
Collection Development and Management Plan

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COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT & MANAGEMENT PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The Worcester Public Library acts to fulfill its mission through collection development and management of resources that address the interests and needs of Worcester's diverse and complex community. This involves the selection, acquisition and organization of library materials, including electronic resources; the evaluation of donations; the judicious de-selection of materials; the preservation and conservation of significant materials; and the protection of intellectual freedom.

The purpose of this policy is to assist the Worcester Public Library staff in building and maintaining collections that are responsive to the community's educational, informational and recreational needs, while supporting the mission, roles and goals of the Library and its Branches. It informs the public of the philosophies that shape the library's collection.

I. Mission, Function, Responsibility, and Goals

Mission:

The Worcester Public Library serves as a welcoming gathering place that actively promotes the free exchange of ideas in our democratic society, and strives to eliminate barriers in the pursuit of ideas. The Library makes information and services available to all people while fostering intellectual freedom, protecting privacy, encouraging and celebrating our diverse community, culture and heritage.

Function By City Ordinance:

As Determined by City Ordinance, it is the function of the Public Library to provide free library services to the residents of Worcester. The library adheres to the standards set by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, ensuring that the library is open to all, makes no charge for normal library services, lends books to other libraries in the Commonwealth and extends reciprocal privileges to the holders of cards issued by other libraries that belong to the same C/WMARS network.

Responsibility:

The Board of Directors is responsible for "the management of the library, the custody of the books, and the regulations under which they may be used." The Board of Directors entrusts the administration of this plan to the Head Librarian. Library staff uses their expertise and judgment to develop and maintain the collection in accordance with this plan.

Goals:

The Collection Development Policy supports the priorities outlined in Worcester Public Library's Strategic Plan for including:

- Delivering collections that help community members to build relevant skills for the workplace, lifelong learning, healthy living and quality of life
- Providing materials to support reading/viewing/listening for pleasure
- Creating readers through early literacy programming and summer reading events
- Showcasing information that engages the community in important civic issues

II. Principles Shaping Collection Development and Maintenance

[The principle that the] library does not promote any particular belief or view but offers collections that allow individuals to examine different sides of issues and make their own decisions.

To this end, the collection may contain original, critical and unorthodox ideas because access to ideas is necessary for a democratic society to function. The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the library's commitment to Intellectual Freedom and not an endorsement of that view. It is the library's position that society is at a greater risk through the suppression or censorship of information and ideas than from their free and open distribution.

[The principle of] free and open use for all.

The library supports and protects the concept of Intellectual Freedom. The selection of library material is based on the patron's right to read, and his or her freedom from censorship by others. Individual choice is paramount and protected. Materials are arranged in a way to facilitate access to the information. They are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents. No restriction is placed on their use except for the purposes of protecting them from injury or theft. Access to some digital or electronic materials may, however, require the use of a valid Worcester Public Library card for authentication and remote retrieval.

[The principle that] the collection covers the interests and views of all ages.

Selection of materials for adults is not restricted by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children or adolescents that some might consider inappropriate. The Library makes its collections available to all. While library users are free to select or reject materials for their own use or the use of their minor children, the freedom of others to use the library collection will not be restricted. The merits of the work, its relationship to the collection as a whole, and service to the library community will be the primary considerations. The responsibility for the reading of selection of teens and children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Library staff does not serve in place of the parents in guiding children's use of the library collection. The Worcester Public Library supports the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights (see appendices), which reaffirms these principles.

III. Scope of Collection and Communities Served:

The library is a community resource for all the people of Worcester. Library users are diverse, reflecting varying ages, races, belief systems, levels of education, incomes, national origins, languages spoken, and political and social views. This Collection Development Policy currently centers on supporting four levels of service.

- 1) **Main Library** – the collections at the Main Library are designed to serve the residents, businesses and area schools and colleges as a reference library, as well as an extensive popular materials library. The scope of the collections at the Main Library are intended to provide a generally high level of subject strength and support a superior depth and breadth of collection to meet the diverse needs and interests of our users.
- 2) **Frances Perkins and Great Brook Valley Branches** are smaller. Their scope is based primarily on the most efficient use of limited available space. The scope of their collections focuses primarily on

current and popular materials to meet patron demand and immediate need. They often serve as the primary library for people whose opportunities to use other facilities are limited, particularly the youngest and oldest in the community.

- 3) **One City, One Library branches at Goddard, Roosevelt, Tatnuck, and Burncoat** collections function as public library branches with a focus on children, but also include YA and adult materials. The scope and content of the collection is intended to support the schools in their efforts to support early literacy.
- 4) **Mobile Express Libraries, Libby and Lilly collections** focus on the needs of borrowers at locations they visit. Libby's collection contains both juvenile and adult materials to support visits to local schools, daycare facilities, public housing and retirement communities. The scope and focus of Lilly's collection is to act as a mobile library for Worcester schools that do not have a library at their location and serves as a supplemental resource for popular juvenile and YA materials that promotes early literacy for Worcester's children.

IV. Collection Overview

Although the majority of the library's collection continues to be in print format - books, periodicals, newspapers, and government documents, there are significant collections of non-print materials such as microforms, CD's, DVDs, games, maps, and sheet music as well. In addition, the Library collects a variety of electronic resources that may include some or all of the following: full text magazines, newspapers, journals and other periodicals, reference sources, indexes, abstracts, images, electronic books, audiobooks, electronic media and Internet resources.

a. General Collections

Youth Collections:

Children's collection: This collection serves children from infancy through age twelve, plus caregivers, children's literature students and educators. It contains materials in a wide variety of formats for children in response to their needs and interests, in recognition of their diverse tastes, backgrounds, abilities and potentials.

Teen Services collection: This collection serves youths from sixth through twelfth grades as well as their parents/caregivers and teachers. It includes fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, audio and video materials.

Adult Collections:

Fiction Collection: This extensive collection includes both popular contemporary works and traditional classic literature. While the majority of the collection is comprised of general fiction, we also have specific genre collections that include Mystery, Science Fiction, Thriller, Romance and Westerns. Large print materials are available in all of the preceding categories.

Nonfiction Collection: The library acquires materials that provide a core of basic knowledge. The library selects materials that address contemporary issues; provide self-help information; facilitate continuing education; enhance job-related knowledge and skills; increase knowledge of the community, the country, and the world; support business, cultural, recreational and civic interests in the community; nourish intellectual, aesthetic, creative and spiritual growth; and present different viewpoints on issues.

Resources include:

- **Business and Career Resources**
- **English as a Second Language & Citizenship**
- **Health Resources**
- **World Languages Collection**
- **U. S. Government Documents**
- **Grants Resource Center**

Audiovisual Collections: The Library's audiovisual collection includes materials in the following popular formats:

- **Music CDs** – includes vocal and instrumental music representing a variety of performers, composers, and styles of popular and classical music.
- **Audiobooks** – Books on CD and PlayAways of popular and classic fiction and nonfiction titles.
- **DVDs** – Digital, Blu-Ray, and PlayAway versions of contemporary and classical films, nonfiction selections, and World Language titles.
- **Video Games** – collected for a wide variety of devices and purchased for all age levels, including Juvenile, YA, and Adult.
- **Downloadable materials** – ebooks, audiobooks, music, and videos in electronic format

Magazine and Newspaper Collections: Approximately 450 magazine and 20 newspaper titles can be found in the Main Library's Periodicals and Digital Services area. The collection covers a wide variety of topics and provides educational, cultural and recreational reading intended to supplement the book collection. Selected Worcester County town newspapers and magazines are collected based on use and available space. A large selection of current magazines and newspapers is also available online in full-text. Each branch has a small selection of newspapers and magazines geared to the needs of that location.

Electronic Resources: consist of content that is stored and displayed digitally and accessed via computers and other electronic devices. The Library collects a variety of electronic resources that may include full text magazines, newspapers, journals and other periodicals, reference sources, indexes, abstracts, images, electronic books, electronic media and Internet resources. As new resources become available electronically, similar reference resources in the print reference collection are evaluated for retention, taking into consideration access, cost, ease-of-use and other selection criteria.

b. Special Collections:

Worcester Public Library maintains special collections, the development and management of which may differ from those of the general collection.

- **Green Collection:** The Worcester Public Library was founded in 1859 by Dr. John Green, who gave to the city his own library of 12,000 volumes, “as a library of consultation and reference, but to be used only in the library building.” Green Collection books may be used only in the Main Library. His deed of gift further stipulated that no books “once added to the department by me, (shall) ever be transferred to any other.” These books are never discarded, but books that are damaged beyond repair may be destroyed. A percentage of income from the Green Trust is used yearly to acquire new materials. These may be discarded when appropriate.
- **Closed Stacks** contain print materials that have value culturally or historically but are not used frequently and are placed in the Closed Stacks on the basement level of the library. These include older U.S. and Massachusetts government documents, bound volumes of magazines and journals, fiction, and nonfiction
- **Genealogy and Local History Collection:** The Worcester Public Library maintains a comprehensive local history collection, focusing on items pertaining to the City of Worcester, Worcester County, Massachusetts as a whole, and the six surrounding New England states. The collection supplements our extensive genealogical holdings since genealogy and local history are closely intertwined. We seek to acquire and make available all Worcester-related items in print and in microform. In addition, we subscribe to major genealogical databases, including, Ancestry.com, HeritageQuest, and American Ancestors.

Microfilms are purchased to preserve local historical and genealogical records when digital access is not available. Presently, the library collects (how many years) the *Worcester Telegram & Gazette* in microfilm. The Library recognizes its responsibility to provide equipment to read and prepare print copies of microform materials.

With the exception of the Archives of the Worcester Public Library, manuscripts, physical artifacts and rare books with no association with Worcester, are not collected. Certain exceptions may be made with the understanding that for inclusion in the collection, the item must fit into the parameters of our overall collection development policy.

Worcester Talking Book Library, (WTBL)

As part of the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLSBPH) network, the WTBL provides free library services to eligible Massachusetts residents of any age who are unable to read traditional print materials due to a visual, physical or reading disability and to organizations that serve them.

The Library loans books in different subject categories, spanning everything from classics to recent bestsellers in English and more than 60 foreign languages. Books for adults and children are available in digital cartridge, large print, braille and analog cassette formats, described videos and electronic download via the NLSBPH BARD site.

V. Policies Guiding the Selection of Library Materials

General Criteria

Selection is based upon awareness of the diverse needs and interests of the individuals in this community balanced against evaluation of material and knowledge of the collection's strengths and weaknesses. It is characterized by flexibility, open-mindedness and responsiveness to the changing needs of the library community and should be continually evaluated. Selection refers to the decision to retain, as well as to add to, the collection. The existence of a particular viewpoint in the collection is an expression of the library's commitment to intellectual freedom and not an endorsement of a particular point of view.

Patron and staff requests are carefully considered and weighed in relation to the total Worcester Public library collection and budget. Duplicate copies of materials are purchased to take care of permanent or temporary demands. Replacement of library materials withdrawn because of loss, theft, damage or wear is evaluated based on the availability of other titles that cover the subject, demand for the title, and similar or more recent materials.

Resources are measured by objective guidelines. The entire work, rather than individual parts, is evaluated. It is the overall contribution of the work that is critical for acceptance or rejection. A single standard cannot be applied to each work, but all items, whether purchased, contracted for or donated (see Policy on Accepting Gifts in appendices), are evaluated with the following criteria:

Selection Criteria for general collections:

- Attention of critics, reviewers, reference books, and the public
- Accuracy, timeliness of data and reliability
- Price, suitability of format for library purposes, durability and ease of use
- Contribution to diversity or breadth of collection
- Relevance to community interests and needs
- Reputation & qualifications of the author, creator, or publisher
- Local significance of the author or creator of the work
- Support of library's mission and goals
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Contemporary significance, permanent value or popular interest
- Suitability of subject, style, and format for intended audience
- Commercial availability of the material

Additional Criteria for electronic resources

- Unique subject coverage to meet needs not provided by statewide databases
- Ease of use and remote access capabilities
- Licensing and maintenance requirements
- Comparison of content and cost with other available formats

VI. De-selection of Library Materials:

De-selection of materials requires the same thoughtful consideration as selection and will be conducted on a regular basis. De-selection is essential both to ensure the currency and relevance of the collection and to optimize use of library space for both collections and programs. The process provides a more appealing, up to date collection, guarantees a reputation for reliable information, allows us to adapt to our growing community and its many diverse needs and interests. It provides feedback on the collection's strengths and weaknesses, identifies materials that need repair and makes space for new materials.

De-selection of General Collection:

When evaluating materials for withdrawal from the collection, commonly accepted practices include considering the age and appearance of the item, how often it circulated, the last circulation date, the availability of funding for replacement titles, the usefulness and accuracy of the materials being reviewed, and the question of whether it continues to fulfill the goals and mission of the Library.

Incorporating all of the above criteria, librarians use a systematic, step-by-step approach to weeding called the [CREW method](#). The CREW method (Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) uses an acronym, MUSTIE, to indicate when an item should be removed from the collection. MUSTIE stands for:

- **M**isleading and/or factually inaccurate
- **U**gly - worn out beyond mending or rebinding
- **S**uperseded by a new edition or a better source
- **T**rivial - materials of short-lived interest (past shelf-life) or of no literary/scientific merit
- **I**rrelevant to the needs and interests of the community
- **E**lsewhere - materials easily borrowed from another source

Once de-selected, books that are still in readable condition are labeled withdrawn and given to the Friends of Worcester Public Library for sale or made available to patrons for free.

De-selection of Periodicals and Newspapers:

Periodicals are discarded based on currency and availability in other formats of the information they contain. Physical copies of national newspapers such as the Boston Globe, and New York Times and the local newspaper, Worcester Telegram and Gazette are discarded once the corresponding microform copy has been added to the collection.

In unique circumstances, periodicals and newspapers may be bound or digitized for preservation purposes.

De-selection of Electronic Resources:

A subscription to a product may be cancelled if:

- Product is no longer cost effective
- Usage statistics are consistently low over a significant period of time
- Content no longer meets the needs of users

- Competitive or better product becomes available
- Vendor provides poor service or fails to hold up on the subscription agreement

VII. Gifts, Memorials and Monetary Donations

Gifts

Material Donations: Due to the increasing costs of selecting and processing materials, the Library is able to accept a limited number of donated materials only. These items must meet the same selection guidelines used for purchased materials. Inclusion in the collection will be based upon the condition of the material, literary merit, duplication, and available space. The Library does not appraise donations or provide evaluation of gifts for tax deductions or other purposes. Upon request, the Library will provide acknowledgement of donations of materials.

The Library retains the unconditional ownership of the gift or donation and its disposition. The Library determines the conditions of display and access to the materials. Due to the high volume of donations received, the Library is unable to notify each individual donor the status of the donation. Unused gifts may be given to the Friends of Worcester Public Library for public sale or may be recycled.

Memorials and Monetary Donations: The Library welcomes monetary gifts to purchase materials, equipment, or support special programs. Selection of specific titles will be made by library staff. Materials will be ordered in keeping with the donor’s wishes if the request complies with the library selection guidelines.

Gift plates, identification plaques or other appropriate recognition identifying the donor or person being honored are available. Other real or personal property donated to the Library will be accepted at the discretion of the Board of Directors. **Planned giving and legacy bequests can also be made to ensure continued vitality of the library for future generations.**

Addition or Reconsideration of Library Materials

Suggestions and requests from the public are welcome. The public has a right to request additions to the collection and to question material now in the collection. *See appendices for Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials.* During the process of reconsideration, questioned material will remain in the active collection until an official decision is made.

The Worcester Public Library does not exclude titles, other than by budgetary constraints or failure to meet selection criteria. The Worcester Public Library upholds the American Library Association (ALA) Library Bill of Rights. Library staff believes that the parent or guardian holds the final responsibility for the material that their children borrow from the library.

The Library makes an attempt to judge materials as a whole, not as an isolated part. Any patron who feels that an item is inappropriate may ask for a “Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials” form from a staff member. The item will be reviewed by a staff committee that will take into consideration professional reviews. The committee will submit its recommendation to the Head Librarian. It is the responsibility of the Head Librarian to determine the Library’s official response.

Appendices

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 18, 1948, by the ALA Council; amended February 2, 1961; amended June 28, 1967; amended January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 24, 1996.

Adopted by the Board of Directors, Worcester Public Library on the following dates: April 5, 1976, April 12, 1983, November 14, 1989

The Board of Directors of the Worcester Public Library endorses the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and the interpretations as detailed in the seventh edition of Intellectual Freedom Manual. The Board will examine changes and additions to these interpretations as they become available.

Procedures for Patron Requests for Reconsideration of Library Materials

1. The patron will be courteously directed or taken to reference, children's or branch staff.
2. The staff will listen to the concerns and will inform the patron of relevant library selection procedures and policies.
3. If the patron wishes a review of the material in question, the librarian will give the patron the Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials form.
4. The patron will be asked to complete the form and return it to the staff or mail it to the Head Librarian.
5. On receipt of the Request for Reconsideration, the Head Librarian will notify the Division Head to assemble appropriate critical reviews including that of the subject specialist and to forward the material to the Head Librarian for review.
6. Subsequently, the Head Librarian will initiate a meeting including supervisors and the subject specialist at which a determination will be made based on the Library's mission and collection development guidelines. The Head Librarian will notify the patron of the decision within 30 days, with a copy to the Board of Directors.
7. Completed request forms and any other information generated by a request will be filed in the Office of the Head Librarian for future reference.

Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

We invite you to fill out this form if there is a book or another item in our collection that you think does not belong in the Library. The Library takes very seriously all concerns expressed by its patrons and will attempt to respond as quickly as possible. Library staff will review your comments and evaluate your recommendation using the Library's mission and Collection Development Policy as a guideline.

1. Format (book, video, etc.) _____

2. Title _____

3. Author/Producer _____

4. What brought this resource to your attention?

5. What concerns you about this work? (Use back side or additional pages if necessary.)

6. What do you suggest the Library do with this title?

7. Are there resources you suggest to provide additional information and/or viewpoints on this topic?

8. Have you read the Library's Collection Development Policy? YES NO

Signature _____ Date _____

Printed Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

Staff Use Only

Received By: _____ Date: _____ Time: _____