



WALTHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY

Window to the World

Long Range Plan

2018-2022

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Welcome to the Waltham Public Library

Merriam-Webster describes the library as “a place where books, magazines, and other materials are available for people to use or borrow.” This is true, but the Waltham Public Library is more than just the materials we house. We build community. We are a social hub, a meeting spot, a place for music, performance, and art. Our Library is more than a place—it is a tutor, a coach, a job finder, a job creator, a technology expert. A library improves the economic, physical, and mental health of its community; the whole city benefits when people use our Library.

Fiscal Year 2017 was an outstanding year at the Waltham Public Library. We introduced a variety of new and exciting programs and were awarded five Massachusetts Library Association Public Relations awards, “presented every two years to libraries that exhibit exemplary public relations campaigns, outstanding publicity, and creative outreach”. Here is just a sample of what we created for our community:

Sensory Storytime: books, songs, and sensory play for autistic children, or those with developmental disabilities who are biologically/developmentally aged 3-6 and their typically developing peers. At the time of its debut, this was the only dedicated story time for autistic children in the Metrowest area. We also hosted a Be Empowered Series to assist with the financial and legal aspects of helping children with disabilities.

Music Train/ El tren de la música: Singing and rhyming in English and Spanish. This new program supports the City of Waltham’s new dual language kindergarten and addresses the needs of our Spanish speaking residents.

Every Monday evening Teens can #HackYourTeenRoom, an initiative to promote the idea that the Teen Room is guided by teen input and to invite teens to design their own programming. Whatever it was, it could happen with their help. We carved pumpkins, threw a Halloween party, and held a learn-to-solder clinic. Last month we held a performance poetry workshop with Brandeis Dean of Students and slam poet Jamele Adams.

We created an ongoing teen career event, J.O.B.: Journey of Becoming (winner of an MLA PR Award). The idea was to pull in professionals from interesting and/or unusual fields or fields of interest to the teens. Our goal is to encourage teens to think outside-the-box about their career possibilities and view their career paths as a process of self-knowledge. Jef Czekaj, a cartoonist, children's book author, producer, and DJ dropped by to talk about his career as an author and musician. In January, TV show host and biologist Pat Spain spoke about his life in entertainment and the pharmaceutical industry.

The Waltham Public Library at Stonehurst: The Robert Treat Paine Estate an outstanding, niche collection of Library materials available for all visitors of Stonehurst to borrow. This pilot program will engage, inspire, and foster a sense of curiosity among visitors to the estate. We hope this is the start of mini-libraries all over the City.

Watch Read Listen (winner of an MLA PR Award our very first year)! In 2016, over 650 Waltham residents came together as a community and watched, read, or listened to *The Jungle Book* and attended a program last summer. In 2017 we selected the story *Frankenstein*. Over 2,000 people donned lab gear and visited Dr. Frankenstein’s laboratory recreated at the Library. Kids explored STEAM related activities all summer long. Grown-ups enjoyed programs about this iconic story, author Mary Shelley (the mother of modern science fiction), Frankenfoods, the idea of the monster today and the effect of the media, arctic exploration and so much more.

That’s not all! We held financial literacy programs for teens and adults throughout April, hosted the ACLU for a “Know Your Rights” series, trekked to Harmonix in Boston with the Girls Who Code group, offered a Black History Month Film Series and hosted Child/Infant Sleep Specialist Teresa Stewart in an effort to get everyone a better night’s sleep. Not to mention ESL, computer classes, book groups, story times and crafts each month. Our wonderful, dedicated staff organizes all of this, and so much more, free, at the Waltham Public Library.

The Waltham Public Library has also been adding exciting items to expand the idea of what a library collection can be. In the past year, here's a sample of what is available at the Waltham Public Library.

- phone chargers and other assorted cables
- a MIDI keyboard for iPads (used by all students at Waltham Public Schools)
- littleBits kits for teens to design their own circuits and musical instruments
- a Sphero SPRK+ that teens can program and drive using an app
- Bloxels kits for teens to experiment with designing their own video games
- a bean-bag toss set, built by Waltham Teens at one of our Maker Mondays
- a variety of board games: chess, checkers, Forbidden Island, Exploding Kittens, Uno, Catan
- Google Cardboard viewers
- Roku

In February 2017, we invited the community to share with us how much they love their Library. These are just a few of their responses.

- When I was unemployed, it was the librarians at the Waltham Public Library who helped me find resources. It took months but I got a job.
- When I had no computer installed at home because I moved to a new place, I used your computers.
- So happy about these resources. You answer a ton of questions every day and I love your ice cream night in the summer and concerts on the front lawn.

As I reflect on the history of Waltham Public Library, our daily challenges and our goals for the future, this is what I focus on. **The Library is Love.** Our Long Range Plan for 2018-2022, shows a love for our community and an eagerness to offer agile, engaging service and resources to ensure the Library remains the true heart of the community.

Welcome to the Waltham Public Library. We're glad you're here.

Kelly Linehan

Library Director

SUMMARY

The Waltham Public Library's FY2018 Long Range Plan is intended to guide and describe the Library's priorities for the next five years. The plan was developed through a series of meetings, data collections and activities that took place in the summer of 2017. Members of the public, staff, focus groups, and a planning committee all contributed information and ideas.

All the data collected was examined to identify those goals considered to be most important to strengthen and improve the progress toward fulfillment of the Waltham Public Library vision. The planning committee did edit the Library's Vision and Mission, choosing to formally re-write both as part of our action plan.

The goals and objectives in this plan do not address every need identified by the committee, and they do not include all of the work the Library will undertake in the course of the next five years.

Vision for Waltham

Waltham will grow as a Boston area leader in business, education, and technology, with a strong sense of community that honors our multicultural working-class roots. We will encourage civic engagement by all residents and promote the physical and economic well-being of all residents.

Waltham Public Library Vision

The Waltham Public Library fosters a healthy democratic society by providing a wealth of current informational, educational and recreational resources to all. The library will be known for knowledgeable and friendly staff, a welcoming and safe environment, accessibility, convenience, and current technology.

Waltham Public Library Mission

The Waltham Public Library provides a diverse population with popular informational, recreational and educational library resources and services. The library staff selects materials to meet known and anticipated demand, makes the community aware of library services and materials, and offers those resources to all with friendliness and efficiency.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

This plan was created through the efforts of a planning committee with the Library Director, collaborating with community members and staff through a survey and focus groups.

Our process was influenced by “Turning outward”, a step-by-step process developed by The Harwood Institute for Public Innovation. We also relied on Stephen Spohn and Arnold Hirshon’s *Library Strategic Planning Toolkit*. We identified stakeholders and used survey results to design our focus groups. The task force presented at and documented the meetings, and distilled the discussions into a concrete plan.

Community Survey

Sponsored by the Friends of the Waltham Public Library, the survey was available in English and Spanish on the library’s website, and in print at the library. We handed surveys out for an entire month to everyone who visited the library, and encouraged patrons to return them when leaving materials in the book drop. In addition, over 1000 library card holders on our mailing list received a postcard in the mail asking them to take the online survey or come by the library for a paper copy. We received approximately 445 responses. A summary of results is in the appendix.

Focus groups

Eight focus groups were held in summer 2017. Two sessions for Parents (of school age children or younger); Recent Immigrants to Waltham; Young Professionals without children, ages 18-30; Teens; Spanish speakers; the Homeless; Seniors in Assisted Living. All focus groups were at the library, except our conversation with some of our homeless population at Waltham Community Day Center, and seniors at the Senior Center in Waltham.

In our focus groups, we asked everyone the same series of questions that revolved around their thoughts and hopes for Waltham. We worried if we limited our questions to things like what would you like to see at the library, we would get the same rote answers (more story times, a sing along, book discussion groups). We wanted to have a conversation with our users. We asked:

What are your aspirations for your community?

What are the challenges Waltham faces in reaching these aspirations?

What changes need to happen to reach our aspirations?

As a team, staff discussed that we know what the library is capable and what programs and services we could offer as applied to the wants, needs, and challenges facing our community.

Staff Meeting

Library staff met with their Department Heads to discuss what feedback would be useful from the patrons, and worked on a Keep, Acquire, Reinvent, Retire exercise. We also devoted half of our Staff Day in spring 2017 to Strategic Planning.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are very grateful to the community members who donated their time to join us for our focus group, offering key insights and ideas, as well as those who took the time to answer our survey.

In particular, we greatly appreciate Waltham's Community Day Center and the William F. Stanley Senior Center for opening their doors to our staff.

The Strategic Planning Committee consists of:

Kelly Linehan, Library Director

Deb Fasulo, Assistant Director

Nancy Rea, Department Head, Youth Services

Seana Rabbito, Children's Librarian

Luke Kirkland, Teen Specialist

Stephanie Zabriskie, Department Head, Audio-Visual

Louise Goldstein, Department Head, Circulation

Laura Bernheim, Department Head, Reference

Aileen Sanchez, Department Head, Technical Services

Todd Strauss, Computer Specialist

We would also like to thank the entire team at the Waltham Public Library, the Trustees of the Waltham Public Library, and the Friends of the Waltham Public Library for their work and continued support of the Waltham Public Library.

COMMUNITY & LIBRARY PROFILES

Waltham, located nine miles west of Boston, is a city of approximately 63,002 (United States Census 2016 estimate). While justifiably proud of its working class heritage as the birthplace of United States manufacturing and a founder of the Industrial Revolution, today Waltham is a vibrant, economically sound middle class community. Waltham has long welcomed business development and is home to hundreds of businesses from venture capital firms, to small start-ups, to leading world and Fortune 500 companies like Raytheon, Thermo Fisher Scientific, and Global Partners.

Waltham, Massachusetts Demographic Information
Prepared by Laura Bernheim

Education Information

Note -- Most of this information is based on the 2016-2017 school year. In some cases, the most recent information is from the 2015-2016 school year. See tables below for all Waltham Public Schools demographic information.

Mass Department of Elementary and Secondary Education:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/DistrictReportCardOverview.aspx?linkid=106&orgcode=03080000&fycode=2016&orgtypecode=5>

United States Census American Community Survey Information Waltham Links

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml?src=bkml

<https://www.census.gov/acs/www/data/data-tables-and-tools/data-profiles/2015/> (leads to American Fact Finder)

Metropolitan Area Planning Council: Waltham Growth Projections

<ftp://ftp.mapc.org/projections/Municipal%20PDF%20Reports/Waltham.pdf>

Data USA <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/waltham-ma/>

Bureau of Labor Statistics: <https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ma.htm>

General Enrollment

- There were **5,461** students enrolled in the Waltham Public Schools during the 2016-2017 school year. The United States Census Bureau estimates that Waltham's population was **63,002** thus public school students accounted for approximately **8.7%** of the city's population.
- There were **953,748** students enrolled in Massachusetts Public Schools during the 2016-2017 school year. The United States Census Bureau estimates that the population of Massachusetts was **6,811,779**. Thus, Massachusetts public school students accounted for approximately **14%** of the total population, and that Waltham is under the state total.

Enrollment by Race/Ethnicity (2016-2017)

Race	% of District	% of State
African American	9.7	8.9
Asian	5.7	6.7
Hispanic	37.5	19.4

Native American	0.1	0.2
White	44.1	61.3
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	2.7	3.4

Waltham Public Schools are fairly diverse compared to Massachusetts as a whole. These numbers are most reflected in the numbers for African-American (Waltham: **9.7%**; Massachusetts: **8.9%**), Hispanic/Latino (Waltham: **37.5%**; Massachusetts: **19.4%**), and White (Waltham: **44.1%**; Massachusetts: **61.3%**) enrollment.

Enrollment by Gender (2016-2017)

Gender	District	State
Male	2,872	488,985
Female	2,589	464,716
Total	5,461	953,748

The school's gender totals are fairly reflective of Massachusetts as a whole though the female public K-12 student population in Waltham is slightly lower than the state's public K-12 female student population.

- Males (Waltham: **52.6%**; Massachusetts: **51.3%**)
- Females (Waltham: **47.4%**; Massachusetts: **48.7%**)

High Needs Population

The number of "High Needs" students in Waltham (**51.1%**) is higher than Massachusetts (**45.2%**) as a whole. According to the United States Department of Education, "High Needs Students" are defined as "Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support, such as students who are living in poverty, who attend high-minority schools (as defined in the Race to the Top application), who are far below grade level, who have left school before receiving a regular high school diploma, who are at risk of not graduating with a diploma on time, who are homeless, who are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English learners."

(<https://www.ed.gov/race-top/district-competition/definitions>)

Elementary & Middle Schools

High Needs Population	# of students	%
Economically disadvantaged students	1284	23.9
Students with disabilities	1038	19.
English language learners	952	17.7

Waltham Senior High School

High Needs Population	# of students	%
Economically disadvantaged students	288	19.5
Students with disabilities	245	16.6
English language learners	183	12.4

Disabilities

The percentage of students with disabilities is about the same as Massachusetts. (Waltham: **17.8%**; Massachusetts: **17.4%**)

English Language Learning and Non-Native English Speakers

- **19.3%** are enrolled in Waltham's English Language Learning program, compared to **9.5%** enrolled across Massachusetts.
- **45.2%** of Waltham students speak a language other than English at home, compared to **20.1%** across Massachusetts.
- Communities contiguous to Waltham have much fewer students whose first language is not English.
 - Newton: **24.0%**
 - Weston: **10.5%**
 - Lexington: **26.8%**
 - Watertown: **31.8%**

Economics of Students

The number of economically disadvantaged students enrolled in Waltham (**27.3%**) is slightly lower than Massachusetts as a whole (**30.2%**).

Waltham does have a higher percentage of economically disadvantaged students than contiguous communities. In all cases, except for Watertown, Waltham's percentage is higher, significantly.

- Newton: **9.0%**
- Weston: **4.7%**
- Lexington: **5.5%**
- Watertown: **24.1%**

2015-2016 Student Dropout Rate Report

This report provides the percentage of Massachusetts public high school students who drop out of high school.

[More about the data.](#)

Dropout rates are not reported for any student group where the number of students is less than 6.

Student Group	# Enrolled Grades 9-12	# Dropout All Grades	% Dropout All Grades	% Dropout Grade 09	% Dropout Grade 10	% Dropout Grade 11	% Dropout Grade 12
All Students	1,473	27	1.8	0.8	3.8	1.3	1.2
High Needs	637	26	4.1	1.7	8.0	3.0	3.3
Economically Disadvantaged	288	13	4.5	2.4	8.1	4.8	3.5
LEP English language learner	183	18	9.8	2.1	15.7	7.1	13.0
Students with disabilities	244	5	2.0	0.0	3.4	3.0	2.3
African American/Black	165	3	1.8	2.8	2.4	1.8	0.0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2						
Asian	89	0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hispanic or Latino	523	20	3.8	1.4	7.8	1.7	3.8
Multi-race, non- Hispanic or Latino	38	1	2.6	0.0	9.1	0.0	0.0
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	5						
White	651	3	0.5	0.0	0.6	1.1	0.0
Female	713	7	1.0	0.5	2.1	1.1	0.0
Male	760	20	2.6	1.1	5.3	1.5	2.4

Cohort 2016 Graduation Rates/4-Year Graduation Rate (2016)

Student Group	# in Cohort	% Graduated	% Still in School	% Non-Grad Completers	% H.S. Equiv.	% Dropped Out	% Permanently Excluded
All Students	357	84.6	7.3	2.2	0.6	5.3	0.0
Male	189	79.4	9.5	2.6	1.1	7.4	0.0
Female	168	90.5	4.8	1.8	0.0	3.0	0.0
ELL	49	55.1	16.3	12.2	0.0	16.3	0.0
Students w/disabilities	98	77.6	13.3	1.0	0.0	8.2	0.0
Low income	176	77.8	10.2	2.3	1.1	8.5	0.0
High needs	233	78.1	10.3	3.0	0.9	7.7	0.0
Afr. Amer./Black	27	92.6	3.7	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Asian	29	89.7	6.9	3.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hispanic/Latino	126	70.6	12.7	4.0	0.8	11.9	0.0
Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White	164	92.7	4.3	0.6	0.0	2.4	0.0
Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl.	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat.	10	90.0	0.0	0.0	10.0	0.0	0.0

Plans of High School Graduates (2015-2016)

Plan	% of District	% of State
4-Year Private College	36	30
4-Year Public College	27	30
2-Year Private College	0	1
2-Year Public College	15	20
Other Post-Secondary	5	2

Work	13	8
Military	3	2
Other	1	1
Unknown	0	6

- Waltham had a dropout rate of **1.8%** for the 2015-2016 school year which is only slightly lower than the dropout rate for Massachusetts (**1.9%**), as a whole.
- The dropout rate for Waltham (**6.3%**) and Massachusetts (**2.9%**) has decreased, dramatically, since the previous strategic plan.
- The group representing the highest number of dropouts are English Language Learners at **9.8%**
- Other groups with high dropout rates in Waltham are Economically Disadvantaged (**4.5%**), Hispanic/Latino (**3.8%**), High Needs (**4.1%**), Multi-Race (**2.6%**), Students with Disabilities (**2.0%**), and African-American (**1.8%**).
- The group with the lowest dropout rate are Asians (**0%**).
- In Waltham, twice as many males (**2.6%**) as females (**1.0%**) have dropped out of school.
- The graduation rate in 2016 for Waltham was **84.6%**. This is slightly lower than the Massachusetts rate of **87.5%**.
- The graduation rates for both Waltham (**77.5%**) and Massachusetts (**81.5%**) have increased since the previous strategic plan.
- **78%** of Waltham’s graduates in 2016 planned to attend college in some form. This includes private and public as well as four and two year institutions. This is slightly lower than **81%** of Massachusetts graduates attending higher education institutions.
- **63%** of 2016 Waltham graduates planned to attend 4 year institutions (public and private) which is higher than the **60.6%** of Massachusetts graduates.
- According to 2011-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) estimates, **90.1%** of Waltham’s population has attained at least a high school diploma. This is higher than Massachusetts which is **89.8%**
- ACS estimates the following for obtaining some form of college degree, by age: (Associate Degree or higher)
 - 18-24 years old: **55.3%** (Massachusetts: **45.8%**)
 - 25 years and older: **32.9%** * (unlike the 18-24 years old which had this as an actual statistic, they break it down by degree name and thus this was the sum of those) (Massachusetts: **30.5%**)
- ACS estimates the following for bachelor degrees or higher by age bracket:
 - 18-24 years: **19.2%** (Massachusetts: **16.0%**)
 - 25-34 years: **65.8%**(Massachusetts: **49.5%**)
 - 35-44 years: **53.9%** (Massachusetts: **46.0%**)
 - 45-64 years: **42.1%** (Massachusetts: **39.5%**)
 - 65 and older: **28.2%** (Massachusetts: **29.3%**)

Immigration, Race/Ethnicity, and Gender

Race & Gender: <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

- **96.9%** of Waltham identify as one race (Massachusetts: **97.1%**), while **3.1%** identify as mixed race (Massachusetts: **2.9%**).

- **75.3%** identify as white (Massachusetts: **79.6%**). The highest minority ethnicities are Hispanic/Latino (**13.3%** higher than Massachusetts's **10.6%**); Asian (**11.1%** higher than Massachusetts's **6.0%**); Black/African-American (**7.1%** same as Massachusetts).
- Waltham has a slightly higher female (**51.4%**) population than male (**48.6%**) population, which is not reflexive of the school population which has a higher male population.
- Waltham's gender breakdown is almost identical to the gender breakdown for Massachusetts. (Male: **48.5%**; Female: **51.5%**)
- The largest gap between males (**42.0%**) and females (**58.0%**) are in the 65 and older group.

Immigration and Non-Native English Speakers

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/15_5YR/S1601/1600000US2572600

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/cf/1.0/en/place/Waltham city,](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/cf/1.0/en/place/Waltham%20city%2C%20Massachusetts/ORIGINS_AND_LANGUAGE/FOREIGN_BORN)

[Massachusetts/ORIGINS_AND_LANGUAGE/FOREIGN_BORN](https://datausa.io/profile/geo/waltham-ma/#demographics)

<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/waltham-ma/#demographics>

- The 2015 ACS estimates that **16,350** residents of Waltham were born in another country which is approximately **25.9%** of Waltham's estimated 2015 population. (Foreign born residents make up approximately **15.8%** of the Massachusetts population)
- The 2015 ACS also estimates that **31.9%** of Waltham residents speak a language other than English. (**22.5%** of Massachusetts residents speak a language other than English)
 - **10.5%** of Waltham's population speaks Spanish as their other language. (**8.4%** of Massachusetts's population speaks Spanish)
 - According to Data USA (website started by MIT Media Lab Director), the three most common languages, other than English, spoken, are Spanish, Chinese, and French Creole.
- As mentioned in the education section, **45.2%** of Waltham public schools students speak a language other than English at home; and **19.3%** of students are enrolled in the school's English Language Learning program.

Economics, including Employment, Income

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ACS/15_5YR/S1701/1600000US2572600

[https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/cf/1.0/en/place/Waltham city, Massachusetts/INCOME/MEDIAN_HH_INCOME](https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/cf/1.0/en/place/Waltham%20city%2C%20Massachusetts/INCOME/MEDIAN_HH_INCOME)

- The median household income for Waltham, according to 2015 ACS, is **\$75,205**. This is more than the median income for Massachusetts (**\$68,563**).
- **5.9%** of Waltham households bring in an income of \$10,000 or less. This is almost on par with the **6.1%** of Massachusetts households making the same amount.
- **54.7%** of Waltham's population is part of the civilian workforce. (Massachusetts: **52.2%**)
- **4.5%** of Waltham's populations identify as Veterans (Massachusetts: **6.7%**). The majority of the Veterans identify as Vietnam War Veterans (**32.3%** as opposed to **34.1%** in Massachusetts)
- The unemployment rate for Waltham, according to the ACS, was **6.1%**. (Note -- this is from 2015. The Massachusetts unemployment rate is updated more frequently and is **4.3%** as of July 2017, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That's increased almost a point since February)
- There is no [government career center or unemployment office](#) in Waltham. The closest are Cambridge, Framingham, and Woburn.
- According to the ACS, **10.0%** of Waltham's residents live below the poverty line which is lower than the **11.6%** of Massachusetts residents living below the poverty line.
- A large number of people living below the poverty line in Waltham are children or young(new) adults.
 - Under 18 years old: **11.9%** (Massachusetts: **15.2%**)
 - 18-64 years old: **9.9%** (Massachusetts: **10.9%**)
 - 65 years and older: **8.3%** (Massachusetts: **9.2%**)
- Ethnic minorities make up a large portion of Waltham residents living below the poverty line:
 - African-American/Black: **19.0%** (Massachusetts: **22.0%**)
 - Asian: **19.1%** (Massachusetts: **14.6%**)

- Hispanic/Latino(a): **17.0% (29.3%)**

Housing/Household/Family Information

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/cf/1.0/en/place/Waltham city, Massachusetts/HOUSING/HOUSING_UNITS

<ftp://ftp.mapc.org/projections/Municipal%20PDF%20Reports/Waltham.pdf>

- There are **25,887** housing units in Waltham, according to the 2015 ACS.
- The majority of household units in Waltham are multi-family units, with **55.7%** of residential buildings having two or more units. **10.6%** of residential buildings have 20 or more units. (**41.8%** Massachusetts’s residential buildings have two or more units)
- There is almost an even split of owner-occupied (**50.3%**) versus renter-occupied units (**49.7%**) in Waltham. There is a much larger gap in Massachusetts between owner occupied (**62.1%**) and renter occupied (**37.9%**)
- There are slightly more family households (**52.4%**) than non-family households (**47.4%**). However, **39.0%** of all Waltham households are married couple families, while **13.3%** of households in Waltham are labeled as “Other Family” by the Census Bureau. (Mostly seems to be single parent households) In Massachusetts, the numbers are (Family Households: **63.6%**; Non-family households: **36.4%**; Married Couple Families: **46.9%**; Other Families: **16.7%**)
- Homeless in Waltham, hard to quantify
 - <http://waltham.wickedlocal.com/news/20160708/defining-homeless-community-in-waltham>
 - <http://waltham.lib.ma.us/services/homeless.pdf>

Aging

https://factfinder.census.gov/bkmk/cf/1.0/en/place/Waltham city, Massachusetts/AGE/MEDIAN_AGE

<ftp://ftp.mapc.org/projections/Municipal%20PDF%20Reports/Waltham.pdf>large

- The median age of Waltham is **33.8** (Massachusetts: **39.3**)
- The two largest age groups in Waltham are 20 to 24 years and 25 to 29 years, both coming in at **11.2%** (Massachusetts’s largest age is 50 to 54 years at **7.6%**).
- However, according to the Metropolitan Area Planning Council, the number of residents aged 65 and older will continue to increase, with a **45%** projected increase between 2010 and 2030. According to the 2015 ACS, the Waltham population 65 and older is not as diverse as the Waltham population as a whole.
 - White: **91.9%** (Massachusetts: **90.3%**)
 - African-American/ Black: **1.9%** (Massachusetts: **4.2%**)
 - Asian: **3.3%** (Massachusetts: **3.1%**)
 - Hispanic/Latino(a): **2.9%** (Massachusetts: **3.6%**)

LIBRARY PROFILE

The Waltham Public Library serves a diverse citizenry from not only the City of Waltham but from the many other members of the Minuteman Library Network. It provides a wide variety of informational, educational, business, reference and recreational services to the community. It provides these services from a single location on Main Street. The original building, dating from 1915 was renovated and expanded in 1993-1994.

The Library is open 68 hours a week, including summers, with a staff of 18 full time and 28 part-time employees. Approximately half of the Waltham population, (30,000) are registered borrowers. The Library collection contains 195,880 items, including 18,159 audio recordings, 13,150 video recordings, 439 print magazine & newspaper subscriptions, 36 museum passes and 15 laptops. Patrons borrowed 384,126 items in FY2017, including 46,565 transferred from other Minuteman Library Network libraries. Waltham loaned 48,483 items to other libraries in FY2017.

The Library's total annual municipal budget, including employee benefits and utilities, was \$2,637,089 in FY2017 or \$42.00 per Waltham resident.

An active Friends of the Library organization sponsors cultural and educational programs for all ages throughout the year. In FY2017, 640 children's and young adults programs were attended by 14,202 young people; 242 adult programs had an attendance of 1,200. In addition, the Friends fund projects and equipment that are above and beyond the scope of the municipal budget, such as laptops and landscaping.

Over the last two and a half years, the Waltham Public Library has undergone many changes. We have hired a new library director and over twenty new staff, professional and paraprofessional, thanks to a fully funded budget, plus five new full-time positions including a full-time Children's Librarian, Teen Specialist, Custodian, Technical Services assistant, Literacy Librarian and full-time Audio-Visual Department Head.

In 2015 we made a to-do list of major projects to tackle and hit all of the major items.

Additional highlights include the renovation of our Teen Room, moving to Open Holds, and the early stages of integrated public service desks where Reference and Circulation function together. We significantly rearranged collections, to better fit the Waltham Public Library and community we service today. This has allowed for quieter study areas, two new meeting rooms, brighter, more engaging spaces for new materials, stronger staffing solutions, and one main Youth Services area. We spent a significant amount of time looking at Accessibility of our library and made improvements, studied our outdated policies and procedures and streamlined them, and we changed our single use restrooms to unisex.

The City has been generous. Our computer budget has increased to \$10,000, and for the first time ever we received separate additional funding for Teen computers. We received more money for training and conferences for staff development, and we continue to meet the requirements for State Aid with a healthy materials budget. In particular, thanks to the support of the City of Waltham and the understanding of our Friends of the Waltham Public Library, probably our largest improvement is that we no longer charge a rental fee for DVDs. As of July 1, 2017, everything is free at the Waltham Public Library.

The issues that were of concern prior to 2015 are no longer pressing: lack of parking, restroom wait time, and cleanliness of the building were our three biggest daily complaints. Even though we were unable to make changes to the public parking, today patrons are not complaining.

We believe the patrons are responding to this new era. The building is cleaner, the layout of collection is more logical, and we are busier than ever. Circulation is trending upward and FY2017 was up .8% from FY2016.

TRENDS

We identified several trends affecting the community and the Library:

Opioid Epidemic: Staff feel strongly about navigating the opioid epidemic, and best serving our patrons who suffer from mental health issues, addiction and homelessness. This is a real crisis that we deal with every day in Waltham, particularly at the library. Library staff know many of these patrons by name and work tirelessly to help advocate for their success. However, staff were shocked that it only came up in one focus group, the Spanish speaking group (in this case mostly immigrants). Interestingly, Waltham is filled with many long-time residents. We find that we are constantly navigating these two worlds, balancing the perception of Waltham by some of the long-time residents with the reality of the Waltham that exists now.

Racism and Discrimination: We believe that the Waltham Public Library must create an environment that actively engages, welcomes and serves all of our diverse population. As a public library, we should continuously foster lifelong learning and curiosity; this includes offering perspectives that may challenge our patrons to think in new ways. We must embrace this role and actively support our patrons with relevant, factual material that they can process in their own way.

English Language Learners and the City of Waltham's Dual Language Program: one of the most exciting things happening in Waltham Public Schools is their commitment to our English Language Learners. The Library is inspired to work with the dual language kindergarten program that started last year, and invest more time and energy to being a partner for all who want to learn English.

Federal Budgets: Earlier this year, federal budgets threatened to defund public libraries by eliminating the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The Waltham Public Library leadership team wants to remain educated, aware and alert for any threats to libraries, our services and our staff.

"Fake news": For the Waltham Public Library team, getting accurate, factual information into the hands of our community is always our bread and butter. But as the community recovered from a contentious election, stories of fake news reports ran rampant. This summer, our most popular program was a discussion about fake news with Callie Crossley. Over 90 patrons showed up for a discussion, followed by a program with UMass Amherst's Allison Butler, to discuss their concerns navigating this realm. We want to expand on this interest and be known throughout the community as a reliable source of factual information.

Downloadable content & the Digital Divide: We recognize that technology transitions are slower in real time. We saw this ten years ago as DVDs replaced VHS (something people still occasionally ask for). Our staff nimbly assists patrons who are just getting email accounts and patrons who want help with the latest iteration of iPhones. It's our role to be a liaison between the old and the new. We want to be smart and agile in terms of offering access to all the technology our patrons need, but also what they want, what they might have fun learning about, particularly as we build a more robust digital collection. We are excited about potential partnerships with other libraries/consortia to continue to prioritize our patron's wants and needs.

Need for community: American Library Association talks about the social role of public libraries as part of the reason we are so valuable to the communities we serve. We agree. Our patrons frequently ask for more programming, more collaborations and more meeting space. We are excited to address all three of these requests.

In addition, our Strategic Planning committee **read and discussed the following articles:**

[Trend Thinking in Libraries: Center for the Future of Libraries helps librarians look ahead for improving spaces and services](#)

Miguel Figueroa, March 2016

[Emerging Tech Trends Require Change Management](#)

Troy Lambert, July 2016

[The State of America's Libraries:](#)

Kathy Rosa, 2016

[Customer Service is Loving People](#)

Matt Smith, February 2017

[Going Inside the Box The Wired Library](#)

Mikaeal Jacobsen, November 2016

[Denver Public Library hires peer navigators to help homeless get back on their feet](#)

Jennifer Kovaleski, January 2017

[Here's what happens when a theme park company designs a library](#)

Monique O. Madan. February 2017

[FEATURE | Civil Rights Training at Nashville Public Library](#)

Kathleen Hughes, January 2017

[Just Good Practice: Engaging Families with Young Children](#)

Dorothy Stoltz, Paula Isett, Linda Zang, Liza Frye, & Liz Sundermann, October 2015

[Connected Learning: Chicago Tests 'Digital Badges' to Track Education](#)

Nancy Scola, March 2014

[How Americans Value Public Libraries in Their Communities](#)

Kathryn Zickuhr, Lee Rainie, Kirsten Purcell and Maeve Duggan, December 2013

[Why Public Libraries Matter and How They Can Do More](#)

David Vinjamuri, January 2013

Keep/Acquire/Reinvent/Retire

SUMMARY

Items crossed out were completed in FY2017.

Keep

Media in all desirable formats.
Happy, friendly staff; Helpful, pleasant well trained staff
Supportive, creative environment for staff
Programs
Thursday night book club
Digital libraries, such as Hoopla and Overdrive
Newer materials
Displays

Acquire

More signage
~~Rokus~~ and the like
Preloaded ipads to check out
More devices
Better setup for public computers. Maybe wireless, maybe just a different setup for the PCs
Brighter Environment - rugs, furniture, paint
More computers. A computer classroom and classes.
Laptop vending machine. Technology vending machine
More advanced software
More specialized full-time staff to lead transformative, innovative projects/initiatives (i.e. marketing, ~~programming, outreach~~, fundraising, ~~adult literacy~~, early literacy, web developer, etc).
More diverse staff. More staff who speak multiple languages.
Professional development
policy/standards/expectations/requirements and funding to support
Bookmobile
Public art
More training for staff
More outreach
Cafe
~~A Literacy Librarian~~
Mobile Hotspots
Mobile Devices to Circulate
Laptop Vending Machines
Readers' Advisory Department
~~New YA room and YA tech~~

Reinvent

~~Our Layout~~
~~2 for on 1 DVDs on Sundays!~~
Curbside Service
~~Change our Waltham bucks to wallet size~~
Waltham Public Library Long Range Plan 2018-2022

Amnesty Days
Fines in General
Replace traditional departments with self-organizing teams based on agile organizational principles.
Roaming/deskless staff.
More restrooms
~~Cleaner building~~
Noise expectations
Transition to streaming AV materials
More customer service orientation and training
Allow for food on one whole floor; have cafe/socializing area.
Articulated vision for the future of the WPL that is commensurate with a vision for the future of all libraries.
Better lighting on second floor
Better electrical wiring
Better technology
The floor numbering system
English Language Learning and Literacy Offerings
The concept of the reference department
Add more book clubs
Outreach and marketing
More reader's advisory (great potential with Next Reads)
The library website and our overall web presence (including our Pinterest page. Great potential there)
~~Moving teens downstairs, so they can be themselves and patrons will be less bothered by them~~
The concept of WPL, website redesign, Reference Desk

Retire

Policies or procedures or services that complicate the user experience.
The current study room policy
~~Fees for DVD rental~~
~~DVD security cases~~
~~Any materials that are in disrepair, regardless of value/sentiment~~
~~Differentiated service desks~~
Carpet
Desktop computers

Old worn carpeting
Old worn disgusting color on walls
Fines
The humongous reference desk! It's a fortress
Tapes

Donations

A few of us can't stand the dusky pink/mauve walls we stare at all day
Drop the allowance of drinks and food outside the snack room-too risky for accidents.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Customer Service should always be a focus for any organization, but it is especially crucial in Waltham, where we are surrounded by other Minuteman Libraries. With one Library for all our residents in 13.6 square miles, for some citizens, it is easier to go to the Watertown, Newton, Lexington or even Weston libraries, where there is plentiful parking, mostly free. Our patrons use other libraries; when we do have patrons use Waltham, they need to know that they are getting the best service. This also requires careful, attentive space planning for the future. We want to have the best physical library we can offer the community. The layouts that worked in 1994 are not the best fit for a library in 2022. As we work toward integrated desks, we're studying what makes the most sense for our users tomorrow. We also want to look at how we serve our student population (from daycares to colleges) and the school system in general. We want to look at where we are inconsistent in service. We want to have honest discussions about our lack of diversity in the professional field, and how we can better serve our foreign language speakers.

Communication. We hear it over and over again in the community. We've narrowed this to three areas to focus on over the next five years. First, how the library communicates with our patrons. How do we share information and news with the community? What is our brand? What is the vision we are working toward? Second, how does the library communicate as an organization? Are we clear about expectations, roles, policy and procedure? Are there systems in place to allow for any updates and changes to be seamlessly incorporated? Does our mission make sense for 2017? Third, Waltham needs a better system in place to share information about the City to the City's residents (we heard this from almost every focus group). There are hundreds of groups and organizations doing great work in the City. The Waltham Public Library believes that we are the best organization to be in the information power house for the City and we know that we can take on this role and be effective managers of information. Of note is that our survey results told us that residents use social media, the web, and flyers are used equally by residents. The same amount across the board. None of these tools were more popular than others.

Collections. We are excited to spend a significant amount of time studying our collections and improving what we offer the community. In 2016 we introduce a Toy Library in the Children's Room, which is incredibly popular. We also want to offer residents an exciting Library of Things. We want to evaluate our current holdings, and have a stronger understanding of what our residents want, and get them on the shelf as soon as possible. We want to be ahead of digital trends and prepared for the next iteration of multimedia formats. But beyond providing collections and access to these collections, we want to foster curiosity. We want to offer more classes on how to use digital tools, how to evaluate information. We want to engage the public with more book discussion groups, more programs that engage both the information and the practical use of that information, like skill building classes, conversation groups, photography classes, etc.

ACTION PLAN

Who?	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Additional Funding?
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GOAL 1:
Waltham Public Library is positioned as an information hub for the City of Waltham, working under and reflecting a cohesive communication model that empowers and supports staff.

Dir. **OBJECTIVE 1: The Library will create an external communication plan.**

Asst. Dir.

DHs

Actions:

1. Rewrite the Library's Mission and Vision statement.	x		x		x	
2. Investigate hiring a marketing firm to audit our current communication and assist with rebranding our identity.		x				Maybe
3. Redesign our logo.		x				Maybe
4. Create brand standards for all information leaving the library.	x					

Dir. **OBJECTIVE 2: The Library will create an internal communication plan.**

Asst. Dir.

DHs

All staff

Actions:

1. Create a Policy and Procedure Manual, online and in print.	x					
2. Develop a process for maintaining P&P Manuals and a schedule for review and updates.		x				
3. Review all policies and procedures to ensure they are useful in empowering our staff, and update as needed.	x	x	x	x	x	
4. Ensure that all staff are up to date on current library policy and procedure.	x	x	x	x	x	
5. Set aside time for department meetings 3 times per year for the purposes of planning, training and reviewing changes.	x	x	x	x	x	
6. Continue all-staff meetings twice yearly, including periodic off-site retreats for training, problem-solving and planning	x	x	x	x	x	Yes

Asst. Dir. **OBJECTIVE 3: Create one cohesive orientation process for all new hires at the Waltham Public Library.**

Actions:

1. Set an Orientation Week Schedule for all new staff that includes time in each department and a full paging list.	x					
2. Investigate training opportunities provided by the City of Waltham/Minuteman to incorporate into the orientation.	x					
3. Explore what training would be worth reviewing with staff on a regular basis, and create a schedule.	x	x	x	x	x	

Ref. DH, Circ. DH

Prog. Coord.

Outreach Lib.

OBJECTIVE 4: Library staff will improve awareness, use and support of the library through effective outreach, communications, programs and partnerships.

Actions:

1. Investigate a marketing collaboration with Bentley College Business School.		x				
2. Create a calendar of regular events at the WPL.		x				

3. Develop a publicity plan/checklist for all programs and events.	x					
4. Create a marketing plan to reintroduce community to existing programs, like the Library at Stonehurst.		x				
5. Collaborate with the Friends to simplify the publicity process and avoid duplication.		x				
6. Work with the Waltham schools to help promote library events and programs.	x	x	x	x	x	

Dir. **OBJECTIVE 5. Redesign the website to strengthen the library's online "branch" as a community resource and tool.**

Asst. Dir.

Actions:

Computer Lib.

DHs

Prog. Coord.

1. Systematic review of the library web site; research into best practices for site content and organization; produce recommendations for improvements. Arrange for Bentley or Simmons student assistance, if possible.		x				
2. Use Google Analytics to study current patterns of use, identify problem areas.	x					
3. Survey website users for feedback.			x	x	x	
4. Implement recommended improvements to web site.			x	x	x	

Dir. **OBJECTIVE 6. Become a clearinghouse for information about City of Waltham events, organizations and issues.**

Asst. Dir.

DHs.

Actions:

1. Investigate opportunities for professional staff to get involved with local organizations.	x	x	x	x	x	
2. Develop a product, calendar or database, which allows access to all events and activities in the City. Work with other City Departments and organizations; use software to harvest information, as well as more traditional information gathering methods.		x				Maybe

OBJECTIVE 7: Maintain awareness of Library user opinions, comments and interests through the use of periodic surveys and other means.

Dir.

Asst. Dir.

DHs

All staff

Actions:

1. Create a patron feedback group for children, teens and adults to test ideas and improvements with before going live.	x					
2. Promote the use of suggestion box/blog and purchase request forms.		x				
3. Revise and re-issue the 2017 community-wide survey every 24 months.			x		x	
4. Integrate feedback into Library operation, as applicable and within budget constraints.		x				
5. Publicize changes made in response to user requests.	x	x	x	x	x	
6. Share results of Strategic Plan in a document that is out in the open for the public and staff to reflect on.	x	x	x	x	x	

Goal 2:

Waltham Public Library is a user-centered information hub, providing welcoming, engaging, helpful, efficient, empowered and solution-oriented service.

DHs
All staff

OBJECTIVE 1: Create a set of desk standards to clarify expectations for customer service at a public service desk.

Actions:

1. Create a "what to do when there is nothing to do" list of tasks.	x					
2. Introduce the "hotel lobby" effect; invite a customer service rep from a major hotel for a presentation on customer service.	x					

DH Ref
DH Youth
Asst. Dir.

OBJECTIVE 2: Improve service and resources for our non-native English speakers/English language learners

Actions:

1. Become an active partner the Dual Language Immersion program at Waltham Public Schools.		x				
2. Become an active partner in Waltham Family School.	x					
3. Investigate potential of bilingual signage throughout the building.		x	x			
4. Collaborate with the Family School, Power Program and WATCH – library tours and classroom visits		x	x	x	x	
5. Translate basic library information into Spanish, Haitian Creole and Chinese			x	x	x	
6. Create the job description for our Literacy Librarian and fill the vacant position.	x					

Dir, Asst Dir.
DH Youth
Teen Spec.

OBJECTIVE 3: Improve service, outreach and resources to youth and their families.

Actions:

1. Work with schools on a campaign to issue a library card to every school-aged Waltham resident.		x	x	x	x	
2. Ensure that all schools have at least one yearly visit by a public librarian.	x	x	x	x	x	
3. Actively promote and grow the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program.	x	x	x	x	x	
4. Reinstate 5th grade tours for all Waltham students	x					
5. Explore the feasibility of simultaneous programs for parents and small children		x	x	x	x	
6. Investigate a program similar to "Baby Bags" for all new parents in Waltham to introduce them to pre-literacy skills and the Waltham Public Library.			x	x	x	
7. Monitor use of the new Teen Room and materials and develop a strategic plan for serving Teens in the community.		x	x	x	x	
8. Position Teen services to be an after-school hub supporting the new high school project-based learning model.		x				
9. Expand summer teen employment opportunities.		x				

Dir.
Prog. Coord.

OBJECTIVE 4: All staff are able to speak a second language.

Actions:

1. Become a part of the conversation about the lack of diversity in the field of Library Science.	x	x	x	x	x	
2. Research grant opportunities to teach our staff Spanish as part of their daily work life.	x	x				
3. Teach our staff Spanish phrases that will assist native Spanish speakers in better utilizing the library.	x					

Goal 3:
Waltham Public Library offers a variety of recreational, informational and educational materials and resources that are factual and current to encourage early literacy, nurture curiosity, introduce technology and foster a lifelong love of recreational reading.

DHs
 Tech Services
 Staff

OBJECTIVE 1. Create a Collection Development staff-led team that meets monthly.

Actions:

1. Explore the potential of hiring a Collection Development Specialist as a permanent staff person.	x					
2. Reevaluate the current collection of materials and resources.		x				
3. Review and rewrite the Collection Development Policy.		x				
4. Create a Yearly Collection Calendar to track award winners, monthly themes, and monitor copies and materials needed.	x					
5. Create A yearly Collection Display calendar to actively promote our collections and highlight materials.		x				
6. Provide a way to support local authors, both published and self-published and support their journeys as authors.	x					

DH Tech Services
 DH Circ

OBJECTIVE 2: Improve use of statistical analysis in collection development to increase circulation.

Actions:

1. Create monthly reports of items routed in to Waltham from other libraries; use this information to identify gaps in the collection.	x	x	x	x	x	
2. Create a quarterly report of subscription database use; adjust selections and/or promotion efforts accordingly.	x	x	x	x	x	
3. Create an annual report of circulation by statistical categories (SCATs) to determine high and low circulations per number of holdings; adjust selections based on this information, building heavily used areas and reliance on network.	x	x	x	x	x	

DH AV
 DH Tech Services
 Computer Specialist
 DH Ref

OBJECTIVE 8: Anticipate and accommodate changing formats for audio-visual materials.

Actions:

1. Offer patrons instruction and assistance in downloadable materials.	x	x	x	x	x	
2. Introduce and train patrons on new technology.	x	x	x	x	x	
3. Provide a terminal dedicated to ebook (and possibly evideo and emusic) downloads.	x	x	x	x	x	
4. Work with the Computer Specialist to come up with a 5 year plan for the next iteration of AV materials.	x					

DH Ref
 Outreach Lib

OBJECTIVE 9: Continue to build, improve and promote the English as a Second Language (ESL) collection.

Actions:

1. Consult with local ESL providers such as English at Large and the Power Program to identify recommended materials	x	x	x	x	x	
2. Make use of circulation reports to identify areas to expand.	x	x	x	x	x	
3. Develop flyers in other language describing the collections, encouraging use and suggestions for additional titles.		x	x	x	x	

4. Communicate with local organizations serving recent immigrants about library services and materials.	x	x	x	x	x	
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DH Youth
DH Tech Services

OBJECTIVE 8: Recatalog Children's Materials.

Actions:

1. Finish weeding the entire Children's collection.	x					
2. Visit other robust Children's Rooms and investigate other ways of organizing materials for our earliest users.	x	x	x	x	x	
3. Decide on a system and implement the changes as needed.		x	x			

Goal 4:

Waltham Public Library provides an engaging, safe, clean, comfortable, accessible and helpful community space.

Dir.
Asst. Dir.
Facilities
DHs

OBJECTIVE 1. Evaluate layout and conduct a space study to look at public use and current building capabilities and limitations.

Actions:

1. Explore hiring a space planning consultant and/or architectural firm.	x	x				Yes
2. Initiate a conversation with the public and solicit their feedback.			x			
3. Investigate potential funding resources for future needs.		x	x			Yes

Dir.
Asst. Dir.
DHs

OBJECTIVE 2: Create a long-range organizational chart.

Actions:

1. Use statistical data to monitor patron activity in each service area of the building.	x					
2. Finalize the transition to Integrated Desks and evaluate staffing needs throughout the building.	x					
3. Investigate the potential of combining service departments, like Audio Visual and Circulation.	x					
4. Discuss the potential for new departments, like separate Teen, Tweens and Collection Management.		x				

OBJECTIVE 3: Review entire facility, audit equipment and furniture and develop a maintenance/replacement plan.

Actions:

1. Access current condition of the building and furniture.	x	x	x	x	x	
2. Purchase replacements as needed.	x	x	x	x	x	
3. Continue to investigate alternative funding support.	x	x	x	x	x	Yes

OBJECTIVE 4: Reimagine the WPL for the next 50 years.

Actions:

1. Hire professional designers.		x				Yes
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2. Develop a space plan.		x				Yes
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OBJECTIVE 5: Remind our community how awesome their Library is!

Actions:

1. Reinvent the celebration that is getting your first library card for all ages!		x				FWPL
2. Develop a welcome packet to distribute to new residents.		x				Yes (sponsors)
3. Collaborate with the FWPL to sponsor a local youth sports team for more visibility in the community.		x	x	x	x	FWPL
3. Offer an OTL (Outside the Lines) event monthly, leading up to a week-long celebration in September.		x	x	x	x	