

# Hanson Public Library

## Library Building Program



Hanson Public Library

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Hanson, MA 02341

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## Executive Summary

In April 2023, the Trustees of the Hanson Public Library initiated a library planning process, selecting library consultant Ruth Kowal, and appointing a Planning Committee (two Trustees, three community members, the Library Director, and the Assistant Library Director). The Planning Committee worked with the library consultant to create a community input process to determine priorities for both a strategic plan and a library building program.

The initial work of the Planning Committee resulted in the creation of a new strategic plan, *Hanson Public Library 2024-2028 Strategic Plan*. The *Strategic Plan* was adopted by the Library Board of Trustees at its September 26, 2023 meeting. The next phase of the planning process focused on the library facility and the consideration of various options for improvements to the 1991 building. The *Hanson Public Library Building Program* is the result of the Planning Committee's efforts.

Through focus groups, a community survey, and meetings with key stakeholders in the community, priorities for the library became clear. Traditional library services, including the borrowing of materials in a variety of formats and assistance by staff, are still very important to residents. Beyond traditional borrowing, residents want the library to be their community hub, the place where everyone is welcome, the place where people come together in Hanson. Residents also want more public programming for all ages, a unified children's area, a space for teens, a large community meeting and programming room that is accessible after hours, small meeting and study rooms, updated infrastructure to support current and future technology, comfortable and welcoming seating, more space for people and collections, and a building that is energy efficient.

The current library is too small and too old structurally to meet the services the community wants from its library. The building, constructed in the early 1990s, is shared with the Town's Senior Center. The building is bursting at the seams. The competition for space continues to limit the library's services. The library is continually forced to make adjustments to its limited space as it attempts to provide: popular print and media collections, still very popular in Hanson; leisure and study seating for all ages; and wired space that meets current and future user needs. These significant space limitations are constantly degrading the quality of public services. There is no viable path for the library to respond to these challenges without a significantly expanded and updated facility. Unfortunately, the library has become mostly a "grab-n-go" service, as there is little area for people to spend comfortable time for leisure or work reasons.

Demand for use of the community meeting room is extensive, and the library has limited access to it during daytime hours due to heavy use by the Senior Center. Library programs are regularly over-subscribed, and staff are required to maintain "waitlists" for potential attendees. Survey respondents ranked "Programs for children" (91%) and "Programs for adults" (90%) as important or very important program services. Creating adequate space

for the Library to respond to a host of community priorities is the foundation of the *Library Building Program*.

The building is physically showing its age. Access to electrical power is inconvenient at best and non-existent in many areas. Lighting levels are too low, and windows are blocked by shelving, reducing natural light coming into the building. The infrastructure can no longer support library service delivery expectations. The use of the facility has outgrown the envelope and the internal layout, and the building has lost its ability to physically meet the needs of library users.

To meet the needs of the community, consideration should be given to a significantly renovated or new facility of just over 22,000 square feet. The current location of the library works well and offers ample room for expansion or for a new structure in the same area. Whether a renovation or a new building, the library should be designed to be a vibrant and vital community center for Hanson, a community which currently has few options for residents to gather. It will need to be built to the highest contemporary and future-looking standards with regard to lighting, ADA compliance, climate control, technology infrastructure, and environmental sensitivity. As a major community benefit, the new library will be designed to serve as the community's emergency warming and cooling center, with generator backup. The layout of the building will make it possible for 24/7 access to the meeting room and kitchen spaces when emergencies require the relocation of Hanson residents. The new library will be designed to be a net-zero building, and has the opportunity to serve as a model LEED building for Hanson.

The new library will be designed with flexibility of use as its mantra. Spaces will be open and re-programmable as needs change. Acoustic management will be a priority, with furnishings and fixtures contributing to sound mitigation. Furnishings and shelving will be flexible as well, with much of it portable for relocation and reuse within the building. The management of the collection will also be flexible, adjusting proactively to the evolving interests and needs of the community, and keeping the collection fresh and in high demand.

To meet the needs of Hanson, a library of just over 22,000 square feet is required (the current branch occupies 8,195 square feet out of the total building footprint of 11,177 square feet). In the ideal, the library would continue to be a single-story building, minimizing the number of staff required to oversee the operations. Options for the expanded library include relocating the Senior Center to new quarters and completing a significant expansion and renovation of the existing shared facility to meet the library's needs, or the construction of a new library in another location, such as the area of the recently demolished Maquan School adjacent to the library. One other option would be to renovate or build a new shared facility to meet the needs of the library and the senior center. Determining the most desirable course with regard to site selection and new construction or renovation/expansion will be primary tasks during the next phase of this project.

The Hanson Public Library is a highly-valued, well-used, but cramped and tired community resource. The building program identifies in detail the challenges of the current facility, as well as the opportunities for the creation of a facility that responds to both current and future library users and community needs and interests.

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## **Introduction**

Public libraries were designed historically to store and deliver books to library patrons. The size and layout of the library were determined not by how people would use the space, but by how many feet of shelving were needed to contain the collection. Patrons were expected to use the library for study and research. Furnishings were bulky and difficult to rearrange. Shelving was fixed in place and designed to maximize storage. Libraries built as recently as the 1990s, when the Hanson Public Library was constructed, pre-date the explosion in computer use, and lack flexible spaces and the infrastructure, especially electrical, to respond to the ways in which people use the public library today.

As community needs and interests evolve, public libraries are responding and making changes in library services and facilities. The Board of Library Trustees of the Hanson Public Library has been actively evaluating the library and considering options for improvements to library services and the facility in which those services will be delivered to the community. To guide and assist Library Director Karen Stolfer and Library Consultant Ruth Kowal in their planning efforts, the Board of Library Trustees established a Planning and Library Building Program Committee in April 2023 consisting of Corinne Cafardo, Chair of the Library Board of Trustees; John Papp, Trustee and Library Foundation President; community representatives Pam French, John Sullivan, Melissa Valachovic, and Corinne Turner; and junior Library Foundation directors and community representatives Mari Santalucia, Erin Fager, and Jillian Coose. Library Director Karen Stolfer and Assistant Library Director Julia Nee also served on the committee.

Library consultant Ruth Kowal was retained to develop both a new strategic plan and the library building program, working with the Planning Committee and library staff, and engaging the community in planning for the future Hanson Public Library. The library building program planning effort was funded through a government earmark that was received by the Hanson Public Library Foundation.

The library building program is built upon ideas and suggestions gathered from the community through a variety of means: public, staff, and trustee focus groups; an online and print survey document; suggestions, comments, ideas, and priorities gathered from library users through flip charts located in the library; a brief questionnaire given to teens using the library on a half-day; quick response charts set up at Hanson Day on September 23, 2023 and during the library's fall 2023 Open House, encouraging event participants to indicate the importance of particular priorities that were identified in the focus groups and survey; solicitation of input via social media outlets; publicity via the Library website, newsletter, and media outlets in the community; and interviews with key community stakeholders. The information gathered from the community was invaluable in creating the vision for the new Hanson Public Library.

The scope of the Library Building Program was guided by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) "Library Space: A Planning Resource for Librarians," a

resource developed to assist libraries in understanding and implementing best practices for renovation and construction planning of library buildings. Since 1990, the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) has assisted communities in developing their public libraries through the renovation and expansion of existing buildings or the construction of new facilities. Over the past 30 years, over 250 cities and towns throughout the Commonwealth have been awarded grants for projects ranging from new construction, to renovation, to special projects, as well as for the preliminary planning activities essential to a successful building project. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners planning resources provide a comprehensive framework for library facility planning efforts throughout the Commonwealth.

The library building program for the Hanson Public Library incorporates input from the community; the assessment and recommendations from the consultant; the *Hanson Public Library Strategic Plan 2024-2028*; trends in library construction; and elements of library planning standards, including various guidelines for library space planning. The amalgamation of this information and insight garnered from the community guided the creation of a plan that will provide direction to the Board of Library Trustees and the Town of Hanson in its future library planning.

The Hanson Public Library planning process was shepherded by Library Director Karen Stolfer, the Hanson Public Library Planning Committee, and project consultant Ruth Kowal.

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# The Town of Hanson: Who We Are and Who Will We Be

## Demographics and Future Growth

The Town of Hanson, with a population of 10,587 (2020 US Census), encompasses a relatively small geographic area (15.82 square miles) in southeastern Massachusetts. The town is located 22 miles southeast of Boston and is bordered by Whitman (with which it shares the regional high school), Pembroke, Halifax, East Bridgewater, Rockland, and Hanover.

Hanson was first settled in 1632 as the western parish of Pembroke. The town was officially incorporated in 1820 and was named for Maryland publisher of the *Federal Republican* newspaper and U.S. Senator Alexander Contee Hanson. Hanson was a champion of free speech and freedom of the press. He was severely beaten, and his newspaper offices were attacked and destroyed by an angry mob after he published an article that was critical of the administration shortly after the outbreak of the War of 1812.

The town's early industry revolved around farming, as well as bog iron and quarrying. Mills also popped up along the rivers during the nineteenth century. Today, the town is mostly residential, with limited farming and cranberry growing. Ocean Spray was first started with several bogs in Hanson and remained headquartered in Hanson before moving to Plymouth in September 1977.

Hanson was home to the Plymouth County Hospital, a tuberculosis sanatorium located on Bonney Hill, opening in 1919 and remaining open until 1992. (Source: Wikipedia)



The town is generally rural in nature, with relatively little industry and a high percentage of single-family homes. The town currently has about 1,800 acres of open space, with 450 acres that are officially declared as conservation area. Focus group attendees frequently noted how important this “green” space was to them. Green Hanson is a community organization focused on “foster[ing] a culture of environmental awareness.” The organization plays an active role in the development and implementation of energy-efficient and sustainable practices. Green Hanson envisions a community where residents can take advantage of sidewalks, bike paths, town meeting places, farmers markets and a walk-able

downtown. They further see energy-efficient buildings and homes utilizing renewable energy throughout the town. Green Hanson is a key partner in the Library’s building planning efforts.

The South Shore is “a choice location to live and to do business” according to the South Shore Economic Development Corporation’s *South Shore 2030 Report*. “The region's unique communities, access to public transportation, strong quality of life, top schools, and coastal

shoreline, rivers, ponds and other pristine natural resources” echo attributes and quality-of-life sentiments noted by residents during the Library’s planning process.

Hanson affords residents and businesses a wealth of amenities, including an extensive open space system and recreational trails. Its excellent schools, parks, and community services contribute to the superior quality of life in Town.



Hanson’s population density is 708.5 persons per square mile, compared with the 901 per square mile for the State of Massachusetts. *(Source: 2020 Census Bureau Quick Facts Massachusetts)*

The 2020 US Census also reports the following for the town of Hanson:

- median age population of 42.8, compared to the state average of 39.6
- population is 90.7% white; .3% African American; 3.1% Asian; 1.3% Latino; 4.8% two or more races
- 91% of the housing is owner-occupied, compared to the state average of 62.4%
- 91% of Hanson residents drive to work, while 6.1% take public transportation
- 35.1% of the residents have a bachelor’s degree or higher education, compared to the state average of 45.2%
- 94% of Hanson residents have a high school or better education, compared with 91.2% for the State

### **Local Economy**

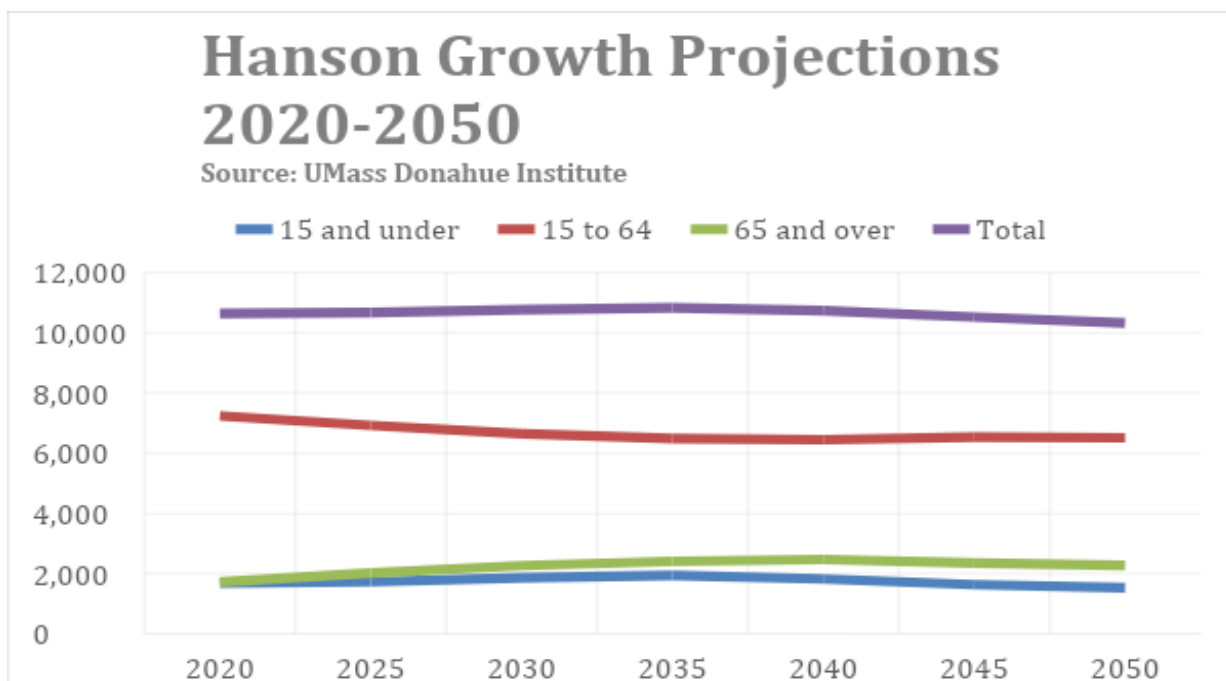
Hanson, which depends heavily on property tax revenue, with relatively little in the way of industry, actively supports and encourages new industry and small businesses to open in the Town.

- In 2020 there were 192 employers in Hanson with a total of 1,400 local employees.
- Employment by Sector – Hanson’s top five industries in terms of employment include Retail Trade, Accommodation and Food Services, Construction, Professional and Technical Services, and Manufacturing.
- Long Term Job Growth – Between 2007 and 2017, the industries that added the most jobs were Accommodation and Food Services, Construction, Professional and Technical Services, Wholesale Trade, and Administrative and Waste Services. *(Source: Town of Hanson)*

Median household income for Hanson in the 2010 census was reported at \$62,687. The *US Census 2021 (Updated) American Community Survey* estimates the median income at \$113,500.

In 1997, the MBTA Old Colony commuter rail opened with a stop in Hanson. This enhanced mode of transportation to Boston has not resulted in a significant change in the population over the past 20 years. However, there has been a slight increase in the number of residents using public transportation.

The UMass Donahue Institute Long Range Population Projections anticipate Hanson's population size to remain generally stable through 2050. The Donahue Institute currently projects a modest growth in population through 2035, reaching 10,834 individuals, to be followed by a modest decline to 10,322 by 2050. The most significant shift will be the increased number of residents over age 65: in 2010 the over-65 population represented 11% of the population; in the 2020 census the over-65 population made up 17.4% of the community; by 2050 it is projected to represent 22% of the population. The impact of this expanding age sector on library planning is critical to the planning for services and the facility.



From the South Shore Economic Development Corporation, *South Shore 2030*, comes their notes regarding the challenge ahead with the aging population on the South Shore. The South Shore is “aging faster than any other metro Boston region.” Attracting younger adults and families to the region requires the “development of more interesting centers of activity,” a key priority identified through the Library’s planning input.



## **Hanson Public Library: Historic Overview**

Library service began with the formation of the Hanson Temperance Library Association on August 17, 1882. Five officers were elected, and all books and pamphlets were owned by and only loaned to members. On August 24th, the 34 members purchased 10 books with the \$15.94 collected as membership fees. On January 18, 1883, the Library moved to its first home, a closet in Soper's Hall, built by J.A. Whitney. The group changed its name to the Hanson Library Association on June 5, 1884, and they soon made plans to purchase land and erect a building for a privately endowed library. Through the generosity of Elijah C. Thomas and his sister, Mrs. Rachel C. Cushing, the building, named Thomas Hall, was completed in 1884 for approximately \$3500. In 1887, the Little Workers Sewing Circle, formed by five girls from South Hanson, purchased 152 books to start a library. With their encouragement, citizens of the area formed the Wampatuck Library Association on April 17, 1889. The Little Workers Sewing Circle's books were given to the Association and housed in Wampatuck Hall.

By 1896, a North Branch of a town-funded library had been established at the store of E.F. Witherell, and the Library at Wampatuck Hall was given into the care of the town to create a South Branch. In 1902, the North Branch was moved to the home of librarian Mary Drew and her sister Evie Drew, who would become librarian after the death of her sister. However, due to the resignation in 1921 of Evie Drew, the town needed to find a new location for the North Branch. This was accomplished when the Hanson Library Association decided to turn over Thomas Hall, their books, and all other personal property to the town, including a grandfather clock made by John Bailey (1770-1815) of Hanover, which keeps time in the Library today.

The North Branch of the Library remained in Thomas Hall until 1961, when an addition to the Indian Head School allowed the Library to move into space there. As part of the relocation, the South Branch was closed, and its books were also moved to the new site. In 1984 the Library expanded into an adjoining classroom, but it became clear that additional room would be required to provide an adequate library for Hanson's citizens. From 1960 to 1980 the population of Hanson doubled, and the Board of Library Trustees realized that further expansion at the current location was impossible. Meanwhile, the Council for Elder Affairs had also outgrown their quarters located in the front of the Hanson Fire Station. The two groups joined forces in the mid-1980's to begin the long process of constructing a joint facility on land donated by the Hanson School Department. The result is the Hanson Library/Senior Center that opened to the public in October 1991.

Careful planning created a building design expected to accommodate growth for many years to come. The long, narrow lot demanded a long, narrow building, which was ideal for the warm timber framed construction. Seating went from 16 to 78. The children have a storytime room with a craft sink that opens into the community meeting room, which can accommodate 80 people. The Marie McLaughlin Historical Room, named in honor of a

former Trustee who served from 1950 to 1986, houses the Library's historical and genealogical collections.

The Library joined the ABLE (Automated Bristol Library Exchange) network in July of 1993 and began the automation process on October 17, 1994. Subsequently, ABLE merged with another network, SEAL, to form the SAILS Library Network, which includes over 70 member libraries. Through its shared online catalog, patrons have access to the circulating collections of any SAILS member library and can place holds for pickup in Hanson. Items from other Massachusetts networks and from other states are also available through the Commonwealth Catalog and interlibrary loan.

Over the years the Library has expanded its offerings to include services such as free wi-fi, computer access, mobile hotspots, online databases, eBook collections, an expanding "library of things," and programming for all ages. Services continue to evolve to ensure the Hanson Public Library remains a thriving center of activity for the community.

# The Hanson Public Library Today



## Current Collections and Services

The Hanson Public Library collection reflects the continuing use of the library collection in the more traditional sense, with circulation of print materials remaining strong. The library collection is heavily used for leisure and entertainment; it is a popular collection. Ninety-nine percent of survey respondents indicated that borrowing books, DVDs, CDs, and similar materials was “Very Important” to them. User choice-of-format patterns are clearly changing, however. The use of eBooks and downloadable audiobooks is growing substantially each year, while circulation of print materials has been stable. In FY24, eBooks and downloadable audio and video accounted for 18% of the total circulation, nearly doubling in use over the prior 5 years. The anticipated increase in use of digital and downloadable collection items impacts both library service and the library facility and is a key component in planning for a new library that is highly flexible.

Total holdings submitted to the MBLC (Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners) for the 2024 State Aid to Libraries Program were reported at 62,296. Over the prior 5 years, collection size has decreased by 22,525 items, a 25% reduction. This shift reflects both the expansion of available eBook and other digital downloadable items, as well as the continuing focus by library staff on collection management. Making adjustments to the print collection in response to user needs and interests has also made it possible for the library to make minimal improvements in the use of the library’s public areas by removing some shelving units, opening up space for additional user seats.

Hanson Public Library Collection FY24	Adult	Young Adult	Children’s	Total
Books	20,555	1,455	17,503	39,513
Print periodicals, serials	640	0	0	640
Audio (CDs, etc.)	765	14	550	1,329
Video all formats	2,817	11	879	3,707
E-books	5,816	253	307	6,376
Downloadable Audio (books, music)	4,301	293	187	4,781
Downloadable Video	2	0	0	2
Materials in Electronic format	6	5	50	61
Miscellaneous (museum passes, e-book readers, library of things, etc.)	671	4	75	750
Total	35,573	2,035	19,551	57,159
Use of electronic collections (SAILS network, Statewide)	5,137			
Total	40,710	2,035	19,551	62,296

*Hanson Public Library FY24 Circulation Statistics*

The eBook collection provided by the MA Board of Library Commissioners has been expanding significantly in response to changing user patterns and the broadening of library use to include a wide range of formats - print to non-print and electronic. At its October 2023 board meeting, the MBLC approved \$1 million in grants to support automated networks, including Hanson's member network SAILS, with the purchase of eContent through the Library eBook and Audiobook program (LEA). The state-funded grants directly

support the growing patron demand for eBooks and audiobooks. In June alone, checkouts statewide through LEA totaled more than 140,000, up from 66,000 during the same period in 2019. The Hanson Public Library's circulation of eBooks and other downloadable items increased from 10% of total circulation in FY19 to 18% of total circulation in FY24, nearly doubling over the 5-year period.

The under-15 population group accounts for 21% of the population, but accounts for 36% of the circulation. 28% of items in the collection are for children, 5% for young adults/teens. Expansion of the library will make it possible to offer children's and teen collections appropriately sized to meet community use.

Collection maintenance activities are ongoing, with a concerted effort to remove outdated and under-utilized items from the collection, as well as to update sections of the collection in need of newer materials and expanded offerings. Planning for flexibility is a priority. This will ensure the library is positioned to respond to future rebalancing of collections and the changing use of space by the community.



*View from library entryway to the rear of the building; circulation desk to the left*

### **Library Hours and Staffing**

The library is open six days a week, including two evenings, providing 44 hours of service. Summer hours are reduced to 42 hours a week, with a half day on Saturday. Library visits have quadrupled over the past five years. The average number of weekly visits in 2018 was 119 people; in 2022 the average number of people visiting the library weekly had increased to 472.

Responding to reference and information continues to be steady over the same five-year period, with a slight increase from 7,605 inquiries responded to in 2018 to 8,560 in 2022. Total circulation increased by 11% over the same five-year period, from 51,037 in 2018 to 56,757 in 2022. Program offerings and attendance are still in recovery from Covid and are heavily impacted by the library's sharing of the community meeting room with the Senior Center and other community groups.

Staff include the Library Director, an Assistant Director/Adult Services Librarian, a Youth Services Librarian, a Youth Services Associate, an Adult & Youth Services Support Librarian, a cataloger, two circulation assistants, and a custodian that is shared with the Senior Center.

Librarian, a Youth Services Associate, an Adult & Youth Services Support Librarian, a cataloger, two circulation assistants, and a custodian that is shared with the Senior Center.

### **Funding Support**

Municipal budget support for the library has increased steadily over the past 5 years. The library received an appropriation of \$442,104 for FY20; the appropriation for FY24 was



\$526,693, an increase of 16% over the 5-year period. The library has consistently received State Aid to Libraries funds through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

The Hanson Public Library Foundation balances ongoing support of the Library with a strong commitment to maintaining and building financial support for the new library facility.

## **Library Governance & Supporters**

### **Library Board of Trustees**

The Hanson Public Library is a municipal department governed by a six-member elected Board of Library Trustees. The Library Trustees are responsible for administering seven trust funds and work closely with the Library Foundation in active fundraising to support the Library.

Authority is granted to the Board of Library Trustees by Massachusetts General Law Chapter 78, sections 10-11. The Board delegates day-to-day operations of the library to the Library Director. The Library Director is hired, with the recommendation of the Town Administrator, by the Trustees. The Library Director is directly responsible to the Board of Library Trustees. All library staff are employees of the Town of Hanson. The Town of Hanson has a full-time Town Administrator and conducts business through an open town meeting format.

### **The Hanson Public Library Foundation**

The Foundation is a non-profit corporation designed to operate exclusively for the benefit of the Hanson Public Library. The Foundation focuses on seeking out, receiving, and administering gifts, grants, endowments, and bequests with the primary uses being to fund capital projects including construction and renovation; to create a general endowment fund; to sponsor musical, artistic, cultural, and educational programs; and to secure cultural enrichment programs for the library and community.

### **Library Volunteers**

The Library currently has an active group of 12 volunteers, who assist with shelving, retrieving holds, pulling items from weeding lists, inventorying the collection, preparing crafts, shelf reading, and various cleaning and organizing tasks. The library is in the process of reactivating the Friends of the Library group.

## **The Library Within the Hanson Community**

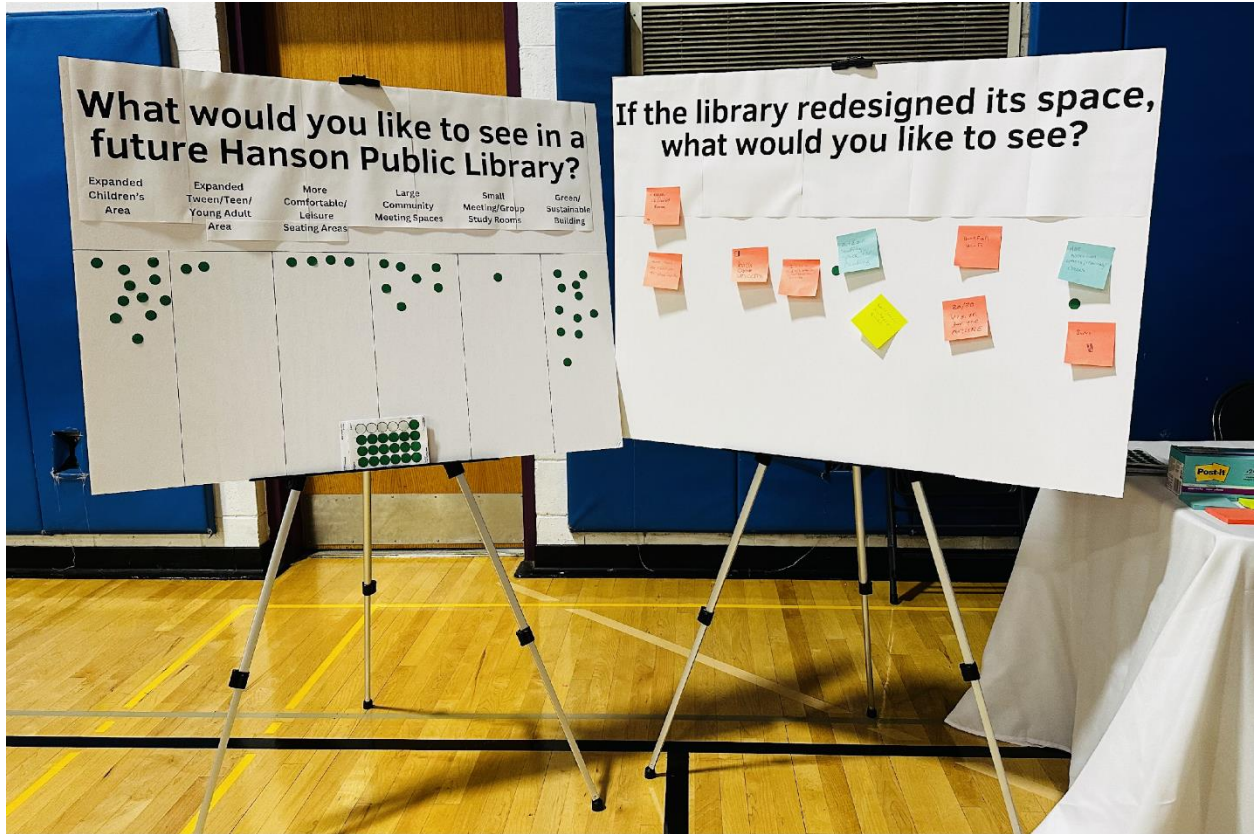
### **Recent Planning Efforts**

In 2007, the Library received a library building planning grant from the MA Board of Library Commissioners. No activity took place under that grant until 2018, when the Board of Library Trustees retained the services of a library consultant to assist in the development of a library building program. The Planning Committee first undertook the task of drafting and recommending a new strategic plan for the Library to the Board of Library Trustees. The *Hanson Public Library 2019-2023 Strategic Plan* was adopted by the Board of Library Trustees at its September 29, 2018 meeting. On March 5, 2019 the Board of Trustees approved a new *Library Building Program*. Community presentations were made, including a report from the library consultant at the May 6, 2019 town meeting. The *Library Building Program* remained viable pending future grant availability from the MA Board of Library Commissioners.

With the anticipated availability of a grant round for 2023-24 the Library Board of Trustees solicited proposals for a consultant to assist with the development of a new strategic plan and a new library building program. A new Planning Committee was established, and work began in April 2023, concentrating first on a new strategic plan, and following up with the library building program. A series of focus groups, a community survey, and a variety of other input methods were employed in late spring into early summer to inform both the strategic plan and the library building program. 44 people participated in the focus groups, 20 teens responded to a teen-focused survey about the library, and 205 people submitted survey responses. Over the summer and fall of 2023, additional input was gathered through questionnaires and conversations with external groups and via prioritization “boards” at Hanson Day on September 23, 2023, and at the Library’s annual fall Open House.

The Library Board of Trustees adopted the *Hanson Public Library Strategic Plan 2024-2028* on September 26, 2023 with approval from the MA Board of Library Commissioners received shortly thereafter. Further Planning Committee work focusing on the development of the *Library Building Program* continued into the fall and winter. On March 26, 2024 the Library Board of Trustees approved a new *Hanson Public Library Building Program*.





*Hanson Day, September 23, 2023*

## **What We Learned from the Community**

Through the focus groups we learned about people’s hopes and aspirations for Hanson as a community, and how the Library could support the community in achieving those hopes and aspirations. Nearly 1,000 thoughts, ideas, suggestions, comments, and compliments were shared through the focus group process. Additional input and deeper questioning in the survey brought forward another extensive amount of material for the Planning Committee to synthesize. Out of the work of the Committee with the consultant and library director came a set of guiding principles and desired outcomes for a new Hanson Public Library.

“The library was a formative place for me growing up. This was my hangout place in high school.”

*Facebook Comment*

## Community Priorities for the Library

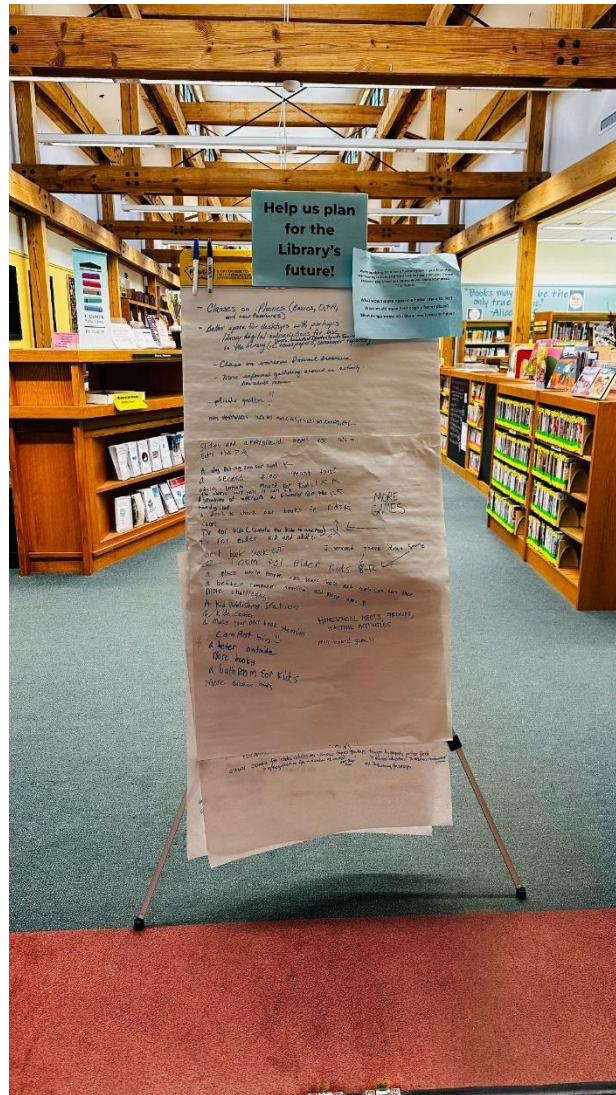
Hanson residents want a library that:

- **Provides a diverse collection that is broad in scope; is a place of informational integrity, a place where individuals seeking accurate and objective information can find reputable resources**
- **Is the centralized community hub, for gathering the community together, building community, making cultural connections, attracting visitors, supporting local economic development**
- **Celebrates differences, is inclusive and responsive to ADA needs**
- **Is a place for building common ground, for unification**
- **Prepares the community for the future**
- **Is a welcoming, attractive building that continues to feel “cozy” yet open, a place people want to spend time, a place to socialize, and a place of respite**
- **Offers a place of excitement, vibrancy, and imagination**
- **Has flexibility of spaces & furnishings that make it easy for users to be separate and to form groups**
- **Provides expanded public programming areas, large and smaller meeting/study rooms**
- **Is looking ahead with contemporary and adaptable power and technology infrastructure systems**
- **Is easy for all to navigate the facility, layout makes “sense” to patrons**
- **Provides green leadership to the community with environmentally “friendly” and energy-efficient systems**
- **Is technologically “anticipatory”**
- **Can be used 24/7, with secure use of public programming/meeting rooms after hours**
- **Marries the indoors and the outdoors, maximizing the flow of exterior green/creative play areas with interior space**
- **Offers a broad range of resources in a variety of formats, ranging from print to digital**

Community input served as the foundation for this planning process. The staff and community focus groups, online and paper surveys, and open solicitation of ideas both at the library and externally, provided insight into the aspects of the current library that are valued by users and into their ideas for how the library could be improved. Most importantly, participants were thoughtful in envisioning what the Hanson Public Library would and could be like thirty years into the future, in 2053.

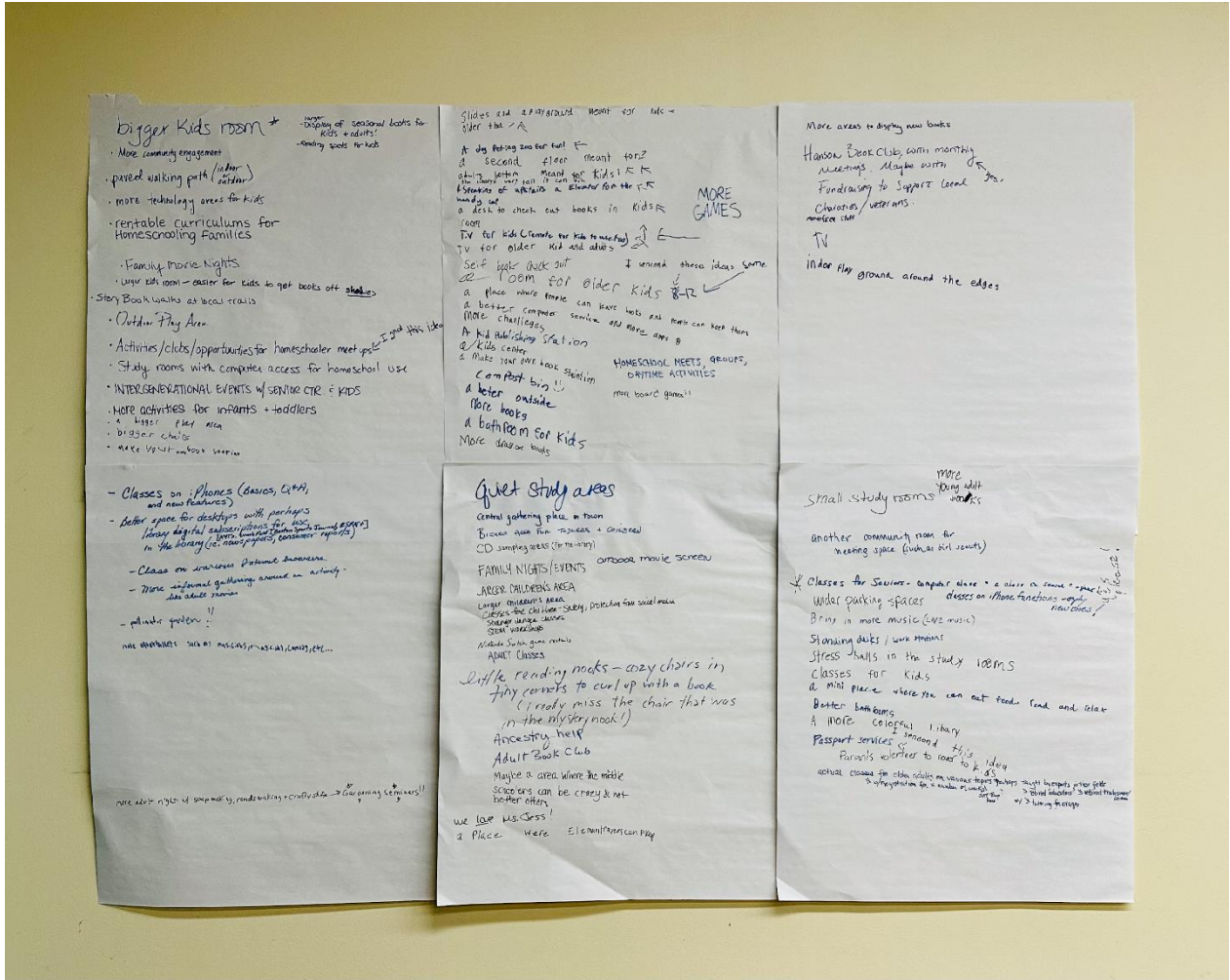
Community members, staff, Trustees, and members of the Library Foundation Board contributed their opinions, ideas, and suggestions to the process through a series of focus groups, open community meetings, and one-on-one conversations. A community “flip charting” at the library asked the question, “How could this library be improved? New

programs or services?” And last but not least, the community responded to a survey that was available online and in paper format. Approximately 44 individuals from age 8 and above participated in the focus groups and direct solicitation of input both within and outside the Library, and over 200 individuals completed the survey. An additional 140 comments and suggestions were collected via the flip charts and Feedback/Priority Boards. There is remarkable continuity in the information gathered from all sources. The results of this community input process have been instrumental in shaping the plan for the new Hanson Public Library. See Appendix A for Planning Survey Selected Results



Sample public comment flip chart





Sample public comment flip charts

From the public input, and as evidenced in the use of the library, the Hanson Public Library is seen as a highly valued part of the community. Over and over residents expressed their desire for a community gathering place that is welcoming, inclusive, convenient, broader in its offering beyond traditional books, connected to the outdoors, a place of learning, and a place of respite. They want the community and the library to continue to have a “small town feel,” to be safe, and to be neighborly. We heard how valued the library is as an important contributor to the quality of life and well-being of the Town.

## Community Feedback

A sample of un-prioritized feedback received from the focus groups, the community meetings, the flip charts, and the survey, follows:

### **Question: What is important to the community served by the Hanson Public Library?**

- *Borrowing materials-books, DVDs, CDs, eBooks, museum passes, etc.*
- *Programs and classes for children*
- *Library staff are available to assist with research, technology and searching*
- *Programs for seniors*
- *Access to computers, printers, other technology, and the internet*
- *Delivery of materials to the homebound*
- *Programs and classes for adults*
- *Expanded learning opportunities for the community*
- *Expanded partnerships with community organizations, schools, and groups*
- *Staff assistance in finding materials to read/watch/listen to and in using technology*
- *Library as a community center*
- *Clearinghouse for community information*
- *The “traditional” library, plus computers*
- *Free, indoor, non-commercial space to take children*
- *Music, DVDs*
- *Programs for teens*
- *Expanded open hours*
- *Preserving Hanson history resources and making them easily accessible to the public*

### **Question: How could the library facility or services offered be improved?**

- *Small meeting rooms, tutoring rooms, individual study spaces; learning spaces*
- *Larger, unified Children’s Area for collection, creative play, crafts, bathroom within Children’s Room*
- *Improved acoustics to reduce traveling sound; quiet study areas*
- *Windows, natural light, incorporation of outdoor space into library space, e.g., outdoor seating, reading garden, creative play area*
- *More natural air flow through the building*
- *Expanded and unified teen/young adult/middle school area*
- *More accessible service desks, restrooms, and shelving for materials*
- *Less crowded; more space*
- *Spaces for neurodiverse individuals of all ages*
- *After-hours meeting room use*
- *Green building, solar panels, electric vehicle charging stations*
- *Private study/small group study rooms*
- *Space for the historical collection*
- *Expanded leisure seating area*
- *Environmentally sensitive, flexible HVAC*
- *Comfortable seating, with natural light and outdoor views*
- *Places to use personal computers (access to electrical outlets, seating to accommodate the equipment)*
- *Expanded parking*

- *More programs for children, teens, and adults*
- *A significantly expanded multipurpose room to permit extensive public programming by the library and for community group use*
- *Easier access to the collection-shelving lower, more spread out*
- *Improved wheelchair/ADA access*

## Hanson Public Library Strategic Plan 2024-2028

Working with the community input, the Planning Committee crafted a new Strategic Plan and laid the foundation for the Library Building Program. The Strategic Plan was adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on September 26, 2023, and accepted by the MA Board of Library Commissioners on September 27, 2023.

Our **Vision** for the community is a library that enriches, engages, and strengthens the community and our **Mission** is a library that inspires curiosity and fosters life-long learning by connecting people and ideas. To support that Mission, the Library provides access to a wide variety of resources, technology, and experiences in a welcoming, supportive environment.

**The Vision and Mission** will be achieved by focusing on 4 priorities:

### ***We Connect our Community***

*The Library endeavors to be at the heart of the community by fostering social connections and offering opportunities for Hanson residents to come together through shared spaces, programs, resources, and events that inform, educate, and entertain.*

### ***We Enrich People's Lives***

*The Library reaffirms its commitment to reading, learning, and culture for all, by supporting and celebrating literacy in all forms - print, digital, artistic - to promote personal growth, discovery, knowledge, and understanding.*

### ***We Open Our Doors to All***

*The Library is a place for everyone, providing a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community space. We actively seek out opportunities to engage all Hanson residents in the use of the Library's informational and recreational resources.*

### ***We are Focused on Hanson's Future***

*The Library is committed to expanding and enhancing its ability to provide a wide range of evolving services to meet the changing needs of the community.*

*See Appendix B for the complete Hanson Public Library Strategic Plan 2024-2028*

The shortcomings of the current building will continue to make it impossible to fully achieve the priorities identified through the community process. An assessment of the current state of the library building follows.

"[I] would love to see the library be more of the center of/hub of the community. A place where community members gathers for a variety of different events. Auto shows, craft fairs, concerts, farmers markets."

*Strategic Planning Survey 2023*

## Assessment of the Current Library Building

Built in 1991, the Hanson Public Library is an attractive, one-story, arts-and-crafts style building surrounded by a pleasing lawn and woodland. The building has an elevated roof line with clerestory windows. The 11,177 square foot building is shared with the Town's Senior Center. The Library entrance to the building leads to a common foyer that provides access to the Library portion of the building, as well as to the shared community meeting room and public restrooms. Although the Senior Center has its own entry and restrooms, their visitors make use of the Library entrance to access the community meeting room and restrooms next to the Library main entrance. They also share a 50-space parking lot, with patrons reporting they often have difficulty finding an available space. Nighttime lighting in the parking lot is inadequate.

There is a partial damp basement located under the community meeting room, containing two storage rooms, a room housing the electrical panels that is also used for storage, and a mechanical room housing the hot water tank and water service to the building. There are ongoing and unresolved water infiltration issues. The Library's two HVAC service rooms are on ground level at one end of the building, on either side of the historical room; the HVAC for the community meeting room and Senior Center are rooftop units.

The building is set back off Route 14, with the entrance to the shared parking area off School Street. School Street continues, leading to the adjacent site of the recently demolished Maquan Elementary School (now open Town land), a field used for athletics, the Indian Head Elementary School, and the Hanson Highway Department. There is no signage pointing to the library on Route 14, nor at the turnoff to School Street. After turning onto School Street, there is a small sign for the Senior Center and the Library on the left at the entrance to the parking lot.

The library portion of the building occupies 8,195 square feet. Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioner reviewers of the grant submitted in 1989/90 for the current building commented "This library is not planned for



*Turn off from Route 14 to School Street; Library is behind the trees; van and cars are in the shared parking lot*



*Parking lot shared with the Senior Center*



twenty years.” They further note “The Children’s area is not large enough.” Clearly the library was undersized when it was built in 1991. The 1991 construction and opening of the library certainly predates the installation of infrastructure to meet current, let alone future, library use. For example, access to electrical outlets is severely limited for both the public and for staff, and network connection points are inconvenient and inflexible. Shelving is tall and inflexible. Staff sightlines are almost non-existent. Most of the furniture dates to the opening of the building in 1991.

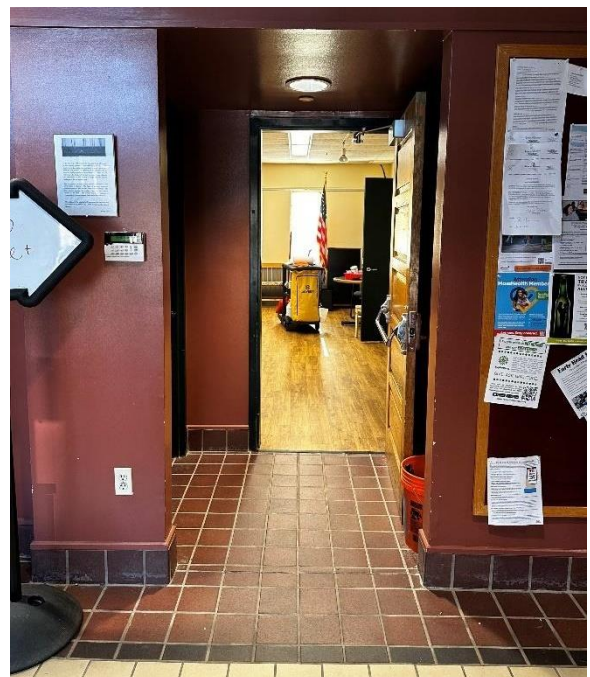
The Library entrance to the building leads to a common foyer that provides access to the Library portion of the building, as well as to the shared community room and public restrooms. Although the Senior Center has its own entry and restrooms, their visitors make use of the Library entrance to access the community meeting room and restrooms next to the Library main entrance. An external book return is located adjacent to the entrance, under the entryway roof. The shared entryway corridor is utilitarian and lacking in any directional information or wayfinding.

Off the shared foyer, to the right, are handicapped restrooms for men and women and the entrance to the library. The two public restrooms, accessed from the internal lobby, are designated for “Men” and “Women” and are not gender neutral. These public restrooms serve both the library and those attending Senior Center programs in the community meeting room. There are additional restrooms in the Senior Center. There is no restroom for children in the children's area of the library.

The community meeting room is off the shared foyer that connects the Senior Center and Library areas. The library entrance from the parking lot is directly into the shared foyer. The Senior Center has its own entry directly into its area of the building. The current shared community meeting room is inadequate in both availability and size. It is too small and is in constant demand, with the library, the Senior Center, and community groups such as the Scouts and the boards of other community organizations,



*Entryway to shared lobby, Library entrance, community meeting room, and external book return*



*Entrance to the community meeting room shared with the Senior Center*

contending for time. Library programs are often over-subscribed, requiring pre-registration for attendees. This regularly requires staff-created “waiting” lists due to limited room capacity. It is not uncommon for there to be 20 names on the waitlist for



*Community meeting room shared with the Senior Center*

popular programs. The library also uses open floor space in the Senior Center for programs requiring a higher (50 people or more) seating capacity when the Senior Center is closed. During the daytime, the community meeting room is shared with the Senior Center.

Looking into the library from its entry doors, one is struck by the simple elegance of the post-and-beam construction, and the initial sense of openness and light created by

the high-center ceiling. On further examination, one sees that a significant amount of floor space is used for furnishings and fixtures. The collection, and the shelving it requires, consume a considerable amount of floor space. Even with aggressive collection maintenance by staff, the amount and varied types of storage to accommodate print and other formats dominates the available space.

The building and its furnishings show their age: systems are inadequate; furniture is uninviting and comfortable leisure seating is limited; finding an electrical outlet to charge a laptop or mobile device is almost impossible; finding a quiet and comfortable space to read or work on a project is impossible as well.

One is struck by the lack of a clear path to staff, library resources, or workspace. The building is crowded, physically off-putting, and difficult to use. These deficits are offset by staff with a strong and positive commitment to excellent customer service. The building in which staff perform their work interferes with their ability to perform at their best.

The original wooden circulation desk is tall, large, and fixed in place. The desk is too high for those in a wheelchair and for children. A recent improvement in staff visibility occurred with the removal of two large taller sections, and one smaller tall section of the original wooden circulation desk. Prior to that carpentry work, staff working at the desk could not be seen by people entering the library, nor could staff see who was coming in. Although visibility has been improved, the work space behind the desk is significantly limited. There is no circulation workroom. All circulation work takes place behind that desk. Even items





*Circulation desk with doorway to workroom to the right rear*

being sent out and returned via delivery are received or prepared to be sent out in delivery from behind the overcrowded circulation desk.

The desks for the Youth Services and the Adult & Youth Services Support Librarians have been relocated from the middle of the “open” floor area, where they were often mistaken for public use desks, and are now on either side of the circulation desk. Book carts and the public printers have been moved to the end of this longer staff work area to cover an internet access hole in the floor that was left exposed by the desk rearrangement. While the public area has been improved with this configuration, it has created a very long and inconvenient structure for staff to navigate in and out of. If one of the circulation staff needs to assist a member of the public, they have a lengthy walk down a narrow aisle behind staff seating and around book carts to meet the patron “on the floor.” The Youth Services Librarian also has no easy physical access to children’s areas with this configuration. Although the visibility of the Youth Services Librarian has been slightly improved for those entering or exiting the Children’s Room, the staff member still cannot see or be seen from directly within the space. Much of the public service staff planning work is done in public, there is minimal staff work area away from the public.

To the left of the entryway, in a separate space of approximately 485 square feet, is the Nancy M. Cappellini Children’s Room, which houses picture books and a portion of the toddler book collection, an activity cube, other small furniture with play accessories, one child-friendly table with 8 chairs, and space used for storytime. A ledge around the perimeter of the room is used as seating for children. The Cappellini Room is totally out of staff sight.



*Circulation & staff desks, book carts, and printing station creating barrier to workroom area*





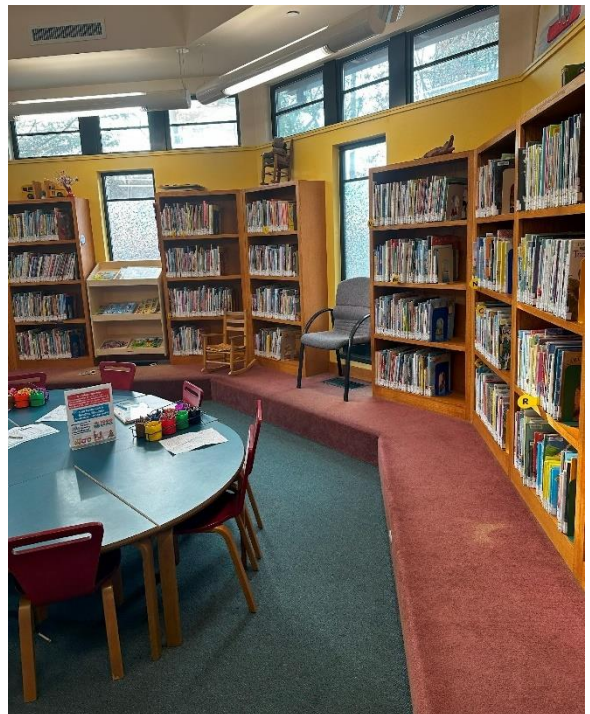
*Children's service desk outside the Cappellini Room*



*Left half of the Cappellini Room; note the ledge around the base of the wall shelving*



*Entrance to the Nancy M. Cappellini Children's Room*



*Right half of the Cappellini Room, showing single table with seating in the room*



*Storytime in the Cappellini Room*



The remainder of the Children's collection, including easy readers, chapter books, youth fiction and nonfiction, the kids' educational games computer, a train table, and a couple of chairs, is housed to the right of the main entryway, opposite the Cappellini Children's Room and the Circulation desk. Approximately 550 square feet house this portion of the Children's print collection with 4 leisure seats for children.



*Other section of children's collection and limited seating, separate from the Cappellini Room*

Space for children's services is cramped, unattractive, and not designed for children. The primary function of the two children's spaces is to house books, and in the toddler area, due to the seating ledge along the perimeter of the room, the shelving is for the most part not easily reachable by an average height adult. There is minimal area for creative play or reading or for parents and caregivers to sit with their children. There is no leisure seating in the toddler area and limited work area for staff in either location. Parents comment that it is difficult to oversee children in two separate areas and wish the children's space was in one unified area of the building. There is no space for carriages to be stored.



*Baby carriage parked outside entryway to Cappellini Room*



*Baby carriage parked outside main entryway to library*

Population growth projections for the community show a stable under-15 population. This segment of the community continues to be major users of the library's collection and programming services. The current space allocated to the under-15 population is significantly under-sized and has been so from the time the library opened in 1991.

To the right of the entryway is the public photocopier. There is no space next to the copier for patrons to lay out and organize documents. This copier is also used by staff, and its location away from their work area is inconvenient.

Diagonally across from the Circulation and librarian service desks are 3 small rooms that are currently used for the Teen Room, a room for the booksale, and a room housing 3 public computers. A recent improvement has been the repurposing of the room that had been the Homework Center into a Teen Room, housing the Young Adult fiction collection and 6 teen-friendly seats. It is highly popular, overflowing after school and on early release days. Teens that can't fit into the Teen Room, and middle school visitors who generally don't mingle with teens, take over the remainder of the public area, especially on early release days, resulting in a boisterous environment for other library users. Seating is inadequate to accommodate the teens and other library users at these times.



*Photocopier adjacent to front door; no area for laying out papers*



*Overflowing teens*



*Cramped Teen Room*



The bulk of the remainder of the public area is devoted to library book stacks, with limited public seating. Staff have made significant progress in collection maintenance efforts which have reduced the amount of shelving required. However, much of the shelving that remains is 7 feet tall and in front of the windows. The openness of the original design is lost, as is the connection to the outdoors. In addition, the tall shelving makes it difficult for people to see and reach items on the upper shelves.



*Adult reading area, showing original furnishings and collection*



*Adult seating and book stacks*



*Adult leisure reading area; adult collection on both sides to the rear*





*Marie McLaughlin Historical Room*

At the rear of the building is the Marie McLaughlin Historical Room, a small 10-foot by 20-foot room which houses the local history collection and serves as a small meeting room. The Board of Library Trustees had met in the McLaughlin Room, however as a follow-up to Covid, the Board now has meetings in the more spacious community meeting room. A large wooden table and a dozen chairs take up about 80% of the floor space. The room is completely out of sight from staff, and in addition to the lack of electrical outlet access, suffers from no climate control. This local Historical Room serves as the library's small meeting room.

The staff workroom is located directly behind the circulation desk, in a separate room. In addition to the Technical Services/Acquisitions Assistant's workspace, the Library's Assistant Director's desk is located in the workroom. The Assistant Director has no quiet area for planning work and no privacy for public and staff communications.

The staff workroom is located directly behind the circulation desk, in a separate room. In addition to the Technical Services/Acquisitions Assistant's workspace, the Library's Assistant Director's desk is located in the workroom.



*Network equipment on open shelving in Staff Workroom*



*Staff Workroom with network equipment mounted in the open on the far wall*

The space is limited, cramped, and inflexible. The staff workroom is where new materials are received and prepared for use by the public, and where items are added to the online system for public and staff online searching and requesting. SAILS network equipment for staff computers and Comcast equipment for the public computers are both housed on an open shelf in the staff workroom. They are noisy (constantly humming) and not secure. In addition, security camera and UPS (uninterruptible power supply) equipment are housed in the open in the staff workroom.



The primary staff workspace is 12 feet by 20 feet and houses 2 work desks, counters, and limited shelving. A closet that had been used to store library supplies is now used by the Foundation to store their needed supplies. The workspace also contains storage for general office supplies and empty book carts. The staff restroom is off a corridor leading from the staff workroom to the hallway leading to the Nancy M. Cappellini Children's room. The staff bathroom is very small and is not handicapped accessible.

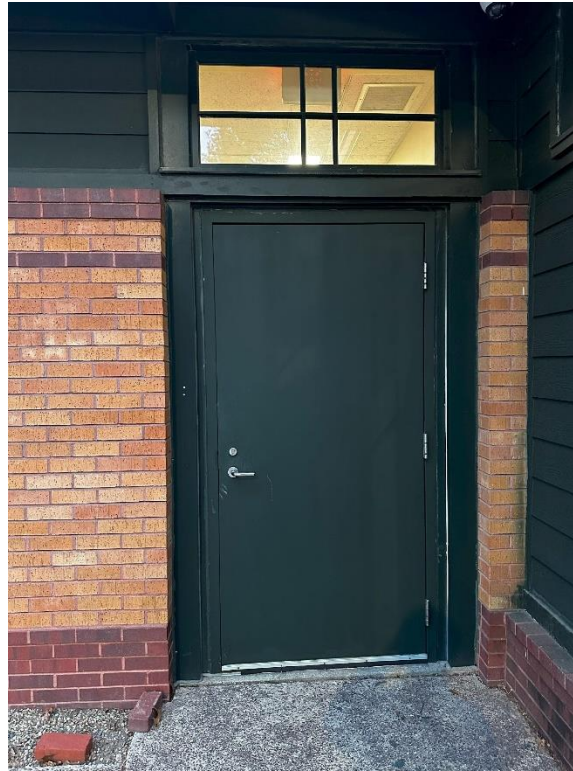


*Staff Workroom view facing the staff and delivery entrance on right*

There is an access door directly from the workroom to the rear parking area that is used for deliveries. There is no protective roof over the door. The drive leading to the delivery door is narrow and not easy to navigate. There are not enough parking spaces for staff near the access door.



*Staff entry and delivery door internal view*



*Staff entry and delivery door at rear of building; note no overhead protection from the weather*





*Staff parking and rear entryway; note lack of outdoor overhead lighting*

Next to the staff work area is a staff break room with a small kitchen setup, and beyond that the Library Director's office. The staff break room is utilitarian, often overcrowded, and the appliances are outdated. The staff break room also serves as a storage area for office and general library supplies.



*Director's desk; note the visitor chair beside the desk is the only furniture in the room besides the desk and task chair*



*Director's Office, with doors to staff break room and public reading room*

The Library Director's office, 8 feet by 12 feet, accommodates the director's desk and one visitor chair. There is no space for a table to conduct a meeting or lay out work, nor does the space permit a different arrangement of existing furniture due to 2 doors, one leading to the staff break room, the other to the main public area of the library, as well as the inflexible location of electrical/internet/telephone connections. Although there is a large window in the room, the blinds must be down much of the time to reduce glare on the computer screen. The overall effect is a cramped and cave-like space.

Noise control in the building is non-existent, and conversations carry throughout the library. This is an especially significant problem with conversations in the lobby area interfering with programs in the community meeting room.

Storage space is severely limited, with every open bit of floor space being put to use. Files are located in staff work areas; equipment and supplies are stored in coat closets and on open shelves; and other supplies are stored in basement space that houses mechanical systems. Every available nook and cranny gets used.

Repairs have been ongoing throughout the life of the building: a new roof was installed in 2015/16 and has been repaired multiple times (although there are continuing leaks); the HVAC system is constantly being repaired; and some of the windows that have degraded have been replaced.

Even with ongoing repairs and replacement, many of the windows are cloudy and the seals on them have given way. The climate control is inconsistent, resulting in the local history/small meeting room and other areas of the building being almost un-heatable in winter. There are continuing issues with the mechanics of the climate control system. The building is showing its thirty-plus years of use. Major components of the facility have reached their end-of-life. A new or significantly renovated facility is required for the Library to continue to serve the community and achieve the priorities identified through the strategic planning process.



*Basement storage area; note electrical and HVAC mechanical systems in space*

## **Current Library Site and Other Sites Considered**

The library is currently located at 132 Maquan Street, accessed via School Street, off Route 14 in Hanson. There is adequate town-owned land to permit renovation and the needed addition to the current building. There is also available land adjacent to the current library for construction of a new library building. The library facility and service needs will be represented in the new master plan the Town is currently developing. Discussions are underway regarding the possible future use of the land behind the library, where the recently demolished Maquan School stood. The Town of Hanson Senior Center, which currently shares the facility with the library, is also facing serious space constraints as its user population expands. Its services and those of the library are certainly compatible, providing that adequate parking and internal spaces are available for public use. If the facility is to be shared, the library must have its own community meeting room. There is opportunity to respond to the space needs of both the Library and Senior Center through relocation of one or both of the departments, as well as renovation and addition to the existing facility. The community is fortunate to have viable options to address both areas of need.

In the event the Senior Center relocates, expanding the library to take over the entire facility will require major renovation and expansion. Achieving a reconfigured building footprint that would deliver library services consistent with the strategic plan, in a cost-efficient and staff-efficient manner, would need to be evaluated. The next phase of this project will require a cost-benefit analysis of new construction versus renovation, incorporating both construction and ongoing operating costs. Significant work would be required to modernize the current facility, including all building systems (with the goal being a LEED certified, net-zero, energy-efficient building). Ensuring the facility meets all current code requirements will need to be incorporated into the facility's design. Further, internal and external space would need to be realigned to respond to the service priorities identified through the community input process. An extensive renovation and expansion would be required to meet the service delivery goals identified through the planning process.

From the community input gathered during the strategic planning process, it is clear the community recognizes the shortcomings of the current facility. People don't want to lose the cozy, hometown feel of the library, but mentioned frequently the cramped space, the lack of comfortable furnishings, the lack of decent lighting and good air flow, the need for updated restrooms with amenities such as a nursing area and hands-free fixtures, and the lack of both a large community meeting room and smaller meeting/individual study rooms.

## **Impediments to Library Service Delivery**

Community input identified a number of building deficits. The Planning Committee was asked as part of their work to identify from that input the key impediments to library service delivery, as follows:

- Children's room excessively small
- The building is cramped and crowded, a small number of people in the building overwhelm the space
- Dark, hardly any windows
- Bad air flow, windows barely open
- No storage
- No sound control
- Bookcases too tall, bad sight lines, the space feels oppressive
- Lack of flexibility with the space - walls, furnishings fixed in place/too heavy to move easily
- Lack of fully ADA friendly building
- Lack of wayfinding/signage
- Lack of meeting space, for small and large groups
- People and collection jammed together
- Entrance is small, dark, confusing
- Staff can't see the Children's room from service desks
- Need for public bag storage, kids come in after school with backpacks, musical instruments, etc. and take up lots of space with the bags
- Furnishings generally - uncomfortable, inflexible, boring
- Color palette for building is dull and drab
- Wifi inadequate
- Electrical access is from 1991, lack of outlets, inconvenient, inflexible
- Parking not adequate for library/community needs

The community is eager to have a library facility that will expand its role as a community center, a community gathering space, a building that is able to deliver the breadth and quality and quantity of library services they want from their library. Additional and flexible space, updated systems, and the return to a building that is welcoming, visibly attractive, and easy to navigate are key priorities for the library building program.

## **The New Hanson Public Library: The Overview**

In thinking about the community input and trends in library service delivery and the designs that would enhance that delivery, it is clear that the direction for the new Hanson Public Library will be that of a community-focused, welcoming, cozy-feeling, inclusive, flexible, sustainable, environmentally-focused, and vibrant facility to serve the residents of Hanson. In recognition of anticipated social and demographic changes, particularly the projected expansion of the population over 65 years of age, the library will incorporate design features to ensure it is able to meet community needs for inclusion and equitable access to services.

### **Principles Guiding the Design of the New Hanson Library**

Planning for the new library will incorporate a number of guiding principles and design characteristics:

- Ambiance and Aesthetics are key priorities for the community. Focus group and survey respondents frequently expressed appreciation for the current library's "cozy" (albeit over-crowded) interior and its natural setting. Maintaining the sense of beauty of the existing Arts-and-Crafts-style, wood-beamed interior, and enhancing those attributes, are important goals for the new library's design. The library should be welcoming from the street, up close, and inside. The interior should reflect a place of comfort, of joy, of fun, of socialization, of respite, and of contemplation. Natural light and bringing the beauty of the surrounding grounds and woods into the library is important. Interior and exterior lighting that is effective, easy on the eye, and low maintenance with logical and easily-accessible controls is a goal. Furnishings will be flexible, attractive, comfortable, low-maintenance, and ecologically sensitive. In recognition of community input, significant attention will be paid to sound mitigation and the creation of differing sound-level zones within the library.
- Sustainability and maintainability over time are critical. Requiring materials and finishes that will hold up to intense public use for years to come is a good investment by the community. Current and anticipated climate impacts on the library must be included in the planning. Roof slopes, a well-covered entryway, natural management of water run-off away from the library, and exterior finishes that are both rugged and environmentally sound are all desirable. The installation of motion-activated lighting and separate zones for managing the building's climate control system are priorities.
- Anticipated changes in climate will be responded to by constructing a library that can serve as the community's warming and cooling center. 24/7 access to meeting rooms, restrooms, and kitchen space will be available to library staff and local officials for residents in need of temporary emergency shelter. A generator will ensure extended availability of power for network and climate-controlled space.



- Access via a motor vehicle, by bicycle, or on foot should be convenient and easy to navigate. Parking for 100 cars, including spaces with electrical charging stations; handicapped parking with electrical charging ability; bike racks; barrier-free walkways that link the library to other town activities, such as the adjacent sports field, are basic requirements. Consideration should be given to a portion of the parking area being covered with a solar roof, which will provide shade, protect that area of the parking lot from snow and ice, and generate electricity.
- Accessibility, both interior and exterior, will meet, and where feasible exceed, the letter and spirit of the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The new library will draw people in, will be so interesting and welcoming, people will make it their “go to” place. The building will present itself as the Town’s community center, a place for everyone, a place that brings people together. It will clearly reflect the unique character of Hanson and articulate pride in its small-town heritage.

### **Welcome to the New Hanson Public Library**

Services will flow easily across lines, yet maintain defined hubs of activity. Users will enter through the main doors into the Welcome Center, which will provide initial orientation to the library and its services, directions, and reader services requiring staff assistance. The Welcome Center will be a “meet and greet” space, where people cross paths with their neighbors and sit for a cup of coffee or tea. The Welcome Center serves as the entry point to the entire library and all of its activities.

At the heart of the library’s operations will be the Community Gathering area, designed to provide a range of experiences for users and to connect to other user services offered in the library. The Community Gathering space will primarily serve adult users, with attractive and comfortable leisure seating, work surfaces designed to support the use of various library-owned and personal technology, and flexibility to be reshaped and repurposed over time. The Community Gathering space will be designed to permit it to combine with the community meeting space for an expanded public programming area. The Community Gathering area intersects with all other activities, providing direct access to Children’s; Teen & Middle School Area; Popular Collections; the community meeting, conference, and individual study rooms; the outdoor reading and creative learning space; as well as to the staff work area.

The new library facility will be bright, cheery, comfortable, and welcoming to library users, regardless of their age, their interests, or their use of the library’s resources. It will be designed to be a vibrant and vital community center and gathering place for the community.



The building will have superior acoustical management, creating an atmosphere that is comfortable and encourages users to spend time in the building. Mobile, flexible display systems for artwork, and the storage for such systems, will be incorporated into the building design.

All building systems will be brought up to contemporary standards, with lighting, power, data, security (including a computer-managed card access system), and climate control systems that are forward-looking in design and maintenance. Renewable energy, including solar, will be required. Building systems will be expected to be energy and cost-efficient and to be flexible to accommodate changes in future needs and technologies. The new library will achieve a net-zero position in the community by producing as much energy as it consumes. The goal will be a facility that runs completely on electric power, with the exception of the backup generator for emergency power. There will be significantly more windows to bring the outdoors indoors, and they will be operable. The building will be designed to manage sunlight and glare on the interior. The building will be a community model in energy efficiency and green building technologies, and will contribute to the green space in the community. The goal will be a high-level LEED certified building. The Town of Hanson has been designated a Green Community by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Opportunity exists for grant support through the Green Community program to underwrite a portion of the costs associated with the library's construction project.

Construction and interior finishes that promote sustainability, energy efficiency, resource conservation, and the utilization of natural, renewable materials are high priorities. As an example, shelving constructed of recycled content will be incorporated into the building design. Sustainability will be integrated into its design, including management of water run-off, alternative energy utilization, and other future priorities of the Town of Hanson.

*“To be truly sustainable organizations or communities must embody practices that are environmentally sound and economically feasible and socially equitable.”*

*Resolution for the Adoption of Sustainability as a Core Value of Librarianship, ALA, 2019*

The library will be designed with a seamless connection to the surrounding outdoor space, taking advantage of the existing natural areas surrounding the library. Incorporating an outdoor reading area, as well as space for programming and creative play, is a community priority. Opportunity exists for the library project to incorporate efforts by the Town's Conservation Commission and include walking paths that link to nearby Maquan Pond and Camp Kiwanee, the 68-acre town-owned campground and function venue.

The library will be designed to meet standard library load levels in all areas to permit flexibility in use over time. In the ideal, the building would be on a single level to minimize the number of staff required and to facilitate accessibility and supervision of the building. If a single-level building is not feasible, great care will be required in planning which functions are located on which level to minimize the impact on staffing levels.

The library will be designed with space flexibility. Furniture and fixtures will be mobile, adjustable, and reconfigurable. Shelving and furnishings will aid in the creation of smaller spaces to provide a sense of privacy, in the creation of areas that are welcoming to neurodiverse community members, and in sound management. Shelving will readily adjust to changing formats, accommodating print, media, and the variety of shapes, forms, and sizes of the anticipated greatly-expanded Library of Things collection. Flooring will be sustainable, segmented for easy replacement of smaller areas, and will be a component of the library's wayfinding system. The new library will provide spaces that are comfortable for all ages, interests, and abilities, including the neurodiverse community, with a Quiet Room, dimmable lighting, leisure seating appropriate to the anticipated use of the space, tables that are height-adjustable, and similar enhancements.

Access to electrical power will be convenient in all areas of the building, and all options for electrical access are viable - floor, ceiling drops, and future wireless charging through walls and work surfaces. The new building will be technologically forward: self-service library catalog computers, such as iPad-type devices, located strategically throughout the collection for the public; the potential for implementation of “card-free” technology for libraries; and lockers for after-hours pickup of requested items. Due to significant use of personal mobile devices and the opportunity for portable devices to be borrowed for use

within the library, there will be few, if any, desktop computers. All interior and exterior doors will be secured via a card access system (RFID, QR code, or other approach). User convenience will guide the overall approach to the building, with catalog computers located conveniently at the ends of shelving, ample opportunities for books to be displayed “cover forward,” and easy access to amenities such as hand sanitizers.

The library collection will be flexible and managed with an eye towards trends in the changes in library use. The print collection will be focused on, sensitive to, and supportive of community needs and interests. In response to current use, the library anticipates significant expansion of the Library of Things collection. The Library of Things supports the library’s commitment to sustainability. Collection decisions will be guided by current usage, understanding that adjustments will be anticipated, expected, and required over time. The Children’s and Teen collections will be proportionately expanded, responding to both current usage of some 34% of circulation and to future sustained population projections for community youth.

Library layout and wayfinding will be responsive to the multiplicity of ADA and neurodiverse needs. Wayfinding and signage will be user-appropriate, flexible, and easy to adjust as needs change over the life of the building. Current and future memorial designations will be determined by the Board of Trustees as the new building is designed.

The philosophy guiding library staff will be the “walk-around” librarian, with staff no longer tied to a service desk. Creating a more efficient building will relieve staff from routine item handling and processes. This will make it possible for them to be available throughout the building to provide more assistance to library users, to be planning and offering the public programming the community desires, and to be out in the community bringing library programs and services to residents. Staff will be able to expand their role as contributors to the educational and cultural life of the community. The new library will support the Library’s Mission to enrich, engage, and strengthen the community. The Library will inspire curiosity and foster life-long learning by connecting people and ideas, and by providing a wide variety of resources, technology, and experiences in a welcoming, supportive environment. The new facility will ensure the Library is able to respond to and sustain its Core Values:

- Service Excellence
- Intellectual Freedom
- Diversity
- Innovation
- Literacy and Learning
- Community & Collaboration

*See Appendix C for the complete Hanson Public Library Core Values*

The new Hanson Public Library will be a lively, vibrant, happening place, complementing and responding to the priorities identified by the residents of the Town of Hanson.

## Area Descriptions

*Note: Non-assignable spaces (e.g. restrooms, storage areas, mechanical spaces) are noted in each of the specific areas. However, the space allocated to non-assignable spaces is calculated based on the total square footage of assigned space. For the Hanson Public Library that calculation is 30% and is noted as an amount of square footage on the Summary Chart of Collection, Reader Seats, Square Footage on pages 60-61 of this document.*

### Main Entrance & The Welcome Center

The Main Entrance & The Welcome Center functions as the single point of control for the building, designed to make it clearly evident this is the primary way one enters the building, and once inside, this is how to navigate throughout the building. The main external entry area, facing the parking lot, will include access to the external book return slot, lockers providing 24/7 pick-up of library materials, and limited exterior seating. The library will continue its current tradition of having a flagpole, properly illuminated for displaying the flag at night, which will be located near the main entrance or in another location easily visible by the public upon entering the library grounds.

Users arrive in the building and will quickly and efficiently be assisted with a transaction, oriented to the location of a particular library service, or take advantage of a self-service transaction. This area of the library will be welcoming and accessible to all, immediately visible when a person approaches and enters the building, spare in its lines, easy to keep neat, and laid out in a way that permits discreet conversation between a user and a staff member to take place.

There will be a service desk that will be minimal in design, height-adjustable, and easily approachable by all ages and abilities. The desk will feature open space on both sides of the service desk to facilitate the movement of people and equipment. The service desk will be designed to make it easy for staff to enter and exit, yet clearly identified as a staff-only area, and organized to minimize the number of staff required (designed for two, preferably one person will be able to manage all activities at this desk). Reserve material will be available for self-service by library users. A tablet self-storage/charging unit will be located in the Welcome Center area. A portable, “clamshell” type booksale/promotional display unit will be located in the Welcome Center area. This area will be a food-friendly space with leisure seating, and may contain a self-service food and beverage dispensing unit. Hand sanitizer dispensers will be located in the area. There will be direct access to the Staff and Library Support workroom area. The surrounding area is under the supervision of staff working at the Welcome Center Desk.

#### **Contains:**

**Main Entrance:** Faces parking lot; has a welcoming façade; green space/water garden; library information display (hours, upcoming events, etc.) in electronic format; fully ADA

accessible-e.g. automatic, double-door system; external slot for fire-suppressed book return linking directly to the staff workroom; “lockers” for after-hours item pick-up; attractive exterior seating; bicycle parking; adjacent to handicapped parking; accessible ADA-friendly signage for library hours. Easy to clean, weather-resistant flooring.

**Interior Lobby:** Spacious for easy, uncongested flow of individuals, groups, and devices such as strollers and wheelchairs; initial wayfinding to orient users as they prepare to enter the building; limited interior seating for those waiting for a ride; information display about library; moderates exterior and interior temperature; lobby space is built with sufficient space and electrical infrastructure in anticipation of the future installation of library security gates; easy to clean, weather-resistant, resilient flooring

**Welcome Center:** Staff-provided circulation services, i.e. library cards, account information/reconciliation; staff assistance/information on use of the library’s services, collections and resources; self-service reserve pick-up; self-service staff-assisted check-out and check-in; access to booksale items; space for displays and promotional items; digital information and promotion display; direct access to the workroom adjacent to the desk for staff back-up and “off-desk” work and storage, work-related telephone communication, minor repairs to materials, and the storage of lost and found items; public restrooms (additional restrooms for children located in Children’s Center)

**Furnishings:**

**Exterior:** sustainable, weather-resistant, vandalism-resistant seating; low-maintenance landscaping; secure, attractive bicycle racks; trash and recycling receptacles; external book return slot; lockers for 24/7 material pick-up; accessible parking lot with 100 spaces, including vehicle charging stations

**Interior Lobby:** one or two benches; wayfinding display; collection loss prevention system wiring in place for future installation

**Welcome Center Desk:** Single point of service desk for circulation and reference/information functions, at standing and sitting height, with sections compliant with ADA regulations and at child-height; desk includes at least 1 locking compartment; flexible power and data connections above and below the desk surface; flexibility of desk essential to accommodate future changes in service delivery and technology (no custom or built-in aspects); ease of mobility of desk highly desirable; task chairs/stool for staff behind service desk; sufficient counter space for computers, printers, and other small equipment needed to support circulation and related public service transactions (barcode scanners, POS system, receipt printer, etc.); space for item returns requiring staff assistance, interior book return slot and bin; storage area for items processed by staff; limited storage for items returned in person; display rack for library handouts; sufficient area behind and adjacent to the service desk to store items on hold for self-service pick-up and items requiring staff attention; trash and recycling receptacles



**Café and “Bookstore”:** Leisure seating, small tables, chairs of various sizes and heights; a self-service food and beverage dispensing unit; mobile shelving units or book carts for used book sales; trash and recycling receptacles

**Restrooms:** Gender-neutral in a quantity sufficient to meet or exceed local code; changing tables in each unit; hands-free water, soap, hand towels and dryers; trash and recycling receptacles

**Equipment:**

Staff computer workstations with barcode scanners and receipt printers

Devices to read phone account info (Apple pay for example)

Cash/credit/debit card transaction point equipment

Portable telephone on desk and telephone in workroom

Book carts for sorting system

Book carts for in-person returns

Book carts/mobile shelving for used booksale

Shelving for reserves on hold

Self-service tablet storage cabinet

Panic button to connect with local police emergency services

Security cameras

Digital display unit

Clock

ADA Self-service library catalog computers for public (additional library catalog computers will be located in other areas of the library)

Photocopier/scanner/fax

Copier control card dispenser/cash handling system

Flagpole

**Capacity:**

Lobby: 4 people; 100 square feet

Café/Booksale space: 12 people; 534 square feet

Self-service reserve pickup: 55 square feet

Book return: 20 square feet

Welcome Desk: 162 square feet

Tablet storage/charging: 10 square feet

**Non-assignable Space:** Public restrooms; photocopier/scanner/fax

**Noise Level:** High

**Area Required:** 881 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Main entrance to building, public restrooms, Staff Workroom, Children’s Center, Outdoor Reading & Creative Learning Space, Community Gathering/Living Room Space, Popular Collections

## **Outdoor Reading & Creative Learning Space, The Garden**

The Outdoor Reading & Creative Learning Space, The Garden will provide library users of all ages with space to read, explore, learn, work on projects alone or in small groups, contemplate the natural, native plant gardens surrounding the library, and find a place of respite. The Garden will also be designed to accommodate a gathering of up to 100 people, for programs and social events. A built-in sound and projection system will be available for program use. A portion of the Garden will be protected by a porch, permitting outdoor use during rainy weather. The porch will be attached to the building and consideration will be given to screening in a portion of it. The Garden will be accessible to all from the Welcome Center and via the Children's Room for programs and activities for Children. The Garden could be in a courtyard, or adjacent to the exterior of the building, enclosed with a decorative fence, to prevent the loss of library property. The Garden will itself be in segments: chairs and table-like surfaces in one; amphitheater seating from natural stone or a similar environmentally appropriate product in another; and the creative learning space with a variety of child-focused activities in a third. Surfaces will be designed for universal/ADA access. Outdoor lighting to permit evening use will be installed. Full wifi and access to electrical charging will be provided. A secure storage unit for portable items that must be protected in cold weather will be readily accessible. In addition to furnishings, this storage area will also accommodate landscaping tools such as shovels, outdoor brooms, racks, and similar equipment.

**Furnishings:** weather-resistant, vandalism-resistant seating and work surfaces; low-maintenance landscaping; trash and recycling receptacles.

**Capacity:** seating for 25; group capacity: 100

**Noise Level:** From quiet to noisy

**Area Required:** 1,500 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Welcome Center, Children's Room, public restrooms

## **Children's Center**

The Children's Center, which will continue to carry the name Nancy M. Cappellini Children's Room, will be a bright, cheery, creative, welcoming space with segments devoted to the various developmental stages of childhood. The space will be highly flexible, with as much of the furniture and shelving as is possible on heavy-duty caster systems to easily permit the reconfiguration of space, in both the short and long term. Shelving systems will be used to create age and activity appropriate spaces within the Children's Center. The toddler area will be equipped with low shelving and bins for boardbooks and toys, storage for media appropriate for toddlers, and a play area for the very young. The toddler area flows into the easy reader section and contains materials in print and various media

formats and appropriate-sized furniture. The collection focused on older children will be located adjacent to the easy reader section, with books, and media appropriate to that reading level.

The Story Nook and Toddler Creative Play areas will be configured to permit combining the space into programming space within the Children's Center. Furnishings and fixtures will be mobile and easily shifted to open up the space to house 30 children and caregivers in the Story Nook, 15 children in the Toddler Creative Play Area, and 10 comfortable reader seats, adult and child-sized, in the Easy Reading Area. An additional 22 reader seats for older children will be a combination of leisure seats and table seating, including 2 low, folding tables for creative play and interactive learning. A sink and storage cupboards for craft supplies will be located near the interactive learning space.

A staff service point will be located within the Children's Center. The Children's Center will offer users child-sized and adult library catalog computers within the space. The library catalog computers will be ADA friendly.

Sight lines will be generous and open to permit easy monitoring of children using the area to ensure they are safe and using library resources appropriately. There will be furniture located in a variety of locations in the Children's Center for displaying the collection, including items from the Library of Things, and for special displays by the library and from the community. Including a window seat in the Children's Center is highly desirable. There will continue to be natural lighting with large windows, preferably with a view towards the Garden. The Children's Center will be contained with glass walls, or glass upper walls, for sound containment and to reduce opportunities for children, for their safety, to leave the area without their caregivers. There will be a gender-neutral restroom equipped with child-sized fixtures and a changing station accessible only from the Children's Center.

The Children's Center will be directly adjacent to the community meeting room, which will be available for programs with a large attendance. Adjacent and convenient to the Children's Center and the community meeting room will be a coat room with adult and child-height hangers/racks and a "stroller parking lot" to accommodate strollers coming into the building.

**Contains:**

The Children's Center contains shelving and storage to house the children's collection in all formats, equipment for using the various media in the collection, computers and other technology learning devices, such as a computer learning wall, appropriate to children, age-appropriate leisure reading areas with lounge furniture, study/work tables, a small storytime nook for approximately 30 children, a play area for toddlers and younger children, and a gender-neutral, family restroom for use by children and their caregivers. Storage for portable furnishings, games, and other items will be located in the space. Flooring will be easy to clean, appropriate for crawling and sitting children.

**Furnishings:**

Flexible, moveable, highly adjustable shelving and other storage for the collection  
Mobile art display units  
Washable, sustainable-fabric rugs for floor play area  
Lounge seating for children and adults; floor seating for children  
Study/work tables at various sizes to accommodate everything from toddler to adult  
Display furniture at child-height  
Storage for various types of media  
Staff workstation  
Wall hooks or portable coat racks  
Secure, lockable storage  
Trash and recycling receptacles

**Equipment:**

ADA-friendly self-service library catalog computers, 1 child-sized  
Computers for use by children  
Oversize digital touch screen wall  
Touch table, interactive floor game, similar items  
Various equipment to play media in collection  
Book carts  
“Trucks” for moving materials to/from the community meeting room for programs  
Portable telephone

**Capacity:**

Story Nook: 30 children; 360 square feet  
Toddler Play Area: 15 children; 220 square feet  
Easy Reader: 10 children; 300 square feet  
Older Children: 10 children; 300 square feet  
Creative play and interactive learning area: 12 children; 580 square feet  
Total Reader Seats: 52; 1760 square feet  
Staff Service Point: 100 square feet  
Collection: 20,000 books and AV; 2,222 square feet

**Non-assignable Space:** Family restroom; stroller parking; storage for portable furnishings; storage for games and supplies, storytime support items, etc.

**Noise Level:** High

**Area Required:** 4,082 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Main Entrance/Welcome Center, community meeting and study rooms, Garden

## **Comfort Room**

The Comfort Room will be located near the Children’s Center and the community meeting room and will provide a private and secure location for nursing, expressing milk, and calming small children and infants. The room will have climate control, wifi, and easily-accessible power.

### **Furnishings:**

- 1 comfortable adult chair
- 2 child-sized chairs
- Small table
- Small sink

**Noise Level:** Low

**Area Required:** 64 square feet

## **Teen & Middle School Area**

The Teen and Middle School area will be designed with the middle school to high school set in mind. It will be comfortable, with teen-friendly furnishings, games, displays, and technology equipment. Flexibility, durability, and mobility of furnishings are a high priority. Shelving and furniture will be used to create nooks within the area, enabling teen and middle school groups to each have space they feel is their own. Walls and other architectural elements will be used for noise containment. Much of the wall area should be etched or clear glass, or similar material, for visual oversight. It will be important to create a space that retains a sense of privacy for its users while maintaining sound control and good visibility of the area. Flooring will be easy to clean and replace, in anticipation of food consumption. Computer equipment use is expected to be with a portable device, “checked-out” from centralized storage. The Teen and Middle School space will be in direct sightline from the Welcome Center and the staff service point in the Community Gathering/Living Room space.

The collection housed in this area will focus on current, popular reading materials and media, with easy access to the broader collection housed in the adjacent Popular Collections.

### **Furnishings:**

- Durable, fun, portable, resilient teen lounge furniture
- Adjustable tables in varying sizes with chairs/stools for group work, games, creative activities
- Reading booth with table
- White board or white wall, wall surface that can be written on and easily cleaned off

Lockers including some large enough to hold musical instruments  
Portable staff workstation  
Portable, lockable storage cabinet  
Trash and recycling receptacles

**Equipment:**

Equipment for listening/viewing media  
ADA-friendly self-service catalog computer

**Capacity:**

Leisure and table seating: 33 seats; 939 square feet  
Collection: 3,500 items; 450 square feet

**Noise Level:** High

**Area Required:** 1,389 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Welcome Center, Community Gathering/Living Room

## **Community Gathering/Living Room Space and Popular Collections**

The Community Gathering/Living Room Space, primarily for use by adults, will provide leisure seating and casual study/work seating. New titles in print and other media will be housed in this area, near the Welcome Desk and the self-check and library catalog computers. The heavily used new titles and media will be housed closest to the Main Entrance/Welcome Desk. The Fiction collection will be adjacent to the new titles/media/leisure reading area, and Non-fiction will be housed to the back of the area. The Library of Things will be shelved adjacent to the non-fiction collection. A limited number of public computers/printers/scanners will be housed in this area, supplemented by portable “checked out” tablets or similar devices for use throughout the building. Workstations with “playpens” will be provided to make it easy for library users with small children to work with their infants and toddlers close at hand.

Sight lines from the Staff Service desk throughout the area will be maximized, requiring careful and creative planning for the selection and arranging of shelving. Priority will be given to at least some portion of the collection being arranged/displayed in a “bookstore-like” fashion, to market the collection.

The area will be light and comfortable. There will be windows for natural light adjacent to leisure seating. Furniture and fixtures will be flexible, durable, and easy to keep clean. A staff service point/work area will be located in the space. The general feeling of this area of the building is relaxing and welcoming. It will serve as the “living room” of the library, for the community. The space will include a wired “tinker table” for small crafts, use of items in

the Library of Things collection, and for educational purposes. At least some portion of the space will be a “food friendly” space with appropriate flooring and furnishings.

**Furnishings:**

(Note: all furnishings are to be sturdy, easy-to-move, easy-to-clean items)

Combination shelving/display units on casters for new titles in various formats

Standard library shelving for fiction, non-fiction, large print collections

Shelving height no greater than 60” desirable

Shelving systems will be used to create discrete, yet open, spaces

Flexible shelving/racking systems for media and Library of Things

Leisure seating

Tables for working with a variety of oversize materials, including items such as a community jigsaw puzzle

Wired tables and individual study furniture

Task chairs for public seating at tables

Easy-to-move seating for user convenience throughout the shelving area

Comfortable, modular seating carrels

Workstations with attached “playpens”

Mobile service desk for staff

Half-size book carts

Self-service dispenser for a variety of portable library technology devices, laptops, iPads, tablets, eReaders, and similar devices

Locking cupboards or similar housing for portable devices for use in the building and/or for loan

Trash and recycling receptacles

**Equipment:** Multiple self-service checkout and library catalog computers adjacent to the collection shelving area

**Capacity:**

Leisure seating for 25 people; 500 square feet

Work table/station seating for 25: 15 single person, 5 two-person; 750 square feet

Family workstations/Parent & Child Carrels: 2 units; 584 square feet

Total Seating: 52; 1,834 square feet

Adult Collection:

    New Collection (Book and Media Titles; Periodicals): 3,000

    Media: 7,500

    Large-Print: 4,000

    Fiction and Mystery: 13,200

    Non-Fiction: 11,750

    Periodicals and Newspapers: 100

    Library of Things: 450 items

Total Adult Collection: 40,000; 2,760 square feet



(Note: a large number of titles will be available on a portable electronic device, such as a tablet, for use in the library or to check out for home use)

Staff Service Point: 64 square feet

**Non-assignable Space:** Display furnishings & storage; storage for “loaner” computer devices

**Noise Level:** Low, minimal, low-level conversation

**Area Required:** 4,658 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Main Entrance/Welcome Desk, Teen & Middle School Area, Meeting & Study Rooms

## **Meeting and Study Rooms**

The community meeting, small meeting, and group and individual study rooms will be flexible in design and provide access to a high level of electronic and technology connectivity. The community and small meeting rooms will be located next to each other and will be accessible for “after-hours” use. These rooms will have zoned security, an energy-management climate control system, and lighting controls to facilitate use outside of library hours. Sound insulation will be at the highest level. A small kitchen will be adjacent to the community and small meeting rooms and will also be accessible for after-hours use. For after-hours access, a card access system (RFID, QR code, or other system) will be used for managed access by members of the community.

### **Community Meeting Room**

This space will be the primary location for programming events, both those organized by the library and those organized by community groups. In the ideal, this room is located directly adjacent to the Children’s Center for ease of programming, as well as directly adjacent to the stroller/wheelchair parking area. The community meeting room will also be near the Teen & Middle School area. The flexibility of the space will be enhanced through sound-proof folding divider walls, and with a “portable” stage that can be dropped down from its storage on the wall and can also serve as additional raised bleacher-style seating. The room will be equipped with an integrated, state-of-the-art sound and projection system that is easily accessible for repair/replacement. A minimum of 2 walls will be available for projection purposes. The room will have superior sound containment, surfaces that are durable, and furniture and flooring that is easy to clean and maintain. In the event the building requires an elevator, the community meeting room will be adjacent to the elevator, and the elevator is either not required to enter the space for after-hours use, or the elevator is contained within the area of the building that can be segregated for use when the library is closed. For after-hours security, the elevator will also have card

access control. The room will also have a direct ADA-compliant exit to the outside. There will be minimal windows, with a light-blocking, easy-to-operate, durable shade system. There will be ample storage for chairs, tables, and miscellaneous furniture and fixtures immediately adjacent.

**Furnishings:**

130 adult chairs  
100 child-sized chairs  
50 story hour floor cushions  
12 flexible and attractive portable tables  
Tech podium with ability to control video conferencing system  
Trash/recycling receptacles

**Equipment:**

Smart whiteboard (either portable or on wall) with associated printer or similar technology  
State-of-the-art videoconferencing, projection device and sound system  
Easels  
Mobile refreshment cart (to be stored in kitchen area)

**Capacity:** 130 adults

**Non-assignable Space:** storage for chairs, tables, storytime cushions; easels; supplies such as flip charts; technology and AV equipment not built into room, when not in use

**Noise Level:** Moderate to High

**Area Required:** 1,500 square feet in meeting room

**Adjacencies:** Children’s Center, Catering Kitchen

**Catering Kitchen**

Located with direct access via a door or a pass-through to the Meeting Rooms and easily accessible for deliveries from the outside. The Catering Kitchen will include a full-size refrigerator/freezer, microwave, deep sink with a flexible-hose faucet, dishwasher, full-size electric stove with oven, a portable cooktop, and extensive counter space. The full-size stove will be available to use for catering purposes and to support the library as the community warming center. The portable cooktop will supplement the full-size stove and can also be used for cooking programs in the community meeting room. Cupboards above will provide storage for paper goods, food supplies such as sugar, and serving pieces. Adjacent to the counter will be sufficient space for caterer roll-in warming ovens. Electrical outlets will be numerous and able to carry the load of the associated appliances. The mobile refreshment cart will be stored in the kitchen.

**Equipment:**

Full-size refrigerator with freezer  
Microwave  
Dishwasher  
Full-size electric stove with oven  
Portable cooktop (can also be used for cooking programs in community meeting room)  
Mobile refreshment cart  
Large, wheeled, secure-lidded trash and recycling bins

**Capacity:** 4**Noise Level:** High**Area Required:** 150 square feet**Small Meeting & Group Study Spaces**

The small meeting rooms (2 rooms) will be used for a variety of purposes including community group meetings, training sessions, staff meetings, group study, and classes. These rooms will be in the same area of the building as the community meeting room to facilitate after-hours access. As with the community meeting room, the rooms will be completely flexible in layout. Sound control will be at a very high level. The walls will be a combination of clear, for visual control, and solid, those prepared to be used as space for a whiteboard or similar technology. Each room will be equipped with the technology needed for online training, video conferencing, and group planning activities. One of the small meeting rooms will be designated the Marie McLaughlin Historical Room, housing the library's historical collection, and serving as the meeting room for the Board of Library Trustees. The local history collection will be housed in wall shelving units designed with preservation of the collection as a priority. The climate control zone for the McLaughlin Room will permit preservation-level temperature and humidity conditions.

**Furnishings:**

Sturdy, flexible, portable tables able to seat up to 15 people in each room  
Task chairs: 30 task chairs, 15 in each room  
Trash and recycling receptacles  
Credenza storage unit on wheels for serving refreshments and storing items such as markers, paper pads, refreshment supplies

**Equipment:**

Computer/projection equipment (may be built-in)  
Smart whiteboard (portable or wall-mounted) with associated printer  
Video-conferencing system

**Capacity:** 15 adults in each room

**Noise Level:** Quiet to moderate

**Area Required:** 600 square feet in each room; 1,200 square feet total

**Adjacencies:** Community Meeting Room

### **Individual Study & Quiet Space/Break Rooms**

The individual study rooms (3 rooms, up to 4 people per room) will be designed for those seeking a quiet area for concentrated work, whether it be to study, to tutor, or as an adjunct to their office. One of the rooms will be set up to function as a Quiet/Break room, with furnishings responding to neurodiverse needs such as use-appropriate seating and an adjustable-height table.

The Quiet/Break room should be located adjacent to the Children's and Teen spaces to provide for additional flexible space for children's and teen use. The Quiet/Break room will have appropriate seating that is supportive of neurodiverse individuals, an adjustable-height whiteboard for marking, and similar furnishings. The Quiet/Break room will be available for general use with the understanding it may be necessary for users to relocate if a parent or caregiver requests access. The Individual Study rooms may be modular office systems, providing greater flexibility over time. The rooms will have superior sound control, will be well outfitted technologically and electronically, and will be constructed to permit visual control from outside the room; one wall will be prepared as a whiteboard or similar system.

#### **Furnishings:**

Portable, adjustable-height, easy-to-clean table that seats 4 in each room

8 task chairs, 4 in each of the standard Individual Study rooms

2 alternative-use, appropriate seats in the Quiet/Break room

Adjustable, portable whiteboard

Trash and recycling receptacles

**Equipment:** Smart whiteboard, easel

**Capacity:** 4 in each room; total of 12 in 3 rooms

**Noise Level:** Low to moderate

**Area Required:** 200 square feet each; total of 600 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Community Gathering/Living Room, Teen & Middle School Area



## **Staff Areas**

### **Staff Room**

The Staff Room is for staff to take breaks from work and to eat. The space should be comfortable, with tables and chairs for eating, and leisure furniture. The Staff Room will have a full-size refrigerator/freezer, a microwave, a full-size sink, a dishwasher, a counter with sufficient space to hold an electric coffee maker/tea kettle and a toaster oven, and cupboards or shelving for storing dishes, food supplies, and items such as paper towels. There will be lockers for staff to secure their belongings, and a coat rack or closet. The room will be adjacent to the Staff Workroom and to a staff bathroom. The room will be away from active public space, but in the ideal would be within easy distance of the Welcome Desk to make it possible for a staff member to quickly respond to a need for assistance.

### **Furnishings:**

- Table seating
- 12 chairs for table seating
- 4 lounge chairs with side tables
- Small bookcase and/or coffee table
- Bulletin board
- Receptacles for storing food waste and regular trash, recycling
- Counter space with storage cupboards above and below
- Coat rack/closet
- Lockers

### **Equipment:**

- Full-sized refrigerator
- Microwave
- Toaster Oven
- Stove
- Dishwasher
- Coffee and tea makers

**Capacity:** 12

**Noise Level:** Low to Moderate

**Area Required:** 400 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Staff restroom, Welcome Desk, Staff Workroom

## **Workroom & Library Support Room**

The Staff Workroom is the area where books and library materials are received and processed on a daily basis, mail is received, and items are processed, repaired, and added to or deleted from the collection. The SAILS network equipment and the Comcast public computer network equipment will be in a contained, climatized, sound-proofed closet space within the Workroom. A private office for the Library Director will be located directly adjacent to the Staff Workroom.

The Workroom will be subdivided into 3-4 discrete work areas, including a semi-private office for the Assistant Director, a staff work area (preparing items for reshelving, ordering, cataloging and processing activity, space for shipping and receiving), and an enclosed area for use by library supporters (volunteers, Friends, and Foundation).

The staff work area will include a section for active and noisier work, such as shipping, receiving, and preparing items for reshelving, and a section for quieter work, including activities relating to technical services and processing activity by staff. The quieter work area includes activities focusing on receiving new collection items, adding them to the online catalog, and performing original cataloging of items as needed.

The semi-private office space for the Assistant Director will be adjacent to shared off-desk work space for the public service staff where they can work on planning and program development. To facilitate ease of access between the Welcome Desk staff, the Assistant Director, off-floor public service staff, and members of the public requiring administrative interaction, the Assistant Director's office will be located close to the doorway behind the Welcome Center desk.

The Library Support room will have direct, secure, access to the Welcome Center public space and from the staff Workroom area. Primary access will be from the Welcome Center. The Support Room will have shelving and counters below glass walls separating it from the larger Workroom and creating a sound barrier between the spaces. The Support Room will provide table area for volunteers and supporters to prepare items for the booksale and work on support projects such as mailings and craft preparation. Storage for the Foundation, volunteers, and other library support groups will be provided.

The Workroom needs to be highly flexible, permitting easy reconfiguration as library needs change. Furnishings such as tables, desks, shelving, and storage cabinets will be rolling stock. Power and data connections will be available at a high level in the Workroom. There will be a noticeable amount of open floor space in the Workroom, to permit ease of movement of bins and book carts and to accommodate the ebb and flow of materials resulting from incoming and outgoing deliveries. There will be a delivery door/loading dock directly into the Workroom from the staff and delivery entrance area. This area will include parking for staff and be of a size to accommodate large delivery vehicles and trash receptacles/dumpsters.

**Furnishings:**

Work tables  
Task chairs  
Portable storage cabinets  
Portable shelving units  
File cabinets  
Bulletin board  
Full and half-size book carts  
Folding platform dolly for moving boxes  
Storage for ILL shipping bins

**Equipment:**

Computers  
Printers  
Telephone  
Photocopier/scanner  
Shredder  
Network equipment for staff computers  
(Comcast) equipment for the public computers

**Capacity:** 8-10

Delivery Receiving/Processing/Mail: 200 square feet  
Staff Work Area and Assistant Director office space: 400 square feet  
Support Room: 200 square feet

**Non-assignable Space:** staff restroom, storage for shipping, processing, and general office supplies, closet for staff coats, lockers

**Noise Level:** Moderate

**Area Required:** 800 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Welcome Desk, Library Director's Office

**Library Director's Office**

The library director's office will be located adjacent to the staff workroom, with direct access to the public Welcome Desk area. The office will include a desk/workstation, file storage, and a table and chairs to accommodate meetings and project work. Furnishings should be flexible, permitting future rearrangement.

**Furnishings:**

Desk with lockable drawers/workstation

Task chair

Table and 6 task chairs

Lockable filing cabinet

Coat rack

Trash and recycling receptacles

**Equipment:**

Computer

Printer/scanner

Whiteboard

Telephone

**Capacity:** 6 people at table

**Noise Level:** Moderate

**Area Required:** 300 square feet

**Adjacencies:** Staff Workroom, Board of Library Trustees meeting room, Welcome Desk

**Additional Non-assignable Requirements**

Mechanical space, custodial storage and workroom, utility room, public restrooms, general and supply storage

## Summary Chart of Collection, Reader Seats, Square Footage Requirements

Area	Section	Collection	Reader Seats	Tech and Meeting Rooms Seats not included in Reader Seat Count	Square Footage Estimate
<b>Main Entrance and Welcome Center</b>	Lobby		4		100
	"Café"/booksale area/display area		12		534
	Self-service reserve book pick-up				55
	External book return slot				20
	Welcome Desk for 2 staff, with return slot				162
	Tablet storage/charging unit				10
	Non-assignable: photocopier, scanner/fax, public restrooms				
	<b>Subtotal</b>			<b>16</b>	
<b>Outdoor Reading &amp; Creative Learning Space, Garden</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>25</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,500</b>
<b>Children's Center</b>	Story Nook		10		360
	Toddler Creative Play		10		220
	Easy Reader seating		10		300
	Older kids corner with seating		10		300
	Computers/interactive learning stools at 2 tables		12		580
	Collection	20,000			2,222
	Staff service point/work area				100
	Non-assignable: stroller parking; storage for games, storytime supplies, portable furnishings; family restroom				
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>52</b>		<b>4,082</b>
<b>Comfort Room</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>3</b>		<b>64</b>
<b>Teen &amp; Middle School Area</b>	Leisure seating		25		625
	Table seating		4		264
	Reading booth		4		50
	Collection	3,500			450
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>3,500</b>	<b>33</b>		<b>1,389</b>



Area	Section	Collection	Reader Seats	Tech and Meeting Rooms Seats not included in Reader Seat Count	Square Footage Estimate
<b>Community Gathering/ Living Room Space/ Popular Collections</b>	Leisure seating		25		500
	Work tables/technology stations-single and double person		25		750
	Family workstation/parent & child carrel		2		584
	Collection (new, high traffic, periodicals)	3,000			390
	Collection (fiction, non-fiction, audio-visual)	36,550			2,300
	Library of Things	450			70
	Staff service point/work area				64
	Non-assignable: storage for "loaner" computer devices, display furnishings				
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>52</b>		<b>4,658</b>
<b>Community Meeting &amp; Study Rooms</b>	Community Meeting Room			130	1,500
	Small Meeting & Group Study rooms/Trustees' meeting room/local history collection	150		30	1,200
	3 Individual/small group study rooms/local history/Trustees/ Quiet/Break Room			14	600
	Non-assignable: storage for chairs, tables, easels, supplies such as flip charts; technology and AV equipment not built in to room				
	Catering Kitchen				150
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>150</b>		<b>174</b>	<b>3,450</b>
<b>Staff Areas</b>	Staff break room				400
	Staff Workroom/delivery/mail/ processing/loading dock (links to public service off-desk workroom space, Assistant Director semi-private office/Library Support Room)	300			800
	Director's Office	20			300
	Server closet				25
	Non-assignable: staff restroom; supply room, custodial storage/work area				
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>320</b>			<b>1,525</b>
	<b>Total Assignable</b>		<b>63,970</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>Non-assignable (30% of gross area)</b>	<b>Public restrooms, mechanical space, general and supply storage, custodial workroom &amp; storage, etc.</b>				<b>5,265</b>
<b>Grand Totals: Collection, Seats, Square Feet</b>		<b>63,970</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>22,814</b>

# Appendices

<b>A: Planning Survey Selected Results</b>	<b>page 63</b>
<b>B: Hanson Public Library Strategic Plan 2024-2028</b>	<b>page 65</b>
<b>C: Hanson Public Library Core Values</b>	<b>page 78</b>
<b>D: Policies</b>	
<b>Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy</b>	<b>page 79</b>
<b>Sustainability Policy</b>	<b>page 80</b>
<b>E: Construction Grant Informational Flier</b>	<b>page 81</b>
<b>F: Construction Grant PowerPoint</b>	<b>page 82</b>

## Appendix A Planning Survey Selected Results

### Top 10 important or very important services

99% | Borrowing materials (books, DVDs, etc.)

94% | Library staff available to assist with research, technology, and searching

93% | Programs for seniors

92% | Partnerships with community organizations, groups, schools, etc.

92% | Museum passes

91% | Programs for children

91% | Library staff available to help with finding new materials to read/watch/listen to

90% | Programs for adults

88% | Library as a community center  
(i.e. a place to interact with neighbors/friends, meet new people, etc.)

87% | Delivery of Library materials to the homebound

#### Other important or very important services:

- ▶ Programs for teens
- ▶ Expanded open hours
- ▶ Preserving Hanson history resources and making them easily accessible to the public

### Top 10 important or very important features for the Library to have in a redesigned space

88% | Expanded children's area

87% | Expanded tween/teen/young adult area

86% | Areas for children's play, creative learning, gaming, etc.

83% | Separate children's program and craft area

82% | Large community meeting/program rooms

82% | Small meeting rooms for community use

79% | More accessible service desks, restrooms, and shelving for materials

78% | Spaces for neurodiverse individuals of all ages

76% | Meeting rooms with technology for virtual and in-person use

73% | Incorporation of outdoor space into Library space  
(e.g. outdoor seating, reading garden, walking paths)

#### Other important or very important features for the Library to have in a redesigned space:

- ▶ Expanded leisure seating area
- ▶ More natural air could flow through the building
- ▶ Green building, solar panels, electric vehicle charging station, etc.

## Appendix A Planning Survey Selected Results

### Top 10 reasons survey respondents would make more use of the Library

75% | Expanded selection of museum passes

64% | More programs for adults

63% | More availability of new and bestseller titles in print/physical format

58% | More indoor seating areas that were comfortable, had natural lighting, and/or provided outdoor views

55% | Different or expanded hours of public service

53% | More outdoor seating areas

51% | More programs for seniors

49% | More "Library of Things" items to borrow (musical instruments, small tools, specialty crafting equipment, puzzles/games, etc.)

48% | More availability of online resources for school, work, research, business, jobs/careers

47% | A larger area for tweens/teens/young adults

#### Other reasons survey respondents would make more use of the Library:

- ▶ A larger area for children's activities
- ▶ Quiet study areas
- ▶ Small meeting rooms for community use

Hanson Public Library

Strategic Plan  
2024-2028



132 Maquan Street  
Hanson, MA 02341

Adopted by the  
Hanson Public Library  
Board of Trustees  
*September 26, 2023*



*Library Director's Message to the Community*

*In April of 2023, the Hanson Public Library embarked on an exciting project to apply for a grant through the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program. We began work on a new strategic plan that serves as a guide to essential library services and the ways we can provide those services to meet the needs of Hanson's residents. Using a variety of methods, we listened to what our community had to say about our current services and what we can do better. What did we hear? The key themes expressed point to a desire for a Library that cultivates social connections, is welcoming to all, provides opportunities for enrichment, and is focused on the future. Service priorities were developed based on these key themes and have been incorporated into a Strategic Plan for 2024-2028.*

*Our new Strategic Plan is the product of successful collaboration among our supportive community members. We are immensely grateful to focus group and survey participants for their valuable and insightful input, and to those who served on our Planning Committee for investing their time to help us shape the Library's next five years. Thank you to Library staff, the Library Trustees, and members of town boards, committees, and departments, whose knowledge of Hanson and Library services assisted us in more clearly identifying community needs. Representative Josh Cutler and Hanson Public Library Foundation Directors were instrumental in securing the funding necessary for this endeavor, and we thank them for their efforts and generosity. Finally, a huge thank you to consultant Ruth Kowal for taking on our project and sharing her extensive library and planning expertise to guide us smoothly through the process.*

*I'm confident this new Strategic Plan speaks to the hopes and aspirations of Hanson's residents for Library service and captures their desire for community, connection, and culture. I'm excited to see what the next five years will bring.*

*Karen Stolfer  
Library Director*

**Vision Statement**

The Hanson Public Library enriches, engages, and strengthens our community.

**Mission Statement**

The Hanson Public Library inspires curiosity and fosters life-long learning by connecting people and ideas. The Library provides access to a wide variety of resources, technology, and experiences in a welcoming, supportive environment.

## **Library Priorities**

### **We Connect our Community**

The Library endeavors to be at the heart of the community by fostering social connections and offering opportunities for Hanson residents to come together through shared spaces, programs, resources, and events that inform, educate, and entertain.

- We actively pursue opportunities for creating new library spaces to support community-identified needs and wishes.
- We cultivate and strengthen community and town partnerships through shared community resources and spaces.
- We expand library marketing and promotion efforts to reach all residents.

### **We Enrich People's Lives**

The Library reaffirms its commitment to reading, learning, and culture for all, by supporting and celebrating literacy in all forms - print, digital, artistic - to promote personal growth, discovery, knowledge, and understanding.

- We provide residents of all ages with resources and programs to support informal and formal learning goals, to explore personal interests, and to continue to learn throughout their lives.
- We provide materials and programs encouraging intellectual pursuits, creativity, and enhanced leisure time activities.
- We provide high-quality, flexible spaces for people to learn, explore, create, and socialize.
- We celebrate and promote reading in a variety of formats to nurture readers of all ages and backgrounds.
- We actively engage in the preservation of and access to Hanson's rich historical record.

**We Open Our Doors to All**

The Library is a place for everyone, providing a welcoming, inclusive, and safe community space. We actively seek out opportunities to engage all Hanson residents in the use of the Library’s informational and recreational resources.

- We strive to continue as a trusted community resource, committed to supporting intellectual freedom for our residents.
- We focus our collection resources on the community, and enhance our resources through extensive shared access to other library collections.
- We ensure that library services are delivered with sensitivity and care to people of all ages, educational levels, interests, and social and cultural backgrounds.
- We seek opportunities to connect with underserved populations and identify ways to provide library services that respond to their particular needs and interests.
- We look outward into the community to identify barriers encountered by those using the Library and seek ways to remove those barriers.
- We serve as a bridge to other libraries and communities through our access to libraries statewide and beyond.

**We are Focused on Hanson’s Future**

The Library is committed to expanding and enhancing its ability to provide a wide range of evolving services to meet the changing needs of the community.

- We incorporate community input as we work to improve library services and facilities, and seek out opportunities to improve the quality of life for all Hanson residents.
- We prioritize creating library spaces that are flexible and embrace evolving community service needs and interests.
- We recognize the importance of being poised to adopt and incorporate developing energy-saving practices and standards.

- We actively seek financial support from a variety of resources to ensure the Library is positioned to deliver services of key importance to the community.
- We recognize the rapidly evolving world of technology and seek ways to assist our community in understanding and successfully utilizing new technologies to share information and resources, and to communicate with our community.
- We pursue optimal staffing levels and recruit and retain staff that reflect our community and are service-oriented, skilled, and knowledgeable, ensuring high-quality library service.
- We encourage and expect staff to remain informed about emerging library services and technology, and be active participants in planning and developing new services and the spaces required to deliver those services.
- We continually explore opportunities for more efficient and convenient ways to deliver library services.



### **Planning Process**

In April 2023, the Library Board of Trustees hired library consultant Ruth Kowal to assist the Library throughout the strategic and library building program processes. The Board of Trustees appointed a 5-person Planning Committee consisting of two members of the Board of Trustees (one of whom serves as the president of the Hanson Public Library Foundation), three community members, and ex-officio members Library Director Karen Stolfer and Assistant Library Director Julia Nee. The Planning Committee was responsible for providing advice and guidance on the process for gathering community input and the identification of priorities for the Library over the next five years.

The planning efforts were grounded in “looking outward” into the community, seeking input from individuals regarding their personal hopes and aspirations for the community and how the Library could support the achievement of those hopes and aspirations through its community-focused strategic priorities.

The Planning Committee began its work on May 8, 2023, providing suggestions to the director and the consultant on the soliciting of community input. Following that meeting, a series of focus groups, a community survey, individual interviews and questionnaires, and flip charts for public suggestions and comments were put in place.

- 2 open community focus groups
- 1 community focus group for town boards, commissions, and organizations
- Board of Trustees focus group
- Staff focus groups
- Library survey - online, via social media, and on paper
- Individual questionnaires for teens at the Library and Camp Kiwanee
- Flip charts in the Library lobby and children’s room

Forty-four people participated in the focus groups, approximately 20 teens responded to a teen-focused survey, and 205 people submitted survey responses. The focus groups and open-ended questions in the survey provided extensive input, which was analyzed and processed by the Planning Committee at their July 17,

2023 meeting. Key themes, words, and concepts were identified and will serve as the foundation for the Library's strategic priorities for the upcoming five years.

**Important Key Words**

- Inclusive
- Community
- Welcoming
- Convenient
- More than books - arts & culture
- Outreach
- Coordination
- Outdoor spaces
- Access
- Gathering (community) - welcoming/socializing
- A place for learning

The new strategic plan is flexible and nimble, and provides the framework for evolving service elements, focusing the Library's activities over the next five years. In addition, it serves as the primary guide to the creation of the Library Building Program, which will be submitted prior to June 1, 2024.

## **Community and Library**

### **Community Profile**

Hanson is a suburban community with an area of 15 square miles located approximately 20 miles southeast of Boston. The town was originally part of Pembroke and was included in a tract of land that Major Josiah Winslow and 34 others purchased from Sachem Josias Wampatuck in 1662. These settlers and later inhabitants found the land suitable for farming and used the many ponds, brooks, and streams to erect sawmills for lumbering. These waterways were also helpful for those involved in growing cranberries, which was a prominent business in the late 19th century along with shingle and shoe making.

Incorporated in 1820, the town was named after Alexander Contee Hanson, publisher of the Federal Republican newspaper in Baltimore. His criticism of the Madison administration and the War of 1812 led to riots in which Hanson himself was attacked. However, feelings soon changed, and three months later Hanson was elected as a representative to Congress. He then served in the United States Senate until his death in 1819 at the age of 33.

Hanson's population from the 2020 U.S. Census is recorded at 10,639. The largest growth was seen in the mid to late 20th century, with an increase of 63.6% from 1960 to 1970. Census data from 2010 (10,209) and 2020 (10,639) shows the recent population increase at 4%. Population size is projected by The UMass Donahue Institute to remain stable over the next 30 years, reaching an estimated 10,322 in 2050. The town is mostly residential with a rural atmosphere, but lies within close proximity to business hubs. The arrival of the Old Colony Railroad made the commute north to Boston and south to Plymouth more convenient and has made Hanson a desirable place to settle.

### **Library History**

Library service in Hanson began with the formation of the Hanson Temperance Library Association on August 17, 1882. Through the generosity of Elijah C. Thomas and his sister Rachel C. Cushing, Thomas Hall was built in 1884 to house this privately endowed library. Five years later, residents from the southern part of

town formed the Wampanoag Library Association and housed a second privately endowed library in Wampanoag Hall.

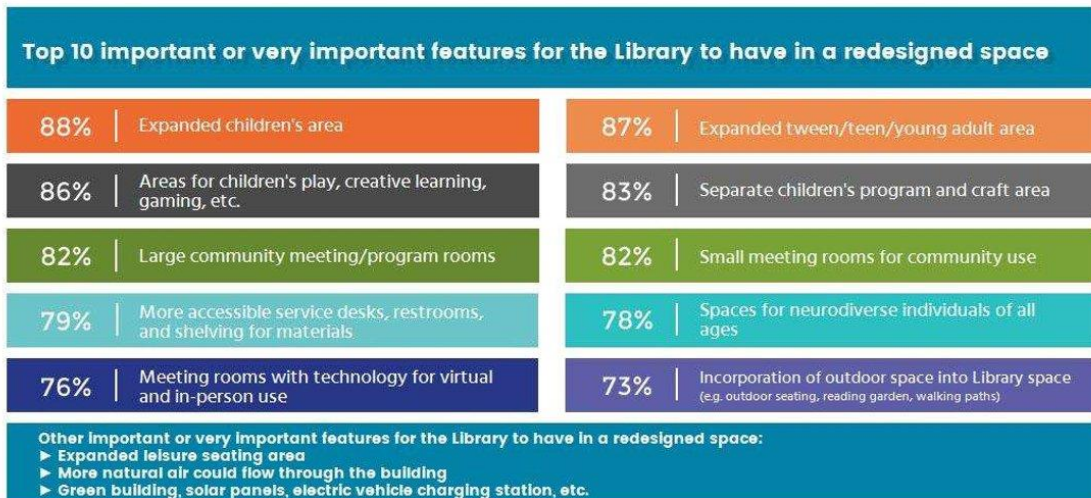
In 1896 two branches of a town-funded library were established. The library at Wampanoag Hall was given into the care of the town to create a South Branch, and a North Branch was located at the store of E.F. Witherell, later to move into the home of librarians Mary and Evie Drew. A new location for the North Branch was sought after the resignation of Evie Drew in 1921, and was found when the Hanson Library Association turned over Thomas Hall and all their property to the town. The North Branch remained in Thomas Hall until 1961 when it moved into an addition at the Indian Head School. As part of the relocation, the South Branch was closed, and its books were also moved to the new site.

By the 1980's, the Board of Library Trustees realized that further expansion was needed. Lacking space at Indian Head, they decided to work with the Council for Elder Affairs, whose space was also crowded, to begin the process of constructing a joint facility on land donated by the Hanson School Department. This building opened to the public in October 1991 and is the home of the Library and Senior Center today.

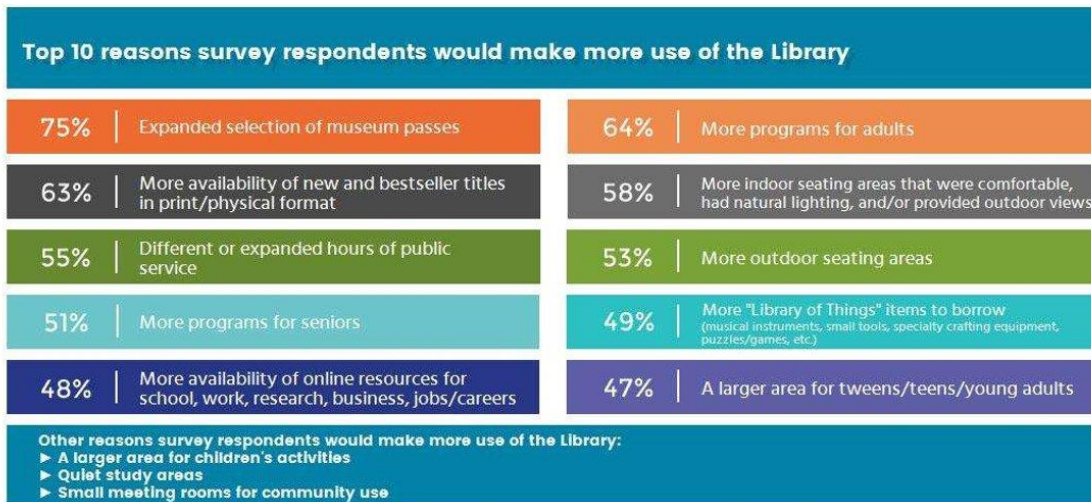
With the development of new technology in the early 1990's, the Library joined the ABLE (Automated Bristol Library Exchange) network and the automation process began on October 17, 1994. Subsequently, ABLE merged with another network, SEAL, to form the SAILS Library Network, which currently consists of over 70 libraries in southeastern Massachusetts. Today, technology is an essential part of library services, and libraries have evolved into important community centers, providing access to a wide variety of materials, offering entertaining and educational programs, and contributing to a better quality of life for all residents.

### Service Evaluation

The community survey, distributed via the Library’s website, on social media, and in print, brought in over 200 responses. The survey provided priority validation of current library services, as well as ideas and suggestions that were identified through the community focus groups, questionnaires, and in-library flip charts.







The majority of survey respondents, 68%, indicated they are between the ages of 40 and 75, with that number split equally among 40-59 year olds and 60-75 year olds. The number of respondents ages 25-39 and age 76 or older are also equal at 14%. The remaining 4% are under age 25.

36% of survey respondents said they used the Library, either in person or virtually, at least once a week, 39% once or twice a month, and 25% less frequently than that.

**Planning Committee Members**

Corinne Cafardo, Chair, Board of Trustees  
 John Papp, Library Trustee, Hanson Library Foundation President  
 Pam French, Community Member  
 John Sullivan, Community Member  
 Melissa Valachovic, Community Member

Karen Stolfer, Library Director  
 Julia Nee, Assistant Library Director

Ruth Kowal, Library Consultant

**Calendar of Key Planning Events**

April 20, 2023	Project Launch
May 8, 2023	Planning Committee Meeting
May 23, 2023	Trustees Focus Group
May 24, 2023	Staff Focus Groups
June 5, 2023	Open Community Focus Group
June 5-30, 2023	Community Input Flip Charts in Library
June 6, 2023	Open Community Focus Group & Invitation Focus Group
June 9, 2023	Questionnaire for Middle School Students
June 13-30, 2023	Planning Survey
July 2023	Questionnaire for Camp Kiwanee Student Employees
July 17, 2023	Planning Committee Working Meeting
August 22, 2023	Draft Plan Presented to Library Board of Trustees

## **Hanson Public Library Core Values**

- **Service Excellence**  
We strive to serve all patrons with excellence and support community needs in a welcoming, respectful environment.
- **Intellectual Freedom**  
We believe in free, confidential access to information, knowledge, and ideas for all people.
- **Diversity**  
We respect diverse experiences and ensure equitable access to library materials and services.
- **Innovation**  
We embrace new ideas and technologies and find innovative ways to provide value to our community.
- **Literacy & Learning**  
We inspire curiosity and creativity to foster literacy, the joy of reading, and a love of learning.
- **Community & Collaboration**  
We value the Library as a community space and build strong relationships with community partners.

*Adopted August 22, 2023 by the Hanson Public Library Board of Trustees*

## **Accessibility, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy**

The Hanson Public Library seeks to be an accessible, diverse, equitable, and inclusive (ADEI) resource to Hanson and the surrounding communities. In conjunction with our mission to foster life-long learning in our community is our commitment to learn how to best support and welcome all people - and to remedy ways in which we are not living up to this commitment.

In order to embody these values, we are taking the following steps:

- Increasing our outreach efforts and diversifying program offerings to meet the needs of underserved populations;
- Diversifying our physical and digital collections to better represent a culturally and racially diverse public;
- Evaluating our programs, services, and policies on a continual basis as a reflection of our understanding that accessibility, diversity, equity, and inclusion are fluid ideas that shift with the changing needs of populations; and
- Seeking opportunities to regularly incorporate ADEI topics into staff development and public programs.

*Adopted February 27, 2024 by the Hanson Public Library Board of Trustees*

## **Sustainability Policy**

The Hanson Public Library recognizes the important role libraries play in larger community conversations about resiliency and a sustainable future. We support sustainable principles that ensure a resilient, sustainable community and Library for all residents. We are committed to minimizing our environmental impact, promoting environmental stewardship at all levels, and maximizing the ability of future generations to live, work, and play in our shared natural environment, with equal access to clean air, clean water, and natural resources. We will strive to minimize pollution and waste, conserve energy and water, protect habitat, support renewable energy resources, purchase environmentally friendly products, and encourage environmentally preferable transportation.

Employee understanding and involvement are essential to the implementation of this Policy. Employees will be encouraged to apply sustainable thinking with regard to collections, programs, services, technology, and partnerships and will be educated about the Library's commitment to support the American Library Association's Triple Bottom Line framework for sustainability: "To be truly sustainable, an organization or community must embody practices that are environmentally sound AND economically feasible AND socially equitable."

As we seek to reduce our impact on the environment, we will continually evaluate our processes and seek methods to measure our impact and communicate results.

*Adopted February 27, 2024 by the Hanson Public Library Board of Trustees*

# Hanson Public Library

## Planning & Design Grant

The Library is applying for a Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program (MPLCP) Grant

### What is the MPLCP?

The MPLCP is a program administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners that provides state grants to municipalities for new or renovated library facilities.

Projects must design a facility projected to meet the 30-year needs of the community for library service.

### 2023-2024 Grant Round

#### Phase 1: Planning & Design

- ▶ Maximum cost expected: \$250,000
- ▶ Grant covers 50% of costs up to \$100,000
- ▶ Town appropriates \$150,000

#### Phase 2: Construction

- ▶ Grant covers about 50% of eligible costs
- ▶ Remaining funds come from the town and fundraising efforts

### Grant Requirements

The following requirements for the grant are due by May 31, 2024:

#### \$150,000 Town Appropriation

- ▶ Required to fund 50% of planning & design costs not covered by grant

#### Town Financial Details

- ▶ Annual budgets
- ▶ Financial policies
- ▶ Capital plans
- ▶ Funding scenarios

#### Facility Assessment

- ▶ Required to assess current building if considering a renovation/expansion

#### Official Management Plan

- ▶ Required to address management of operations if considering a shared facility

#### Site Options

- ▶ Must select at least two potential sites  
Site Option 1: Current Library Site  
Site Option 2: Maquan School Land

#### Library Building Program

- ▶ Serves as instructions to architect for design of a library

#### Strategic Plan

- ▶ Sets library goals for next five years

### Why Is the Library Applying for an MPLCP Grant?

The 34-year-old library building can not meet current community needs for library service.

#### From the Community:

- ▶ Children's Room excessively small
- ▶ Lack of library & community meeting/program space
- ▶ Electrical/data access inconvenient, dates from 1990
- ▶ Wifi weak and unstable
- ▶ Building not ADA compliant
- ▶ Ongoing roof leaks
- ▶ HVAC insufficient, outdated, constantly needs repair
- ▶ Dark, poor ventilation, few windows
- ▶ No sound control or quiet areas
- ▶ Bookcases too tall, light doesn't reach lower shelves
- ▶ Poor sight lines & staff visibility into children's areas
- ▶ Furnishings 34 years old and fixed in place
- ▶ Inadequate storage space

#### Year of Construction

1990

#### Current Size of Library

8,000 sq ft

#### Estimated Size Required for New or Renovated Library

22,000 sq ft

Hanson was denied state grant funds to build the current facility in 1990 because the state determined the design was not large enough to meet community needs through 2010.

### Community Comments

During our planning process, we asked for the community's input about the Library facility and services. Here's a sample of what we heard.

*"This library 'is an outstanding asset to the community'... 'is an invaluable part of our daughter's education'... 'provides a multitude of resources and assistance to the entire community'... 'does a great job offering programs for all ages and interests'."*

*"I would love to see the library be more the center of/hub of the community. A place where community members gather for a variety of different events."*

*"The library is very small and isn't as inviting (physical structure, not the employees!) as other libraries in the area."*

*"I would like the library to have more meeting rooms, a cafe area, & outdoor seating areas so that it is a place residents can get together & enjoy a sense of community."*

*"I would like a larger children's area with more interactive and engaging learning materials."*

*"More windows and natural light would be good, more visibility through the stacks, and more accessibility for those who need it."*

### Important Dates

Applications Due	May 31, 2024
Recipients Announced	Oct 2024
Planning & Design	Oct 2024-Jan 2026
Construction:	
Preliminary Work	Feb 2026-Aug 2027
Start of Construction	Aug/Sep 2027
Estimated Completion	Jan 2029-Sep 2029

To learn more visit:  
[hansonlibrary.org/  
building-project](https://hansonlibrary.org/building-project)





# Building Your Hanson Public Library for the Future

## Building Project Background

### Why now?

- State grant funds are available to assist communities with library construction projects
- Public input gathered confirms the library building is too small, outdated, insufficient to meet community needs
- Current library constructed in 1990; building systems (HVAC, electrical, plumbing, wifi) outmoded and inadequate; furnishings old; space inadequate for public meetings/programs and for people to spend time in the library for personal learning and social connection

### The Library provides our community with free:

- Creative, entertaining, and educational events & activities for all ages
- Passes to museums & local attractions
- Digital library collections - downloadable books, streaming movies, etc.
- Print books for leisure and educational purposes
- Library of Things to borrow: small tools, special crafting equipment, musical instruments, puzzles & games, etc.

Your Library needs to grow - help make it happen!

The Library and the Town of Hanson have the opportunity to apply for state grant funds (MPLCP) for library construction.

### What is the MPLCP\* 2023-2024?

- State grant funds to municipalities for new or renovated library facilities
- Projects must design a facility projected to meet the 30-year needs of the community
- Competitive process requiring submission of an extensive application & a commitment from the local community

\*MPLCP: Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program

Getting Community Input on the Library's Future

The Library Board of Trustees appointed a Library Planning Committee in April 2023 to assist with the development of a new 5-year Strategic Plan and a Library Building Program. The Committee sought input from the community through:

- A series of community focus groups
- A community survey & a teen-focused survey
- Questionnaires and conversations with external groups
- Prioritization boards at Hanson Day and the Library's Annual Open House





What We Learned From the Community: A Selection of Priorities

The community wants the library to:

- Be a centralized, community hub for gathering the community together
- Be a welcoming, attractive building that continues to feel “cozy” yet open; a place people want to spend time, to socialize, and to be a place of respite
- Be flexible in space and furnishings, making it easy for users to be separate and to form groups
- Expand public programming areas; provide large and smaller meeting/study rooms
- Provide green leadership to the community
- Be technologically “anticipatory”
- Be available to groups 24/7 with secure use of public meeting rooms after hours
- Be a place that marries the indoors and outdoors; have a flow between interior space and exterior green & creative play space

From the Community Survey: Most Important Considerations for Redesigned Space

Top 10 important or very important features for the Library to have in a redesigned space	
Expanded children’s area	Expanded tween/teen/young adult area
Areas for children’s play, creative learning, gaming, etc.	Separate children’s program and craft area
Large community meeting/program rooms	Small meeting rooms for community use
More accessible service desks, restrooms, and shelving for materials	Spaces for neurodiverse individuals of all ages
Meeting rooms with technology for virtual and in-person use	Incorporation of outdoor space into Library space (e.g. outdoor seating, reading garden, walking paths)
<b>Other important or very important features for the Library to have in a redesigned space:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expanded leisure seating area</li> <li>• More natural air could flow through the building</li> <li>• Green building, solar panels, electric vehicle charging station, etc.</li> </ul>	

## From the Community Survey: Most Important Library Services

Top 10 important or very important services	
Borrowing materials (books, DVDs, etc.)	Library staff available to assist with research, technology, and searching
Programs for seniors	Partnerships with community organizations, groups, schools, etc.
Museum passes	Programs for children
Library staff available to help with finding new materials to read/watch/listen to	Programs for adults
Library as a community center <small>(i.e. a place to interact with neighbors/friends, meet new people, etc.)</small>	Delivery of Library materials to the homebound
<b>Other important or very important services:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Programs for teens</li> <li>• Expanded open hours</li> <li>• Preserving Hanson history resources and making them easily accessible to the public</li> </ul>	

## From the Community Survey: Top Reasons People Would Use the Library More

Top 10 reasons survey respondents would make more use of the Library	
Expanded selection of museum passes	More programs for adults
More availability of new and bestseller titles in print/physical format	More indoor seating areas that were comfortable, had natural lighting, and/or provided outdoor views
Different or expanded hours of public service	More outdoor seating areas
More programs for seniors	More "Library of Things" items to borrow <small>(musical instruments, small tools, specialty crafting equipment, puzzles/games, etc.)</small>
More availability of online resources for school, work, research, business, job/careers	A larger area for tweens/teens/young adults
<b>Other reasons survey respondents would make more use of the Library:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A larger area for children's activities</li> <li>• Quiet study areas</li> <li>• Small meeting rooms for community use</li> </ul>	



## Why is the Library Applying for a Grant?

**The library can no longer deliver services residents want from their library:**

Building opened to the public in 1991, 33 years ago

- Electrical and data access is old and not located conveniently; wifi is weak and unstable
- Single meeting room, shared with the Senior Center, is inadequate to meet needs of Library, Senior Center, and community groups
- Children's room is too small; limited space for teens and middle school students
- Lighting is substandard
- Limited adult seating for leisure and for studying
- Building is not ADA compliant
- Ongoing roof leaks
- Windows are hidden behind fixed shelving units and many are cloudy from seals that have failed
- HVAC system outdated, insufficient, constantly in need of repair

## Creation of the Library Building Program

Analyzing the community input received, the Planning Committee worked with the Library Director and consultant to draft the Library Building Program, a requirement for the library construction grant application





## What Does the Library Building Program Include?

*For complete document: [www.hansonlibrary.org/building-project](http://www.hansonlibrary.org/building-project)*

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Description of the Hanson Community

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History of the Library and the Library Today

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Recent Library Planning Efforts with the Community

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Assessment of the Current Library Building

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Current Library Site and Other Sites Considered

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Facility Impediments to Library Service Delivery

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New Hanson Library-Principles and Welcome

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Detailed Area Descriptions (to guide architectural design)

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Space Requirements for Services

## How Does the Community Get the Process Started?

- Trustees adopt the Library Building Program in March 2024
- Library Building Program is shared with the community via presentations to Town officials, the library website, and meetings with community groups
- Town meeting considers the Library's request for funds to commit the community to the initial project planning phase in the event Hanson is successfully awarded an MPLCP grant
- The Library completes and submits the application for grant funds by May 31, 2024

## 2023-2024 Grant Round

### Phase 1: Planning & Design

- Maximum cost expected \$250,000
- Grant covers 50% of costs up to \$100,000
- Town appropriates \$150,00 in anticipation of a grant award

### Phase 2: Construction

- Grant covers about 50% of eligible costs\*
- Remaining funds come from the town (appropriation and/or bonding) and fundraising efforts by the Library Foundation

\* Amount of grant varies depending on the incorporation of certain standards (i.e. LEED design level) in the new library's design

## Grant Submission Requirements: Deadline May 31, 2024

- 5-Year Strategic Plan - *Completed September 23, 2023*
- Library Building Program - *Adopted by Library Trustees March 26, 2024*
- Town Financial Details: Annual Budgets; Capital Plans; Financial Policies; Funding Scenarios - *Underway*
- Site Options: Current Library Site; Maquan School Land
- Facility Assessment: Required if considering renovation - *Underway*
- Official Management Plan: Required to address management of operations if considering a shared facility - *Underway*

## For More Information on Your New Library

- Visit [hansonlibrary.org/building-project](http://hansonlibrary.org/building-project)
- Karen Stolfer, Library Director - [kstolfer@hansonlibrary.org](mailto:kstolfer@hansonlibrary.org)
- Corinne Cafardo, Board of Library Trustees Chair - [bikeriding30@gmail.com](mailto:bikeriding30@gmail.com)