

THREE COMMUNITIES  
ONE LIBRARY  
A PLAN FOR ALL



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# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many people contributed their valuable time and significant talents to create this strategic plan.

## *Special thanks to...*

The Ypsilanti District Library Board of Trustees for the vision and commitment to excellence which initiated the process.

Ypsilanti area community members who provided input through interviews, surveys, or by taking part in community conversations.

Our Strategic Plan Steering Committee for conducting interviews, studying the research and identifying the plan's areas of focus.

Ypsilanti District Library staff for carefully considering and thoughtfully responding to the questions posed with innovative action steps for success.

Your ideas will guide the Library to 2022!

***Lisa Hoenig***

Director

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategic planning is a process of discoveries and decisions. For Ypsilanti District Library (YDL), the process became the occasion for customers and prospective customers to be heard, for the staff to engage in meaningful deliberations, and for the Board and new Director to establish a positive tone and direction for the entire organization.

Three economically and culturally distinct communities—the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, and a portion of Superior Township—comprise the Library’s service area. Equally distinct are the Library’s three service outlets: the City’s Michigan Avenue branch, a busy, well-used former Carnegie post office building; the elegant and spacious Main Library located in Ypsilanti Township; and Superior Township’s crowded, temporary space at a fire station. The challenge for the Library was to plot a path that ensured equivalent service levels across the District despite facility disparities and demographic dissimilarities.

Under the oversight of the Board of Trustees and with invaluable feedback from a Strategic Planning Steering Committee, the Library conducted a series of Executive Interviews with key community “influentials”. Economic and racial divides were issues of concern as were other disparities and differences among the three municipalities the Library serves. The interviews underscored the importance of the Library in community-building, academic achievement, lifelong learning, enriching entertainment, and technology-provision. The interviews also affirmed the Library’s reputation as a “community staple” providing welcoming facilities and stellar programs—even while under-resourced and inadequately promoted.

A study benchmarking key YDL indicators against those of four other similar libraries confirmed superior performance and financial challenges. YDL ranked 4th among peers in total revenue while providing the most programs of the peer set, 2nd highest program attendance, and highest in number of cardholders. YDL’s lowest cost per circulation was mirrored by its ranking as lowest in total staff expenditures for salaries and benefits.

With these insights in hand, the consulting team launched a telephone survey of a statistically significant number of households across the district. Overall, respondents—qualified as Library users and nonusers—agreed with the statement that “The Library is a trusted and important community asset” but only half that many “would support a tax increase to provide for improved or expanded library services”. Yet a significant number of users indicated they did not know enough about YDL’s services to rate their level of satisfaction. In combination, these two findings in particular pointed to a need for more outreach and promotion about not only the specifics of the Library’s assets and offerings but also their value to the quality of life and economic prospects of the communities YDL serves.

During a course of facilitated planning sessions, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee identified five areas of strategic focus:

1. Generate and support greater staff diversity,
2. Maximize the effectiveness of Library programs,
3. Improve the Library's fiscal health,
4. Make the best use of Library facilities,
5. Market the Library more effectively.

Library staff was organized into twelve work groups to develop specific objectives with action plans and measures of success. Productive collaborations, community education, and staff time emerged as critical success factors, and, in many cases, baseline measures would need to be established to gauge progress toward objectives. The groups also identified the resources that would be required to implement the plan fully. Underlying all deliberations were the imperatives to address an inadequate Superior Township facility and to educate the public on Library funding concerns and how they affect service goals for the community.

By sifting through the research and incorporating feedback from the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Trustees, Library Director, and staff, the consulting team identified key messages most likely to resonate with the community and designed a dynamic, contemporary landmark projecting the Library's compelling role in community building and inaugurating a new era of more aggressive outreach and promotion.

The new brand personality was tagged with the compelling question, "Ask Why", a meaningful call-to action to the community to be curious, explore, study, discuss, debate, and never stop asking questions or seeking answers.

# ABOUT THE LIBRARY'S SERVICE AREA

Ypsilanti District Library's service area comprises the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, and a portion of Superior Township—three separate municipalities with both overlapping and contrasting demographics. The Library's 56 staff—37 of which are full time employees—operate three library locations and one bookmobile under the leadership of a strong Executive Director and Board of Trustees. Struggling to recover from the recession and exodus of the automotive industry, the economic decline of Ypsilanti's tax base has had a direct impact on the Library's budget. Ypsilanti District Library's operating budget is down \$500,000 since 2008, resulting in an annual budget of \$3.65 million.

Ypsilanti, proud home of Eastern Michigan University, is often described as “the Brooklyn to Ann Arbor's Manhattan.” More blue collar than its neighbors, Ypsilanti nonetheless has a burgeoning arts, music, and creative scene. Downtown destinations, nicknamed “Downtown” and “Depot Town,” attract shoppers, foodies, and EMU students. Ypsilanti takes pride in its manufacturing history, diversity, and quirky culture.

Eastern Michigan University and the proximity of the University of Michigan and other institutions are reflected in the high educational attainment of the City's population. Over 39% of City residents have earned a bachelor's degree or higher, significantly more than the state as a whole. Despite impressive higher education rates, most residents are employed in the service industry; the most common jobs in Ypsilanti are Administrative Supervisors, Food and Serving Supervisors, and Retail Supervisors.

The distance between the haves and have-nots is wide. With a poverty rate significantly above national and state rates, Ypsilanti City's economy has seen better days. The City's population of 19,435 is very young—the median age is 15 years below the state average—and racially diverse. The Townships, by contrast, have a more positive economic profile. The urban-suburban Ypsilanti Township, which surrounds the City and Ford Lake, has a median income in line with the state average, although a slightly higher proportion of households below poverty levels in comparison to state and national rates.

Rural Superior Township, an area notable for its extensive wetlands, has a median income nearly \$20,000 above the state average. Overall, the population is older than that of the City and Ypsilanti Township.

	Ypsilanti City	Ypsilanti Charter Township	Superior Charter Township	Michigan	USA
Population	19,435	53,362	13,058	9,883,640	308,745,538
Median Age	24.6	33.7	36.7	39.5	37.6
% High School Graduate or Higher	90%	91%	93%	90%	87%
% Below Poverty Level	33%	19%	13%	17%	16%
Median Household Income	\$ 31,061	\$ 45,517	\$ 68,971	\$ 49,576	\$ 53,889
<b>Diversity</b>					
%White	62%	57%	59%	79%	74%
%Black	28%	32%	28%	14%	13%
%Hispanic or Latino	3%	6%	6%	5%	17%
%Asian	3%	3%	6%	3%	5%
<i>Source: American Fact Finder</i>					



# METHODOLOGY

Under the leadership of a new director, the Board contracted with The Ivy Group to conduct research and facilitate a multi-dimensional community needs assessment and strategic planning process for the Ypsilanti District Library to guide management decisions about the future delivery of programs and services.

The consulting team managed a phased series of planning activities that included the following:

- Site visits
- Benchmarking study
- Executive interviews
- Telephone survey
- Staff in-service
- Steering Committee facilitation
- Planning summit

The consulting team reviewed and analyzed the Library's previous strategic plan, research conducted in the community, and demographic data.

## ***STRATEGIC PLANNING STEERING COMMITTEE***

The Library recruited five citizens, three Board members, and four YDL staff for a Strategic Planning Steering Committee. The Library convened a series of meetings with the Committee to review the research and provide insights and recommendations.

## ***INITIAL SITE VISIT***

At the initial visit, consultants met with the Library's senior management team, toured the Library's service area, and visited branches. At an extended meeting with the Board, the team reviewed the planning process, led a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis, and presented current best practices and trends in library service provision.

## ***BENCHMARKING STUDY***

The benchmarking study measured the performance of the Library against that of four peer libraries: Calvert Library (Prince Frederick, MD), Edison Township Free Public Library (Edison, NJ), Eastern Monroe Public Library (Stroudsburg, PA), and Willard Public Library (Battle Creek, MI). Peer libraries were selected based on demographic indicators for service areas as well as circulation, number of branches, annual budget, and number of visitors or program attendees. Inputs (i.e., government income), outputs (i.e., circulation, reference), and analysis (i.e., cost per circulation) were compared using the most recent published data (FY2013) from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the Public Library Data Service.

## ***EXECUTIVE INTERVIEWS***

Twenty-three individuals who influence public opinion in the Library District were interviewed in person or by phone for their perspectives on the needs and trends (social, political, economic, and demographic) affecting the Library's service area and the ways in which YDL might help address those needs. The interviews also explored opportunities for the Library to improve customer service and communications, and to identify possible collaborations and partnerships which the Library might form with public and private sector entities in the future.

## ***TELEPHONE SURVEY OF HOUSEHOLDS***

To confirm the qualitative information gathered during executive interviews, 382 telephone interviews were completed with randomly selected households in the Library's service area. 382 interviews yielded a margin of error of +/-5% at the 95% confidence level across the entire service area population, but not for individual market segments.

The survey was designed to determine:

- profiles of non-user and user populations and frequency of use;
- the importance that residents attach to specific library programs and services;
- levels of customer satisfaction with specific attributes of library services (programming, collections, technology access, customer service, etc.);
- barriers that prevent some citizens from utilizing Library services; and
- interest in new programs, services, and technologies for the Library to consider for the future.

## ***STAFF IN-SERVICE AND PLANNING SUMMIT***

On completion of the research, The Ivy Group facilitated a series of meetings with the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and Library staff to review the research findings and reach consensus regarding major new strategic initiatives. Five major areas of strategic focus emerged:

- Generate and support greater staff diversity
- Maximize the effectiveness of Library programs
- Improve the Library’s fiscal health
- Make the best use of Library facilities
- Market the Library more effectively

These five areas of strategic focus became the key organizing tenets of the plan.

## ***WORK GROUPS***

Staff were organized into twelve “work groups” whose purpose was to translate the research into actionable plans and to identify resources required to fulfill the plans as well as measures of success. Their plans were integrated into a draft of the proposed strategic plan that was submitted to the Library leadership team for review and feedback.

## ***KEY MESSAGING AND BRANDING***

With the research in hand and staff feedback, the consulting team developed key messages and created a new brandmark, color palette, and design system.

## ***FINAL PRESENTATION***

On final approval, Lead Consultant Pam Fitzgerald formally presented the plan to the Library Board of Trustees, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, and work group representatives. Subsequently, the Board adopted the final plan.

# STRATEGIC AREAS OF FOCUS

## ***GENERATE AND SUPPORT GREATER STAFF DIVERSITY***

### ***Foster a workforce that reflects our community.***

Meet with Eastern Michigan University's Office of Diversity and Affirmative Action to learn about the University's approach to fostering a diverse workforce and with other libraries (Ferndale Area District Library, for example) that have had success in diversifying their workforce to identify best practices and "good ideas" that can be integrated into this plan.

Review job postings to ensure clarity of specific job requirements and inclusion of "big picture" information that markets the job as interesting and desirable and the Library as a vibrant work environment.

Include in all position postings and job descriptions the requirement that a candidate demonstrate previous successful experience working with diverse populations.

Explore legal and contractual implications of and underwriting opportunities for

- a paid summer internship program targeting candidates of diverse backgrounds pursuing a Master of Library/Information Science; and
- training and career development of newly hired paraprofessionals through ALA and Library of Michigan.

Create a checklist for advertising postings at all YDL locations; University of Michigan, and WAYNE State University Career Development Centers; Parkridge Community Center; NAACP; Michigan Works; Handshake (EMU); and local ethnic newspapers: Arab American News (Dearborn), Latino Press (Detroit), and Michigan Chronicle (Detroit). For MLS positions, post in Black Caucus ALA Jobs Postings website, Spectrum Scholarship Program and on HBCU Connect, Chinese American Librarians Association, REFORMA.

To make YDL more attractive to diverse candidates:

- make hiring committees as diverse as possible; and
- consider standardizing the interview process by adding to position-specific questions a series of universal questions, and/or a point rating system for interview responses, and a tour of the work site for top candidates prior to hire.

Offer opportunities for part-time staff to work shifts when hours become available due to vacations and sickness.

When budgets permit, reinstate and expand paraprofessional positions.

***Facilitate community dialogue that builds relationships with all neighborhoods and people of all ethnicities and races.***

Review mission and vision statement and all Library policies and public documents and communications, including website and newsletter language, library card applications, etc. for inclusive language regarding protected classes.

Clearly and consistently communicate Library's commitment to inclusiveness and reassurance of protection against discrimination on the basis of age, sex, race, creed, national origin, color, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, height, weight, disability, political affiliation, and immigration status, emulating resolutions of the City of Ypsilanti's Human Relations Commission.

Offer opportunities for staff training (such as participation in ALA webinars) on how to facilitate community dialogue.

Foster community engagement by encouraging YDL employees to attend meetings of community organizations (Willow Run / Ypsilanti NAACP, Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Black Chamber of Commerce, Parkridge Community Center, New West Willow Neighborhood Association, Hope Clinic, Corner Health Center, etc.) on staff time and by paying modest dues as appropriate.

Create a Diversity Dialogue Committee, to include the New West Willow Neighborhood Association, Parkridge Community Center, Willow Run / Ypsilanti NAACP, Hope Clinic, Corner Health Center, Center for Multicultural Affairs (EMU), LGBT Resource Center (EMU), and Washtenaw Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights, etc. to assess community needs and develop programs (speakers, community outreach, community conversations, etc.) that support diversity.

Arrange for training for Diversity Dialogue Committee as well as interested library staff and community partners on hosting and facilitating Community Conversations.

With the guidance of the Committee, host Community Conversations about diversity (age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexuality, gender identity, religion and values) and consider at least one community-wide "one community, one book" dialogue engaging a broad array of organizations in discussions about issues of diversity.

Explore feasibility for Board consideration of a gender-inclusive bathroom.

## **MAXIMIZE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LIBRARY PROGRAMS**

### ***Develop a community-needs-based program proposal and evaluation process.***

Conduct training in Outcomes Based Planning and Evaluation (OBPE) (and include OBPE training in new staff orientation). Regularly convene program proposal and evaluation committee consisting of department heads and key public services staff to assess new program proposals and the effectiveness of existing programs.

Develop a new program application process to include

- primary staff organizer;
- intended audience;
- brief description;
- evidence that the program addresses at least one of eight identified community needs:
  1. early childhood literacy
  2. emerging adulthood
  3. education and lifelong learning
  4. job skills
  5. digital inclusion
  6. economic development
  7. civic / community engagement
  8. STEAM initiatives;
- specific behavioral objectives: for example, a parent reads to their child more often because of skills learned in parent/child interaction at the library; a patron is able to write a resume; etc.;
- estimated attendance;
- partners/cosponsors;
- budget and resources required; and
- Supervisor's approval.

Annually assess the effectiveness of existing programs in meeting behavioral objectives and community needs by using the OBPE tool.

Develop online proposal submission and archive capabilities and both online and paper mechanisms to assemble patron evaluations, staff feedback, and anecdotal information on behavioral outcomes. Maintain a database of partner community organizations and contact information.

### ***Reorganize, rebrand, and reintroduce the summer reading program (SRP).***

Apply best practices to relaunching a dynamic program that measurably decreases the summer slide and improves children's reading scores.

Focus on critical thinking, community engagement, and skill-building (in addition to reading) to engage area youth in positive, analytical learning experiences that appeal to and improve the academic performance and growth of all young people, including those who do not self-identify as "readers."

Rename the SRP to better convey goals and outcomes, tying in themes of community (Ypsilanti), identity (Library), and learning (exploration, discovery, etc.).

Rebrand SRP as a library-led community collaboration that nurtures enrichment, engagement, and involvement in addition to improved academic performance, holistic wellness and responsibility of area youth.

Ensure the design of the new program logo stylistically mimics YDL's new brand and positions YDL as the leader of the summer initiative.

Incorporate program brand and information on patron portal of Read Squared, YDL SRP website page, program flyers and promotions.

Improve and streamline the program administration with a reconfigured SRP steering committee that reduces redundancy, clarifies expectations and roles, includes IT and marketing in planning and implementation and adheres to a decisive "chain of command". Track SRP participation and school reading scores by age in a multi-value data table to evaluate program effectiveness compared to established benchmarks.

Develop line item budget for accurate financial analysis of program expenses.  
Formalize and annually update a program to-do list and timeline.

Utilize badging or other trends identified through ALA's Center for the Future of Libraries to ensure relevancy to a young audience and solicit TAG and TEAM perspectives on new design and participation in yearly events.

Lead conversations with the newly-established YDL-YCS taskforce to solicit feedback and increase participation.

***Become a valued contributor to economic development, especially small businesses.***

Investigate existing community resources, such as the Entrepreneur Center at Washtenaw Community College, and develop relationships by attending regularly scheduled meetings of local business groups (i.e., DDA, Ann Arbor/Ypsilanti Chamber of Commerce, SPARK, SCORE) to learn how the Library can better support the business community and to introduce the concept that the Library can be a vital partner in economic development.

Identify opportunities to serve the business community by consulting with Michigan public libraries that have developed successful partnerships with businesses (e.g. Salem-South Lyon District Library).

Form a business advisory board of support agencies; solicit input from local businesses; and assist with the development of a baseline survey of area business needs.

Utilizing tools from BRASS, WCC, MeL, and other sources, train staff to serve the business community effectively; designate staff member to coordinate training.

Create a small YpsiBiz! business/start-up portal on YDL's website.

Develop a standard small business/start-up service presentation which can be customized to specific business interests; market and present to local organizations, businesses, and the community at large; post on website.



## ***IMPROVE THE LIBRARY'S FISCAL HEALTH***

### ***Explore millage feasibility and voter education program.***

Research history of millage requests in the community. (When do existing millages expire? Have millage campaigns fared better in primary or general elections? Etc.)

Develop a variety of financial scenarios for the Board's consideration.

If the Library Board authorizes a millage campaign, contract with a millage consultant to guide voter education outreach.

### ***Expand fundraising capabilities.***

Conduct training for Board and Library leadership on fundraising strategy in general and major gift and capital programs, in particular.

Develop an internal process for Director, Assistant Director and Communications and Development Coordinator to vet and approve grant proposals.

Create centralized, real time access to database of previous funders, programs, standard application requirements (institutional background information, DUNS, service population, tax exemption numbers, etc.).

Investigate 501(c)(3) status.

Explore ways to grow the YDL Endowment Fund in consultation with Ypsilanti Area Community Fund staff.

### ***Explore workflow opportunities and efficiencies.***

Survey staff at Whittaker—Acquisitions, Circulation, Youth, Adult, Technology, Administration, Outreach/Superior; at Michigan Avenue—Circulation, Adult, Youth—to identify opportunities for improving workflow and efficiencies.

Investigate alternatives to SAM and credit card payment system to improve customer service for computer users.

Replace antiquated phone system, enabling automated text messaging or phone reminders and notifications.

Consider adding telephone headsets to enable hands-free work.

Implement a more robust SPAM blocker.

Research replacement of OCLC for MARC catalog records (candidates may be Sky River and Blue Cloud).

Upgrade efficiency of Books on Wheels service by enabling online registration and establishing set days and times for deliveries.

Implement an online library card application.

Create department-by-department checklists of procedures and information resources, including online links to relevant details in YDL manuals as “ready reference” quick guides (e.g. how to operate the cash register, computer time limits at Superior, etc.) for employees at all public desks, regardless of location.

Cross train interdepartmentally around standardized procedures to create efficiencies and ensure consistent new employee orientation.

## ***MAKE THE BEST USE OF LIBRARY FACILITIES***

### ***Conduct facilities and space utilization studies of Michigan Avenue and Whittaker Road branches.***

Contract with library facilities and space consultants to develop capital program and identify opportunities for space reutilization at Michigan Avenue and best use of space and opportunities for maintenance efficiencies at Whittaker Road.

### ***Improve service to Superior Township.***

Looking ahead to the eventuality of a new Superior Township branch, conduct a detailed user and non-user survey of residents of Superior Township (completed surveys from 350 Superior Township residents over the age of 18 for 3961 households produces a confidence level of 95% at a + 5%) to determine needs and how the Library can better meet them.

Conduct an abbreviated in-school paper survey of middle school and high students to the same ends.

Make the library a hub of information for Superior Township residents by providing Township-specific information.

Conduct for Board consideration a study of the feasibility of adjusting hours of branch operation (currently M 12-8; T 10-6; W & Th 4-8; Sat 10-6) in light of survey results and analysis of statistics, by day of week and time of day of:

- Door counts,
- Reference questions,
- Circulation.

Make the building more welcoming and improve its safety by:

- collaborating with Superior Township on a plan to upgrade exterior lighting around building and in parking lot and to install brighter lighting around the sign at the corner of MacArthur and Harris;
- adding a second drop box in the parking lot for drive-up returns; and
- increasing security hours/presence at the building.

Revamp the Superior collection to make better use of space and increase circulation by:

- Analyzing circulation statistics specific to the Superior branch to determine materials (both by I-type and by Dewey classification and regardless of ownership location) most often checked out at that location;
- Comparing those circulation statistics to what Superior Township residents are checking out at all locations;
- Reorganizing and revamping collections to reflect findings; and
- Making more computers/tablets available to Superior branch patrons.

Improve marketing to Superior Township residences by:

- Creating a flyer advertising key library offerings (locations, hours, remote resources, classes, programs, etc.) for possible distribution in Superior Township's mailed newsletter and elsewhere;
- Distributing copies of the flyer and Latitudes to Superior Township office buildings (Township Hall, Twp. Rec & Ed office, other?); churches; any large stores likely used by Superior Township residents (e.g., Kroger on Mich. Ave.?).

Increase the number of evening bookmobile stops in the Township and send the bookmobile or book trike to special events, such as neighborhood parties, church events, and Parks events.

Investigate grant funding for story walks in two (or more) Superior parks consisting of permanent or semi-permanent installations with pages from a picture book for literacy play and promoting the Library to the community.

Investigate the feasibility of providing services/programs/events at alternative locations (churches, Township Hall, parks, etc.) in the Township.

### ***Maximize visibility and use of the bookmobile.***

Make the Navigator's new wrap a rolling billboard for the brand.

For maximum visibility and service when scheduling permits, park the Navigator at alternative locations throughout the district, such as Michigan Avenue on Sundays or at parks, churches, or events in Superior Township.

Consider broadcasting music as a bookmobile “theme” from the speakers as the bookmobile approaches a stop.

Install roadside signs at each bookmobile stop (there are 20) with time and days of stops; post maps of bookmobile stops at static locations (Whittaker, Michigan Avenue, and Superior).

Foster partnerships with area events to cross-promote the bookmobile and YDL.

Expand neighborhood visits into Saturday, late morning and early afternoon to reach people who might have conflicts during the week.

Schedule the Navigator for parent/teacher nights in area schools.

Solicit email addresses to enable patron e-notifications of bookmobile visits.

## ***MARKET LIBRARY SERVICES MORE EFFECTIVELY***

### ***Examine newsletter usage, format, content, and frequency.***

Change format to a folded, tabloid-sized newspaper to increase live page size and decrease cost per page.

Reach every household (single-family and multi-unit) in the Library’s district by sending the newsletter via postal routes.

Increase the frequency of newsletter mailings, beginning with the Winter 2018 issue.

Establish guidelines for expanded newsletter content, with a rubric to determine what library news items and program listings are included and highlighted.

Include a calendar of events and news articles.

Develop a policy or guideline regarding promotion of events hosted by outside groups.

In consultation with Washtenaw Literacy, ensure readability. Increase font size, use more plain language, and avoid “library lingo.”

### ***Improve internal communications.***

Schedule quarterly department meetings in advance (include an invitation to Director and Assistant Director) as opportunities for group problem-solving, addressing departmental concerns, and disseminating information on procedure, policy, programming, public concerns, and direction.

Restructure or replace the current Intranet system for better organized, more intuitive, streamlined means for casual, immediate and archived communications.  
Make all shared documents, forms, signs, and procedure files available in an organized and searchable format within the new Intranet.

Purge temporary or obsolete files and reorganize and otherwise repurpose I Drive for local branch or department special communications, collaborative documents, and drafts of files.

Maintain on the Intranet a security log readily available to all staff system-wide of patron suspensions, details of infractions, and, whenever possible, photos of the individuals involved.

Provide opportunities for Library leadership to work service desks periodically to forge close working relationships with “on the floor” staff and to provide first-hand experience with issues and challenges.

## ***Rebrand, develop messaging, upgrade website, and improve wayfinding***

Inventory signage, communications, and publications as the first step toward applying new brand and graphics standards in spring 2017.

Launch new website in spring 2017 and work to keep website content robust and dynamic.

Re-brand outreach fleet for maximum visibility and impact in the community.

In consultation with Washtenaw Literacy, establish a standing committee of staff and others to monitor wayfinding on an ongoing basis, with the goal of consistent, simple signage across the district, including labels for public service desks.

Renovate the main floor reception desk at Whittaker Road to improve its effectiveness as a directional aid.

Evaluate digital signage and real-time communication options (website, clickable maps, same-day room reservations) to assist in wayfinding once initial improvements to wayfinding are solidified and a space utilization study is complete.

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# APPENDICES



## **BOARD AND LIBRARY LEADERSHIP ASSESSMENT**

Looking ahead to our first meeting, the Board reviewed the key initiatives of the 2011 -2014 Strategic Plan, YDL's mission and value statements and considered the questions posed.

### **2011 – 2014 STRATEGIC PLAN**

To what degree do you believe these initiatives have been implemented (understanding that #1 and #4 remain problematic)? If they have not, what obstacles have impeded their implementation? Which have continuing relevance to the current planning initiative?

- Secure and develop a larger Library space in Superior Township
- “Reach out” to Augusta Township to become part of the YDL's service district
- Improve access and increase the functionality of public computers
- Implement “Teen Zones” at YDL facilities
- Develop an integrated program strategy that aligns with community priorities and demographic changes
- Strengthen the self-directed user experience
- Research, purchase and implement an alternative RFID system
- Implement a private fund development plan

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Is the YDL mission statement still relevant? Is it too broad? Too narrow? Does it say what the Library does, why it does it, how, and for whom? Is the focus balanced between services and customers? Does it motivate and inspire employee commitment? Does it say what you want the Library to be remembered for?

*As a community resource, our mission is to enrich life, stimulate intellectual curiosity, foster literacy, and encourage an informed citizenry.*

## **VALUES STATEMENTS**

Values drive the intent and direction of planning. Do YDL's articulated values accurately reflect how the Library, its Trustees, and staff actually operate or are they aspirational? To what extent were the 2011-2014 strategic initiatives aligned with and/or supportive of these values? Is there anything missing? Are the explanations adequate?

1. Public Trust: We commit to being fiscally responsible with public resources,
2. to protecting patron confidentiality, and to providing safe, well maintained and accessible facilities.
3. Equal Access: We believe in equal access to all YDL resources.
4. Diversity: We are committed to reflecting the diversity of our community through our collections, services and staff.
5. Excellent Service: We commit to providing excellent service by providing accurate and reliable information in a respectful interaction between well-trained, friendly and efficient staff and all members of our community.
6. Outreach and Partnership: We will actively develop partnerships and joint activities with community groups to further the YDL mission.
7. Idea Gathering Place: As an idea-gathering place, the Library promotes the democratic ideals of intellectual freedom by providing for a free exchange of information and ideas from a wide variety of viewpoints.

## ***SUGGESTED TRENDS READING***

The Pew Institute regularly publishes meaty articles and papers—free subscriptions available on sign-up. Look particularly at Kathryn Zickuhr’s Trends PowerPoint.

In addition...

### ***ALA’s annual report:***

[http://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2015/issues and trends](http://www.ala.org/news/state-americas-libraries-report-2015/issues-and-trends)

### ***An overall look at library statistics:***

<http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets/alalibraryfactsheet06>

### ***Particularly useful for the newest in gadgetry and technology:***

<http://www.slideshare.net/davidleeking/emerging-trends-in-libraries-for-2015>

### ***Exciting and provocative:***

[https://placesjournal.org/article/library-as-infrastructure/?gclid=CPu\\_itSIo8oCFUYehgodpm8HfA](https://placesjournal.org/article/library-as-infrastructure/?gclid=CPu_itSIo8oCFUYehgodpm8HfA)

### ***Vendor perspectives:***

<http://ideas.demco.com/blog/5-library-trends-to-watch-in-2016/>

<http://company.overdrive.com/overdrive-reports-2016-digital-library-trends-for-public-libraries/>

## ***BENCHMARKING STUDY***

***October 2016***

### ***ABOUT BENCHMARKING***

often relative to recognized standards, that libraries, government agencies, and non-profits can use to assess strengths and identify areas needing improvement. Library benchmarks are typically numerical (quantitative) statistics such as circulation, visits, and revenues. Management expert Peter Drucker called benchmarking “critical” to good government and nonprofit management.

Comparing its performance to that of similar institutions enables a library to highlight areas of excellence as well as under-performance that may require further study or attention. The comparisons also provide concrete and persuasive data for advocacy, reports to elected officials, fundraising, and grant applications. For example, benchmarks indicating comparative under-staffing can help build a case for additional personnel.

However, benchmarking is neither a stand-alone exercise nor a complete assessment of library performance. Findings should be approached with an open mind and curiosity about the reasons behind them. Benchmarking results must be viewed within the context of a library’s unique situation, including its community demographics, facilities, financial situation, and management. It should be used in concert with other tools such as surveys and customer feedback in order to flesh out a complete picture of institutional performance. Benchmarking and national rankings tend to show that the majority of high-performance libraries have highly educated and affluent populations, excellent funding, large collections, and multiple outlets. Of course, it is possible for a library to excel without all of these conditions, but the reasons why vary enormously and are based on local conditions and management.

Some cautions:

- Both the American Library Association (ALA) and the Pew Research Center have published comparative data regarding library budget allocations by state. Historically, personnel expenses comprising roughly 60% of a library’s budget have been considered optimal. That target has ticked upward over the last decade to 65-70%—even higher in major metropolitan areas or for libraries that are unionized—as the costs of healthcare and other benefits have mushroomed. Another generally accepted standard is the percentage of a library’s budget that should be devoted to collection expenditures: 12% in Pennsylvania and Illinois and at least 15% in Texas, for example.

- Some numbers, such as holdings (number of items in the collection) need to be supplemented with additional information to be meaningful. For example, the number of holdings alone does not take into account the age, condition, or other attributes that fully describe the quality of the collection.
- Many statistics have hidden “cause-and-effect” attributes, revealed only after further investigation. For example, libraries with short loan periods and more renewals will tend to have larger circulation numbers than peers with longer loan periods and fewer renewals. Another example is personnel costs which can often reflect the size and number of floors in a building. It can be worthwhile to consider and explore causes of comparative statistics of concern.
- Library performance is affected by community demographics, such as education, income, and crime levels of the community.
- Library numbers tend to focus on transactions and outputs, whereas patron outcomes, or the actual changes in user behavior that libraries create, are the most convincing measure of library success. Outcome assessments, however, are more difficult and are typically applied to specific projects or grants as opposed to overall library operations. For example, a library can collect and benchmark the number of children registered for Summer Reading (output), but the change in reading ability and scores after participation (outcome) requires additional data from schools or parents.
- There are many opportunities for data entry errors, including both the library and the databases providing access to the numbers.
- Data reflects past performance. For this report, 2013 data, the most recent publicly-available information, was pulled from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) database.

The voluminous data available can be overwhelming to gather and process. It’s best to “start small” and look at figures most important to the planning effort, vision, concerns, and projects at hand. When a library has above- or below-average performance, it can merit further study. For example, public libraries in large college towns often have below-average reference numbers due to the presence of academic libraries and tech-savvy customers in their service area. Other libraries can have relatively low program attendance if they are in communities with an over-abundance of cultural and recreational events.

***Statistics collected by IMLS and the Public Library Data Service (PLA Metrics /PLDS) for FY 2013 are the basis of this report.*** This source is the most current publicly available information and may reflect data entry errors by libraries or processing agencies. The mean and median performance for each measure was calculated, as well as Ypsilanti District Library’s ranking among the libraries.

## ***YPSILANTI DISTRICT LIBRARY PEER CANDIDATES***

The most meaningful benchmarking data is obtained by selecting peer libraries similar in size, population, geographic area served, and finances. For this study, criteria focused on:

- Libraries with a similar size service population
- Libraries with a similar number of outlets
- Libraries with operating expenses per capita within +/- 35% of YDL

Final peer set:

Library	Service Area Population (U.S. Census)
Ypsilanti District Library – Ypsilanti, MI	82,974
Calvert Library – Prince Frederick, MD	89,628
Edison Township Free Public Library – Edison, NJ	99,967
Eastern Monroe Public Library – Stroudsburg, PA	89,474
Willard Public Library – Battle Creek, MI	89,779

often relative to recognized standards, that libraries, government agencies, and non-profits can use to assess strengths and identify areas needing improvement. Library benchmarks are typically numerical (quantitative) statistics such as circulation, visits, and revenues. Management expert Peter Drucker called benchmarking “critical” to good government and nonprofit management.

Overall, YDL has no highly irregular performance numbers that would prompt significant concern or indicate underperformance, relative to its elected peers.

## ***REVENUES***

YDL is at the median of local revenues, but its total revenue per capita ranks 4th among peers suggesting the need to advocate for additional funding from local government. YDL’s Michigan peer, Willard Public Library, received just over \$5 million in local funding with per capita funding of \$61.22, compared YDL’s to \$3.45 million in local funding with per capita funding of \$44.94.

<b>Library</b>	<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>Total Revenue Per Capita</b>	<b>State Revenue</b>	<b>Local Revenue</b>	<b>Local Revenue Per Capita</b>	<b>Other Revenue</b>
Mean	\$4,055,775	\$44.79	\$252,915	\$3,506,981	\$38.65	\$253,184
Median	\$4,066,498	\$45.37	\$43,450	\$3,453,791	\$41.62	\$233,250
Rank of YDL	4	4	5	3	3	3
Ypsilanti	\$3,728,450	\$44.94	\$41,409	\$3,453,791	\$41.62	\$233,250
Calvert	\$4,066,498	\$45.37	\$737,014	\$3,126,282	\$34.88	\$203,202
Eastern Monroe	\$2,149,939	\$24.03	\$400,202	\$1,273,391	\$14.23	\$476,346
Edison Township	\$4,837,738	\$48.39	\$43,450	\$4,678,325	\$46.80	\$115,963
Willard	\$5,496,252	\$61.22	\$42,500	\$5,003,116	\$55.73	\$237,158

## **EXPENDITURES**

<b>Library</b>	<b>Total Operating Expenditures</b>	<b>Total Operating Expenditures Per Capita</b>	<b>Total Collection Expenditures</b>	<b>Collection Expenditures Per Capita</b>	<b>Collection Expenditures as Percent of Total Expenditures</b>
Mean	\$3,812,682	\$42.21	\$447,705	\$42.21	11%
Median	\$4,013,517	\$41.75	\$321,640	\$41.75	9%
Rank of YDL	4	3	3	3	3
Ypsilanti	\$3,463,997	\$41.75	\$321,640	\$41.75	9%
Calvert	\$4,013,517	\$44.78	\$336,195	\$44.78	8%
Eastern Monroe	\$1,975,237	\$22.08	\$253,670	\$22.08	13%
Edison Township	\$4,064,536	\$40.66	\$278,673	\$40.66	7%
Willard	\$5,546,125	\$61.78	\$1,048,349	\$61.78	19%

## **SERVICES**

YDL has the most programs of the peer set and the 2nd highest program attendance; however, the Library averages 16 in attendance per program, the lowest of the peer group. This merits further review. YDL might be pleased with the attendance per program if its focus is on small-sized storytimes or small group activities. On the other hand, it could indicate a need to consolidate or reduce programs that may not be bringing in enough people through the library doors.

YDL commendably has more cardholders than the other libraries in the peer set. When comparing performance to other libraries, it is important to remember that cardholder numbers are affected by record purging policies. For example, not every library follows the recommended standards of removing cardholders annually who have not used their cards in 2 or more years.

Another point of differentiation is YDL’s number of reference questions—the highest among peers. Reference counts come with a caveat: they can be widely variable across libraries due to different methodologies of counting reference questions. Even within a library, there can be staff inconsistencies in reporting reference transactions.

“Cost per circulation” is a way to consider the cost-effectiveness of operations. It is calculated by dividing total expenditures by total circulation. YDL’s cost per circulation ranks 4th in the peer set, at \$4.48, below the mean and median of the group, indicating an effective rate.

“Cost per visit” is a similar measure, calculated by dividing total expenditures by the number of visits. Although YDL ranks 2nd highest, at \$7.69, the overall cost to provide a transaction to customer is not altogether out of line that of its peers. It may suggest, however, that YDL conducts many transactions with a relatively small number of “power patrons”—individuals who visit regularly and check out items at a disproportionately higher rate.

Library	Programs	Program Attendance	Cardholders	Reference Transactions	Cost Per Circulation	Cost Per Visit
Mean	1,240	29,812	47,445	86,593	4.83	7.48
Median	791	23,056	40,288	40,197	4.69	7.37
Rank of YDL	1	2	1	1	4	2
Ypsilanti	2,467	38,623	64,968	185,678	4.48	7.69
Calvert	2,130	62,439	62,579	154,014	3.58	7.32
Eastern Monroe	461	8,920	37,618	23,779	4.74	6.03
Edison Township	791	23,056	31,771	40,197	6.66	7.37
Willard	353	16,020	40,288	29,297	4.69	9.00

## **PERSONNEL**

YDL has 46 employees, the median of the peer set for total staff, and should be commended for having the most MLS librarians of its peers. With respect to staffing, consideration should be given to the fact that library staff numbers can vary based on the size and layout of facilities, cooperative work arrangements, and outsourcing—any or all of which may explain the wide variation from 31 to 54 staff across the peer group.



Yet YDL ranks 4th in total staff expenditures for salaries and benefits. Personnel expenditures can vary based on local cost of living, job descriptions, and the presence of a union. Many libraries are now spending 68-79% of their budgets on personnel, with YDL at 73% for 2014.

Library	Total Staff	Librarian Staff	MLS Librarians	Total Staff Expenditures	Total Staff Expenditures as % of Total Expenditures
Mean	43.6	21.5	12.3	\$2,785,619	73%
Median	46.4	19.0	11.5	\$3,221,181	73%
Rank of YDL	3	3	1	4	3
Ypsilanti	46.4	19.0	19.0	\$2,519,869	73%
Calvert	54.2	46.2	9.8	\$3,476,022	87%
Eastern Monroe	31.3	11.0	9.1	\$1,284,905	65%
Edison Township	38.6	11.5	11.5	\$3,221,181	79%
Willard	47.6	20.0	12.0	\$3,426,120	62%

## COLLECTIONS

YDL's rankings in collection sizes among peers range from 2nd in print collection to 5th in local databases. YDL's total circulation ranks third, the median in the peer set. This reflects the likelihood of a current and well-used collection at YDL. Typically, when more money is spent on new materials, circulation is higher. Gains in circulation figures are thus likely if YDL can divert more funds to new acquisitions.

Library	Print Materials	Ebooks	Local Databases	Total Circulation
Mean	226,666	30,352	18	820,755
Median	209,265	24,804	20	772,536
Rank of YDL	2	3	5	3
Ypsilanti	243,198	24,804	10	772,536
Calvert	209,265	81,472	20	1,122,412
Eastern Monroe	195,988	2,987	27	417,022
Edison Township	282,422	15,181	22	609,852
Willard	202,458	27,315	11	1,181,955

## ***YPSILANTI DISTRICT LIBRARY: LEADERSHIP INTERVIEW INSTRUCTIONS***

- Establish a firm target date for completion of interviews.
- Brief the interviewers on expectations.
- The Chair of the Board of Trustees sends a letter to leaders explaining the project and introducing the individual on the Strategic Planning project who will be in touch with them to set up a time for the interview.
- The interviewer schedules the meeting. The interview should be scheduled at a time and place convenient to the interviewee—it may be that a telephone conversation will work better for some, although in person is certainly preferable.
- An information packet about public library services may be either sent before the interview for them to review or as a leave behind.
- The discussion guide covers the range of topics to be covered during the interview; however, interviewers are encouraged to “go off script” if there is an interesting line of conversation about the Library developing.
- Take only the briefest notes during the interview so that the conversation flows naturally and without undue pauses.
- If individuals acknowledge to interviewers that they do not have a library card, issue one to them following the interview and inviting them for a tour their closest library facility.
- Immediately after the interview, fill out the discussion guide form and submit to the Director. (The discussion guide is provided as a word document for your convenience.) When all are complete, the Director will submit them to the consulting team.
- Each interviewer sends a personal thank you notes to all individuals who participate in the interviewing process from appropriate library personnel. The Chair might also send a more formal thank you with some follow-up information about progress toward the plan and signaling them that they will be invited to leadership breakfast when the plan is finalized.

## ***EXECUTIVE INTERVIEWS***

### ***DISCUSSION GUIDE***

Person Interviewed: -----

Position and Organization: -----

Date: -----

Interviewer: -----

1. Do you or your family use the Library?

If yes...what for? What has been your/their experience?

OR

If no, why not?

2. From your perspective as a leader in the community, how would you describe the Library's reputation? (Do you hear people talk about the Library? If yes, what do they say?)

3. What are the most important roles the public library plays in our community?

4. What changes are taking place in our community which may affect public library services in the future?

5. What do you think are the most pressing needs in the community that the public library might help address?

6. What do you think the Library's priorities should be in the future in terms of program and service delivery?

7. Libraries are challenged to keep pace with constantly evolving technology. How important is the access to technology that the Library now provides? How can the Library meet customer expectations regarding technology in the future?

8. Does the Library communicate effectively with the community? (Are you aware of the Library newsletter? If yes, do you read it?) How would you suggest the Library improve its external communications?

9. From your perspective, what is the outlook for the Library with respect to funding and public support?

10. Do you have any additional thoughts or advice that you would like to share that will assist us as we proceed with planning?

[Thank the interviewer, ask if they would like to be included on the Library’s newsletter list (if not already on it), and let them know that, when the plan is complete, they will be invited to a leadership breakfast to learn all about it.]

Person Interviewed: \_\_\_\_\_

Position and Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer contact number:

## **SUMMARY REPORT:**

### ***DIRECTION PROVIDED BY YPSILANTI DISTRICT LIBRARY EXECUTIVE INTERVIEWS:***

#### **COMMUNITY**

- Growing population wanting to age in place (City of Ypsilanti)
- Shifting demographics—minority population increasing
- Drugs, low incomes, unemployment challenges
- Growing need for studio and maker spaces
- Taxable assets growing (hotels, grocery store, driverless care facility, for example) (Townships)
- A community divided (Black Lives Matter is significant movement in Ypsilanti)
- Economic growth is slow, but steady (Ypsilanti Township)

#### **REPUTATION**

- Extremely positive
- Innovative
- A “community” staple”
- Bookmobile visible and popular
- Library does not have relationships with local businesses
- Operating in old style of self-contained, with little visibility

#### **THE LIBRARY AS GATHERING PLACE:**

- Synonymous with safety, welcoming, friendly, “a place of refuge,” especially for teens
- Important as a locus for community-building; a “neutral” venue; the great equalizer that can bring people together
- Whittaker provides “pride of place”
- Opportunity to have conversations regarding equity, race, policing, drug epidemic, and other issues confronting Ypsilanti; the Library supports “social interaction”
- Growing senior population needs opportunities to socialize, stay connected
- Library can provide “free entertainment” in a community that is economically struggling
- No centralized information source for the community—can the Library fill that gap? Information kiosk?

## **EDUCATION**

- A key community asset
- Focus should be on Pre-K, children, and teens in particular
- Promote summer reading, after-school and weekend programming, homework help
- Must support the schools; coordinate programs with curriculum
- Health literacy a priority (according to community health survey conducted by the hospital)
- Be aware of trends (e.g. 3rd grade reading bill)

## **FACILITY**

- Whittaker sets the standard
- More meeting room space needed
- Ensure accessibility
- Must better “penetrate” Superior and subdivisions
- Parking and exterior directional signage confusing (Superior only)
- Reconfigure and restripe parking lot (Superior only)
- Maintaining public transportation access is key

## **SERVICE**

- Self-check-out a plus

## **MARKETING**

- Logo is “awful”
- Expand publicity
- Must address issues that “libraries are obsolete” in today’s world
- Continue to engage the community; make sure planning is inclusive
- Significant factor: Lack of local newspaper a significant barrier to community building and communication
- Cross-promote events and resources with other organizations; leverage their reach
- Mixed response to Latitudes visibility
- Use virtual reality tours to introduce the Library to the community
- Aggressively promote Zinio and Overdrive, e-books
- Partner to get information out into community
- Utilize City Clerk’s listserve
- Leverage social media
- Newsletter “must be expensive”
- Market to local businesses, especially large employers

## ***PROGRAMS and SERVICES***

- Families—parenting education, family literacy, partnerships and collaboration reduce risk of duplication
- Reach out to organizations with programs already in place with services that can boost appeal, resources, etc.
- Church congregations
- Health insurance and human services enrollment support
- Advance directives and end of life decision support (Legal Aid partnership?)
- Distribute cards to employees of large area employers
- Reach out to tool lending library

## ***ORGANIZATIONAL HEALTH***

- Ensure new strategic plan is flexible and has contingencies
- Well-respected staff
- Community strongly believes that staff living in the community a great asset

## ***TECHNOLOGY***

- Stay current!
- Ensure access to “free Internet”, especially for low-income, critically important
- Seniors need help to understand how to navigate technology

## ***FUNDING***

- “Under-resourced compared to Ann Arbor”
- Municipal financing system “broken”
- Plan and strategize well in advance
- Ensure that the mission is clear
- Make the case well in advance
- Concern about financial capability of much of the population to pay more
- Some degree of confidence that the community will support increased funding

## ***ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT***

- Access to computers for resumes and job searches critically important
- Career fairs
- Small business start-ups and entrepreneurs could use help

## **TELEPHONE SURVEY OF COMMUNITY RESIDENTS**

### **Executive Summary**

**October 17, 2016**

### **BACKGROUND**

On behalf of the Ypsilanti District Library (YDL), The Ivy Group conducted a telephone survey of randomly selected residents of the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, and Superior Township in September, 2016. The goal of the study is to provide the Library with a precise and statistically-reliable understanding of the needs and preferences of both current and potential customers as they relate to public library use in the District. Study findings will enable the Library to develop, with confidence, future priorities for Library program and service delivery.

Some cautions:

### **OBJECTIVES**

Specific objectives of the telephone survey are to:

- Determine use patterns;
- Identify barriers that prevent some citizens from utilizing public library services;
- Measure levels of customer satisfaction with specific attributes of the Ypsilanti District Library;
- Identify programs and services that residents would like the Library to enhance;
- Determine how current customers get their information about Library offerings;
- Measure the level of awareness regarding particular service offerings; and
- Gauge the community's sentiment for the Library, to include its willingness to support a tax increase to fund the expansion of services.



## **METHODOLOGY**

The consulting team developed a custom 12-minute questionnaire with input provided by the Library on topic areas to be covered. Included were four questions that would be posed to a respondent based on the frequency of his or her Library use.

The Ivy Group then purchased a total of 9,582 randomly selected telephone numbers (4,005 cell; 5,577 residential landline) from a commercial list broker as follows:

	Cell numbers	Landline numbers
City of Ypsilanti	840 (all available)	2,157 (all available)
Superior Township Excluding the Ann Arbor school district	790 (all available)	1,805 (all available)
Ypsilanti Township	2,375	1,615

Calls were conducted during the day, at night, and over the weekend by professional interviewers experienced in conducting public library studies. Ypsilanti District Library was identified as the sponsor of the research project both by Caller ID and by the researchers.

To qualify for participation in the study, respondents had to be at least 18 years of age and reside in the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, or Superior Township.

Over a period of 12 days, a total of 382 telephone interviews were completed (100 on cell phones and 282 on residential landlines). 382 interviews yields a margin of error of +/- 5% at the 95% confidence level across the entire service area population, but not for individual market segments.

## **FINAL CALL DISPOSITIONS**

***Calls conducted August 29 —September 9, 2016***

No answer	3,483
Phone busy	1,102
Disconnected phone	1,374
Business/Government phone	155
Respondent not available	242
Initial refusal	522
Computer tone	49
Language problems	46
Schedule callback	44
Call substitute phone number	0
Answering machine	4,030
Unable to complete call	55
Number changed	22
Blocked call	108
Duplicate number	1
Add to study do not call list	25
Break off in mid-interview	11
DNQ-CELL REFUSAL	7
DNQ-NON RESIDENT	100
DNQ-AGE	15
DNQ-Q5	1
OVER QUOTA	4
Completed Interviews	382

## **DEFINITIONS**

In the context of the questions being asked, someone who has used the Library only once or twice in a year is typically no more knowledgeable about the depth or breadth of library resources or customer service than is an individual who has not used the Library at all. Therefore:

- A “library user” is defined as someone who has used the services of the Ypsilanti District Library—either in person, online, or by phone—three times or more in the past 12 months.
- A “non-user” is defined as an individual who has used YDL—either in person, online, or by phone—two or fewer times in the past 12 months.

## **RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS**

A total of 382 residents of YDL's service area participated in the telephone survey.

- 37% of respondents are male and 63% are female.
- 72% of respondents have a card for the Ypsilanti District Library.
- 34% of respondents reside in the City of Ypsilanti; 38% reside in Ypsilanti Township; 28% reside in Superior Township.
- 87% of respondents report that they have Internet access at home: 80% of City residents; 90% of Ypsilanti Township residents; and 93% of Superior Township residents.
- 46% of respondents have used public library services two or fewer times in the past twelve months. For purposes of this research, these respondents are classified as “non-users” of library services.
- The primary reasons that these respondents give for not using the Library are that they do not have the time to use the Library (24%); they have other places to get books and other materials (19%); they use the Internet to get information (18%); or they don't read a lot (12%)—findings consistent with those of other libraries across the nation.
- 54% of respondents have used the services of the Ypsilanti District Library three times or more in the past twelve months. For purposes of this research, these respondents are classified as “users” of library services.
- Among users, 40% indicate that they have used YDL more than 12 times in the past year. 22% of users are considered “power patrons”, having used YDL more than 25 times in the past year—including one without a library card!
- Regardless of their domicile, YDL users are more likely to name the Ypsilanti Township location (Whittaker Road) as the branch they use most frequently.
- The Library's website and the Latitudes Newsletter are users' top two sources for information about YDL programs and services.
- Among four resources surveyed, respondents report the highest level of awareness regarding the Library's downloadable eBooks and eAudiobooks collection. Fewer than one-fifth of respondents are aware that YDL offers online homework help, with little difference between library users and non-users.
- Asked to rate their level of satisfaction with six library service attributes, users report that they are most satisfied with staff courtesy/customer service and YDL's hours of operation.
- Satisfaction with the Library's Wi-Fi and meeting room availability rank the lowest of the six items surveyed.
- A significant percentage of users indicate they do not know enough about a number of Library services to be able to rate their level of satisfaction.
- Survey respondents rank children's materials and programs as the most important resource for the Library to provide. Programs for teens ranks second.

- Overall, survey respondents deem YDL’s bookmobile route as the resource most important for the Library to expand or enhance.
- 34% of respondents overall believe it is extremely important for YDL to expand service in Superior Township, as opposed to 55% of the respondents who live in Superior Township.
- 88% of users report that they are extremely satisfied with the Library overall.
- 91% of all respondents (94% of YDL users) completely agree that, “The Library is a trusted and important community asset.”
- However, just 50% of all respondents (52% of YDL users) completely agree that, “I would support a tax increase to provide for improved or expanded library services.”

## **QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS**

### ***Gender of survey respondents (noted, but not asked)***

63% of telephone survey respondents are female and 37% are male. This finding is similar to that from other public library surveys in which females were more likely to be the library user in the household and therefore more willing to take part in a survey about libraries.

### **QUESTION 1a**

#### ***Municipality of residence***

To qualify to participate in the survey, respondents had to reside in one of the three municipalities served by the Library. The survey’s total respondent base comprises the following segments:

City of Ypsilanti	34%
Ypsilanti Township	38%
Superior Township	28%

### **QUESTION 2**

#### ***Percentage of respondents who have an Ypsilanti District Library card***

72% of survey respondents are registered cardholders.

Women (78%) are more likely than men (62%) to have a library card, as are library users (94%) compared to non-users (47%). Respondents ages 26-40 are more likely to have a YDL card than are individuals in other age brackets.

Residents of Superior Township appear less likely to hold cards (68%) than do residents of Ypsilanti Township (73%) or the City (75%).

### **QUESTION 3**

#### ***Use of public library services in the past 12 months***

54% of all survey respondents are deemed “library users”, having used YDL three times or more in the past 12 months in person, online, and/or by phone.

33% of users reside in the City; 42% reside in Ypsilanti Township; and 25% reside in Superior Township.

Among users, library patronage in the past 12 months is as follows:

### **QUESTION 2**

#### ***Percentage of respondents who have an Ypsilanti District Library card***

72% of survey respondents are registered cardholders.

Women (78%) are more likely than men (62%) to have a library card, as are library users (94%) compared to non-users (47%). Respondents ages 26-40 are more likely to have a YDL card than are individuals in other age brackets.

Residents of Superior Township appear less likely to hold cards (68%) than do residents of Ypsilanti Township (73%) or the City (75%).

Frequency	% of Library Users
3 -6 times	39%
7 - 12 times	20%
13 - 25 times	18%
26+ times	22%

In contrast, 46% of respondents have used the services of the Ypsilanti District Library two or fewer times in the past 12 months and are thus classified as “non-users” for purposes of this study.

	City of Ypsilanti	Ypsilanti Township	Superior Township
Not at all	33%	26%	42%
1 - 2 times	14%	15%	10%

In contrast, 46% of respondents have used the services of the Ypsilanti District Library two or fewer times in the past 12 months and are thus classified as “non-users” for purposes of this study.

#### **QUESTION 4**

#### **Primary reason for not using YDL, or not using YDL more frequently**

Note: Question 4 was posed only to library non-users (individuals who have used library services two or fewer times in the past 12 months.)

I don't have time.	24%
I have other places to get books, DVDs, etc.	19%
I use the Internet to get information.	18%
I don't read a lot.	12%
*Other	8%
The Library is too far away.	5%
I don't have a library card.	4%
I don't have a way to get to the Library.	1%
I use the services of other libraries.	3%
Don't know.	3%
I am unfamiliar with what the Library offers.	2%
**The Library doesn't have what I need.	1%
Library technology is out of date/inadequate.	1%
I owe a fine or fees.	1%
The Library's hours are not convenient for me.	-----
The staff is unfriendly/unpleasant.	-----
The Library is crowded and noisy.	-----
I have safety/security concerns	-----

\* Of the 14 individuals who provided a response coded as Other:

- Six cite issues with health, mobility, or age;
- Three have relatives or neighbors who visit the Library for them;
- One says that parking is a problem;
- One has just moved to the area;
- One has been out of the country;
- One does not know where the Library is; and
- One is not in the area of the Library very often.

\*\* When asked to elaborate, the respondent cited “Ebooks and print books that I wanted were not available – thrillers and mystery books.”

Analyzing the data by municipality of residence reveals that the top four reasons for non-use overall are consistent across localities, with the only differences pertaining to rank order.

	All Non-users	<i>Residence</i>		
		City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
Don't have time	24%	26%	30%	15%
Have other places to get books, DVDs, etc.	19%	28%	15%	13%
Use the Internet to get information	18%	8%	25%	22%
Don't read a lot	12%	15%	8%	13%

## QUESTION 5

### Branch used most frequently

Note: Question 5 was posed only to library users (individuals who have used library services three times or more in the past 12 months.)

Ypsilanti Township                      64%  
Whittaker Road

City of Ypsilanti/Downtown    29%  
West Michigan Avenue

Superior Township                      6%  
MacArthur Boulevard

Analyzing the data by municipality of residence reveals where users from each locality most often access YDL services. As reflected in the chart below, residents of all municipalities report patronizing the Ypsilanti Township branch more often than the Library's other outlets.

Residence	Branch Used Most Often	
City of Ypsilanti <i>33% of all users</i>	City	46%
	Ypsilanti Twp	52%
	Superior Twp	-
	Bookmobile	1%
	Online	-
Ypsilanti Twp <i>42% of all users</i>	City	14%
	Ypsilanti Twp	83%
	Superior Twp	2%
	Bookmobile	-
	Online	1%
Superior Twp <i>25% of all users</i>	City	31%
	Ypsilanti Twp	47%
	Superior Twp	22%
	Bookmobile	-
	Online	-



### QUESTION 6

#### Source of information about YDL programs and services

Note: Question 6 was posed only to library users (individuals who have used library services three times or more in the past 12 months.)

	All Users	Branch Used Most Often		
		City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
Latitudes Newsletter	59%	58%	60%	46%
Website	59%	58%	58%	62%
In-branch Flyers	47%	45%	47%	54%
E-mail	34%	35%	32%	54%
Social Media	19%	15%	21%	23%

It is interesting to note that the Latitudes Newsletter is the only source of Library information for which usage increases with respondent age. Use of the Library’s website, in comparison, tends to decrease with respondent age.

## QUESTION 7

### Resources and services with which users are “Extremely Satisfied”

Note: Question 7 was posed only to library users (individuals who have used library services three times or more in the past 12 months.)

	All Users	Branch Used Most Often		
		City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
Staff Courtesy and Customer Service	92%	93%	93%	85%
Overall Satisfaction with YDL	88%	90%	89%	77%
Hours of Operation	73%	80%	74%	46%
Wait Time for Reserved Items	49%	53%	44%	77%
Number of Computers	39%	37%	44%	8%
Library Wi-Fi	31%	25%	34%	39%
Meeting Room Availability	30%	25%	32%	31%

A significant percentage of users indicate they are not sufficiently familiar with the following in order to rate their level of satisfaction:

Meeting room availability	55%
Library Wi-Fi	54%
Number of computers	34%
Wait time for reserved items	20%

**QUESTION 8**

*Resources and services rated “Extremely Important” for the Library to provide*

	All Respondents	Users Only
Children’s Materials and Programs	90%	93%
Programs for Teens	75%	76%
Programs for Seniors	68%	76%
Computer Training	64%	65%
Help applying for unemployment, social security, health insurance, etc.	56%	59%

**QUESTION 9**

*Resources and services rated “Extremely Important” for the Library to expand/enhance*

Respondents	Residence			
	All	City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
Bookmobile Route	41%	42%	38%	43%
Teen Space at Whittaker Road	35%	39%	34%	33%
Service in Superior Township	34%	30%	22%	55%
Users Only	Branch Used Most Often			
	All	City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
Bookmobile Route	41%	48%	36%	46%
Teen Space at Whittaker Road	34%	37%	34%	15%
Service in Superior Township	33%	30%	28%	92%

**QUESTION 10**

**Awareness regarding YDL resources**

	All Resps	Users Only	Branch Used Most Often		
			City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
Downloadable eBooks/eAudiobooks	62%	73%	75%	73%	69%
Streaming Video and Music	41%	45%	47%	46%	31%
Digital Magazines	37%	41%	38%	41%	54%
Online Homework Help	17%	19%	22%	18%	31%

**QUESTION 11**

**Percentage of respondents indicating complete agreement with the following statements:**

“The Library is a trusted and important community asset.”

All Respondents	Residence		
	City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
50%	50%	47%	55%
Users Only	Branch Used Most Often		
	City	Ypsilanti Twp	Superior Twp
52%	52%	50%	62%

“I would support a tax increase to provide for improved or expanded library services.”

## **QUESTION 12**

### ***Percentage of respondents with Internet access at home***

- Yes 87%  
(80% of City residents; 90% of Ypsilanti Township residents; 93% of Superior Township residents)
- No 13%

## **QUESTION 13**

### ***Age distribution of survey participants***

- |           |     |
|-----------|-----|
| 18 to 25  | 2%  |
| 26 – 40   | 11% |
| 41 – 60   | 32% |
| 61 and up | 56% |

## **QUESTION 14**

### ***What other comments, if any, would you like to share about the Ypsilanti District Library at this time?***

167 individuals (44% of all respondents) took advantage of the opportunity to share anecdotal feedback about the Library. These comments, recorded verbatim by the interviewer follow below.

From YDL users who patronize the City of Ypsilanti branch most often (34)

- BUY MORE COPIES OF BOOKS-ONE FOR CIRCULATION AND ONE FOR REFERENCE
- I APPRECIATE THE PROGRAMMING THEY HAVE.
- I THINK THAT THEY NEED TO IMPROVE THEIR CUSTOMER SERVICE.
- IT'S WONDERFUL-THEY HAVE A LOT OF CLASSES.
- THEY ARE ALWAYS VERY HELPFUL-ONE TIME I WAS LOOKING FOR A POEM AND THEY FOUND IT AND MADE A COPY OF IT FOR ME.
- I THINK THAT YOU HAVE A VERY FINE LIBRARY SYSTEM-THE FACILITIES I HAVE BEEN TO ARE WHITTAKER ROAD AND MICHIGAN AVENUE AND THEY ARE SUPERIOR BUILDINGS.
- I HAVE BEEN VERY PLEASED WITH THE LIBRARIANS-WHEN I CAN'T FIND SOMETHING THEY GET RIGHT ON THE COMPUTER AND FIND IT FOR ME.
- NEED MORE SERVICES FOR THE TEENAGERS.

- I THINK IT'S A WONDERFUL LIBRARY-IT PROVIDES A LOT OF DIFFERENT OPTIONS TO ACCESS SERVICES-I CAN GO ONLINE TO RESERVE A BOOK TO PICK UP.
- IT ENHANCES OUR LIVES.
- I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE MICHIGAN AVENUE LOCATION OPEN ON SUNDAYS.
- I AM HAPPY THAT THEY ARE THERE.
- KEEP DOING WHAT YOU ARE DOING.
- I'M SATISFIED-THE LIBRARY IS GOOD FOR ANYONE WHO WANTS TO GO.
- IT IS A GOOD LIBRARY AND GOOD SERVICE IS PROVIDED.
- I FIND IT TO BE VERY SATISFACTORY.
- WHENEVER I GO THERE OR HAVE TO ORDER A BOOK EVERYONE HAS ALWAYS BEEN KIND AND HELPFUL.
- KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK-HELPFULNESS OF STAFF DIRECTING PEOPLE TO BOOKS- KEEPING THE ATMOSPHERE IN CHECK AND NOT TOO NOISY.
- EXPAND THE HOURS ON WEEKENDS.
- LOVE THE LIBRARY-IT'S A GREAT ASSET TO THE COMMUNITY.
- VERY HAPPY THAT IT IS THERE-MY HUSBAND AND I BOTH USE IT.
- THE DOWNTOWN LIBRARY SHOULD BE MODERNIZED-NEEDS MORE COMPUTERS-THE LIBRARY NEEDS MORE ROOM-THE CHILDREN'S AREA IN THE BASEMENT IS TOO SMALL.
- I WISH THEY WOULD OFFER TRAINING FOR SMARTPHONES.
- KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK WITH INTERNATIONAL VIDEOS AND MATERIAL FOR KIDS.
- STAFF IS GREAT-HELPFUL FRIENDLY AND KNOWLEDGEABLE-THE MICHIGAN AVENUE LOCATION NEEDS MAINTENANCE-WEAR AND TEAR ON FLOORS WALLS DOORS AND CARPET.
- THEY DO A MARVELOUS JOB-STAFF IS PATIENT, HELPFUL, AND COURTEOUS-WE VOTED FOR THE RENEWAL.
- THE MAIN BRANCH OF THE LIBRARY SHOULD NOT BE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN-SHOULD BE IN DOWNTOWN AREA.
- I HAVE USED IT FOR YEARS AND YEARS AND HAVE ALWAYS BEEN SATISFIED-MY KIDS GOT MATERIALS TO HELP WITH HOMEWORK.
- I APPLAUD THE FACT THAT THEY HAVE A SEED SHARING PROGRAM-YOU CAN BRING IN A PACK OF SEEDS TO SHARE AND YOU CAN TAKE A PACK FOR YOUR GARDEN-I ALSO LIKE THAT AT WHITTAKER ROAD THEY HAVE AN ONGOING JIGSAW PUZZLE THAT YOU CAN WORK ON.
- I LOVE THE LIBRARY-BEEN GOING THERE SINCE I WAS 7 YEARS OLD.
- I SUPPORTED SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP JOINING THE DISTRICT-WOULD LIKE MORE AUDIOBOOKS-SCIENCE, BIOGRAPHY, SCIENCE FICTION. MORE TEXT BOOKS ONLINE-MATH.
- GREAT FACILITY-GET A LOT OUT OF HAVING ACCESS TO LIBRARY.

- I'M VERY GLAD THAT THERE IS BUS SERVICE TO THE LIBRARY OR I WOULD BE LIMITED IN GOING.
- MORE BOOKS NEEDED IN THE DOWNTOWN LIBRARY.

From YDL users who patronize the Ypsilanti Township branch most often (64)

- I LOVE THE BOOKS ON TAPE.
- JUST KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK-I AM SATISFIED WITH THE LIBRARY SYSTEM.
- I REALLY APPRECIATE THE LIBRARY.
- I ENJOY THE LIBRARY AND THE AUDIO BOOKS.
- I WAS UPSTAIRS AND A MAN WAS VIEWING PORNOGRAPHY ON A COMPUTER-I TOLD A LIBRARY EMPLOYEE AND SHE SAID THAT IT IS PERMITTED IF DONE ON THE UPPER LEVEL WHERE CHILDREN CAN NOT SEE IT.
- REALLY SATISFIED-ALWAYS FIND WHAT I AM LOOKING FOR WHEN I GO THERE.
- IT'S A GREAT PLACE-I LOVE THE LIBRARY.
- • THE FAMILY RESTROOM SMELLS OF PEE EVERY TIME I USE IT FOR MY GRANDDAUGHTER-A LITTLE AIR FRESHER WOULD PROBABLY DO THE JOB
- I LIKE IT VERY MUCH-I LIKE THE DIFFERENT LOCATIONS ESPECIALLY THE ONE HERE AT THE FIRE STATION LOCATION-IT'S NICE TO HAVE SO MANY TO CHOOSE TO GO TO.
- I JUST THINK THAT IT'S A WONDERFUL THING TO HAVE IN THE COMMUNITY.
- THERE SHOULD BE AN OUTSIDE BOOK RETURN AT THE MICHIGAN AVENUE LOCATION-THEY AREN'T EVEN OPEN ON SUNDAY.
- I WOULD LIKE THEM TO ACCEPT FUNDING FROM ALTERNATIVE SOURCES- LIKE KROGER'S GROCERY POINTS-WHEN PEOPLE PURCHASE FOOD POINTS ARE ASSIGNED TO ORGANIZATIONS.
- WOULD LIKE THEM TO HAVE LIVE PEOPLE TO HELP WITH CHILDREN'S AND TEEN'S HOMEWORK.
- I FEEL THAT THE DOWNTOWN YPSILANTI LIBRARY IS TOO LOUD-DOWN STAIRS THEY HAVE TEENAGERS PLAYING VIDEO GAMES AND THAT'S NOT WHAT LIBRARIES ARE FOR-THEY SHOULD BE A QUIET PLACE.
- I WISH THAT I HAD A HALF A MILLION DOLLARS THAT I COULD GIVE TO THE LIBRARY TO HELP EXPAND WHAT THEY OFFER.
- DOING A GREAT JOB-PLEASANT EXPERIENCE-CHILDREN ARE HAPPY WHEN WE ARE THERE.
- WOULD LIKE TO HAVE OVERDRIVE-ACCESS TO BOOKS ONLINE FOR TABLET OR COMPUTER.
- THANKS FOR PROVIDING THE SERVICES YOU OFFER.
- THE LIBRARY ON WHITTAKER ROAD IS ONE THE FINEST I HAVE EVER BEEN IN-TITLE AVAILABILITY-FRIENDLINESS OF PEOPLE-EASE OF OPERATION-EASY TO FIND BOOKS AND MATERIALS YOU ARE LOOKING FOR.

- I LOVE THE SELECTION OF LARGE PRINT BOOKS.
- I AM VERY HAPPY WITH IT-I DON'T HAVE TO WAIT TO USE COMPUTERS-I WOULD LIKE THE LIBRARY TO OPEN ON SUNDAY MORNINGS AT 10AM.
- I FIND IT COMFORTING AND AN INTERESTING PLACE.
- WOULD LIKE TO SEE SOME MORE CD'S-MORE MOVIE SOUNDTRACKS-ENYA-MAN OF STEEL-RACHEL YORK.
- REALLY GOOD SERVICE-I HAVE ORDERED BOOKS AND I HAVE GOTTEN THEM.
- GET MORE BOOKS-ROMANCE-MYSTERY-OLD CLASSICS LIKE BLACK BEAUTY-WESTERNS AND CHILDREN'S STORIES.
- I AM IMPRESSED WITH THE PROFESSIONALISM OF THE STAFF FROM TOP TO BOTTOM AND AMOUNT OF MATERIALS-MY ONLY COMPLAINT IS THAT NEW MATERIALS CAN ONLY BE CHECKED OUT FOR TWO WEEKS.
- KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK-GREAT SERVICES PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY.
- I ENJOY IT-IT'S CLEAN AND IT'S UP TO DATE.
- THEY ARE DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB.
- EXTREMELY VALUED ASSET BECAUSE I'M A PRACTICING ATTORNEY.
- I LIKE THE LATITUDE NEWSLETTERS.
- IT'S A GOOD LIBRARY-WISH I COULD USE IT MORE.
- VERY GOOD ESTABLISHMENT-ENJOYABLE PLACE TO GO-I WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT CONTINUE TO EXIST.
- PEOPLE THERE ARE FRIENDLY AND EXTREMELY HELPFUL.
- I'VE BEEN GOING SINCE I WAS A KID-THE STAFF IS COURTEOUS.
- VERY GOOD PLACE TO GO.
- THEY DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH BOOKS-PEOPLE WILL BE ON HOLD FOR MONTHS BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF BOOKS.
- THEY COULD MAKE BETTER USE OF THE UPSTAIRS ROOMS-FOR MEETING ROOMS OR FOR OUTSIDE USE.
- DON'T CLOSE THE LIBRARY-I THINK IT IS IMPORTANT-THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IS BAD AND IF THEY CLOSE THE LIBRARY WHERE WILL THE CHILDREN LEARN- THE STUDENTS CAN DO THEIR HOMEWORK AT THE LIBRARY.
- THE MEETING ROOMS SHOULD BE LARGER AND MORE AFFORDABLE-THE HOURS SHOULD BE OPEN LONGER FOR THE COLLEGE STUDENTS IN THE WINTER.
- LIBRARY IS TOO FAR AWAY WITH HEAVY TRAFFIC AT THE WHITTAKER LOCATION.
- I ENJOY THE SERVICES THAT THE LIBRARY OFFERS.
- IT SERVES US WELL-WE USE IT SPARINGLY.
- EXTEND THE HOURS OF OPERATION.
- THE WHITTAKER LIBRARY HAS ALWAYS BEEN ACCOMMODATING WITH ALL OF OUR FAMILY'S NEEDS.
- WE LOVE THE LIBRARY-WE ESPECIALLY LOVE THE AUDIO BOOKS.
- IT'S AN EXCELLENT PLACE AND I ENJOY IT-THE AVAILABILITY OF ALL SORTS OF INFORMATION.



- NEED TO PUBLICIZE THE PROGRAMS THEY OFFER BETTER.
- WE LIKE TO USE THE CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS FOR OUR KIDS.
- WHITTAKER ROAD IS VERY NICE.
- I APPRECIATE MULTIPLE BRANCHES WHERE I CAN PICK UP AT ONE BRANCH AND DROP OFF AT ANOTHER.
- I LOVE THE USED BOOK STORE AT WHITTAKER ROAD.
- THANKS FOR DOING WHAT YOU DO- IT'S A VERY HELPFUL PLACE.
- MORE BOOKS THROUGH E-BOOKS-MOST OF THE TIME THEY DO NOT HAVE A LOT OF THE POPULAR BOOKS.
- I AM SATISFIED WITH THE PROGRAMS AND EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES-ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS-READING AND MATH.
- KEEP GETTING BETTER-ALL THE PROGRAMS MENTIONED-INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY OF BOOKS.
- THE WHITTAKER LIBRARY IS NICE.
- IT IS A FABULOUS RESOURCE FOR MY AREA AND I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THE CHILDREN IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA-THEY SHOULD HAVE MORE ACTIVITIES FOR THOSE CHILDREN AT THE LIBRARY.
- I REALLY APPRECIATE THE PROGRAMS-BOOK GROUPS, BOOK SALES, HANDS ON ACTIVITIES.
- DOWNTOWN BRANCH NEEDS MORE TEEN SPACE-WOULD LIKE MORE INFO ABOUT FUNDING-WOULD LIKE MORE INFO ABOUT PROPOSED NEW BRANCH IN SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP-INFO ABOUT THE PLANS.
- SOME COPIES OF BOOKS ARE IN ROUGH CONDITION.
- I AM IMPRESSED WITH THE NEW LIBRARY.
- I HATE THE LOCATION OF THE WHITTAKER BRANCH-IT'S CONGESTED WITH TRAFFIC-HATE THE BUILDING-LOOKS LIKE THEY CUT SOME CORNERS-LOOKS TOO MUCH LIKE A CHEAP GOVERNMENT BUILDING.
- LIBRARIES AND BOOKS FOR CHILDREN ARE VITAL TO EVERYONE.

From YDL users who patronize the Superior Township branch most often (5)

- THE BOOKMOBILE ROUTE NEEDS TO BE EXPANDED.
- PROVIDES A LOT OF SERVICES-WHITTAKER HAS A LOT MORE EVERYTHING-BEAUTIFUL BUILDING-SUPERIOR IS USED A LOT BY CHILDREN-IT IS SMALLER AND COULD BE EXPANDED.
- I LOVE THE LIBRARY.
- UPGRADE THE COMPUTERS-THEY SEEM A LITTLE OLD.
- GOOD PLACE TO READ AND TAKE CHILDREN.

From the YDL user who uses the Bookmobile most often (1)

- BRAVO-KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK.

From the YDL user who accesses the Library online most often (1)

- NEED MORE QUALITY BOOKS AND LESS JUNK-WELL WRITTEN AND QUALITY BOOKS- LESS TRASH-THERE IS A LONG WAIT FOR GOOD BOOKS.

From non-users (62)

- THEY SHOULD ADVERTISE THEIR SERVICES MORE.
- I REALLY ENJOY THE LIBRARY.
- I WOULD NOT VOTE TO BUILD ON WHITTAKER-BETTER PEDESTRIAN WAY TO GET THERE.
- I LIKE IT THAT I HAVE ACCESS TO THE DOWNTOWN LIBRARY-IT IS THE CLOSEST ONE TO ME.
- MY HUSBAND AND I WERE THERE LAST WEEK TO DROP OFF A BOOK AND MY HUSBAND WALKS WITH A CANE AND THEY WERE CLOSED-I WISH THAT THEY WOULD HAVE A BOOK DROP OFF BOX.
- I KNOW IT'S BEEN THERE SINCE I WAS SMALL AND IT'S RIGHT IN TOWN SO IT'S CONVENIENT-IT PROVIDES BOOKS FOR ALL AGES TO READ.
- NEED MORE PARKING-4 OR 5 MORE SPACES IF THEY CAN OBTAIN THE LAND.
- I WOULD LIKE TO SEE A LARGER LIBRARY IN PHYSICAL SIZE.
- I'D LIKE TO GET THE BOOKMOBILE BACK ASAP.
- A COUPLE OF YEARS AGO I TOOK MY GRANDDAUGHTERS TO A TEA PARTY AT THE LIBRARY AND THEY HAD TO TAKE THEIR AMERICAN GIRLS-IT WAS VERY NICE.
- THE WHITTAKER BRANCH IS HARD TO GET TO-THE DOWNTOWN BRANCH IS TOO SMALL-PROGRAMS OFFERED WOULD NOT BE UTILIZED AT DOWNTOWN BRANCH.
- I AM GLAD THAT WE HAVE ACCESS TO IT IN SUPERIOR.
- DOWNTOWN LIBRARIANS WERE NOT VERY FRIENDLY-IT WAS LIKE I WAS BOTHERING THEM.
- IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR THE LIBRARY TO MAKE PEOPLE AWARE OF SERVICES THEY OFFER-LIKE THE STREAMING AND EBOOKS.
- VERY CONVENIENT LOCATION AND PARKING IS SUFFICIENT.
- NEED TO PROVIDE BETTER SERVICE IN SUPERIOR TOWNSHIP AND HAVE MORE AFRICAN AMERICAN STAFF.
- REALLY LOVE THE LIBRARY-HAS A HUGE OFFERING FOR THE COMMUNITY.

- I LIKED IT BUT I USE THE INTERNET MOSTLY.
- THE PEOPLE THERE ARE QUITE HELPFUL AND PLEASANT.
- IT'S A GREAT LIBRARY SYSTEM.
- I THINK THAT IT'S A GREAT LIBRARY.
- IT'S A GREAT ASSET TO THE COMMUNITY AND THE BUILDING IS NEWER AND IT IS LOVELY.
- JUST CONTINUE TO OFFER YOUR GREAT SERVICES AND I HOPE TO USE THEM SOON.
- OFFER MORE OF THE GREAT PROGRAMS-CONCERTS FOR KIDS.
- MORE BOOKMOBILE ROUTES-IN THE HARRIS ROAD AREA.
- IT'S BEAUTIFUL-I LOVE IT.
- I THINK IT IS REALLY GOOD FOR THE KIDS-THEY CAN RENT MOVIES AND THE STORYTIME IS GREAT.
- I THINK THEY NEED TO CONVEY A LITTLE MORE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT THE LIBRARY DOES.
- WONDERFUL FACILITY AND DON'T NEED MORE TAXES.
- IF THEY ARE CONSIDERING A TAX INCREASE THEY NEED TO PROVIDE VOTERS WITH WHAT THE TAX INCREASE WILL PROVIDE-I WOULD WANT TO KNOW HOW THEY ARE SPENDING THEIR MONEY NOW BEFORE THEY GET MORE TAX MONEY.
- I THINK THAT IT'S VERY VERY IMPORTANT FOR A COMMUNITY TO HAVE A LIBRARY.
- I WOULD LIKE TO BE ABLE TO TAKE A COMPUTER CLASS THIS FALL.
- I LOVE MY LIBRARY AND EVERYONE WHO WORKS THERE IS AMAZING.
- RESOURCES THEY PROVIDE ARE VERY IMPORTANT.
- MY GRANDPARENTS USE IT AND IT'S VERY IMPORTANT.
- SERVES A PORTION OF THE POPULATION BE THAT CAN'T AFFORD BOOKS AT HOME.
- WISH I WAS MORE ACQUAINTED WITH LIBRARY.
- CONTINUE TO EXIST AND PROVIDE SERVICES-SERVICES TO COMMUNITY.
- VERY IMPORTANT PLACE-SERVES COMMUNITY-THE PEOPLE DEPEND ON IT FOR ACTIVITIES AND INFORMATION.
- WHEN I HAD CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME IT WAS A VERY IMPORTANT RESOURCE-I AM NOW 80 YEARS OLD AND THAT IS WHY I DON'T USE THE LIBRARY AS MUCH AS I USED TO.
- I HAVE BEEN TO WHITTAKER ROAD-IT'S A NICE FACILITY.
- IT'S A GREAT PLACE TO READ AS A FAMILY.
- THE LIBRARY IS A VITAL PART OF OUR COMMUNITY AND WE NEED TO SUPPORT IT MORE-ONCE I SETTLE INTO MY NEW JOB I'LL BE USING THEIR RESOURCES AS I HAVE IN THE PAST.

- IT IS GREAT THAT THEY HAVE MEETING ROOMS.
- THEY DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH BOOKS.
- IT'S NICE TO HAVE IN OUR AREA-IF YOU WANT TO FIND OUT SOMETHING IT'S RIGHT IN THE AREA.
- I AM VERY GLAD THAT YOU KEEP UP WITH SPECIAL DATES ON THE CALENDAR-LIKE THE FESTIVALS AND WHEN PARADES ARE TAKING PLACE-I ALSO LIKE TO LOOK AT THE MAGAZINES THAT YOU HAVE AT THE LIBRARY.
- IT'S WONDERFUL-I LOVE THE LIBRARY.
- I LIKE THE WIDE RANGE OF PROGRAMS OFFERED.
- THE LIBRARY IS A GREAT REFERENCE SOURCE AND WE ARE FORTUNATE TO HAVE IT.
- I AM 91 AND AN AVID READER AND I THINK THE LIBRARY IS MARVELOUS.
- NEED A PROGRAM TO GET PEOPLE MORE INVOLVED.
- SHOULD USE A LARGER ROOM WHEN HAVING BOOK SALES-IT'S VERY CROWDED.
- IF THIS IS RELEVANT TODAY BUT I DON'T KNOW WHETHER THE BOOKMOBILE IS COVERING ENOUGH GROUND TO SERVE ITS PURPOSE AND HOW DOES THE LIBRARY GET THE WORD OUT THAT THIS SERVICE IS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMUNITY.
- DO ALL YOU CAN TO GET THE BOOKS OUT TO THE CHILDREN BECAUSE THEY NEED IT TODAY.
- I THINK THEY ARE DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB BASED ON WHAT I'VE HEARD.
- THEY DO A GREAT SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.
- YOU SHOULD HAVE MORE TEXT BOOKS-SCIENCE AND MATH.
- THEY DO A GOOD JOB.
- I THINK THEY SHOULD EXPAND THEIR RELIGIOUS BOOKS SECTION.
- I KNOW MY WIFE ENJOYS GOING.

## **WORK GROUP INSTRUCTIONS**

After reviewing the research, the YDL Strategic Planning Committee formulated five questions that the Library must answer to advance its mission, raise its profile in the community, add value to the lives of area residents, and engage the Library more effectively in the life of the community.

The Committee also prioritized strategic responses to the questions. Work Groups are now charged with amplifying these responses into a series of tactical action steps that will direct the Library's energies and resources for the next three to five years. Each tactical action step must also incorporate a mechanism for measuring progress and identify the resources required for successful implementation.

## **THE FIVE QUESTIONS AND PRIORITY RESPONSES:**

- How can we improve our fiscal health?
  - » Explore millage feasibility/voter education
  - » Expand philanthropy
  - » Explore workflow opportunities and efficiencies
  
- How can we maximize the effectiveness of our programs (not marketing)?
  - » Develop a program proposal and evaluation process based on community need
  - » Become a valued support to local businesses
  
- How can we make the best use of our facilities/space?
  - » Conduct a space utilization study for Whittaker Road
  - » Determine how better to serve Superior Township
  - » Maximize use and visibility of the Bookmobile
  - » Review hours of operation
  
- How can we better inform residents about library services?
  - » Examine newsletter usage, format, content and frequency
  - » Launch effective new branding, messaging and website
  - » Improve internal communications
  
- How can we improve staff diversity?
  - » Foster a workforce that reflects our community
  - » Facilitate community dialog that builds relationships with all neighborhoods and people of all ethnicities and races.

**HOW TO PROCEED:**

Each Work Group will review the research that has been conducted and undertake additional research, as needed, to develop specific tactical action steps / initiatives to achieve the strategic goals.

To validate the efficacy and wisdom of an initiative, the Work Group may apply the Library Litmus Test:

- Does it satisfy identified needs of populations served by the Library?
- Is it practical and actionable?
- Does it align the Library’s mission and vision with community goals and aspirations?
- How will it affect work flow and work load?
- Does it make “best use” of staffing and financial resources?
- Does it provide a favorable return on investment?
- Does it offer opportunities for productive collaborations and partnerships?
- Will it advance “the brand”?

Groups may choose to apply the Boston Matrix to the process of prioritizing the action items. For example, the merit of a tactical action step may be judged by whether it has a high or low probability of success against its potential to have greater or lesser impact.

Submissions will follow this format example:

How can we improve our fiscal health?

STRATEGIC RESPONSE:

Explore millage feasibility/voter education

ACTION STEPS:

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

RESOURCES REQUIRED

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

PROGRESS / SUCCESS MEASURE

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

## **WHY BRAND AND MARKET?**

An institutional commitment to branding and marketing provide Ypsilanti District Library with an opportunity to:

- Project a dynamic image whose launch will generate a “buzz” with both current and prospective customers;
- Communicate the Library’s relevance to contemporary community life;
- Generate excitement around programs and services;
- Ensure that the Library is positioned as a cornerstone educational institution worth supporting and using;
- Build customer loyalty and repeat and more frequent use;
- Defuse the perception that libraries are just warehouses for books;
- Differentiate proprietary online resources from commercial search engines and promote the Library’s online resources and the Library website as its fifth “branch” (the three bricks and mortar facilities and the bookmobile);
- Increase awareness and use of the Library and its services through pro-active outreach to core stakeholder groups and closer connections with underserved population segments;
- Achieve graphical consistency across all Library publications, promotions, way finding, etc.;
- Boost employee’s pride in their association with a highly visible and respected organization;
- Recruit “the best and brightest” of the profession;
- Showcase the professional expertise of librarians; and
- Capitalize on technology and social media to engage the community

## ***POSITIONING STATEMENT AND KEY MESSAGES***

Positioning statements that articulate the Library’s “value propositions” to its service area are intrinsic to messaging and promotion.

Ypsilanti District Library

- Is a valued, respected, and well-established community asset;
- Contributes significantly to the quality of life in the City of Ypsilanti, Ypsilanti Township, and Superior Township;
- Provides no-fee services and resources to residents;
- Serves as a community connector where friends and neighbors can meet, learn, and exchange ideas;
- Offers exciting and innovative programming for groups and individuals of all ages;
- Is a vital supporter of reading and literacy;
- Provides a source of reliable information not easily available elsewhere;
- Levels the playing field and ensures equal access to educational, informational, employment, and leisure resources; and
- Ensures the confidentiality of its customers;
- Answers questions in a non-judgmental and professional manner;
- Is certainly worth the community’s support and its investment of tax dollars.

## ***TAGLINE***

The new brand personality is dynamic, informal, contemporary and tagged with the compelling question, “Ask Why”, an imperative signaling that the Library encourages curiosity, exploration and study, discourse, the quest for knowledge and answers to questions, academic aspiration, and lifelong learning