

Millburn Free Public Library

Strategic Plan

2016 – 2017 – 2018



Millburn Free Public Library

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Introduction

This strategic plan was developed to help guide the Millburn Free Public Library in its decision making for the next three years.

Work on the plan began in August 2015. Five focus groups meetings were held and a community survey was conducted in January 2016. A copy of the survey is appended to this plan.

The input from all sources was distilled into this document. The plan will be reviewed periodically in order to make sure that it remains relevant and helpful.

Special thanks to the staff of the Millburn Free Public Library for their input and participation; to the members of our five focus groups; to the members of the community who completed the survey; and to the Board of Trustees for their support.

The Strategic Planning Committee

Michael Banick, Director

Judith Eisner, Library Trustee

Sumner Freedman, Library Trustee

The Board of Trustees of the Millburn Free Public Library

Robert W. Strickler, President

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Vision and Mission

Vision

The Millburn Free Public Library inspires and informs.

The Millburn Free Public Library makes Millburn Township a better place to live.

The Millburn Free Public Library is the heart of the community.

Mission

The Millburn Free Public Library fulfills the educational, informational, cultural and recreational needs of the community by providing open and equal access to library services and library materials in various formats in a facility that is comfortable and well-maintained.



Community Overview

Profile of the Community

Millburn Township is composed of Millburn and Short Hills and covers 9.8 square miles in western Essex County, New Jersey. The township is bordered by the Essex County towns of Livingston, West Orange and Maplewood; the Union County towns of Union and Springfield; and the Morris County town of Chatham.

Population

The 2010 population of Millburn Township is 20,149.

34% of the population is under age 20.

11% is over age 65.

Median age is 40.9 years.

80% of the population is White, but the township has become more culturally diverse in recent years. 16% of the population is Asian, including Chinese (8%), Asian Indian (4%), Korean (2%) and Japanese (1%). 2% of the population is Black or African American. 3% of the population is Hispanic or Latino of any race.

3,737 residents were foreign born. 24% of the population (age 5 or older) speak a language other than English at home.

Households

There are 6,805 households in the township. 81% are occupied by families. 49% of households are with their own children under age 18. 19% are non-family households. 92% of the residents (age 1 or older) were living in the same house 1 year ago.

82% or 5,580 of the households are owner-occupied. 18% or 1,225 of the households are renter-occupied.

Education and Income

98.9% of people age 25+ are high school graduates or higher. 82.1% have bachelor's degrees or higher. 37% have bachelor's degrees. 45% have graduate or professional degrees.

The median household income in Millburn Township is \$165,944.

Millburn School System

The Millburn School District is regarded as one of the best school districts in the state, if not the country. For this reason, there is a steady influx of families with school-age children who move to the township to enroll in its schools. In addition to the public school system, there are several private schools within the township serving children of all ages.



Library Profile

The Millburn Free Public Library is governed by a 7-member board of trustees: The mayor (or his/her alternate); the superintendent of schools (or his/her alternate); and 5 citizen trustees with staggered terms. The board meets monthly (except in August) and as needed.

The Library is open 66 hours per week, except in August, when it is open 63 hours per week.

There is one service location of approximately 30,000 square feet on two levels.

Funding is primarily through the municipal appropriation, which is 1/3 of a mil, plus some additional local support for operating costs (such as payroll processing and grounds maintenance), plus additional municipal support for capital projects. The municipal appropriation funds about 95% of the library's operating costs. The remaining 5% of revenue comes through overdue fines, donations, Friends support, photocopier revenues, state aid and other miscellaneous sources.

Staffing

There are 29 employees of the library including 18 full-time and 11 part-time staff. The total number of FTEs (full-time equivalents) is 23. There are four departments in the library: Administration, Information Services, Circulation & Technical Services and Maintenance.

Services

The MFPL offers an array of services, including:

- Borrowers' services (books, magazines, DVDs, Blu-Rays, audiobooks, CDs)
- Downloadable services (eBooks, e-Magazines, streaming video, streaming music)
- Technology access (Internet, databases, Wi-Fi, wireless printing, 3-D printing)
- Reference service including research assistance and reader's advisory
- Programs and events for all age groups
- Relaxing spaces
- Toys and puzzles
- Notary service
- Self-serve fax and photocopy service
- Charging stations for devices



The Plan

Six concepts were developed based on input from all sources:

1. Library Building
2. Library Services
3. Community Resources
4. Communication and Public Relations
5. Funding
6. Outreach



Concept # 1: Library Building

The facility should be modern, inviting, accommodating and flexible.

Goals

- Refresh and modernize the appearance of the facility.
- Assure accessibility for people with special needs, beyond ADA minimums.
- Expand facility to accommodate community needs.

Tactics

- Conduct a space assessment to determine best use of existing space.
- Improve physical features: finishes, lighting, carpeting, ceilings, etc.
- Install new and improved directional signage throughout facility.
- Provide soft seating areas and comfortable seating clusters to encourage patrons to relax and stay.

Any improvements should give consideration to noise levels upon completion, ensuring sufficient quiet spaces.



Concept #2 – Library Services

A library is a service organization, and the Millburn Free Public Library should set an example of excellence in library service.

Goals

- Be friendly and proactive.
- Maintain professionalism.
- Improve outreach.

Tactics

- Provide professional development opportunities for staff.
- Set clear expectations for patron service levels.
- Make sure staff are trained in the use of library resources.
- Stay alert for service trends and adopt ideas that would work well for our community.



Concept #3: Community Resources

The MFPL should have ample, current resources to serve the community.

Goals

- Demonstrate ongoing relevance of the library.
- Be a platform for learning.
- Maintain and develop inter-library relations.
- Continuously update collections, technology and infrastructure.

Tactics

- Maintain a collection that meets the evolving needs of our community. Acquire, or provide access to, materials that are in demand, in the formats that are desired. This includes print, non-print media, large-print, foreign language and electronic delivery. This also includes proper resources to house, or provide access to, materials.
- Provide classes, workshops, seminars and other programs on topics that are relevant, engaging and of community interest, including literacy, ESL, citizenship and enrichment courses.
- Provide sufficient space for formal and informal meetings and programs, as well as space to read and space to work collaboratively.

Concept # 4: Communication and Public Relations

The MFPL will keep the community informed and engaged.

Goals

- Increase library attendance and usage.
- Increase community pride in the MFPL.
- Improve community awareness about the library.
- Change the perception that the library is just a place for books.

Tactics

- Develop an online and print newsletter.
- Continually develop and refresh our web and social media presence.
- Produce and distribute brochures about library services and resources.
- Host open houses to introduce or re-introduce the community to the Millburn Library.
- Increase media presence, including more frequent press releases, paid ads and announcements on local TV.
- Work closely with various groups to ensure that their needs are met.
- Install directional signage around town.

Concept # 5: Funding

The Millburn Free Public Library should pursue supplementary funding sources to assure long-term sustainability and growth.

Goals

- Locate sources of additional revenue to hedge against changes in millage.
- Locate sources of revenue to fund major projects.
- Maintain good relations with the Friends of the Millburn Library.

Tactics

- Evaluate the feasibility of program sponsorships.
- Evaluate the feasibility of naming opportunities.
- Consider establishing a foundation for major gifts.

Concept # 6: Community Outreach

The Millburn Free Public Library should maintain strong ties with community organizations to demonstrate its support.

Goals

- Connect with schools, businesses, civic groups, religious institutions and other community groups to show how the library can help them advance their missions.
- Strengthen the Millburn Free Public Library's ties with the community.

Tactics

- Evaluate open hours to ensure that community needs are properly met.
- Work with businesses, the Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Millburn Association to show how the library can help them or their members.
- Call clubs or organizations. Invite them to meet at the library.
- Arrange programs that build around certain interests, such as languages, arts, games, math, travel or photography.



Assessment

Some concepts described in this report are already being addressed, even if in an informal manner. This plan will formalize efforts in a concerted way as the library moves through the next three years.

To evaluate performance, the library will look at two measures of performance: internal statistics and peer group comparisons.

For items that are more subjective in nature, the library will evaluate whether or not the established goals were met.



Appendix – Copy of the Community Survey

Millburn Free Public Library Strategic Plan 2016-2018

The Millburn Free Public Library is conducting this survey to help us formulate a 3-year strategic plan for the years 2016, 2017 and 2018. The survey is brief but important, as it gives you, a member of our community, a chance to relay your feedback, observations and suggestions to us. The survey should take between 5 and 10 minutes to complete. At the end, there is an option to leave your name, e-mail address and phone number. If you complete this optional section, you will be entered for a chance to win a prize, a new Apple iPad 2 Air with WiFi -- our way of thanking you for taking part in this project.

1. In your own words, what are three strengths of the Millburn Free Public Library? (100 words or less)

2. In your own words, what are three areas at the Millburn Free Public Library that need improvement (100 words or less)

3. Are there any services or resources that you have seen at other libraries that you think should be available at the Millburn Free Public Library?

4. What is your gender?

- Male Female

5. What is your age?

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older
- I am less than 18 years old.

6. Do you have a Millburn Free Public Library card?

- YES
- NO

7. How often do you visit the Millburn Free Public Library?

- More than once a week
- Once a week
- Two or three times a month
- Once a month
- Every 2 - 6 months
- Once a year
- Less than once a year
- I do not visit the Millburn Free Public Library

8. *If you currently do not visit the Millburn Free Public Library, please tell us why (100 words or less).*

9. *What are the main ways you use the Millburn Free Public Library? Remember, a "use" can be in-person, by telephone or via the library website. (Check all that apply)*

- Ask a quick question of a staff member
- Ask a detailed reference question of a staff member
- Attend a children's program (or bring a child to a program)
- Attend a teen or young adult program
- Attend an adult program (library-sponsored lectures, movies, concerts and cultural programs)
- Attend a community meeting
- Attend a book discussion meeting
- Attend a club or other organization meeting
- Borrow a book
- Borrow an audiobook
- Borrow a DVD or Blu-Ray
- Borrow music on CD
- Borrow a museum pass
- Borrow the collections
- Connect to free WiFi with my own device (smart phone, tablet, laptop, etc.)
- Download eBooks (print)
- Download e-Magazines
- Get something notarized
- Meet socially with other people
- Pick up brochures or community information (including reading the bulletin board)
- Read magazines or newspapers
- Read a book (but not borrow it)
- Relax

- Stream movies or TV shows
- Stream music
- Tutoring
- Use a computer to check or send e-mail
- Use a computer for database research
- Use a computer for general Internet research
- Use a computer to print something out (paper documents)
- Use a computer for other reasons (e.g., word processing, write a resume, etc.)
- Use the 3-D printer
- Use a quiet study room
- Use the ATM
- Use the photocopiers
- Use the public fax
- Visit the art gallery
- Work on an individual project
- Work on a group project
- Other (please specify)

10. In the past 12 months, approximately how many times have you visited the Millburn Library website (www.millburnlibrary.org)?

- 1 -25
- 26 - 50
- 51 - 75
- 76 - 100
- More than 100 times

11. What are the main ways you use the library website? (Check all that apply)

- To see if the library is open
- To search the library catalog for an item
- To check my library account
- To use library e-Resources (magazine & newspaper articles, genealogy, learn a language, etc.)
- To download an e-book or magazine
- To stream movies, TV shows or music
- To check the library calendar of events and programs
- To reserve a museum pass
- To get contact information for library staff
- To review library policy
- To learn about the Friends of the Millburn Library
- To search or read about local history
- Other (please specify)

12. Optional, but required for entry in the iPad drawing. Please give us your contact information.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

Survey results will be reviewed by members of the Millburn Free Public Library Strategic Planning Committee, which includes the Library Director and two members of the Board of Trustees. Any ideas that are incorporated into the final strategic plan will be anonymous.

While all community members are invited to participate, the following individuals are not eligible to win the iPad: Millburn Free Public Library Staff; Millburn Free Public Library Trustees; and immediate family members of library staff or trustees. Immediate family members shall include spouses, children, parents or anyone residing at the same address.