

# STRATEGIC PLAN

## 2021-2027

The mission of the Natchitoches Parish Library is to assist patrons of all ages by providing exemplary customer service through a competent and friendly staff in order to meet the informational, recreational and educational needs of our patrons through a current and useable collection of information in various formats and presentations.

Library Board of Control

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Mr. Thomas Roque – *President*  
Rev. Dr. Frank Fuller – *Vice President*  
Mr. Tracy Brown  
Mrs. Linda Jenkins  
Mrs. Juliette Moffett  
Mrs. Karen Terrell  
Mrs. Gloria Waldrup-Davis

Mrs. Jessica McGrath – *Library Director*

## INTRODUCTION

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The Natchitoches Parish Library was founded in 1938 and was relocated a number of times before settling into its long-time home at 431 Jefferson Street in 1955. During this time period, the library opened five (5) branches in Ashland, Campti, Goldonna, Provencal, and Robeline. Since its founding, the library has had at least one (1) bookmobile in operation to reach the rural areas of the Parish.

Unfortunately, the 1980's saw a decline in funding, forcing the library's Board of Control to make the difficult decision to close all branches and discontinue bookmobile service. In 1992, the public came to the rescue, voting additional funding to the library, which allowed the library to purchase an integrated circulation, cataloging, and OPAC system. In 1995, the library received its first Internet access through a Louisiana Library Network grant, coordinated through the State Library of Louisiana.

Adequate funding, dedicated to the library, was assured for a ten-year period in 1997, when the public voted to allow the library eight (8) mills. The money enabled the library to increase its automation and purchase a new bookmobile. However, to provide the level of service that the public deserved, it was necessary for the library to expand. After years of hard work, planning, and renovating, the new Natchitoches Parish Library opened at 450 Second Street on June 1, 2002. It offers nearly 16,000 square feet on three floors.

From 2015 to present, many changes have taken place at the Natchitoches Parish Library including the hiring of a new director, updated logo, tagline and website, and construction of a library branch in Campti, serving patrons in the northeast part of the Parish. Wireless hotspots and laptops have been added to the circulating collection, which helps close the "digital divide." The addition of a 3D printer and Playaway launchpads, along with Playaway views and iPads in the children's area have also provided a technology boost to the library's services.

2019 saw over 112,000 visits to the Natchitoches Parish Library. Patrons had access to over 67,000 print, 41,000 electronic, 12,000 audio materials, and 9,000 video resources. Over 26,000 visitors attended the 1,049 educational and recreational programs offered to children, teens, and adults throughout the year, and nearly 5,000 reference questions were answered online and in-person by library professionals.

Through the Community Bookmobile, Schoolmobile, and Outreach Services, community members across the Parish were visited by library staff in their homes, on the road, at daycare centers, retirement homes, schools, and special events where stories were read, faces were painted, and books were checked out. Library Express, the library's homebound service, continued to provide personalized service to those in the Parish who are unable to come into the library.

The library's online presence through various social media outlets, web interviews, and digital press releases has provided opportunities to promote programs and services with a broader

audience and acts as a tool for connection, communication, networking, marketing, and creation. Our online presence allows the library to connect with patrons in their digital world, at a convenient time for them.

2020 brought the COVID-19 pandemic and with it, confusion, fear, shutdowns, quarantines, and unavoidable change. In response, the library closed its physical locations to the community for nearly seven weeks to best ensure health and safety for all, while staff continued providing services remotely where possible, emphasizing the library's public Wi-Fi and digital collection, both available 24/7. Virtual library card sign-up was expanded, allowing patrons to apply online through the library's website. Because of this, the library's digital collection continues to see increased monthly usage. Over the next six months, the library would alter its services to meet the state's guidelines for safe opening. The pandemic required the library to pivot, accelerating staff to innovate and adapt in their response to the community's needs. No-contact services like curbside pickup and take-and-make crafts were introduced, with increased usage and both becoming permanent services offered to patrons at both locations. Library programs went online, with staff interacting with patrons through gaming, trivia, book clubs, storytime, and at-home activities.

As of 2020, the library operates on an annual budget of approximately \$2.6M, with its main source of funding (97%) provided by the Parish-wide, dedicated ad valorem (property) tax. As stated previously, this dedicated tax for the library was voted on by Parish residents in 1997 and renewed in 2007 and 2017; it will be up for renewal again in 2027.

Before developing this plan, a library survey, conducted both within the library and online, produced more than 150 responses from users and non-users alike. The overwhelming message of the survey results was encouraging and supportive, with responses addressing positive customer service experiences, the importance of the library and its services and programs, possible barriers to library use, and longtime support from local residents.

Libraries have always been, and continue to be, in the knowledge business. The Natchitoches Parish Library is no different. We are not a static institution but are constantly evolving to support the communities we serve. We are certain that, throughout the numerous transitions the library has seen, it continues to be a critical hub for the community, providing valuable resources and opportunities to residents of Natchitoches Parish.

In order to address the ongoing goals of the library, this strategic plan, which focuses on nine (9) main areas, was created and will serve as a guide for budgeting and service development from 2021 to 2027. In developing goals and objectives to support these areas of service, the library has kept the issues and concerns of the community, expressed in the form of a survey, at the forefront. The library intends that this strategic plan be a living document that allows the library flexibility to respond to changing needs throughout the community. Over the course of this plan (2021-2027), the library will continually measure, evaluate, and refine the goals and objectives listed within to create an environment which promotes the use of library resources for all people within Natchitoches Parish.

The immediate future of the library is spelled out within this plan – reflecting the best of who we are – and provides assurance in the library’s passion and commitment in supporting and responding to the evolving needs of the communities we serve. Highlights include the addition of branches in the western and southern parts of the Parish, increasing quality programming and services for all ages, superb customer service, supporting economic advancement, and a renewed focus on strengthening our communities. In planning for the future, the Natchitoches Parish Library is reaffirming its commitment to knowledge, connection, and community – what we believe libraries stand for.

## COMMUNITY ANALYSIS 2018/2019 U.S. Census Bureau estimates

*Natchitoches Parish covers a total of 1,252 square miles.*

38,158 residents	14,630 households
1,596 Veterans	66.1% households with a computer
	56.4% households with broadband Internet

RACE	AGE
White	Median age
Black/African American	Population 18 years and over
Hispanic/Latino	<5 years of age
American Indian/Alaska Native	<18 years of age
Asian	>65 years of age

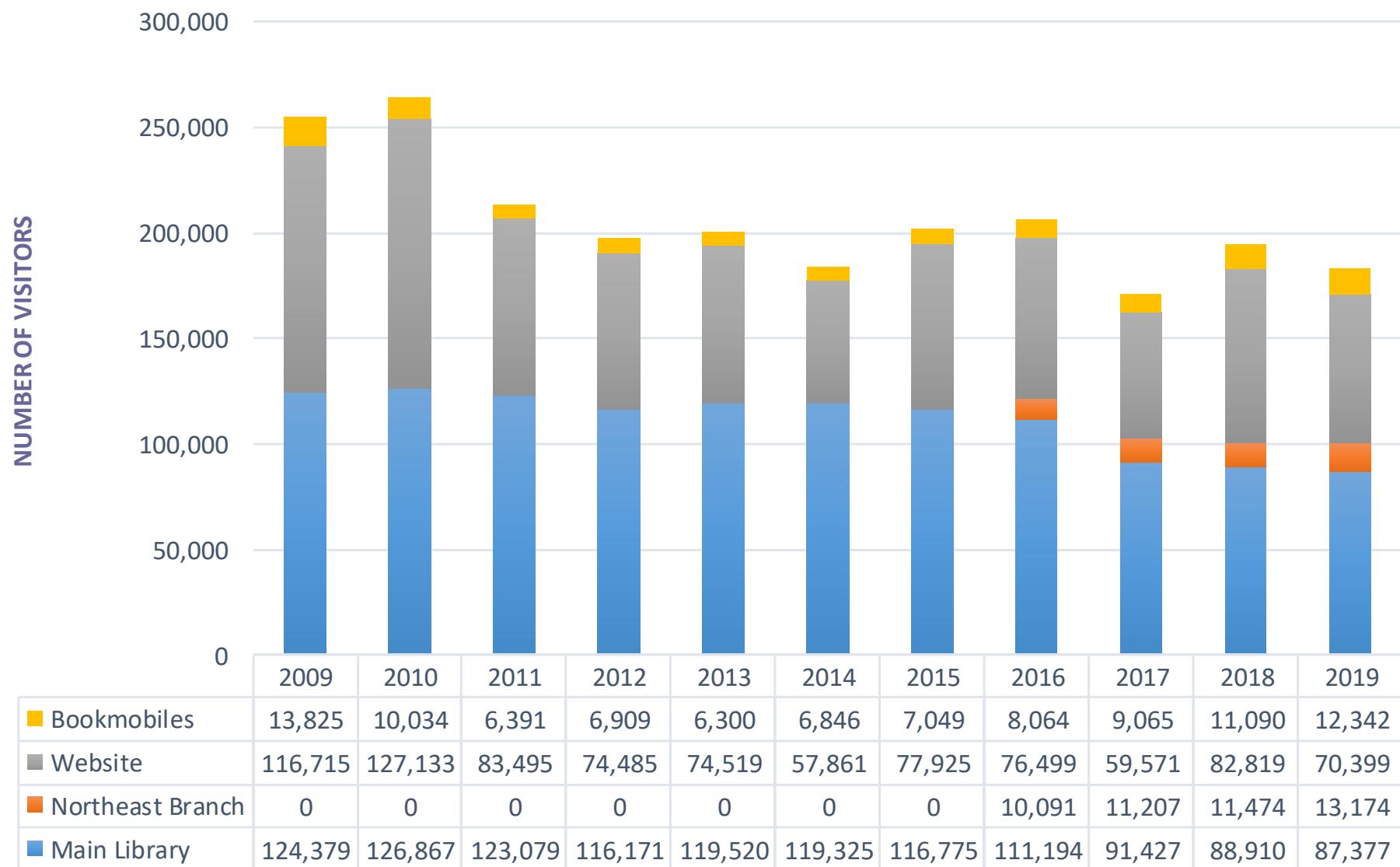
  

EDUCATION	INCOME
>25 without high school diploma	Median household income
86.5% high school graduates or higher	Per capita income

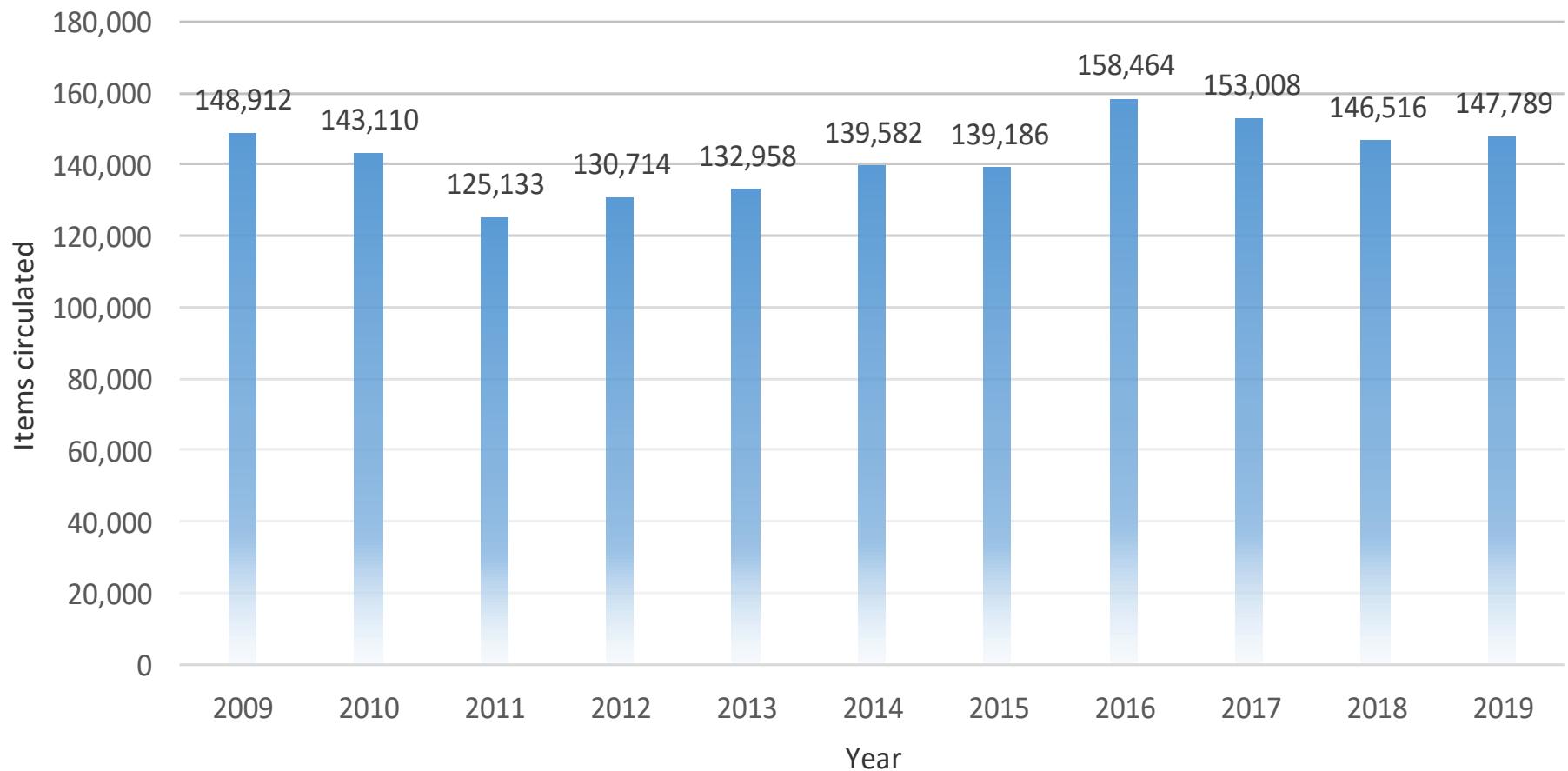
## LIBRARY OVERVIEW 2019 Public Libraries Statistical Report

Year Founded: 1938
System Membership: Green Gold
Total Buildings: 2
Bookmobiles: 2
Population: 38,158
Registered Borrowers: 27,819 (73% of population)
Public Service Hours: 6,084
Patron Visits: 112,893 (2.96 per capita)
Reference Transactions: 4,699
Public Internet Workstations: 69
Electronic Resource Usage: 8,429
Children's Programs: 563 (20,713 attendance)
Young Adult Programs: 160 (973 attendance)
Adult Programs: 293 (2,871 attendance)
Electronic Databases: 66
Collection: 125,315 items (3.28 per capita)
Total Circulation: 147,789 (3.87 per capita)
Total FT Staff: 24
Tax Rate: 8 mills (expires 2027)
Total Operating Budget: \$1,878,420

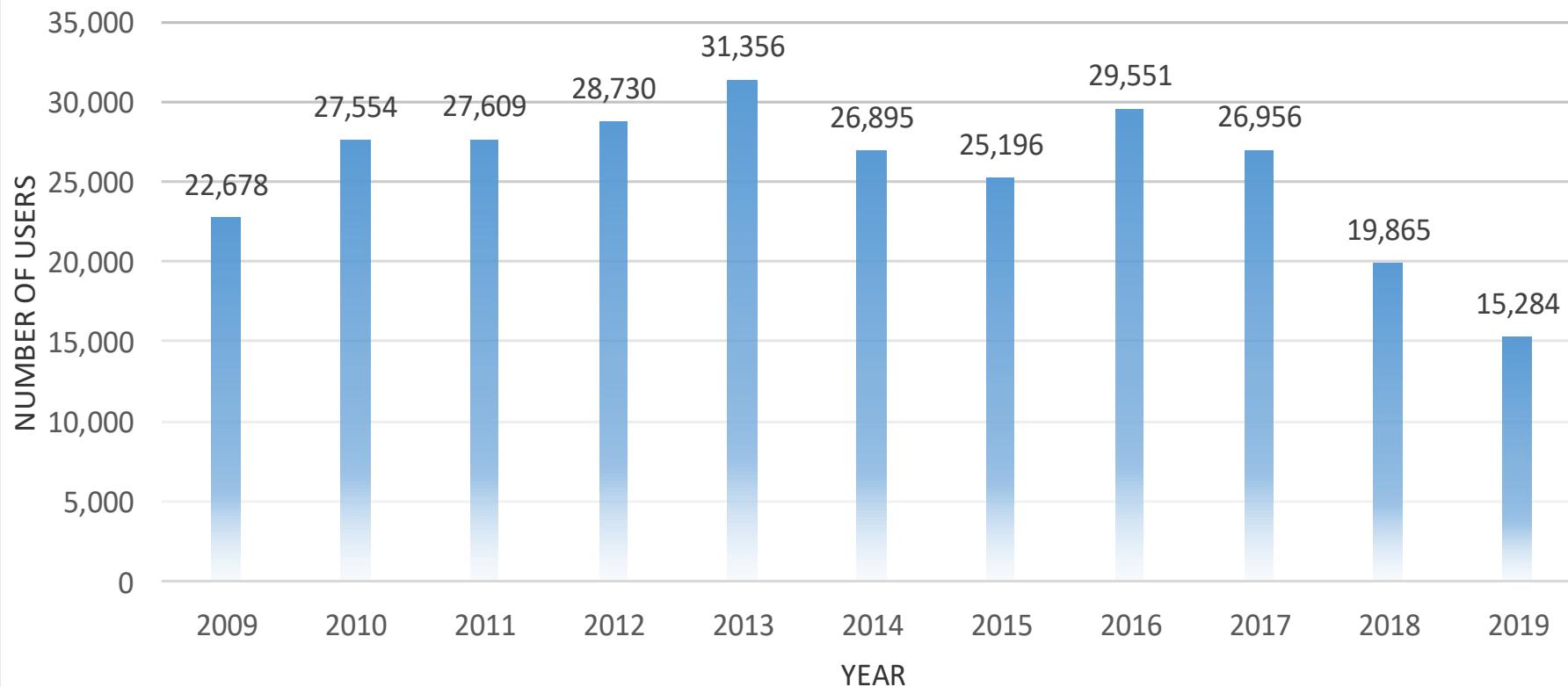
## YEARLY VISITS

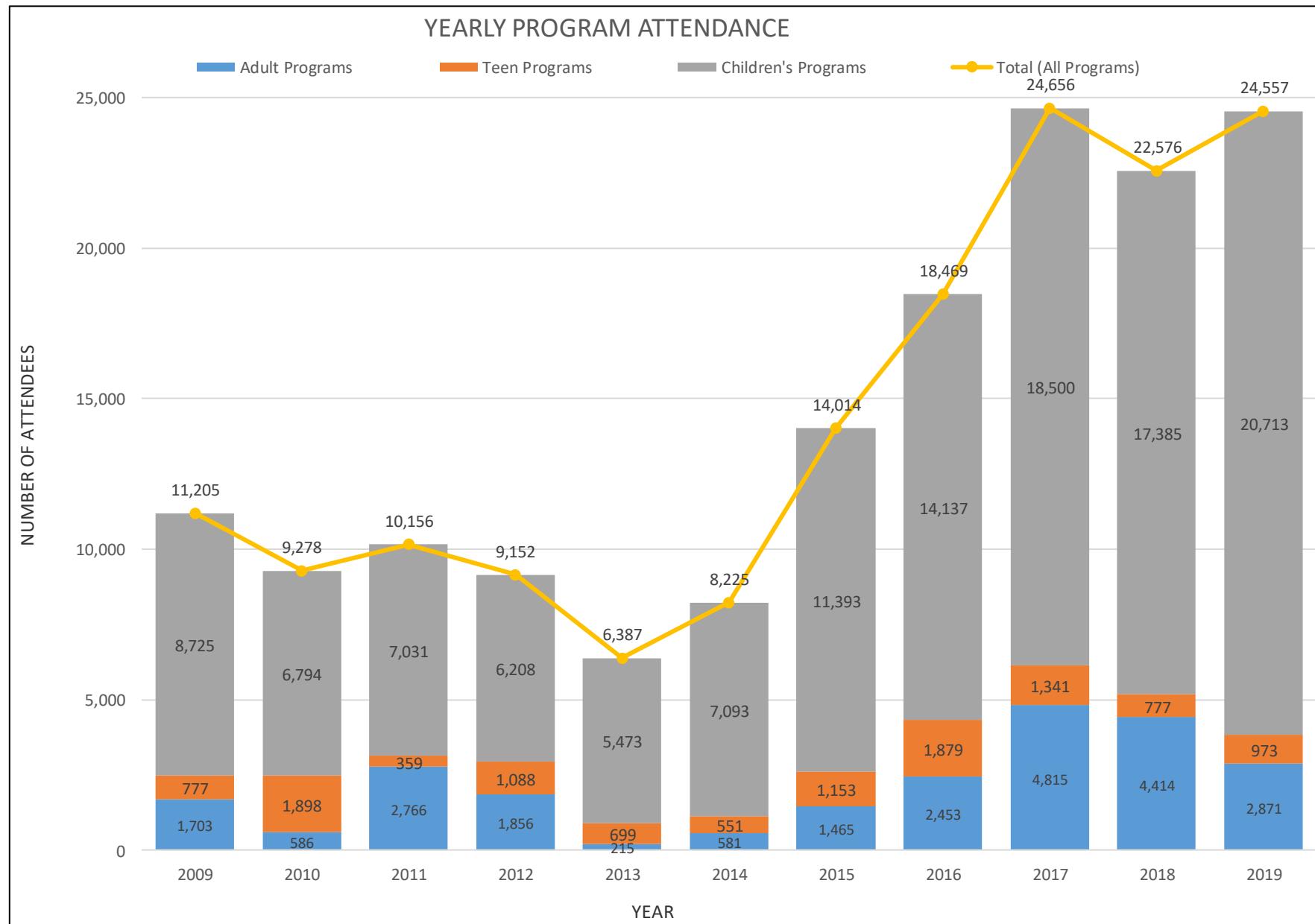


## YEARLY CIRCULATION



## ELECTRONIC RESOURCE USERS





# SWOT ANALYSIS

## STRENGTHS

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- Knowledgeable, service-driven, responsive staff;
- Well-informed, involved, dedicated Library Board of Control;
- Parish-wide voter support as demonstrated by 67% approval rate in 2017 tax election;
- Adequate ad valorem;
- Attractive buildings in Natchitoches and Campti;
- Supportive, charitable Friends of the Library;
- Open and free access for all to information, programs, and services;
- Strong, current physical and online collections;
- Public computer access points;
- Current children's, adult, and teen programming and events;
- University community;
- Relationship with city organizations, daycares, businesses, Northwestern State University, local schools, civic groups, and other public agencies;
- Membership in the Green Gold Library Consortium;
- State Library support.

## WEAKNESSES

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- 33.5% of population lives below the poverty level;
- 13.5% of adult population does not have a high school diploma;
- No public transportation available;
- Failing schools within the district;
- Shelf space and storage is at capacity on a regular basis;
- Lack of community awareness of library services and programs.

## OPPORTUNITIES

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- Addition of a meeting room at the Northeast Branch;
- Possibility of Western Branch addition;
- E-Materials use steadily increasing;
- Technology continues to play a part in library services;
- Working relationship with Friends of the Library provides for placement of surplus reading materials which are used for the FOL Book Sale;
- Positive relationships with local media outlets provides for ample press opportunities;
- Collaboration with city organizations/University/public agencies for combined programming and awareness;
- New leadership in city, University, Chamber of Commerce, and School Board;

- Community involvement through new approaches to advertising and promotions;
- Intentional year-round teen and adult programming;
- Willingness of local businesses to donate items and play a part in library programs.

## THREATS

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- COVID-19 restrictions;
- Competition with other community events;
- Apathetic attitude of the library's usefulness/purpose;
- Questioned relevancy in the digital age;
- Unwarranted and often biased comparison with the need for parish-wide road maintenance and repair;
- Increased push by anti-tax groups;
- Shrinking state funding;
- Insufficient amount of security at library locations;
- Spread of misinformation through social media regarding the library, its budget, services, and programs.

# GOALS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIONS

## COMMUNITY AWARENESS

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**GOAL: Promote library services, events, and resources to grow community awareness and establish new and maintain existing connections with individuals and organizations throughout the Parish.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Create an informational booth to be used at local events which includes:
  - Additional signage describing various library services and programs.
  - Interactive games requiring visitor participation.
  - Mobile book cart for pop-up library services.
- Improve quality, timeliness, and number of subscribers of the library's newsletter.
- Continuously evaluate the library's website, ensuring that it is user friendly and easy to navigate while also establishing it as a one-stop, virtual library location.
  - Provide links to local, state and federal information, resources for businesses and nonprofit organizations, homeschooling and educational resources, and listings of available jobs, training centers, and local employer information.
  - Provide access to online educational, cultural, recreational, genealogical, and entertainment databases.
  - Create a video tour that introduces users to the library and showcases the various areas, departments, and commonly used features of interest.
- Utilize the bookmobile(s) for general library promotion at parades, festivals, and events throughout the Parish.
- Organize Library Card Sign-Up Month events each year, with emphasis on getting staff out into the community to interact both with users and non-users and intentionally target prominent members in the Parish for public relations opportunities.
- Communicate the library's message on a regular basis by speaking with businesses and civic, social, educational, retirement, and religious organizations and clubs.
- Increase media coverage of library services and programs.
  - Maintain contacts with local media and advertising outlets.
    - Create and distribute press releases in a manner that is timely, accurate, and responsive.
  - Identify opportunities for paid advertising, print and online, for designated library services and programs.
  - Utilize various social media outlets on a regular basis to relay library services and programs.
- Maintain ongoing survey practices that reach both library users and non-users to determine possible adjustments to policies and practices.
- Display items at the library that are created by local residents or items from personal collections.

- Educate patrons on the proper use of library-provided databases and the online public access catalog.
  - Create brochures, rack cards, and bookmarks with detailed instructions addressing common questions, procedures, and tasks related to the library's digital content.
- Increase and sustain volunteer base through promotion and partnership with community/school groups.
- Maintain a community events bulletin board and distribute publications from community organizations.
- Develop and maintain informational packets for new residents.
- Educate residents on library funding to garner support and understanding of the 2027 library millage renewal.
- Provide residents the avenue to apply for an e-card online, giving them the ability to utilize the library's digital collection.
- Addition of passive outreach – floor-standing signage and rack cards – at designated locations (MLK Center, City Hall, Parish Courthouse, etc.) across the parish to promote library services and card sign-up.
- Distribute quarterly mailouts (postcards, flyers), to patrons and non-patrons, promoting library services.
- Determine locations throughout the Parish as “Outreach Spots” where signage and flyers can be used as a passive form of communicating to residents about the library’s services.
  - Martin Luther King Jr. Center/gym
  - Natchitoches Parish Courthouse
  - City Court Building
  - Natchitoches City Hall

## FACILITIES

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**GOAL: Provide user-friendly, attractive, safe, and customer-service driven facilities in the Parish that encourage community interaction and use; operate open hours convenient for the public.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Create a schedule of maintenance services for library locations and vehicles.
- Increase security efforts to monitor daily activity and ensure safety.
  - Convert Main Branch entry points – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, elevator, and Technical Processing area – to restricted/card-only access.
- Provide space for working and collaboration – including meeting room access – to entrepreneurs, small business owners, nonprofit groups, and government agencies.
- Foster a welcoming environment that provides a comfortable, inviting space where patrons are able to fully utilize and enjoy the library, its services and programs.
  - Update signage at the Main Branch to reflect a more modern style and the use of current library terms. Addition of a mural at the Northeast Branch.
  - Addition of a mural in the children's area at the Main Branch.
  - Relocate DVD section at the Main Branch in order to create a café area for patrons.
- Review and revise policies and procedures as needed to improve the user experience.
- Provide self-service fax machines at a lower cost to patrons than what is currently being offered.
- Enhance current programming opportunities by procuring non-traditional library equipment including, but not limited to:
  - Cotton candy machine.
  - Gas grill.
  - Snow cone machine.
- Initiate renovation projects to maintain current facilities.
  - Replace flooring throughout the Main Branch.
  - Replace flooring in the Bookmobiles.
  - Replace outdated lights at the Main Branch with LED.
- Initiate construction projects to improve upon and expand library services throughout the Parish.
  - Purchase land/addition of a branch in the Western part of the Parish.
  - Purchase land/addition of a branch in the Southern part of the Parish.
  - Addition of a meeting room at the Northeast Branch.
  - Enclose children's corner at the Main Branch.
- Extend library service hours at both locations in order to accommodate patrons with varying work/school schedules.

- Northeast Branch: Friday openings to coincide with completion of the meeting room addition.
- Main Branch: extend hours to 8:00PM one night a week.
- Implement credit/debit card processing for ease of fine and fee payment.
- Take additional precautions against COVID-19 and other viruses with the addition of ultraviolet/germicidal lights on all HVAC systems at both library locations.
- Install the ASHER automated service tool on the Main Branch's chiller to provide on-demand service operating reports for analysis by Storer Services' Service Department to monitor equipment.
- Maximize curbside service opportunities with the addition of after-hours pickup lockers to be located on the outside of both library locations.
- Provide an additional way for patrons to return library items by installing an outdoor book drop at the Main Branch, conveniently located for easy drive-through returns.
- Procure a small scissor lift for completion of indoor and outdoor maintenance projects.
- Upon completion of a second branch library, determine the most effective, efficient, and financially feasible approach to serving rural residents: Bookmobile, Red-Carpet Delivery Service, or Book Vending Machines.
- Expand opportunities for a safe, active-learning environment for children which encourage play and discovery through dramatic play furniture, games, manipulatives, and flexible seating.

## RESOURCES AND COLLECTION

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**GOAL: Provide access to materials and resources in a variety of subjects and formats that allow for educational and recreational learning opportunities.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Remove outdated or obsolete materials to concurrently withdraw as many items as are being added to the collection.
- Improve eMedia circulation by expanding the collection in both type and number; employ promotional materials on a routine basis which target certain groups and outlets.
  - Freegal (music and movies)
  - Flipster/Zinio (magazines)
  - Overdrive/libby (books, audiobooks)
  - Hoopla (books, audiobooks, movies, music, comics)
- Supplement traditional collections with non-traditional materials that broaden the scope of library services.
  - Storytime kits
  - Halloween costumes
  - Media equipment
  - Fishing poles
  - Tools
  - Bike locks
  - Film converter
  - Wattage meter
  - FLIR camera for smart phones
  - Other items of interest
- Build upon current collections, specifically addressing patron needs, to boost circulation at the Northeast Branch and on the Bookmobiles.
- Create and maintain timely displays, bookmarks, brochures, and promotional materials on popular topics, themes, and seasons.
- Digitize the library's vertical file collection while continuing to virtually index current editions of the local newspaper.
- Review and revise the library's Collection Development Policy as needed.
- Transition all reference materials into general circulation for increased visibility and use.
- Expand both the children's, teen, and adult graphic novel collections to meet patron demands.
- Reconfigure the children's collection at the Main Branch to improve flow and usability.
- Collaborate with parish schools to supplement literacy opportunities for students through the SORA app, which provides ebooks through the library's Overdrive subscription.
- Partner with the Natchitoches Genealogy Library to increase accessibility to their collections through digitization.

## PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES (ADULT)

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**GOAL:** Provide age appropriate cultural, educational, recreational, and entertaining programming which stimulates imaginative thinking, creation, and growth.

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Increase the quantity and improve the variety and timing options of programming for adults in all age ranges and stages of life; build upon those programs that are well-received.
  - Addition of a virtual component to programs, whether as standalone programming or supplemental to in-person programming.
  - Duplicate evening programs during normal operating hours.
- Expand the Adult Summer Reading Program to draw in adult patrons of varied ages, specifically targeting age groups with low participation numbers.
- Implement programming that focuses on:
  - HiSTEP (formerly GED) preparation,
  - Cultural heritage and diversity,
  - Path to citizenship,
  - Employment and workforce development,
  - Life decisions,
  - English as a Second Language instruction,
  - Tax preparation,
  - Financial literacy education,
  - Topics of interest,
  - Local authors, illustrators, and craftsmen,
  - Adult literacy.
- Utilize local residents proficient in certain areas, crafts, artistry, and skills to provide patron-led programming.
- Provide readers' advisory services to assist patrons in locating materials of interest.
- Partner with StoryCorps, and independently funded national organization, to record, collect, and make available oral histories from local residents.
- Introduce passive programming to maximize patron participation.
  - Grab-and-go crafts.
  - Interactive subject-specific book displays.
- Utilize programming events to promote the library's traditional and digital collections.
- Expand programs at branch locations to reach rural patrons of all ages; modify existing programs, as necessary.
- Offer curbside pickup at all locations to provide a convenience for all patrons and a safer option for those more at-risk and susceptible to illness.
- Offer one-on-one and group instruction for patrons to develop basic technology skills.
- Partner with workforce organizations and experts in the field to deliver training on job preparation skills (interviewing, resume writing, etc.).
- Host community meetings on various topics of interest.

## PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES (YOUNG ADULT)

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**GOAL: Provide age appropriate cultural, educational, recreational, and entertaining programming which stimulates imaginative thinking, creation, and growth.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Increase the quantity and improve the variety and timing options of programming for young adults, ages 11 to 17; build upon those programs that are well-received.
  - Addition of a virtual component to programs, whether as standalone programming or supplemental to in-person programming.
  - Duplicate evening programs during normal operating hours for virtual/homeschooled students.
- Continue to provide the Teen Summer Reading Program which is designed to help children and teens maintain their reading levels over the summer and minimize the effects of summer learning loss.
- Implement programming that focuses on:
  - Young adults with special needs,
  - Cultural heritage and diversity,
  - Life decisions,
  - Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEAM),
  - Topics of interest,
  - Local authors and illustrators,
  - College and career readiness.
- Establish a teen advisory board (TAB) that participates in the planning and implementation of programs and services for young adults.
- Partner with local middle and high schools to provide programs to ensure that teenagers know how to find, evaluate, and use print and digital information.
- Introduce passive programming to maximize patron participation.
  - Grab-and-go crafts.
  - Interactive subject-specific book displays.
- Utilize programming events to promote the library's traditional and digital collections.
- Expand programs at branch locations to reach rural patrons of all ages; modify existing programs, as necessary.
- Offer interest-based projects and activities to develop teens' 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and foster personal growth.
- Increase outreach efforts to local schools, clubs, and organizational groups focusing on teens.
- Establish contemporary and relevant social media outreach through the platforms TikTok, Discord, and Twitch
- Collaborate with outside organizations to incentivize participation with teens through volunteer projects.

- Create volunteer opportunities with concrete goals and endpoints; incentivize participation by ensuring said projects provide material for resumes and college applications.
- Partner with the Natchitoches Parish School Board to disseminate digital newsletters directly to parent and student emails.

## PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES (CHILDREN)

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**GOAL: Provide age appropriate cultural, educational, recreational, and entertaining programming which stimulates imaginative thinking, creation, and growth.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Increase the quantity and improve the variety and timing options of programming for children and families; build upon those programs that are well-received.
  - Addition of a virtual component to programs, whether as standalone programming or supplemental to in-person programming.
  - Duplicate evening programs during normal operating hours for virtual/homeschooled students.
  - Initiate programming on the Book and Schoolmobile routes.
- Continue to provide the Children's Summer Reading Program which is designed to help children maintain their reading levels over the summer and minimize the effects of summer learning loss.
- Develop monthly programming which targets families who consistently visit the library:
  - Block Builders Club,
  - Storytime kits,
  - Art classes,
  - Exercise classes,
  - Grab-and-go kits,
  - Special story time hour.
- Provide support, resources, and optimal space for those families who homeschool their children.
- Create and promote virtual programs which allow people to interact with the library in a non-traditional way.
  - Storytelling
  - Gaming
  - Trivia events
- Present regularly scheduled story times in-house and off-site (daycares, parks, bookmobile stops) that include interactive components such as singing, puppets, props, and movement.
- Implement programming that focuses on:
  - Early literacy skills (1000 Books Before Kindergarten),
  - Children with special needs,
  - Cultural heritage and diversity,
  - Topics of interest,
  - Local authors and illustrators,
  - Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEAM),
  - Parenting topics.
- Offer a book delivery service for preschools and daycares.
- Establish a kid's advisory board (KAB) that participates in the planning and implementation of programs and services for children.

- Utilize library staff to plan and present puppet shows and skits.
- Introduce passive programming to maximize patron participation.
  - Grab-and-go crafts.
  - Interactive subject-specific book displays.
- Utilize programming events to promote the library's traditional and digital collections.
- Expand programs at branch locations to reach rural patrons of all ages; adapt modify programs, as necessary.
- Coordinate with partner organizations to provide effective programs and enhance learning opportunities for children. Examples include:
  - Northwestern State University Student Employment Office: afterschool tutoring.
  - Northwestern State University Computer Information Systems and Industrial Engineering Technology: STEM classes.

## TECHNOLOGY

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**GOAL: Provide access to and support for current and evolving technologies which enhance traditional library services, promote learning and discovery, and attract new library patrons.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Provide patrons with public computers, printers, high-speed Internet, and wireless access at all library locations and on the Bookmobiles.
- Introduce new technology for circulation both in-house and outside that allows patrons of all ages to participate in group learning and individual discovery, while also collaborating with schools and community groups as an extension of the library's Outreach program.
  - 3D printer
  - 3D pens
  - Poster printer
  - Gaming devices
  - iPads
  - Chromebooks
  - E-Readers
  - Pre-loaded e-readers
  - Pre-loaded tablets (Playaway Launchpads)
  - Pre-loaded video devices (Playaway Views)
- Invest, on a regular and reasonable schedule, in upgraded technology equipment, programs, and materials for both staff and patrons.
  - Server(s)
  - Wireless printing device(s)
  - Desktop computers
  - Network device(s)
  - Emerging technologies
- Build upon the library's "WiFi to go" service by increasing the number and type of devices available at all locations. This service provides patrons the opportunity to check out the Internet.
- Promote staff expertise through the creation of instructional materials, demonstrations, tools, and formal classes for the library's digital services and technology which encourages patron use.
- Research ways in which the library can provide access to technology in rural parts of the Parish.
- Maintain and upgrade, as necessary, the current Integrated Library System (ILS).
- Investigate alternative online fax service options for use with public computers (Fax Zero, Got Free Fax, FAX24, etc.)
- Develop a comprehensive hardware replacement schedule; replace those reaching end-of-life.
- Provide public and staff training to maximize database use.

- Develop and implement MakerSpace services which encourage hands-on learning for all ages with a variety of the latest technology such as 3D printing, augmented reality, robotics, circuitry, and STEAM gaming.
- Invest in a mobile computer lab used to support staff when teleworking and to supplement in-house public access computing and training.
- Regularly research new, non-traditional and alternative technologies to support changing operations and functionalities.
- Ensure a stable, high-performance network at all physical locations; upgrade internet bandwidth as needed.
- Implement an internet filter which meets CIPA guidelines but also offers more flexibility in use for staff.
- Create online instructional videos for the public and staff, providing an overview of relevant technology topics.
- Develop an extensive technology plan detailing goals, structure, budget, and timeline.
- Transition the library's website to a new host for more stability, support, and ease of use.
- Create a library mobile app to provide content in a more easily-accessible form for patrons.
- Convert the operation of library digital displays to Raspberry Pis for consistency and timeliness in advertising and ease of use.
- Utilize various technology components to enhance and increase participation in the Schoolmobile's Traveling Tales summer route.
- Install digital signage inside the Bookmobiles to promote library services and programs.
- Provide a video conversion service to patrons to convert analog video and audio content into a digital format.
- Convert Main Branch entry points – 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, elevator, and Technical Processing area – to restricted/card-only access to increase security efforts.
- Create a Makerspace at the Main Branch, providing a collaborative learning environment – a place for creation, innovation, and entrepreneurship – where patrons come together to share materials, knowledge, and experiences. Included, but not limited to:
  - 3D printing
  - Art & digital design
  - Computer coding
  - Robotics
  - Photography
  - Audio & Video production
  - Digital conversion
  - Gaming

## OUTREACH

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**GOAL:** Utilize both traditional and non-traditional methods to strengthen strategic partnerships, increase visibility, and extend library services, programs, and assistance throughout the community.

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Partner with community groups, organizations, and governmental agencies to positively impact the Parish and increase visibility of the library's services.
  - Chamber of Commerce
    - A+ Coalition
    - Home and Garden Expo
  - City of Natchitoches
    - Keep Natchitoches Beautiful
    - "Bloomin' on the Bricks"
    - Witch Way to Main Street
    - Pumpkin Glow
    - Spring/Fall Farmer's Market
    - Summer Splash
  - Parish Events
    - Cloutierville Mardi Gras Parade
    - Marthaville Good Ol' Days Parade & Festival
    - Campti Smokin' on the Red Festival
    - Robeline Heritage Parade
  - Natchitoches Regional Medical Center
    - Born to Read Program
    - Annual visits during Library Card Sign-Up Month
  - Natchitoches Parish School Board
    - Parent Advisory Committee
    - Football games
    - Health Fair
    - Literacy/Math Family Night
    - Santa visits
    - Teacher informational packets
    - Literacy Kit distribution
  - Northwestern State University
    - Career Fair
    - Internship Opportunities
    - Student Employee Participation
    - Learning Express promotion with Education students
  - Service Groups
    - Rotary Club
    - Kiwanis Club
    - Lions Club

- Service League – “Reading on the River”
  - Louisiana School for Math, Science, & the Arts
    - Move-in day
- Strengthen and expand the library’s “Library Express” service by engaging homebound and elderly patrons through individual “check-ins” and visits to homes, senior centers, nursing homes, religious groups, and civic clubs.
- Increase visibility of the Schoolmobile during the Summer months by utilizing it for “Traveling Tales,” a mobile story time stop at various locations across the Parish.
  - Partner with community and civic groups to provide nourishing snacks to help meet patrons’ physical needs.
- Utilize various library staff to make both formal and informal presentations within individual classrooms throughout Parish schools, at community events, and within the library during field trips and planned group visits.
- Increase visibility of the Community Bookmobile to better serve residents in rural parts of the Parish.
  - Review and modify schedule as necessary.
  - Initiate calls/emails to former patrons.
  - Issue quarterly press releases about service.
  - Develop quarterly paid ads on social media about service.
  - Identify locations near stops where flyers/schedules can be distributed.
  - Distribute door hangers to residents near stops.
- Initiate programs, displays, and collections that encourage teen participation on the Schoolmobile.
- Extend library services to students at Northwestern State University (NSU) and the Louisiana School for Math, Science, and the Arts (LSMSA).
- Collaborate with NSU students and faculty to bring a variety of quality programming and services to the library.
- Determine opportunities to partner with Parish schools and daycares which promote literacy and encourage use of library resources and services.
- Increase the library’s virtual presence to engage a broader audience.
  - Utilize Youtube for instruction on library-related topics like how to access databases.
  - Develop a podcast with broad themes related to the library.
  - Provide interactive group gatherings through Zoom or Facebook Rooms.
  - Implement a virtual “ask-a-librarian” service, allowing patrons online access to professional reference assistance.
  - Create a virtual library tour of both branches through Google maps.
- Partner with the Natchitoches Genealogical Society to offer workshops, materials, and resources for local genealogical research.
- Evaluate and update Bookmobile and Schoolmobile use for efficiency as well as for effective, dependable, and regular library programming and literacy services.
- Prepare and distribute books and resource materials to new moms at the Natchitoches Regional Medical Center through the Born To Read program.
- Monitor new and emerging social media platforms; implement when appropriate.

- Initiate “check-ins” for elderly patrons; inform them of Library Express, Bookmobile, and online service options.
- Establish monthly outreach for children, teen, and adult programming where various methods of communication, including, but not limited to Facebook ads, mailouts, flyers, and press releases, are used to intentionally target certain groups of patrons.
- Promote literacy by providing low-cost books to the community through quarterly Friends of the Natchitoches Parish Library “Mini Book Sales” at the Main Branch.

## TECHNICAL SERVICES

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**GOAL: Reflect current collection development best practices to develop and maintain a patron-driven, diverse collection of print, non-print, and digital resources covering a broad spectrum.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Review and modify statistical reporting to reflect evolving experience, addition of materials and programs, and service responses.
- Review and correct bibliographic and authority records for consistency and redundancy.
- Streamline the overall cataloging process with definitive timelines.
- Allow patrons the option to choose email or text notification as their means of communication with the library.
- Complete a yearly inventory of the library's collections to assess for lost/stolen items and prepare for a systems purge.
- Integrate titles cataloged as "Graphic Novel" into the appropriate fiction collections.
- Commit to actively participate in State Library of Louisiana Database Committee communications to evaluate and strengthen electronic collections as well as maximize database marketing.
- Maintain and enhance digital and streaming services.
  - Add service that delivers digital magazines (Zinio, Flipster).
  - Explore a universal platform for all digital content.
- Integrate additional relevant electronic resources into the library collection when appropriate and feasible.
- Integrate and consistently maintain the library's digital eMedia records in the library's online public access catalog.
- Remove a barrier to access by eliminating overdue fines.
- Enhance the children's collection with age-appropriate materials that support learning, including audiobooks, Playaways, Playaway Views & Launchpads, and tablets.
- Support small business needs by providing current, diverse, and responsive books and other relevant content.

## PERSONNEL

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**GOAL: Create a team environment and equip library personnel with the materials, resources, and educational opportunities which promote lifelong learning, provide for accountability, open communication, and informed decision-making, and enable them to provide quality service, programs, and assistance to the community.**

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Provide staff training specific to improving the ideal customer service experience.
- As required by law, provide yearly training for sexual harassment and ethics.
- Provide opportunities for professional development and continuing education through online webinars, one-day workshops, conferences, and on-site work days.
- Revamp local storage to include external hard drives and cloud-based backups.
- Explore collaborative efforts which create temporary, non-staff positions focusing on specific projects, opportunities, and services within the library.
  - Northwestern State University Early Childhood Interns
  - Northwestern State University student workers
  - Public Library Association Intern grant
- Create cross-training opportunities to enhance staff knowledge and skills base and address shortfalls.
- Design training, policies, and procedures to assist in dealing with customer challenges.
- Continue the use of yearly performance evaluations to determine staff strengths and areas for improvement.
- Update and maintain an emergency preparedness plan for both library locations.
- Focus on training all staff to provide quality reference service at each service point and library location.
- Provide staff training to maximize database use.
- Develop and train technology staff to provide support for third party products that complement/support library technical operations.
- Transition the library's information technology services to a contracted service provider to ensure faster, more efficient service with shorter turnaround time.
- Implement the use of time clock software to improve accountability, streamline payroll, simplify the process, and accurately track employee work time.
- Produce and revise annually, a procedures manual to assist staff with standard operating procedures.

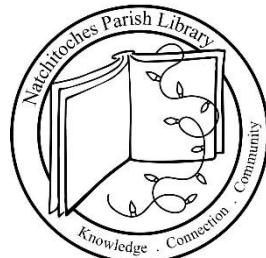
## FUNDING AND ADVOCACY

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**GOAL:** Maintain sound financial planning and prudent fiscal practices which demonstrate good stewardship to Parish taxpayers; encourage support of the library and secure funds by communicating the fiscal needs to the community.

### OBJECTIVES/ACTION ITEMS:

- Establish the library as part of the community's priority infrastructure by participating on community task forces and committees involved in human services planning.
- Actively participate in the Green Gold Library Consortium by attending meetings, interacting with consortium acquisitions staff, promoting use of consortium materials, and suggesting means of improvement.
- Expand the Friends of the Library group and increase participation by recruiting patrons in rural parts of the Parish.
  - Encourage Parish residents to donate to and attend the Friends of the Library annual book sale.
  - Continue to provide off-site storage to house donated books.
- Research grant opportunities to support current library programs and future initiatives.
- Collaborate with the Parish Government in supporting local initiatives.
- Secure funding for an additional 10 years by renewing the library's millage in 2027.



## NATCHITOCHES PARISH LIBRARY

[www.natlib.org](http://www.natlib.org)



Main Branch, Natchitoches

450 Second Street  
Natchitoches, Louisiana 71457  
(318) 357-3280

Monday – Friday  
9:00AM – 6:00PM

Saturday  
9:00AM – 5:00PM



Northeast Branch, Campti

3129 Highway 71  
Campti, Louisiana 71411  
(318) 476-3280

Monday – Thursday  
10:00AM – 6:00PM

Saturday  
10:00AM – 2:00PM