

LONG RANGE PLAN

2011 - 2016

Library Board

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LIBRARY VISION STATEMENT

The Simsbury Public Library should be the first stop for any needed information in the community. Residents, businesses and town government will turn to the Library first when they need information, referrals, research, information technology assistance, consultation, reader's advisory and recreation. The Library serves as a triage point with qualified staff advising on the pathways to information. The Library is physical place as well as a virtual service. Residents are able to access the Library through its electronic resources. The Library is accessible 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The overarching purpose of the Library is to simplify the complexity of modern life and support residents of all ages in making smoother transitions in our ever-changing world. Both in its physical and electronic form, the Library provides an environment conducive to thinking and learning. In a world of fragmented information, the librarians will help people put pieces of the puzzle together.

The overarching purpose of the Library is to enable all residents to access every available medium through which information may be gained.

Service Objectives:

Information Literacy:

It is our goal to provide training and Library instruction services, specifically teaching the public to find and evaluate information. The Library will provide access to information and will offer public Internet training and access as well as training in the use of the online catalog and related informational databases. Recognizing the huge role that technology continues to play in information services, the Library will maintain a full teaching schedule in the Technology Learning Center for residents of all ages and technical skills levels.

We base our decision on the following:

Accumulated information from other libraries, The American Library Association, various Library Journals and publications and a survey of Simsbury Library users conducted in June 2010.

Survey results that show that 68% of Library users use of the Library's website and that such use is widespread among all age groups. Source: Simsbury Public Library Patron Survey, July 17, 2010.

The Simsbury Commission on Government Report, January 1994, addresses the role of the library as the center for life-long learning and recommends the following: "Consider utilizing the Library as the Town's training center to conduct seminars and /or skills enhancement programs" p.29.

Goal: Expand information literacy programs so that all users will be able to use Library materials independently. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of interactions between librarian and patron where instruction occurred.
- # of times licensed databases are used at home and within the library
- # of hits to the library's website
- # of attendees who are new to Information Literacy programs

Goal: Continue to manage and expand the scope of offerings at the Technology Learning Center. Measurable objectives include:

- # of workstations
- # staff hours available for technology help
- # of programs presented
- # of new programs and applications available on Technology Learning Center computers
- # of Learning Center computers
- # and age range of attendees
- # of suggestions for future programs and enhanced services
- % of positive user evaluations

Technology requirements:

- Presentation equipment (LCD projector, smart board)
- Teaching software (Synchron Eyes)
- Wireless Internet and printing services
- Variety of software applications
- Fastest Internet available
- Maintain the infrastructure of the Technology Learning Center at current standards
- Provide continuous training for staff
- Redesign entire Library Website except BRC pages

We expect to expand this service by 2% yearly for 5 years

Commons:

It is our goal to provide an environment, which addresses the need of people to meet and interact with others in the community and to participate in public discourse about community issues.

We base our decision to include this service objective on the following:

Simsbury's "Plan of Development" states as a goal: "To promote further development of Simsbury Center as the governmental, institutional, cultural, recreational and business / retail center of the community".

Simsbury's Main Street Partnership Simsbury Center Design Charrette, 2009, which addresses the need to maintain a vibrant Town Center. The Library, with its long hours of operation (open 64 hours/week) and steady stream of customers insures that there is life in the downtown area, especially in the evenings and on weekends. Increase awareness of all that Simsbury has to offer with the Library as designated Town Visitor's Center.

According to the 2004 User Survey, 25 % of respondents indicated that they visited with friends at the Library and 59 % attended library programs.

Research showing the need for "third spaces" a place that is neither home nor work but a public space where people, especially telecommuters, can interact.

Goal: Increase awareness of the Library as Commons thereby directly benefitting local businesses and increasing Library patronage. Increase awareness of all that Simsbury has to offer with the Library as designated Town Visitor's Center. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of notices regarding Library programs in print and on-line media
- # of notices regarding Library programs on SCTV and social media
- # and frequency of email updates of Library programs to Library Patrons
- # of outreach talks by staff, Friends and Board about the Library as Town's Living Room
- # of programs broadcast or podcast

Goal: Expand the Commons function of the Library. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of affinity groups such as French conversation, English conversation, slam poets and Scrabble that meet informally throughout the Library
- # attending TGIF (free coffee on first Friday of the month)
- # of community organizations that meet in the Library
- # of Library programs
- # attending Library programs
- Increase in % of lounge seating occupied at any particular time

Goal: Expand the commons facilities and enhance Friends Bookstore and Café. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of sq. ft. devoted to programming and meeting rooms
- # of seasonal outdoor seats with Wi-Fi capability
- # of linear feet of face-out display added
- # of additional parking spaces
- # of complaints about public bathrooms' cleanliness and working order

Technology needs:

- Fast wireless internet connectivity with wireless printing capabilities
- State of the art presentation software
- Maintain adequate number and quality of microphones for number of meeting rooms and presentations.
- Improve electronic bulletin boards throughout the library with capability to stream multiple channels
- Redesign Library website which can be updated by staff members and can accommodate two way chat, blogs and newest communication software
- The ability to download our electronic bulletin board content to our website as a continuously running slide show (see Hartford Public Library website).
- Adequate number of public access computers configured for speed and graphics
- Maintain public use equipment at state of the art level
- Software to manage reservations for meeting rooms, galleries and performance spaces with ability for person reserving room to cancel their booking on line.
- Additional site-specific lighting

We expect this service to increase by 5% yearly for five years

General Information

It is our goal to provide print, non-print, electronic information and other reference resources covering a wide variety of topics and a web site for accessing general information resources. This service includes providing consumer information and support for informal learning. The Library will provide staff skilled in determining users' needs and in locating relevant information that satisfies those needs.

We base our decision on the following:

52,000 reference questions asked in FY 2010. Source: Simsbury Public Library Annual Report 2009–2010.

The use of electronic reference sources within the library and through the library website.

52% of survey respondents interacted with library staff other than to check materials in or out. Source: Simsbury Public Library Patron Survey, July 17, 2010.

Goal: Increase awareness of the Library as the “place to go when you want to know”.

Measurable objectives for Library service include:

- # of on-site reference questions answered
- # of email reference questions answered
- # of text message questions answered
- # of questions answered through chat reference
- # of visitors to library's licensed databases
- # of inter-library loan requests
- # of program attendees
- # and type of use of Library's web-site
- % increase in type and use of Library web-site

Goal: Provide users with the resources needed to research their questions.
Measurable objectives for Library service include:

- # of patrons requesting information and percentage of questions satisfied
- # of subject databases
- # of specialized pathfinders, bibliographies or packets distributed
- % of positive survey responses to quality of non-fiction collections
- % increase in materials budget
- % increase in staff hours

Goal: Provide adequate space for study and research in the Library.
Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of quiet study rooms
- # of lit and wired carrels
- # of comfortable seats with access to electricity for laptops
- % occupancy of carrels, study rooms and tables at peak times

Technology needs:

- Fiber optic Internet connection
- Increase number of full text databases
- Chat software
- Text messaging software
- Public computers that allow downloads to portable devices
- Smart phones and tablets to enable staff to answer patron's questions away from the reference desk
- Integrate electronic data-base bibliographic records into library catalog

We expect to expand our general information activity by at 2% yearly of 5 years.

Life-long learning:

It is our goal to provide and maintain an extensive collection of circulating and downloadable materials on a wide variety of topics in which the public has a sustained interest including providing programs to meet the public need. While all residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest, we would specifically target two special groups: those over 45 and within that, the male population.

We base our decision on the following:

The demographics of our Town: 36% are in this age category. Source: CREC Town Profiles 2011.

The rate of growth of 55+ housing in Simsbury is higher than any other type of housing. (Source: Town of Simsbury Planning Department)

Survey results show that this population group has only 25% male participation although males and females exist in equal numbers within this population. Source: Older Americans Survey, Simsbury Public Library, February 2010

Goal: Enhance the life-long learning environment in the Library. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of pre-retirement planning programs
- # of life-long learning programs such on topics such as health, environmental issues, finances, retirement, social and political issues
- # of attendees at such programs
- # of technology classes on emerging trends
- # of attendees at such programs
- # of special displays
- # of staff presentations to community groups
- % increase in adult circulation of all types of materials and in all formats including downloadables

Technology needs:

- All public computers configured to download licensed digital content to personal storage devices
- Blog and wiki software
- Software to manage program registrations, reminders

We expect to improve our services for life-long learning by keeping our collections current and weeding the non-fiction collection by 4% per year for 5 years.

Current topics and titles:

It is our goal to provide a current collection and sufficient copies of titles in high demand to ensure customer requests are met quickly. Materials will be offered in formats people want and selected primarily on the basis of local demand. The Library's collections will be organized in ways that make items easy to locate and will be displayed attractively. Programs such as book talks, book signings, vacation reading and book clubs will increase. New staff hired will have strength in Reader's Advisory. Existing staff will be trained to become Reader's Advisors.

We base our decisions on the following:

Adult book borrowing is the most popular service – 63 % of respondents, followed by DVD borrowing –37% of respondents. (User Survey July 2010)

Our monthly statistics show that new fiction and non-fiction circulate at four times the rate of old fiction and nonfiction. (Sirsi reports, April 3, 2011).

More audio and electronic books topped the suggestions. The second most popular request was for new books and DVDs. (User Survey July 2010)

The July 2010 User Survey also indicated that 68 % of respondents use the Library's website to check the catalog, read reviews and place books on hold, up 27% since the last user survey in 2004.

Goal: Increase current titles so users have immediate access to new materials.

Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- % circulation of materials published within the past 3 years
- # of patron-placed reserves
- # of reserve requests per copy per title
- # of Pronto Books in circulation
- % increase in downloadable titles (audio, book and video)

Goal: Promote current Library materials. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of Library based discussion groups
- # of attendees in Book Discussion groups
- # of patrons suggestions for purchase
- # of face out displays of current material
- # of patron placed reserves

Goal: Promote interest in alternatives to new titles. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- % increase in circulation of older fiction
- # of users participating in book programs
- # of books recommended by users

Goal: Provide a reading room / browsing area which helps nurture the joy of reading. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of linear feet of special face out displays to encourage high use of materials
- # of lounge and coffee bar seating to encourage lingering

Goal: Provide easy and rapid access to downloadable materials. Train staff to help public download all formats to their personal devices of any type. Provide easy to understand instruction online and in print. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of new downloadable titles
- # of titles downloaded
- ratio of staff-assisted vs. non assisted downloads

Goal: Provide remote access points for patrons to borrow current titles.

Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of red box kiosks in Simsbury's villages
- # of titles checked out at remote sites

Technology Needs:

- Install fast fiber optic connectivity
- Provide headphones for patron use with Library data-bases
- Provide fast download stations and a variety of circulating readers
- Continue to purchase downloadable titles consortially
- Integrate information about available downloadable titles into our catalogs so patrons are aware of them
- Provide content-rich public access catalog, Library website social media pages where users can post and read book reviews
- Profile user's reading tastes and notify them electronically (and automatically) when any materials fitting their profile are acquired.
- Develop and use Library applications for mobile devices so patrons can access the catalog and their accounts

We expect circulation of current topics and titles to expand by 2% per year for 5 years.

Business, Entrepreneurship and Career Information:

It is our goal to maintain the Simsbury Public Library's Business Resource Center (BRC) as the region's premier Public Library Business Center. We will continue to provide cutting edge business and career information services to address existing and emerging needs of our users for information related to business, non-profit management, entrepreneurship, career / work, personal finances, and college planning.

The Library will increase its print and electronic resources (focusing on business databases) and market its facilities & services such as computers for public use, wireless Internet access, meeting spaces, training facilities, collaborative networking opportunities, presentation equipment, fax machines, printers and copiers.

In addition, we will address economic and demographic trends of increased telecommuting overall and increased entrepreneurship by the Millennial Generation. The Library will become the new "water cooler" for local telecommuters who will use our meeting spaces, programs and resources for opportunities to network collaborate and socialize. The large GenY cohort, which is estimated to experience job shortages during their early working years, will find business programs and resources that are created especially for their interests, learning styles and needs. There will be a focus on the Young Entrepreneur.

Millennial Generation comprises those born in the mid 1970's until 2000 and includes Generation X (1965-1984) and Generation Y (1985-present)

We base our decision on the following sources:

Generational Demographic research that indicates trends of entrepreneurship for the 25 and under population due to a lack of ready employment for this cohort. Based on research by Ken Gronbach, demographer and author, "The Age Curve" and 2010 U.S. Census.

Business program evaluation data collected from 1999-2011.

Feedback from BRC Business Advisory Group.

Formal and informal discussions with the local business community and with other business support organizations such as Simsbury Chamber of Commerce, Simsbury Main Street Partnership, SCORE, Connecticut Small Business Development Centers and the University of Hartford Entrepreneurial Center.

Participation in collaborative projects with the Simsbury High School such as Job Shadow Day, Entrepreneurship classes and college planning workshops. In addition, the Library regularly uses student workers and interns from the schools.

Goal: Enhance the Millennial Generation's awareness of the Library's business resources. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of hits to BRC web pages designed for Millennials
- # of visits to the BRC by 18–25 year olds
- # use of social networking and other “youth oriented” communication methods to promote programs & services

Goal: Provide tele-commuters with opportunities and tools to connect with other tele-commuters and resources to help them adjust to their new work model. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of networking/training events attended by telecommuters
- # of room bookings by telecommuters
- # of specialized communications for telecommuters by the BRC
- # of lap-top using adults at any particular time

Goal: Maintain professionally staffed, physically distinct Business Resource Center that is the ‘go-to’ place for businesses, entrepreneurs and job seekers in the community. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of sq. ft. devoted to BRC
- # of workstations dedicated to BRC
- # of staff hours dedicated to the BRC
- # of specialized resources added to BRC
- # of programs & attendees at BRC programs
- # of visits to BRC and BRC website
- # of hits on BRC databases

Goal: Increase collaboration between local schools and the Business Resource Center. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- Incorporation of cross-links between library and school
- # of co-sponsored programs
- # of attendees at library programs (students and parents)
- # of students using self guided programs for Career and College preparation

Technology needs:

- Fiber optic Internet connectivity
- Video conferencing capabilities
- High speed color printer/copier/scanner
- Access to wireless printer
- Blog software
- Ability to video record
- State of the art peripherals (scanners, webcams, etc) for BRC and TLC
- Maintain currency of software
- Enable Business Outreach librarian's mobility through smart technology
- Integrate electronic data-base information into library catalog

Create Young Library Users:

Our youngest community members are the future. Library users of all ages are encouraged to be intellectually curious. Library resources and programming support lifelong learning. Therefore, it is imperative that we cultivate children's curiosity and help them explore the world around them. Fluency in reading, computing, and special multi sensory programs introduce them to the wonderful complexity of our world.

We base our decisions on the following:

- Demand of parents for library programming for children from babies through grade school

- Studies showing that children who master reading at a young age are more likely to continue reading

- The importance of literacy for success in life and careers

Goal: Enhance the life-long learning environment for children in the library so that their interests expand. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- % of space dedicated to children's activities
- # of computers and applicable software for children
- # of special displays
- # of children who visit the Children's Room
- # of caregivers who visit the Children's Room
- average length of stay for visitors to Children's Room
- # of comfortable and quiet seating areas for children and their caregivers to read, view and listen for pleasure
- # of hits on children's web-page

Goal: Provide and refresh current collections which are appropriate and attractive and span a wide range of ages and interests: Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of children's books circulating
- # of "Books for Babies" packets distributed
- # of subject specific packets available and circulating
- # of Children's' e-books downloaded
- # of hits on Kidflix and other children's databases
- % growth of Children's collections

Goal: Provide programs for entertainment and education for children of all ages. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # children in Summer and Family Reading Programs
- # of programs for children
- # of hands on experiences for children in the Library
- # of attendees at regular and special programs
- # of outreach efforts to publicize these programs
- # of hits on Children's webpage

Technology needs:

- Fiber optic connectivity
- State of the art presentation software in Children's Program rooms
- Webcam
- Children's Room web-page, Facebook presence, blog
- Child-friendly computers
- Computers configured to support all types of media production
- Color copiers
- Computers configured to allow downloading of licensed digital content to personal storage devices (PDA, flash drives, MP3 players, etc.)
- New DVD player in Children's Program Room

Teen Services

Teens 13–18 form a relatively small percentage of Simsbury’s population, approximately 10%, but they are worth focusing on because it is normally through the teen years that young people lose their interests in reading and life–long learning as their lives become more stressed and complex. It is in the interest of our community to keep these young people focused on learning and also on positive social interactions.

We base our decisions on the following:

- Library and Education research shows that teens are a group with special needs

- Studies show that the more sources a teen has to build external assets (support, boundaries, etc) and internal assets (positive values, commitment to learning, etc), the less likely they are to engage in risky behavior

- Library time and instruction has decreased in the junior high and high school levels

- Staffing levels in school’s media centers have decreased

- School Library Media Specialist have less time to build relationships with teens

In the 2009 Main Street Partnership Charrette, the teen focus group asked for accessible and inexpensive spaces downtown for socializing and for use as a home base

Goal: Teens will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating print, video, audio or visual content in a real-world on-line environment. We will establish a Teen Advisory Board, hire a Teen Librarian and create a teen blog on the Library website. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- Create a Teen Blog on the Library's website
- Set up a Teen Advisory Board
- # of hands-on classes to teach teens a variety of media production tools
- # of concerts, plays, poetry slams and other performing arts presented by and for teens at the Library
- # of Teen writer's workshops and subsequent publications
- # of Teen art exhibits
- # of Teen librarian staff hours
- # of participants on teen blog
- # of fans on Facebook
- # of Teen staff Librarian hours

Goal: Promote Teen literacy. Teens will have their own specialized collection of fiction and reference materials in all formats. This will include books specifically geared to Teens that can be downloaded onto audio devices or e-readers. We will provide space for tutors, use the Teen Advisory Board to help select and weed materials, and provide specialized data bases for individualized on-line study. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- % increase in teen collection (both paper and digital)
- % increase in teen materials circulation
- Increase in # of formats available to teens
- # of fun literacy programs geared to teens
- # of sign-ups for individualized on-line study
- # of tutoring sessions for teens in Library
- # of book trailers created by Teens and / or reviews written by Teens

Goal: Teens will have high speed access to digital content. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of Teens who use Library computers to access Internet
- # of hits on Library's Teen web page
- # of Teens using Library's wireless capability through their portable devices
- # of Teens showing leadership by using social networking for promotion of literacy and Teen programs

Goal: Provide meaningful opportunities for teens to work, volunteer, and mentor within the community. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of electronic and print notices aimed at teens
- # of participants in mentoring programs
- # of participants in volunteer fair
- # of participants in job fair and job-related programs geared toward Teens
- # of programs utilizing community resources (local authors, professionals)

Goal: Provide a specially designed and furnished space for teens including space for creative productions and for junior entrepreneurship. Measurable objectives for Library services include:

- # of sq. feet devoted to teens
- # of linear feet for teen displays and collections
- # of lockers for teens
- # of dedicated computers for teens

Technology needs:

- Apple computers
- Entertainment / educational equipment
- Special lighting
- Production studio with the tools and software needed to create live action or animated video, and record music.
- Ability for teens to contribute content to website and catalog reviews to title records in the catalog