

Our Guide to Tomorrow

A Strategic Plan

Matawan Aberdeen Public Library 2009-2012



**Prepared by
Matawan Aberdeen Public Library
Planning Committee**

Assistance from
Library Development Solutions

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Message from the Board President/Planning Committee Chair

“Our Guide To Tomorrow” is a strategic plan for the Matawan-Aberdeen Public Library to offer improved library services for our joint community over the next few years and beyond. It is the result of the collaboration of the Library Staff, Board of Trustees, and community volunteers. Under the direction of consultants from Library Development Solutions, our planning committee focused on the integral role the MAPL has as the information center for our towns and we gained insight into ways to promote lifelong learning and literacy.

This plan is an outline to address the changing needs of library users and the increased services offered to them. A vast collection of data was gathered by Library Development Solutions in an effort to let us know what the public wants from their library and much thought was put into ways to fulfill these requests. Now that “Our Guide To Tomorrow” is complete, our real task begins; implementing the proposed changes so that the community of Matawan-Aberdeen receives only the best library services.

*Leon Pencek
President, Board of Trustees
Patricia Coleman
Chair Strategic Planning Committee and
Treasurer
Marla Sieman, 1st VP
Elliott Krauss, 2nd VP*

The Planning Process

Library trustees, members of the planning committee, library staff and many Matawan and Aberdeen residents contributed time and energy to this planning process and the development of the Strategic Plan 2009-2012. Library Development Solutions, a Princeton, New Jersey-based library consulting firm, assisted with the effort.

At the beginning of the planning project, library planners determined that a successful plan must reflect the needs and interests of the community served by the library. Using focus groups, a survey and a staff, board and community based Planning Committee; the library spoke with many individuals in both communities by listening to ideas and suggestions for making the library a more essential part of their daily lives. Library planners listened carefully to community input, identified the most frequently requested suggestions and worked together to devise a plan to improve library services and begin to make long term decisions about the library facility. In all, close to 300 residents and library staff were involved in the development of this strategic plan.

The planning process included:

Data Analysis

Library staff and the consultants gathered a variety of data that were analyzed and shared with the Planning Committee to obtain insights about trends relating to library use, programs and services. Demographic trends were considered using data from the 2000 U.S. Census, North Jersey Transportation Authority (NJTA) and the Monmouth County Planning Board (MCPA).

Focus Groups and Survey¹

Over 100 library staff, trustees and community residents met in a series of focus group sessions and a town meeting. During these sessions, participants discussed their ideas for improving library service, shared what they liked best about the library, and identified areas needing improvement. A survey was filled out by 206 residents accessed through the library's web site.

Staff Discussions and Meetings

The consultants met with library staff to learn more about the current service program and how departments work together to deliver service. The staff also discussed ideas about their vision and ideas for the future of the library.

¹ See the report "Voices of Matawan and Aberdeen" for details about the community feedback and survey results.

Space Analysis

The consultants conducted an analysis of the current library space using a formula that is widely used in libraries throughout the US and modified to meet current local and state standards. The formula uses information such as population, population growth, collection size, and other factors that define library use and standards. According to the analysis, there is a gap between the current space and space needed today and in the next 20 years to deliver modern library services. The gap is approximately 15,420² square feet.

Meetings with the Planning Committee

A planning committee made up of staff members, trustees and community members met four times, including a ½ day retreat to review the outcomes of the focus groups, surveys and town meeting, develop a vision and new mission to guide the library, determine strategic direction, review staff recommendations for implementing the plan, and finalize recommendations for future library directions.

The Planning Committee:

- Identified social, technological, educational, demographic and other trends likely to affect the delivery of library service and assessed the library's ability to accommodate those trends.
- Assessed the library's strengths and capacity to deliver quality service, including the capabilities of the current facility.
- Developed a vision to guide the library's future and created a mission statement that incorporates the library's primary purpose and the values associated with delivering library service to the community.
- Considered strategic roles for the library to shape the way that library service will be delivered.
- Discussed and agreed upon priorities, goals, and objectives to guide the library's development over the next few years.

The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library

The history of the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library dates back 106 years to 1903 when the Matawan Free Public Library was opened 7 hours a week in a rented space. By 1921, the library moved to the corner of Main Street and Park Avenue. In 1962 the Borough and Township formed a joint library and by 1967 a new 2,800 square foot library was opened on the current site.

² See MAPL Space Analysis Report 2008

As the two communities continued to experience growth through the 1960's and 1970's, plans were quickly developed to add another 2,000 square feet to the library which became the Children's Wing. This also included a basement. In 1985, a two story addition was constructed which added 4000 square feet. The lower level is the current children's area. The expanded facility is 9,880 square feet.³

Currently, the population of both communities is a combined 28,038. Thanks to the dedication of the Library Board of Trustees, Aberdeen Township and Matawan Borough and the Friends of the Library, the existing building is a reminder of Matawan and Aberdeen's shared community and may still offer possibilities to continue to grow with the community. Interior as well as exterior expansion and redesign will be necessary to provide modern library services to residents of both communities. Another option to be explored is building a new library.

Accomplishments

The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library can celebrate many accomplishments achieved during the past few years. The library's commitment to providing responsive library service to both communities has helped it focus on constant improvement in its services, collections, technology and programs. The Director, Susan Pike has provided critical leadership for the staff and Trustees in making improvements to meet community needs. The successes of the past few years have encouraged library staff and trustees to continue pursuing initiatives to increase library use and support. Among the many accomplishments that deserve attention are:

- A wireless network
- 16 newer public use computers
- Popular children's and adult programs
- Sound stewardship of the budget
- Trustees who support the library and understand the importance of their role as library advocates
- The successful ongoing Friends' book sale
- Ongoing improvement and extensive weeding to the collection
- Addition of Playaways and other new formats to the collection
- Strengthened relationship with both town governments

Library Use

Use of the library continues to grow, reflecting trends in public library use in New Jersey and throughout the country. Despite the concern that the Internet, Google and Wikipedia could make libraries obsolete, the opposite has occurred. Many new users are coming to the library to use high speed connections that allow them access to web-based information more quickly; for others, the library may

³ See Matawan Aberdeen Building Highlights by Leon Pencek

be their only source of Internet access. People continue to read and use libraries to explore new avenues for learning.

The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library is becoming a busy library. For the fiscal year ending 2008, Matawan and Aberdeen residents:

- Borrowed 111,883 items
- More than 5,841 people attended one of 315 library-sponsored programs.
- 15,278 people logged on to use the computers

SWOT Analysis

The Planning Committee conducted an internal/external SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) analysis to help understand the library and its present environment. Along with the rest of the needs assessment process, this helped form a foundation for planning.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience and knowledge of staff and administration • Engaged Board of Trustees • Library location is convenient for most • The Wireless Network • The number of public access computers • The 1985 expansion and 2005 renovation • Positive relationship with both town halls • Membership in LMxAC and reciprocal borrowing with many libraries • Children's and adult programs • The Friends of the Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dated collections • Uncomfortable furniture • No quiet space or area • Undersized children's area • Location of children's area • Hours • Even with 16 computers...still need more • Lack of teen space • The size of the facility • Meeting room use and policies • Not frequent enough communication to the community • Misperceptions about library funding due to the joint library format • Non-conforming ADA lift
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tap into the good will and history that people have for the library • Become a magnet for new families • Everyone sees the library as an asset • Create teen programs and reasons for teen use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes in funding and the economy • Resistance to change by staff, administration, funders, board • Lack of vision • Low expectation for library service and inaction by the

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Improve the awareness, identity and profile of the library• Improve the collection/collection development/DVD policy• Develop an Email newsletter• Fundraising-annual appeal• PR in general-self promotion• Library cards and services to commuters at RR• Expansion and use of the meeting room	<p>Board of Trustees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deferred decision making on the future of the facility
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Creating the Plan

The Planning Committee considered a number of factors in developing a plan for the library. Demographic trends and projections, emerging trends affecting the community's overall development, the outcomes from the community focus groups and survey, input from the staff and a planning retreat all helped the Planning Committee make informed decisions about the library's future.

Planning Assumptions

A number of key assumptions helped lay the groundwork for this plan. Planners agreed that:

- Government support from both communities is good and could still improve.
- Sound ideas for improvement to the facilities are difficult to implement at times.
- Matawan and Aberdeen revaluation and other funding related issues have an effect on library services.
- Grant money may be available for library programs and staffing.
- Tough economic times make libraries even more important than they are in flush times.
- Issues of operating a joint library are evident in all that we do, being one of only six in the state.
- The population of the service area will continue to increase slightly for the next 15 years to a population of 28,599 people. There will continue to be demands on Matawan and Aberdeen's infrastructure and their ability to meet the expectations for modern public library service.

- The combined population will continue to reflect a diverse range of ages with more young families, increasing numbers of older adults and newer immigrants.
- The library is identified as an anchor of Matawan's Main Street.

Matawan and Aberdeen Demographics

- The service area population is expected to reach more than 28,599 by 2025.
- According to the US Census, about 30% of both towns' population is under the age of 24, 35% is between 25-44 years of age, and about 35% of the population is 45 or older.
- The average age for a service area resident is 36.5 years, slightly younger than the statewide average age of 37.2 years.

Emerging Trends

The Planning Committee and staff identified community, state and national trends that must be considered in planning for future library services. A number of major trends are driving the design and delivery of library services based on the survey and focus groups:

- ***People consider ease of use and convenience when they visit a public facility.*** Residents, who lead increasingly busy lifestyles, expect efficient and friendly service and comfortable surroundings. Organizations and businesses that provide knowledgeable and friendly service with readily available resources are rewarded by customers with increased use. Time starved families, especially with young children, look forward to services and resources that respect their time.
- ***The physical environment of public spaces is important for library customers.*** The popularity of chain bookstores and coffeehouses where people can comfortably relax, read, attend a program or browse for hours indicates a need for pleasant community gathering spaces. Residents expect the library to adapt to the need for the various ways that people want to use it. The library is expected to have differentiated spaces for quiet study and reading, space for computer use and research, space for collections of print and non-print materials and space to accommodate informal community gatherings, conversations, discussions and programming.
- ***People are rediscovering reading, but are less patient about waiting for library material.*** People all over the country are rediscovering the pleasures of reading. Early literacy and pre-literacy programs in nursery schools and childcare centers are helping children get ready to learn. Reading and family literacy are emphasized in

schools, as educators understand more about the connection between reading and educational success. Busy adults are finding that reading can be an enjoyable, stress-relieving pastime and a way to share experiences with others. People are less willing to wait to read popular books, especially when visiting libraries. They want to come to the library with a reasonable expectation that there is a good supply of recently published material available for them to borrow.⁴

- ***The use of technology has changed the way that people seek information at home, at work, at school and at the library.*** The expectation that the library serve as the community's provider for electronic as well as print information has expanded the library's traditional role. The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library is increasingly called on to provide skilled searching and help to locate resources in the complex online world of information. The library's online catalog through LMxAC, reference databases and its website respond to the community's growing need for electronic guidance and resources. People also expect an increased level of instruction in how to use computers, the Internet, databases and other electronic resources.

Voices of Matawan and Aberdeen

Library Development Solutions conducted a series of focus groups; a town meeting and a library user survey in which they listened to over 294 residents express their ideas for the future of the library. The discussions were helpful in affirming many of the issues that the Board and staff have considered recently; especially that the library can be an important and central public space in the community and that it needs to quickly improve collections and services to be more responsive. At the same time, library planners received many new ideas and suggestions to consider for the future of the library.

Focus group and survey participants mentioned that:

- Residents of all ages expect to find multiple copies of new bestsellers and library shelves stocked with recent fiction and non-fiction titles. They also expect to find multiple copies of new DVDs and CDs. Students expect to find the information they need to complete a school assignment or to find a new science fiction, fantasy or other new fiction book for reading enjoyment.

⁴ The report, "Reading on the Rise: A New Chapter in American Literacy," is based on data from "The Survey of Public Participation in the Arts" conducted by the [United States Census Bureau](#) in 2008. Among its chief findings is that for the first time since 1982, when the bureau began collecting such data, the proportion of adults 18 and older who said they had read at least one novel, short story, poem or play in the previous 12 months has risen.

- People want convenient access to library resources and programs to meet their needs. Sunday hours and regular Saturday hours year round were among the ways the community thought the library should respond to changing needs, especially to meet needs of working parents and children.
- Many residents of Matawan and Aberdeen are still unaware of all that the library offers. The library needs to improve its communication to all residents.
- The library is viewed as a destination of choice to use a computer to access the Internet as well as to receive help from a staff member. The library is expected to be current with computer technology.

Our Guide to Tomorrow: A Strategic Plan for the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library

The following vision, mission and values form the foundation for the library's goals. The goals and objectives provide a view into the specific strategies that the Library Board and staff will employ to achieve the vision.

The library is fortunate to have two communities that understand the importance of the library and the value of the library in the overall health of both communities. It is up to the Library Board and staff to implement the plan and create a welcoming environment to tomorrow's resources and technology to attract more people to the library and to increase use and support.

Service Responses

The Planning Committee adopted the following service responses to provide the foundation for the goals and strategies in response to identified community needs:

Current Titles and Topics- Popular Materials

The library will continue to focus on developing collections and offering programs that are topical and respond to current needs and interests of local users. There is increasing demand for multiple copies of best sellers and current titles by people who use the library for popular reading materials.

Community Commons and Gathering Spot

The library will become the information resource center of the community for all residents, users and visitors. It is the crossroads of both communities and the center of print and computer-based information for students, parents, retirees, children, and the place where residents can gather to explore and share new ideas and current topics.

Children's Center

The library will increase its response to the growing demand for children's services and materials. The library will work to remove the waiting list for children's programs, create an exciting environment for children and parents and provide the necessary resources for children K-12.

Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning

The library will continue to play an important role in helping the community and individuals achieve their personal and collective goals. It will remain a place where preschool children can obtain early literacy skills that prepare them for a successful school career through their participation in library sponsored story times. Older children will know that they can find a wide assortment of materials to support their schoolwork. In addition, new immigrants and all adult learners can find information on a wide assortment of topics to support their lifelong learning.

Vision

The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library will partner with individuals and the community in search of a better life for all

Library users will experience the following as they use the library and its services.

The library will:

- Transform the library to meet changing community needs
- Attract a diverse group of people of all ages and bring them together in a spirit of community
- Provide a warm, welcoming, easy to use library that accommodates a variety of activities
- Collaborate with other community organizations in creating more support and advocacy

Mission

The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library, the community's hometown library, provides resources to help people realize their dreams.

Library Shared Values

- We have respect for staff, users, Friends and the Board.
- We believe that learning and leisure are central to a meaningful life and that the library thoughtfully responds to community and individual needs.
- We value personal and community curiosity and discovery of solutions to needs.

- We will make sure that every visit to the library is enjoyable and that users are satisfied.
- We believe in creative approaches to reach more members of the community
- We believe that services should be provided in a modern 21st Century library environment
- We believe that the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library is essential for a democratic society, protecting the freedom to read, question, think, discuss and debate.

Goals and Objectives to Help Achieve the Vision for the Library

During the next few years, the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library Board of Trustees and staff will focus on the following key goals to help achieve the vision and mission.

- Develop a great library collection
- Create a warm, friendly and satisfying library experience and facility
- Build community through the library
- Support lifelong learning, information literacy and educational support
- Create a modern library infrastructure that assists in achieving the vision and goals

Goal One: A Great Library Collection

Matawan Aberdeen Public Library users will find a current collection of library materials and resources that reflects and fulfills their interests

Objectives:

1.1 Increase the annual budget for library materials

Action Steps:

- Increase materials budget to 15% or greater of the total budget each year in order to revitalize the popular collection (2009-12)
- Develop a gift book program and a “buy, read and donate to the library” program (2009)
- Work with the Friends of the Library to identify annual fundraising goals to support the library collection (2010)
- Increase the number of available copies of best sellers based on the number of holds for each title (2009-12)
- Develop a Rapid Read or Lightning Read collection for local residents’ use (2009-10)

1.2 Increase the assortment of materials reflected in the library's collection

Action Steps:

- Annually examine collection use to adjust spending on material formats (2009-12)
- Immediately assess print reference material to significantly reduce hard copy purchases when they are available through existing library databases (2009-12)
- Reduce reference area shelf space to expand computer use space and/or for comfortable seating (2009)
- Continually assess new popular digital and print formats for inclusion in library collection (2009-12)
- Develop a Spanish language collection to meet the needs of new immigrants (2009-10)

1.3 Develop a cohesive and coordinated approach to collection development

Action Steps:

- Redeploy resources and budget from little used parts of the collection to more heavily used and popular parts of the collection (2009)
- Reexamine the library's collection development policy and practices and write a new policy (2009)
- Assign responsibilities to oversee collection development to a staff coordinator to oversee the new policy (2009)
- Continue to weed the collection to remove all worn, outdated and obsolete materials in all areas of the collection(2009)
- Use the Space Analysis report as a guide for collection size (2009)
- Create a replacement budget to remove old circulating materials and replace with fresh copies (2010)
- Stop "mending" damaged books (2009)

1.4 Establish a comprehensive reader's advisory service

Action Steps:

- Merchandise and display library materials more effectively (2009-12)
- Promote library acquisitions to the community (2009-12)
- Use the library's home page on the Web site to highlight recent print and A/V purchases (2009-12)
- Consider writing a local newspaper column that focuses on new books (2009-12)
- Work with staff to offer one-on-one reader advisory sessions (2009-10)

Goal Two: The Library Experience

Matawan Aberdeen Public Library customers will encounter a welcoming, warm and inviting library space and friendly,

knowledgeable staff that support the library's mission and service program and satisfy community needs.

Objectives:

2.1 Strive to provide a satisfying library experience for all library users

Action Steps:

- Provide opportunities for staff to attend off-site and in-service day programs that will increase their skills and expertise to provide satisfying library experiences (2009-12)
- Review job descriptions and titles to develop a modern and effective staffing plan (2010)
- Review existing staffing levels and add staff where necessary to meet user demands, such as in the children's services, custodial and other areas, (2009)

2.2 Provide easy and convenient access to technology to meet the information needs of library customers

Action Steps:

- Increase the number of public access computers, at least 6 more, available in the library to reduce waiting time (2009)
- Create a computer instruction area to respond to community needs (2009-12)
- Review all software so that it is the same as the school system's software (2009)
- Heavily promote use of the wireless network (2009-12)
- Consider adding self-checkout capability (2011)
- Provide online services through the website such as registration for events, credit card payments for fees and library card registration (2009)

2.3 Reorganize the library's existing space to support its service program and begin planning an expansion or new building for the future

Action Steps:

- Continue to unclutter every area of the library, including offices, storage, processing, and children's areas
- Reduce the reference space by at least half and expand computer or sitting space in that part of the building (2009)
- Consider relocating the book processing area. Then expand use of the meeting room to its original space and open the room divider when needed (2009)
- Determine the short term renovation needs of the elevator to provide adequate ADA compliance (2009)

- Decide on a plan to move ahead with either expansion or building a new library on the existing site or a new site (2009-10)
- Hire an architect and interior designer to develop options to respond to the space analysis and the need for additional space, such as an expansion of the current facility (2009-10)
- Secure capital funding to support near term space improvements and longer term facility plans (2010-11)

Goal Three: Create a partnership with the Matawan/Aberdeen Community

Local residents will think of the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library as a partner in providing needed resources and information for the community

Objectives:

3.1 Create a new identity for the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library as the HUB for all residents

Action Steps:

- Design a new library logo, colors and icons to reflect the new vision and image of the library as the guide to tomorrow and partner with community (2009-10)
- Redesign the web page using a professional designer to reflect the new vision and image of the library(2009)
- Develop a new overall awareness campaign to reflect the new vision and profile (2010)
- Consider hiring a part time communications or community relations person and/or new staff to accomplish the awareness campaign (2010)
- Create a new email database of residents who want to receive a new email newsletter (such as Constant Contact) and begin the newsletter (2009)
- Use banners on the outside of the building to draw attention to the library and that something is new and changing (2009)

3.2 Increase library use through easier access

Action Steps:

- Plan to provide consistent Saturday hours year round (2009)
- Plan to provide Sunday openings all year (2009)
- Explore Friday evening openings with special family oriented library programs (2010)
- Consider a materials drop box in the Cliffwood School area of the community (2010)
- Review and consider changing DVD policies in relation to fees and number of items(2009)

- Consider and evaluate alternate methods for delivering service to the Cliffwood area (2010)
- Consider constructing a drive through drop box in the parking lot (2009)

3.3 Develop opportunities for people to interact with others in the community

Action Steps:

- Offer a variety of new book discussion groups and book clubs to attract additional groups of residents (2009-10)
- Offer speakers and authors on current events and topical issues (2010)
- Develop additional reading programs such as Two Towns-One Book in which the whole community reads and discusses one title (2010)
- Review space needs to create an informal gathering (seating area) space in the library, possibly a larger seating area near the front and enlarge the meeting room to accommodate larger programs (2009)
- Create a staff programming committee to develop new and interesting adult programs, and develop a compelling adult program calendar (2009-10)

3.4 Collaborate with community organizations and schools

Action Steps:

- Develop two new partnerships with community organizations annually to expand the total number of agencies/organizations that collaborate with the library on specific projects (2009-12)
- Explore methods to leverage costs of delivering library service by using technology and streamlining processing and other routine tasks (2010)
- Continue to work with LMxAC (Libraries of Middlesex Automation Consortium) and other libraries to increase reciprocal borrowing, purchasing power through group purchases and discounts (2009-12)
- Explore the future use of self-service checkout (2010)

Goal Four: Promote Information Literacy and Lifelong Learning in the Community

Matawan and Aberdeen residents will find the assistance they need to effectively navigate information resources that helps them explore new ideas and learn new skills

Objectives:

4.1 Provide easy access to one-on-one information assistance to library users in person, on the phone, via the web

Action Steps:

- Schedule staff “tech monitors” to be available to walk-in users at peak times (2009-12)
- Develop instructional classes in computer, Internet, catalog and database use (2009-12)

4.2 Provide programming to promote a lifelong love of reading for children

Action Steps:

- Offer additional space for children’s programming (2009-12)
- Provide additional staff if needed to meet the demand for children’s programming and retire the waiting list (2009)
- Offer and promote summer reading for youth of all ages (2009-12)
- Develop a library card promotion campaign with the local schools and PTA to deliver a library card to every student in the local schools-One Student...One Card (2009-12)

4.3 Expand programming for teens and adults

Action Steps:

- Study how to provide library space specifically designated for teens (2010)
- Create a teen advisory board to develop programs and activities of interest to middle school age and high school age teens and recommendations for collections and programs (2009-12)
- Consider providing an ad hoc nonvoting position for one or two local teens on the library board each year (2010)
- Provide ongoing programs for teens (2009-12)
- Consider creating late night study nights during mid-terms and finals for group study and tutoring (2009-12)
- Subscribe to tutor.com and promote throughout the community and schools (2009)
- Develop programs of interest to older adults (2009-12)

Goal Five: Secure Good Stewardship

The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library will have stable and dependable sources of leadership, support and staffing to meet the community’s standards for library service

Objectives:

5.1 Increase the level of staff and board development for the library

Action Steps:

- Create a schedule for annual evaluations of administration and staff (2009-10)

- Take advantage of local and state-wide opportunities for the board to improve their knowledge and skills of volunteer community stewardship (2009-12)
- Develop a set of core competencies for staff and provide development opportunities for them to accomplish them (2010)
- Increase the opportunities for staff members to attend development training(2009-12)
- Provide time for staff presentations to board members during board meetings(2009-12)

5.2 Continue support for the activities of the Friends of the Library and any other advocacy and support formats

Action Steps:

- Review the need for a new library advocacy group such as Matawan Aberdeen Library Futures Committee to assist with building support for facility planning outcomes (2009)
- Explore ways to support the membership and increased involvement in the Friends of the Library (2009-12)
- Publicize donation options – memorials, birthday gifts, planned giving, and start an annual appeal (2009-10)

Measuring Success

Each year, library staff and trustees will conduct a planning session or retreat to assess their progress in meeting the plan's goals and objectives. Goals and objectives will be modified, added, or eliminated depending on changing needs and circumstances during the planning cycle. The results of such an annual assessment will be shared with all library stakeholders.⁵

In evaluating its success, the MAPL Library will:

Measure levels of community satisfaction 2009–2012:

- Develop and administer specific community needs online surveys based on the results of the 2008 satisfaction/opinion survey

Monitor and measure levels of support 2009–2012:

- Record and report levels of public and private support
- Encourage and help guide growth in numbers and the activity level of the Friends of the Library
- Report to the Board of Trustees on progress toward meeting new funding goals, such as an annual appeal and other fundraising methods

Measure and analyze customer use 2009–2012:

- Record, report, and compare circulation statistics and goals set in this plan
- Monitor collection turnover

⁵ Some of these measurements and statistics are to be made available to the Board and community on a quarterly basis as well.

- Record and report numbers of reference questions
- Monitor and record program attendance
- Record the frequency of computer use
- Monitor and record frequency of use of library Web site visits and page uses
- Monitor the percentage of the population using the library and set high goals for new card registrations in each year of the plan to reach 45% by 2012
- Develop baseline data about current library use and measure changes in use following any building improvements or floor layout changes
- Install an electronic people counter system to begin monitoring library visits - 2009
- Develop baseline data about specific collections and determine levels of use if featured in special displays

Increase the level of awareness 2009–2012:

- Measure the number of new partnerships with organizations and area businesses each year
- Measure the number of presentations to community groups

Monitor the success of the community forum series 2009–2012:

- Record and report numbers of participants at all programs

Matawan Aberdeen Public Library Board of Trustees

Leon Pencek, Board President
Marla Sieman, Board First Vice President
Elliot Krauss, Board Second Vice President
Patricia Coleman, Treasurer
John Sadell
David Sobel, Aberdeen Mayor
William Martin, alternate
Michael Abend
Kathleen Eovino, alternate
Carol Starr, ex President and Board member (2008)

Strategic Planning Committee Members

Leon Pencek, Board President
Marla Sieman, Board First Vice President
Elliot Krauss, Second Vice President
Patricia Coleman, Board Treasurer
Anisa Gandhi, resident
Gerry Crockett, resident
Carol Starr, resident
Sue Fertig, resident
Michelle Marolda, resident
Anahid Avakian, resident
Nancy Shamoo, staff
Laura Beyer, staff
Chrissie McGovern, staff
Susan Pike, Library Director

Consultants

Alan Burger and Leslie Burger, Library Development Solutions

Introduction

In November 2008, consultants from Library Development Solutions conducted a space analysis of the Matawan Aberdeen Public Library. Among the many factors taken into consideration were:

- Existing square footage of the library
- Current combined population and estimated 2025 population of the Township and the Borough
- Collection size to meet population needs
- Programming space to meet population needs
- Number of seats to meet modern standards
- Number of computers to meet growing demand

A Look at Matawan Aberdeen Public Library Population Changes⁶

Town	2000 population	2025 projection
Aberdeen	17,454	18,866
Matawan	8,910	9,172
Total	26,364	28,038

Ethnicity and Language

Both Matawan and Aberdeen are becoming more diverse. According to recent statistics and studies, residents of Asian and Hispanic backgrounds continue to grow in both communities.

Town	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian
Aberdeen	78.8%	12.0	7.0	9.2
Matawan	82.3%	6.5	6.5	11.1

Educational Attainment

In Aberdeen and Matawan, educational attainment is slightly above average; of the population age 25 and older, 23% in Aberdeen have a Bachelor's degree and 11.4 % have an advanced degree. In Matawan 18.9% have a Bachelor's degree and 11.5% have an advanced degree. The New Jersey averages are 18.8% and 11% respectively.

Library Use

Overall total library use has been steadily increasing in the last few years according to statistics provided by the library, even though circulation figures of adult and children's books dipped from 2003-2005, they are rebounding very quickly, since 2007 with newer collections and additional audio video materials.

⁶ Monmouth County Planning Board (MCPB), November 2007. The North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA) projects a 2025 population of 20,630 for Aberdeen and 9,420 for Matawan; a total of 30,050, NJTPA Population Forecast by County and Municipality, 2005. However, for the purpose of this study we have used the more modest projection of the MCPB.

Circulation, Reference and Computer Use

The library's desire to increase library visits and circulation depends on a number of challenges that the library will face over the next few years.

It is important to have a constantly changing book stock with a significant number of new materials that can be attractively displayed in order to encourage use. Presently there may be adequate space in the library to display these new material using new display fixtures and different shelving, though existing damaged and obsolete material will need to be continuously weeded to encourage browsing.

It is also important to feature high interest materials in displays that may remove an item from its normal shelf location based on the Dewey classification system in order to increase interest and turnover in these materials. This too requires different space use and display than may be used today. Likewise, the location of newer popular materials is a key to their use.

Use of local public libraries for reference questions and extensive research has changed with the heavy use of Internet and database searching, either from a home computer or a computer in the library. The space that is dedicated to rarely used and redundant reference material needs to be re-purposed for modern public uses such as computer use, browsing, seating and other uses. The hard copy reference collection can probably be reduced by half.

The number of computer and Internet uses per year has significantly increased in the library, especially after the addition of the new computers. The library offers 16 public use computers, far greater than most libraries of this size. The library was ahead of the curve in offering this depth of service. Today there is very little slack time in computer usage. Additional increases will only be achieved if access to additional computers and Internet use can be provided. Key to increases is the ability of students to feel welcome in the library after school to work on projects, both on computers and in groups. Additionally, the Internet is bringing new users to the library; who also ask for assistance in finding information both online and offline. The library needs to reinforce the idea that the library staff can be helpful in finding material on the Internet and can save people hours of search time.

The library is limited by staffing and space in the number of adult and children's programs it can offer. These are popular aspects of library services but the limited size of the programming space creates a waiting list for children's programs which leads to frustration and dissatisfied residents.

Library Challenges

Library Development Solutions identified the following challenges associated with the current library building.

Location

The library is located within the geographical center of both communities and in the heart of the Matawan Central Business District. This creates a convenient location for people who may walk to the library and a challenge for residents who must drive to the library, especially students and others who can not drive.

Expansion or renovation

Aside from location, a significant challenge associated with the library is the constraint of its current building. Significant future expansion is possible, if needed, onto unoccupied space at the rear of the building or onto the adjacent property. Minimal expansion of the library may be possible by using this rear space between the parking lot and the building. There is no significant historical or architectural significance to the existing building. There may exist a restriction on the property as to its future use.

Building New

Another option would be to build a new library facility to offer modern library service to the growing communities. This poses the question of where the library is located to best serve residents of both communities. Questions of land costs, building costs, and access for residents are ones that need to be determined by the library board and local governments.

Estimated Ideal Library

The following information provides an estimate of the service components and square footage for an ideal library or total library space for the residents of Matawan and Aberdeen based on the 2000 population of 26,364 and an estimated library service population of 28,599 for 2025. The estimated square footage and service components owe much to the Connecticut State Library's *Library Space Planning Worksheet* and the Illinois State Library's *Avenues to Excellence for Public Library Service*. In 1964 the American Library Association created a standard of .7 square feet of library space per capita. The significant changes that have occurred in communities and libraries in the past 40 years have required a more flexible standard when analyzing library space. The Matawan Aberdeen Public Library does not meet current modern standards for its current population.

The following table describes the gap between the current library and standards to meet today's population of 26,364 and 2025's projected service population of 28,599. All figures are based on delivering a basic print collection of 84,000 volumes rather than a core print collection of 70,000 volumes or a growing collection of 127,198 volumes.⁷

Even for today's population, there is a gap of 15,420 square feet. The following chart identifies space to meet modern community library needs. The

⁷ Core= 2.4 volumes per capita; Basic=2.9 volumes per capita; Growing=4.4 volumes per capita

identified square footage can change as planners add or remove features during the development of a functional building plan.⁸

Functional Area	2025 (current)
Population+ non resident usage	28,599
Books	84,300 (89,029)
Non print materials	8,430 (3,906)
Subscriptions	252 (135)
PAC's	4 (4)
Internet/WP Computers	28 (16)
# of seats (excluding meeting room seating)	115 (48)
All Space in square footage	
Collection Space	
Books	8,430
Non Print	843
Periodicals	168
Periodical Storage	378
Totals	9,819
Meeting Room Space	
General Meeting Space	1,100
Conference Room Space	450
Children's Programming	350
Children's Crafts Space	875
Sub-Total	2,775
Special Use Space	
Bulletin Boards, Copier, Newspaper and Paperback racks, staff lockers, staff lounge, study rooms, display cases, etc...	1,035
Computer Lab	196
Teen Room	500
Book Sale	50
Snack Area	250
Sub-Total	2,031
Non-Assignable Space	
Bathrooms, hallways, vestibule, storage, etc...	5,060
Totals	
Collection Space	9,819
Public Electronic Workstations	1,415
User Seating Space	3,450
Staff Work Space	750
Meeting Room Space	2,775
Special Use Space	2,031
Non-assignable Space	5,060
Gross area:	25,300 sq.'

⁸ The library is currently 9,880 square feet

Appendix C

Joint Library	Population	2007 Local tax support	2006 Equalized Value	Millage 2007 Local Tax Support/2006 Equalized Value	2007 Tax Support for library per capita
Matawan/Aberdeen	26,364	1,022,104	3,105,601,439	.000328135	\$38.76
Matawan	8,910	327,180	1,005,643,015	.000325344	\$36.72
Aberdeen	17,454	694,924	2,099,959,424	.000330923	\$39.81
Morris	40,430	3,131,874	8,195,223,441	.000382132	\$77.46
Morristown Town	18,544	992,300	2,597,234,591	.000382060	\$53.51
Morris Twp	21,796	2,139,574	5,597,988,850	.000382204	\$98.16
Princetons	30,230	3,570,276	7,064,826,919	.000520263	\$118.10
Princeton Boro	14,203	1,071,083	2,257,511,679	.000474453	\$75.41
Princeton Twp	16,027	2,499,193	4,807,315,240	.000519873	\$155.94
Other Libraries					
Neptune	27,690	1,652,204	3,852,152,565	.000428904	\$59.67
Sayreville	40,377	1,634,677	4,904,035,443	.000333333	\$40.49
Old Bridge	60,456	2,160,704	6,329,144,767	.000341390	\$35.74