

Strategic Plan



Thomas Crane Public Library

FY 2025 - 2030



tcpl

THOMAS CRANE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Executive Summary

*A Letter
from
the
Director*

We are so proud to present the Thomas Crane Public Library's Strategic Plan for fiscal year 2025 through fiscal year 2030.

It is an exciting time to be working in libraries, in ways both good and bad. While we are continuously exhilarated to offer the community expanded services, such as our cutting-edge new Makerspace, the unfortunate reality is that libraries are under attack nation-wide, with book challenges increasing last year by 92% and anti-library legislation being passed to criminalize librarians for doing their jobs.

Furthermore, library services continue to recover from the pandemic. Public libraries suffered significant losses to both programming attendance and circulation as the world stayed in isolation. We are finally starting to see our numbers recover as people move back into their pre-pandemic habits. Museum pass circulation has doubled since last year, Adult programming quadrupled in the last year, and Kids and Teen programming continue to grow steadily towards their pre-Covid numbers. We anticipate nearly 400,000 visits this year, up from 186,000 in 2022.

Here in Quincy, we spent the last six months turning outward to openly and actively listen to what our community wants and needs from its library over the next five years. We hosted eight listening sessions open to any member of the public to come and share their thoughts with us. We held seven focus groups with the Staff, the Library Friends and Trustees, and trusted partners in the community including the Quincy Police Department, Father Bill's & MainSpring, and Quincy Asian Resources, Inc. (QARI). We also ran a public survey that was open for five weeks, available both online and in paper form, and which was translated into five languages.

I am delighted to report that the feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. To paraphrase actress Sally Field: "You like us, you really like us." We received hundreds of survey responses; a few standout comments include:

*I love having a public library as good as the Thomas Crane Public Library.
My kids love to browse for books. And I love the bookstore.*

You are doing a phenomenal job!!!! Thank you!!!!

Shout it louder! You all are so great and provide so much. I want more people to know!

The responses also showed that we are not without our challenges. Branch hours continue to be a problem for our patrons, with hours especially limited at Adams Shore and Wollaston. Patrons indicated that they have safety concerns at the Main Library. Parking continues to be a problem. We heard you, and we are endeavoring to ameliorate those problems, and others.

In the last two years we have been generously funded. We added a safety officer position, reference librarian position, and a new Archives & Special Collections Department. We are so grateful to our Mayor, his team, and the City for their continuous support of the Library and their understanding of the value of a healthy, thriving public library in our community.

We will have so much to offer the community over the next five years. We are assiduously planning many events, both big and small, to celebrate the 400th anniversary of Quincy. And following that, we are excited to help celebrate the Semiquicentennial of the United States of America.

It is my privilege to serve this dynamic and historic community. Many thanks to Mayor Koch for all he does to help the library excel. Thank you also to the Board of Library Trustees, and Friends of the Library for their feedback on this plan and for their generous volunteer service to our institution and to our community. I would be remiss if I didn't thank the excellent Staff of the Library who make it all possible, and acknowledge the hard work and dedication of the Strategic Planning Committee. And thank you, of course, to our community and to our partners, whom we are honored to serve.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sara Symon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sara" and last name "Symon" clearly legible.

Library Director
Thomas Crane Public Library

Vision & Mission



Honoring our History Imagining our Future

Our Vision-----

Our Mission-----



At the Thomas Crane Public Library we take pride in the rich history of our city, and also look forward with hope and aspiration to an innovative and exciting future. We turn outward to see our community and to meet their needs, and strive to be excellent stewards of our facilities and collections in service to all city residents. Our mission is to serve equitably, to embrace our community, and to offer education, entertainment, and access to all.

Strategic Priorities



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES & CORE VALUES

The Strategic Plan articulates overall service priorities & values, and will serve as the Library's organizational compass for the next five years, guiding development of annual action plans and helping to provide exceptional services.

Our Priorities

1

Access & Equity

Values: Service, safety, empowerment, diversity, community, and accessibility in all its forms: physical, lingual, cultural, and technological

2

Engagement

Values: Collaboration, compassion, communication, civic responsibility and participation, outreach, and partnership

3

Education

Values: Learning, growing, cultural enrichment, literacy, and innovation

4

Stewardship

Values: Preservation, restoration, accountability, sustainability, and discoverability

5

Service

Values: Excellence, kindness, empathy, acceptance, and transparency

6

Entertainment

Values: Fun, enjoyment, creation, and gathering

Access & Equity

PRIORITY

Serve all members of our community equitably by providing a welcoming, inclusive, and dynamic environment.



PRIORITY

Provide safe, clean, and comfortable spaces for everyone.

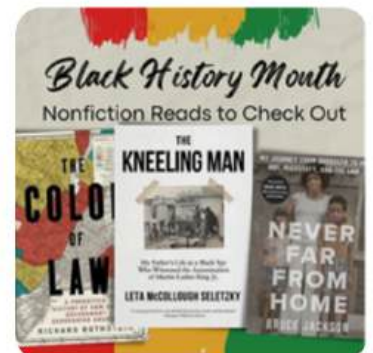
PRIORITY

Empower all Quincy residents to leverage library services to improve their lives and the world around them.



PRIORITY

Increase physical, lingual, cultural, and technological accessibility.



Engagement

PRIORITY

Collaborate with our community partners, other City departments, and Quincy residents to engage the greater community with the library.

PRIORITY

Serve all with compassion and empathy.

PRIORITY

Communicate our values, mission, and services effectively to stakeholders, & remain open to receiving feedback in order to tailor our offerings to evolving needs of the community.

PRIORITY

Increase opportunities for civic engagement with local politics and causes, and raise awareness of and access to our elected officials.

PRIORITY

Continue to expand outreach efforts by engaging more community partners in the library's mission.



The Feb. 2024 Romance campaign featuring Fabio created international buzz & our highest social media engagement ever

Education



*The Cranium,
makerspace,
opened in 2024*

PRIORITY

Continue to provide computer, printing, fax, and scanning services as tools to help close the digital divide.

PRIORITY

Facilitate an environment of learning in all locations through collections and services, and through providing access to study rooms & spaces.

PRIORITY

Provide programs which help the community learn new skills, or absorb new information about Quincy and the wider world.

PRIORITY

Increase opportunities for all community members to engage with and learn about the many diverse cultures represented in Quincy through gatherings, programs, and collections.

PRIORITY

Facilitate access to literacy services for adult learners, as well as English learners.

PRIORITY

Engage Quincy residents through opportunities to learn new and innovative topics such as cloud computing, 3D printing, CAD, and more.

Stewardship

PRIORITY

Preservation & augmentation of our historic facilities, including the HH Richardson Building, Aiken Ell, Coletti addition, and the Olmsted lawn.

PRIORITY

Prioritize restoration & preservation of rare and special collections.

PRIORITY

Be accountable to our community with regard to our care of collections and facilities.

PRIORITY

Work to ensure diversity in collections, and to offer meaningful and substantial representation of the diverse spectrum of individuals and influences that have built Quincy.

PRIORITY

Engage in best practices for sustainability. Develop new practices to continually improve sustainability and reduce the Library's negative impact on the Earth's environment.

PRIORITY

Continually facilitate access to "hidden collections."



Service



PRIORITY

Acknowledge that we all have different lived experiences, and practice acceptance of those differences.

PRIORITY

Be transparent in all of our dealings with the public, our community partners, and each other.

PRIORITY

Utilize strong, modern, and effective marketing and promotional tools to advertise the wealth of library services offered. Fully express what the Library has and what the Library does in a way that can be heard and understood.



PRIORITY

Nurture and grow a culture of exemplary customer service.

PRIORITY

Encourage kindness and empathy in our interactions with the community.



Entertainment



PRIORITY

Facilitate fun and interesting events, programs, and celebrations to encourage our community to gather.

PRIORITY

Provide insight into other lived experiences through music, film, literature, and programming.



PRIORITY

Advance opportunities to create & learn together through art and technology.





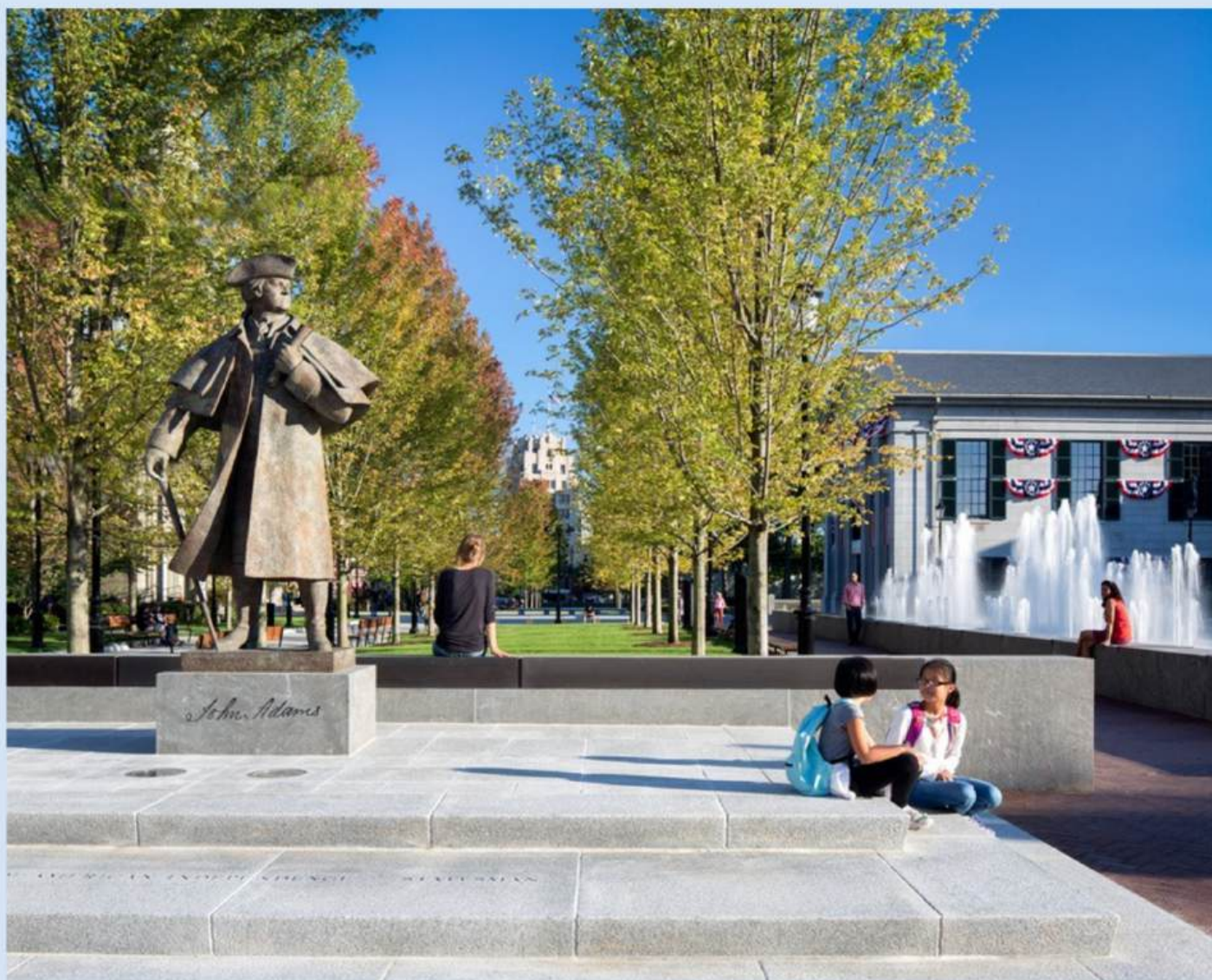
*"Walk & Talk"
conversation
group meetup
for English
learners*



*Staff members showing off new Library of Things
items available to borrow*



Flyer advertising new self checkout services



Statue of John Adams, Quincy Center



Our History



Exterior, Main Branch Library

THOMAS CRANE MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The Thomas Crane Memorial Library opened on May 30, 1882, funded by Albert Crane and Clarissa (Starkey) Crane in honor of their beloved father and husband, Thomas Crane. Thomas Crane (1803 - 1875), born on Georges Island, Boston Harbor, was raised in Quincy, Massachusetts and worked his way from a stone-cutter in the Quincy granite quarries to a prosperous New York City business owner. He remained an honest, energetic, enterprising, patient, and wholly unassuming, generous benefactor.

1882: Richardson Building

Albert Crane (1842 - 1918) and Library Committee Trustee and Chairman Charles Francis Adams, Jr. (1835 - 1915), great-grandson of President John Adams (1797-1801), commissioned Henry Hobson Richardson and his frequent collaborators, stained glass master John LaFarge (1835 - 1910), contractors and builders, the Norcross Brothers, and the “father of the American landscape”, landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted (1822 - 1903) for the project.

The memorial library was considered Richardson’s masterpiece in the field of library architecture, an exemplary representation of his Romanesque style and “almost universally recognized as one of Richardson’s greatest works.” With a foundation of Quincy granite, an upper structure of North Easton granite, and trimming of Longmeadow brownstone, it also features eyebrow windows and red slate roofing tiles.



And His Leaf Shall Not Wither

Between 1800 and 1882, John La Farge created one cloisonne-style stained glass masterpiece, *The Old Philosopher*, with a total of about a thousand pieces, featuring seven pieces of glass in the ear alone. His two supporting works, the *Alpha* and *Omega*, were made in a more traditional stained glass style using lead between each piece of glass. Originally positioned in the rear wall, they were removed to the windows to the right of the Richardson entrance sometime after the Aiken addition. In 1898 the Crane family again commissioned La Farge for the creation of the memorial window *Angel at the Tomb* in memory of the late Benjamin Franklin Crane (1841 - 1889). A wooden panel with carvings and the phrase “And his leaf shall not wither” originally appeared under this window before it was shifted to the rear of the Aiken Ell when *Angel at the Tomb* was moved from its original place adjacent to the Richardson Building’s public entrance.

Frederick Law Olmsted created a lawn true to his ideology: in harmony with the surroundings without many trees and flower beds to detract from peaceful contemplation. He was encouraged and inspired by romantic English garden styles. This aesthetic was continued by the Olmsted firm when the Olmsted Brothers were called upon to make adjustments to the grounds in 1913.

The Library was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1972, and declared a National Historic Landmark in 1987 as the Crane Memorial Library. It was also ranked 43rd out of 150 works of architecture polled in 2007's AIA sponsored America's Favorite Architecture.



La Farge Stained Glass

1908: Aiken Ell

In 1908, a donation from Albert Crane made possible the erection of an ell, designed by architect William Martin Aiken (1855 - 1908). Aiken, born in South Carolina, previously worked in the design office of H.H. Richardson, and also served as the Supervising Architect of the U.S. Treasury.

The Aiken Ell increased the reading and book rack space to the library, provided a children's room in the basement, and increased the natural lighting with large windows and translucent glass floors. The bookplate stained glass windows that once graced the Richardson reading room were removed to the rear of the ell. To round out the design and to honor the architects, three additional stained glass windows were installed above the twenty-five smaller windows which feature the initials of the design team. One window for Henry Hobson Richardson, one for William Martin Aiken, and one for the Norcross Brothers.

With no elevator in the Richardson or Aiken building, materials were transported from floor to floor via dumbwaiters, a space which now houses air conditioning ducts. The children's room would later serve as Technical Services Department after the 1939 Coletti Addition, before it became the former home of the Friends of the Library bookstore in July 2011 with the help of a Community Preservation Grant and State Aid. Most recently in 2023 when the bookstore relocated to the more publicly accessible and prominent space in the CBT atrium, the Aiken basement was allocated for staff.

As the changing needs of the community saw the addition of Aiken, it also saw changes to the landscape. The growing downtown serving an emerging business district saw adjustments in the form of the widening of streets. By 1913 the changes to Washington Street called for restoration to the lawn and a new planting map. The Olmsted Brothers were called upon to advise on the work that their father and founder Frederick Law Olmsted had designed in the original landscape.

1939: Coletti Addition

Constructed with funds from two sources, 55% from Crane family funds and 45% from the U.S. Public Works Administration, the Coletti addition was dedicated in 1952 as the Albert Crane Memorial Wing. Designed by Quincy and Boston architects and brothers, Paul A. and Carroll Coletti, in a Richardson Romanesque style, it was kept to traditional elements but with modern modifications to allow for more natural lighting. The Coletti Brothers retained the turret, eyebrow windows and roof of red slate to form harmony between the addition and the original building structures. The original quarries used in the 19th century were reopened so that the same materials could be used for construction, the exterior being granite and brownstone to match the Richardson original building.

Two brownstone bas reliefs carved by Joseph Coletti flank the Coddington Street entrance which symbolize Quincy's rich history in the granite and shipbuilding industries. Featured in the gable end of the street elevation is a large crane to commemorate the generosity of the Crane family. Rear elevations are of glazed brick specially made with quartz and mica spots to match the granite of both buildings. The interior woodwork is native pine while the original Coletti additional furniture, designed by the architects, was crafted in maple.

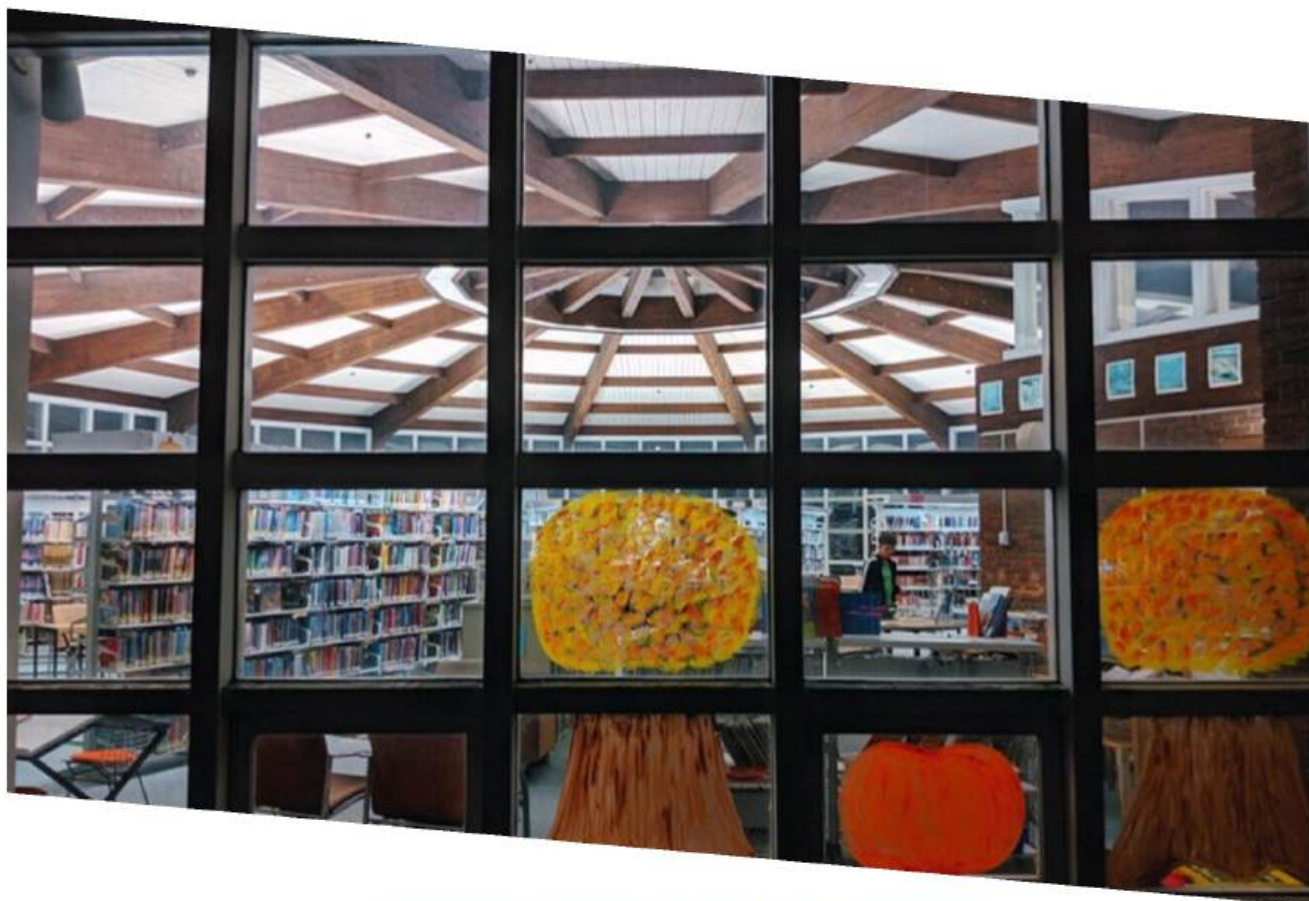
2001: CBT Addition

The three-year expansion, renovation, and restoration project was carried out in two phases: the first, the renovation of the 1939 Coletti addition and the construction of a 55,000 sq ft new addition; the second, the restoration of the H. H. Richardson building.

Architect Richard Bertman and his team from CBT/Childs Bertman Tseckares Inc. of Boston designed the new addition, constructed of granite, brick, and brownstone, with the familiar distinctive red slate roof. This addition incorporated aluminum arches, balconies, and windows in a contemporary interpretation of Richardson's Romanesque style. Organized around a three-story atrium, the addition more than doubled the library space.

Working from archived photographs, CBT directed the restoration of the Richardson building, repainting the walls, recreating period light fixtures, and restoring the yellow pine woodwork and wide-planked floors. The remaining tables and chairs designed by Richardson were restored and put back into use for the public to enjoy. The project was funded by the City of Quincy, with grants from the MBLC, the Massachusetts Historical Commission, and nearly \$1 million in private donations. The library was awarded the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board's 2001 Honor Award for Accessible Design in Public Architecture. The library also received a Massachusetts Historical Commission 2002 Historic Preservation Award. The addition was dedicated to Mayor James A. Sheets, in honor of his vision, leadership, and commitment to the library construction project.





View through the window at the Adams Shore Branch

ADAMS SHORE

The Adams Shore Library was formally dedicated by Mayor James R. McIntyre on April 10, 1970. The building, designed by the Coletti Brothers, Architects of Hingham, MA was erected in 1969 by Waltham Building Construction Company. The front of the building is a cylindrical mass of glass which, in combination with the interior wooden beams, suggests a ship's wheel. The back of the building fans out from the circular structure to house a program room and other facilities. The building site is at the intersection of Sea and Palmer streets, positioned to serve Houghs Neck, Germantown, Adams Shore, and Merrymount.

The building was financed through a municipal bond, a federal grant, and City appropriations. Total expenditure for the branch library was around \$600,000, which included a \$75,000 federal reimbursement grant and \$20,000 in urban beautification funds for landscaping. Henry E. Bates was Director of Libraries during the initial planning of the branch, and Warren E. Watson was Director during the building and opening of the branch. Ms. Betty Santangelo was the acting Branch Librarian and Mrs. Blanche Eckert was the Children's Librarian when the branch first opened.

NORTH QUINCY

An increase in Quincy's population during the late 1940s and 1950s spurred a need for expanded library services which led to the building of the North Quincy Branch. Two lots of land opposite Sacred Heart Church on Hancock Street were taken by eminent domain in early 1962, and the contemporary design for the structure was created by Quincy architects Hanlon and Donahue. The L.C. Blake Construction Company won the building contract for \$219,224. Just before the dedication, the Chairman of the Library Board of Trustees noted that the \$300,000 cost of the new branch was the first instance "that the City of Quincy had spent a penny for a library building." Mayor Della Chiesa presided over the formal dedication of the branch on September 9, 1963. Also present were City Council President Charles Shea, Councillors John J. Quinn and George Burke, and branch librarian Louise Dinegan.

Library Director Megan Allen oversaw a renovation of the North Quincy Library between 2019 and 2022. The branch reopened with new floors, carpets, couches, tables, windows, and a new ceiling made to match the original. The lower level teen room was updated to reflect modern touches, but retained the original blue stone flooring. The busy branch features an open floor plan offering services for all ages. The updates to the branch also included new plumbing, staff areas, expanded meeting room and study room spaces, and an asbestos abatement. A lift and bathroom renovation brought the branch up to ADA compliance.



Interior, North Quincy Branch



Photograph, Wollaston Branch

The Wollaston Library was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.

WOLLASTON

The Wollaston Library is located in the heart of an active, walkable business district. The Wollaston Woman's Club conducted a drive that resulted in the purchase of the land on which the building was erected in 1922. Community residents, including school children, bought land by the foot until approximately 8,500 square feet were acquired. The Woman's Club continued its effort on behalf of the library by launching a book drive to fill empty shelves and by providing chairs for the recreation room. Wollaston Glee Club even originally donated a piano.

The branch library was one of architect William Chapman's earliest Quincy commissions. He chose a Classical Revival style. The rectangular single story building has a hip roof and exterior walls of stucco. Its elegant entrance boasts many architectural details, including a book in low relief. Part of the Crane Memorial Fund was used to build the \$15,000 neighborhood library. The official opening in early 1923 was attended by Mayor George E. Adams; library trustees; and Truman Temple, librarian. Miss Catherine Saville, branch librarian at the time, was not in attendance, having been confined to her house with a broken ankle.

Quincy Demographics

Diverse & Vibrant

Average rent costs in Quincy (\$1885) are higher than the state average (\$1634) and home ownership (48.1%) is lower than the state average (62.2%). The average median household income in Quincy (\$90,205) is under the state average (\$94,488) and the poverty level (12.1%) is above the state average (10.4%).

Despite this, the number of Quincy residents with a higher education degree (50.4%) is above the state average (46.6%) and the employment rate (66.8%) is also above the state average (64%).

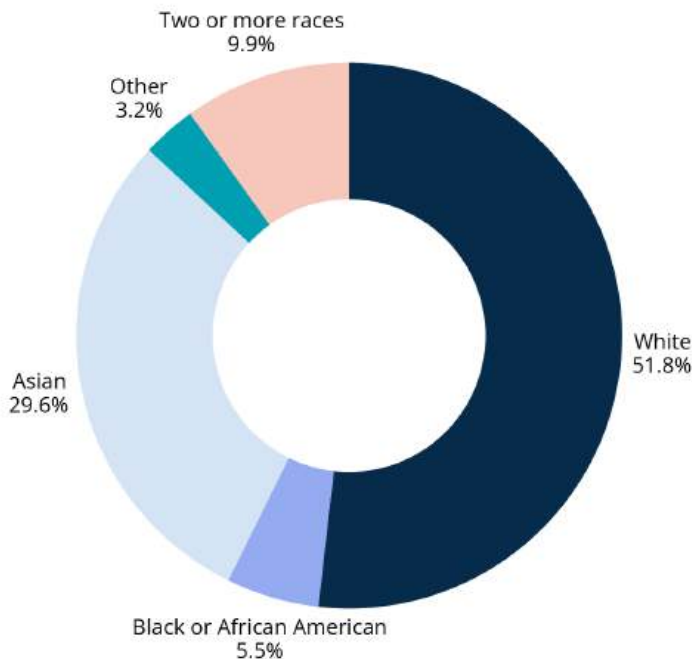
Quincy is a diverse and vibrant city, and the percentage of languages spoken at home other than English (41.9%) is much larger than statewide overall (25%).

Quincy Public Schools data shows that the most common languages spoken by English learners are Chinese, Vietnamese, Spanish, and Portuguese.



Source: 2020 Census Quickfacts and the 2022 American Community Survey

Quincy Racial Makeup



As of the census of 2020, there were 101,636 people, 46,789 households, and 24,934 families residing in the city. The population density was 6,132.6 people per square mile. There were 47,009 housing units at an average density of 2,837 per square mile. The racial makeup of the city was 51.8% White, 5.5% Black or African American, 0.1% Native American,

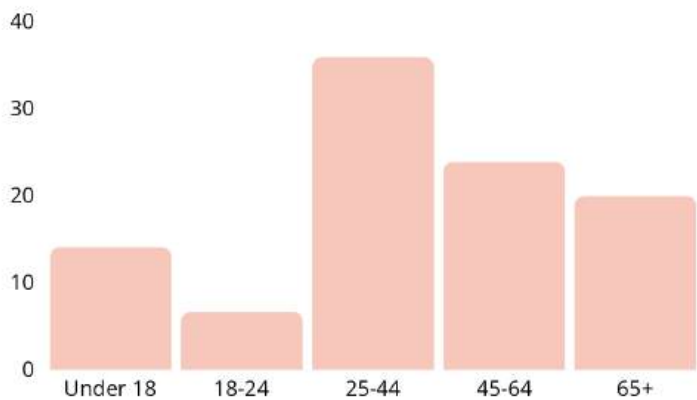
29.6% Asian (20.2% Chinese, 2.9% Vietnamese, 2.8% Indian, 0.7% Filipino, 2.6% from other Asian races), 3.1% from other races, and 9.9% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 7.1% of the population (0.7% Puerto Rican, 0.3% Mexican). There were 46,789 households out of which 18.6% had children under the

age of 18, living with them, 39.5% were married couples living together, 9.9% had a female householder with no husband present, and 46.7% were non-families. 39.1% of all households were made up of individuals and 14.8% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.14 and the average family size was 2.93.

The population was spread out with 14% under the age of 18, 6.6% from 18 to 24, 35.8% from 25 to 44, 23.8% from 45 to 64, and 19.9% who were 65 years of age or

older. The median age was 40.8 years. For every 100 females there were 100.3 males. For every 100 females age 18 and over, there were 130.6 males. The median income for a household was \$90,205, and the median income for a family was \$112,628. Males had a median income of \$60,868 versus \$54,538 for females. The per capita income for the city was \$41,804. About 7.8% of families and 12.1% of the population were below the poverty line, including 15.2% of those under the age of 18 and 11.1% of those ages 65 and older.

Quincy Age Demographics



Survey Results

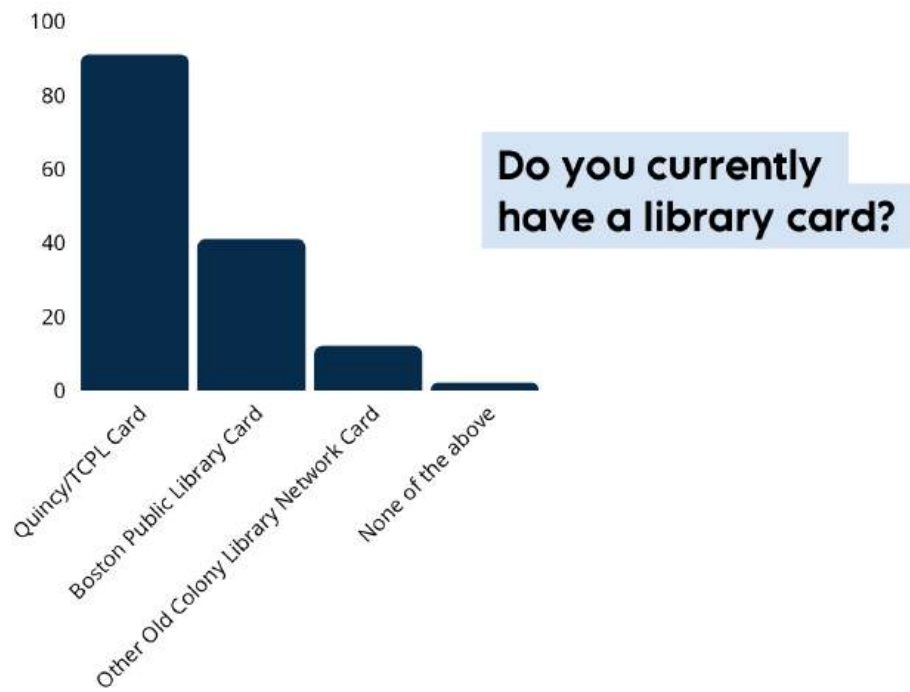


Teens hanging out at the North Quincy Branch Library

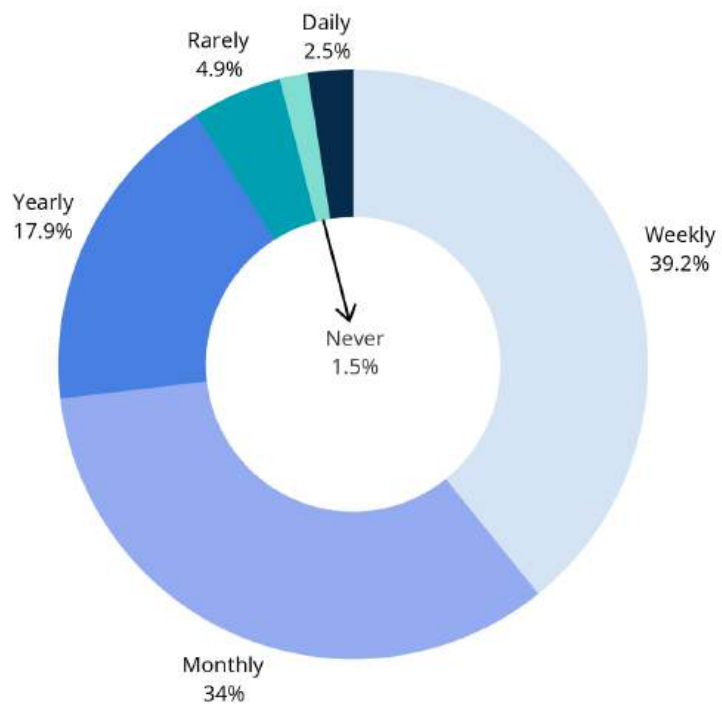
As part of the strategic planning process, the Thomas Crane Public Library sought community input through a Strategic Plan Community Survey. The survey was available online, and print copies of the survey were available for pickup at all Library locations.

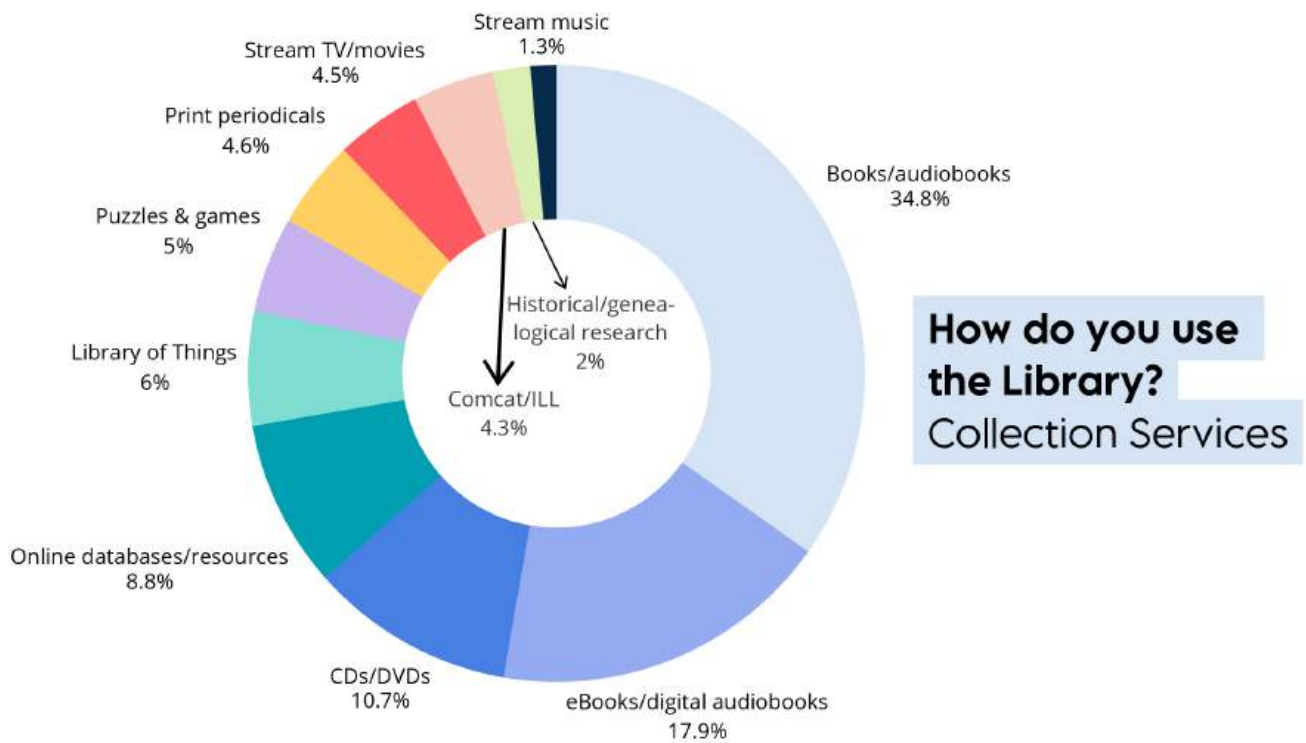
City of Quincy Translation Services translated the survey into five languages: Simplified Chinese (中文), Traditional Chinese (中文 (繁体字)), Portuguese (Português), Vietnamese (Tiếng Việt), and Spanish (Español). Survey translations were available both online and in print form.



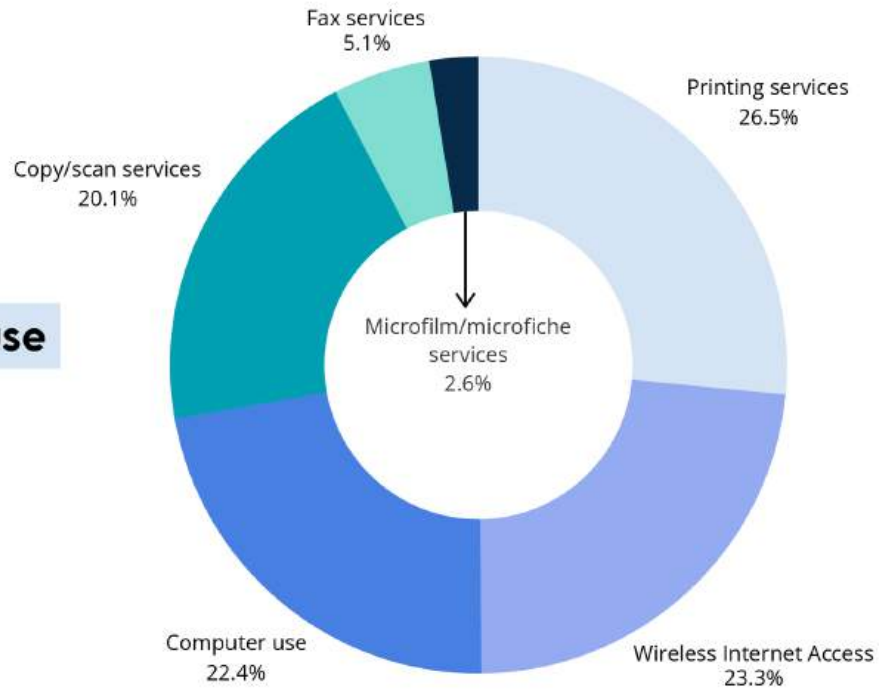


How often do you visit the Thomas Crane Public Library?

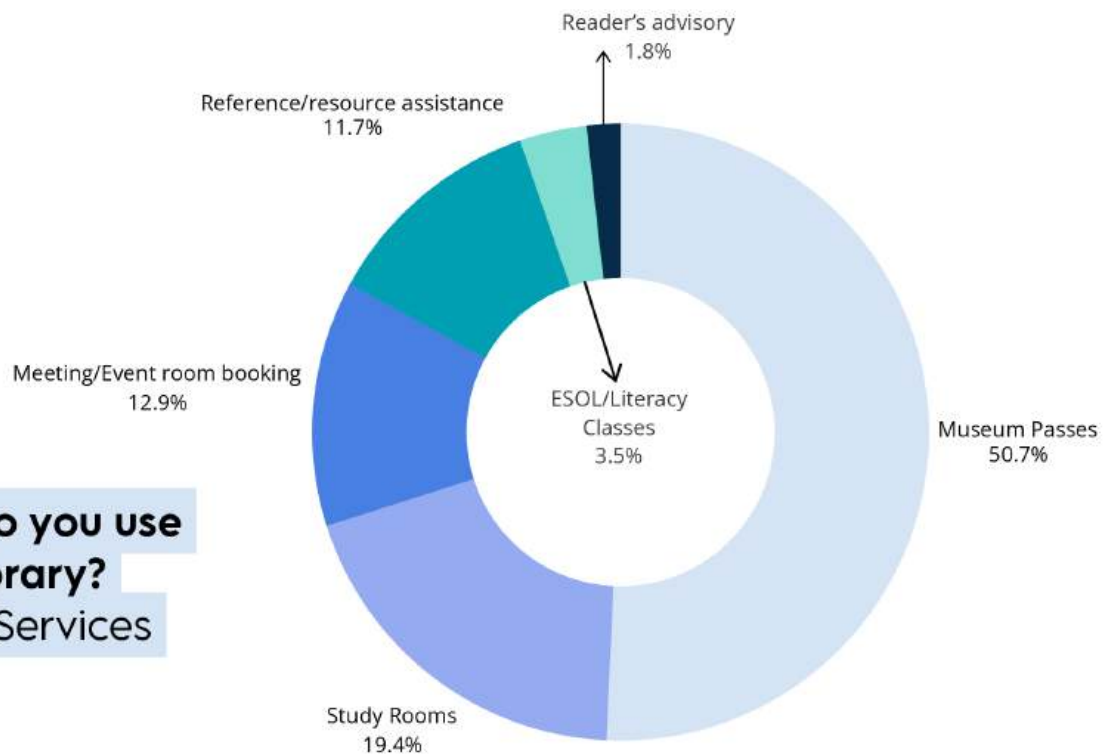


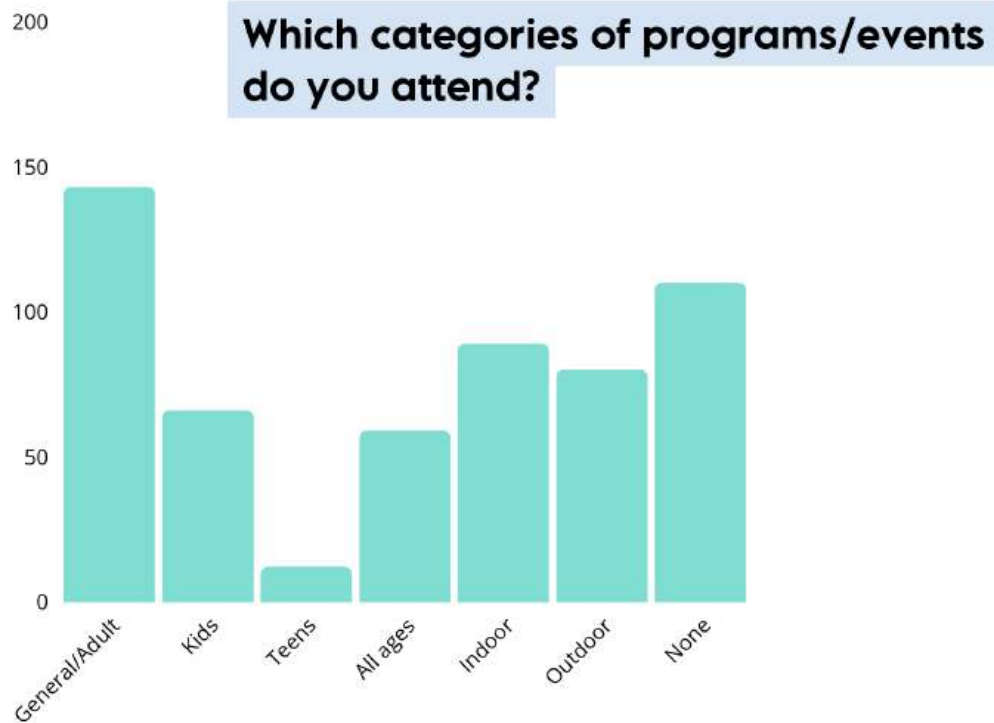


How do you use the Library? Technology Services

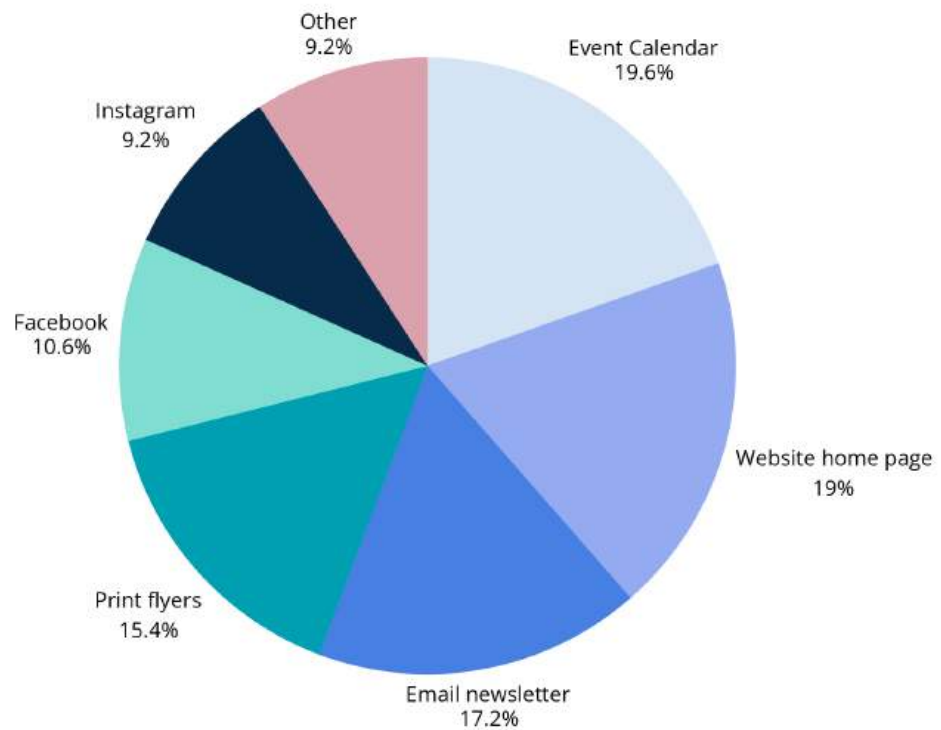


How do you use the Library? Other Services

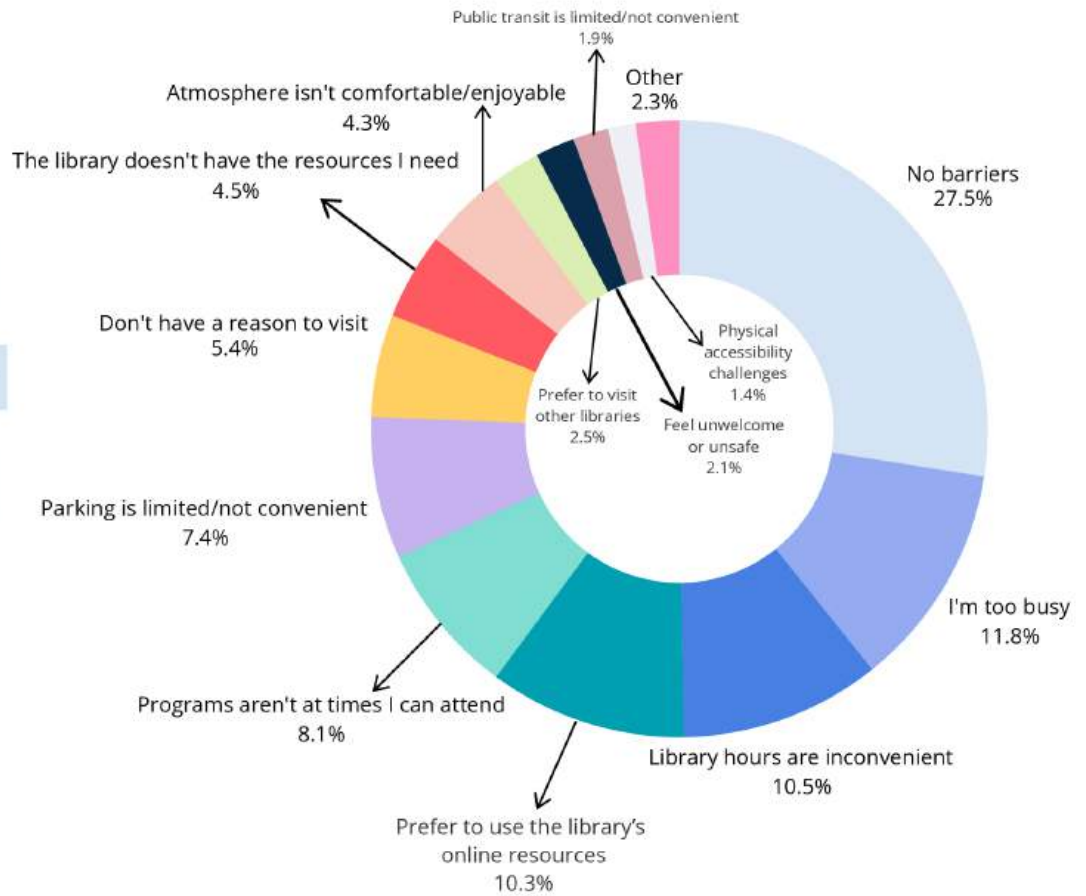




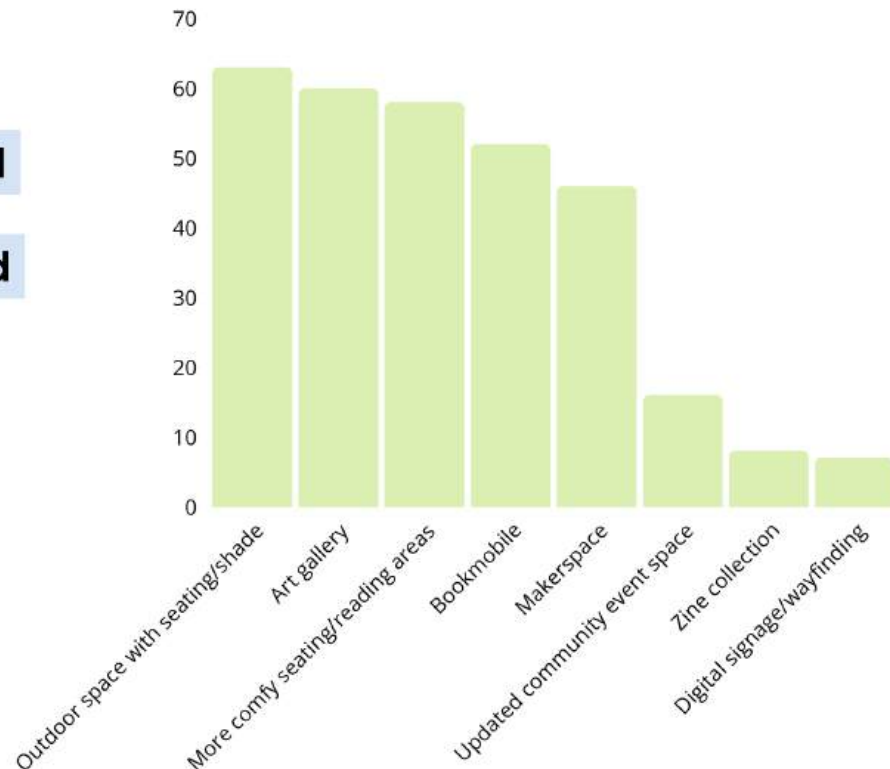
How do you typically hear about new library programs or events?



Do you experience any barriers to access, or have other reason(s) that prevent you from visiting the library more often?



Please rank the following potential projects in order of how much you'd like to see them happen:



What are three words that best describe the Library?





Main Library, Atrium

Planning Process



Timeline

Community Input



March 21-April 26

Community Survey,
Listening Sessions,
and Stakeholder
Focus Groups

Plan Creation



April 29 - June 13

Drafting of Strategic
Plan, Review, and
final vote by the
Board of Trustees

Plan Release



July

Strategic Plan
submitted and
published

8 Listening Sessions

7 Focus Groups

1 Community Survey



Our wide-ranging planning process elicited input from city residents and stakeholders. Library staff facilitated listening sessions & focus groups with guiding questions about Library spaces and services.

Eight Community Listening Sessions

- Saturday, March 23 from 1 – 2 PM – [Main Library](#)
- Monday, March 25 from 6 – 7 PM – [Adams Shore](#)
- Thursday, March 28 from 3 – 4 PM – [Adams Shore](#)
- Monday, April 1 from 6 – 7 PM – [Main Library](#)
- Tuesday, April 2 from 6 – 7 PM – [North Quincy](#)
- Wednesday, April 3 from 10 – 11 AM – [North Quincy](#)
- Wednesday, April 3 from 6 – 7 PM – [Wollaston](#)
- Monday, April 8 from 2 – 3 PM – [Wollaston](#)

Seven Stakeholder Focus Groups

- Staff
- Friends of the Library Executive Board
- Board of Trustees
- TCPL Teen Peer Advisor Group
- QCAP (Quincy Community Action Programs)
- QARI (Quincy Asian Resources, Inc.)
- Father Bill's, QPD (Quincy Police Department), Manet

One Strategic Plan Community Survey

Our Strategic Plan Community Survey was translated into five languages: Chinese (Mandarin), Chinese (Simplified), Vietnamese, Spanish, and Portuguese, and was available both online and in print form. The survey ran for a total of five weeks.

Credits

Strategic Plan Credits

Strategic Plan Steering Committee

Sara Slymon
Library Director

Taylor Devlin
Technology Director

Strategic Planning Committee

Lena Brownell
Executive Assistant
for Administration

Amanda Pegg-Wheat
Wollaston Branch Manager

Dorothy Cronin
North Quincy Branch Manager

Shaun Ramsay
Senior Library Assistant

Matt Foley
Technical Services Assistant

Tammy Van
Adult Services Librarian,
Marketing & Communications

Margaret Lagerstedt
Archives & Special Collections
Coordinator

TCPL Leadership Team

Sara Slymon
Library Director

Taylor Devlin
Technology Director

Paul Porter
Circulation & Access Coordinator

Julie Rines
Children's Coordinator

Mary Diggle
Adult Education Coordinator

Kristy Lockhart
Deputy Director

Theresa Tangney
Reference Coordinator

Deirdre Sullivan
Collection Services Coordinator

Margaret Lagerstedt
Archives & Special Collections Coordinator

Kevin Mele
Facilities Supervisor

Staff Day, June 2024





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