, social media and word of mouth were the most frequent ways that they found out about programs. However, there were services that

Which of the following are ways that you learn about activities, programs, or news about the HCL? (Check all that apply.)

many regular users did not know are provided at the library such as printing, copying and scanning. General awareness of services should be a main component for future marketing.
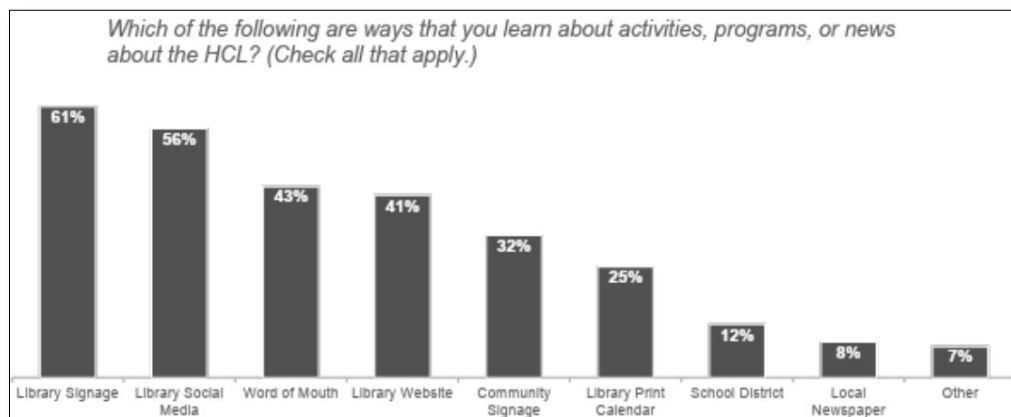
The survey also lacked data from younger residents, such as teens and pre-teens. While advertisements are sent to the school district, the survey lacks data on where regular users hear about library events. Having outreach to the schools would increase these numbers and raise awareness.

Outreach events can also highlight more than just programs and showcase the digital resources also offered by the library. This engagement outside of the library will attract users, whether they want to sign up for digital resources or begin attending programs and checking out physical materials.

The services that had the least amount of awareness were homebound delivery services, online database access, and online learning. While homebound delivery is a newer service in the library, online databases and learning have been offered for quite some time. These tools are great for different groups and all ages. The community survey identified the need to emphasize these tools.

"For my purposes, the library is already perfect. I think there should be school and community involvement but am unaware of what is available now." ~Community Survey Comment

3. PROGRAMMING & RESOURCES

Goal: Ensure that the library is offering engaging, educational programs and services, as well as resources that target the needs of the community.

Objectives

- Increase usage of underutilized resources.
  - Engage local groups in resource and book talks that highlight the different offerings at the library.
  - Create new patron registration packets to highlight resources at the library which promote resources and activities both within and outside the library.
- Increase attendance and satisfaction in library programs.
  - Increase the variety of programs offered at the library based on comment cards and surveys to help determine local demand for programs.
  - Create a program evaluation tool to ensure consistent and reliable programming for all ages. This will be combined with occasional patron survey satisfaction forms to evaluate patron experience.
- Create special collections and expand educational pass offerings.
  - Expand Educational Institution Passes (zoo, horticultural, museum) by identifying local demand while securing funding through donations from local initiatives.
  - Create a collection of non-traditional items available for checkout (Library of Things: STEM Toys, Tech, Wi-Fi hotspots, etc.).

Why?

Modern libraries are more than just books; they offer a vast array of resources, programming and special collections. During conversations with the community and during the survey, there were a variety of services that patrons did not know the library offers. These services are important and beneficial resources to the community, and it is important to highlight these services.

Programs are also inconsistent with community demand and strategic development is needed to enhance the programs that are being offered. Therefore, it is important to discover the right kind of programming through various data collections in this strategic cycle to determine the future of program development and directions to enhance library experiences.

Another request seen on a regular basis was an expansion to the different institutions that offer library passes and requests for non-traditional items. Currently, the library offers puppets for checkout, but there is a lack of technology for patrons to borrow. Surrounding libraries have larger offerings of these items, and this expansion should be explored further.

4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURAL SUPPORT

Goal: Ensure short and long-term fiscal sustainability through continuous exploration of funding opportunities and sources of funding to meet and support the ever-evolving service needs of the community.

Objectives

- Develop and implement advocacy efforts with city leaders and civic stakeholders.
    - o Create a strategy for collaboration with the village and township so the library is an active stakeholder in local events and advocacy initiatives.
    - o Ensure the library director serves an active role in village and township collaborations and meetings.
- Establish fundraising initiatives to support library services and facility needs, including identifying new opportunities for funding, such as grants and fundraisers, to support library services.
    - o Establish a fundraising goal each year, created and supported by the library board and director, for capital or endowment campaigns.
    - o Establish a fundraising goal each year by the library director for special projects, with the assistance of local non-profit and business groups, including grant projects and other fundraising initiatives.

Why?

The library is an important asset that needs to be updated to meet the needs of the community and make Hustisford a more attractive place to live, work, and visit. Maintaining and updating the facility to meet the evolving needs of the community requires securing additional sources of funding. The library recognizes the importance of being good stewards of public funds and strives to use these funds wisely. This requires greater advocacy with civic stakeholders and city leaders to strengthen and enhance a collaborative environment. This also requires the stewards of the library, trustees and the director, to become proactive fiscal agents to maintain greater fiscal security for future generations.

5. CULTURE OF PLANNING

Goal: Continuously develop and implement plans to strengthen our staffing, building and grounds, and finances through workgroups and committees that spend time on a regular basis (with an annual minimum of meetings) to discuss progress and maintain communication.

Objectives

- Develop and implement a plan for ongoing maintenance, preventative maintenance, and capital improvement strategies.
    - Create a facilities maintenance management plan with the village and township that includes goals and timelines to ensure durability of the facility.
    - Have an annual review meeting inviting members of the community to see changes and updates at the library.
- Develop a technology plan.
    - Evaluate current technology and create a strategy for updating existing equipment, reevaluating periodically when new trends and technologies become available.
- Develop and strengthen library staff and library board trustees.
    - Create internal processes that help increase staff satisfaction during hiring and annual evaluations.
    - Create a continuing education plan for staff and reevaluate employee recognition policies.
    - Create a continuing education plan for library board trustees with resources from the Department of Public Instruction and educational support from the American Library Association and the Wisconsin Library Association.

Why?

Creating and implementing plans will improve efficiency and promote informed fiscal planning that will enhance our services. An aging facility requires a systematic approach to maintenance and replacement in order for the library to be proactive, rather than reactive. For example, it would avoid the situation a few years ago where an HVAC unit needed full replacement, but limited funding was available. It is difficult to predict the future, but working to institute processes that respond to changes, trends and other factors influencing the nature of library operations will help provide seamless service, evenly distribute expenditures, and meet our community needs. An emphasis on planning will reduce the likelihood of unexpected expenditures and enhance the library's ability to cope with unanticipated expenditures and events. A well-trained staff and board of trustees will strengthen these goals.

IMPLEMENTATION, ASSESSMENT & COMMUNICATION

The Hustisford Community Library director and staff will work in conjunction with the Library Board of Trustees to prioritize and coordinate activities for this plan. A complete activity and implementation plan will be created by the Hustisford Community Library director and will serve as an implementation guide during the life of this plan. The library will consider available resources, including funding and staff time; changing conditions locally, regionally, and statewide; and opportunities that arise to innovate during the implementation of the plan. The library board and library director will review progress on a bi-annual basis, or as needed.

Further information about Wisconsin State Library Standards and other information about this strategic plan can be found on the Hustisford Community website. Any questions or concerns should be directed to either the Hustisford Community Library Board of Trustees, or to the library director. We encourage community involvement and are excited to show the future progress of our library.

Future updates can be found on the website throughout this strategic planning process. Thank you again to everyone who has participated!

Approved and adopted by the library board on September 10, 2024.