Millis Public Library

2021 – 2025 Strategic Plan

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS AND APPROVAL

This Strategic Plan is the result of many hours of work on the part of many people. We would like to thank the following people who served on the Community Strategic Planning Committee:

Karen Bouret   Sandra Elaine Scott
Donna Cabibbo   Chris Soffayer
Richard Harlow   Colin Streck
Bonnie Hilton   Beverly Temple
Theresa Mahoney   Erin Underhill
Christine McCaffrey

The 2018-2019 Library Staff who participated in the planning process during the Staff Strategic Planning Meeting and through the review of the goals, objectives, activities, and projected outcomes:

Rebecca Appelbaum   Karen Mortimer
Kim Borst   Mary Carney-Philips
Donna Brooks   Rachel Silverman
Esther Davis

Deb Hoadley served as a consultant for this project and her excellent facilitation skills and guidance helped keep the process moving forward smoothly.
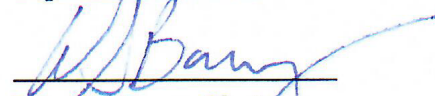
We would also like to thank the Friends of the Millis Library for they assistance in getting the survey out to as many people in the community as possible and for their continued support. Lastly, we would like to thank all our patrons, Library supporters, town officials, and anyone who contributed their perspectives during the Strategic Planning process.
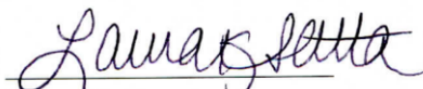
Respectfully,

Kim Tolson, Library Director

The Millis Public Library Board of Trustees approve this Strategic Plan as written on September 30, 2019.

Wendy Barry, Chairperson

Laura Satta

Jennifer Farrar

LETTER TO THE MILLIS COMMUNITY

September 2019

Dear Millis Residents,

The Millis Public Library and the Millis community are in a period of change. In the past 6 years, the town has rebuilt or refurbished 4 major municipal buildings. This includes the current "new" Library, which was the first of these projects completed in 2013. Over this short time period, the town has also seen two senior living communities as well as several major traditional housing developments approved and/or started. As the town's population grows and shifts, the Library must respond to support a wider range of collections, programs, and services in line with community needs and desires.

The Commonwealth recognizes the need for Libraries to grow and serve their communities. Every five years the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), the state agency with oversight authority for the Commonwealth's libraries, requires all libraries to prepare a strategic plan. This provides the Millis Library with an opportunity to re-examine the purpose of the Library within our community on a regular basis.

Over the past 12 months, the Millis Library has engaged in this process. The Mission and Vision for the Library was refined, and this specific Strategic Plan developed for serving the community. In order to understand community needs, the Library engaged the public and key stakeholders in the strategic planning process. A Community Planning Committee was formed of 11 stakeholders in the community with various backgrounds, interests, and community responsibilities. Focus Groups for other stakeholder groups (e.g. staff and teens) were held and a Community Survey (both hard and electronic version) was developed and distributed. Through these efforts, over 400 different community viewpoints were gathered to help shape this Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan provides focus and direction for operations, planning, and resource allocation resulting in clear goals, objectives, activities and expected outcomes. This Strategic Plan will inform all Library decisions.

Through this Strategic Plan, the Millis Public Library commits to inspiring lifelong learning and building community by providing a safe, welcoming space where community members of all ages can access materials, technology, information, services, and programs that engage the imagination, foster literacy, inspire intellectual curiosity and broaden cultural perspectives. The Board of Trustees is fully committed to working with and supporting the Library Director and staff as they implement this plan. The Board of Trustees is truly grateful for the ongoing support of elected and appointed officials, the

Friends of the Millis Public Library, Library staff, volunteers, donors, and most importantly Library patrons. It is people who transform a library building into a community space where residents can come together to learn, enjoy, and enrich their lives. The Millis Public Library is a place for everyone.

Respectfully,

The Millis Library Board of Trustees
Wendy Barry, Chairperson
Laura Satta
Jennifer Farrar

TOWN DEMOGRAPHICS AND TRENDS

The Town:
Millis is a small, suburban town located in western Norfolk County, Massachusetts, along the Charles River. It is located 26 miles southwest of Boston, 32 miles east of Worcester, 32 miles north of Providence, Rhode Island, and covers 12.3 square miles, or 7,848 acres. Millis is bordered by Medway on the west, Holliston and Sherborn on the north, Medfield on the east, and Norfolk on the south. Once an industrial town, it is now primarily a suburban community with rural areas remaining on the outskirts. There is approximately 2,627 acres (28.9% total land area) of open space including agricultural, conservation, and recreational land.

Major roadways include Route 109, which connects to Interstate 95 (11 miles east of Millis) and Interstate 495 (8 miles southwest of Millis). Route 115 is the major north-south route through town. There is no public transportation option (rail or bus) within the town of Millis. Commuter rail transit to Boston is available in the neighboring town of Norfolk and in the nearby towns of Walpole, Franklin, and Needham.

Population Trends:
In 2018, the Annual Report of the Town Clerk listed the population of Millis as 8,807. There are 2,189 senior citizens (60+), 4,946 adults aged 19-59, 1,197 school-aged children, and 475 children 5 and under. Over the last 10 years, the population has been steadily rising, with a 7% overall increase. The senior population (60+) has increased at a much faster rate than other age groups, growing by 54% in the last 10 years. In 2018, this age group made up nearly 25% of the population, compared with 17% in 2008. With the recent addition of two new senior living communities (412 homes) and development of a 93-unit assisted living community, this age group is expected to increase further in coming years.

The population of school-aged children has decreased by 21% in the last 10 years. However, with a new Clyde Brown Elementary School building, which opened for the 2019-20 school year, we may see a change in this trend.

Education, Work, and Income:
In addition to Clyde Brown Elementary School, which houses preschool through grade 5, Millis has a combined Middle/High School, which houses grades 6-12. The school day for students in the Middle/High School ends at 2:20pm.

According to the 2017 American Community Survey estimates, 97.5% of residents are high school graduates and 53.3% have a bachelor's degree or higher. Top industries that employ residents are education, heath care, or social assistance (21.3%); retail (14.1%); professional, scientific, or management (13.4%); manufacturing (12.8%).

The median* household income in Millis is $100,230, higher than the state average of $74,167. 4.4% of individuals (400 people) fall below the poverty line in Millis, compared with 11.1% state-wide.

Race, Ethnicity, and Language:
The population of Millis is predominately White (96.2%) with small percentages of Black (0.2%), Asian (1.2%), and other races (2.4%). In terms of ethnicity, 5.2% of people are of Hispanic or Latino origin.
The majority of people speak only English at home (87.4%). However, it is worth noting that of the 12.6% of people that speak another language at home, 48.2% of these report speaking English less than "very well."

Median is a form of average that represents the middle value in a sequence of numbers when ordered from lowest to highest. In this case, that means that half of all reported incomes fall below this number and half fall above.

SNAPSHOT OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Since the last Strategic Plan was submitted in October 2013, the Millis Public Library has undergone significant growth. A major contributor to this was a new Library building, which opened in July 2013 and more than tripled the square footage for the Library. This new building is located in an ideal downtown location, within walking distance to the schools and the senior center and in close proximity to many of the town's restaurants and businesses.

This new, larger building can support much more use by the community. The building (excluding meeting rooms) has a seating capacity of 83, a 219% increase from the old building. The capacity of the largest meeting space is 80 people, a 100% increase. The community has taken advantage of the improved space. In FY19, meeting and study rooms were used an average of 40 times per week, compared with just 2 times per week in the final year in the old building (FY14). The Library has seen a steady increase in visitors each year since the new building opened, with well over 100,000 visits each of the last three years.

In addition to providing space for community use, the Library is the primary provider of free technology access in town, with desktop and laptop computers, WiFi, e-readers and tablets, and printing, scanning, and faxing capacity. The Library provides free access to both physical and online collections of books, audiobooks, magazines, news, movies, music, and more. As a member of the Minuteman Library Network, the Library also offers access to the collections of 40 additional libraries in Massachusetts.

The Library hosts an array of educational, cultural, and recreational programs for all ages, including technology instruction, early literacy programs, art exhibits, job search assistance, and much more. The majority of these programs are funded by the Friends of the Millis Public Library, a non-profit volunteer group that supports and fundraises for the Library.

Library staff are key to maintaining these services, helping residents navigate Library collections and find information, planning and supervising programs, and ensuring a welcoming and safe space for all. With the growth in activity and services offered, Library staff are busier than ever. While there has been a small increase (11%) in staff hours since the new building opened, the average staff hours per week fall well below other libraries in Massachusetts with comparably sized buildings and populations.

The infographic on the following page gives a visual look at some of the services provided during the most recent fiscal year (July 2018-June 2019).
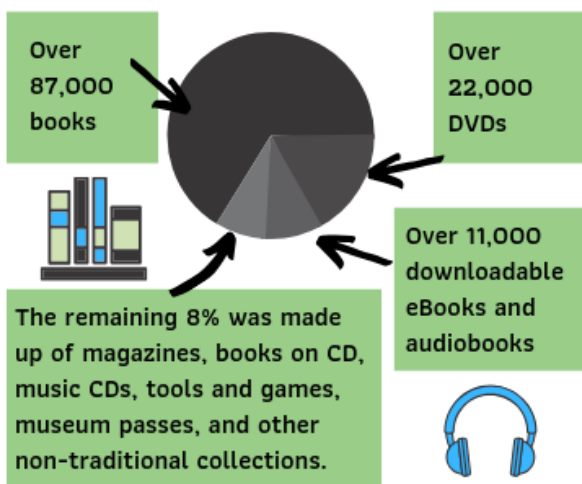
Millis Public Library in FY19

The Millis Public Library had over 111,000 visitors last year. What brought them to the Library?

'This library is the best thing to happen to Millis in the 20 years we have lived here. The space is awesome and it has created a town center.' - Millis Library Patron

People borrowed over 132,000 items.

Over 87,000 books

Over 22,000 DVDs

The remaining 8% was made up of magazines, books on CD, music CDs, tools and games, museum passes, and other non-traditional collections.

Over 11,000 downloadable eBooks and audiobooks

People connect to the internet.

Many people rely on the Library to get online. In a typical week, patrons used the Library computers 144 times and connected to the WiFi 1,125 times.

Meeting spaces were used 3,639 times.

This includes programs for kids and teens (with attendance of more than 11,000) and programs for adults (with attendance of more than 2,000). Programs have included:

read to a dog, early literacy storytimes.

author events, concerts.

film nights, book groups, STEM programs, tech trainings, art classes, and much more!

The Library anwered almost 9,000 questions.

Library Staff answer lots of different questions about books, movies, history, genealogy, current events, and more!

The Library has all sorts of collections.

Nearly 55,000 books, magazines, newspapers, CDs, and DVDs,

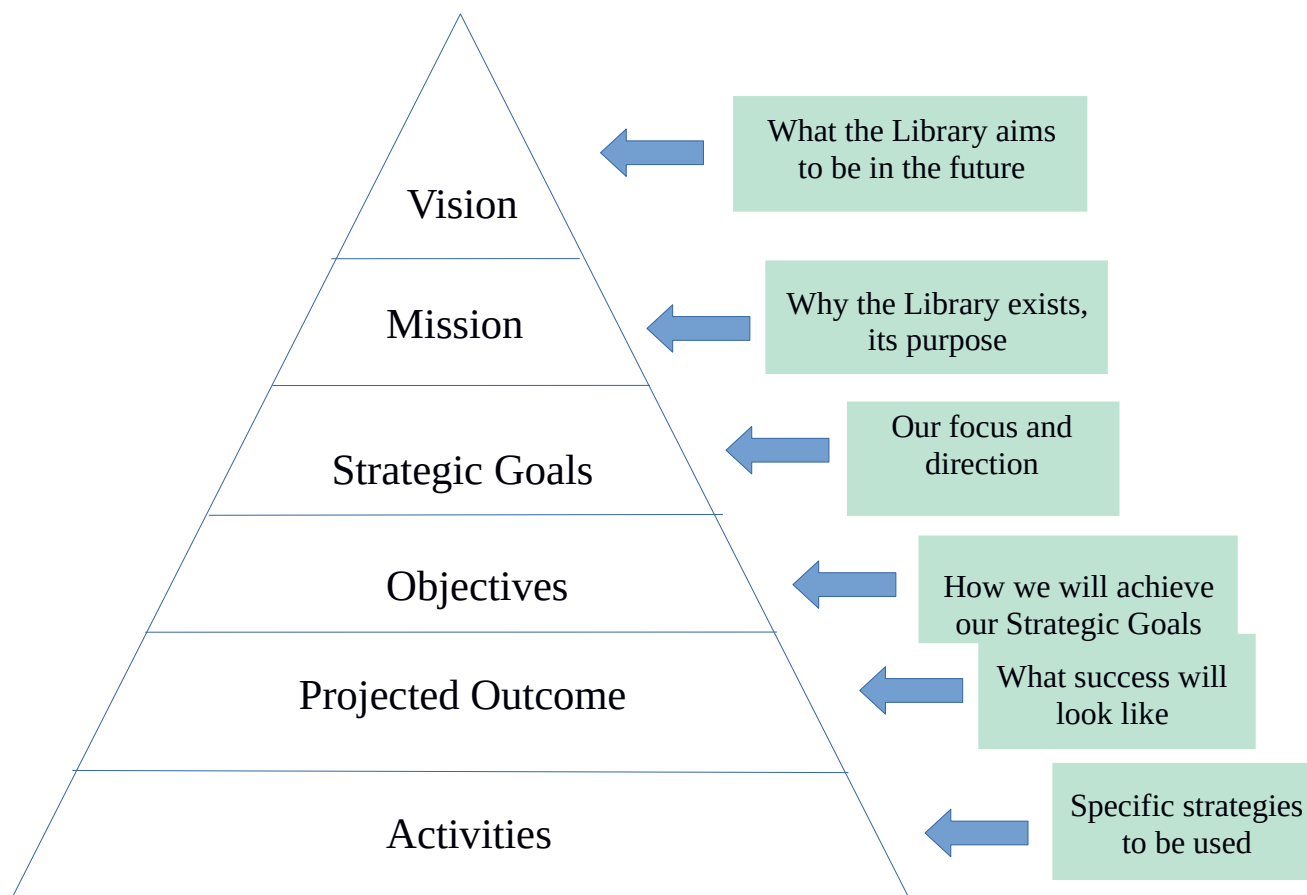Over 77,000 eBooks, eAudio, and other e-content,

museum passes,

ukuleles,

telescopes, metal detectors,

and much, much more!

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS

The following graphic depicts the organization of the Millis Public Library's activities and operations as a direct foundation supporting the overall Mission and Vision for this valuable civic resource. We plan and operate with a clear purpose, developed through our community-based strategic planning process (detailed in Appendix A).

Vision — What the Library aims to be in the future

Mission — Why the Library exists, its purpose

Strategic Goals — Our focus and direction

Objectives — How we will achieve our Strategic Goals

Projected Outcome — What success will look like

Activities — Specific strategies to be used

Vision Statement

The Millis Public Library strives to continue to be a key resource for the community, connecting people with up-to-date information and technology, supporting individual growth and education, and providing an inclusive and inspiring space to gather, connect, and engage.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Millis Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning and build community by providing a safe and welcoming space where community members of all ages can freely access materials, technology, information, services, and programs that engage the imagination, foster literacy, inspire intellectual curiosity, and broaden cultural perspectives.

STRATEGIC GOALS, OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES, AND OUTCOMES

Goal 1- ACCESS: Community members have improved access to Library services.

Objective 1.1: Increase & optimize hours that the community can access the Library and its services.
Projected Outcome: The community is more easily able to access the Library and its services.
    Activity: Investigate possibilities for increasing after-hours access for meeting room use.
    Activity: Evaluate cost scenarios of extending hours on high-demand days and adding hours on days currently closed.
    Activity: Explore implementing an after-hours hold pickup service.

Objective 1.2: Improve website design and functionality to enable Library users to more easily access Library resources and information.
Projected Outcome: The Library website becomes a virtual destination for access to Library resources and information.
    Activity: Expand virtual Library and resources available 24/7.
    Activity: Incorporate interactive content on Library webpage.
    Activity: Curate web resources to create pathfinders on topics of interest to the community.

Objective 1.3: Provide comfortable and engaging spaces for all ages and abilities.
Projected Outcome: Patrons have increased enjoyment and utilization of the Library building.
    Activity: Reconfigure Young Adult room, incorporating input from the target audience to better maximize use.
    Activity: Add interior signage to assist with wayfinding.
    Activity: Explore options for caregivers to access adult books and magazines while using the Children's Room.
    Activity: Identify and implement strategies to create quiet spaces within the Library building.

Goal 2- CONNECTION: The Library serves as a hub, connecting people with community-wide information, services, and other community members.

Objective 2.1: Serve as a central space for community events and information.
Projected Outcome: The Library is a trusted resource for community information.

Activity: Collaborate with other town departments on the creation of a town-wide meeting and event calendar.

Activity: Create opportunities for Library staff, community members, and organizations to share knowledge on topics of interest to the community.

Objective 2.2: Build and strengthen partnerships with local organizations and municipal departments to extend the reach of the Library and offer new programs and services.
Projected Outcome: Community members have greater awareness of Library programs and services and new opportunities for learning and engagement.

Activity: Develop a system for keeping town agencies up to date on new Library resources or programs.

Activity: Explore and identify ways to work with local cultural, artistic, and/or educational groups to implement joint initiatives.

Activity: Collaborate with libraries in surrounding towns to pool resources and extend the reach of the Library.

Activity: Collaborate with local artists to design projects and/or events that inspire creativity and build skills within the community.

Activity: Investigate and identify ways to incorporate local community experts in programming.

Objective 2.3: Design and implement a comprehensive outreach and communication plan to engage and inform the community about Library services and programs.
Projected Outcome: A larger portion of the population has increased knowledge of and use of the Library's resources and programs.

Activity: Identify ways to increase Library presence throughout the community.

Activity: Explore ways to identify new residents and engage them with Library services and programs.

Activity: Host an open house style event for public, town employees, and committee members to showcase Library resources.

Activity: Broaden social media and eNewsletter marketing to reach new audiences.

Activity: Identify underserved groups and explore ways to engage them with Library services.

Activity: Develop and conduct a survey (or other method of collecting feedback) of Library non-users in Millis.

Goal 3- LIFELONG LEARNING: Community members of all ages are engaged with new and diverse Library programs and services.

Objective 3.1: More effectively engage teen population with updated and improved services, spaces, and programs.
Projected Outcome: Teens feel welcome in the Library and engaged with the programs, collections, and services for their age group.
>   Activity: Investigate logistics to provide teen-centered services during after school hours.
>   Activity: Increase teen-targeted programming during peak usage hours such as after school and on weekends.
>   Activity: Rearrange Young Adult collections for increased appeal and discovery.
>   Activity: Reconfigure Young Adult room to better reflect use and include input from the target audience.

Objective 3.2: Diversify programs offered for adults, based on community input.
Projected Outcome: Varied programming that reflects the diverse interests of the community.
>   Activity: Implement and use program feedback evaluation to measure and improve the effectiveness of programming.
>   Activity: Conduct a community survey to better understand needs and interests.
>   Activity: Develop new programs and services based on community input and local expertise.
>   Activity: Develop and promote a programming outline/schedule for each fiscal year.

Objective 3.3: Foster and promote literacy within the community.
Projected Outcome: Millis has strong reading culture at all age levels.
>   Activity: Expand book group programming for all ages.
>   Activity: Incorporate authors and writers into more programming.
>   Activity: Provide robust Readers' Advisory training for all staff.
>   Activity: Explore implementing literacy initiatives within the community (e.g. Little Free Libraries, Storywalks, ESL programming).

Goal 4- RESOURCES: Learning and discovery are supported by staff and up-to-date, innovative Library resources.

Objective 4.1: Develop a staffing model that will ensure safety, facilitate excellent customer service, and support strategic goals.
Projected Outcome: Library users experience consistent and excellent service.
     Activity: Develop a long-term staffing plan, including an analysis of on-call and part-time positions, to ensure staffing appropriately supports Library goals.
     Activity: Analyze and adjust staff schedules to ensure adequate staffing during peak operating hours.
     Activity: Develop a comprehensive staff training plan that fosters the development of all staff members to best serve the community.

Objective 4.2: Develop collections and information resources, both physical and digital, to reflect the needs and interests of the community.
Projected Outcome: Patrons can easily find the resources they want and will discover appealing and satisfying items in both physical and online collections.
     Activity: Update Collection Development policy.
     Activity: Conduct a nonfiction collection assessment to ensure the collections reflect the needs and interests of the community.
     Activity: Help patrons locate and discover Library materials by experimenting with new collections grouped by topic.
     Activity: Introduce add-ons within print collections (e.g. pathfinders/QR codes to online resources, unusual items grouped with print collections).
     Activity: Expand digital book and audiobook collection.
     Activity: Explore methods to increase awareness of non-traditional Library collections (eLibrary, unusual items).
     Activity: Expand job, career, and business resources.
     Activity: Increase access to Millis' local history archives.

Objective 4.3: Increase access to relevant, up-to-date technology for Library patrons and staff.
Projected Outcome: Community members and staff have the tools and training necessary to succeed personally and professionally.
     Activity: Investigate options for implementing a scanning to email service.
     Activity: Explore the cost of implementing RFID technology for improved workflow, which will allow staff more time to interact with patrons.
     Activity: Explore ways to add maker technologies to Library offerings.
     Activity: Develop strategies to deliver effective and responsive patron technology training.

APPENDIX A: PLANNING PROCESS (METHODOLOGY)

In late 2018, the Millis Public Library began the process of developing a new Strategic Plan for FY2021-2025. The goal was to use community input along with demographic data and regional, national, and global trends to create a document that would provide direction for the Library and guide decision making over the next five years.

The Library Director and Board of Trustees put together a Community Planning Committee, made up of eleven stakeholders in the community. The members represent a variety of backgrounds, interests, and involvement with different community organizations. Planning Consultant, Deb Hoadley, was hired to assist with the strategic planning process and facilitate Community Planning Committee and Staff Planning meetings.

In January 2019, Deb Hoadley facilitated a meeting of Library staff. The group participated in SOAR (Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results) and visioning exercises. See Appendix C for meeting agenda and summary.

The Community Planning Committee met twice in January and February 2019. During the first meeting, the group was introduced to the strategic planning process and background information about the Town of Millis and the Library. Deb then led the group through the SOAR exercise. During the second meeting, the group completed a community visioning exercise. See Appendix B for agendas and summaries from these meetings. Two focus groups were conducted by the Youth and Family Services Librarian to get input from Middle and High School aged youth. See summaries in Appendix D.

A community survey (Appendix E) was created, incorporating feedback collected during these meetings. This survey was available in both paper and online format for seven weeks. It was shared on the Library's website, on social media, on school email listservs, in local papers, and inside the Library (bookmarks and flyers). Bookmarks and paper surveys were also available at the Town Hall and Senior Center. A total of 360 surveys were completed, which gives us a solid representation of the community.

A third Community Planning Committee meeting was held in June to review the survey results, suggest revisions to the Library's Mission and Vision statements, and discuss some possible goals to include in the Strategic Plan.

The Board of Trustees and the Library Director met in July to finalize the revised Mission and Vision statements. They also reviewed survey results and all input from the committee meetings, staff meetings, and focus groups to draft strategic goals and objectives. This new plan incorporates the broader themes that emerged during the information gathering process, as well as many of the more specific requests and suggestions that we got during the process.

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY PLANNING COMMITTEE

Millis Public Library
Community Strategic Planning Committee
Meeting #1 Agenda
Tuesday, January 22, 2019
6:30 – 8:30pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Strategic Planning – An Overview
    a. Parts of the Plan
    b. Timeline & Process

III. Demographics
    a. Community Statistics
    b. Library Statistics
    c. Future Library Trends

IV. S.O.A.R. Exercise
    a. Brainstorming rules
    b. Strengths
    c. Opportunities
    d. Aspirations
    e. Results

V. Future meeting dates:
    a. Meeting #2: Community Vision – Tuesday, Feb. 5 from 6:30-8:30pm
    b. Meeting #3: Survey Results & Wrap-Up - TBD

Community Planning Committee
Meeting #1 Handouts

<u>**Millis Community Demographics**</u>

Total Population, Report of the Town Clerk:

2008	8,207		2013	8,527
2009	8,235		2014	8,378
2010	8,338		2015	8,501
2011	8,187		2016	8,591
2012	8,382		2017	8,629

5% increase over last 10 years

Population by Age Grouping, 2017 Report of the Town Clerk

Seniors (60+)	24.6%
Adults (19-59)	56.0%
School Age (6-18)	14.3%
Preschool (0-5)	5.1%

Senior Population (60+), Report of the Town Clerk

2013	20.2%
2014	21.7%
2015	22.7%
2016	23.5%
2017	24.5%

Racial/Ethnic Groups, 2017 American Community Survey

White	96.2%
Other	2.4%
Asian	1.2%
Black/African American	0.2%

Hispanic/Latino (of any race)   5.2%

Languages Spoken at Home, 2017 American Community Survey

Speak only English	87.4%	
Spanish	4.5%	*(28% of those speak English less than "very well")*
Other Indo-European Languages	7.9%	*(20.2% of those speak English less than "very well")*
Asian and Pacific Island Languages	0.2%	*(0% of those speak English less than "very well")*

Educational Attainment, 2017 American Community Survey

Percent high school graduate or higher: 97.5%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher: 53.3%

Income, 2017 American Community Survey

Median Household Income: $100,230
Individuals below the poverty level: 4.4%

Top Industries, 2017 American Community Survey

21.3% work in education, health care, or social assistance
14.1% work in retail
13.4% work on professional, scientific, or management
12.8% work in manufacturing

Commuting, 2017 American Community Survey

92% drive to work
2.8% take public transportation
2.2% work at home
Mean travel time to work is 34 minutes – 18% travel 60 minutes or more

Millis Public Library Statistics

Holdings, Circulation, Interlibrary Loans (ILL), FY18 Annual Report Information Survey

Total Holdings (all physical and digital materials): 126,143
    Books: 45,522
    Audiovisual (book on CD, DVD, music CD): 8,647
    E-books: 54,614
    Downloadable Audio and Video: 16,973

Total Circulation: 127,969
    Total Children's Circulation: 55,834
    Total YA (Young Adult) Circulation: 4,430
    Total Adult Circulation: 67,705

Total Use of Electronic Collections: 13,465

Total ILL Items Received: 15,978
Total ILL Items Provided: 14,546

Yearly Circulation

	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
Physical	116,402	114,629	118,379	118,008
Overdrive	5,494	6,505	6,636	6,711
E-Library	3,086	6,215	11,164	15,855
Total	124,982	127,349	136,179	140,574

Library Services, FY18 Annual Report Information Survey

Annual Hours Open: 2,195
Total Annual Visits: 110,399 (average of 50 people per hour)

Adult Programs: 167 with 2,098 attendance (average of 13 people per program)
Young Adult Programs: 52 with 1,242 attendance (average of 24 people per program)
Children's Programs: 326 with 10,655 attendance (average of 33 people per program)

Number of Public Computers: 24
Weekly Public Computer Use: 204 sessions in a typical week
Annual WiFi Use: 60,069 (average of 1,155 per week)

Library Cards: 4,672 Residents are registered users

Library Space and Staff, FY18 and FY14 Annual Report Information Surveys

New building opened in July 2013
    17,800 square feet (from 5,400 in old building, 230% increase)
    Seating capacity of 83 (from 26 in old building, 219% increase)
    Largest meeting room seating capacity is 80 (from 40, 100% increase)

3 full-time and 7 part-time staff (from 1 full-time and 8 part-time)
    All staff work average of 196 hours per week (177 hours in FY13, last year in old building, 11% increase)

Meeting/Study Room Use (excluding staff meetings): 3,266 (average of 63 per week compared to 2 in old building, 3,050% increase)

Library Staffing Comparison

All Massachusetts libraries with a building size within 1000 sq. ft. and a population within 25% of Millis

Library	Average Open Hours/Week	Average Staff Hours per Week	Staff per Open Hour
Georgetown - Peabody Library	30	197.5	6.58
Blackstone - Blackstone Free Public Library	32	281	8.78
Chatham - Eldredge Public Library	41	385	9.39
Millis - Millis Public Library	**42**	**196**	**4.66**
Salisbury - Salisbury Public Library	43	226	5.26
Williamstown - David & Joyce Milne Public Library	45	335	7.44
Middleton - Flint Public Library	47	283	6.02
Lincoln - Lincoln Public Library	54	449	8.31

From FY17 Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS)

Library Output Comparison (FY17)

Library	Appropriated Municipal Income per capita*	Circulation per capita	Total Number of Programs	Total Program Attendance
Georgetown - Peabody Library	$38.46	10.33 (5)	257 (7)	3,774 (6)
Millis - Millis Public Library	**$46.14**	**17.99 (4)**	**631 (3)**	**17,026 (1)**
Blackstone - Blackstone Free Public Library	$47.63	8.04 (7)	279 (6)	2,826 (7)
Salisbury - Salisbury Public Library	$49.73	6.96 (8)	389 (5)	5,298 (5)
Middleton - Flint Public Library	$50.86	8.87 (6)	427 (4)	9,311 (4)
Williamstown - David & Joyce Milne Public Library	$73.71	19.02 (2)	135 (8)	2,352 (8)
Chatham - Eldredge Public Library	$84.28	18.68 (3)	720 (1)	15,296 (2)
Lincoln - Lincoln Public Library	$131.02	25.21 (1)	651 (2)	12,170 (3)

From FY17 Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS)

*Library budget is 1.2% of the Town of Millis total municipal budget

Millis Public Library
Community Strategic Planning Community
Meeting #1 Summary
January 22, 2019

Deb Hoadley, consultant, talked about the strategic planning process and then led the Community Strategic Planning Committee through a brainstorming exercise, focusing on the Library, called the S.O.A.R., which stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results.

Strengths:

Staff:
- Pleasant and welcoming staff
- Significant change in the culture
- Genuine interest in helping
- Up-level customer service – staff is personally vested
- Great Reader's Advisory

Building:
- Library is not silent
- New building
- Welcoming atmosphere
- Center of town
- Meeting room – brings in outside groups; more diverse Library programs; multi-purpose use;
- opportunities for joint programs
- Plentiful, free parking
- Café area – food and drink allowed
- Comfy
- Open space – conversations can happen; gathering spot
- Good roof
- Dynamic atmosphere
- Display areas for art
- Fireplace

Collections:
- Digital collections – newspaper; OverDrive; Hoopla
- Non-traditional items – coloring book kits, etc.
- Book collection – current; New York Times bestsellers; trends and hot books
- Museum passes

Miscellaneous:
- Children's programs – people come from other towns
- Dedicated computer access
- Friends of the Library

Opportunities:

Programs:
- Craft/book club during lunch – something topical that people can be doing something while talking about a book
- Community "experts" for programs
- Nighttime programs (book, literary) – 7:30pm
- ESL program – Spanish for parents (students are learning a language at school); drop-in conversation circles
- Citizen classes
- Programs for parents to use technology (this is provided by MERIT to the students) – parallel program
- Maintain general population programs – cross generational programming like cribbage, tech help)

Communication:
- Website content
- Town listserv
- Get feedback on a regular basis on what people are doing at the Library; feedback can be informal or formal; create Library stories to share

Collection:
- Expand items to borrow – spinning wheel; potter's wheel
- eNewsletter – increase communication; market to taxpayers
- Paperback collection – wanted
- Diversified collection – have books and materials to reflect other races, cultures and have different voices

Miscellaneous:
- Partnership with local businesses – maybe offer coupons or discounts for groups
- Volunteer club for teens

Aspirations – What does the Library look like in the future? What is the vision you have for the Library?
- Hours open on Thursdays until 8pm; Sunday hours
- Town-wide calendar – beyond town meetings (Deb mentioned Burbio)
- Need to look at target audiences:
  - Single, no kids – activities to do together; topic; something fun to learn; experience; one and done program
  - Mom/Parent focus – move adult books into children's room for easier access (don't have time to look for books in adult area)
- Partnership with Recreation
- Community programs – get people involved and engaged
- Look at environmental issues
  - Ways to take care of the earth
  - Green incentives
  - Library is LEED certified and can be a model

- ○ Recycling education – efforts by the town
- After hours access – lockers that are locked with materials to pick up
- Self check-in

- Space:
  - ○ Comfortable meeting chairs
  - ○ Outside space – table and furniture for everyone; native plants; do a demonstration garden, for example a rain garden
  - ○ Handicap accessible doors into the meeting room
  - ○ Expand café area – coffee; water; snacks for sale
  - ○ Tween/teen space – safe place; formal and informal activities
- More full time staff; more staff hours to support the vision
- Somehow be involved in the town's economic development – show how the Library supports this with being the center and businesses are growing up around it
- Develop an infographic to show various statistics about the Library to market what it does

Results – How will you know you are successful in reaching the vision?
- Increased foot traffic
- Will know where and what people are doing at the Library
- More community involvement
- Increased staff
- Increased hours
- "Quality of life" impact
- Growth of who is coming to the Library and why
- Increase number of unique users
- Look at hours per individual (avg)/residents
- What are people using – create categories
- What is the cost of the service
- Outgrow space (will show how much the Library is being used)
- Nationally recognized – buzz about the Millis Public Library

Millis Public Library
Community Strategic Planning Committee
Meeting #2 Agenda
Tuesday, February 5, 2019
6:30 – 8:30pm

I. Welcome, Introductions & Review
    a. What is your role in the community? (Parent, business owner, garden club member, historical society, teacher, etc.)
    b. Discussion/Questions from last meeting – S.O.A.R.

II. Community Vision Exercise
    a. Brainstorming Rules
    b. Definition & Examples of Vision Statements
    c. Prioritize
    d. Library Role
        i. Priority
        ii. Partnership
        iii. Supporting

III. Next Steps
    a. Survey
    b. Strategic Planning Committee Meeting #3: Review survey results and look at current   mission, vision and draft goals. Meeting date: TBD

Millis Public Library
Community Strategic Planning Committee
Meeting #2 Summary
February 5, 2019

We started the meeting with introductions and everyone discussing how they are involved in the community and what segment of the population they represent.

The group brainstormed ideas about their own **community vision** for Millis and what this looked like to them.

- Continued renovation of downtown
  - Restaurants
  - Increasing the walkability
- COA/Recreation Community center – new building for youth, seniors and recreational activities; something to enjoy together
- Continued improvement in the investment of the town; town's infrastructure
- Keeping the feeling of a small town, and still making contributions to improve
- New middle and high school – emphasis on science and math
- Increase the business base and add to what is existing; increasing tax base; balance with personal tax
- Cohesive feeling about each other – "small town, big family"
- Attract diversity – cultural and also thought-based – having an open mind to new ideas
- Community-wide programs, like the Spanish immersion program, where all people can participate
- Be the model for proactive approach to sustainability; expand options and services; transfer station and recycling (has an opportunity to create a model for all to follow)
- Regional approach to sharing resources
- Move beyond the reputation of being the "step sister" town
- Transportation options to commuter rail; small van; park & ride
-

What are people **proud** of now in the community?

- Spanish immersion program
- School choice
- Oak Grove – 300 acre open space
- Young, engaged police force that works with all ages
- Library is an anchor in the community

What are some of the **challenges/issues** in the community?

- Volunteerism – getting people to become involved; civic engagement
- Need to capitalize on people's interest group/niche where they can plug in – create a "Talent Bank"
- Communication
  - Town-wide calendar where everyone knows when things are happening so events are not booked on the same day
  - Town website

- ○ Social media issues
- ○ Need centralized newspaper (print) – where there is news, as well as views
- ○ Community cable channel
- Build partnerships and relationships between the town and _____(fill in the blank)
- Millis needs to be attractive to other towns and this will help to build partnerships
- School perception – it is good now; people moved here because of the schools; not always the case
- Take advantage of Tri-County
- Sports opportunities
- Rte. 109
- Reputation of those who grew up here and now are living here
- Keep open space; trails for everyone; accessible and Walkable for seniors (more people need to know what is in town – greater communication)
- Cyber bullying – not just schools; social media – more people need to be educated and informed about what are the real facts

After the group brainstormed, **six themes emerged** from all the ideas. The group then were given two dots and they were able to vote on what they felt were the priority items.

1. Develop a comprehensive communication plan. This includes the town, Library, community organizations and the school. This also includes social media, print and using the local cable channel. (4)
2. Continue to focus on economic develop, especially in the downtown area. This would include more restaurants, shopping and continuing to improve the town's infrastructure. Businesses would help to increase the tax base and attract more people to the area. (6)
3. Encourage diversity, not just ethnic diversity, but embracing new ideas and having an open mind about different cultures. (1)
4. Build a community center to support all ages. (2)
5. Work on being a sustainable community (including keeping open space), which will be a model for other towns. (2)
6. 6. Increase civic engagement and finding opportunities that match people's talents. Need more ways for people to come together, work together and share the Millis pride. (3)

After this discussion, we talked about the **Library's role** to meet the top two priorities. They were asked to write down what the Library could do to play a role in supporting one or both of these priorities. They were also what role the Library would have: a **priority, partnership or support** role.

We focused on #1 and 2.
#1. Everyone thought the Library would play a partnership role.
- Create a calendar with town hall and other organizations, etc.
- The Library could give technical consulting
- The Library could host meetings to find out information on how this can happen (town-wide communication); Library could initiate the conversation
- Library could host a public forum
- Library could provide information to a central group and then they would disseminate the information

- Use all channels of communication (social media, print, cable)
- Library could create a publication
- Library could work with the town administrator
- Ways the library could do this:
  ○ Seek grants
  ○ Hire specific staff to handle this
  ○ Staff would collect info and use a volunteer corps to get the word out
  ○ Research plans that were successful
  ○ Everyone could submit to the calendar; color-coded to avoid conflicts
  ○ Library would be open for these meetings to happen; mostly at night
  ○

#2. The Library could play a <u>supporting</u> role.
- Host public forums
- Gather relevant information
- Work with economic development committee
- Outreach programs with businesses
- Add to the Library's collection with relevant materials to support the growing downtown businesses
- Help develop materials for people to use on the public access computers
- Create a business center

The next step in this strategic planning process will be to develop a survey for the whole community. These priorities can be part of the survey and see if the community as a whole agrees on what is important to them. For the Library to remain relevant, the community must see themselves reflected not just in the town, but also in the Library. One of the benefits of the Library is that it has become the anchor for the downtown area and was a catalyst for other town projects. The Library is already seen as a leader in the community and needs to leverage this to serve the community.

Millis Public Library
Community Strategic Planning Committee
Meeting #3 Agenda
Tuesday, June 18, 2019
6:30 – 8:30pm

1) Welcome & Introductions

2) Review of survey results and trends from data gathered to date

3) Review current mission statement: *The mission of The Millis Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning by providing services, materials and activities that engage the imagination, foster literacy, inspire intellectual curiosity, and advance the pursuit of knowledge for all members of the community.*

4) Discuss possible vision statement(s) for the Library

5) Discuss broad goals

6) Next steps

Note: Please review the current 2015-2020 Strategic Plan prior to our meeting.
There was also a community vision statement for Millis in the 2015-2020 Library Strategic Plan: *Millis will continue to be a supportive, progressive, safe community that maintains great schools and affordable housing to support and unify a multi-generational community.*

The third and final meeting of the Community Strategic Planning Group was held on June 18, 2019. The purpose of the meeting was to review survey results and talk about the Library's mission, vision and goals.

A summary of the survey was distributed and reviewed during the meeting. There were 360 responses. This was a significant sample size. Overall people were satisfied with the building and overall customer service. They were less satisfied with the hours and programs for young adults and adults. There is an opportunity to market and promote what the Library does and find out what people want from the Library and increase engagement.

After the review of the survey, the group looked at the current mission statement and discussed words that should stay, words that should not be part of the mission and new words they would like to add.

Special Note: The book, *Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civic Life* by Eric Klinenberg was mentioned as a great resource. It has many references to libraries and how they contribute to the infrastructure of a town/city. There is also a podcast that was mentioned, 99% Invisible and episode 346 focuses on this book.

Current Mission Statement: *The mission of The Millis Public Library is to inspire lifelong learning by providing services, materials and activities that engage the imagination, foster literacy, inspire intellectual curiosity, and advance the pursuit of knowledge for all members of the community.*

Community Vision: Millis will continue to be a supportive, progressive, safe community that maintains great schools and affordable housing to support and unify a multi-generational community.

The Mission of the Library should define what the Library does and why it exists.
The group was asked to look at the mission statement and say which words they would like to see stay in the statement, words to not include and new words they would like to add. In the previous strategic plan, the community vision of Millis was mentioned, but the Library did not have their own. Some of the words from this community vision statement seemed appropriate for the mission statement.

Words to Not Include
Take out this phrase: "Advance the pursuit of knowledge for all members of the community"
Words to Include
Exist to provide "lifelong learning"
Words to Add

Initiate civic engagement	Safe environment	Recreational
Multi-generational community	Welcoming	Free
Inclusive	Unity	Access
Supportive	Educational	Enhance
Progressive	Cultural	Entertainment?

Space vs. Place (physical and
online)
Next we discussed the Vision Statement. This should be one or a few statements describing what the
Library would like to be in the future. This allows the strategic plan to be flexible and adaptable to
changes in the environment in the next 7, 10 or more years.

The Library will be… OR
The Library strives to be…

- Have a technological presence
- Heartbeat of the community
- Pre-eminent **resource**
- The first place people go for information – be the HUB
- Connector
- Unify the community
- A space where people gather and connect with one another and engage with the Library
- Connectors and opportunities – more partnership opportunities

We also discussed some goals as they emerged from the mission and vision discussion.
- Increase access to the Library (thinking of the library space vs. place)
  - Hours
  - Online presence
  - Outreach and engagement activities
  - Look at space options and flexibility within the Library to do different activities

- Enhance and broaden communication
  - Library marketing and promotion
  - Partnership with the town to have a community calendar

- Be a leader in technology and innovations
  - Makerspace
  - Artificial intelligence
  - Virtual reality

- Maintain and encourage Library Staff
  - Continue to support educational opportunities
  - Hire teen and/or resource librarian

- Build community engagement
  - Provide multigenerational programs
  - Create opportunities for civic engagement

APPENDIX C: STAFF STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

Millis Public Library
Staff Strategic Planning: SOAR & Community Vision
Meeting Agenda
Tuesday, January 22, 2019
1:00 – 3:00pm

I. Welcome & Introductions

II. Strategic Planning – An Overview
    a. Parts of the Plan
    b. Timeline & Process

III. Demographics
    a. Community Statistics
    b. Library Statistics
    c. Future Library Trends

IV. SOAR Exercise
    a. Brainstorming rules
    b. Strengths
    c. Opportunities
    d. Aspirations
    e. Results

V. Community Visioning Exercise
    a. Millis Today & Yesterday
    b. Challenges/Issues
    c. Future

Millis Public Library
Staff Strategic Planning
Meeting Summary
January 22, 2019

Deb Hoadley, consultant, talked about the strategic planning process and then led the staff through two brainstorming exercises. The first focused on the Library, called the S.O.A.R., which stands for Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations and Results. The second was a community visioning exercise to discuss issue/challenges and what the future of Millis should be. There was also a discussion on how the Library can play a role in meeting these challenges and priorities.

Stakeholders:

Friends of the Library
Toddlers/Families/Caregivers
Trustees
Staff/Director
Retirees
Job Seekers
Schools
Recreational Readers
Organizations/Town Groups
Condo Boards (meeting space)
Book groups
People who work in Millis
Non-residents of Millis
Business owners and people who work from home

Interest groups
Volunteers
People who don't have computers/printers/equipment that the Library has for public use
DVD users – people don't have Internet or cable at home
Housebound
Tutors
People needing workspace
Minuteman Network – staff; patrons; administration
Students who want to study or hang out

Strengths:

Staff:
- "Get it done and more"
- Different skill sets
- Helpful to each other
- Output – lots getting done
- Friendly

Building:
- Light & bright
- Different feel
- Things in the building: study rooms, meeting room space (flexible)
- Location is central
- Comfortable seating
- Parking lot
- Children's room (can close it)
- Teen room
- One story
- Front desk – it is evident where to go for help

Miscellaneous:
- Friends of the Library
- Tech Help Day
- Network – Minuteman – ILL; Delivery Service; Trainings; online resources
- Online lending services – OverDrive; newspapers; Hoopla, Lynda, Freegal, Mango
- Materials – "Red Dot" books – not on reserve
- Museum Passes

Opportunities:
Services:
- Scanning
- Non-traditional items (CD player, etc.)
- Increase the pop-up/"Free Little" libraries around town
- Information Services (Registry of Deeds)
- More job seeker programs and employment help

Programs:
- Teens who are here consistently – what to do with them
- Get feedback from outside groups on what they want from the Library besides space (books, sponsorships)
- More input from professionals, like teachers
- Senior population – programs, Library being the community center
- Writing programs for aspiring writers (NaNoWriMo - National Novel Writing Month in November)

Miscellaneous:
- Teen volunteers
- Internships
-

Aspirations – What does the Library look like in the future? What is the vision you have for the Library?
- Employment/Career Center – information, books, web links, programs
- Maker Space:
  - Portable, equipment like sewing machines and tools; Mac computer for media
  - Creating a space and time for people to discover and explore new things
- ESL Resource Area
- Increase number of staff
  - Teen librarian to work 2:30-5 shift
  - Tech person – move beyond a volunteer position
  - Analyze and reflect on off-hour programs done currently and formalize plan to staff these programs.
- Open later on Thu and Fri
-

Results – How will you know you are successful in reaching the vision?
- Quieter afternoons
- More people coming to the Library for programs

- New people engaged with new offerings
- New staff
- New hours
- More satisfied patrons
- Library is being talked about in a positive way
- More circulation – looking at a targeted audience
- More circulation of non-traditional items
- More traffic on website

Issues/Challenges/Priorities Facing the Town Now & Community Vision:
- New elementary school – maybe more families and children may be moving into Millis
- New population is wealthier; concern of being priced out of the town
- Elderly population increasing and will need different services
- Tax rate is going up; concern for people on fixed income
- Housing is not as affordable and the houses being built are bigger
- People find the town desirable to live in; close knit community; suburban; friendly; readily
- available resources
- "Small town, big family" "Small school, big family"
- Middle School population – idleness; drugs; vaping; pot; no place for them to go
- Race issues
- Sports – shortage of space (fields and at the school)
- Walkable center – all schools near center
- Senior population growth
- Building renovations/ new construction

What is the Library's role?
- The Library is free
- The Library could have dedicated staff for teens
- The Library could expand delivery and other outreach services
- The Library can find ways for the community to engage with each other
- The Library could create multigenerational programs; day programs for adults
- The Library needs to develop a relationship and partnership with the senior center and recreational center so there is no competition
- The Library needs to work on ways to show the library is a good investment and that it is the community's Library – feeling of ownership
- The Library needs to take on more of a community center feel – a place for everyone

APPENDIX D: FOCUS GROUP SUMMARIES

Middle School Book Club Focus Group
Tuesday, February 26, 2019

1. What are some of your favorite things to do and why?

Reading, sleeping, snacking, drawing, writing, basketball, cooking, football. flip tricks, hanging out with friends, spacing out, Fortnite, DI, jogging, singing.

2.) What would you like to be able to do, or have, in Millis?

Zoo, tennis courts, ice rink, arcade, volleyball for 5th graders, nicer park with bike paths and a duck pond.

3.) What are your impressions of the Library?

Quiet. Too crowded. Children's room too busy/full of babies and toddlers, and teen room full of kids who get in trouble.
Good.

4.) Tell me about your ideal library?

Fish tank! Every book you need always checked in/available, apartments you could live in, penguins, slides, spiral staircases, moving ladders, study rooms stocked with fidget toys. More monitoring of the problem kids who "ruin it for everyone."

5.) Is there anything else you would like to say about the community or the Library?

They like the early dismissal activities, and like that on early dismissals they can be in the community room. They like the community room a lot- having more space, also being able to eat and study in there with distance from the problem kids. They would enjoy having the room open to them after school.

Formally and informally, all the kids that DO spend time here (some of them have very little experience using our space, or are very young and haven't really used it in a "teen" way.) mentioned feeling pushed out by "bad kids" "wild kids" "eighth graders who cause trouble" and would spend more time here if that was not an issue.

Teen Library Users Focus Group
Wednesday, February 27, 2019

1. What are some of your favorite things to do and why?

    Sleep, watch Netflix, eat food, play Fortnite, (then they insisted I remove that one, bc it was "just a joke") play Rainbow Six, play sports

2. What would you like to be able to do, or would like to have, in Millis?

    Pool, Starbucks, more fast food restaurants

3. What impressions do you have of the Library?

    Good place to hang out, "like a boys and girls club," like the teen room, like that we have an area where they can eat.

4. Tell me about your ideal library? What makes it your ideal library?

    It would have a pool, more video game playing, sleepovers, a coffee machine

5. Is there anything else you would like to say about the community or the Library?

    About the Library: I like it. It's enjoyable when I'm here.

COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Q1: 89% (318) of the respondents have Millis library cards. 13% (45) had library cards from other libraries. The majority of these were from Medway.

Do you currently have a Millis Public Library Card? (Check all that apply.)
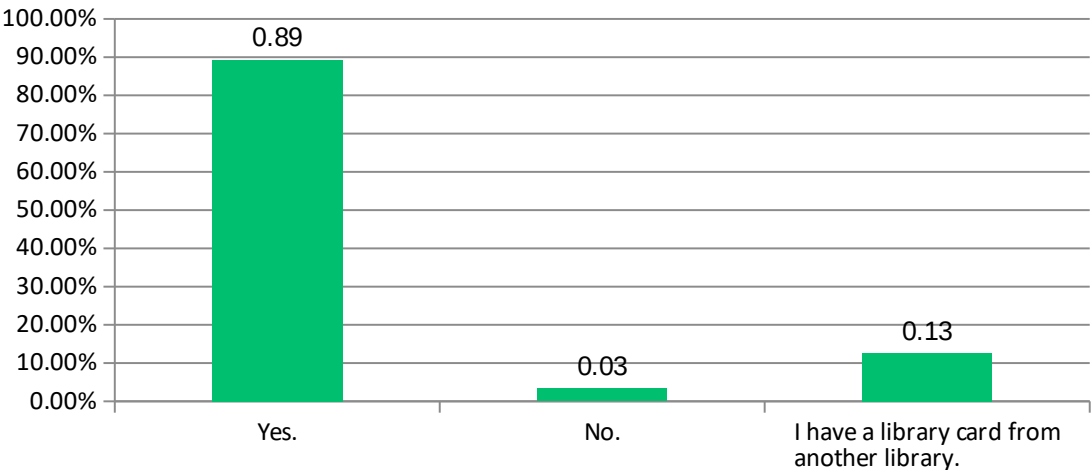
Q2: 76% (272) have used the library at least once a month or more.

### On average, how often do you visit the Millis Public Library?
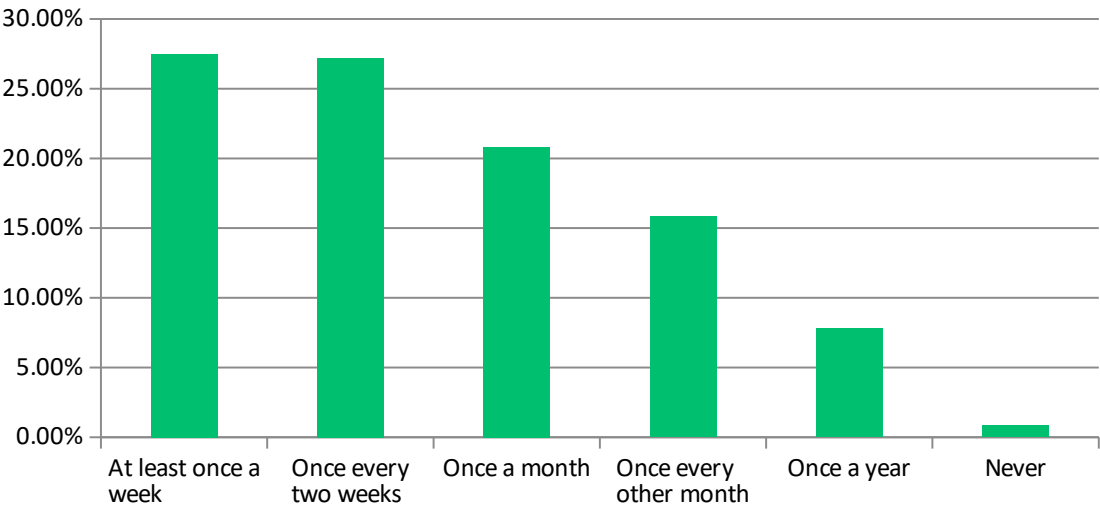
Q3: 57% (204) visit the library and use the library's online/web resources. 39% (139) only visit in person, and 3% (12) said they only use the library's online resources.

If you use the library, do you...
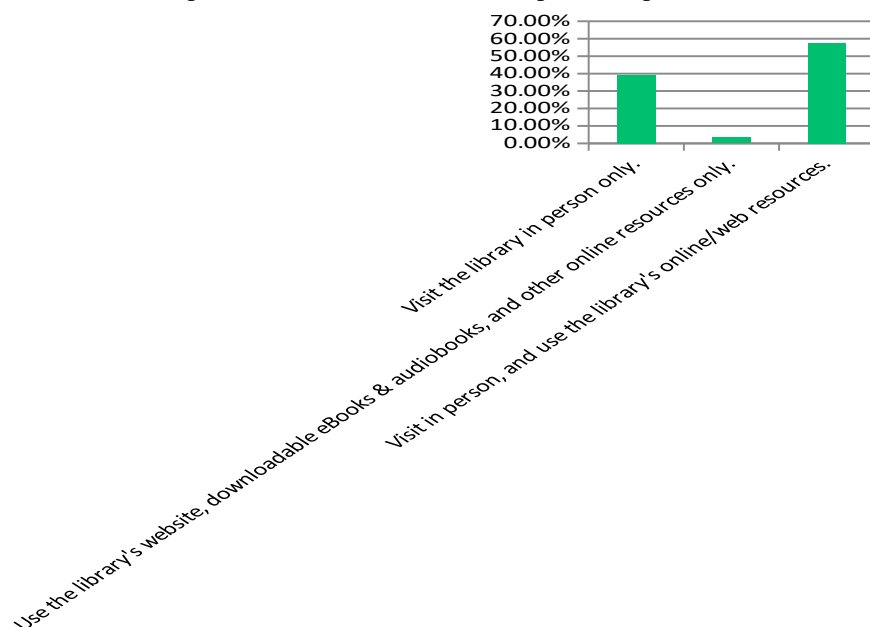
Q4: Books and other materials to check out is still why people visit the library (87%) and 49% request books from other libraries and 39% borrow a museum pass. Many people stated they came to the library for the Book Sale.

What are your main reasons for using the library? (Check all that apply)
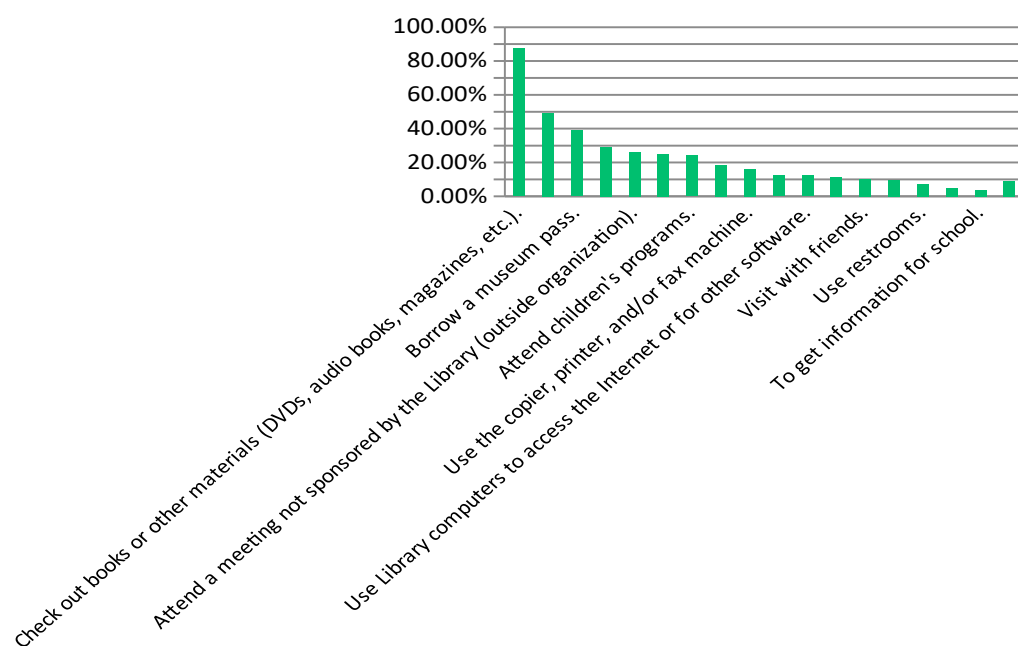
Q5: 25% (90) answered that they don't use the library regularly. Of these 90 people, 31% said they don't need to use the library. 31% said the hours of the library are too limited, and 31% said they buy their own books. 14% said they didn't know what the library had to offer them. Hours were also mentioned in the comments.

If you do not use the library regularly, why not? (Check all that apply.)
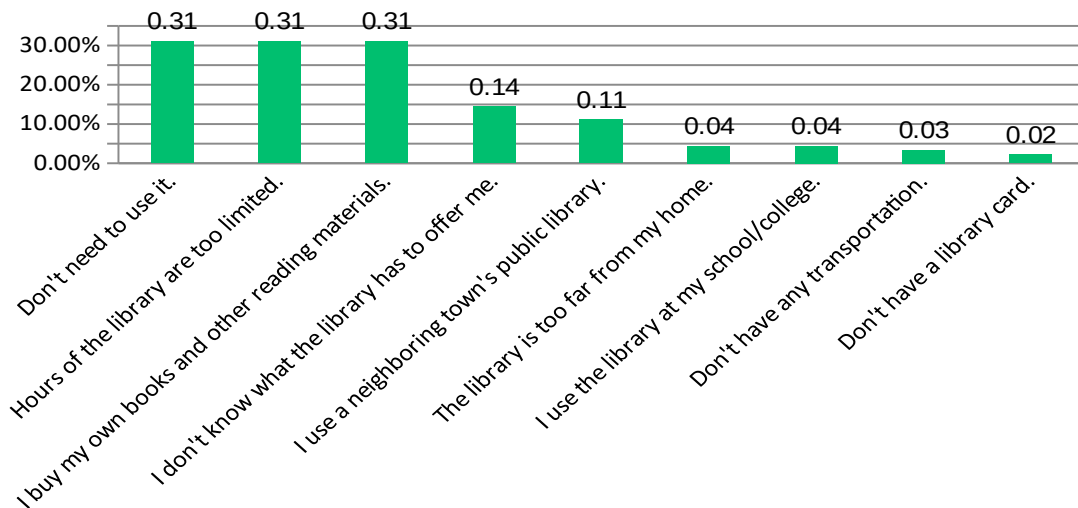
Q6: In term of satisfaction, people were extremely satisfied with the building, both interior and exterior. They were also satisfied with the overall customer service. They were least satisfied with the hours of operation and the programs for young adults and adults. A lot of the comments were about the hours.
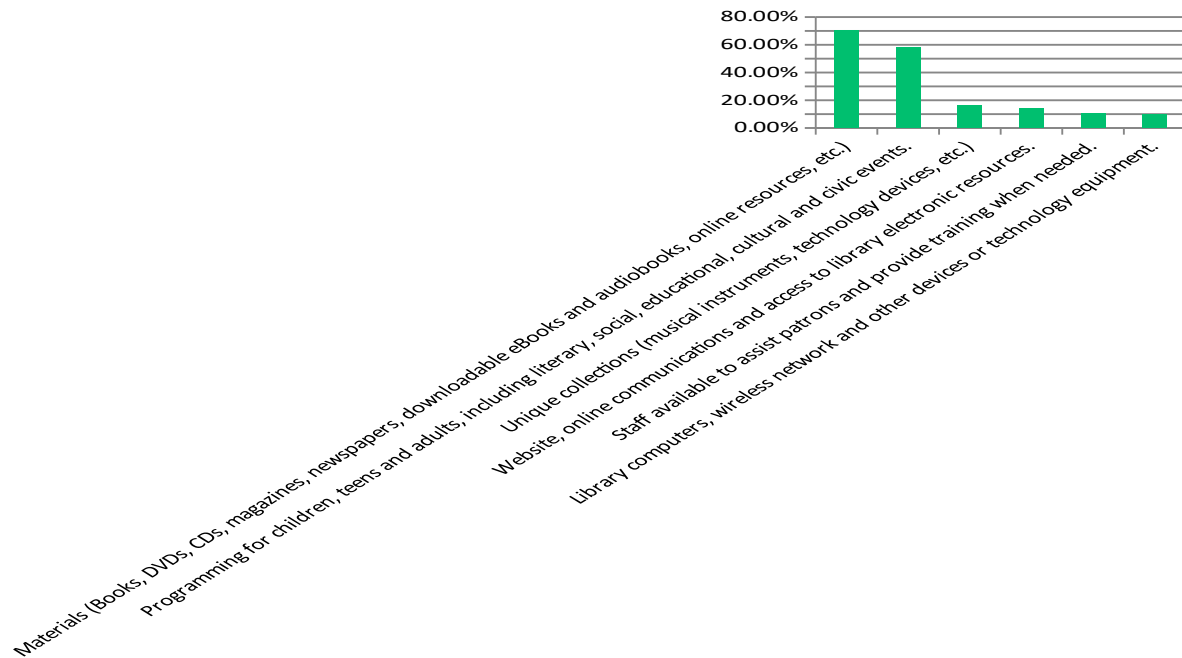
How would you rate the following? If you are not familiar or used a service, please leave that rating box blank.
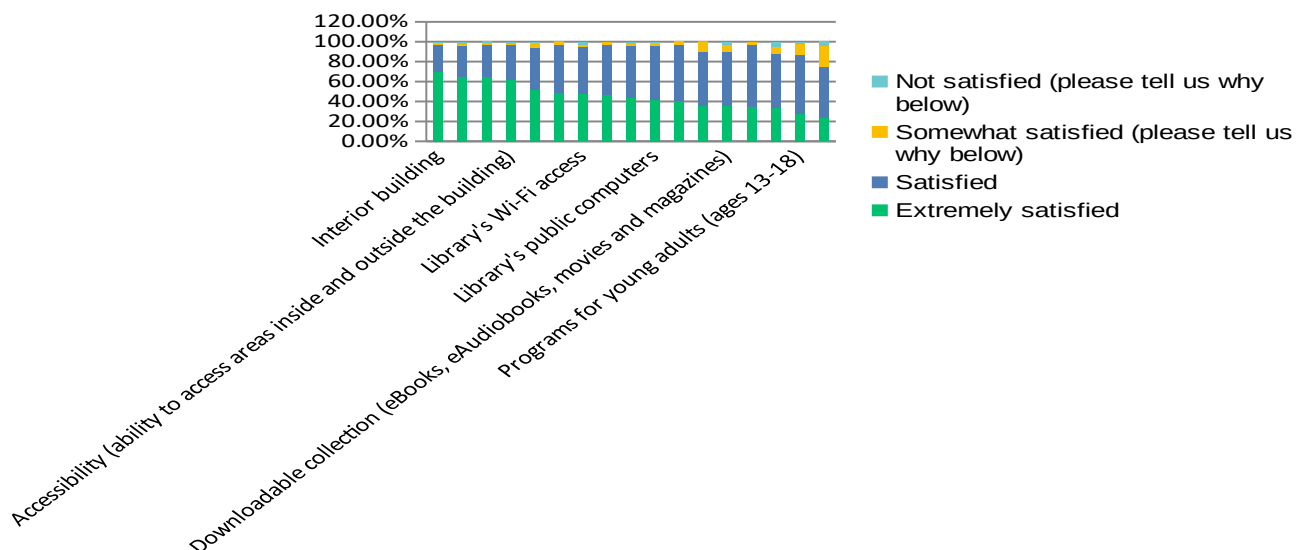
Q7: Focus resources on materials (71%) and programming for children (58%). Again, the hours were mentioned in the comments.

**Overall, where would you most like the Library to focus its resources? Choose up to 2.**

Q8. The two top priories for the library should be programs for all ages and expanding library hours. More materials were also mentioned.

**What do you think the TOP THREE PRIORITIES should be for the library? (Select up to 3)**
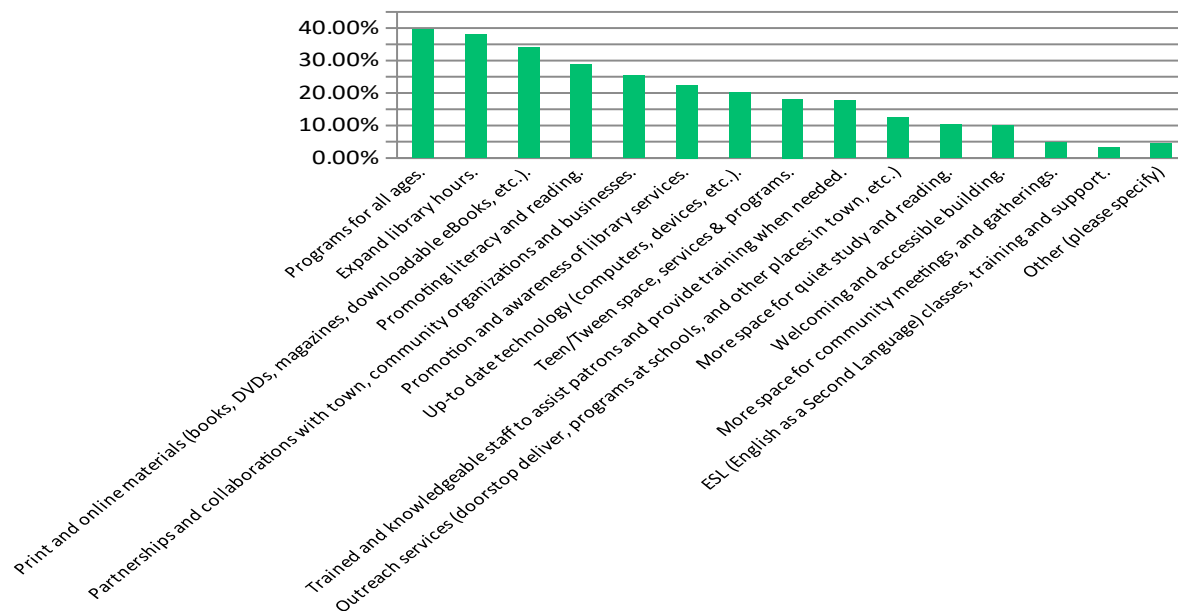
Q9. 49% said they don't use the Library's downloadable collection, and 14% did not know the library offered these resources.

Do you use the Library's download-able eBooks, audiobooks and magazines?
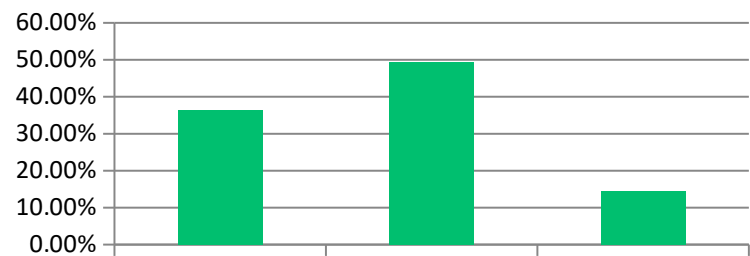
Q10: From the six priorities for the community of Millis, there were two that ranked highest. 45% said to develop a comprehensive communication plan. The other priority was to work on being a sustainable community. Road repair and the Senior Center came up in the comments.

Six (6) themes have been identified as priorities for the community of Millis. What are your two (2) top choices?
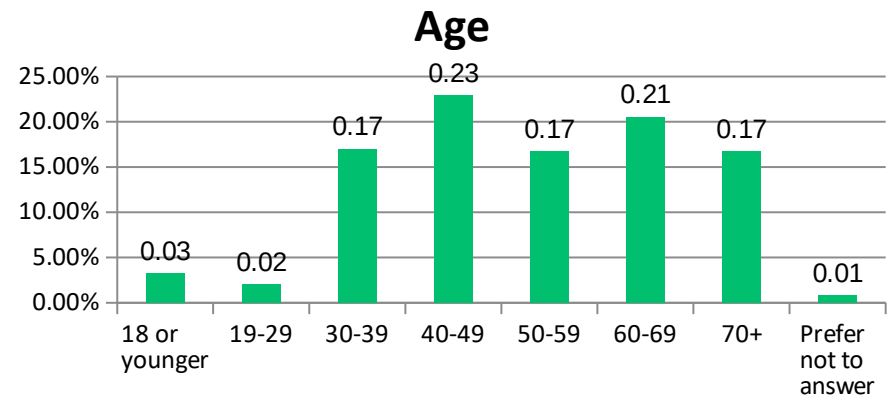

A B C D E F
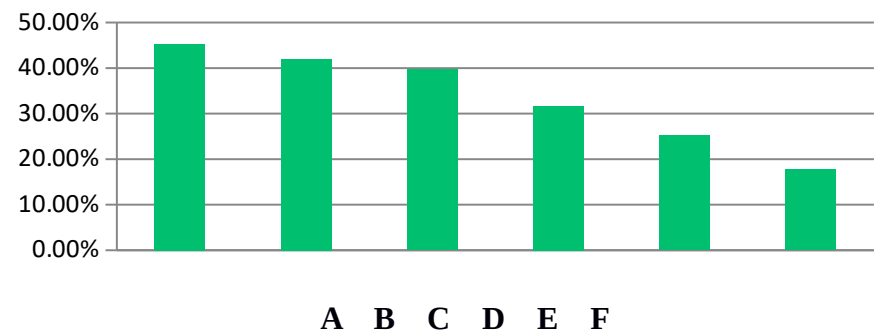
A - Develop a comprehensive communication plan among all town departments, community organizations and the school, to spread awareness of community events, issues, and news.

B - Work on being a sustainable community (including keeping open spaces) and be a model for other towns in Massachusetts.

C - Continue to focus on economic development, especially in the downtown area.

D - Build a community center for all ages.

E - Encourage diversity of all types, and embrace new ideas and open-mind about differences.

F- Increase civic engagement and opportunities to find local experts to share experiences.

Q11: What would you like to be able to do now that is not currently being done anywhere in the community that the library could help you with?

activities adults ages area attend board book bring center change clubs community connecting crafts currently development engagement events group hall health help house ideally include involved job kids learn light meet offer open opportunities people person problem programs public read reduces resources school seniors support tech teens think town years
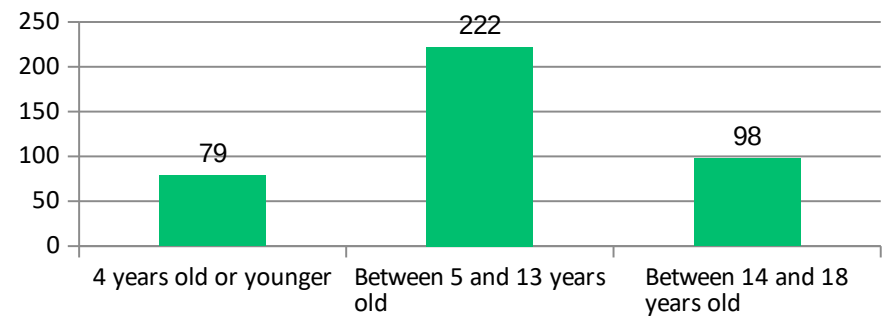
Q12: Is there anything else you would like to share with us?

adult age amazing area beautiful best blu-ray book building center children enjoy expand experience family feel friendly group helpful hope interest job keep kids librarian libraries love music offer patrons people please programs public rachel reading school service small space staff students suggestions thank towards weeks welcoming wonderful work years

Q13: All age groups responded, with the most responses coming from the age range, 40-49, 23% followed by 60-69 at 21%.

Age

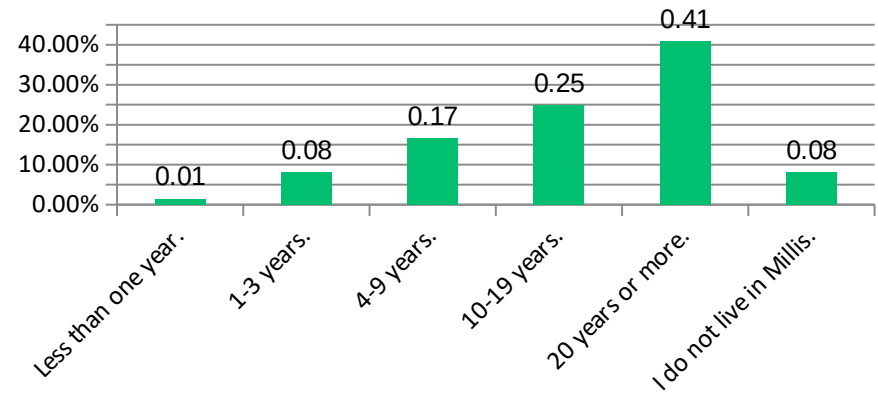| Age group	Percentage
18 or younger	0.03
19-29	0.02
30-39	0.17
40-49	0.23
50-59	0.17
60-69	0.21
70+	0.17
Prefer not to answer	0.01

Q14: The majority of the responses have between 5-13 year olds in their household.

How many children, by age, are currently live in your household?

Age	Count
4 years old or younger	79
Between 5 and 13 years old	222
Between 14 and 18 years old	98

Q15. 40% have lived in Millis for 20+ years.

How long have you lived in Millis?

| Duration	Percentage
Less than one year.	0.01
1-3 years.	0.08
4-9 years.	0.17
10-19 years.	0.25
20 years or more.	0.41
I do not live in Millis.	0.08

Q16. 92% of the respondents were white. 3% were of mixed ethnicity.

Q17. 100% identified their preferred language as English.

Q18. 40% have a Bachelor's degree and 38% have a Graduate degree.

What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?
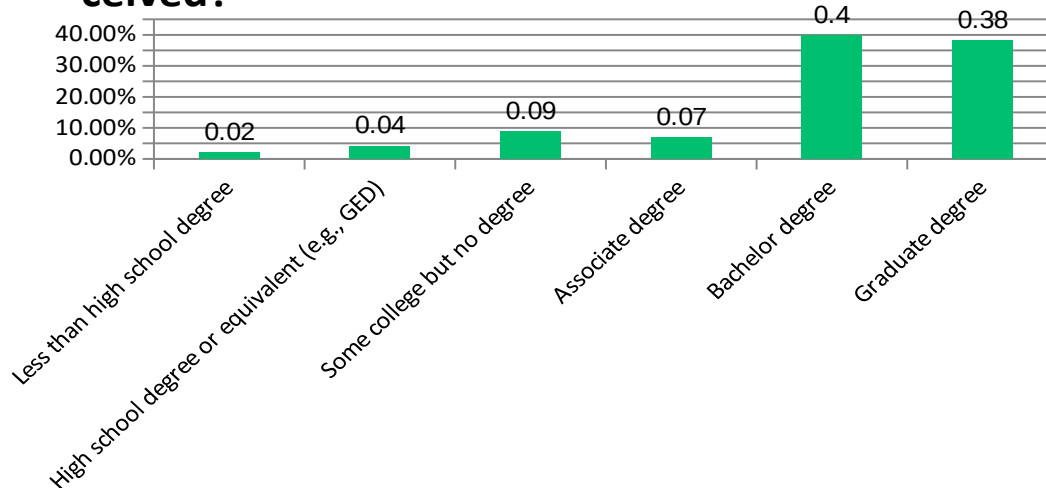
Q19. 47% are employed and working full-time. The other group were the retired, with 23%.

Which of the following categories best describes your employment status?

Q20. 98% currently have Internet access at home.