

2025 - 2030

Strategic Plan



Forbush
Memorial Library



Mission

Forbush Memorial Library provides access to diverse resources, programs, and spaces. We welcome everyone to explore, learn, and connect.



Table of Contents

1

Message from the Director

2

Message from the Board

3

Community Snapshot

4

Process

5

Community Feedback

6

Priorities & Goals

7

Next Steps

8

Appendices

9

Acknowledgements

Message Director

from the



Now more than ever communities are relying on libraries to provide information, socialization, and entertainment, and it behooves us to consider the best way we can direct our resources towards these ends for as many people as possible. This plan strives to make sure the library is focused on reaching out to new potential patrons in our community while also preserving the offerings and character that have served our existing patrons so well. With these goals firmly in mind we have reimagined our mission with input from the residents, staff, and patrons of the Forbush. This plan sets new objectives for continuing to provide access to diverse resources, programs, and spaces, where everyone can explore, learn, and connect.

— Deric Wilson, Forbush Memorial Library Director

"Something which we think is impossible now is not impossible in another decade."

-Constance Baker Motley



Message

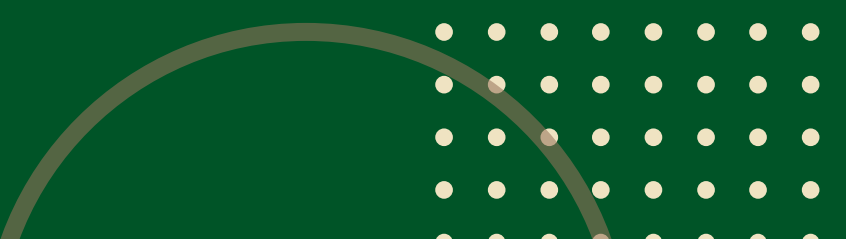
from the **Board**

It is our pleasure to share with the greater Westminster community this strategic plan to help guide the library's efforts for the next five years. The mission, strategic priorities, and goals are the core components that will help to propel Forbush Memorial Library positively into the future. We want to acknowledge how this plan reflects the needs and wishes of the greater community, the collective wisdom of our library staff, director, and trustees, and the guidance of consultants who helped to contribute to this document.

The best plans are dynamic, flexible tools for continuous improvement. With the library's mission as its primary rationale, Forbush Memorial Library strives to be an exceptional and innovative public library and active community partner dedicated to helping all individuals realize their full potential.

It is not intended to be published and forgotten, but rather actively guide annual action plans, monthly reporting, and the everyday activities of the library. We are proud of our history and look forward with eager anticipation to all that lies ahead in our future.

Forbush Memorial Library is grateful for the feedback received from the community during our strategic planning process. Focus groups, community conversations, surveys and many discussions all contributed to the content and direction of this plan. Thank you.



Community Snapshot

Population

- 8,330 residents
- 26.9% is 65+
- 19.6% is under 18
- 7.2% have veteran status

Characteristics

- 97.5% White
- 1.7% two+ races
- 1.5% Hispanic/Latino
- 0.6% Asian
- 2% foreign-born
- 3.6% speak a language other than English at home
- 4.4% disabled under 65

Household & Income

- 3,248 households
- 85.8% are owner-occupied
- 2.53 persons/household
- Median household income is \$95,674
- 3.4% in poverty

Technology Access

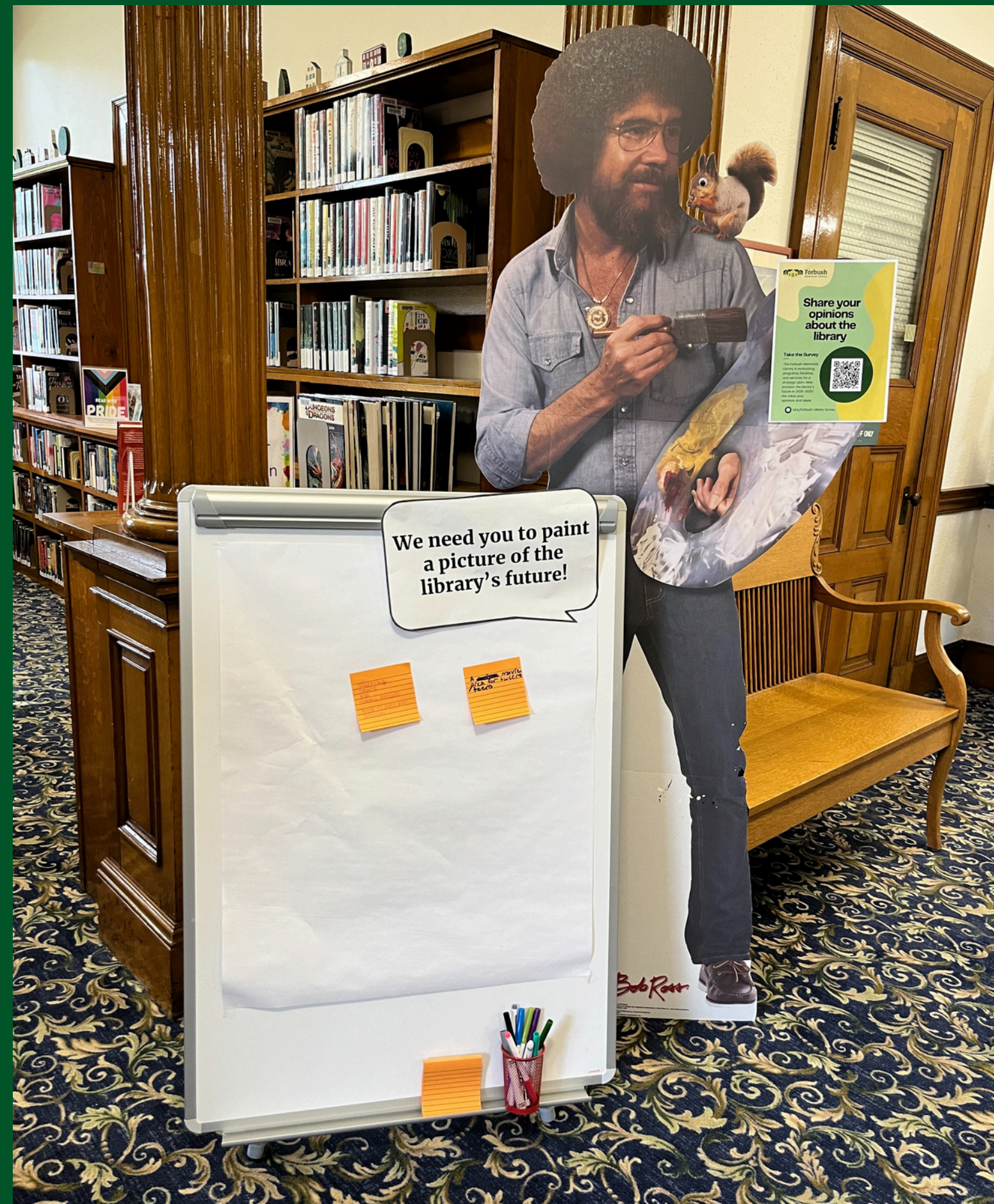
- 94.8% households with a computer
- 91.8% households with broadband access subscription

Education & Employment

- 93.8% age 25+ with at least a high school diploma/ equivalent
- 40.2% age 25+ bachelor's degree or higher
- 62% age 16+ in the civilian labor force
- 28.8-minute commute to work (mean)
- 408 students at Westminster Elementary School
- 195 students at Meetinghouse School

Our Process

- Trustee review of current plan
- Online and paper surveys
- Focus group sessions for staff and patrons facilitated by the Massachusetts Library System
- Community conversations with seniors and parents
- Microfeedback stations
- Children's "dream library" art project
- Analysis of data
- Identification of strategic priorities and goals



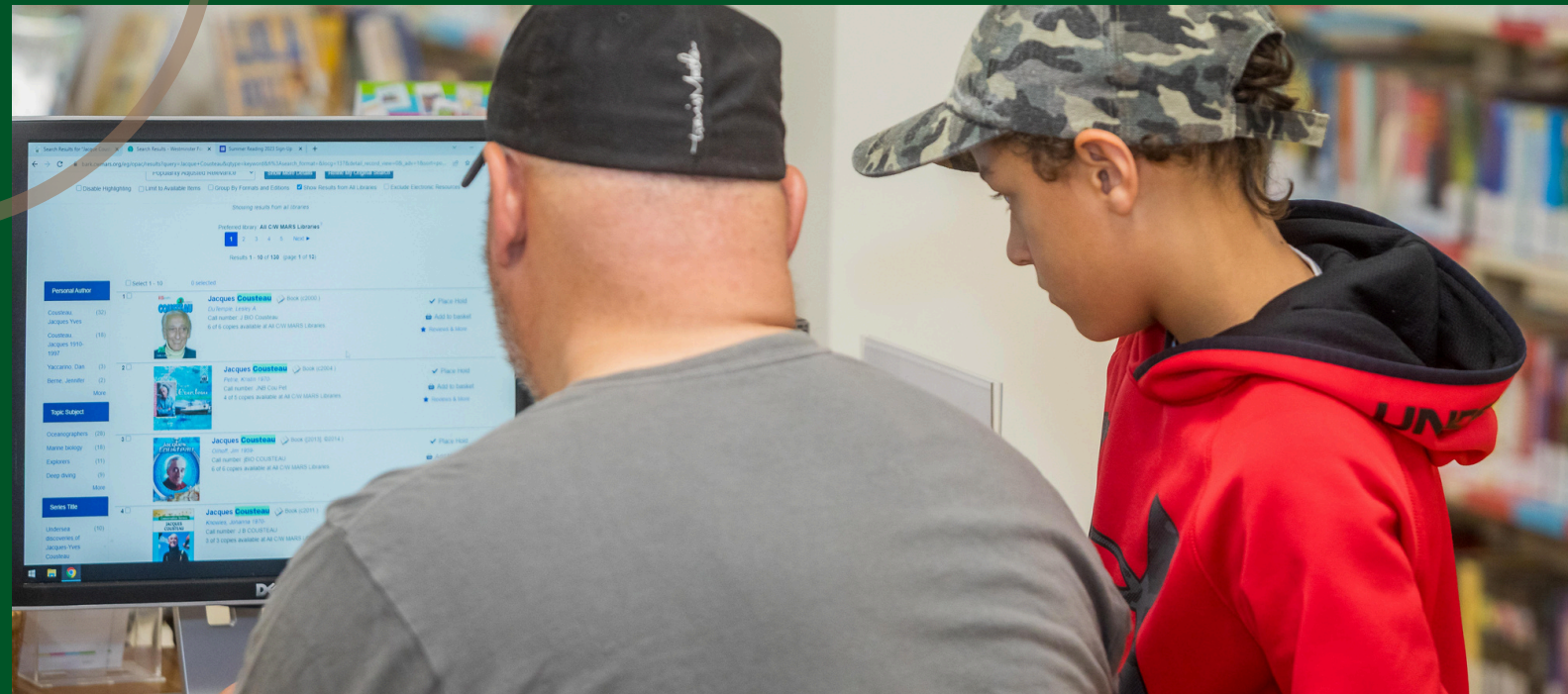
Community Feedback

“The library is perfect the way it is
Keep books! | Very satisfied
I love the librarians
Welcoming & friendly | Website is fabulous
I know I'll come home happier if I stop at the
library first
Children's programming is awesome!

Parking can be a challenge
Make a good space for teens
Comfy chairs please | More digital streaming
Library of things - seeds, cookware, toys!
Not sure when things are going on
Increase variety of programs
Coffee area to relax, read | Longer hours

”





Strategic Priorities

- 1 Celebrate reading!
- 2 Make the library more accessible
- 3 Foster a welcoming atmosphere
- 4 Build public awareness of the library's mission and value
- 5 Focus resources on community needs



1

Celebrate reading!

- Build physical and digital collections
- Promote collections
- Offer library programs celebrating literature
- Make the library a special occasion



2

Make the library more accessible

- Provide a diverse range of collections and programs
- Sustain, enhance, and promote access to collections, programs, and spaces
- Ensure individuals with disabilities can enjoy all the library has to offer



3

Foster a welcoming atmosphere

- Reconfigure space to create an environment that is both welcoming and functional
- Improve the patron experience
- Ensure access to the library for all



4

Build awareness of the library's mission & value

- Expand existing outreach channels
- Target outreach to underserved populations/nontraditional users
- Work collaboratively with town departments
- Cultivate and expand relationships within the community



5

Focus resources on community needs

- Explore new resources, both physical and digital, to offer our community
- Evaluate community needs regarding indoor and outdoor spaces
- Maintain and develop collections that reflect the diversity and interests of the community



Next Steps

Annual Action Plans

The Action Plan is a living document. It not only details the initiatives and projects that must be completed to achieve strategic plan priorities, but also outlines key roles and responsibilities, milestones and timing, and the metrics and measures that determine success. Each year the library will develop an Action Plan for the following fiscal year allowing for flexibility to integrate new needs and priorities as they arise.

Communicating Progress

The Library Director will review progress toward achieving the Strategic Plan's Priorities, Goals, and Action items quarterly. The Director will communicate progress to the staff and trustees at monthly meetings. The Director will also report on performance highlights from the calendar year to the community. The Strategic Plan, including its appendices, is available on the library's website.

Appendices

Appendix A: Environmental Scan Report

Appendix B: Library Survey data

Appendix C: Wishes for the Library data

Appendix D: MLS-facilitated Focus Groups data

Appendix E: Process



Trustee Approval

This Strategic Plan for 2025-2030 was approved by the Board of Trustees on April 15, 2025 and is submitted to the citizens of the Town of Westminster, Massachusetts and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Kimberly Samson, Chair
Margherita Altobelli, Vice Chair
Kim Brothers-Caisse, Recording Secretary
Tiffany Davis, Corresponding Secretary
Michelle Miller
Neepa Shah



Acknowledgements

The Forbush Memorial Library Board of Trustees extends our appreciation to the hundreds of community members who responded to the Strategic Plan survey as well as those participating in focus groups, community conversations, and other data gathering methods. Community pride and involvement is strong in Westminster and your thoughtful answers to our questions helped to shape the strategic priorities that will serve the community's evolving needs.

We would also like to thank Michelle Eberle from Massachusetts Library System, the staff of Forbush Memorial Library, and the Strategic Planning Committee.

*"A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never failing spring in the desert." -
Andrew Carnegie*

