



MONROE TOWNSHIP  
**LIBRARY**

# STRATEGIC

# PLAN



## 2022-2025

***LIMITLESS DISCOVERY***

# CONTENTS

Message from the Board . . . . .	3
Acknowledgments . . . . .	5
Our Process . . . . .	6
Community Analysis . . . . .	7
Survey Responses . . . . .	14
Focus Groups . . . . .	18
Vision and Mission . . . . .	22
Goals . . . . .	23
Objectives . . . . .	24
How to Use This Plan . . . . .	25



# MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Serving as the Board President continues to be a privilege that is only enhanced by the Library Board that I lead. The Monroe Township Public Library is everything that a community could want in a library. Our Library continues to be exemplary, innovative, creative and inclusive and this has been made possible by the ongoing support we have received from our Township Council. The Township administration refers to the Library as the jewel of the Township. Sister libraries in the State of New Jersey turn to us to investigate our innovations. In addition our Library Director and Assistant Director have served and /or currently serve in leadership capacities in the New Jersey Library Association (NJLA).

The Library staff is dedicated to their roles and have helped the Library and the community to navigate the difficult challenges that have been cast upon us by Covid 19. When Covid cases reached our staff other staff members stepped up to compensate for their absence. In the process of responding to the demands of the pandemic, the Library has instituted new approaches some of which will remain permanent, namely, curbside service and online programming.

The list of new programs and activities attributed to our Library are lengthy; they are a reflection of the excellent staff development that includes the Director and Assistant Director as well as staff members. Attending relevant conferences and NJLA events is a staff expectation. Our Studio M is a model utilization of the 3D printer and Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) projects; the RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) Program increases the digital identification of our collection and expedites the distribution of materials; we have received a State Construction Grant; innumerable digital services are available to our patrons; The Friends of the Library provide stimulating programs as well as financial support; for the first time the Library served as one of several early voting locations, it was so successful it has become a permanent voting location; our Bookmobiles bring books and materials into the community on a regularly scheduled basis, we deliver Library materials to those that are homebound, our Library hours have been extended to meet the needs of our diverse community, and this summer we will be housing a farmers' market on our property.

The Library's level of service is impressive - in 2021, 235,141 items were checked out

(94,675 digital items), 664 programs were offered, there were 222,307 visits to our website, 2051 teen volunteer hours, 29,330 reference questions answered, Museum Pass Program was reinstated and the Library went fine free. Each year the Library develops a realistic yet futuristic Plan of Service that strives to reach goals for the upcoming year.

The 2022-25 Strategic Plan will provide a framework for future Plans of Service. The Monroe Township Library strives to serve its diverse community, fostering an environment that is conducive to personal discovery and providing the spark that ignites learning in our Library, the hub of Monroe Township.

***Benjamin Baum, President***

*Board of Trustees*

*Monroe Township Library*



# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

## Strategic Planning Committee

Benjamin Baum, President, Board  
 Lisa Chen, Vice President, Board  
 Francine Kitts, Friends of the Library  
 Dr. Marilyn Gonyo, Library Foundation  
 Leah Wagner, Library Director  
 Karen Klapperstuck, Assistant Director  
 Lynnette Fucci, Youth Services Coordinator  
 Natasha Mikulich, Community Engagement Coordinator  
 Jaclyn Gryszka, Circulation Supervisor

## Library Board of Trustees

Benjamin Baum, President  
 Lisa Chen, Vice President  
 Prena Shah, Secretary  
 Robert Isaacs, Treasurer  
 Anne Corey  
 Bernadette Yannacci  
 Mayor Stephen Dalina  
 Mayor's Alternate Dr. Alton Kinsey  
 Dr. Dori Alvich, Superintendent  
 Superintendent's Alternate  
 Kelly Roselle

## Consultants

### Library Crossroads, LLC

Cindy Czesak  
 James Keehler  
 Allen McGinley  
 Patricia Tumulty



# OUR PROCESS

The strategic planning process started with an in-depth analysis of the Monroe Township community. Consultants gathered data from quantitative sources, such as the U.S. Census and the NJ School Performance Report, to determine highlights, trends, and unique features.

In an effort to better understand the concerns, attitudes, opinions, challenges, experiences, and needs of the residents of Monroe Township, a community-wide survey was developed. The survey was distributed to residents and other stakeholders through the library's email newsletter, social media, and a press release to local media. It was also published in a print format and distributed to community anchor institutions - including Town Hall, the senior center, the recreation department, and assisted living facilities - to ensure inclusive responses from the entire community.

The information gathering phase also featured a staff survey to solicit input from library employees, and determine additional opportunities for strategic growth.

Consultants led a series of focus groups to explore themes identified in the surveys, and obtain more detailed feedback from key stakeholders in Monroe Township. These focus groups included conversations with key demographics, including: working adults, teenagers, parents of young children, and members of community organizations.

Following the conclusion of the information gathering phase, consultants met with the strategic planning committee to determine the overarching mission and vision for the strategic plan. Based on the information gathered from the community analysis, surveys, and focus groups, consultants conducted additional meetings to establish the goals and objectives of the strategic plan.

The final strategic plan is a result of a joint effort between the Monroe library community, and Library Crossroads Consultants. The plan has been informed by input from the residents and various stakeholders of Monroe Township, and analysis performed by consultants in collaboration with the library's strategic planning committee.

---

# COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

## Introduction

This analysis includes qualitative data from sources, such as the U.S. Census Bureau and the NJ School Performance Report, as well as insight gained from surveys and focus groups. These measurable statistics provide us with an improved understanding of the Monroe community, and help clarify emerging trends that were reflected in feedback from library staff and town residents.

## At a Glance

**Population and Demographics** – Monroe Township has experienced a 24% increase in total population. There has been a significant increase in the number of Asian residents in Monroe Township. Also, the percent of residents that are over the age of 65 is more than double the average for the entire state of New Jersey.

**Computer and Internet Use** – 86.5% access to broadband internet is close to the New Jersey average. This represents a continuing information access issue that many New Jersey communities face - not everyone in the community has home access to broadband internet. Information literacy, a person's ability to fully and safely use the internet, is not represented in the Census numbers.

**Education and Income** – Monroe is a relatively educated and affluent community. Both the percent of the population with a Bachelor's degree or higher, and the median household income of Monroe residents are above the state average.

**Economy and Transportation** - About half of Monroe residents are in the civilian labor force and have commute times that are longer than the New Jersey average. The convenient location of Monroe to major roads such as the New Jersey Turnpike, Route 130, Route 1, Route 195, Route 9, and Route 18 impacts who chooses to live there, as well as what businesses increasingly choose Monroe.

**Business** – Over 90 percent of the largest businesses in Monroe are based around logistics, including trucking, warehouses, and distributors. These businesses increase employment opportunities, but also increase traffic and concerns about overdevelopment.

## Community Analysis

### Population and Demographics

The Township of Monroe is relatively large, spreading across nearly 42 square miles, with a population of over 48,000 residents. The township is located in the southern portion of Middlesex County, in central New Jersey, and borders Monmouth and Mercer counties. Its neighbors are South Brunswick and Old Bridge, and Monroe Township surrounds the entire Borough of Jamesburg.

Residents in Monroe are mostly White, a large number are older, and there is a growing Asian population. Nearly 40% of the residents in Monroe are age 65 or older, which is more than double the averages of both the state of New Jersey and Middlesex County. While most of the residents identify as White, increases in the Asian community are particularly significant. Nearly 20% of residents identify as Asian. In Monroe schools, the New Jersey Department of Education Performance Report for 2020-2021 reported the following racial and ethnic group populations: 48.6% Asian, 38.6% White, 7.4% Hispanic, 3.7% Black or African American.

Monroe is growing and changing, bringing new opportunities for library programs and outreach. In the last 10 years, it is estimated that the population of Monroe has increased 24.2%. With a population increase of this size, and the evolving demographics of the town, it is important that the library build relationships with new residents and engage each community. The Census numbers for housing tenure estimate that over one quarter of the housing units in Monroe have new residents since 2010, re-affirming the need for continued outreach by the library and town. Outreach programs and resources can communicate the extent of library services, make connections in new neighborhoods, and collect feedback about the needs and expectations new residents may have.

**Voices from the Community:** The public survey and focus group discussions revealed concern about over-development and the future of Monroe as it continues to evolve. Respondents often cited a lack of parks and open space for families. The survey respondents and focus group participants also expressed a desire for the library to help connect various demographic communities in Monroe Township. In describing the type of town they wanted Monroe to be, the most frequently used words were: “inclusive,” “accepting,” “diverse,” and “welcoming.” There is also a strong desire for the library and community to provide volunteer opportunities for active seniors.

---



## Computer and Internet Use

Computer and Internet use for Monroe is near the average for both Middlesex County and New Jersey. Over 90% of households have a computer and 86.5% have broadband access. With this level of internet connectivity, it is important to engage the community in the development of information literacy skills. The library can also be a valuable source of access for those who do not have a computer or internet at home.

***Voices from the Community:*** Survey respondents rank “access to computers” and “WiFi and printing” as the most valued library services and major community needs. Respondents valued library technology training and support as critical services.

---

## Education and Income

Statistics for educational measures in Monroe are well above the New Jersey average. Over 46% of residents have a Bachelor’s Degree or higher and 94.2% have graduated from high school. Standardized test scores in Monroe are consistently above state averages. Most students participate in PSATs and almost 80% participate in the SATs. In the class of 2019, 86% of students continued their education at another institution.

As with the population increase, the NJ Department of Education Performance Reports\*\*\*\* show that enrollment in Monroe Township schools has also increased, bringing with it greater diversity. District enrollment in the last 4 years has increased from 6,734 to 7,000. The school population includes: 5.4% Economically Disadvantaged Students, 16.6% Students with Disabilities, 1.8% English Learners. The district has seven school library media specialists for the eight schools.

Building strong relationships with the schools is a key way for the library to connect with families across Monroe Township. Successful schools attract families and provide a positive effect on property values and, in turn, funding for the library.

Monroe is an upper middle-class township, with a small percentage of people who live in poverty. The median household income in Monroe Township is just over \$90,000. In contrast, 4.2% of the population lives in poverty. Although this poverty rate is below the county and state average, it does reflect a responsibility to assess the needs of those living in poverty, and determine the best services and locations to reach them.

***Voices from the Community:*** The public survey revealed a strong desire for Monroe to provide excellent schools and continuing education opportunities for all ages. While income is above the New Jersey average, a number of survey respondents cited concerns about affordability, including concerns about taxes and food insecurity. Survey respondents greatly appreciated the library for providing free access to books, computers and internet, meeting space, and programs.

---

### **Economy and Transportation**

Monroe's participation in the labor force is below the New Jersey average as a result of the large number of retirement communities in Monroe. Nearly 50% of the population is in the civilian labor force, as opposed to around 65% of the state's population and the rest of Middlesex County. This is not a revelation to the library, but does create a larger disparity in the priorities and needs of different areas of the community.

***Voices from the Community:*** The public survey revealed concern around the increased traffic in the community, particularly from tractor trailers serving the numerous warehouses located in Monroe. Residents also cited a lack of convenient transportation options for those with mobility issues, as well as access to resources for the homebound. Another issue raised by survey respondents was a lack of access to community services for the developments around Route 33, which are closer to Monmouth County than they are to the library and town hall.

---

### **Business**

The largest companies in Monroe have an estimated income over \$20 million per year. There is a prevalence of companies based around logistics: warehouses, wholesalers, distribution centers, and trucking companies. Monroe's access to major roads has made it an appealing location for these companies. Healthcare and nursing home services are also represented on the list of the largest companies in Monroe.

***Voices from the Community:*** In describing what type of community they wanted Monroe to be, survey respondents often said they wanted Monroe to be a town that supported small and local businesses. The residents were concerned about the impact of the number of warehouses in Monroe and the tractor trailer traffic.

## Data from the United States Census Bureau

### Population

	Monroe
Population Census (April 1, 2020)	48,594
Population Estimate (April 1, 2010)	39,132
Population % Change (2010-2020)	+24.2%

### Age

	Monroe	County	State
Persons under 5	3.4%	5.7%	5.8%
Persons under 18	17.3%	21.7%	21.8%
Persons 65 years and over	37.9%	15.5%	16.6%

### Race and Ethnicity

	Monroe	County	State
White alone	74.6%	60.1%	71.9%
Black or African American alone	3.1%	12.0%	15.1%
Native American & Alaska Native alone	0.3%	0.7%	0.6%
Asian alone	19.5%	24.9%	10.0%
Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander alone	0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Two or More Races	2.0%	2.3%	2.3%
Hispanic or Latino	4.6%	22.1%	20.9%

### Historical Comparison

	2010	2019
White alone	81.6%	74.6%
Black or African American alone	3.9%	3.1%
Native American & Alaska Native alone	0.08%	0.3%
Asian alone	12.6%	19.5%
Native Hawaiian & Pacific Islander alone	0.01%	0.0%
Two or More Races	1.2%	2.0%
Hispanic or Latino	4.3%	4.6%

### General Characteristics

	Monroe	County	State
Veterans (2015-2019)	3,306	24,709	321,991
Veterans, as percent (2015-2019)	7.3%	3.0%	3.6%
Foreign Born Persons (2015-2019)	22.5%	32.8%	22.4%
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	90.3%	63.5%	63.9%
Languages Other Than English Spoken at Home	27.1%	44.5%	31.3%

**Housing Tenure**

	<b>Est. Units</b>	<b>%</b>
Moved in 2019 or later	265	1.4%
Moved in 2015 to 2018	4,308	22.1%
Moved in 2010 to 2014	4,920	25.2%
Moved in 200 to 2009	6,527	33.4%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	1,947	10.0%
Moved in 1989 or earlier	1,559	8.0%

**Computer and Internet Use**

	<b>Monroe</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>State</b>
Households with a Computer (2015-2019)	90.3%	92.6%	91.4%
Households with a Broadband Internet Subscription (2015-2019)	86.5%	86.4%	85.8%

**Economy**

	<b>Monroe</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>State</b>
In Civilian Labor Force (2015-2019)	49.7%	64.4%	65.5%

**Transportation**

Mean Travel Time to Work (Minutes)	43.5	34.4	32.2

**Income and Poverty**

Median Household Income (2015-2019)	\$90,451	\$89,533	\$82,545
Persons in Poverty, Percent	4.2%	8.5%	9.2%

**Education**

	<b>Monroe</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>State</b>
High School Graduate or Higher	94.2%	89.8%	89.8%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	46.9%	43.6%	39.7%

**Data from NJ School Performance Report Card****Race and Ethnicity**

	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>2019-20</b>	<b>2020-21</b>
White	44.9%	41.8%	38.6%
Hispanic	6.7%	6.9%	7.4%
Black or African American	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%
Asian	43.4%	46.2%	48.6%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0.1%	0.1%	0.2%
Native American or Alaska Native	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Two or More Races	1.1%	1.2%	1.5%

**PK-12 Public Schools**

	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>	<b>Targets Met 18/19?</b>
English/Language Arts Proficiency	69.3%	66.6%	No
Math Proficiency	64.6%	63.6%	No

	2018	2019	2020
4-Year Graduation Rate	95.5%	95.2%	93.4%

	Class of 2018	Class of 2019
Postsecondary Enrollment (4-Year)	70.7%	67.7%
Postsecondary Enrollment (2-Year)	17.6%	18.4%
Any Institution	88.3%	86.0%

### Standardized Tests, 2019-2020

	Monroe	State
PSAT Participation Rate	94.7%	82.8%
SAT Participation Rate	79.4%	71.1%
ACT Participation Rate	23.8%	17.2%

PSAT Reading and Writing	525	476
PSAT Math	523	473
SAT Reading and Writing	585	536
SAT Math	597	536
ACT Reading	26	25
ACT English	26	24
ACT Math	26	24
ACT Science	25	24

### Largest Businesses in Monroe

Company Name	Primary SIC Description
Appliance Dealers Co-Op	Appliances-Household-Majors-Dealers
Automann Inc	Automobile Parts & Supplies-Wholesale
Automann USA	Distribution Centers (Whls)
Berry Global	Plastics-Products-Retail
Campbell Freighliner Svc	Trucking-Motor Freight
Cargotec USA Inc	Trucks-Industrial (Whls)
Comfort Oil Inc	Oils-Fuel (Whls)
Cosmetics & Perfume	Cosmetics-Manufacturers Equipment (Mfrs)
Costco Distribution Ctr Cold	Distribution Centers (Whls)
Cranbury Center	Nursing & Convalescent Homes
Genera Corp	Automobile Parts & Supplies-Wholesale
Graham & Brown USA	Wallpapers & Wallcoverings-Wholesale
Hyundai Motor America	Automobile & Truck Brokers (Whls)
Intercosmetics Inc	Cosmetics-Wholesale
J F K Health Systems	Hospitals

Marmaxx Distribution  
 National Micro Rentals Inc  
 O'Neal Flat Rolled Metals  
 Port Jersey Logistics  
 Tractor Supply Co  
 Tri-State Dental  
 Williams-Sonoma Distribution

Distribution Services  
 Audio-Visual Production Service  
 Steel-Distributors & Warehouses (Whls)  
 Logistics  
 Farm Supplies (Whls)  
 Dental Equipment & Supplies-Wholesale  
 Distribution Centers (Whls)

## SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESPONSES

### The Participants

#### *From Retirees to Teens*

#### Respondents

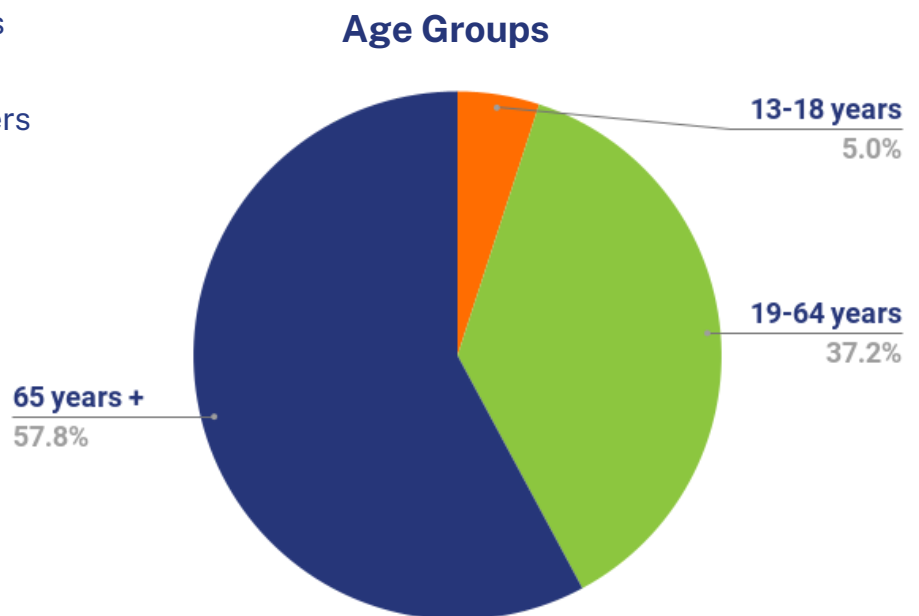
1,696 # of Survey Respondents  
 96.46% Library Card Holders  
 2.83% Non-Library Card Holders

#### Age Groups

5.01% 13-18 years old  
 37.15% 19-64 years old  
 57.84% 65 and older

#### Tenure in Monroe

25.08% 0-5 Years  
 24.08% 6-10 Years  
 18.71% 11-15 Years  
 12.66% 16-20 Years  
 19.46% Over 20 Years



## Top Ranked Responses - Library Services

### **Access to Services / Convenient Hours / Support for the Community**

#### **Please describe your normal use of your library:**

- 82.65% Use In-Person Services (checking out materials and attending programs)
- 37.84% Use Online Services (downloading materials and attending online programs)
- 15.54% Use the library for study space and reading space
- 9.31% Use the library for research services
- 9.18% Use Library Computers and WiFi

#### **Most important strengths of the library:**

- 77.16% Convenient operating hours
- 69.45% Well-trained and engaged staff
- 61.96% Safe, clean and ADA Accessible building
- 47.02% Ample and attractive interior space
- 41.33% Unique services (Museum Passes, Launchpads and Maker Programming)

#### **Why some residents don't use the library:**

- 35.77% I use my computer at home or other location
- 22.44% I buy my own books and other materials
- 20.65% Too busy/no time
- 8.62% Library location is not convenient
- 8.28% Don't know what services the library offers

#### **How does the library help you reach your goals:**

*Responses to this question fell into three main themes: how the library created access to learning, supported people's goals, and helped build the community.*

**Access to Learning** - Included: information access, a large book collection to enjoy, space for study groups, technology access, and the promotion of literacy and lifelong learning opportunities.

**Support for Personal Goals** - Included: helping residents find jobs, providing resources for growing small businesses, improving mental health through customer service, and a variety of programs and resources.

**Building the Community** - Included: providing meeting room space for community groups, creating a sense of community, and connecting generations.



## What could the library improve overall:

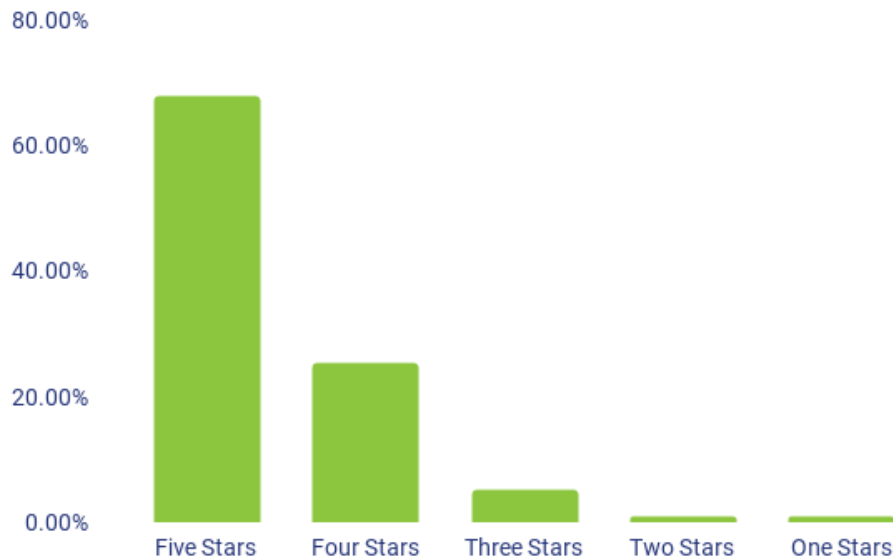
*Responses to this question fell into categories related to accessibility, collections, and spaces in the library.*

**Accessibility** - Responses referred to: the distance to the library, the parking lot distance and capacity, and offering additional hours.

**Collections** - Responses referred to: the wait time on hold items, increasing downloadable materials, and providing more museum passes.

**Spaces** - People would like: more meeting rooms, an improved outdoor area, and quiet space in the library.

## On a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the best, how would you rate Monroe Township Public Library?





## Top Ranked Responses - Community Based Questions

### ***Everyone is Included / A Safe Place to Live / Opportunities for Learning and Growing***

#### **Challenges faced in last few years:**

- 36.09% Learning new technologies
- 20.16% Online security and identity theft
- 16.46% Obtaining reliable health information
- 12.41% Ensuring opportunity for children
- 11.71% Employment or underemployment

#### **Most important community issues:**

*Responses to this question fell into two main categories: issues involving inclusion and support, and those involving health and safety.*

**Inclusion and Support** - For the homebound, new residents, and seniors. For mental health and improved communication.

**Health and Safety** - Emergency services, community resilience after natural disasters, and environmental preservation.

#### **Type of Community Monroe should be:**

*Responses to this question fell into three main themes: that the community should be inclusive and connected, safe and healthy, and full of opportunity.*

**Inclusive and Connected** - People want a community that is welcoming and supportive to all, has volunteer opportunities for seniors, and is populated by a civically engaged public.

**Safe and Healthy** - Respondents want a safe place to raise families, a town that is not overdeveloped, a place with less traffic, and more investment in parks and open space.

**Full of Opportunity** - People want a community that is supportive of small businesses, has opportunities for those with mobility issues, has strong education opportunities and schools, and provides improved access to local shopping and dining options.



# SUMMARY OF FOCUS GROUPS

## Focus Group Comments

About 75 people participated in five different focus groups. Two groups engaged specific demographics – one for teens, and one for representatives from community organizations. Participants for the other three groups were recruited through an open invitation on the online community survey.

The groups met in person in the library, at varying times and days of the week. To encourage participants to feel comfortable speaking freely, employees of the library and Board members were not present. The questions started broadly and narrowed to focus on specific library services.

## What type of community do you want to live in?

**Four out of five groups mentioned they wanted to live in a diverse community; additional descriptors included:**

- Active
- Safe
- Supportive
- Respectful
- Inclusive
- Intergenerational
- Thriving
- Caring

During discussion, it was clear that the participants were looking to the library to serve as the center of the community. Several individuals mentioned that they hoped the community would become more unified and that a center of the community would help that unification.

## Why do you think it is important for communities to have libraries?

**In addition to acknowledging the importance of library resources, all the groups mentioned the important community role of the library, as described here:**

- Community focal point
- Builds our community
- Can be a hub, a place of knowledge and a place to come together
- Community center; meeting space
- Can serve as the center of town; library as hub
- People come together, especially for programs
- Not very many opportunities to communicate in the community

## **What do you think are the most important roles of the library?**

**A significant number of participants lauded the importance of library resources and programs, such as:**

- Electronics resources (would like even more)
- Programs such as book discussion groups, knowledge sharing
- Bookmobile
- Education - tools to accomplish what you need to do
- Children's programming; STEM

**In all groups, the discussion expanded into an aspirational role for the library:**

- Sense of community
- Social support
- Resource center or community center
- Future for libraries is in technology, especially for those who don't have access
- Opportunity for growth and access
- Library partners with other organizations, especially schools
- Library can coordinate space usage throughout Monroe Township; master calendar
- Need a community center; satellite location?

## **What would you like to see at or from the library?**

**This was an opportunity for participants to share their personal experiences and desires. There were two areas of focus: collections (including e-resources) and programs.**

### Programs:

- More programs on the weekend
- Adult programming in the evening
- Language learning programs; ESL programs
- Virtual programming
- Use of library meeting spaces for community groups to expand programming

### Collection:

- Need to expand collections in other languages
- High demand for popular titles; expansion of current non-fiction materials
- More large print materials
- Expand the foreign film collection

**Finally, the groups were asked to specifically address library buildings and grounds, customer service, and library website or catalog.**

### Library buildings and grounds:

- It should be open every day!
- The grounds could be better maintained
- Bookmobile is great!
- Amazing - remember when it was in the basement of the municipal building
- Need more individual study areas
- Better lighting



# "The library **enriches my life** and **broadens my** **understanding** of our world."

–Monroe Resident

## **Customer service:**

- Very positive
- Outstanding
- Uniformly responsive
- There should be a way to know which staff member to contact for different kinds of questions

## **Library website or catalog:**

- Confused about how to use
- Should be scaled down and cleaner
- Love the website, catalog is difficult
- Beautiful but not useful
- I don't use, I just go to staff members for help

It is obvious that the community of Monroe appreciates their public library and, by virtue of their questions and suggestions, hope it will continue to improve. Also, almost all of the participants indicated that they would like to be kept informed about the strategic planning process and were willing to assist in any way possible.

---

# VISION

The Monroe Township  
Library: Encouraging  
**limitless discovery.**

# MISSION

The Monroe Township  
Library inspires **vibrant and  
inclusive experiences,**  
igniting the spark for  
**lifelong learning.**

---

# GOALS

## Discovery & Learning

Encourage a continuum of learning for all.



# OBJECTIVES

## Goal 1: Community

### **Embrace the library's role as community builder.**

**Objective 1:** Plan programs and events that build community and bring people together around a common purpose.

**Objective 2:** Support a wide-variety of professional growth opportunities for library staff and leadership around outreach and engagement.

**Objective 3:** Ensure the library is a welcoming place to all in the community.

## Goal 2: Connections

### **Build connections by strengthening and sustaining relationships with groups and local organizations.**

**Objective 1:** Reestablish the connection with schools and adapt to their needs.

**Objective 2:** Initiate an analysis of underserved and unserved populations.

**Objective 3:** Strengthen existing partnerships and review opportunities to expand services.

## Goal 3: Creating

### **Create an environment that continues to inspire innovation and growth.**

**Objective 1:** Improve the customer experience.

**Objective 2:** Assess evolving technology trends and implement when appropriate.

**Objective 3:** Encourage personal creativity and growth through experiences and collections.

## Goal 4: Discovery and Learning

### **Encourage a continuum of learning for all.**

**Objective 1:** Invigorate a full spectrum of programs, taking into consideration the diversity of the community.

**Objective 2:** Continue to evaluate and modify collections, virtual and physical, in keeping with evolving trends.

**Objective 3:** Offer expertise and guidance to support discovery and learning.



# HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

This strategic plan is the result of input from the community and library staff. It has been shaped by data about where the library has been, and feedback about how the library can best serve the community and your stakeholders. As a result, it contains information and recommendations that can be used to strengthen and guide library management in a number of ways.

## Sharing

This plan should be shared with anyone who would benefit from understanding where the library has been, and where you would like it to go. Communication about this plan can be shared with:

- Staff
- Township Officials
- The Public (through the website)
- Friends of the Library/Foundation
- Community Partners
- Surrounding Libraries
- Job Applicants

## Planning

Does an existing service or program help the library meet your stated goals, or would those resources be better applied to a new service? How do you meet the seemingly unlimited needs of the community with a limited amount of resources, time, funding, and staff effort? The library's Vision and Mission statement and Goals and Objectives can help guide the library's annual Plan of Service, and inform difficult decisions around the expenditure of limited assets.

## Evaluating

This plan serves as a rubric for measuring your success. Oftentimes, the assessments made by members of library administration differ from considerations of those outside of library management. For this reason, we encourage libraries to provide opportunities for feedback – for your entire community, and all areas of library staff – to evaluate your library's success in meeting the stated goals and objectives.

## Budgeting

When developing your next budget, ensure that your library's goals and objectives are reflected in your budget. This strategic plan should also be a regular part of any budget presentation or request for funds.

## Reviewing Policies

Are your current policies reflective of the Vision and Mission statement and the Goals and Objectives in this plan? For example: if you want "inclusive experiences" and to be "welcoming to all," is the policy under consideration including everyone? Who does it include? And who is being left out?

## Recruiting

Are you recruiting the staff you need to meet your Goals and Objectives? We encourage you to use this strategic plan as a rubric for developing employment postings and hiring practices. Through job listings and an easy-to-find location on your website, all applicants should be able to review the strategic plan to see what your library values.

## Working with Partners

Sharing the strategic plan with potential partners, including other libraries, may create new opportunities to work together for collective impact.

## Holding Staff Meetings

We recommend actively engaging with this plan - share and discuss the strategic plan with all staff and volunteers. Simply making the plan available does not ensure the plan has been read and understood. Reviewing and discussing will help library staff and volunteers become involved with the stated goals, and see how their own feedback is reflected in the plan.

"I love the smell of **books**. I love the **serenity** once inside the doors. The staff are **knowledgable and kind**. I love just sitting in the back with my book. I can **read, contemplate, and relax**."

-Monroe Resident

