

The Wareham Free Library’s Long-Range Plan: 2017-2022

Table of Contents

[Preface](#).....2

[Executive Summary](#).....3

[Section I: What Is An Appropriate Budget?](#).....5

[Section II: What Is Our Library Like?](#).....12

[Section III: What Does A Fully-Funded Library Offer?](#).....20

[Section IV: Where Will Our Budget Go?](#).....27

[Section V: Strategic Objectives](#).....32

[References](#).....39

Preface

This document contains five sections. The first, “What Is An Appropriate Budget?”, aims to arrive at an appropriate and appropriate municipal allotment for the Wareham Free Library. The second, “What Is Our Library Like?”, analyzes data on the library’s activity. The third, “What Does A Fully-Funded Library Offer?”, defines the library’s relevance and value. The fourth, “Where Will Our Budget Go?”, establishes specific and concrete library goals. The fifth and final section, “Strategic Objectives,” establishes the library’s goals, objectives, and outcomes and aligns them with a five-year timeline.

Statistics are for the Wareham Free Library’s “Main Library” on 59 Marion Road; Spinney Memorial Library statistics are separated noted. For almost all comparative analysis, median values are chosen over average values to mitigate the effects of outliers. Library data are not normally distributed, and the “central tendency” is best represented by the median.

Wareham’s population category is defined as 15,000-24,999. “Commonwealth” refers to Massachusetts libraries that participate in the state’s resource-sharing system.

When comparing municipal budgets, we used an adjusted municipal budget that considered Wareham’s accounting and reporting practices, namely by

- 1) Excluding the fire department from other town budgets, as Wareham excludes it.
- 2) Excluding enterprise funds when towns reported them in their total general fund budgets, as Wareham excludes them.

We compared Wareham’s FY 2017 budget with the FY 2017 budget of other communities. In four cases, however, we were unable to obtain FY 2017 figures and settled on FY 2016 (Ludlow, Somerset, Rockland, and Dracut).

This plan’s structure and style respond to Wareham’s specific needs. When recertified, we will modify the plan to conform to MBLC’s preferences, e.g. rather than weave the needs assessment into the narrative (analyses of demographics, surveys, and focus groups), the needs assessment will have its own section.

Executive Summary

Purpose

The Wareham Free Library's Long-Range Plan represents the benefits of fully-funded library service. Although I would like to see this plan implemented, I realize that my preferred funding goal (1% of the municipal budget) may not come in the presented timeline, given Wareham's financial challenges. However, I maintain that 1% of the town's budget should be our funding goal, irrespective of its short-term feasibility, and therefore we plan accordingly.

This long-range plan demonstrates an ideal: the great potential in what we term "fully-funded library services," i.e. a public library operating at about 1% of the municipal budget. It represents excellent educational and literacy services for the community of Wareham. It aims to re-establish our local history/genealogy center, to hire staff with expertise in technology, education, and research, to repurpose the Spinney Memorial Library as a civic and literacy center, to cultivate dynamic community programming, to redesign the main building so as to enhance public service (e.g. installing a café)—among many other proposals. One of the plan's primary objectives is to demonstrate the tremendous value brought by fully-funded modern public libraries.

But I understand the Town of Wareham's fiscal reality and thus will deviate from this plan as budgetary constraints require. It is not the *only* plan I have or will construct; it is, in short, a "best case scenario." As the library's director, my job is to promote success for the Wareham Free Library; I will sacrifice proposals in this plan wherever appropriate. Without considerable progress toward reaching 1% of the municipal budget, we might need to readjust our objectives and outcomes but will nevertheless preserve our goals: 1) to become a certified library; 2) to deliver excellent traditional library services; 3) to develop educational and research-based services; and 4) to enhance our space and overall environment.

Note, as well, that this plan focuses exclusively on library services. For example, one of my organizational goals is to improve our library's energy efficiency, but, because that goal is not about library services, it is omitted here.

The Importance of Certification

As the only populous decertified library in Massachusetts, we suffer many disadvantages. We do not receive any state aid (an estimated \$10,000-\$30,000, depending on compliance with state standards) and we do not qualify for state grants, from large-scale construction projects to small technology supplementation. But worst of all, our residents lose access to the manifold materials of Massachusetts—from 20-26 million items, depending on what's counted. These effects are

devastating, and the longer we persist without certification then the more this untenable situation becomes the “new normal,” an unfortunate but expected reality of living in Wareham.

It should not be this way. Our library should be certified and our residents should enjoy the same unfettered and expansive access to materials that our neighbors do in Carver, Marion, Mattapoisett, Fairhaven—literally every other populous municipality in the state. We can do better than what we have now; we should expect that, at a minimum, we support a certified public library, as has been managed by so many other economically struggling communities.

An Appropriate Municipal Allotment

In Massachusetts, libraries receive overwhelming support from their municipalities. For all libraries, the median amount of municipal funding as a percentage of total income in FY 2015 was 91.8%. Only about 10% of a library’s total operating income, then, tends to come from outside sources. This funding materializes as about 1% of the municipality’s total budget, school included (Wareham’s population group = 1.13%; Wareham’s fiscal peers = 1%). By contrast, our FY 17 allotment was 0.37% of the municipal budget.

Benefits of Library Service

Public libraries are institutions of lifelong learning, access, entertainment, and literacy. Unlike specialized departments like a public school district, a public library theoretically serves all of a municipality’s residents, from toddlers to students to the working poor to the intellectually elite to disabled seniors to the local homeless. In Wareham especially, which has considerable levels of working poor as well as many educational challenges, an accessible, *open* public library becomes vital.

A fully-funded library offers excellent traditional public service—reference, circulation, and community programming—as well as educational assistance. This plan positions the library as an educational center for all Wareham residents, offering instruction and assistance from information literacy to computer programming. It goes so far as to introduce a new classification of librarian, an Education Librarian, which would be the first of its kind nationwide. The library is also positioned as a town research department, assisting town administration and department heads with research needs.

Section I: What Is An Appropriate Budget?

Introduction

Libraries nationwide struggled during the last recession. Between FY 2010 and FY 2012, for example, the majority of American libraries claimed to experience flat or decreased funding (Hoffman, Bertot, & Davis, 2012). When municipalities face difficult economic times, libraries often receive cuts. Post-recession, however, the tide is turning; *Library Journal* reported that in 2014 about 73% of surveyed libraries reported an increase in operating budgets (Peet, 2015). Indeed, this trend continued into the following year, with 74% of public libraries reporting funding increases (Peet, 2016). These data suggest that “libraries nationwide are beginning to find their fiscal footing after some lean years” (Peet, 2015).

Overall, Wareham’s experiences echo these national trends, as most municipal departments faced cuts in FY 2014 and then rebounded to pre-cut levels. The library’s budget, however, was disproportionately cut (Figure 1).

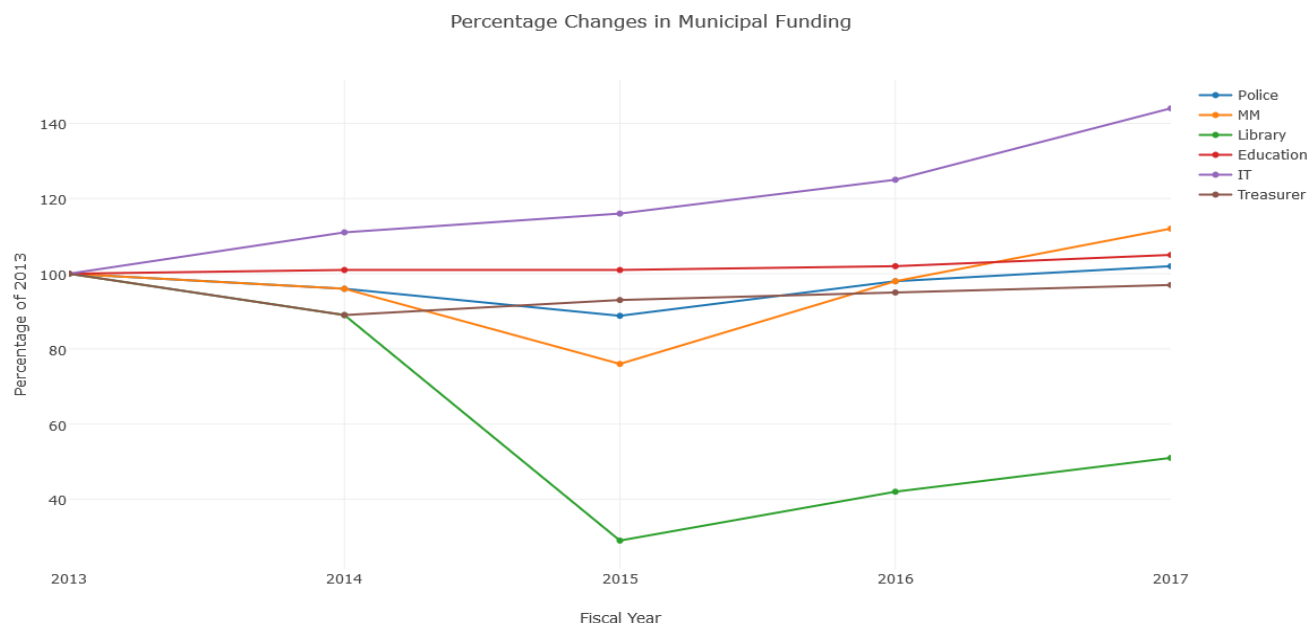


Figure 1: Changes presented as percentages of the department’s 2013 budget. MM = municipal maintenance.

Because the library’s cuts were disproportionate to the rest of the Town’s, in 2014 the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) decertified The Wareham Free Library. Since Commonwealth libraries participate in an extensive resource-sharing system, they must adhere to minimum funding standards to prevent unfair resource strain. This system aims to prevent poorly funded communities from “leeching” off their fully-funded peers. Communities that fail to meet MBLC’s funding standards can request yearly waivers, but when a library faces

cuts disproportionate to the rest of its town departments, MBLC may—and in Wareham’s case, did—reject these requests.

Decertification carries several penalties: 1) forfeiture of State Aid to Public Library monies, an amount estimated between \$10,000 and \$30,000 for Wareham; 2) forfeiture of the right to apply for grants under the Library Services and Technology Act and the Public Library Construction Program; 3) forfeiture of universal borrowing privileges. Commonwealth libraries are not obligated to lend materials to decertified libraries. Libraries instead agree to lend to decertified libraries on a case-by-case basis; since Wareham’s decertification, only Freetown and Swansea have agreed to do so.

The effects on borrowing privileges are devastating (Figures 2 and 3). Certified libraries have free and unrestricted access to over 26 million items through either their consortium—in Wareham’s case, the SAILS network—or through the Commonwealth Catalog, an interlibrary loan platform that facilitates lending and borrowing with every consortium in the state (9 total). Because of decertification, Wareham effectively lost 99.5% of its original collection.

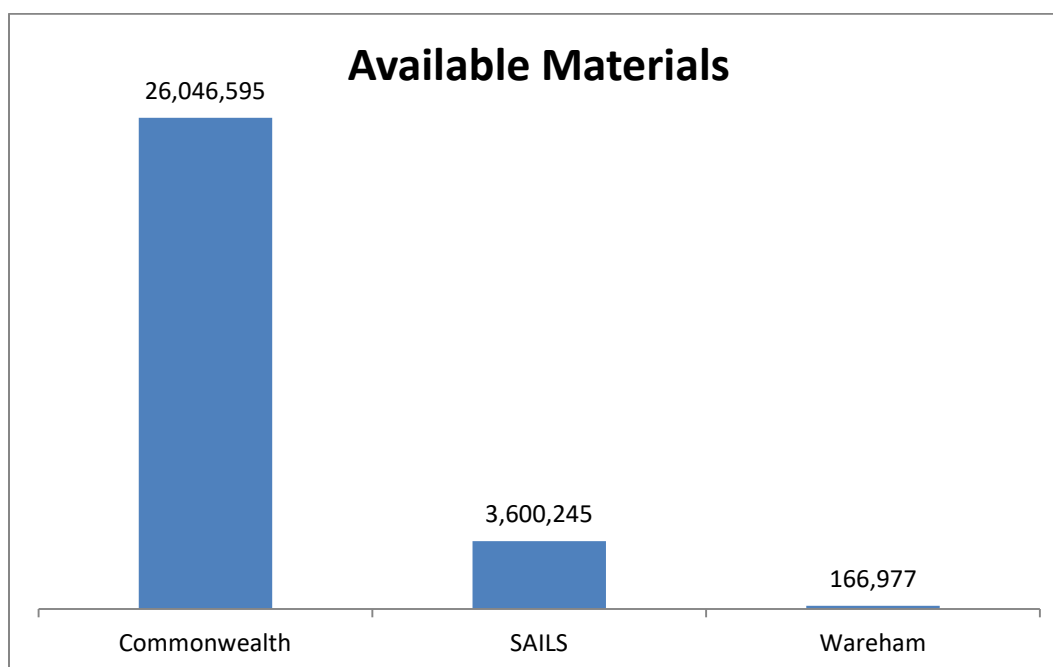


Figure 2: Total available materials. The Commonwealth figure represents an estimated amount of items available to certified libraries (excludes eBooks, electronic materials, downloadable audio-visual holdings, microfilm, and any sort of special material). SAILS represents the circulating holdings within Wareham’s network consortium. As a decertified library, Wareham has access to only 166,977 items.

Total Circulating Materials

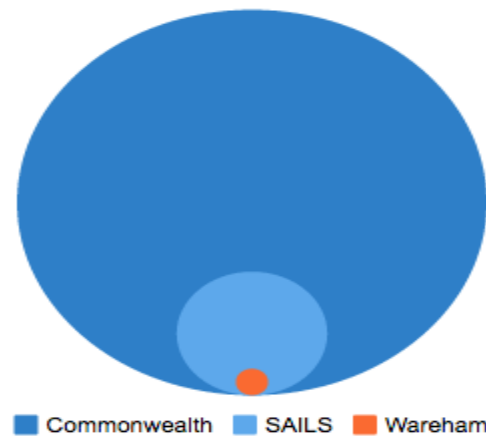


Figure 3: A stacked Venn diagram representing the effects of decertification.

Wareham is the only populous (greater than 2,000 residents) municipality with a decertified library; other decertified libraries include Alford (population = 494) and Tyringham (population = 327). Some well-meaning advocates have recommended privately funding our library, but this recommendation runs counter to common and established practice: Commonwealth libraries receive an overwhelming amount of their income from municipalities. The TAMI statistic represents a library's Total Appropriated Municipal Income, i.e. how much money a municipality allocates for its library. For all Commonwealth libraries, the median TAMI as a percentage of the library's total income is 91.8%. Massachusetts municipalities, in short, provide almost all of their libraries' income.

In recent years, as the Town recovers from its failed override attempt, the library has seen greater financial commitment (Table 1):

Fiscal Year	Total Appropriated Municipal Income	% of Total Town Budget
2015	\$124,839	0.22%
2016	\$177,748	0.31%
2017	\$216,824	0.37%

Table 1: Library's TAMI and percentage of total budget over the past 3 years.

Wareham's increased budget allocations suggest a brighter future. However, when compared to other municipalities, the library's funding pales. An allotment of 0.37% would rank last in Wareham's population category (median = 1.13%). Thus its FY 2017 allotment of \$216,824

requires significant enhancement. In contrast, libraries in Wareham's population group received a median allotment of \$644,695 (N = 53; mean = \$750,231), almost triple Wareham's.

Many of the libraries in Wareham's population group are not fiscal peers; Canton and Lincoln, for example, are wealthy towns with budgets over \$100 million. Perhaps communities like Wareham cannot afford to allocate 1.13% of their budgets to library services. So while it may make sense to compare Wareham to these communities for library activity, financial comparisons may be inappropriate. The following section, therefore, compares Wareham to its fiscal peers, i.e. communities similar to Wareham in size and per capita income.

Fiscal Peers

To define a category of fiscal peers, we examined communities with a population $\pm 7,000$ and a per capita income $\pm \$5,000$ of Wareham's. We arrived at those ranges because they represented, at extreme ends, two communities with similar community dynamics to Wareham: Fairhaven and Bourne. As Fairhaven's population was 15,952, we considered communities around $\pm 7,000$ of Wareham's population. We did the same for Bourne's per capita income of \$34,012. This totaled 21 communities.¹ That Wareham came close to average and median values suggests the appropriateness of these fiscal peers (Tables 2 and 3).

Median Values	Population	Per Capita Income	Total Budget
Wareham	22,086	\$30,354	\$59,383,327
Fiscal Peers	20,749	\$31,351	\$54,061,559
Difference	+1,337	-\$797	+\$5,321,768

Table 2: Wareham's statistics compared to its fiscal peers (aggregate median).

Average Values	Population	Per Capita Income	Total Budget
Wareham	22,086	\$30,354	\$59,383,327
Fiscal Peers	21,888	\$30,894	\$59,107,669
Difference	+198	-\$540	+\$275,628

Table 3: Wareham's statistics compared to its fiscal peers (aggregate average).

What matters is not so much the exact peers chosen but how Wareham's budget relates to those peers. Because Wareham's budget is above the median value of its fiscal peers (Figure 4), we

¹ Webster, Ludlow, Agawam, West Springfield, Yarmouth, Somerset, Fairhaven, Easthampton, Bourne, Middleborough, Saugus, Milford, Gardner, Dracut, Stoughton, Norton, Bridgewater, Swansea, Rockland, Greenfield, South Hadley.

hypothesize that this effect will persist throughout its individual departments, i.e. departmental expenditures should be around or above median values. If Wareham had instead been compared to wealthier municipalities, and its total budget had fallen below median values, then we should expect to find *below median spending* throughout Wareham's departments.

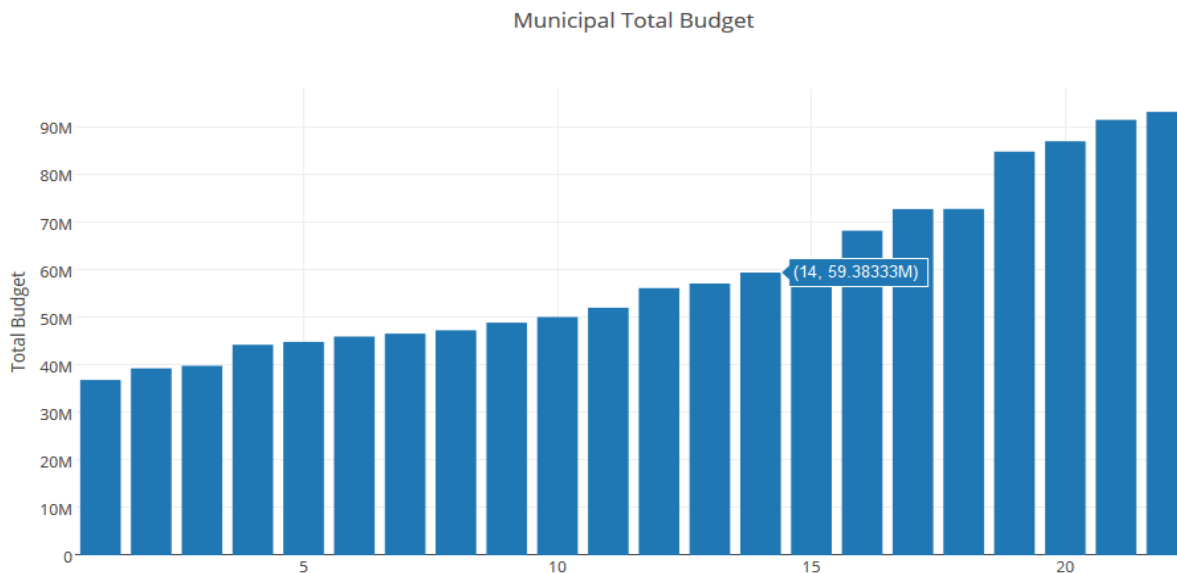


Figure 4: Budgets for Wareham and its fiscal peers. Wareham = \$59,383,327; median = \$54,061,559.

However, this observation did not hold true for Wareham's library. Figure 5 presents a scatterplot of library funding; each dot represents a specific municipality, one of Wareham's fiscal peers. The x-axis portrays the total dollar amount spent on a department and the y-axis portrays the percentage of the municipal budget represented by that dollar amount, i.e. Wareham's library received \$216,824, 0.37% of the town's total adjusted budget. As the graph illustrates, Wareham's library—by far—has the lowest funding.

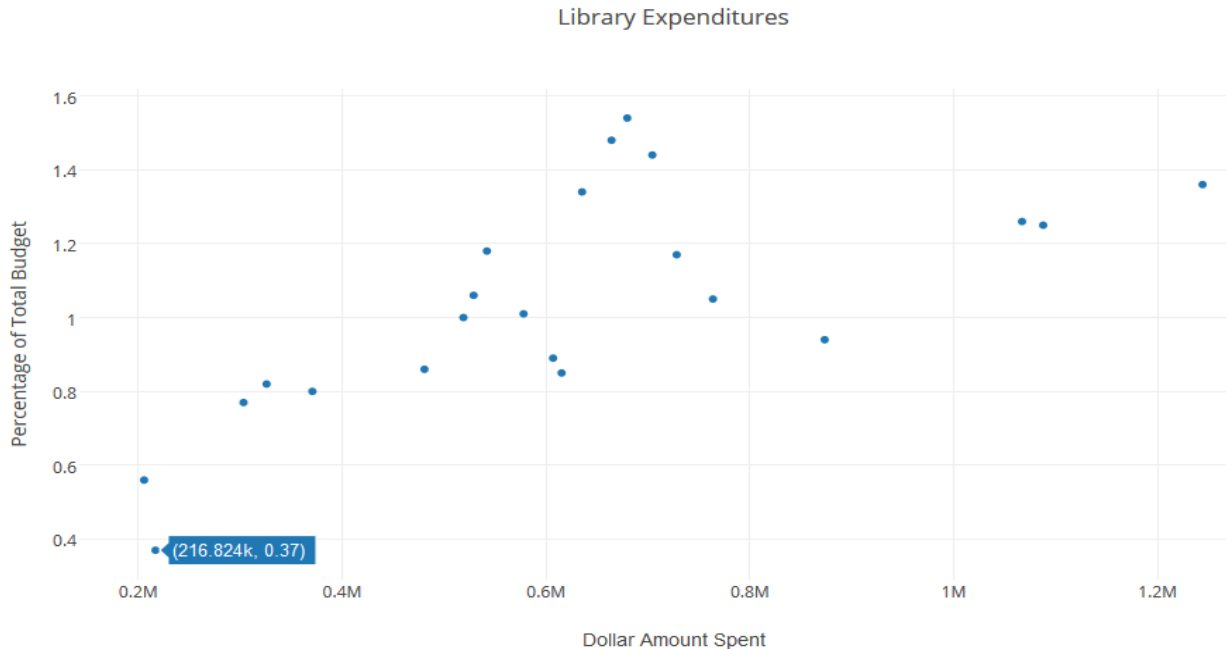


Figure 5: Library expenditures. Wareham = \$216,824, 0.37%; median = \$611,149, 1.03%.

We are encouraged by the Town’s renewed commitment to bolstering its library, as the library’s funding has increased over the past two years. Furthermore, the Town Administrator has agreed to add \$13,000 to this year’s budget in the coming months to help absorb additional salary expenses. These are positive signs, but based on the aforementioned data and analysis, we argue that significantly more library funding is needed—and deserved. Therefore, we request steady increases over five years, culminating in a municipal allotment of 1% of Wareham’s FY 2017 budget—\$593,833.

Partial Privatization: The Library Foundation

Fundraising is one of this library’s key strengths. The Friends of the Wareham Free Library have been raising meaningful funds for quite some time; their book sales alone generate around \$10,000 annually. Friends’ fundraising has vitally complemented the library’s books and subscriptions’ budget as well as helped maintain the Spinney Memorial Library. In FY 2016, for example, the library received no direct municipal funding for books and materials; the Friends as well as grants from other organizations (e.g. Makepeace) financed the library’s collection.

The Wareham Library Foundation represents an even larger financial commitment, going so far as to fund 35% of the director’s salary (\$22,750 in FY 2017). In Fall 2016, a memo of understanding was signed by the Friends, Foundation, Library Trustees, and the Board of Selectmen to show that all three institutions were committed to the library’s success. The gist of this MOU is that the Town and library groups will collaborate to promote library excellence.

It bears mentioning that, as 501(c)(3) organizations, the Friends and the Foundation should not be responsible for handling the library's operating expenses and salaries. As is the case for virtually all Commonwealth libraries, and certainly for all of Wareham's fiscal peers, municipalities assume over 90% of the library's total income. Wareham should be no exception. With appropriate municipal funding complemented by the Foundation's aggressive fundraising, the Wareham Free Library could become one of the strongest libraries not only in the South Coast but also the commonwealth.

Section II: What Is Our Library Like?

This section presents data on the library's FY 2016 activity. Longitudinal analysis is difficult if not impossible due to Wareham's constantly shifting hours. FY 2014 was when the main library last featured regular hours; for much of FY 2015, for example, it opened only 18 hours. Thus only FY 2016 is considered here, which unfortunately limits longitudinal analysis.

Popular Despite Irregular Hours

Wareham has 14,785 total cardholders, representing approximately 67% of its total population. While the circulation database prunes inactive users after three years, it does not do so for delinquent (fine owing) patrons; therefore, not all of those cardholders are active. Still, it represents a sizeable share of the population and is higher than many local area libraries (e.g. Middleborough = 65%, Dartmouth = 44%, Fairhaven = 55%).

Circulation traffic remains heavy. The library circulated 61.1 materials per hour open, well-above the state median value of 42.7 and more than many libraries in larger population groups (such as Dedham, Chelsea, Bridgewater, Somerville, Peabody, Lynn, Lawrence, Fall River, Springfield, Lowell, and Fitchburg). This number is especially impressive considering the library's decertification; lacking universal borrowing privileges, Wareham loses an estimated 15,000 checkouts per year. A recertified Wareham would likely circulate at least 74 items per hour, placing it above the population group's median score (71.1). In FY 2012, for example, a certified Wareham processed 81.4 materials per hour open.

In terms of staffing, the library's circulation per full-time equivalent staff member (averaging the interim director's hours) was 22,490—much higher than its population group value of 13,904. These data indicate a heavily overburdened workforce, as staff members are expected to process far more materials than workers in other libraries.

Door counters indicate modest "foot traffic," averaging 36 visitors per hour, above state values (median = 28.1) and slightly-below its population group (N = 44; median = 41.0). This makes sense, as the library's irregular hours disrupt continual service, and the library has lacked robust adult and teen programming for quite some time. Once 17th in the state in terms of adult programming (FY 2003), it offered just 63 adult and teen programs in FY 2016 compared to 123, the median value for its population group. And 61% of these public programs were the quilters and toastmasters. Although Wareham is closer in terms of children's programming, due to the efforts of its children's librarian and volunteers, it still falls short of its peers (128 to 221).

PC Reservation usage is respectable, averaging 5.1 sessions per hour open. For its population group, Wareham's essentially the middle value (median = 4.8).

Absent any reference staff, Wareham does not track reference statistics, but comparably-sized communities can provide some insight into how many queries Wareham receives: reporting libraries in Wareham’s population category (N = 45) received an average of 4.3 transactions per hour open (median = 2.6). Without reference, archival, or historical staff, however, Wareham has no reliable way to answer any of these questions.

Who Uses Our Library?

The largest number of cardholders falls between the ages of 45-64, consistent with national trends (Pew Research Center, 2015. Other ages see a fairly even distribution (Figure 6).

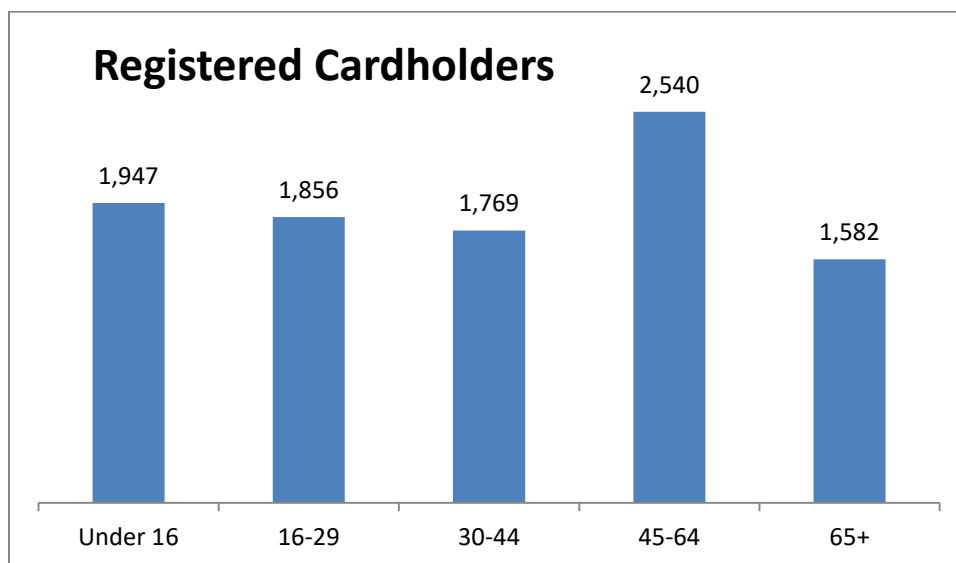


Figure 6: Registered cardholders by age. Note that over 5,000 cardholders are “unknown” in the database.

When’s A Good Time To Find A Parking Spot?

Circulation patterns demonstrate clear early morning preferences, peaking at 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Figure 7). Traffic then stalls until the afternoon, where it sees a slight resurgence from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM and then declines considerably (lowest point = 6:00-7:00 PM, 3,680).

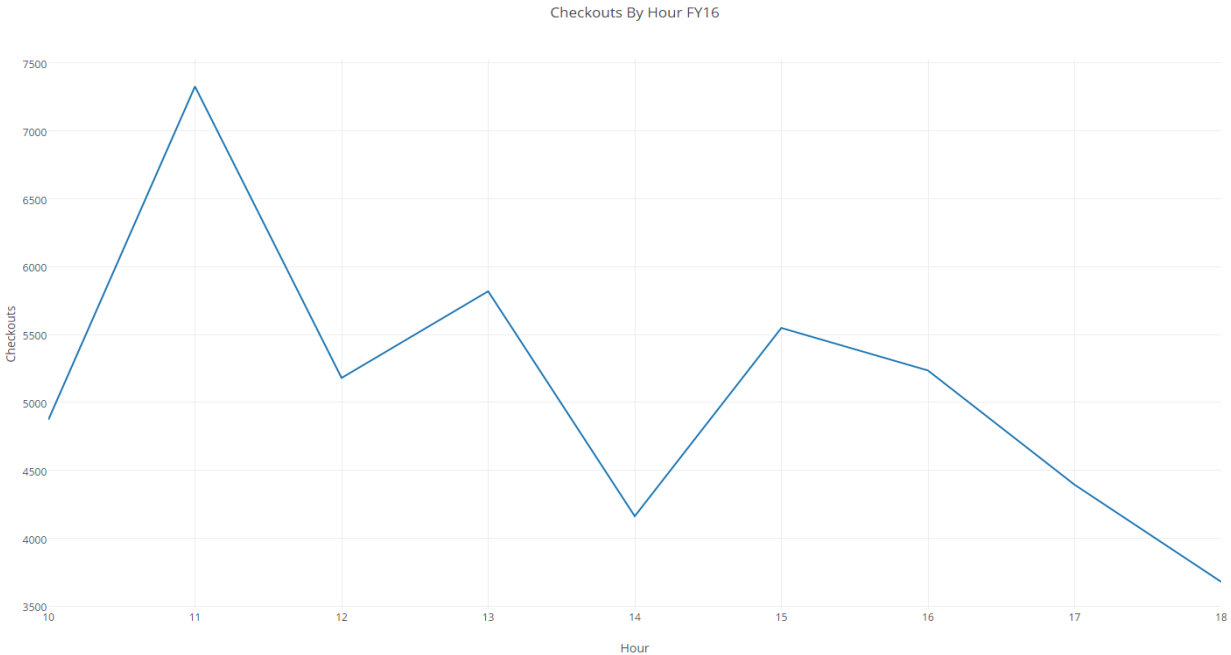


Figure 7: Checkouts per hour. Note that the “time” presented includes any transaction occurring within the hour. Thus 7,400 checkouts occurred *between* 11:00 AM and noon.

A popular tourist destination, Wareham receives many summer visitors. We speculated that summer would be the library’s most popular season, but this hypothesis did not hold entirely true (Figure 8). Although August was a very popular month, so were March and October, owing likely from the school year.

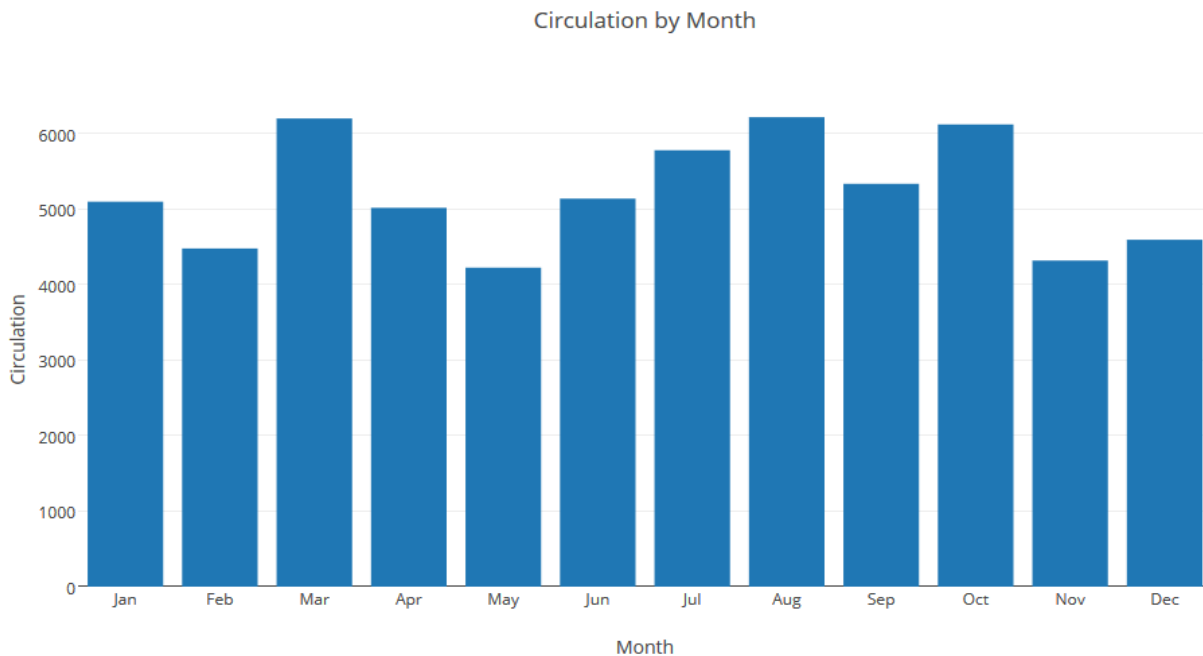


Figure 8: Circulation traffic by month. The school year remains competitive with summer.

Saturday and Tuesday were the library’s busiest days when adjusting for hours opened (Figure 9). We find this unusual, as Saturday tends to be one of the quieter days for libraries. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, MBLC permits Commonwealth libraries to only be open 5 days per week for maximum state aid compliance, and most close Saturdays.

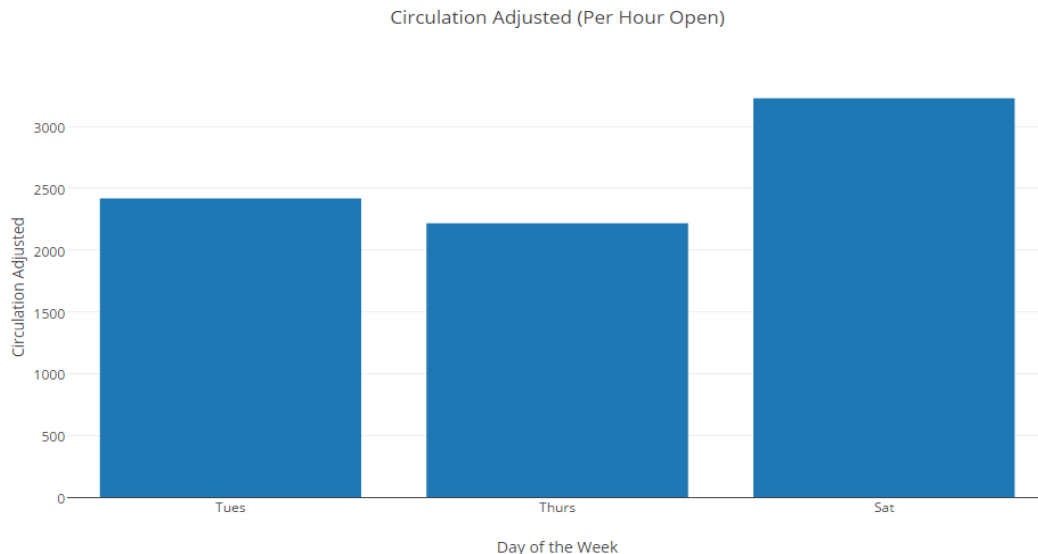


Figure 9: Circulation traffic when adjusting for Saturday’s hours.

What Do Patrons Borrow?

As is the case in most libraries, children’s room circulation experiences tremendous traffic. We circulated more junior room books than both national and Massachusetts’ averages, 36.5% to 35.2% and 32.8% respectively (IMLS, 2016). Young adult circulation totals were quite low at just 4% (Figure 10).

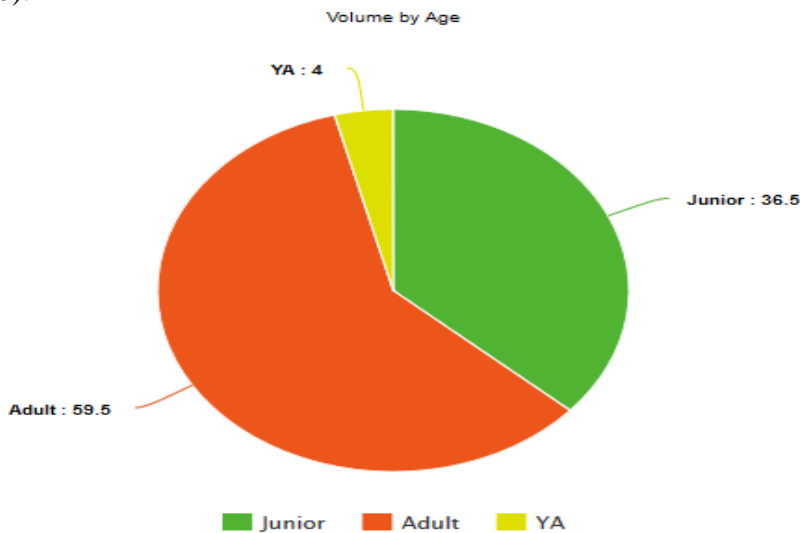


Figure 10: Materials borrowed by age category.

Similar to national trends and contrary to popular belief, most of the library’s borrowed materials were print-based (66.7%), similar to the Massachusetts’ median value (65.6%). See Figure 11.

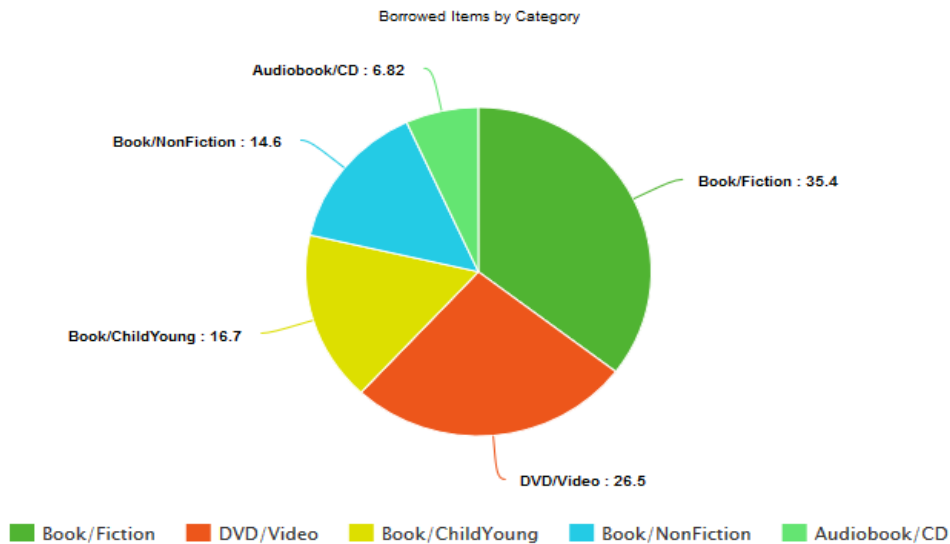


Figure 11: Borrowed items by category. Note that for classification purposes, “like” items were combined, e.g. large type fiction and mysteries fall under “fiction.”

Indeed, the overwhelming majority of Americans remain print-based readers; just 27% of Americans in 2015 claim to have read an eBook, similar to the 2014 figure of 28% (Rainie & Perrin, 2015). Most Americans also profess to be readers; 72% claim to have read a book within the past year in any format (Rainie & Perrin, 2015).

Our collection totals 85,760 items. A 1:1 relationship between items in the catalog and items circulated is not realistic; topical items are purchased and then essentially go “out of circulation.” However, the catalog should broadly reflect borrowing trends and needs. Popular genres should see greater catalog presence.

Circulation Percentage measures the general amount of circulation per category; it does not indicate that each item in the catalog was circulated (Table 5). Nonfiction circulates the least, and, despite comprising 3.9% of the catalog, DVDs generate 26% of the library’s total traffic.

Item	Catalog Count	Circulation	Circulation Percentage
DVD	2,355	13,996	594%
Junior DVD	1,010	5,302	525%
Audiobook	1,376	2,616	190%
CD	1,307	1,582	121%

Large Type	3,231	3,614	112%
YA Fiction	2,872	2,137	74%
Fiction (alone)	16,960	11,764	69%
Mystery	5,760	3,285	57%
Biography	1,644	654	40%
Nonfiction	16,105	5,005	31%
YA Nonfiction	897	136	15%

Table 5: Circulation and catalog counts.

EBooks: Forgotten Value

Despite belonging to a decertified library, Wareham’s residents can still borrow electronic materials through Overdrive because SAILS’ network fees fund this service. Wareham’s eBook usage was significantly below the network’s median value. And because SAILS has many smaller libraries than Wareham, the gap would likely be larger within Wareham’s population group. These data suggest that many of Wareham’s residents are unaware that Overdrive lending services exists (Figure 12), a trend national in scope; in its latest survey on library eBook usage, the Pew Research Center found that a majority of Americans “do not know [eBook lending] is provided by their local library” (Zickuhr et al., 2012).

Tumblebooks, an eBook platform for children, has seen impressive usage. This activity may stem from Wareham lacking school librarians (only the high school has any library staff). Wareham’s eAudioBook usage is the literal median value in SAILS, but, as indicated above, this usage is actually quite low because many smaller libraries see hardly any usage at all.

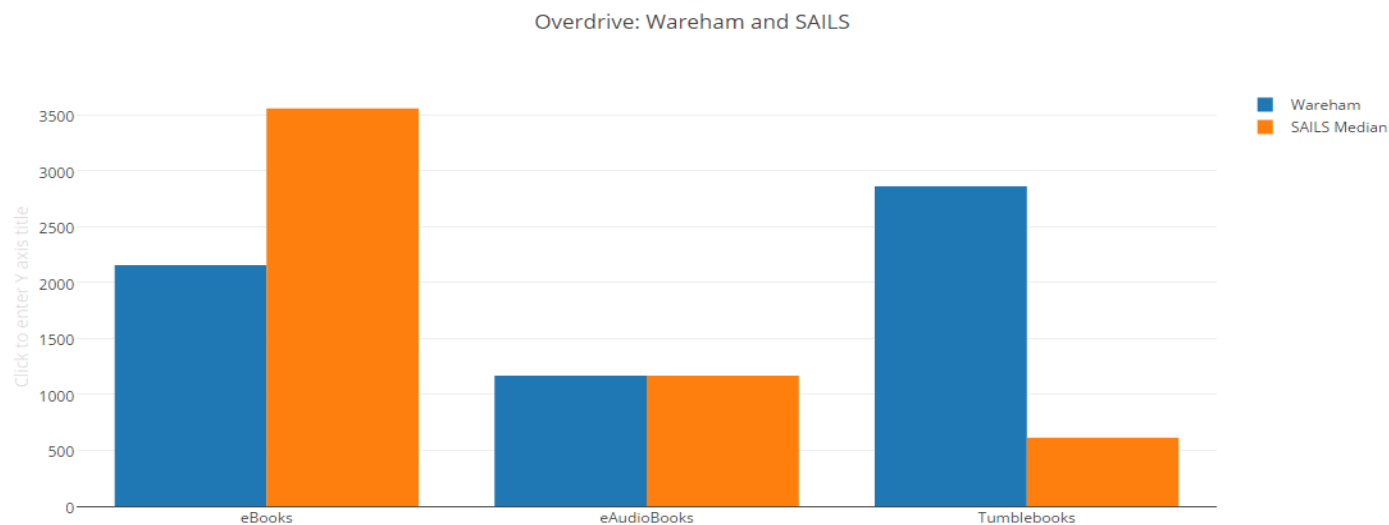


Figure 12: Overdrive usage comparing Wareham to SAILS. No other comparative groups are available.

The Spinney Memorial Library

The Spinney Memorial Library's very existence credits the hard work of its founders and supporters. In 2005, Spinney Memorial Inc. donated an historic building to the Friends of the Wareham Free Library. The Friends and their affiliated groups raised over \$700,000 to renovate and improve the building. In 2012, the Friends gave the building, with all of its improvements, to the Town of Wareham. During Wareham's fiscal struggles, however, private funds have operated and staffed the Spinney. Indeed, to this day the Spinney relies on volunteers to help manage the branch's maintenance and programming.

In spite of this interest, the Spinney has never seen the "main library's" volume. Averaging 6.1 visitors per hour in FY 2016, the library compares to the median value of libraries in the 1,999 and lower population group (5.4). The circulation of 6.8 items per hour also resembles the 1,999 and below group's median value (10). This makes sense, as the Spinney seems to serve mostly Onset, a census-designated place with a 2010 population estimated at 1,573.

Thanks to its generous donors and enthusiastic volunteers, the Spinney Memorial Library has sustained itself, up to and including staff salaries. However, beginning in FY 2017, the Town agreed to absorb the Spinney's costs. This presents a quandary to decision makers for both the Town and its library. Money spent on the Spinney returns far less value than money spent on the main building (Table 6). For simplicity, this analysis considers only salary, not any of the other costs associated with operating a building. We argue it is best practice to maintain a building with at least two staff members, both in terms of public service and safety, and this often translates to one librarian and one library assistant (totaling \$42.67/hour).

Statistic Per Hour	Main Library	Cost Per	Spinney Library	Cost Per
Circulation transactions	61	\$0.70	6.8	\$6.28
Visitors	36	\$1.19	6.1	\$7.00
PC Reservation sessions	5.1	\$8.37	1.3	\$32.82

Table 6: Comparisons between main and Spinney libraries. The table is mostly for illustrative purposes. For simplicity's sake, operating costs are omitted and costs per transaction treated independently.

These data present two clear problems:

- 1) The Spinney offers considerably less public service per hour open to Wareham residents than the main library.
- 2) Operating the Spinney is less cost-efficient; dollars spent return significantly less investment than those spent on the main.

But the Spinney sees respectable traffic in programming and targeted educational services. Its holiday programs (at Halloween and Christmas) were exceptionally well-attended, with over 200 participants each. Children's programming remains steadily attended throughout the year. And despite being in Onset, Spinney is not popular only in the summer; in the winter months, Spinney averaged 22 participants across 14 programs. Partnerships like Head Start amplify these attendance figures; without Head Start involvement, Spinney participation rates average 11 participants. With Head Start, that number increases to 17.

The Spinney therefore needs a clearer identity and purpose (see Section IV for details).

Section III: What Does A Fully-Funded Library Offer?

First, sufficient library funding returns certification, which means our patrons can borrow from Commonwealth libraries, our library can receive state aid, our director can apply for grants (such as a Construction Grant), and our staff can receive additional training.

Beyond regaining certification, however, we detail several significant benefits to funding Wareham's library system. Wherever possible, statistics come from the American Community Survey (2013-2015). Otherwise, demographic statistics come from the 2010 U.S. Census or an external source: a Housing Production Plan delivered to the Wareham Affordable Housing Trust by consultant Karen Sunnarborg (2013).

Direct Results of a Fully-Funded Library

★ *Necessary Public Service*

In many ways, Wareham resembles the typical American suburb. The vast majority of its housing units are detached single-family (78%). Its population of 22,086 has remained relatively stable for several decades and will likely stay stable; the Massachusetts Institute for Social and Economic Research projects little growth for Wareham through 2020 (Sunnarborg, 2013). Low property taxes facilitate affordable housing. With a \$170,000 median home price, Wareham's property is more affordable than the state median home with a price of \$290,000.

Wareham differs from many suburbs, however, with its unique geographic blend and diversity. As a popular tourist destination and coastal community, 19.4% of its properties are seasonal compared to the state's 4.1%; in fact, the slogan on Wareham's seal, *Nepinnae Kekit*, means "summer home" in Wampanoag. Wareham's 54 miles of coastline is among the largest in the South Coast, and a large section of the community is "rural," with almost one-third of the land used for agricultural purposes (mostly cranberry bogs). Further, despite a large White majority (86.5%), Wareham comprises a noticeably diverse ethnic community, largely through the presence of its Cape Verdean residents.

Yet Wareham faces many challenges as well—challenges to be met by a fully-funded public library. Many of Wareham's residents struggle to make ends meet; 43% of its households are "beyond [residents'] means and unaffordable" (Sunnarborg, 2013, p. 6). Unsurprisingly, then, Wareham's residents have a median household income of \$55,136 compared to the state's \$65,052. Indeed, 30% of Wareham's households earn less than \$35,000 per year. These disadvantaged residents would especially benefit from a public library's services, from book

borrowing to Internet access to space for managing school work to developing literacy and job-based skills.

Wareham is an older community, with a median age of 44.4 compared to the state's 39.2, and about one-third of its seniors are disabled (Sunnarborg, 2013, p. 19). Nationwide, seniors tend to be frequent library users, with almost half reporting visits to their libraries at least once per week (IMLS, 2012). The digital divide has affected them perhaps more than any other age-based demographic; The Pew Research Center finds that about 40% of seniors “do not go online at all” (Smith, 2014). Public library services can help connect these seniors not only to necessary civic and literacy material but also to family, friends, and peers, keeping them socially engaged.

Finally, Wareham lacks significant educational attainment. With only 21.3% of its residents possessing a Bachelor's degree or higher, Wareham falls below the state's median value (38.2%). Those types of residents are whom a public library benefit the most and for whom the “playing field” can be leveled. Although not frequent library users, residents with lower educational attainment are more likely to rate a library's services as “very important” over residents with higher educational attainment (Zickuhr et al., 2013). Library outreach and educational services can connect with and support the important needs of those residents.

Wareham's demographic profile, in short, reveals a diverse community in both character and geography, one with many residents who would benefit from fully-funded public library service.

★ *Exemplary Public Service*

Our library's staff struggles to manage the library's manifold demands. Other libraries have dedicated staff to manage reference transactions, teen services, and technology assistance. With current funding, our library does not. This means many patrons do not receive the assistance they need. Furthermore, other libraries can pursue dynamic, engaging, and even transformative projects: makerspaces, learning centers, class-based instruction, technology tutelage, etc. Wareham must focus almost exclusively on managing circulation traffic.

Wareham's arrangement requires its limited staff to manage all library functions. For example, rather than train patrons in eReaders or even help them print emails, staff must perform routine circulation functions. Currently the director has allocated several hours per week to staffing the otherwise empty reference desk, but this solution is neither sustainable nor cost-efficient.

Staff members lack the time to organize and promote programs. Over 10 hours of the children's librarian's time is spent staffing the circulation desk—she should instead manage the children's room, hosting events, providing readers' advisory, and connecting directly with families. Despite limited time, the children's librarian has managed to maintain excellent programming. But the library has virtually no teen programming, and adult programming relies almost entirely on the

Friends and the Foundation. As indicated in Section I, Wareham offered only 63 adult and teen programs in FY 2016; our population group's median was 123. There are simply no more staff hours available to plan, produce, and sustain valuable library programs.

Instead, our current funding allocations provide us with enough support to function as essentially a “materials distribution center.” Our library is popular by this traditional metric, but we need to do more—much more—to keep pace with contemporary libraries in offering dynamic service.

Appropriately funding the library would allow for the kinds of excellent service with which public libraries have become identified, for which Wareham patrons call, and of which our community needs make critical.

★ *Cost-Benefit Value and Return-on-Investment*

Public library goods offer value over private sector goods. Services offered by libraries typically cost more in the private sector. For example, print and audiovisual materials ordered through public libraries average about 40% savings; basic Internet access in Massachusetts is provided free of charge by Internet Service Providers; and discounts with organizations like TechSoup allow libraries to purchase technological equipment at reduced rates.

This argument is well-supported by research. Consensus finds that a library's cost-benefit ratio is about 4:1. Aabø (2009) conducted a meta-analysis of 38 library valuation studies to find an average 4:1 benefit-cost ratio. For instance, Wisconsin libraries provided “a return on investment in library services [of] \$4.06 for each dollar of taxpayer investment” (Ward, 2008). In Ohio, Fleeter (2016) estimated every tax dollar spent on public libraries yielded \$3.89 in value. Barron et al. (2005) found that, in South Carolina, a dollar spent on public library services could purchase almost up to \$4.48 in services elsewhere. Kamer (2005) reached similar conclusions in New York's Suffolk County, estimating \$3.93 in value per \$1 spent.

In short, extensive research demonstrates that public library funding allows a community to gain considerably more “bang for its buck” on services purchased.

★ *Cost-Efficient Staffing*

Because of staffing shortages, our specialized librarians must work “below grade” to provide the minimum-level of public service. This means, for example, that the children's librarian must cover the circulation desk rather than connect with families and deliver programming. The technical services librarian must shelve materials rather than catalog them. The director must troubleshoot printers rather than write for and apply for grants.

Table 7 estimates the annual costs of these inefficiencies by subtracting the difference between the employee’s actual rate of pay and his/her rate of pay “below grade.” Circulation and reference services are covered by the position of Library Assistant, a position currently earning \$14.67. Note that these are yearly averages and do not consider real-world fluctuations, such as the director’s time covering circulation during an extensive Worker’s Compensation claim. The children’s librarian in FY 18, for example, will earn \$29.13/hour, costing \$378.69 over 13 hours—\$187.98 over a Library Assistant working at \$14.67.

Position	Hours Circulation	Hours Reference	Lost Weekly	Lost Yearly
Children’s Librarian	13	-	\$187.98	\$9,774.96
Technical Services Librarian	12	-	\$173.52	\$9,023.04
Director	2	7	\$146.97	\$7,624.44
Total	27	7	\$441.66	\$26,440.44

Table 7: Estimated losses in inefficient staffing, projecting from FY 18.

Staffing shortages contribute to approximate inefficiencies in excess of \$26,000 annual value. A properly staffed library allows its staff members to work “within grade” and thus provide proper and commensurate value for their services.

Indirect Results of a Fully-Funded Library

★ Property Values

Wareham is not a community which can ignore property value enhancements; the Boston Globe (2013) reported that, despite being a coastal community, Wareham’s median home price had depreciated from 2005 to 2013 by 20.38% (\$254,950 to \$203,000). Comparing property values of towns like Wareham with and without certified libraries is not possible because all populous towns have certified libraries. Therefore, direct comparisons are not possible. However, the value of public libraries can be approximated through previous research as well as surveys on American attitudes.

This area is not extensively researched, but what little research exists on it does support the hypothesis. For example, Diamond et al. (2010) found that homes in Philadelphia closer to their public library were worth almost \$10,000 more than homes elsewhere in the city. And Cooper and Crouch (1994) argued that, as the existence of public libraries (in their research) increase property evaluations, local governments may collect more tax revenue from those homes.

Americans certainly believe in the value of public libraries; 90% of Americans polled by the Pew Research Center believe that closing a public library would impact their community (Zickuhr et al., 2013). It is hard to believe that many people would believe this impact to be positive. With such a large majority of Americans valuing public libraries, it is not such a large leap to assume that, without fully-funded public library services, Wareham's property values would decline. Indeed, a larger Pew Research project, the Gates Library Typology survey, found that 93% of polled Americans believed that public libraries improved "the quality of life in a community" (Princeton, 2014, p. 9).

★ *Necessary Literacy and Educational Support*

Public libraries have been shown to enhance student learning. For instance, Lance and Marks (2008) studied data from the National Center for Education Statistics to find a significant and strong relationship between children's library circulation and scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress exam ($p < 0.01$; $r = .514$). A significant and moderate effect was also found between children's public library program attendance and NAEP scores ($p < .05$; $r = .288$). Lance and Hofshire (2012) examined over five years of data to find that students whose states lost librarians performed worse on the NAEP than states which gained librarians. In a replication study, Krashen, Lee, and McQuillan (2012) found that access to books, a "combination of school library holdings and public library circulation," significantly predicted NAEP scores (p. 28). Many other researchers arrived at similar conclusions, particularly that access to books helps mitigate the effects of poverty (Evans, Kelley, Sikora, & Treiman, 2010; Achterman, 2008).

Wareham is a community which needs supplemental educational assistance. Despite Wareham's above median spending in education among its fiscal peers (52.2% to 49.6%), Wareham's Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) scores fall far below those of the state and of its fiscal peers. This suggests that factors other than school spending limit student achievement. Indeed, poverty is a significant educational detriment. Sunnarborg (2013) revealed that, for residents under the age of 18, 14.4% were below the poverty line, higher than the Massachusetts' suburban average of 13% (Johnston, 2014).

In the following analysis, MCAS exam percentages are presented as a *percentage of the state average*—that is, 100% represents the state average. Scores over 100% indicate a district outperformed the state average, and scores under 100% indicate a district performed below the state average.

Especially alarming in Wareham is the continual decline of MCAS scores for 3rd graders, culminating in 2015 after the library's decertification (Table 8):

Year	Reading	Mathematics
2011	82%	95%
2012	88%	88%
2013	84%	88%
2014	75%	81%
2015	60%	69%

Table 8: Wareham MCAS percentages of proficient or advanced scores.

Granted, some Massachusetts elementary schools opted out of the MCAS in favor of another exam, the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC), possibly affecting state-wide averages.

But districts cannot opt out of the 10th grade MCAS exam due to it being a graduation requirement. We calculated a three-year average of 10th grade MCAS scores as a percentage of proficient and advanced scores. This testing cycle comprised nine separate subject-area exams. The state average over this three-year period was 82%: i.e. for the nine separate exams taken over that time period, 82% of Massachusetts exams scored proficient or advanced. Wareham's fiscal peers were predictably lower than this state-wide figure but remained close at 81%. Wareham, however, fell far short of the mark at 65%: i.e. 65% of Wareham's exams scored proficient or advanced. The closest districts were Gardner (69.7%) and Webster (72%). Most peers did significantly better (e.g. Yarmouth = 79.7%; Bourne = 84.7%).

Exam data also suggest that many of Wareham's students may be unprepared for college. The College Board has released a benchmark score of 1550 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT); "studies show that students who meet the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark are more likely to enroll in a four-year college, more likely to earn a higher first-year GPA (FYGPA), more likely to persist beyond the first year of college, and more likely to complete their degree than their peers who did not meet the benchmark" (College Board, 2013, p. 3). Wareham's scores fall short of that benchmark (Table 9):

Year (Fall)	Wareham's Total	State Average	CB Benchmark
2012	1409	1515	1550
2013	1389	1523	1550

2014	1439	1522	1550
------	------	------	------

Table 9: Wareham’s average SAT scores (out of 2,400).

Advanced Placement exams reveal a similar level of unpreparedness (Table 10):

Year (Spring)	Tests Taken	% 3-5 Scores	National Average
2013	113	35.4%	58.9%
2014	146	36.3%	59.2%
2015	160	34.4%	57.9%

Table 10: Wareham’s AP exam results.

College-readiness is a primary concern in higher education. The JED Foundation’s “First-Year College Experience” study (2015) confirmed what many higher-education professionals already knew: first-year students feel “unprepared” for college and its increased demands. Students specifically feel unprepared to tackle college-level research, as identified by the Project Information Literacy’s comprehensive study: “Most freshmen said their research competencies from high school were inadequate for college work” (Head, 2013, p. 3). These students were overwhelmed by the size of their campus libraries and the diversity of those libraries’ resources. Professors often ask their students to find highly-specialized, peer-reviewed, and difficult source material—material to which they were never exposed in high school.

Wareham’s library must supplement its education system. Poorer communities especially need supplemental aid, as, for instance, learning retention between school years is significantly worse for poorer students (Allington et al., 2010). Library-based, summer-long reading programs can help mitigate the loss, as the extensive aforementioned research has shown. Overall, these students need educational assistance; Wareham is not in any position to limit a key supplemental educational institution: the public library.

Wareham’s adult population also needs educational support. As Sunnarborg (2013) noted, Wareham “has a significantly number of lower paying jobs with a relatively low average weekly wage of \$694” (p. 34). Many of Wareham’s jobs “have tended to be seasonal or related to the service and retail industries”; thus Wareham’s employment rates lack stability. Wareham’s library can help this adult population to further their educational goals as well as receive job skills training and assistance, services often offered by fully-funded libraries but which remain relatively unknown to library users (Rainie, 2016).

Section IV: Where Will Our Budget Go?

This section outlines general services provided by a fully-funded library. The programs are based upon both national trends and the community needs highlighted in previous sections.

Developing Community Literacy

As argued in the preceding section, Wareham needs educational support, both for students and adults. We therefore propose to establish the library as a multipurpose “Literacy Center.”

Libraries nationwide construct literacy centers to extend normal library services. Some help mostly children—such as Fairfield County Library—whereas others target adults. The Wareham Free Library actually has been delivering adult education services for quite some time. Since 2002 it has offered these services to adult learners through private funding under the Reading Partners program (with sponsors such as A.D. Makepeace, Walmart, and the TD Charitable Foundation). Its volunteers have tutored adult learners in a variety of contexts, from English reading skills to test preparation and computer training. At its height in 2010, Reading Partners assisted an average of 37 concurrent users, aiding about 120 students yearly. Many of those students went on to achieve their goals, such as passing citizenship tests or the GED. Since that time, however, funding droughts have prevented Reading Partners from flourishing. Only one volunteer now handles appointments when she has free time after her day job.

A fully-funded library can help these adults gain the skills they need to succeed, not only through direct tutoring and instruction but also through creative partnerships. As one example, consider that virtually all employers today—including retailers like Home Depot and the Ocean State Job Lot—require online job applications. Some residents, however, lack the skills to manage these operations. Our library could partner with these companies so that reluctant applicants can visit the library and receive training in online systems as well as compositional job-related tasks (i.e. resume and cover letter writing).

Seniors as well can receive training in digital literacy skills. Seniors represent a sizeable segment of Wareham’s population. Without dedicated, permanent leadership in Wareham’s Council on Aging, our seniors lack stable resources for continued and professional education.

In addition to these adults, we would like to assist school-aged children and teenagers. Wareham Public Schools employs only one staff member to cover dedicated, district-wide library services. The middle school has a library but no dedicated staff, and the elementary schools have

converted their libraries into classrooms. School librarians usually assist faculty with information literacy and research instruction. Considerable research, as presented in the preceding section, stresses the positive effects of school librarians on academic achievement as well as college-readiness. A fully-funded library can hire a teaching librarian who can teach various literacy skills not only to the general public but also to middle and high school students, specifically with college-preparatory research. This innovative hire would be possibly *the first of its kind* in public library service nationwide.

A fully-funded library can help offer the supplemental research assistance these students need and cannot receive through their formal educations. A Literacy Center, in general, can formally engage, educate, train, and enrich residents of all ages, from early-learners (who lack consistent access to reading materials) to older adults who need assistance with digital skills training.

Providing Dynamic and Engaging Service

Our library demonstrates that traditional library services remain popular. Despite its decertification, Wareham receives significant traffic in circulation, computer use, and children’s programming. These essential services lay the foundation for successful modern libraries.

But fully-funded libraries offer more—much more. First, they are able to expertly and fully assist the public. Patrons needing book recommendations confer with specialized librarians. Reference assistance is provided by trained and technologically-savvy staff. Patrons do not enter the library and leave dissatisfied. In Wareham, patrons may not receive the help for which they had entered the building because the staff is overwhelmed. They also cannot get desired materials, whether for school or for pleasure; as patrons of a decertified library, they are “not allowed” to borrow materials from virtually the entire state. A fully-funded library would, instead, allow these patrons to receive needed assistance. Indeed, publicly-available patron satisfaction surveys demonstrate tremendous appreciation for fully-funded library services.²

Second, adult programs run regularly, with various events happening in the library, from author talks to book discussion groups to lecture series to concerts to yoga classes. As Wareham lacks a dedicated recreation department, a fully-funded library could also support recreational activities. The same reasoning applies to teen services, where flourishing libraries run movie nights, gaming clubs, summer reading programs, and outdoor activities. The goal is for something to always be “happening” in the library so that it feels like—and becomes—an alive, engaged community center (Wareham’s courtyard in particular can facilitate excellent summertime event programming). Right now, with a noticeable dearth of extracurricular activity, the library feels

² Communities examined were Canton, Waltham, Hingham, Dighton, and Natick. We found these results in long-range plans; most long-range plans mentioned surveys but did not present data on patron satisfaction.

empty in ways that it did not during the early to mid-2000s when its programming had ranked top 20 in Massachusetts.

Third, libraries offer extensive patron education and outreach. Fully-funded libraries have specialized staff to train patrons, usually in technology. They hold classes and offer individualized instruction on various subjects, such as computer programming, social media, cybersecurity, English language learning, and eReaders. Outreach will be critical because many patrons are unaware of educational library services—modern libraries are far more than just “materials’ distribution centers.”

Fourth, fully-funded libraries provide novel services as seen in “Makerspaces.” Makerspaces foster creative learning and experimentation through various specialized equipment, from low-tech sewing machines to high-tech additive manufacturing (3D printing). Some librarians go so far as to offer training in computer adaptive design (CAD) software. Our activity room would, for example, make an ideal location to host a Makerspace. Makerspaces, or similar creative spaces, make an excellent way to increase non-traditional library traffic and expand its user base.

These are the kinds of services—among many others—which fully-funded libraries offer their residents. And, as research in Section III demonstrated, both traditional and dynamic services are offered at considerable value.

Revamping and Repurposing Space

In 1988, the Wareham Free Library applied to and received a grant from the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program to build Wareham’s first town-owned public library building. The building site was chosen along Route 6 near the Memorial Town Hall on the north side of the street largely because of its desirable central location.

On May 6, 1991 the library opened its doors to the public, at 59 Marion Road, in the first town-owned library building in its history. The new library designed by Amsler Woodhouse MacLean, Architects, Inc. and built by Travi Construction Corp. of Norwell, has received praise from across the state for its design and beauty (Library History).

The building, however, has fallen into disrepair. Its outside courtyard has not been painted in years nor have the library grounds been reliably maintained. The inside of the building likewise suffers from neglect: stained carpeting, broken facilities (e.g. the water bubbler), and deteriorating walls. And with over 20,000 square feet, the library’s expansive space is not living up to its potential; the whole nonfiction section sits relatively unused.

A fully-funded and certified library would qualify for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. This program allows libraries to apply for construction grants, which

cover up to 60% of eligible construction costs. Remaining costs could be covered through either debt exclusion or private fundraising.

Further, a fully-funded library would have a revamped and welcoming physical space that responds to Wareham's needs. As one example, many libraries now house "coffee shops" or simple cafés. Such spaces have been operating in libraries since the 1990s. Although we would pursue working with local area businesses, the coffee shop would ideally be used for ambience and convenience, not profit. In tandem with expanded adult and teen programming, this would create a strong sense of community engagement.

Reimagining the Spinney Memorial Library

All of the Spinney's advocates, from library staff to generous donors, desire its success. And although data indicate that it cannot serve as a realistic "lending library," the branch shows much promise as a space for events, programs, and skills training. Thus we propose "re-purposing" the Spinney from what is now primarily a "lending library" to a civic, programming, and literacy center. We aim to cultivate a library environment which sponsors active learning and education, and the Spinney fits that vision. As explained in the previous section, the Spinney saw good participation rates with children's programming, especially when partnered with organizations like Head Start.

Onset especially needs literacy development and supportive infrastructure—28% of the population falls under the poverty level (state = 15%), 47% of "poor males" are disabled, 52% of "poor females" are disabled, and 74% of "poor residents" do not work. Just 4% of Onset residents possess a Bachelor's Degree. And although the Spinney would be open to all of Wareham's residents, its Onset residents would likely gain the most value from its educational and literacy services. One of the Spinney's assets is proximity to these residents, especially those who are disabled and/or lack transportation.

A repurposed Spinney would offer targeted educational services to Wareham's residents, especially those living in or around the Onset neighborhood. A partnership with the Town would also be explored whereby Town officials would offer services at the Spinney on certain days or times of the year (e.g. a location to submit tax payments).

Standing as the Town's Research Department

Just as the Wareham Free Library lacks a dedicated reference department, so the Town of Wareham lacks a "research department." Town research must instead be conducted ad-hoc by its administrators and employees. But the demand for municipal research is great, from grant applications to comparative analyses of community dynamics to ensuring compliance with state

regulations. Rather than fund an independent research department, Wareham can hire research workers out of the library with service desk responsibilities.

For example, the library could support the Town's research needs, aiding department heads with locating grants as well as applying for them. And it could provide considerable assistance on larger projects. For instance, the Sewer department is currently drafting a FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan. This massive undertaking requires considerable expertise, research, and composition—essentially “all hands on deck.” Library-based researchers would aid the Sewer department in analyzing certain sectors of Wareham as well as requesting information from various parties and writing relevant sections.

Supporting Local History Research

The Stone Room is the main library's research room and archive. During the early to mid-2000s, the room saw significant activity as several patrons per week contacted library staff for help with research and genealogy. In addition to individualized assistance, staff offered genealogy training classes and programs on prominent Wareham families (e.g. the Bumpus family, one of Wareham's earliest settlers), historic buildings (e.g. the Kendrick House), archaeological projects, and expert talks on conducting primary research. In 2004, responding to increased research demands, the Stone Room's part-time staff member was promoted to full-time.

But now the room sits largely unused. No staff member is trained to operate the room and locate—never mind identify—its various historical materials. No materials have been digitized, despite digitization becoming a major library-based initiative, both nationally and in Massachusetts through the Digital Commonwealth Project. Enterprising patrons must navigate the Stone Room themselves. And as the Stone Room's materials are idiosyncratically arranged and not cataloged, these patrons cannot hope to find pertinent information.

The Stone Room needs revitalization. First, many of its items can be digitized through the Boston Public Library's free and extensive Digital Commonwealth Project. This process will save space as well as make items available online. Second, it needs standardized cataloging to facilitate searching and access for all staff members. Only a few Wareham residents—former library staff—understand the Stone Room's idiosyncrasies. Finally, it needs trained staff to manage its diverse materials, offering research assistance and guidance to the general public.

Section V: Strategic Objectives

This section outlines the library's goals, objectives, and outcomes, as supported by the narrative in the preceding sections. Outcomes are projected for only three fiscal years due to general volatility. The years under which outcomes are presented at "best case deadlines"; that is, the end of those years are when we would like to have achieved those outcomes. They are not necessarily the years in which we will begin working toward that outcome.

Community & Educational Services

Goal: Establish the library as an educational service center to support literacy development for Wareham residents of all ages.

Objective 1: Develop, promote, and enhance the library's educational services.

FY 2018:

- Offer public instruction and training programs on critical skills such as computer usage and security. This can be temporarily managed by the library director but should be assumed by a future hire. At least one program (with multiple class sessions) should run per season.
- Offer individualized support on complementary skills like eReader usage and computer programming (partnership through schools or volunteer consultants). Offer at least 20 total "office hours" for the first year.
- Establish a culture of learning assessment so that library-based training and teaching invite reflection. From satisfaction surveys to pre and posttests, instructional effectiveness should be continually monitored and improved.

FY 2019:

- Hire an educational librarian ostensibly to enhance Wareham's educational opportunities. This hire should not only train the general public in general skills but also partner with the school department to offer supplemental research and literacy assistance. This innovative hire would be *the first of its kind* in public library service.
- Conduct a space analysis of the "Activities Room" as a possible candidate for becoming a learning-centered Makerspace.
- Revitalize the adult literacy program to tutor and aid at least 50 students in the year.
- Improve community outreach: aim to increase active cardholders by 10% from FY 2016.

FY 2020:

- Aim to absorb the adult literacy program into the library's general budget, offering adult literacy and career advisement services to Wareham's residents. Aim to aid at least 100 students in the year.
- When recertified, apply for grants to facilitate the creation of Wareham's Makerspace.

- Continue improving community outreach: increase active cardholders by 5% from previous FY 2019.
- Obtain dedicated learning space in the main library, e.g. a “computer lab” separated from the patron computers, to facilitate class-based instruction.

Objective 2: Collaborate with educational institutions and independent organizations to enhance Wareham’s complete educational services.

FY 2018:

- Collaborate with the Wareham Middle School to improve its library space. Right now, the middle school lacks a librarian and the space goes unused by students. Library volunteers and the children’s librarian can work with the middle school to offer guidance on the library’s collection as well as its space. A grant should be pursued on what exactly to address.
- Collaborate with the Council on Aging to offer complementary and not redundant educational opportunities for Wareham’s seniors. At least one training class or session should be offered per season. Other possible library services include mobile deliveries.

FY 2019:

- Collaborate with Wareham’s elementary schools to offer early-learning literacy services. As a target goal, children’s room programming should meet median values for Wareham’s population group of the preceding fiscal year.
- Partner with educational organizations like Head Start to offer supplementary support for at-risk students. Library staff and volunteers should meet regularly with these students.
- Become a welcoming and safe environment for students without home Internet access to complete their online-only homework. In response to periodic patron surveys, establish--and improve upon—a baseline of student representation in the library.
- Collaborate with local area businesses to help job candidates and applicants manage application materials and processes.

FY 2020:

- Collaborate with external experts and volunteers so that the library offers both vital and novel training opportunities, e.g. Microsoft Excel and “coding for kids.”
- Collaborate with an organization like the Boys and Girls Club to explore partnerships which blend literacy development and physical activity, civic engagement, or social connections. At least one substantive partnership project should have been implemented.

Architectural Improvements

Goal: Develop a modernized library space that responds to the needs of Wareham’s residents.

Objective 1: Create an attractive, welcoming, and safe environment by improving the library’s interior facilities and grounds.

FY 2018-20:

- Catalog issues with the library's building in preparation for capital improvement projects.
- Submit updated capital requests to the Capital Planning Committee.
- Research cost-effective and temporary solutions for smaller and localized infrastructural problems, e.g. dirty carpeting.
- Research and create sustainable landscaping solutions for the inner garden as well as the outside grounds.

FY 2021:

- Apply for large grants to pursue capital improvements (e.g. MBLC's Construction Grant). Note: this requires certification in the previous fiscal year.

Objective 2: Promote services which respond to the needs of Wareham's residents.

FY 2018:

- Redefine meeting room policies. Many libraries charge for private and/or closed meeting space. Monitor room usage and income derived from such charges to determine long-term feasibility.
- Re-establish adult programming by increasing the number of programs offered by at least 100% from those offered in FY 2016.
- Begin tracking attendees in public meetings to facilitate robust data collection.

FY 2019:

- Explore the viability of partnering with local area businesses to offer a "cafe" or "coffee cart" within the library. Monitor the cafe's effectiveness through point of sale transactions as well as library metrics (circulation and door traffic).
- Improve technology within the library's community room (e.g. offer an overhead projector and conference call capabilities).
- Examine feasibility of adding additional study spaces/carrels.
- Create a programming liaison program where full-time staff members are responsible for program development in their area of expertise.
- Review meeting room policies and procedures for long-term feasibility.

FY 2020-2021:

- Implement a learning-centered Makerspace.
- Hire a Teen and Outreach Librarian, whose job responsibilities will involve developing programming for both teens and adults.
- Maintain or improve the number of adult programs offered in FY 19 and improve teen programming considerably.
- Improve teen materials' circulation by at least 25% from the preceding fiscal year.

Objective 3: Revitalize the Stone Research Room as an asset to both casual and serious researchers.

FY 2018:

- Clearly label and identify the Stone Room's materials, separating them based on a logical classification scheme.
- Collaborate with the Boston Public Library on its Digital Commonwealth project to digitize many of Wareham's primary historical documents.

FY 2019:

- Based on results from the Digital Commonwealth project, weed redundant material from the Stone Room.
- Create instructional aides to assist patrons with accessing digitized materials.
- Create research guides and aides to help both researchers and staff understand the location of materials.

FY 2020 Onward:

- Catalog remaining physical items into the library's database to facilitate effective searching and retrieval.
- Connect with local area groups (such as the Wareham Historical Society) to advertise the library's updated collection.
- When funds permit, hire a part-time archivist to curate the room and hold research "office hours" as well as group training sessions (on topics such as genealogy).

Municipal Partnerships

Goal: Foster meaningful partnerships with Town departments to facilitate effective municipal-based research.

Objective 1: Establish a Town research center within the library that primarily aims to assist municipal departments.

FY 2018:

- Establish a Town Research department in the library. Research responsibilities will be managed by the library director until a suitable hire can be located and enough budget apportioned.

FY 2019 Onward:

- Hire a dedicated Town Researcher with some public desk responsibilities.
- Promote and assess public's awareness of other Town departments and their functions.
- Revisit the Spinney's original mission as a location for residents to process Town service transactions.

Objective 2: Pursue construction of a Town archive.

FY 2018:

- Conduct a Needs Assessment with Town stakeholders to gauge interest in the creation of a Town archive.

FY 2019:

- Given sufficient interest in a Town archive, formulate a specific plan for the creation of an archive, located in an appropriate location.

A Redefined Spinney

Goal: Clarify an identity for the Spinney Memorial Library so as to increase its impact in the Wareham community.

Objective 1: Establish the Spinney as a literacy and educational center for Wareham residents, especially for those living in Onset.

FY 2018:

- Repurpose the Spinney as a center for literacy development, especially for younger children. Transition Spinney effectively so that the number of programs offered remains at least competitive with the previous fiscal year.
- Transfer materials from the Spinney to the main building to enter the main library's collection or to be sold.
- Continue to offer children's programs throughout the year, at least as many as in the previous year.

FY 2019:

- As part of the broader movement to expand adult literacy services, offer adult literacy assistance and job skills training at Spinney. Offer at least one training session, class, or seminar per month.
- Increase the total number of Spinney programs by at least 25% from the previous year.
- Revisit the Spinney's original mission as a location for residents to process Town service transactions.
- Offer targeted senior programming, at least one training session, class, or seminar per season.
- Explore possibilities of continuing lending services to the Spinney with expanded hours and technology.

Objective 2: Collaborate with local area groups to increase the Spinney's community presence.

FY 2018:

- Collaborate with Wareham's Head Start chapter to develop a more formal relationship. Track program and attendance rates.

- Collaborate with other Wareham and Onset Bay organizations such as the YMCA and the Boys and Girls Club, exploring opportunities to blend learning with physical fitness and social engagement.

Traditional Library Services

Goal: Deliver excellent traditional library services commensurate with expectations for a fully-funded library.

Objective 1: Enhance circulation services throughout the entire materials' lifecycle, from purchasing to marketing.

FY 2018:

- As the materials' budget increases, develop a catalog which accurately reflects patrons' borrowing needs.
- Weed the collection—the first in many years—to make room for incoming materials.
- Monitor exact materials' expenditures to identify effective purchasing practices.
- Clean up the library catalog so that item records do not contain errors.

FY 2019:

- Raise awareness of the library's Overdrive membership and increase Overdrive usage to at least SAILS' median value.
- With the addition of dedicated circulation staff, increase children's programming by at least 25% from the previous year.
- Increase children's circulation by at least 10% from the previous year.

FY 2020:

- Provide more robust circulation services to build community investment: readers' advisory, book clubs, engaging displays, etc. Monitor and track effectiveness of these offerings.
- With a dedicated teen librarian, increase YA circulation by at least 20% from the previous year.
- Perform extensive community outreach to increase the library's overall borrowing.

Objective 2: Offer responsive and excellent dedicated reference and technology services.

FY 2018:

- Provide dedicated reference services and technology assistance through the use of volunteers and the library director.
- Upgrade obsolete computer equipment (i.a. Windows XP public computers).
- Improve staff-directed infrastructure (e.g. purchase a scanner for public use as well as a new ADF-compatible fax machine).
- Enable mobile/wireless printing (LPT:One) for patrons.

FY 2019:

- Hire a part-time reference library assistant, whose job responsibilities primarily will involve working in the reference department to help patrons with reference and technology services.
- Continue using volunteers to complement the reference assistant's hours.
- Offer regularly both individual and class-based technology assistance.
- Track reference statistics to facilitate data-driven decision making to offer excellent services.

FY 2020 Onward:

- When the budget permits, promote the reference assistant to full-time.
- Hold training workshops, at least one per season, on reference/technology.

Institutional Climate

Goal: Develop excellent library services based on community needs and data.

Objective 1: Proportionate with funding, expand library services to make the greatest community impact.

FY 2018:

- Expand hours according to data so as to benefit the most Wareham residents.

FY 2019:

- Expand hours to benefit more specific populations (e.g. residents who can visit only in the evenings).
- Improve library marketing efforts through established best practice (e.g. Facebook advertisements).

Objective 2: Generate and analyze library and community-based data to make informed organizational decisions.

FY 2018-FY2020:

- Deliver regular community surveys (at least yearly) to explore developing services.
- Distribute regular in-house patron satisfaction surveys (at least yearly).
- Continually monitor library services and programs to determine long-term feasibility of those services and programs.
- Restart library network data collection participation (namely the ARIS report).

References

- Aabø, S. (2009). Libraries and return on investment (ROI): A meta-analysis. *New Library World* 110 (7/8): 311-324.
- Achterman, D. 2008. Haves, Halves, and Have-Nots: School libraries and student achievement in California. PhD dissertation, University of North Texas. Retrieved from <http://digital.library.unt.edu/permalink/meta-dc-9800:1>
- Allington, R., McGill-Franzen, A., Camilli, G., Williams, L., Graff, J., Zeig, J., Zmach, C., & Nowak, R. (2010). Addressing summer reading setback among economically disadvantaged elementary students. *Reading Psychology* 31(5): 411-427.
- Barron, D., Williams, R., Bajjaly, S., Arns, J., & Wilson, S. (2005). The economic impact of public libraries on South Carolina. *The School of Library and Information Science, University of South Carolina*. Retrieved from <http://www.libsci.sc.edu/sceis/final%20report%2026%20january.pdf>
- Boston Globe (2013). Median home prices by town. *The Boston Globe*. Retrieved from <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2013/09/05/median-home-prices-town/EFKrm7BXfTPdjSvgt6MWXJ/story.html>
- College Board. (2013). 2013 SAT report on college & career readiness. *The College Board Online*. Retrieved from <http://media.collegeboard.com/homeOrg/content/pdf/sat-report-college-career-readiness-2013.pdf>
- Cooper, J., & Crouch, M. (1994). Benefit assessment helps open doors of one cash-strapped California library. *American Libraries* 25: 232-234.
- Diamond, D., Gillen, K, Litman, M., & Thornburgh, D. (2010). The economic value of the Free Library in Philadelphia. *Fels Institute of Government: University of Pennsylvania*. Retrieved from http://www.freelibrary.org/about/Fels_Report.pdf
- Evans, M, Kelley, J, Sikora, J, and Treiman, D. (2010) Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*, 28 (2): 171-197
- Fleeter, H. (2016). The return on investment of Ohio's public libraries & a comparison with other states. *Ohio Library Council*. Retrieved from http://olc.org/wp-content/uploads/documents/post-id_2060/2016/04/Ohio-Public-Libraries-ROI-Report.pdf
- Head, A. (2013). How freshmen conduct course research once they enter college. *Project Information*

- Research Report*. Retrieved from http://projectinfolit.org/images/pdfs/pil_2013_freshmenstudy_fullreport.pdf
- Hoffman, J., Bertot, J., & Davis, D.M. (2012). Libraries connect communities: Public library Funding & Technology Access Study 2011-2012. Chicago, IL: American Library Association. Retrieved from <http://viewer.zmags.com/publication/4673a369>.
- IMLS (2012). Talking points: Libraries keep seniors engaged and connected. *Institute of Museum and Library Services*. Retrieved from <https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/publications/documents/seniors.pdf>
- IMLS (2016). Public libraries in the United States survey. *Institute of Museum and Library Services*. Retrieved from https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/fy2013_pls_tables_8_thru_18a.pdf
- JED Foundation. (2015). The first-year college experience: A look into students' challenges and triumphs during their first term at college. Retrieved from <http://settego.org/wp-content/themes/xcel/images/First-Year%20College%20Experience%20-%20Data%20Report%20for%20Media%20Release%20-%20FINAL.pdf?pdf=Full-Report>
- Johnston, K. (2014). Child poverty continues to climb in Mass. *The Boston Globe*. Retrieved from <https://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2014/09/21/child-poverty-continues-climb-massachusetts/cz4Df6tzBt2Rxdj1nM9d5J/story.html>
- Kamer, P. (2005). Placing an economic value on the services of public libraries in Suffolk County, New York. *The Long Island Association*. Retrieved from <http://scls.suffolk.lib.ny.us/pdf/librarystudy.pdf>
- Krashen, S., Lee, S., & McQuillan, J. (2012). Is the library important? Multivariate studies at the national and international level. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education* 8(1), 26-38. Retrieved from <http://jolle.coe.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/06/Is-the-Library-Important.pdf>
- Lance, K., & Hofshire, L. (2012). Change in school librarian staffing linked with change in CSAP reading performance, 2005 to 2011. *Library Research Service*. Retrieved from https://www.lrs.org/documents/closer_look/CO4_2012_Closer_Look_Report.pdf
- Lance, K., & Marks, R. (2008). The link between public libraries and early reading success. *School Library Journal*. Retrieved from <http://www.slj.com/2008/09/research/the-link-between-public-libraries-and-early-reading-success/>
- Library History. *The Wareham Free Library*. Retrieved from <http://www.warehamfreelibrary.org/library-history/>
- Peet, L. (2015). Paying for people: Budgets & funding. *Library Journal*. Retrieved from <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2015/02/budgets-funding/paying-for-people-budgets-funding/>

- Peet, L. (2016). Gaining ground unevenly: Budgets & funding. *Library Journal*. Retrieved from <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2016/02/budgets-funding/gaining-ground-unevenly-budgets-funding/>
- Pew Research Center (2015). Demographics of library users. *Pew Research Center: Hispanic Trends*. Retrieved from http://www.pewhispanic.org/2015/03/17/public-libraries-and-hispanics/ph_2015-03-17_hispanics-libraries-22/
- Princeton Survey Research Associates International (2014). *The Gates Typology Survey*. Retrieved from www.pewinternet.org/files/2014/03/PIP-Library-Typology-Topline.pdf
- Rainie, L., Perrin, A. (2015). Slightly fewer Americans are reading print books, new survey finds. *The Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/10/19/slightly-fewer-americans-are-reading-print-books-new-survey-finds/>
- Smith, A. (2014). Older adults and technology use. *The Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <http://www.pewinternet.org/2014/04/03/older-adults-and-technology-use/>
- Sunnarborg, K. (2013). Town of Wareham, Massachusetts: Housing Production Plan. Retrieved from <http://www.mass.gov/hed/docs/dhcd/cd/pp/wareham.pdf>
- U.S. Census Bureau (2013). Retrieved from <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- Ward, D. (2008). The economic contribution of Wisconsin Public Libraries to the economy of Wisconsin. *NorthStar Economics Inc*. Retrieved from <http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/pld/pdf/wilibraryimpact.pdf>
- Zickuhr, K., Rainie, L., Purcell, K., Madden, M., & Brenner, J. (2012). Libraries, patrons, and e-books. *The Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2012/06/22/libraries-patrons-and-e-books/>
- Zickuhr, K., Rainie, L., Purcell, K., and Duggan, M. (2013). How Americans value public libraries in their communities. *The Pew Research Center*. Retrieved from <http://libraries.pewinternet.org/2013/12/11/libraries-in-communities/>