

PHYSICAL ITEM
CIRCULATION



72,013 **3%**



DIGITAL ITEM
CIRCULATION

31,905 **48%**



INTERLOAN
TRANSACTIONS

4,765 **58%**

PATRON VISITS

69,089 **59%**



LIBRARY CARD HOLDERS

5,631 **11%**



#OF PROGRAMS

678 **144%**



PROGRAM ATTENDANCE

9,687 **140%**

Section One: Summary

Over the course of 2022-2024, the Durham Public Library successfully implemented its [Library Strategic Plan](#), achieving significant milestones that have strengthened its role as a vital community resource to its patrons and the Oyster River Community. By focusing on accessibility, engagement, and collaboration, the library has enhanced its services, spaces, and connections within the community. Key accomplishments include:

- **Increased Library Card Sign-Ups:** The library experienced a notable increase in new library card registrations, with 11% more patrons joining in 2024 compared to end of year statistics for 2021.
- **Increased visits to the Library:** The number of patrons visiting the library has increased by 59% over the last three years due to our successful programming and carefully maintained welcoming, accessible, and inclusive spaces.
- **Circulation of materials.** Whilst circulation of physical materials has decreased slightly, this number is offset by skyrocketing use of digital resources made available at the library. Use of digital materials such as ebooks, audiobooks, movies, television, and magazines available through Libby, hoopla, and Kanopy have skyrocketed by 48%!
- **Community Partnerships:** Through active collaboration, the library built new partnerships with local schools, Town Departments, and community organizations, leading to numerous joint programs and initiatives that serve diverse populations.
- **Successful Promotion of Library Offerings:** The library significantly increased awareness and participation in its programs and services, we increased our social media reach, visits, and views by over 100% across the board.
- **Welcoming and Inclusive Spaces:** The library continued its commitment to inclusivity by fostering spaces that welcome all community members, evident through our patrons' responses on program exit surveys and spontaneous comments left with members of our team.
- **Maintaining Excellent Facilities:** As a trusted community center, the library preserved its reputation for excellence by keeping facilities in top condition and addressing barrier to access and usability.
- **Engaging Programs:** The library hosted engaging events celebrating books, culture, and intellectual growth, enriching the community, and fostering lifelong learning.

These achievements underscore the library's dedication to meeting the evolving needs of its patrons while maintaining its mission of providing access to knowledge, fostering connections, and inspiring discovery. With these successes, the library is poised to continue its positive trajectory and further strengthen its impact on the community. The next section of this evaluation provides a more detailed reporting about how we specifically met our objectives.

Section Two: Accomplishing our Strategic Objectives

This section of our addresses some of the more memorable accomplishments and activities documented throughout the years in completing the priorities and objectives outlined in the Library's Strategic Plan (2022-2024). The goal is to measure the extent to which the library has advanced its mission to foster community connections, provide access for all, support literacy and lifelong learning, and focus on the future.

Priority 1: Community Connections

Strategic Objectives:

- Facilitate community conversations.
- Actively represent the Library beyond its four walls.
- Increase awareness and use of library resources.
- Develop partnerships to attract new populations.

Key Achievements:

1. Facilitation of Civic Engagement:

- Hosted discussions such as affordable housing panels, climate change talks, and forums on global and local civic issues in partnerships with Town Departments, other libraries, and Oyster River Community Read.
- Organized events like the "Community Conversations" series, which featured panels on the impacts of zoning regulations and environmental preservation among other.
- Supported civic engagement through programs like the Oyster River Community Reads book discussions on themes of social infrastructure, poverty, and race.

2. Community Representation:

- Staff actively participated in Durham Day, Downtown Trick-or-Treat, and Rotary events which engaged hundreds of local residents.
- Partnerships with Oyster River High School to host library card sign-up events resulted in over 100 new student cards.
- Co-sponsored events with UNH, including the "Age of Champions" wellness fair, which provided health screenings and resources for seniors.

3. Promotion of Resources:

- Achieved an 14% overall increase in library card registrations due to focused outreach campaigns and events in the community.
- Successful promotion of resources via digital newsletters and community outreach.

4. Promoted library programs through social media campaigns, reaching a broader audience and boosting attendance.

5. Partnership Development:

- Collaborated with Parks and Recreation for outdoor family movie nights, health & wellness, and financial security events.
 - Worked with local businesses to secure sponsorships and prizes for the annual Summer Reading Program.
 - Partnered with non-profits such as Riverwoods and Bagdad Woods to provide mobile library services to senior residents.
-

Priority 2: Access for All

Strategic Objectives:

- Deliver services with sensitivity and inclusivity.
- Mitigate barriers to access.
- Engage non-users and accommodate diverse needs.
- Provide inviting civic spaces.

Key Achievements:

1. Inclusivity in Programming:

- Programs for various demographics, including children, teens, adults, and seniors.
- Hosted accessible events, such as CPR certification sessions and mental health awareness workshops.
- Hosted multi-generational events like movie nights, game nights, Snowflake socials and coordinated a daycare visit to Harmony Homes for a joint storytime program with crafts.

2. Removal of Barriers:

- Digitized local newspapers, providing historical access to over 50 years of regional archives.
- Installed LED lighting and high-contrast decals to improve visibility for visually impaired patrons in the elevators.
- Installed "Pop-it" door handles on study room doors so that they could be easily closed by wheelchair users.
- Expanded lending options with a "Library of Things," featuring items like Wi-Fi hotspots, which address digital divide issues.

3. **Creating Welcoming Spaces:**

- Enhanced public spaces by installing the Durham Garden Club's commemorative bench, commemorative storytime chair, quarterly updated story walk books, creating the family literacy area, maintaining vibrant seasonal plantings.
- Upgraded meeting room technology, including new AV equipment like the Meeting Room Owl and technology adapters, to facilitate hybrid programming and community use.
- Renovated the Jim Beliveau Reading Area to include comfortable seating and improved lighting.

4. **Engagement with Underserved Populations:**

- Launched outreach programs at Harmony Homes and Growing Places, bringing library services directly to underserved groups.
- Conducted a bilingual poetry reading to engage non-native English speakers in the community.

Priority 3: Literacy and Lifelong Learning

Strategic Objectives:

- Celebrate the wonder of books and promote reading.
- Nurture enthusiastic library users of all ages.
- Actively participate in cultural and intellectual life.

Key Achievements:

1. **Celebrating Books and Reading:**

- Ongoing programs such as storytimes, book clubs, reading challenges, and author visits.
- Developed and presented events like Oyster Readers' Awards and themed literacy programs.

2. **Youth Literacy Initiatives:**

- Expanded early literacy offerings with storytimes and interactive programs.
- Teen Advisory Board-led initiatives, including creative projects and leadership development.

3. **Participation in Cultural Life:**

- Featured monthly art exhibits by local artists, including Ruth Green's miniatures, Seacoast Quilters Guild displays and hosted artist-in-residence papercutting artist, Susan Throckmorton.
- Hosted programs like "Latino Poetry Night" and "Abenaki Storytelling," highlighting diverse cultural narratives.

Priority 4: Focused on the Future

Strategic Objectives:

- Maintain and expand 21st-century literacies.
- Develop collections informed by community needs.
- Seek reliable resources to support priorities.
- Form partnerships with stakeholders.

Key Achievements:

1. Advancement of Literacies:

- Introduced PyBadges, teaching coding to youth through hands-on programming workshops.
- Expanding the Bill Schoonmaker Library of Things to include STEAM, creativity, and literacy kits.
- Expanded STEAM offerings with Innovation Station Saturdays, featuring 3D printing, robotics demonstrations and make your own potions events.
- Promoted environmental literacy with nature journaling programs and the installation of native pollinator plants to the east side of the building lawn.

2. Collection Development:

- Enhanced digital resource collection and physical collections, including an expanded large print collection, based on community input.
- Increased circulation (14%) and digital resource usage.

3. Partnerships:

- Strengthened relationships with UNH, local schools, and town organizations partnering to deliver joint programs.
- Collaborated on digitization projects and community initiatives.

4. Planning and Adaptability:

- Addressed technological and infrastructural needs, including updates to lighting, security systems, and HVAC components.
- Conducted professional development and strategic planning sessions to prepare for future challenges.
- Launched a marketing and communications manual funded by an ARPA grant to improve outreach and engagement.

Conclusion

The Library's activities over the past three years demonstrate significant alignment with its strategic objectives. By fostering community connections, enhancing access, promoting lifelong learning, and focusing on the future, the Library has established itself as a vital and forward-thinking community resource. Continued efforts in these areas will ensure sustained progress toward the Library's mission and vision.