

# Flint Public Library

# Long Range Plan FY 2018 - FY 2022

### PO Box 98, Middleton, MA 01949

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#### **Introduction and Acknowledgements**

The Flint Public Library is a much-loved institution and respected as the heart of the Middleton community. For over 125 years it has served the many needs of the public, thanks to the vision and dedication of Middleton residents throughout the years. This support continues today. Every five years the Library Trustees, Friends Group, Staff, and Community Members gather to reflect and assess the programs and services of the Flint Public Library and to create a forward-thinking strategic plan to meet the evolving needs of the Middleton community. This Long Range Plan is the result of their endeavors.

**Donna Bambury** 

Peter Vantine, Treasurer

Alyce Forlani, Friend

Leslie Musiak, Friend

Roger Talbot, Tech Advisor

Beth Sullivan, Teen Advisor

We would like to thank the following people for their support.

#### Flint Public Library Board of Trustees

Melissa Stankus, Trustee Chair Gretchen Hover Moreschi, (online survey) Shirley Raynard

#### **Planning Committee Members**

Kosta Prentakis, Town Selectman Melissa Stankus, Trustee Chair Gretchen Moreschi, Trustee Shirley Raynard, Trustee Peter Vantine, Trustee Donna Bambury, Trustee Larry and Molly Curran, Citizen Reps Annie Wilton-President of the Friends

### Flint Public Library Staff Members

Ariana Blaus Nicole Cardarelli Mark Doerrer Jessica Furtado Judy Gallerie Melissa Gaspar Tracey Goodwin Geneva Huckleberry Claudia Johnson Loretta Swift Johnson Phil Johnson Justin Liberti

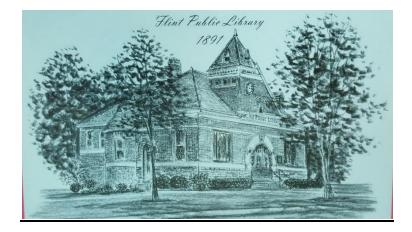
Karen Farley, Citizen Rep Susan Rubin, Citizen Rep Melissa Gaspar, Director

> Elizabeth Macgregor Lisa Rundquist Stephanie Smith Noah Torname Brook White

### The Friends of the Flint Public Library

Annie Wilton, President of the Friends Anne Cote, Vice President Mona Cocciardi Paula Fee, Secretary Alyce Forlani Leslie Musiak, Bernadette Powers, Treasurer Shirley Raynard

We thank all the respondents to the Community Survey and authors of suggestions placed in our suggestion box. We appreciate and value your opinions and comments!



### **Brief History of the Flint Public Library**

Middleton has always been interested in maintaining a library for its citizens. As early as 1772, a social library was founded by Reverend Elias Smith. In 1838 another library association was established by Dr. E.S. Phelps with 46 members and 84 volumes but it was short-lived. The present Flint Library originated as an association formed in 1865 with John M. Peabody President. This association flourished and was turned over to the town in 1879 after the Honorable Charles L. Flint, a prominent Massachusetts citizen born in Middleton, wrote a letter to the Selectmen suggesting the 150 anniversary of incorporation of the Town should be commemorated by the establishment of a Public Town Library, free to all. Mr. Flint offered \$1,000.00 to help start a library provided the Town appropriate \$400 for necessary expenses.

In 1891, \$10,000 was bequeathed to the town under the will of Honorable Charles L. Flint for the purposes of erecting a permanent building for use as a free public library. Following this generous donation, the Flint Public Library was built on a centrally located site in Middleton Square on land purchased by the Town to be used for the construction of a library. Created of ornamental Ashler brick with Nova Scotia sandstone trimmings and a slate roof, the library has an elegant and regal look. The interior finish was of cypress, with birch floors and furniture of highly polished oak. The front painted memorial windows were created by the renowned artist, Donald McDonald whose work is rare and precious. The original book collection amounted to 5,000 volumes representing accumulations from earlier private library associations and the personal library and writings of Charles L. Flint. An early advocate of secondary and higher education, Charles L. Flint was a leading force for the establishment the University of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the public high school system. He wrote seminal works on agricultural topics and became the Secretary of Agriculture for Massachusetts. Most of his original writings reside in the library's glass cased book shelves.

Over the years, the library remained architecturally unchanged with only a 1978 renovation of its basement for a Children's Department. In the early part of the 21<sup>st</sup> century a group of dedicated citizens helped promote the expansion and renovation of the Flint Public Library, a tremendous undertaking which spanned the better part of 3 years. With successful fundraising efforts in progress, new construction soon began and the library operated from a temporary setting on Lookout Lane in Middleton. The new building was completed in 2008 and

a grand rededication of the library was held on Nov. 8, 2008. The new space encompassed more than 18,000 sq ft. and was funded by grants from the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners, Municipal Funds, Historic Preservation Grants and private donations. The total cost of the project exceeded 7 million dollars. Presently, the library contains more than 60,000 books, 3,700 videos, 2,700 audio books, passes to local attractions, museums and subscriptions to almost 400 periodicals. The library also offer eBooks, audio books, and videos which can be downloaded from a computer to the patrons own mobile device.

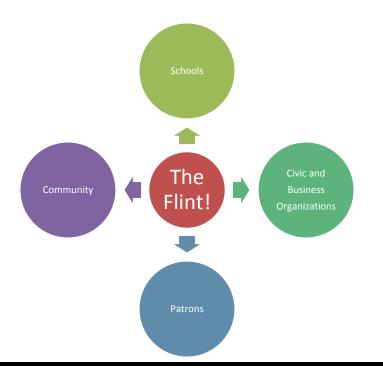
There are 16 computers for the public to use with high-speed Internet. Wireless Internet access is also available. Annually, the library hosts more than 400 programs dedicated to cultural, recreational or educational subjects. Story hour sessions and after-school programs are offered on a weekly basis as the library is committed to promoting reading and literacy to the community's youth. Maintaining a very close and cooperative relationship with Middleton's educational institutions, the Flint Public Library hosts school classes and supports the school summer reading requirements. The Flint also is committed to delivering library material to the homebound and works closely with the Town's Council on Aging.

The library boasts healthy circulation and attendance statistics with about half of its 8,900 residents owning library cards. The library participates in a regional consortium called the Merrimac Valley Library Consortium (MVLC) wherein books at other libraries, both public and academic, can be located and borrowed by Middleton residents at no cost. The Flint Public Library makes its resources available to the community 51 hours per week.

The library is supported through the Municipality of Middleton and overseen by an elected Board of five Library Trustees, elected for a three year term and responsible for overseeing policy decisions. The day-to-day operation of the library is entrusted to the Library Director who supervises six full-time employees and eight part-time employees. In 2016, the Flint Public Library celebrated 125 years of service to the community!

Historical information taken from: *"Middleton, Massachusetts : a cultural history"* by Lura Woodside Watkins. Essex Institute Salem MA, 1970. Statistics from the Annual Report to Mass Board of Library Commissioners for 2016 data.





# Our Vision is ...

to bring people to the library AND the library to people to Exchange ideas, Enlighten minds, Empower lives, and Enrich the community





# Our Mission...

The mission of the Flint is to inform, enrich, and empower every person in the community by creating and promoting easy access to a vast array of ideas and information, and by supporting an informed citizenry, lifelong learning, and a love of reading.

The Flint Public Library is interested in providing free and equal access to information in a variety of formats, in utilizing the new technology, in furnishing environments and resources that respect the diversity of cultures, and in supporting and defending the principles of intellectual freedom, the Library Bill of Rights, and the Freedom to Read Statement.

# ...Founded on our Values

Literacy & Learning

Community Engagement

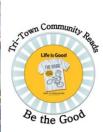
Equality & Service

Historical Preservation

Innovation and Opportunity

# ...will determine our Goals







### LITERACY & LEARNING

The Flint Public Library is a center of education, information and life-long learning.

- The library will offer a wide range of programs for every age group.
  Weekly early literacy groups from birth through school age
  After-school activities and vacation time programs for grade school children
  Monthly programs for teens
  Adult Programs and monthly interest groups such as book and writing groups
  Build on and expand programs and groups which are already successful
- The library will be the community's access to information and technology. By providing a sufficient number of public access computers with the latest technology By maintaining an excellent collection of reference materials: print and online By offering fast wireless internet access By teaching patrons how to use new technologies, and access information
  - By promoting and educating the public about free eBooks, audio books, and videos By educating the public about the services provided through MVLC databases By providing in-library use of Chrome books or other new devices
- The library will promote activities that encourage the enjoyment of reading Engaging book displays, interactive programs, discussions, community reading events By providing quiet places for reading, reflection, studying, working, tutoring By being ADA compliant and free of charge, the library is a barrier-free resource Summer Reading Programs for all age groups will be offered and promoted ALA Reading events will be offered and promoted such as Teen Read Week etc. By helping patrons find items they enjoy reading or are useful to them

- Increased circulation of items and attendance at library events by 4% per year
- Increased the number of programs offered by 3% per year
- Increased visibility of the library's presence in town events and conversations
- Increased word-of-mouth promotions and positive goodwill towards the library



# **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT** The Flint Public Library is the place to engage with others: to meet, to share, to be inspired, to be informed and transformed.

### **4** The Flint Public Library will be a center of cultural, social and recreational events.

- By hosting programs which celebrate diversity and encourage cultural understanding. By offering musical, cooking, travel, and international programs
- By offering museum passes which allow people to attend cultural, educational, and recreational venues they might not otherwise be able to afford.
- By creating a space for acceptance the library will build relationships across cultures and belief systems
- By offering programs which are family-friendly, intergenerational, engaging and fun

### **4** The Flint Public Library will be respected and valued as *the* place to meet

- By providing excellent, professional, and efficient service
- By being a clean, welcoming, user-friendly facility with meeting room space
- By creating an efficient process to book events and meetings in the meeting rooms
- By having ample parking and being open enough hours to serve the public adequately

### 🖊 The Library will collaborate with others to build partnerships and share resources.

- By sharing resources and collaborating with other area libraries on programs & services
- By being a visible partner for other town departments and town events: Chief Will events
- By collaborating with other community groups such as the Middleton Arts Council,
  - Middleton Stream Team, Scouts, Veterans, Middleton in Motion, Walk/Bike Alliance, Council on Aging, Middleton Garden Club, Middleton Historical Society, Tutors, and Teachers
- By collaborating with area schools to support the success and education of every student By collaborating with the schools on the summer reading program
- By displaying the lists and books in an easy-to-find area

- \* Increased the number of collaborative events by 2% per year
- Increased the use of Museum Passes by 2% per year
- Increased goodwill of the community towards the library



## EQUALITY

The Flint Public Library is an outstanding resource open to all and a barrier to none.

4 Library patrons have a fair and equal access to all library services

- By providing a clean, welcoming and safe building with good lighting and signage
- By complying with all ADA requirements and being accessible to patrons with disabilities.
- By continuing to assess programs and services to ensure they are inclusive
- By providing a language service that includes ESL lessons easily downloaded to a device
- By providing materials for non-English users
- By providing outreach services to the homebound
- By providing online services which are mobile-device friendly
- By providing an engaging and informative website which is a portal to online services
- By providing video content of programs on local access cable for home viewing
- By promoting the library programs and services through multiple medias including online, print, social media and our digital sign
- By providing fast broadband Internet access to patrons
- By providing such services as wireless printing, faxing, and scanning

- Increased numbers of Outreach patrons by 3% per year
- ✤ More traffic to our website and use of online resources by 3 % per year
- ✤ More positive feedback from patrons who have used the library services





### **SERVICE** The Flint Public Library staff will provide excellent professional library services to all.

The Flint Public Library staff are knowledgeable, professional, and welcoming Staff attend on-going trainings to grow and develop in their knowledge and skills 2/yr Yearly employee reviews and discussions of professional development Monthly staff meetings to discuss topics related to work Review/streamline work flow procedures as needed to increase efficiency Review staff ergonomics for comfort and long term health Continue to review and develop library collections for greater patron interest Keep up-to-date on trends and reading interests to better serve our patrons Record patron feedback to improve library programs and services Focus on quality of programs and services Staff will work together to decide what new services might be added to serve the community Staff will put patrons first, acknowledge them with a greeting or smile Staff will offer help to any patrons who appear in need of assistance

- Increased attendance of staff at workshops, trainings, and webinars
- Few unexpected staff departures
- Positive feedback from patrons, satisfied customers
- \* Increased feelings of job satisfaction and pride in their work by staff
- \* An additional step increase in pay added to the compensation package
- Increased feelings of appreciation by staff
- Increased numbers of people using the library services
- Creation of a formalize process whereby patrons can recommend titles
- Positive staff reviews each year



### HISTORIC PRESERVATION

The Flint Public Library is a historic treasure and the place to preserve the history of the library and the town of Middleton.

### **4** The Library will be a source of beauty and pride

By maintaining the historic character of the building the library will keep its historic value and be an icon and tourist attraction in the center of town

- By implementing the comprehensive landscaping plan the grounds will be a point of pride for everyone who sees the library
- By becoming a destination of the Essex National Heritage Area and hosting an event during the annual Essex Heritage "Trails and Sails" event

Building is kept clean and well-maintained with a schedule of painting and repairs The library will be in compliance with all building codes and safety requirements

### **4** Materials important to the library's history or Middleton history will be preserved

By digitizing Town Reports, High School Yearbooks and other historic information By digitizing the Tri-town Transcript if possible

By digitizing the historical walking-tour guide and using it to promote Middleton history

By keeping important books and documents in safe storage containers and locked

By maintaining a Local History Collection and Local Authors Collection

By expanding interest in genealogy and providing more classes or resources By reviving the Middleton Coloring Book

By reviving the Middleton Coloring Book

- Increased awareness and pride in the library as a historic landmark
- Increased number of visitors to the library as a destination point + Trails and Sails event
- Increased traffic to digitized historic documents on library website
- \* Long term preservation of historic papers, maps, documents and books



# **INNOVATION & OPPORTUNITY**

The Library is a center of innovation and opportunity which fosters positive growth

### 4 The Library is a positive economic force in the community

- By supporting local businesses and finding ways to collaborate with them
- By attracting people to the library who may then shop in Middleton
- By being a rich resource that attracts people who value libraries to the Middleton area
- By increasing property values near the library as shown by statistics

### **4** The Library provides opportunities for professional and personal growth

- By providing resources and programs which help people start or grow their business
- By providing free online job search help, job skills tutorials,
- By providing resources for cover letters, resume writing
- By providing internet access for online education and/or job applications
- By providing proctoring services as needed to support online education
- By providing space for tutoring and studying
- By providing small meeting spaces for group collaboration
- By trying new ideas, programs, and technologies the library is leading innovation

### **4** The Library has a strong marketing strategy that engages interest and grows support

- By using multiple avenues to publicize events; press, radio, cable, social media, emails By having a website which is easy to use, engaging and fast
- By increasing keeping the events updated on the Library Events bulletin board
- By using the electronic sign on Rte 114 to maximum advantage for the library
- By reaching people with mobile apps so the library services are at their fingertips on their mobile devices--BlueCloud mobile app

#### **4** The Library provides opportunities for community support and library growth

- By finding funding sources through grants, partnerships and the town.
- By having a strong "Friends Group" which advocates and supports the library's mission
- By continuing to build a base of annual giving to support library programs
- By identifying and engaging speakers and presenters who will speak on behalf of the library at town meetings when needed
- By attracting and engaging a network of volunteers who are passionate about the library
- By welcoming all age groups as volunteers (when possible): high school, scouts, seniors
- By developing internship programs at the library for high school and college students



- \* The library is supported by more local businesses; increased by 3% per year
- \* The library is valued as an economic partner by local businesses and citizens
- \* The library is a hub for entrepreneurs, job seekers, people with their own businesses
- \* The library is a place for collaboration, networking, and innovation
- The library has a strong Friends Group that continues to grow the membership (200 members: \$10,000) and promote the library
- The library provides volunteer opportunities for those who would like a hands-on connection to the library and be part of the library's mission and vision



#### Long Range Plan Methodology

The Flint Public Library's Long Range Plan was created over a period of 9 months. Two helpful resources were used as a framework for discussion. The first was an outline recommended by the Massachusetts Library System (MLS) at a Strategic Planning Workshop which Melissa Gaspar attended (March 14, 2016, Marlborough, MA). In brief, this streamlined approach consists of three meetings with the Long Range Plan Committee members and includes a community survey sent out between the second and third meetings.

The second resource was an all-day seminar that Melissa Gaspar, library director attended which focused on "How Librarians are Leading Change" produced by The B. A. David Company. (June 2015) This seminar provided a "Spectrum of Change" visual which was very helpful for the group to understand the changing roles of libraries and where the Flint is currently positioned. There were 10 spectrums of engagement.

- 1. The Library is a place that houses collections/The Library is a place for people to engage
- 2. Library centric institution/Community centric institution
- 3. Focus on what the library does (activities) /Focus on the impact the library has (outcomes)
- 4. Commitment to traditional services/Open to constant and purposeful change
- 5. Customer Focus/Customer Involvement
- 6. Physical spaces/Physical, virtual, ubiquitous, and mobile spaces
- 7. Platform for searching and finding/Platform for creating and innovating
- 8. Place for consumption of knowledge/Place for creating new knowledge
- 9. A research culture/A learning culture
- 10. Librarians as keepers of knowledge and info/Librarians as enablers and teachers of skills.

The Long Range Plan committee met three times to discuss the strategic vision for the library over the next 5 years. Information was also gathered from focus groups such as the library staff, Trustees, Friends groups as well as adult groups that meet at the library.

In the first meeting, The Long Range Plan committee spent time brainstorming ideas to build on the successes of the current library programs and services and to project how to be positioned to meet the needs of the community in 5 years. Next, the committee created a survey which was posted online and also paper copies were available at the library. Some members of the group made an effort to reach out to non-library users for feedback. Three hundred and one surveys were returned and they represented 909 people which is about 10% of the population. In our last survey in 2011 we only reached 6% of the population. In the second meeting the committee reviewed the results of the survey.

### **Results of the Flint Public Library Survey**

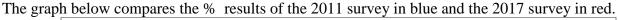
1. Do you or your family currently use the library? 300 answered; 1 skipped

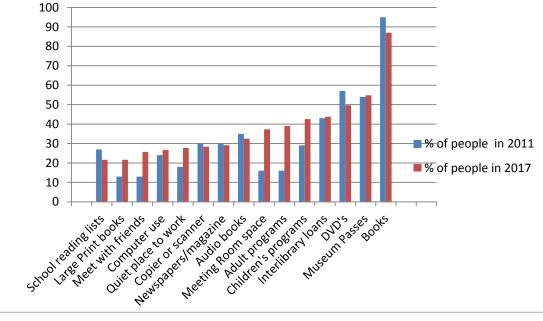
• Yes 94.7%

No 5.3%

- 2. Below is a list of services the Flint Public Library provides. Please indicate which of the following services you or your family have used. Check all that apply. 292 answered; 9 skipped
  - Books 87%
  - Audio books 32.5%
  - Large print books 21.6%
  - Interlibrary loans 43.8%
  - Research 17.2%
  - Magazines or Newspapers 29.1%
  - o DVD's 49.7%
  - Computer use 26.7%
  - Genealogy research 8.9%
  - Museum Passes 54.8%
  - Copier or scanner 28.4%
  - Tax Forms 12.0%
  - School reading lists 21.6%
  - Children's programs 42.5%
  - Teen programs 8.9%
  - Adult programs 39.0%
  - Meeting Room space 37.3%

- Quiet place to read or work 27.7%
- Meet with friends 25.7%
- Use as a "home" office 6.2%
- Check the bulletin board 18.8%
- Download eBooks or videos 17.8%
- Job search or application 8.6%
- Delivery to the homebound 6.2%
- Fax services 6.9%
- Online education 4.8%
- Work on school projects 15.4%
- Meet with a tutor 6.2%
- Other: please specify 20.6% Internet/WiFi/ Use of projector Music Cd's



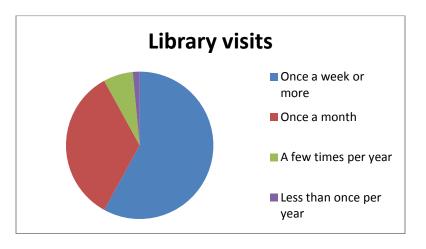


Although the numbers of people using the services increased in 2017, the % of use shows some interesting trends. The greatest gains were in the areas of Meeting with Friends, Meeting Room Space, Adult Programs and Children's Programs. The use of Large Print books also showed a sharp increase.

Some services stayed about the same while the use of DVD's and books declined slightly. The use of eBooks, e audio books, and videos is on the upswing by our patrons, but it is still under 10% of the population. For comparison purposes, this graph shows the most popular services.

### 3. Please indicate how often you or your family use the library. 282 answered; 19 skipped

- About once a week or more 58%
- About once a month 34%
- A few times a year 6.5%
- Less than once a year 1.5%



4. Are you satisfied with the quality and quantity of library programs and services? Do you have any program suggestions or ideas for new library services? 129 answered; 172 skipped

We received a lot of positive comments in this section and some requests for a quieter space. The programs most frequently requested were arts and crafts, exercise programs, author visits, lecture series, travel programs and cooking programs.

#### 5. How would you rate the staff at the library? 281 answered; 20 skipped

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Not satisfied
Helpful and Effective	86.5%	10.7%	2.9%
Knowledgeable	86.7%	10.4%	2.9%
Professional	85.2%	12.3%	2.5%
Welcoming and Courteous	85.0%	10.8%	4.3%

- 6. Are you happy with the speed of Internet at the library? 271 answered; 30 skipped
  - Yes 39.1%
  - o No 2.6%
  - Not sure 58.3%

7. How frequently do you use our new website at www.flintlibrary.org? 276 answered; 25 skipped

- I never use it 27.2%
- I use it occasionally 49.6%

- I use it frequently 23.2%
- **Other (Please specify)** 0

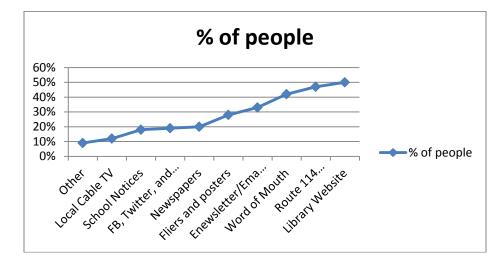
8. How satisfied are you with the new website? 238 answered; 63 skipped

- I like it 55.9%
- I like aspects of it 21.4%
- 9. How do you hear about library programs and services? Please check all that apply.
  - Library Website 49.8%
  - FB, Twitter, Instagram 19%
  - Newspaper 20.4%
  - Fliers and posters 27.6%
  - Word of mouth 41.6%

- I don't like it 5.5%
- 0 Other (Please specify) 17.2%
- - School notices 17.6%
  - Local cable TV 11.8%
  - Rte 114 sign 47.3%
  - enewsletter/email blast 33.3%
  - Other (Please describe) 9.0%

### **Responses from Other were:**

Librarians mention them; From attending groups at the library; Welcome wagon in town



10. If you do not use the library please tell us why. 31 answered; 270 skipped

- Inconvenient location 0
- Unpleasant experience 16.1%
- Inconvenient hours 16.1%
- Just not in the habit 45.2%

- - I'd rather buy books 6.5%
  - I use another library 45.2%
  - Other (Please describe)

#### 11. Do you live in Middleton? 294 answered; 7 skipped

- Yes 81.3%
- No 15.3% Name of town N. Andover 27%; Peabody 27%; Danvers 24%; Misc.

#### 12. Please indicate your age and the ages of members of your family. see graph below

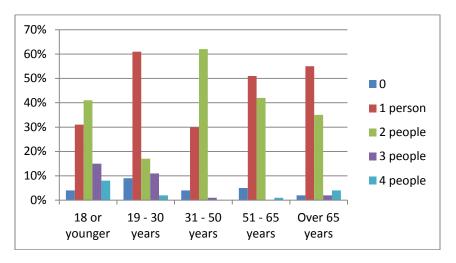
• 18 or younger How many

• **51-65 How many** 

• **19-30 How many** 

• 31-50 How many\_\_\_





#### 13. What do you like to do in your spare time? Your interests and hobbies may give us ideas for future programs. Thank you for sharing!

We received many ideas from this section. The most frequent responses were interests in exercise programs, gardening, outdoor activities, cooking programs, travel, and arts and crafts programs.

The Long Range Plan Committee met a final time on May 24 to review the draft of the plan and to create a vision statement for the library. The committee helped fine tune the goals and measures of success, making the narrative read more smoothly and creating clearer more tangible measures of success. The committee also created a vision statement for the Flint Public Library:

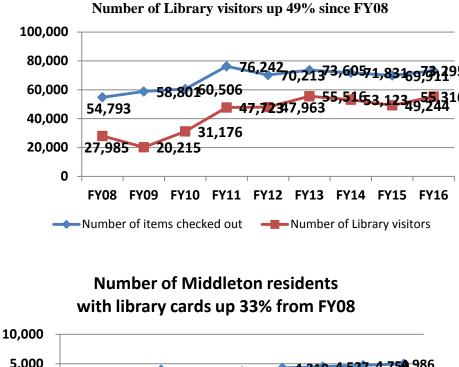
### The Vision of the Flint Public Library is to bring people to the library AND the library to people to exchange ideas, enlighten minds, empower lives and enrich the community.

In addition to the survey, the Trustees and committee also assessed the growth the library has had since the Renovation and Expansion in 2008. The library has been increasingly busy to the point that this year the Trustees requested additional hours for staffing for the library. Specifically, they requested to upgrade a Part Time Circulation Position (19 hours/week) to a Full Time benefitted position (38 hours/week) and to add 4 hours to the Early Literacy Librarian position to bring it from 15 to 19 hours/week. Since the completion of the Library Expansion and Renovation Project, the number of people using the library and the number of programs and meetings has increased dramatically requiring the additional hours of staffing. Below are some comparison charts. All data has been taken from the

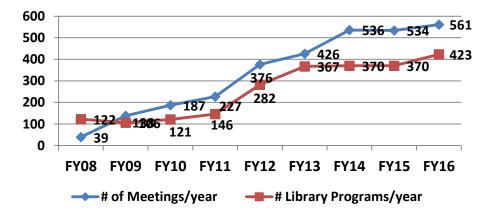
public records of the Annual Report Information Survey which is available on the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners website. <u>https://mblc.state.ma.us/</u>

Flint Public Library Increased use from 2008 - 2016

Number of Items checked out up 25% since FY08



Number of Meetings up 93% from FY08 Number of Library Programs up 71% from FY08



In closing, my deepest thanks to everyone who worked on the Long Range Plan this year. You have provided a great outline to follow in the years ahead. Thank you for guiding the library to a bright and successful future as an indispensable resource to the Middleton community.

Submitted by: Melissa M. Gaspar

Melissa M. Gaspar

Library Director Flint Public Library 1 South Main Street, Middleton, MA 01949

