



312 Old Main Street
South Yarmouth, MA 02664
Jane N. Cain, Library Director

Strategic Plan

for Yarmouth Town Libraries

FY2025 – 2030

Approved by the Yarmouth Library Board September 28, 2023

Submitted to the

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

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Mission Statement

Yarmouth Town Libraries provide expert assistance and current information resources broad enough to meet the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of its residents and visitors to the community and to Cape Cod. The public will have access to, and increased awareness of, current topics and titles in multiple formats.

Yarmouth Town Libraries inspires children to become lifelong readers and supports continuous learning for all ages.

Yarmouth Town Libraries will offer safe, accessible spaces, and opportunities for residents and library users to meet, formally and informally, in a variety of programs for all ages.

Vision Statement

The Yarmouth Town Libraries serve all residents of and visitors to the community as they seek facts and ideas for life, as they read for pleasure, as they become informed citizens of a free society, and as they prepare themselves for the future. Skilled library staff members develop collections, provide both local and remote resources, and efficiently manage the library to effectively meet the public's needs.

Yarmouth Town Libraries Strategic Planning Committee - 2023

Dr. George Bovino, Yarmouth resident, Chair, Town Library Board
Kathryn Basile, Yarmouth resident, Vice Chair, Town Library Board
Helen Niedermeier, Yarmouth resident, Secretary, Town Library Board
Pam Barton, Yarmouth resident, Library Board member
Jane Garvey, Yarmouth resident, Library Board member
Angela Carbone, Yarmouth resident, Library Board member
Kellyn Bogle, Yarmouth resident, Library Board member
Linda Callahan, Yarmouth resident, President, South Yarmouth Library Association
Mindy Herington, Cape Cod resident, Library Youth Services Supervisor
Jane Cain, MLIS, Yarmouth resident, Library Director

A Brief History of the Town of Yarmouth

Before the 1600s, indigenous Wampanoag tribes lived in what are now the towns of Dennis and Yarmouth, the area then known as “Mattacheese” or Mattacheeset” meaning “planting lands” or “planting lands by the sea.” The Plymouth Colony court awarded land grants in Yarmouth to John Crowe, Thomas Howes, and Anthony Thacher, who incorporated the town in 1639, naming it for a seaside town in England. Families settled in the town and focused their commerce on farming. Given Yarmouth’s proximity to the sea, by the late 1600s, fishing, whaling, salt production, sailworks, shipbuilding, and packet transportation were important trades in Yarmouth.

As in many Cape Cod communities, by the late 18th century, Yarmouth was a town of well-established villages. The north side settlement on Cape Cod Bay along the present Route 6A is Yarmouth Port. On the south side, West Yarmouth remained rural for generations. Friends’ Village, now South Yarmouth, was a hub of business activity, much made possible by its access to the Bass River. Many historic homes of ship captains remain in Yarmouth Port and South Yarmouth. Dennis separated and incorporated as a separate town in 1793.

Toward the end of the 19th century, West Yarmouth’s rural land and large stretches of sandy beaches were a prime target for developers who created summer communities. Tourism became, and remains, an important industry in Yarmouth. With tourism, came development. From 25 families in 1639, Yarmouth’s year-round population in 2023 is now more than 25,000. (*The Town of Yarmouth, Massachusetts: A History, 1639–1989*; Marion Vuilleumier)

Yarmouth Population and Demographics

The 2023 Yarmouth, MA, population is 25,286. There are 1,035.9 people per square mile (population density). Since the year 2000, Yarmouth’s population had been trending down.

Year 2000 census: 24,809

Year 2010 census: 24,373

Year 2014 census:* 23,820 (local annual census)

Since the 2020 federal census, and as one result of an international pandemic that upended people’s work and home lives, Yarmouth’s population has actually increased. Given 3+ years of pandemic restrictions and the rise in popularity of remote working, there has been a 9% surge in Yarmouth’s population, putting the current figure at 25,286, according to Massachusetts Department of Revenue statistics.

Sources of data: Town of Yarmouth Local Census, * data from Yarmouth Town Clerk in 2015; Federal Census Bureau, 2020; [Division of Local Services, Massachusetts Department of Revenue](#) – website checked 9-29-23

Family Dynamics in Yarmouth, MA

The median age in Yarmouth is 54.2. The US median is 38.9. Nearly 33% of the population of Yarmouth, as in most towns on Cape Cod, is over the age of 65. The average household size is 2.31 people. 53% of households are occupied by those who are married, 17 % never married, 16 % divorced and 14 % widowed.

Race in Yarmouth, MA

Yarmouth is becoming more diverse. When we last reviewed ethnic population statistics, nearly 94% of town residents were self-identifying as White. At a recent Rotary meeting, Yarmouth's Chief of Police stated that our current population is now 85-86% White. Census data confirms this and tells us: 5.9% are black, 2.9% claim Hispanic ethnicity, 2.6% are Asian, and 0.1% are Native American.

Sources of data: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Current Population Survey, Educational Testing Service and ACT, Inc. National Center for Education Statistics and other sources.

The Town of Yarmouth currently has 596 units of state-approved affordable housing, the equivalent of 5.19% of the town's 11,479 yearround units, up from 405 units or 3.36% in 2010. More than three-quarters (76%) or 454 units involve rentals compared to 24% or 142 ownership units. Given its location on Cape Cod, Yarmouth will continue to be a tourist destination that is attractive to second-homeowners and retirees. Moreover, the ability to work and attend school remotely, further fueled by the pandemic, has put additional pressure on the existing housing stock, draining the supply of housing and driving up prices. Without the creation of considerably more affordable Year-round units are based on total housing units minus seasonal/occasional units or 11,479 units for Yarmouth based on 2020 census data, down from 12,037 in 2010.

(Source: Town of Yarmouth Housing Production Plan, 760 CMR 56.03(4); January 2023, Amended July 2023; Karen Sunnarborg Consulting, with technical support from Town of Yarmouth Director of Community Development, Affordable Housing Administrator, and Town Planner.)

The Community

Yarmouth is in the mid-Cape area, about 20 miles east of the Cape Cod Canal, and is the third largest of the 15 towns on Cape Cod. Yarmouth is bordered on the east by the town of Dennis, on the west by the town of Barnstable, on the north by the Cape Cod Bay, and on the South by Nantucket Sound. Yarmouth's location makes it a popular tourist destination.

Within its 24 square mile area, there are five public schools: three elementary, one newly built and recently opened intermediate school (grades 4-7), and one regional high school shared with the town of Dennis. There is a private parochial elementary school in South Yarmouth and three private nursery schools; seven Protestant churches, three Catholic, one Episcopal, and one Society of Friends (Quaker) meeting house.

In 2015, the World Health Organization deemed Yarmouth an Age-Friendly community – one that supports a thriving older population. Yarmouth’s Council on Aging provides hundreds of programs and classes in a wide range of subjects each year. The high school offers a continuing education program for adults. The Yarmouth Recreation Department offers year-round recreational activities for town residents and visitors. With 14 beaches, four golf courses, the variety of accommodations along the 6-mile stretch of Route 28 on the south side and the historic charm of Route 6A on the north side, Yarmouth offers much to people of all ages.

The Town of Yarmouth is governed by a five-member Board of Selectmen. A full-time Town Administrator administers their policies. An annual Town Meeting is held each April, with special Town Meetings called most years in the fall.

Yarmouth’s population more than doubles during the summer months with an influx of tourists and other summer visitors. During the past several years, that population also increases during the “shoulder seasons,” extending the summer season into late spring and early fall. Following nearly three years of pandemic-related restrictions on everyone’s lives and livelihoods, Yarmouth is evolving into a year-round community for more of its residents, resulting in a strain on our infrastructure with the increased population.

The tax rate for FY 2023 is \$8.11 per thousand dollars of assessed evaluation. (This is \$3.55 less than the tax rate in 2002.) The municipal budget for FY 2022 was approximately \$85,939,440, including the school budget. The FY2023 town appropriation for the library system is \$1,036,536. The library received State Aid in FY 2023 of [\\$45,251](#).

History of Yarmouth Libraries

The three libraries in the Town of Yarmouth share similar histories. All began as small reading associations in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, later incorporating as libraries: Yarmouth Port in 1866, South Yarmouth in 1869, and West Yarmouth in 1891. South Yarmouth Library started as an historic homestead built circa 1841. There have been five additions to the library, the latest in 1990 when a new children’s room, meeting room and an elevator were added. The South Yarmouth Library Association owned the building until 1998, when it turned over the management of the facility to the Town. The administrative offices for the South Yarmouth and West Yarmouth town libraries is in this building.

The West Yarmouth Library was founded in 1863 and in 1891, the West Yarmouth Library Association was formed to maintain the library. In 1965, a new building, funded by Mr. and Mrs. Harold Castonguay in honor of their daughter Ann, was built. In 1971, the Castonguays provided the funds to build an addition to the library.

The Yarmouth Port Library was founded in 1866 and in 1871, the Yarmouth Library Association was formed to manage the library. Three additions were added in 1881, 1951, and in 1958. The Yarmouth Port Library is a public library that is privately owned, funded, and managed by the Yarmouth Library Association.

Until the 1990s, when a Town Library Board was formed, the three libraries operated as independent entities, each governed by a board of trustees, with its own head librarian independently administering its own budget. Town Meeting approved the creation of a 7-person Library Board appointed by the Selectmen in August of 1994 and a Library Commission to study library issues. In 1995 this group recommended one centrally managed public library department. Currently, the Town Library Board acts in an advisory capacity to the Board of Selectmen and reviews broad library policies.

In 1996 the Town approved a Proposition 2 ½ override that effectively increased the library's budget by 60%. The override added 4.5 full-time positions to the staff, increased the materials budget, and provided funding for public access computers. The override brought Yarmouth libraries up to the average level of funding as in other Cape libraries.

In May of 1999, the Town Library Board commissioned a study to ascertain space requirements to meet determined library service needs. The study considered several options for improvement. The recommendation was to expand the South Yarmouth Library and to retain two village libraries at West Yarmouth and Yarmouth Port. Unfortunately, in 2005, a Town vote to approve matching funds for a planning and design grant for new construction of a main library facility was narrowly defeated. After the Great Recession in 2008, appropriations for the Town Libraries were cut 17% in two years. At that time, 3.5 library staff positions were lost and management and financial responsibility for the Yarmouth Port branch was turned back to the private Association.

Any plan for modernizing and developing more efficient library space has been on hold for the last decade, due to changing local, state, and national economic and social conditions. Recent extreme weather (heavy snowstorms in 2014 and 2015 and a tornado that touched down in town in July 2019) has increased our awareness of climate resiliency and sustainability. In February 2023 the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners announced a new grant round for library renovation or construction, and community interest in the library's future has risen.

The town has embarked on a consultant-led Community Needs Assessment project and is currently updating its library building program document, drafted in 2018, to assess community library needs and prioritize resources to move to new space or upgrade one of

the two current available municipal buildings for shared space, or one or both of our current public library facilities. Yarmouth ranks last or nearly last among all Cape libraries in space per capita, collection size per capita, and spending per capita. Space recommendations for a community the size of Yarmouth suggest we secure twice as much square footage as we currently have. (We are 100% undersized!) More voters need to realize this deficiency in the Town library system.

Appendix C shows comparative data across Cape Cod libraries; it is clear that Yarmouth’s data ranks the community at the low end of conditions, such as per capita spending, per capita square footage, number of meeting room, study spaces, and availability of parking at each facility.

Current Town Library Statistics

In FY2023, the **South Yarmouth Library** held 110,669 titles, including 33,123 books, 327 volumes of print periodicals, 2,480 audiobooks and music CDs, 6,326 video discs, 31,360 e-books, 12,379 downloadable audio items, and 324 miscellaneous materials (electronic and traditional games, kits, puzzles, etc.) The **West Yarmouth Library** holds 25,813 items in these formats: 19,228 books; 106 print periodicals, 1,044 audiobooks and music CDs, 4,041 videos and 94 miscellaneous materials. New formats on hand in recent years include puzzles for adults (500-1,000 piece, all provided through donations), computer accessories (*e.g.*, cables, chargers) and portable wireless internet access devices, “hotspots.”

Library Affiliations

The Library is a member of the Massachusetts Library System, a state-supported collaborative fostering cooperation, communication, innovation, and sharing among member libraries of all types; and the CLAMS network that provides resource sharing, direct and equal access, and meet every patron’s needs, through cooperation, leadership, and technology.

FY 2023 Library Programs and Attendance:

	Programs	Program Atten. Adults	Prog. Atten. ' tweens & Teens	Prog. Atten. Children	Public Computer Sessions	Total Visits to Library
SY Lib	256	106	53	3,259	8,077	27,866
WY Lib	36	10	0	371	4,039	18,502

Community Library Needs Assessment Methodology

To secure broad input from community residents of all ages and interests for both strategic planning and space planning, the Town Library Board and the Library Planning Committee have begun community conversations on how best to plan for future library services.

Pre-pandemic, a Library Study *ad hoc* Committee member interviewed our Town Police Chief, our head of Community Services, and other voices in Yarmouth. There was a lack of awareness on the need for more and improved library space back in 2018.

This past spring, a Library Board member interviewed Middle School students and produced a “wish list” from our younger community residents. (see Appendices D) The Library Board has done their own focus group to help set planning priorities for the Library.

In June of 2023, Michelle Eberle of the Massachusetts Library System visited Yarmouth for a public library planning meeting that utilized Strength Opportunities Aspirations and Results (SOAR) analysis, and brainstorming visioning questions and statements. In the Appendices to this document are a list of SOAR comments, a summary of prioritized hopes and desires of the June planning session, and results from the surveys. A print Strategic Planning survey has been available at each library, at Town Hall and at the Senior Center, to reach out beyond our walls to seek contributions to the planning effort from non-users as well as users. The survey has been available online at the Library’s website during the month of September. At the September 1 meeting of a 74-member Yarmouth Rotary organization, the Library Director secured dozens of print Strategic Plan survey responses. We received 100 surveys and those were tabulated and reviewed by the Library Director and Library staff. Comments on social media relating to library planning have been collected, as well as emails sent to Town Administration and Library leadership from Yarmouth residents.

The Town of Yarmouth has sponsored two significant planning studies, providing valuable information from a Town Visioning Study from February 2022 and a Town Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan just released in August 2023. The Visioning Plan identified what is valued in the community, the challenges ahead, and the community’s collective vision for Yarmouth’s future. This Visioning Study included a series of public forums and two surveys. The Vision Plan is intended to provide a solid foundation for updating the Town’s Local Comprehensive Plan (LCP), which serves as Yarmouth’s long-term master plan. The Draft Open Space and Recreation Plan research has complemented the Library’s Strategic Planning in securing community input regarding what Yarmouth residents want and need in their community.

source: Town of Yarmouth Housing Production Plan, 760 CMR 56.03 (4),
January 2023, Amended July 2023.

What We Heard

Four themes emerged from the SOAR brainstorming, not unlike the last time we sought community input on library services back in 2014-15. Certain ideas were repeated, overlapped and became the focus of this new Strategic Plan. Those four conclusive themes allowed us to develop goals and objectives around the following ideas:

Intergenerational Activities

After lively discussions about what an ideal community should be and how the library could contribute to that ideal condition, people want more family events in town. The events should be diverse and accessible, located in venues convenient to a variety of neighborhoods. One resident suggested “Shakespeare on the Lawn,” at the West Yarmouth Library. Ideas such as “Olde Home Day,” or an annual community gathering like an ice cream social open to all ages were suggested. In our active community, people want learning opportunities and to increase their cultural experience and awareness. Outdoor walking trails and paths would be welcome. The Library is seen as an important place for many activities and should be a perfect destination.

Community

Yarmouth residents want their library to have a presence in the community – a place of pride and a comfortable destination for them to meet friends, visitors or family members and share all the library has to offer. They want their Library to contribute to a strong local community and to our democracy at large. People have enjoyed our shift to outdoor programs and want to see more of that: nature walks, use of the bike trails, classes and workshops on topics such as our unique coastal environment and on the future of weather and climate on Cape Cod.

Collaboration

During the SOAR exercise in June, many attendees agreed that the library collaborate in the community with other organizations, such as the Cultural Center of Cape Cod, the Dennis-Yarmouth School District, Rotary, the Chamber of Commerce, and other non-profits. Library staff discuss our increased outreach with the businesses in town and with group homes for adults with unique library needs. We want our services, programs, and collection to be more diverse, equitable and accessible than we have traditionally been.

Commons

Cape Cod offers diverse educational opportunities: classes at the Cultural Center and through the Program of Lifelong Learning at Cape Cod Community College, at local schools and at nearby libraries. Yarmouth residents want to be part of that learning culture and want their library to offer more lectures by experts or authors and a large variety of cultural events. There were repeated requests for meeting space and study rooms for co-working space, “like at the other libraries on the Cape.”

Yarmouth Town Library Division of Community Services Department Long-Range Strategic Plan ~ FY2025-FY2030 ~ Goals and Objectives

Given what we have learned, and how we are evolving as a library system, and in conjunction with the prioritized goals and objectives that were the result of our community input, library staff and board members have developed action items for the future.

Goal One: The Library will serve as a hub for the collection of community information, will provide welcoming spaces for and plan a variety of *intergenerational programming*.

Objective 1.1: The Library staff consistently reviews, updates and publishes community information in a variety of print and digital formats. Library staff will aim to publish 10 notices each month in a variety of platforms: online and in print.

- a) Develop teams of Library staff to share responsibility, including the Reference Librarian, Youth Services Librarian and Staff Librarians.
- b) Publish community events, including those from other town departments, as part of Library's communication effort.

Objective 1.2: Library staff and related municipal departments (Public Works, Recreation, IT, Senior Services, Health) will evaluate all Town sites for accessible, efficient meeting and program spaces.

- a) Continue to reconfigure existing space to accommodate a variety of programs and services for all ages; acquire mobile furniture and storage options.
- a) Director, Principal Office Assistant and two Department Heads will meet regularly to plan a variety of programs, focusing on intergenerational audiences, throughout the Town.
- b) Report to Library Board by December 31, 2023 with a plan for calendar year 2024.
- c) Library Director will provide regular reports to Town leadership.

Objective 1.3: Library staff will continue to assess library space, furnishings and technology needs throughout FY 2025-2028.

- a) Library staff will review and share professional literature on library space utilization and technology topics, 2023-2025.
- b) Library staff will work with Community Needs Assessment consultant (see Appendix F, Workplan for gathering community library needs assessment Fall 2023-Spring 2024.)
- c) Revise Library Building Program document to report on facility and technology deficiencies and recommended space needs to Library Board, Library Planning Committee and Town's Select Board.

- d) Update 2018 Library Facilities Assessment report and monitor school building assessments during 2024-2025.

Objective 1.4: Library Director, staff, and Library Planning Committee (LPC) will have prepared application for the Massachusetts Public Library Construction Program through our Board of Commissioners (MBLC) for Design and Construction grant announced in February 2023.

- a) With announcement of grant award in the Fall of 2024 (and our being selected), planning and design can begin on new or renovated Library facility.
- b) Develop a Building Committee to work through the Design phase of construction.
- c) Report progress to Town leadership and to the public on a regular basis.

Goal Two: Library leadership will work to build consensus regarding library needs in the *community* and provide a platform to demonstrate library support.

Objective 2.1: Library Director, Association leadership and Library Board will recruit two community groups: one to plan library programs and services and one to advocate for improved Library facilities and staff development during FY 2024-2025.

Objective 2.2: By FY 2026, Library Director will secure additional Town appropriations for adequate staffing for Library Administration, Community Outreach and Communications/Marketing.

- a) Library Director, Library Board and Library Department Heads will develop a plan to educate the public on what a modern library does.
- b) Analyze tasks; describe steps to efficient execution of goals, and again, compare staffing levels to libraries considered “right-sized” that are keeping up with public demand for space, programs and services.
- c) Library leadership will continue to get out into the community with positive messages and images on successes at the Library.

Objective 2.3: The Library will sponsor and collaborate on a variety of educational and cultural programs to enrich the community and to increase community awareness of library services. There will be a minimum of six collaborative programs in FY 2025-2026.

- a) Library staff will put on a program at Yarmouth Senior Center in early 2024 on “Getting the Most from Your Local Library.”
- b) Director and Library Department Heads will attend local Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, Historical Society meetings and events in the community and talk with key people about sharing resources to put together programs.

- c) Yarmouth Town Libraries Director will communicate with Yarmouth Port Library Director to co-host programs at a minimum of once each season.
- d) Library will continue to participate in WHO Age-Friendly Committee at the Yarmouth Senior Center, to build a thoughtful community that embraces aging.

Goal Three: Yarmouth Library will strive to provide open and accessible space with meeting places for different size groups and for people of all ages; contributing to a “learning commons” infrastructure for ongoing educational and cultural programs and services.

Objective 3.1: Increase number of open-air programs, utilizing gazebo and outdoor seating at South Yarmouth Library, and front lawn space at West Yarmouth library.

- a) Continue to monitor safety issues during outdoor programming, and utilize volunteers to help with crowd management.
- b) Work with Town Police and Fire to maintain safety standards for programming at Town facilities.

Conclusion

As we look ahead to planning library services and programming for the future, we can’t help but “look back” to planning efforts over several years – actually, since the 1970s. Study after study has concluded that the library facilities are inadequate to service the community. In addition, when library services to a community of 25,000 are compared to other similarly-sized communities, it becomes clear that Yarmouth Town Libraries are undersized and outdated. The situation has continued, and declined further in the past five years. <See App. C, Benchmarking> Library administration now has a sufficient level of funding to maintain current staffing and expenses. Recent improvements in the materials budget and program funding from our two Library Associations/Friends groups has made the library a stronger presence in the community – a place where people can find what they need for their education, curiosity, community connections, cultural enrichment. Yet we, as a community, must face current facilities challenges and together, find the strength to fund and build a better future.

In the foreseeable future, our public library leaders, staff, and support groups will focus on:

Services: Continue to expand services for teens and adults; publicize library programs and services for all ages in our community. Focus on keeping library staff technology skills sharp and reach out to other organizations to provide training that is in high demand in Yarmouth.

Space: Continue to reconfigure existing spaces, find more room for comfortable seating, quiet space, collaborative work space for the public and for the Library staff. Our current cramped library spaces have old electric and heating/cooling systems and are often under repair. We must make the community aware of these deficiencies and communicate how this hampers our capacity to provide services and programming that they see in other nearby communities.

Funding: Now that we have met our Minimum Appropriation Requirement for a few years, it is time to think about not only improving our annual appropriation, but maintaining our place in the Town’s long-range capital planning, so that we can seriously consider improving our physical library facilities, or combining our resources into one modern, centrally located library facility.

We must consider these priorities:

- Retention of our trained and knowledgeable staff;
- Increased hours of operation at the libraries– for programming and to satisfy demand;
- Expanded services, such as space for a learning commons and private work, co-working and study space, and sufficient technology to accommodate that demand.

All of this takes adequate funding and a reasonable staffing level to allow sufficient “off-desk” time for Staff Librarians and Library Department Heads to work together and plan. The first year of our FY 2025 – FY 2030 Strategic Plan will focus on securing grant funding to plan for adequate and improved physical space for our library staff to work more efficiently and effectively, and the development of better, more realistic space for the public to enjoy. Yarmouth Town Libraries will continue to thrive.

Appendix A: Massachusetts Library System SOAR & Visioning Exercises

Yarmouth Town Libraries Community Forum

June 8, 2023 Thursday night, 6 – 8 p.m.

Library Director: Jane Cain

Attended by 32 participants from the community

Facilitated by Michelle Eberle, Consultant, Massachusetts Library System

Opener: Describe the Library in one word or phrase

- Hub
- Staff- helpful
- Wonderful staff
- Welcoming (2)
- Helpful
- Friendly
- Vital
- Lifesaving
- Special
- Comforting
- Easy
- Necessity
- Necessary
- Romance
- Books and research
- Informative (2)
- Learning and enjoyment
- Open to everyone
- Interconnector
- Heart and soul – community
- Community
- Historical
- Strong neighborhood
- Mainstay in local neighborhood
- Essential and welcoming community center
- Convenient
- Potential
- Missing

Strengths: what we do best

- **Staff** - informed, welcoming, leadership
- Materials - **online**
- **Response in COVID**
- Love of local availability
- Familiarity
- Sense of belonging
- **Accessibility**
- Ease of **access** to library
- Programs for children and elderly
- **Staff** - outstanding and professional
- Ride bikes to libraries
- Personal needs met
- **Accessibility during COVID**
- Beautiful building - W. Yarmouth
- Beautiful building - neighborhood
- **Staff** - #1 - welcoming atmosphere - navigating interests
- Internet **access** - digital divide
- Job seekers
- **Programs** for all ages
- Wealth of resources in consortia
- **Staff** - director
- **Staff** like neighborhood bartenders
- **Reader's advisory**
- **Collections**
- **Reference materials**
- Looking at update - services
- Hours
- No late fees
- Automatic renewal
- **Response during COVID** and with opening

Opportunities: trends, circumstances, partnerships

- **MBLC Grant**
- Community **partnerships – south and west** – decrease silos
- Partnerships -schools, senior centers, town government, cultural center, Rotary
- Civic association partnerships – hub for associations to meet – cultural center – more localized historical program.
- Collaboration with local businesses, Family Table, corporate sponsors
- Business government and community partnership
- Programs with local businesses
- Tutoring nights w/ students at Cape Cod Community College
- Presentations for students – local organizations
- Partnerships – w/police for neighborhood safety
- Partner with summer residents
- Partnership w/natural resources of town – future of ponds and ocean
- Students – gaps
- Tutoring, young people
- **IT**
- **IT** – library as a hub for intergenerational mentoring – teens social media buddies for older adults
- Expansion
- Pirate museum program
- **Education and training**
- **Book clubs (2)**
- **Lawn parties**
- **Local students** to volunteer – learn more about how libraries operate
- Keep pace with **technology**
- **Computer** programs – **group training, small room training** for Zoom meetings.
- Express libraries
- Planning – facilities
- Space to meet

Aspirations: our hopes and dreams

- **Funding** – best possible from town
- Recognition of **importance of the libraries – town services**
- More community **activities bring whole town together**
- W. and S. Yarmouth Library remain open and expanded – strengthen library facilities – **village feel**
- Keep pace with **technology**
- Gathering space for intellectual aspiration
- Learning and leisure
- Unique personalities
- Library as an **intellectual beehive**
- Self-checkout
- Fundraising

- Virtual Reality opportunities
- Open to all options regarding space
- **Increase budget for staff**
- **Space** for Zoom workshops
- More **outdoor programs** – for all generations – civic association – meetings
- Architecture – **update infrastructure**
- Safe place in emergencies
- Generator
- Charging stations
- **Space** for staff – outdoors – more light – more welcoming
- ADA – reading, study rooms, presentation rooms
- Arts
- Paintings
- Engagement with non-English speakers
- More programs
- More diverse collection
- Shakespeare in the park
- Community gardens with programs – painting
- Yoga
- Café

*Also, please refer to separate attachment with spreadsheet highlighting responses from the sticky note brainstorm.

Results: measures of success

- Diversity
- Measurable goals – include all stakeholders
- Open to change and new ideas
- # patrons using library
- # library cards
- Circulation
- Funding
- Meeting space
- Appreciation
- Lifelong learning
- Community spirit

Wave a Magic Wand

If you could have one wish for the library come true, what would that be?

- **Greater financial support** for library
- **Programs** geared to **diverse** population groups.
- **More Space**
- A **community space** big enough for everyone to be together.
- **A place where all the goals mentioned tonight can be realized.**
- Outreach to a **more diverse** community
- Serving the needs of all ages and **diverse populations** of the town
- Ample **space**
- **Culturally diverse** programs

- Continue outstanding staff
- That librarians have budgets that are based on optimism, not always budget constrained!
- A library that will **serve all people, no matter age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and be a center of learning and joy**
- **More diverse community programs** for whole town.
- **Consensus on the way to improve library services.**
- **Expansion of library services**
- 100% funding from the town
- **Increase IT**
- **South Yarmouth and West Yarmouth** still exist and are **kept up to date.**
- More **money** in town budget **for staff**
- The **library is a “cool” place where my daughter wants to go with friends.**
- That it still will be in existence
- Library **serves more diverse**
- A **100-million-dollar gift** with no restrictions – library staff decides.
- Library would play a central part in all town communication and education and activities.

Visioning: Participants were asked to complete the following statement:

“I dream of a Yarmouth where...”

“Everyone from Yarmouth can come together,

Come together to see recitals, art, paint outside.

Come together to share a cup of coffee and talk.

...there is vibrancy & creativity. Many opportunities for all segments of the community

...where people are friendly, vacant businesses are now thriving, housing is available to those who need it, and I can enjoy the beach and natural environment with my many relatives and friends.

...where Route 28 is cleaner and more inviting. Perhaps more family-style gatherings more often.

...where things stay clean, healthy, safe.

...I can walk to a neighborhood library that I am proud of and supports my needs in retirement and the aspirations of my community.

...where all have equal access.

...a community where intellectual pursuits are nurtured.

...where my child can walk or ride her bike safely to all necessary resources.

...where families can afford to live in order to thrive. Safe housing, great schools, community resources and reasonable day care costs.

...where the villages remain and embrace the historical past and not grow into a major metropolitan area where the neighborhoods and villages disappear.

...where my grandchildren can grow up like my wife did...summer fun!

...where we keep our village! It's not a town like those "off Cape," but small, quaint, and well read! It also makes sure those in need have enough food and all children have a bed to sleep in.

...residents are heard.

...where there are trees and flower boxes along Rt. 28 all in bloom and properties taken care of – by all residents.

...where people come together in mutual respect and celebrate diversity of ideas & are open to others' viewpoints.

...where all people are thriving because it is an inclusive, compassionate community which values and protects its wonderful environment.

...where there are multiple sources of intellectual stimulation and opportunities to interact with a broad spectrum of community members.

...where we have a place for the community members to learn, grow, and socialize with one another.

...where the library serves all people of all ages, etc., with exciting architecture, and inviting spaces and staff.

...where there is a downtown area to shop, eat and meet at a library that serves as a community center. I also dream of a Yarmouth where the water is crystal clear and swimmable.

...a community where there is no pollution or prejudice.

...1) where neighbor helps neighbor.

...2) where each individual can live their best life.

...3) where we preserve beauty of our natural [sic] for other generations.

...where everyone's voice is consider[ed], included, and welcomed.

...where our library will continue to grow.

...with fewer empty buildings on its main roads. I dream of modern improved public buildings open and accessed by everyone in the town. I dream of ways to bring Yarmouth into the future.

... all are accepted – where people can afford to live – where there a[re] places to gather, learn, discuss and enjoy – from birth – to old age...

...all citizens of all ages are active contributors to the community and who benefit from all community resources.

...there is acceptance for all, where all people feel welcome everywhere in our town.”

Report submitted by Michelle Eberle 6/20/2023.

Appendix B: Yarmouth Library Strategic Planning session June 6-8, 2023-the StickyNotes Exercise, during MLS-led Yarmouth Library Strategic Planning Community Discussion

Brainstorm New Services, Resources, Programs, Partnerships

Resources – technology, books, mtg rms, etc. outdoor space
Fresh children’s books – so they look new & fresh
Significant collections of foreign language books, esp. Portuguese (2)
More resources for non-native speakers
Increased resources, for underserved groups in the community
Partnership with a more diverse community
More little free libraries

Partnerships with town government, community organizations, schools
Educate people as to the importance of the library as part of a [great?] community
Outreach to summer residents
Partnership w/the business community
Create relationship with Town communications committee/
department to education <sic> town on activities
Partnerships with other towns, as well as Yarmouth
Student internships
Social media mentoring

Services:

Greater fundraising efforts to fund more services
Books on Wheels (sim to Meals on Wheels) for those unable to drive – **we do that/better publicity?**
Opportunities for ESOL learners – materials, perhaps tutors
Job matching for teenagers with local businesses
Expanded IT services and training
Expand IT
Meet with friends during snow storm and watch the storm and charge my phone

Programs:

Children’s activities (5) – although the program is great now!
Ice cream social with musical entertainment
Author series (3) / Writer lecture series – **we do that/better publicity?**
Paint plein air in the new gardens...
Intergenerational programs
More outdoor activities
Discussion group – specific topics
Recording of political debates and having available for view
Outside activities: plays, concerts, readings
Service-intergenerational program
Media learning opportunities
Community activities – one book one town as an example
Lawn theme party from a classic book
More community programs & involvement
Meetings of local civic associations
Community activities as “Shakespeare in the Park”

Administration:

Continue to employ quality staff

People open to new library – st{illegible] agendas

Make architectural innovation [a?] major part of any future plans/design

Take the lists from all towns you have gathered and send or email to all the towns to share ideas. You don't know what you don't know

Additional funding sources

A membership "Friends of Library" dues paid- **we do that/better publicity?**

Clear precise goals & a specific way to measure success – frequent questions of patrons

Funding for library a town priority

Please schedule a "listening session" where members of public may express thoughts about closing existing facilities

More funding for materials

More staff to fill positions lost in the recession

Appendix C: Strategic Planning Survey for Yarmouth Town Libraries: 2025-2030

An [online survey](#) and print copies of the survey were made available to the community during the month of September. The results from 147 responses are shown below:

STRATEGIC PLANNING SURVEY FOR YARMOUTH TOWN LIBRARIES : 2025-2030

1.

Which library do you use the most?

Mark only one oval.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| <input type="radio"/> West Yarmouth Library | 23.8% |
| <input type="radio"/> Yarmouth Port Library | 12.6% |
| <input type="radio"/> South Yarmouth Library | 53.1% |
| <input type="radio"/> Other Cape Library(ies) | 2% |
| <input type="radio"/> I use the Library online | 3% |
| <input type="radio"/> I don't use the Library | 3% |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: | 2% |

2.How often do you visit the library?

Mark only one oval.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="radio"/> Weekly | 30.4% |
| <input type="radio"/> More than once a week | 14.1% |
| <input type="radio"/> About every month | 28.9% |
| <input type="radio"/> A couple times a year | 11.9% |
| <input type="radio"/> Other: | 6% |

3. What resources and materials do you want to see more of in the Yarmouth libraries?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|--|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Audiobooks/Playaways | 16.5% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DVDs | 22.7% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> eAudio and eBooks (Libby/Hoopla apps) | 28.5% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Large Print Books | 20.3% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Regular Print Books | 39.8% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Newspapers/Magazines | 18.7% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meeting Room Space | 26 % |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Study Space | 18.7% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Computers | 16.3% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Internet for my own device | 22% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Printing/Copying | 17.9% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | 11% |

4. What types of programs would you like to see?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Crafts | 29.8% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Help with devices (phone, tablets, etc.) | 35.5% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Book Discussion Groups | 41.1% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Programs | 25.8% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Teen Programs | 16.9% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Wellness/Fitness | 38.7% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music/Theater Performances | 29% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Author Talks | 49.2% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Speakers on current events/issues/other topics | 57.3% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | |

5. Do you drive to the library, use public transportation, or walk/ride bike? Mark only one oval.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drive to Library | 85.2% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Take the Bus, Lyft, etc. | 2.5% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ride Bike | 2.5% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Walk to Library | 10.7% |

6. What days/times are good for you to attend programs at the library?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekdays | 64.7% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Weekends | 43.6% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mornings | 39.8% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Afternoons | 56.4% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evenings | 47.4% |

7. How would you like to hear about local library events?

Check all that apply.

- | | |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library's eNewsletter | 64.7% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signs/fliers at Library | 33.1% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signs/fliers around Town | 12.8% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Media | 37.6% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Library Website | 51.9% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Word of Mouth | 7.5% |

8. What improvements to current library services would you like to see? (See Excel Spreadsheet attached for comments here and for question 12).

9. Please tell us about yourself - age: Mark only one oval.

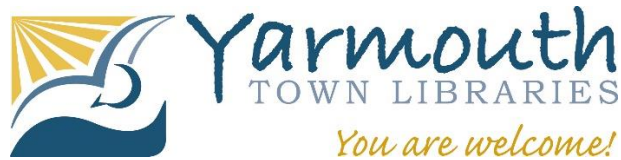
- Age 0 to 5
- Age 6-12
- Age 13-18
- Age 19-29
- Age 30-49
- Age 50-64
- Age 65-80
- Age 80-100

10. Please tell us about yourself - gender: Mark only one oval.

- Male
- Female
- Non-Binary
- Transgender
- Other

11. Your email (optional): _____

12. Any further comments?



Appendix D: Benchmark Study of Cape Libraries

Analysis done by Library Planning Committee; based on FY 2023 ARIS and Financial Report data collected by MBLC in 2022.

Town	Pop.	No. of Libraries	Sq. Footage	Largest Lib. per Square Foot	Sq. Ft. per Person	Total Ann. Circulation (2022)	Circulation Per Person	Town Appropriation per Capita
Barnstable	48,916	7	71,853	20,100 - Osterville	1.469	604,510	12.358	\$39.82
Bourne	20,452	1	16,000	16,000 - Main	0.782	148,501	7.261	\$38.77
Brewster	10,318	1	23,418	23,418 - Main	2.269	173,467	16.812	\$67.27
Chatham	6,594	2	18,361	18,000 Eldrige	2.784	115,525	17.52	\$93.38
Dennis	14,674	5	22,294	10,000 -DPL	1.519	215,827	14.708	\$42.20
Eastham	5,752	1	17,815	17,815 - Main	3.097	128,364	22.316	\$95.63
Falmouth	32,517	3	52,530	40,000 - FPL	1.615	414,146	12.736	\$67.57
Harwich	13,440	3	23,312	20,312 - Brooks	1.735	243,821	18.141	\$78.33
Mashpee	15,060	1	22,000	22,000 - Main	1.461	199,481	13.246	\$48.03
Orleans	6,307	1	16,568	16,568 - Main	2.627	100,528	15.939	\$106.86
Provincetown	3,664	1	10,990	10,900 - Main	2.975	51,860	14.154	\$112.39
Sandwich	20,259	1	18,000	18,000 - Main	0.889	165,064	8.148	\$51.00
Truro	2,454	1	11,623	11,623 - Main	4.734	43,039	16.911	\$182.85
Wellfleet	3,556	1	10,000	10,000 - Main	2.812	105,993	29.807	\$149.15
Yarmouth	25,023	3	18,000	8,990 - So. Yar.	0.719	217,275	8.683	\$37.08

Appendix E: Mattacheese Middle School Focus Group Results

1. Have you visited any of the public libraries? (Not the library located at Mattacheese Middle School, but one of the local, public libraries outside of school?)

61 responses

Many times	27.9%
A Few times	50.8%
Never	16.4%
Once	1.5%
Like 2 times	1.5%
I went to the Sandwich Public Library a couple times	1.9%

2. Where do you live? 60 responses

Yarmouth	65%
Dennis	26.7%
Bamstable	5%
Dunno. Dennis I think	2%
Harwich	1.3%

3. What would you like to do at the public library? Check all that apply:

61 responses

Borrow books
Outlet study or homework
Technology activities (coding,
Hands on activities
Join an after school activity
Take a class or workshop to learn .
Look around
Read in a corner
I am not to

4. What after-school library activities interest you?

60 responses

Crafts/Makerspace	56.7%
Video Games	53.3%
Cooking	35%
Sewing/Cosplay	28.3%
Magic/D&D/L.A.R.P.	18.3%
Book Discussion/Fandom	16.7%
Author Visits	5% .

**5. If there was an area in the library focused on teens, what would you like to see in that teen room?
List or describe your ideas**

55 responses

I dont know

Nothing really

Books

Quite study area

Good books Art, make stuff,

Video games the trendy ones.

Computer, Romance books.

Cosplay, décor, etc.

Computers with spotify to listen to music while studying or sitting there with your friends, bracelet stuff
idk

Maybe a craft spot or video games.

I dont know

A gaming room

Computers, maybe things to draw with, some young adult type of books.

A couch so they can relax and get there anger out

Terror books.

No.

The Song of Achilles, Harry Potter, anything by Rick Riordan

Young Adu(lt) books, comfy seating, scrap paper, a table, mellow lighting, etc

Baby sitters ?

Scarry books

I do not now

None

Higher level books; LED strip lights, a trendy aesthetic, crafts, comfy sitting area, a safe feeling space.

Video games and arts and crafts supplies

Some more young adult novels

maybe some tips to help make your dream job come true at a young age but i dont really know it could be anything, doesnt really matter:)

Maybe a spot for doing crafts or a spot to play video games

No

Starwars. And games

I dont have any ideas

better things

I dont really go in the teen room.

Idk

I dont know nice chairs a bean bag

Bean bags

It would have a quiet place to study.

Crafts Well honestly, I dont know what every teen likes for I am only 11

A place to read, study, and socialize

A phone area where they can use their phone only for a certain amount of time

Sports books

No because a lot of the teen books dont intrest <sic> me

Deadpool, Marvel, ps5, x-box, violente <sic> books

Computers, 3d printers and books

Maker space/ arts crafts

Video games and manga

I don't want to go to the teen room

Games. cosplay, crafts, music.

Legos, video games, and the arts of crafts

Tv, been <sic> bag chairs, cool lights, grafic <sic> novals <sic>