A Strategic Plan to Reimagine, Repurpose, & Renew

Trumbull Library 2016–19

February 2016
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Planning for the Future

The Trumbull Library is planning for the future. Based on our record of more than 40 years of achievement and high-quality services and resources in our Main Library and more than 90 years in Fairchild-Nichols Library, we started our planning project to guide the Library’s growth, allocate its resources, and shape its thinking about the future.

At the beginning of this process, the library involved as many residents as possible to learn about their interests. At the same time, town leaders were publicly discussing the future role of the library. Our new plan—Reimagine, Repurpose, and Renew—reflects our thoughts about the world today and the role our library, facility, staff, and supporters play in it.

Conversations with local residents, along with library staff and trustees, shaped this plan. Further, 1,500 people participated in our survey or in a focus group, providing us with valuable feedback about our facility, programs, and policies.
After reviewing the collected information, as well as the usage and demographic trends, library planners identified these strategic issues to consider:

**Services for all residents**

The library serves four generations, children, teens and young adults, working adults, and older adults, each with their own unique needs. Every day, the staff balances the demands of each of these groups and provides resources, targeted services, and space to satisfy their needs. Changes in the way each generation uses and interacts with the library reflects the need to continually evaluate and adjust the library’s service program.

The Trumbull Library space needs to reflect the enthusiasm and vibrancy of the community’s children and families. Both current and future space needs a cohesive theme that fosters interactive and imaginative play and provides comfortable areas for reading, schoolwork, and technology. The Library’s collection, services, and programs are designed to ensure that young children enter school ready to learn. Resources for older children will help them explore topics of personal interest, satisfy their curiosity, inspire a life-long love of reading, and support their schoolwork.

The combination of excellent resources, exceptional programs, and inspiring spaces will ensure that every child has a superior library experience that leads them to become life-long library users and supporters.

Trumbull preteens and teens are valued customers and are the future generation of library supporters. Consistent programming and a staff dedicated to providing leadership and engagement opportunities for this age group is a key component of a successful library service program. A dedicated and contemporary space for teens, including space for homework help, gaming, and opportunities for social engagement will ensure that the library becomes a destination for this group.
Working age adults with limited free time lead complicated lives, trying their best to balance the demands of work, growing families, aging parents, and other personal issues. The library needs to accommodate this group by extending hours, promoting its digital content, targeting programs of interest, and finding new ways to encourage community engagement.

Trumbull’s older adult population is growing, a reflection of baby boomers’ aging; the 60+ population is expected to increase not only in Trumbull, but also in many neighboring communities. Although a large number of people will relocate during their retirement years, a significant number are choosing to “age in place” and will remain in Trumbull or move to Trumbull from other Fairfield County locales. The library will need to accommodate them in an active way by offering expanded programming and opportunities.

**Digital Literacy**

Digital content and new distribution channels have transformed libraries. As a result, library users are increasingly relying on staff to provide one-on-one instruction and coaching on how to use their devices and access library content. Demand for this type of assistance grows each year. Comments from the library survey support this trend, one that will have significant impact on the library collection, space, and staff in the future. The library will need to balance the needs of traditional print readers versus those who seek digital content.

**Community Engagement**

As a public institution, the Trumbull Library faces a unique challenge in reminding residents of its mission, role, resources, and relevance. This includes the opportunity to help the community reimagine what the library means to them and how it can be more central to their lives. The Library staff can make strategic use of digital marketing and communication tools like the weekly e-newsletter, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other social media to reach existing and new audiences and encourage greater engagement.
Refreshed Spaces

Changes in use, new technologies, and the increasing demand for more small and medium-size gathering and collaborative workspace requires the library to continually evaluate its policies, programs, and facility, especially as the Main Library is 42 years old. As digital content becomes more prevalent, certain print collections need to be reduced in favor of community gathering and learning space and places for individual or group work. Some areas are prime candidates for minor refreshing to meet community expectations.

Staff Development

Sufficient engaged and knowledgeable staff results in great service. Providing the service level expected by the community and helping staff develop new skills is an important investment for the library.

Sustainability

The Trumbull Library depends primarily on tax support. Residents and local government have been reliable supporters. While the library has demonstrated thoughtful financial stewardship, increased demand may impel exploring other revenue streams. A revitalized Trumbull Library Foundation or Friends of the Library can play an important role in exploring fundraising strategies that will secure the resources needed to support the priorities in this plan.
We Listened

We continue to learn from local residents every time we ask for suggestions and ideas for the future. We spoke with 195 people and staff in focus groups and 1,288 people through an online and print survey. We heard about the library’s need to:

- Repurpose our 42-year-old main library so it better meets modern and future community needs
- Refresh collections with more new print titles and digital content
- Respond more actively to the needs of teens and others who may not now use the library, or use it sparingly, with an expanded, separate Teen Room, deeper, more current collections, and up-to-date mobile computing devices, including gaming resources
- Respond to changes in the town’s demographics, such as increasing numbers of younger, dual income families and a more diverse population, with services and programs that address their needs
  - Expand access to technology
  - Provide additional small and group-meeting and quiet study space
  - Address issues related to parking
  - Encourage more community engagement by connecting residents with each other through conversation and discussion
  - Promote the library as the cultural, social, and intellectual front porch of the community
  - Increase awareness of the Library’s mission, collection, program, and facility needs

1 Results from the Survey and focus groups are available in a document entitled *Community Comments*, which is available in the library at the Reference Desk.
Accomplishments

The following are select achievements at the Trumbull Library over the past three years:

- Mounted the Great Minds Art Exhibit and reinforced the library’s important role in defending First Amendment rights
- Launched Hoopla, a digital video download service
- Engaged the community through the successful “OneBook/One Town” community-wide read
- Re-designed the website
- Added an ongoing used book sale inside the library
- Established the Creator’s Corner in the Fairchild branch along with educational classes
- Established a weekly email newsletter
- Launched the library Facebook and Twitter feed
- Expanded the library’s digital content with the addition of 1,368 ebook titles
- Reorganized library space to provide more seating and study options for patrons
- Added eight powered study carrels at the Main Library
- Initiated a successful Fall and Spring Lifelong Learning Lecture Series
- Began Homebound Delivery service
- Introduced an “Adopt a Shelf” program
Our Vision for The Trumbull Library

The Trumbull Library is the place where our community comes to meet, read, learn and discover the world.
Our Mission

The Trumbull Library is the community’s primary information, cultural, and civic destination.
Our Shared Values

- We embrace change and respond to community needs
- We offer welcoming, accessible facilities that are a destination for all residents
- We provide a wide variety of programs that enlighten, inspire, and entertain
- We foster an environment of partnerships with other public and private organizations
- We hire and train staff who are eager to learn and provide every visitor with friendly and knowledgeable service
- We respect diversity of opinion and backgrounds and are tolerant of minority viewpoints
Four goals will guide the Library’s work from 2016–2019.

**GOAL ONE**

Reimagine the Trumbull Library to meet residents’ needs

**GOAL TWO**

Repurpose current space to respond to changing community expectations

**GOAL THREE**

Renew and refresh library collections and resources

**GOAL FOUR**

Create the Trumbull Library of the future by securing sustainable funding and renewing outreach necessary to implement this plan
Reimagine the Trumbull Library to meet residents’ needs

**Objective 1:**
Make the Trumbull Library the preferred local forum for thoughtful engagement and discussion

**Objective 2:**
Position and promote the Trumbull Library as the place for learning and personal growth for all residents

**Objective 3:**
Integrate digital services in all that the library does
Repurpose current space to respond to changing community expectations

**Objective 1:**
Plan for repurposing space to accommodate community needs

**Objective 2:**
Provide a dynamic and interactive library experience for all
Renew and refresh library collections and all resources

**Objective 1:**
Implement new methods for delivering content, collections, and all resources

**Objective 2:**
Deliver convenient library services that respond to changing community needs

**Objective 3:**
Develop a staffing plan that supports new spaces, programs and collections
Create the Trumbull Library of the future by securing **sustainable funding** and renewing **outreach** necessary to implement this plan

**Objective 1:**
Develop a plan to ensure the financial future of the Trumbull Library

**Objective 2:**
Reposition and grow the Trumbull Library based on its reputation of achievement and new challenges