

Palisades Free Library Long Range Planning, 2018

External and Internal Environment

Review external and internal environment:

- Political factors
 - Town Board - voted twice for a 10% reduction in funding (2013 and 2014)
 - New Town Supervisor wants to cut libraries from Town budget
 - Possible consolidation with other South Orangetown Libraries
- Economic factors facing Orangetown
 - 2% tax cap
 - High property and school taxes
 - Town Supervisor wants to cut taxes
 - \$40 Million sewer upgrade
- Economic factors facing the Library
 - Under Town control for funding
 - Less competitive with other libraries for salaries and benefits
 - Using a fund balance to offset operating budget
- Community culture
 - community minded
 - artists and those interested in the arts
 - value their history
 - love their library
- Needs of the community
 - Safety issues on roadways
 - Preserve historic nature of community
 - Display and access of Local History and Archives
 - More programming for older teens
 - More children's programming on weekday evenings
 - Place for quiet study and reading
 - Notary
- Current staffing
 - Open 7 days a week, 56 hours
 - Full time director: Maria Gagliardi
 - Full time administrator/head of circulation: Debbie Firestone
 - Full time adult librarian: Anya Berg
 - Part time children's librarian: Claudia Uccellani
 - Part time teen librarian: Georgia Grandstaff
 - Part time evening/weekend staff
- Administrative issues
 - Supervising and providing ongoing training for a mostly part time staff
 - Difficulty finding subs to fill in for vacation/illness
 - Laws and regulations increasing in complexity
 - Expertise in areas needed: legal, human resources, facilities
- Current technology
 - 4 public computers
 - Color copier/fax/scanner
 - Ebook readers
 - Inadequate telephone system
- Building Needs

- Properly performing HVAC
- Generator to keep sump pumps going in blackout
- Sound dampening in bathroom
- Early Literacy section in children's room
- Movable book shelves in Historic Room
- Storage for local history
- Storage for children's programs
- Storage for staff room
- Jigsaw puzzle table
- Safety bars on window in meeting room
- Parking lot lighting
- Sprinkler system or extra faucet for garden
- New tables for staff room, lobby
- Community demographics
 - 540 Housing units
 - Age: 65+= 34%; 40-64=35%; 25-39=7%; 18-24=10%; 10-17=10%; 0-9=4%
 - Family size: 1 person=22%; 2-3 people=57%; 4-5 people=14%, 6+ people=7%
 - Ethnicity: 85% white; 1.7% black; 10.5% Asian;
 - Social and economic: \$96,979 median household income; 30% households make over \$200,000 a year
- Library usage statistics
 - Palisades residents use the Palisades Library 79% of the time; Orangeburg Library 9%; Tappan Library 4%; Other 8%
 - 34% of checkouts at the Palisades Library are by non-Palisades residents: Nyack 9%; Tappan 8%; Other 17%
- Library trends
 - Establish and maintain partnerships with other educational, cultural or community organizations
 - Provide programming to address community needs
 - Provide staff with annual technology training
 - Makerspaces and hands-on programs
 - Digital Literacy
 - Health Literacy
 - Diversity and Inclusion
 - Fine Free Lending
 - Lower, moveable bookshelves
 - Challenging misinformation and fake news
 - Sustainability
 - Lending "things": wifi hotspot devices, energy monitors, bird watching kits, cookie cutters, unusual bake ware, musical instruments

Quotes from surveys and focus groups

A library of this quality in such a small neighborhood is a 'miracle'.

The size fits the community perfectly.

The library has the ability to be the 'glue' that holds the community together.

Don't replace books with socialization – the library should remain quiet.

We LOVE the Palisades Library. Such an excellent children's section, and wonderful programs. I find the video games are an unnecessary distraction for the kids. They already have too much exposure to them, even in school!

I think it's critical that books remain available to people, and a place to read for those who need one.

I love the local history hanging on the wall! It makes the library so much more fun to explore!

I don't think there is much offered for older teens.

I think great for small children, (and my daughter loved it when she was little, but by the time she is 10 she did not find the programs interesting.) I think having the teen book section is great.

I love the friendliness and welcoming attitudes at the library.

I wish I lived closer to Palisades so I could visit it more often.

I love the library. It's a wonderful, cozy place - with a nice selection of newly released books & DVDs. Everyone on staff is very friendly.

Only to say that I believe libraries should be places of respect for reading and scholarly work. We have plenty of places for socializing in Palisades--what is much harder to find is the quiet space reserved for uninterrupted thought.

This library is so cozy, homey and earthy. It is a special place to visit (like coming home to a close friend/relative's cottage.) I always look forward to coming here and feeling at home.

**2018 Long Range Planning
Public Survey Summary
Palisades Free Library
May 2018**



Sixty-nine people answered the survey.

This is a smaller number than the past two surveys conducted (124 people in 2014 and 112 people in 2010). 92% of people who answered the survey were regular library users, frequenting at least once a month. Overall satisfaction with the library is very high. 91% were “very satisfied” and only one person (who was from Palisades) said they were “not satisfied” but did not leave a comment as to why.

The way people use the library is changing.

Not surprisingly, “books” are the number one reason why people use the library at 84%, but this number is down from 93% in 2010. DVDs were a distant second (39% down from 58% in 2010). Programs was the third reason at 28%. In 2010, programs ranked 6th behind magazines, museum passes and audiobooks. This year audiobooks garnered 16% of users whereas in 2010 26% of respondents said they used audiobooks. For those who don’t use the library for books, they visit less than once a month and come for audiobooks, programs, a quiet place to read, and to play in the children’s room.

Reasons for using Palisades Library vs Other Orangetown Libraries

We wanted to know why patrons use other libraries and what they feel must be housed or experienced at the Palisades Library. 93% of respondents felt it was very important that New Books be at the Palisades library. As far as Older Books are concerned, 67% felt it was very important; 27% somewhat important and 6% not important that older books be at the Palisades Library. After new books and older books, programs ranked third followed by Local History. DVDs were seen as less important than a quiet place to read.

67% of survey respondents said they used the other Orangetown libraries. 28% went for new books, 25% for DVDs, and 21 % for older books. Although 25% said “other,” many wrote they visited other libraries for books and programs. Other reasons include visiting an art show or exhibit, music CDs, and needing a notary.

How should we use space at the Palisades Library?

We asked the open-ended question of how people would like to see space allocated in the library. 40% wanted no change, 21% wanted to see more room for programs, and 19% wanted more books. 13% of total respondents wanted more space for the children, although only 29% of parents said they wanted more space for children and 41% of parents said they wanted no change. Nowhere on the survey did anyone say that they wanted more parking, which has been a perennial comment on past surveys.

Website

Website satisfaction was mixed. 35% said it was easy to use, 15% thought it was good. 24% were neutral and 9% found it not to be user friendly. Most people used the website to look up a book or DVD or to look at program information.

Pastimes

We asked patrons what kinds of events and activities they've been to in the recent past. The most popular answer was library program with a 58% response rate followed by movie (57%), play or musical (48%), museum (48%), and art gallery (46%). With regards to what patrons wanted in adult programming, there was no common theme.

Families

35% of respondents have children between 0-17. Parents of older teens felt there was not much offered for their children. Satisfaction is mixed with regard to the number of programs, variation, quality, and times offered. 30% of parents did not answer. The highest satisfaction is with the quality of the programs offered. The lowest satisfaction is with the number of programs offered. According to the survey, children don't seem to be using the library for homework or studying or to access databases. In actuality, we do see teens using the study area. Our database statistics back up the survey response that usage is low.

Comments

When we asked for comments about the library 41% mentioned the friendliness and helpfulness of the staff. 36% said they loved the library or that the library was great. The only negative comment was about the poor cell phone service.

Adult Focus Group

Adults Monday 3/19/2018 @4:30

4 participants. One man, three women. All long-term residents. Two grew up in Palisades.

- Use the library a few times a month.
- Come for books, research, wifi, film screenings, and local history.
- Check out fewer DVDs because of streaming services.
- Use other libraries for books and research – tend to go to larger libraries.
- Prefer books over ebooks.
- Download audiobooks but did not know about the new *Libby* app.
- Find out about community events through the community center emails, 10964, Library Newsletter and post cards, bulletin boards and flyers. They did not mention the library emails.
- Library should not compete with Community Center type of events/programs.
- More lectures & talks.
- Would like more book displays.
- Don't want social function to replace books.
- More access to local history and local authors.
- Upgraded website: interface is antiquated and "it hurts"
- Avoid going digital with everything – keep access to books. Don't lose sight of intellect.
- Bring awareness to community about what the library offers.
- Love the staff and librarians at Palisades.

Staff Focus Group Feedback Notes 4/06/18

Palisades Culture

- Arts- Artisans
- Community minded
- Love their library
- Families- Sports Oriented -Academic Competiveness

Ways We Assist Patrons

- Technology-Printing/Faxing/Personal Devices
- Early literacy and reading support – Story time
- Movie/Book/Reading recommendations
- Reference- Resource Questions - School Project
- Delivery to people who can't come in

Best Feature of Library

- Quaintness of the space and character of the building
- Friendly Customer Service

Uniqueness

- Building
- Historical
- Programs we offer because of the community we have
- A nice staff, Long term, consistent staff
- Smaller size- A positive, easy to navigate, high quality collection

Needs Improvement

- Internet speeds
- Better cell phone reception
- Bigger/larger collections, more materials
- Better phone system
- Bathroom sounds
- Chair in the lobby for the elderly
- Outreach- Need to get ourselves known better- Diversity- Latino Community
- More space- Programs, parking, materials
- More resources accessible remotely- Hoopla, Kanopy
- Limited use library card- Do not have to come in to get a card

Wrap Up: Most important things discussed

- Quality of collection
- Staff/customer service
- Making the best use of space we do have- It has evolved
- Charm of the building
- Raising awareness

Board of Trustees Survey 2018

7 out of 9 trustees responded. Answers listed from very good to poor.

Q2. Trustees understand the Library's mission, programs and services

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
6	1	0	0	7	3.86

Q6. Board receives regular reports on finances/budgets, programs, services and other important matters

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
6	0	0	0	6	3.75

Comments Just started. N/A

Q7. Board exercises fiduciary responsibility for the use of public and private funds

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
6	0	0	0	6	3.75

Q3. The structural pattern (board, officers, committees, director, staff) is clear

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
5	2	0	0	7	3.71

Q8. Board effectively represents the Library to the community

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
5	2	0	0	7	3.71

Q10. Board meetings facilitate focus and progress on important organizational matters

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
5	2	0	0	7	3.71

Q1. Trustees have full and common understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a board

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
5	1	1	0	7	3.57

Q4. Board has clear goals and actions resulting from relevant and realistic strategic planning

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
4	3	0	0	7	3.57

Q9. Advocates for funding for the library community as a whole and specifically for the Palisades Free Library

very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
4	3	0	0	7	3.57

Q11. Board regularly monitors and evaluates progress toward strategic goals and program performance

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
4	3	0	0	7	3.57

Q14. Each member of the board feels involved and interested in the board's work

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
5	1	1	0	7	3.57

Comments I certainly do!

Q5. Board attends to policy-related decisions which effectively guide operational activities of staff

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
4	2	0	0	6	3.4

Comments This is a confusing statement. Not sure how to address.

Q12. Board regularly evaluates and develops the Library Director

Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
2	4	0	0	6	3.25

Comments We are incredibly fortunate to have Maria as our director and would support any professional development she thought beneficial.

Q13. Board has approved comprehensive personnel policies which have been reviewed by a qualified professional

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
3	3	0	0	6	3.25

Comments Unclear on the review. Should it be done by more than the board and the director?

Q15. All necessary skills, stakeholders and diversity are represented on the board

Very good	Good	Fair	Poor	Total	Weighted Average
3	3	0	0	6	3.25

Comments Always an opportunity to better in terms of diversity. More actively soliciting Board candidates from the community rather than relying on sitting Board member recommendations could help. It'd also be interesting to hear whether the 5-year commitment discourages prospective candidates.

Goals

Definitely need long term planning
Developing a clear 5 year plan for growth
Long-range strategic planning

Continue community outreach
Community involvement
Work with Friends of the Library with ideas for raising funds
Partnership with the friends for fund raising initiatives
Financial sustainability

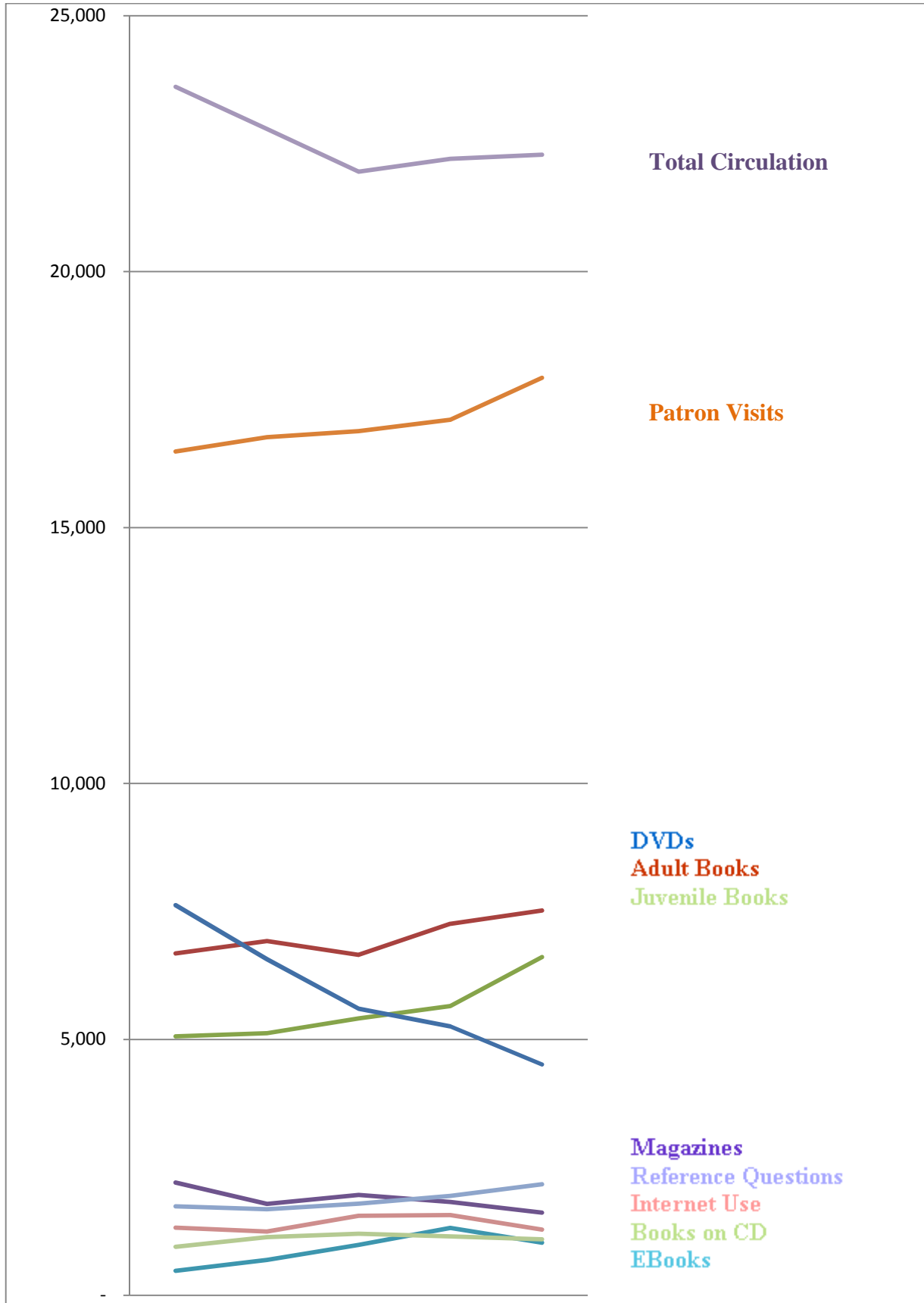
Consolidation decision
Deciding to combine with the other libraries or not

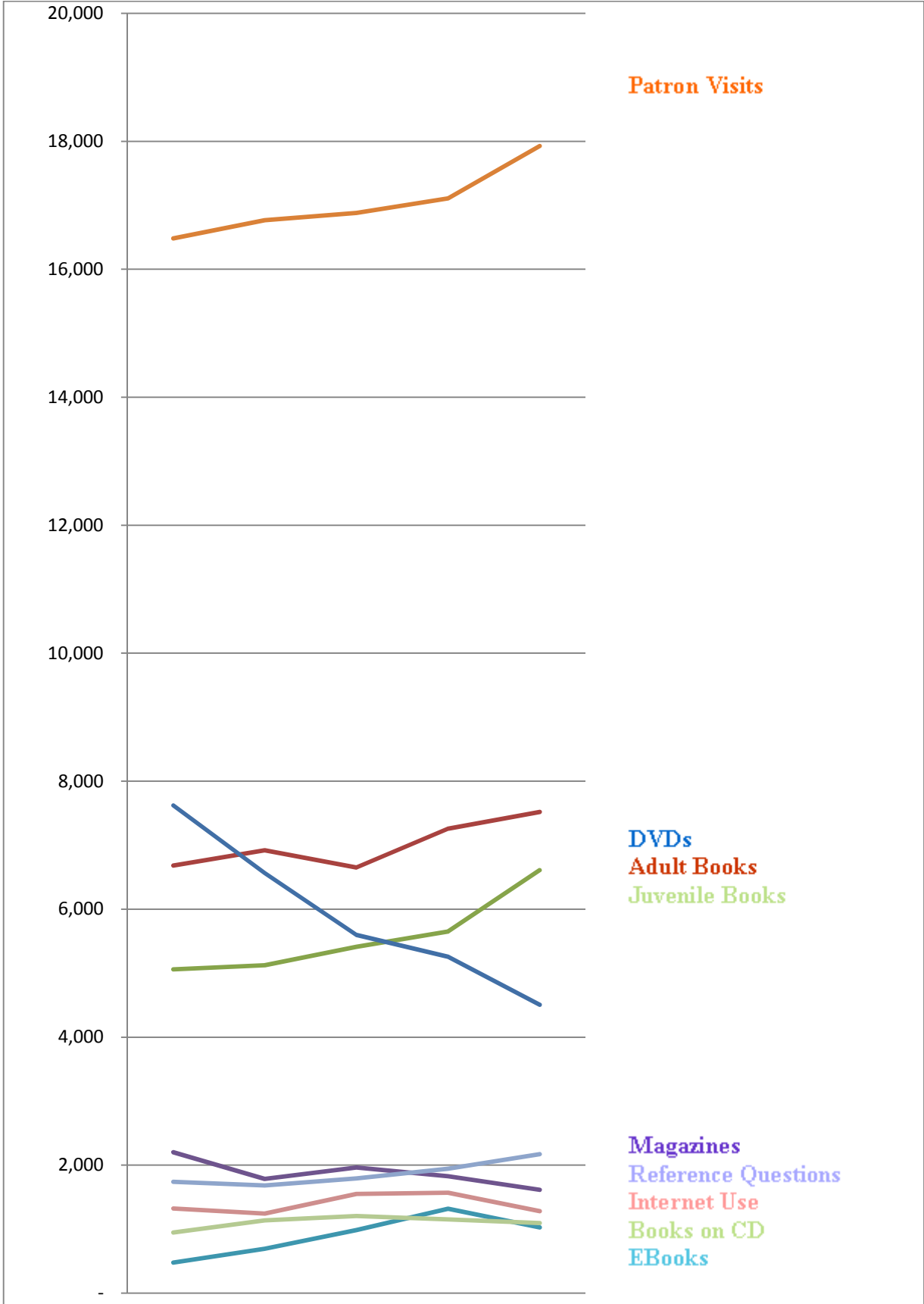
Rethinking use of space to draw community in

I believe more ideas/discussions to get younger community members involved and regularly using the library

Honestly the library is very well run and cared for by Maria and the staff

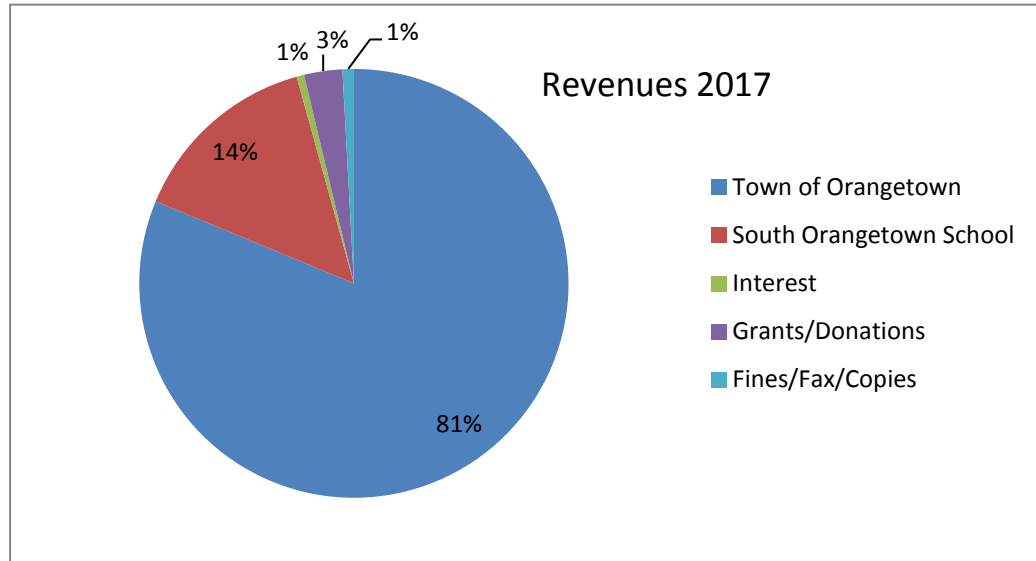
Statistics 2013 - 2017





Income

Town of Orangetown	\$	381,768
South Orangetown School	\$	67,898
Interest	\$	2,665
Grants/Donations	\$	13,544
Fines/Fax/Copies	\$	4,029
	\$	469,904



Expenses

Salaries/Benefits	\$	336,166
Library Materials	\$	33,720
Building Expenses	\$	38,764
Equipment	\$	3,266
Capital Expenses		
Professional Fees	\$	32,392
Supplies, Shipping, Telecom, Misc	\$	15,667
Insurance	\$	5,751
	\$	465,726

