

WEST MILFORD TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2021 - 2025



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A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Welcome from the West Milford Township Library Board of Trustees. We are anxious to share with you the visions of our strategic planning so you can see what we hope will be **the future of the library**.

The creation of this plan was spearheaded by Mr. James Rogers and supported by Ms. Sandra Nebel, Ms. Jodie Comune, and myself. Many hours were spent by board members, staff members, community members and more to develop this document even during the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020. I want to thank them all for their service and dedication to the library and the community.

The committee worked hard to collect data from all sources including patrons and other community members. They analyzed the information and organized a comprehensive plan for the future. It includes the collective visions of many people who love the library and know and appreciate its value as the cultural core of West Milford. They have focused on all areas and styles of information sharing for the future.

The West Milford Library Board of Trustees, with the leadership of the Library Director and the support of the staff, will forge ahead to make the library's Strategic Plan the means to enhance lifelong learning for all. Another goal is to bring people together to build an even greater community with greater services for all ages. We invite the entire West Milford Township Community to **join us in this journey**.

Dr. Joan Oberer, President
West Milford Township Library Board of Trustees



OUR MISSION

Libraries impact people's lives in many ways. The West Milford Township Library is the community's intellectual and cultural center, providing lifelong learning, excellent staffing, and resources that inform, entertain and enrich the entire community.

VISION

The West Milford Township Library exists to serve the needs of our residents by building partnerships that reinforce existing and future opportunities for all segments of the community.

SHARED VALUES

The following shared values will guide the West Milford Township Library staff, administration, and Board of Trustees as they deliver library services:

- *We treat each other and our patrons respectfully, courteously, and without judgement.*
- *We do everything we can to help our patrons address their information needs with knowledge and friendly service.*
- *We support free and open access to information and library services.*
- *We value and embrace change, and understand that our organization evolves to benefit all members of the community.*
- *We are good stewards of our budget, our facility, and the accumulated knowledge in our collections, and of our staff.*

2020

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COMMUNITY PROFILE

The Township of West Milford is an eighty square mile rural community in northwest New Jersey. The Township is bordered on the east by Bergen County, the north by Orange County, New York and the west by Morris County. The entire township lies within the New Jersey Highlands Conservation Area, an environmentally-sensitive region which supplies drinking water to over two million New Jersey residents. A large part of the township is reservoir property owned by the City of Newark. Within the township's borders lies Greenwood Lake, New Jersey's second largest lake. The area is characterized by numerous smaller lakes and mountainous terrain. According to demographic data from the United States Census Bureau's 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, the Township population in 2017 was 26,759. The median age of WM residents in 2017 was 44.5 years. 3.1% of households in West Milford had an income that was below the poverty line. Six percent are foreign-born. 8.9 % of residents speak a language other than English at home. Ethnically the Township consisted of 93% Caucasians, 1% African-American and 1.5% Asian-American. The U.S. Census tracks ethnicity as it relates to Hispanic or Latino descent, Hispanic or Latino can be of any race. Thus, the Hispanic or Latino population in West Milford is projected at 9.1%. The median household income was \$98,843. 93.6% of residents are high school graduates and 33% hold a bachelor's degree. The West Milford Public School District had a student population of 3,379 in school year 2016-2017, of whom 11.8% qualified for the federal free and reduced lunch program.

GOAL 1:

THE LIBRARY WILL WORK TO UNITE ALL MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY BY ENGAGING OUR RESIDENTS THROUGH SHARED EXPERIENCES

Objectives:

1. Expand the library's outreach particularly to underserved segments of the community.
2. Explore new ways to disseminate library information to a broad cross-section of groups within the Township.
3. Expand opportunities for local writers, artists, and poets to exhibit and share their works with the public.
4. Maintain a library presence at community and township events such as the Autumn Lights Festival and in the local school system to promote library participation.
5. Offer programs that provide life skills training: resume writing, interviewing skills, job seeking, and more.
6. Continue to promote one-to-one and small-group technology training for patrons and schedule quarterly tech training sessions at remote locations.
7. Start a regular schedule of tech drop-in sessions to help patrons get started with mobile devices, Office applications, and PC basics.
8. Institute a Museum Pass program.



GOAL 2: THE LIBRARY WILL EXPAND ITS PHYSICAL AND DIGITAL COLLECTIONS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR ENTIRE COMMUNITY

Objectives:

1. Expand our digital presence by incorporating new subscriptions to databases and other digital platforms to permit greater remote access of materials for all patrons.
2. Market and create reader's advisory tools.
3. Explore the interest and need for in-library use and loan to the public of non-traditional physical library materials, e.g. devices, virtual reality gear, seeds, power tools, instruments, etc.
4. Purchase WiFi hotspots for remote use at events and for loaning to the public.
5. Ensure that consideration of the needs of historically oppressed, underrepresented, and underserved groups is an integral part of collection development. Regularly assess the adequacy of existing collections to ensure they are reflective of the diversity of the library's constituent populations.

GOAL 3: THE LIBRARY WILL EXPAND ITS COLLECTION, SERVICES, PROGRAMS AND TECHNOLOGY TO BETTER SERVE CHILDREN FROM BIRTH THROUGH GRADE 5

Objectives:

Ensure equity and diversity in material selection, program offering, and services.

Early Literacy (Babies – Kindergarten)

1. Promote participation in the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten initiative.
2. Continue storytimes for young children.
3. Offer parenting workshops and special events that focus on early-literacy.
4. Implement parent and child classes that focus on early literacy e.g. music and movement, sign language, and/or sensory programming.

Elementary (1st grades – 5th grade)

1. Restructure children's book clubs to encompass all elementary grades: Grade 1, Grades 2-3, and Grades 4-5.
2. Implement a maker's club and/or coding club to encourage innovation and to build on our successful S.T.E.A.M programming.
3. Consider the addition of electronic resources that support children's educational and recreational needs.
4. Implement an after school Homework Help program.



GOAL 4:

THE LIBRARY WILL
UPGRADE ITS
PROGRAMS,
MATERIALS, AND
TECHNOLOGY TO
BETTER SERVE THE
NEEDS OF MIDDLE
GRADES 6TH-8TH
AND YOUNG
ADULTS (YA)
GRADES 9TH-12TH



Objectives:

1. Explore the purchase and use of digital platforms and media to expand our current material and electronic offerings for both age groups.
2. Designate programming specifically for grades 6-8 (Middle Grade) and grades 9-12 (High School).
3. Offer drop-in projects and activities for both age groups.
4. Consider sponsoring STEM programs offered at the library in conjunction with the WM schools.
5. Promote critical thinking through Young Authors workshops.
6. Create thematic book lists for young adults and teens in print and on-line.
7. Convene a Teen Advisory Board.
8. Create volunteer opportunities for grades 6-12, including volunteer opportunities for our proposed Homework Help program for grades 1-5.
9. Ensure equity and diversity in material selection, program offering, and services.

GOAL 5: THE LIBRARY WILL CONTINUE TO CONSIDER NEW WAYS TO MARKET ITSELF

Objectives:

1. Engage WM Channel 77 to record library programs and broadcast to the community.
2. Keep the library's website and social media updated with current information about on-going library and community activities. Explore new social media tools to better communicate with the public.
3. Foster new partnerships with West Milford Township departments, the West Milford Township School District classes and clubs, various community groups, organizations, and local businesses.
4. Create consistent branding, with a new logo that displays our library's mission to the community.
5. Consider a seasonal newsletter mailer that would be sent to all households in West Milford.

GOAL 6: THE LIBRARY WILL MAINTAIN A ROBUST STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Objectives:

1. Promote an atmosphere of lifelong learning and professional skills enhancement among staff.
2. Encourage staff to attend relevant workshops, conferences and webinars provided by NJLA, the New Jersey State Library and other professional organizations.
3. Create a "shared learning environment" in which staff members are provided opportunities to instruct their colleagues on professional matters.
4. Consider closing the library and conducting an annual staff development day.
5. Make staff development an important consideration in the annual budget.
6. Have a notary public at the library including required insurance.

GOAL 7: THE LIBRARY WILL REACH OUT TO THE COMMUNITY TO PROVIDE MATERIALS AND SERVICES TO THE HOMEBOUND

Objectives:

1. Conduct a survey of care facilities, senior housing and shut-ins within the Township to determine interest in delivery of and access to library materials.
2. Determine the feasibility of providing such services including impact on staff and budget.
3. Create a budget to effectuate homebound services.
4. Publicize existing digital online reference services such as Ask-a-Librarian E-Mail Service to residents who are unable to visit the library.
5. Publicize existing reference services available by phone and email.
6. Create instructional videos in how to use the catalog, how to reserve and renew materials online and how to download e-books.

GOAL 8: THE LIBRARY WILL CONTINUE TO ASSESS AND STRIVE TO IMPROVE THE FACILITY TO ENSURE PATRON AND STAFF SAFETY AND CONVENIENCE

Objectives:

1. Install automatic door openers on first and second floor interior doors of the adult and children's sections.
2. Consider creative ways to expand parking around the building.
3. Regularly assess cleaning and sanitizing needs of the building.
4. Install ceiling projector and drop-down screen in the library conference room.
5. Research and monitor peak times of library use and create a library schedule that addresses those peaks and needs.
6. Set up a public computer specifically for quick printing.
7. Finalize and implement wayfinding signage for all library collections.
8. Consider the purchase of self-check out systems for patron convenience.





WEST MILFORD TOWNSHIP LIBRARY

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