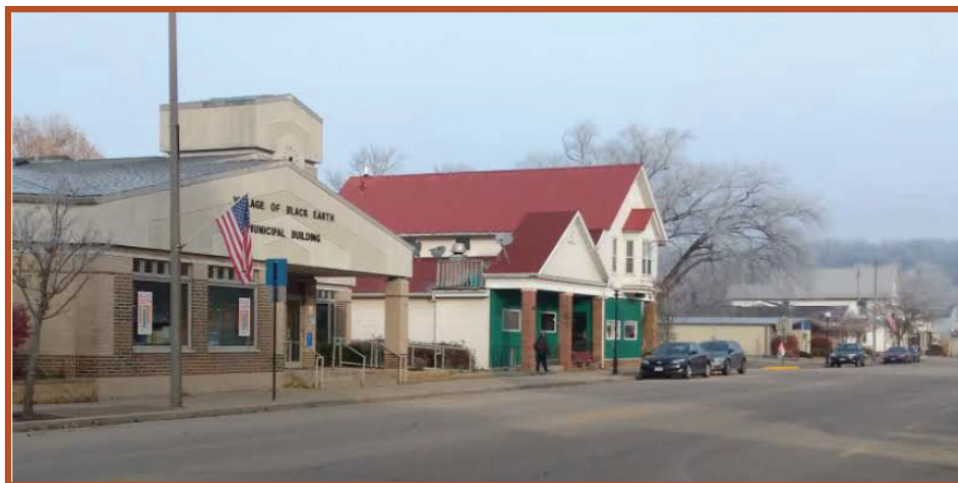


Black Earth Public Library



Strategic Plan Environmental Scan

2020-2025

**BLACK
EARTH**

LIBRARY

BLACK EARTH PUBLIC LIBRARY ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

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Who We Are:

The Black Earth Public Library, built in 1990, accounts for approximately 2,600 square feet in the municipal building on Mills Street in Black Earth, WI. The library offers the community approximately 21,000 current books, magazines, audiobooks, digital audio players, DVDs and Blu-Ray and CDs. The library subscribes to several online databases, including Chilton Automotive Repair, NoveList Plus, Consumer Reports and Ancestry. The library recently became a Contributing Institution in the Digital Public Library's Recollection Wisconsin project, adding many historical local photographs and oral history interviews.



An interlibrary loan system allows Black Earth library users to borrow materials from any library in the South Central Library System as well as from libraries anywhere in the United States. The library offers hundreds of opportunities for children and adults to participate in library programs, both educational and entertaining.

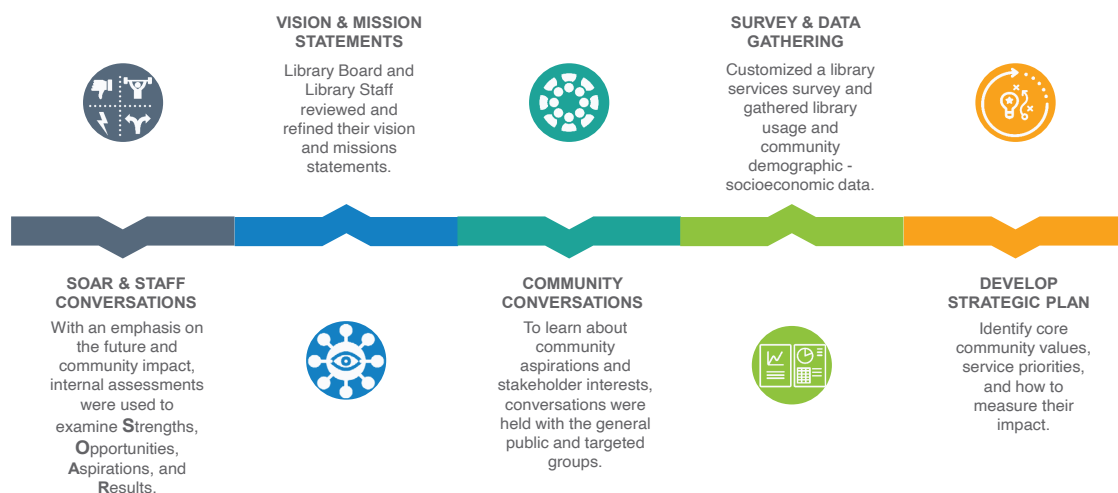
The library employs six staff members, is governed by a five-member Library Board and is a department of the Village of Black Earth.

About the Strategic Plan

The Strategic Plan supports the Black Earth Public Library's implementation of innovative services intended to enrich community life. The library director, board members, and staff met with consultant staff from the South Central Library System in 2018 to discuss planning needs, to update the library's Mission and Vision Statements, and to identify the library's Strengths, Opportunities, Aspirations, and Results. In 2019, consultant staff from the South Central Library System gathered and analyzed library usage and community demographic socioeconomic data, developed and analyzed a library services survey, led Community Conversations, and developed the library's Strategic Plan and Environmental Scan.

Black Earth

Strategic Plan Development | 2018-2019



■ Strategic Planning Methods

The library director and SCLS staff determined our community needs and aspirations must be reflected in the shared plan and they chose a community engagement planning structure inspired by the work of the Aspen Institute's report, *Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries*.

The planning format consisted of four components:

1. A **SOAR** Assessment, in which library staff members discussed the **S**trengths, **O**pportunities, **A**spirations, and **R**esults of public library service to residents of the greater Black Earth area (late winter 2018).
2. Community conversations, which provided opportunities for community residents to meet with each other to discuss aspirations for community life (spring and summer of 2019).
 - April 25, 2019, Audience: Older Adults and Open Public Conversation
 - May 9, 2019, Audience: Open Public Conversation
 - June 25, 2019, Audience: Teens and Open Public Conversation
3. Online library service survey: June - July 2019
4. Various data sets and statistics gathered and analyzed: April/May - September 2019.

■ Strategic Planning Roles and Responsibilities

Library administration and board, Friends of the Library

- Coordinated the facilitation of the SOAR Assessment and Community Conversations
- Updated the library Mission and Vision
- Publicized Community Conversations
- Publicized Library Services Survey
- Provided progress reports to the Library Board and feedback to the strategic planning consultant from the South Central Library System.

Library staff

- Participated in the SOAR Assessment
- Took notes at the Community Conversations
- Gathered to reflect on and identify main themes raised during the SOAR Assessment, Community Conversation, and in-person interviews.

Consultant staff from the South Central Library System

- Facilitated the SOAR Assessment and Community Conversations
- Helped the library director identify service needs and strategic plan goals
- Identified, analyzed, and presented library and community data
- Assisted with crafting the Strategic Plan and Environmental Scan



How We Serve:

Our Mission:

The Black Earth Public Library and its staff provides inspiring programs, services, and materials for the community’s educational, informational, cultural, and recreational needs in a welcoming and respectful atmosphere.

Our Vision: The Black Earth Public Library provides opportunities for free and equitable access to learn, discover, create and connect.

(adopted 10-16-2018)



Who We Serve:

The Black Earth Public Library serves residents of the Village of Black Earth, the Town of Black Earth, and surrounding region. Library funding comes from an annual appropriation from the Village of Black Earth and Dane County. The library’s Eligibility for Services policy states:

The Black Earth Public Library shall serve all residents of the community. Services shall not be denied or abridged because of age, religious, racial, social, economic, or political status. Persons residing outside of the geographical area shall be issued an appropriate county library card according to their place of residence which shall be accepted for usage in the Black Earth Public Library. Any person with reciprocal borrowing privileges with the South Central Library System shall also be served.

The Black Earth Public Library card may be used at any public library in Columbia, Dane, Green, Sauk, Wood, Adams, and Portage counties belonging to the South Central Library System. It may also be used at public libraries in other library systems with South Central reciprocal borrowing agreements.

Service Snapshots: What Data Tells Us

Population, demographics, and future estimates:

The Wisconsin Department of Administration estimates the region’s population will slightly rise by 2040, with higher population growth in the Town of Black Earth. Additionally, the village and town have higher property value and median household income rates than the rest of Wisconsin.

Population Estimates—Department of Administration












	2018	2040
Village of Black Earth	1397	1395
Town of Black Earth	484	570

2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates				
	Table ID	Village of Black Earth	Town of Black Earth	Wisconsin
Median age	DP05	42.9	49.8	39.2
Population under 18	DP05	22.9%	18.4%	22.5%
Population 65 +	DP05	17.4%	20.4%	15.6%
Not Hispanic - White Alone	DP05	96.4%	97.3%	81.8%
Hispanic	DP05	2.3%	1.9%	6.6%
Veterans	S2101	9.5%	9.8%	7.8%
Property value	DP04	\$189,800	\$353,200	\$169,300
Median Household Income	DP03	\$60,188	\$101,250	\$56,759
Poverty rate - children (under 18)	DP03	11.7%	1.1%	16.7%
Poverty rate	B17001	6.2%	2.7%	12.3%
Households without an internet subscription	S2801	20.6%	14.9%	20.9%
Renters pay >30% income	B25074	25.0%	66.7%	42.9%
% children under 18 living in households with supplemental security income (SSI), cash public assistance income, or food stamps/snap in the past 12 month	S09010	16.3%	23.6%	24.9%

Black Earth Public Library: Registered Borrowers and Library Use

Wisconsin public libraries submit an annual report to the Department of Public Instruction. The most recent data from 2018 indicates there are 1096 registered borrowers with library cards at the Black Earth Public Library. Annual report data provides information about the number of materials borrowed, the number of library visits, information about computer usage, and program attendance.

2018 Library Service Data: Black Earth meets the Dane County Plan for Library Services.

2018 Black Earth Public Library Statistics		
	Square Footage	2,560
	Staff	2.5
	Hours per Week	44
	Registered Users	1,096
	Library Visits	28,309
	Items Borrowed (includes 1,086 ILL and internal uses)	31,951
	Use of E-Books, E-Audio, E-Video	2,365
	Number of Programs	177
	Program Attendance	2,449
	Wireless Internet Uses	11,330
	Uses of Public Internet Computers	1,589

Snapshot of library card registration and use by municipality:

Percentage of Village of Black Earth Residents who have library cards with the Black Earth Public Library:

2018 % Residents with a library card
47.5%

(LibPas: 1,397 municipal population, 664 resident registered users)

Percentage of Village of Black Earth residents who used their library card in 2018:

2018 % Residents who used their library card
24.5%

(LibPas: 1,397 municipal population, Koha: 342 = distinct count of Borrower# 2018 CKO for D-BE-V)



While survey mailers were not sent directly to residents of the Town of Mazomanie, the Town of Berry, or the Town of Cross Plains, residents in neighboring municipalities frequently use the Black Earth library.

2018 Annual Report data indicates the residents of the Village of Black Earth borrowed 15,519 materials from the Black Earth Public Library. Residents in the Town of Vermont borrowed 3,516 items and residents of the Town of Black Earth borrowed 2,736 items.



Items Borrowed at Black Earth Public Library in 2018

Total Borrowed

31,951

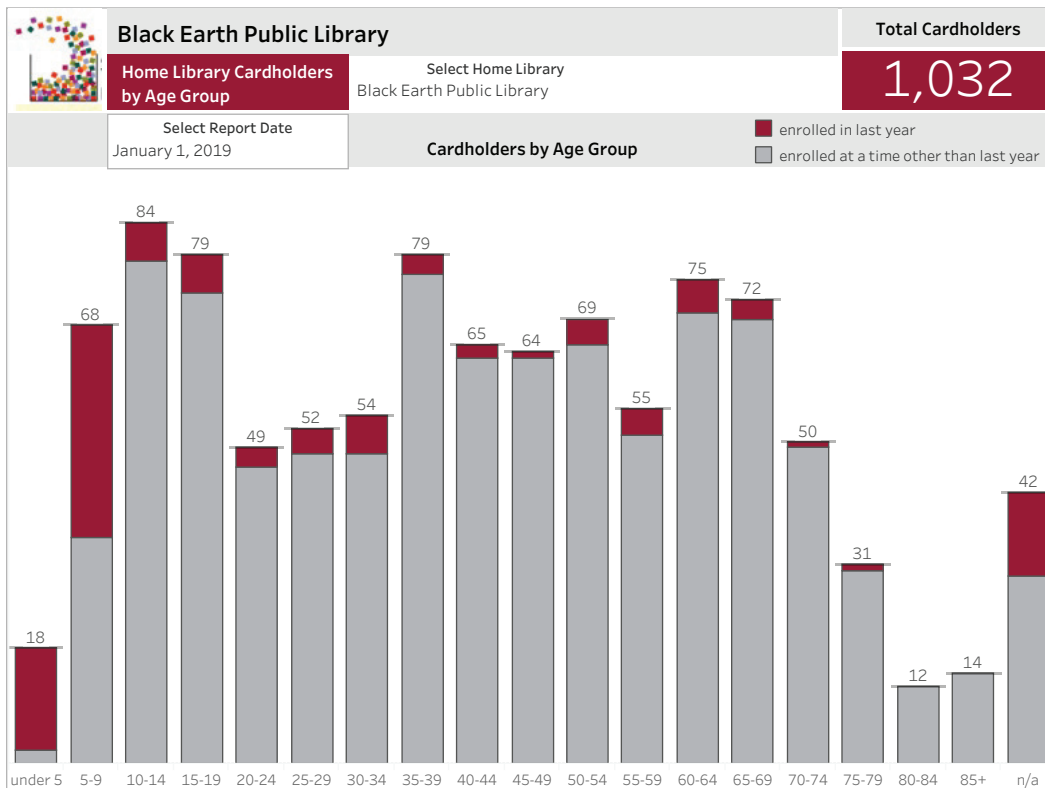
Items Borrowed by Top 10 Municipalities

1	BLACK EARTH, VILLAGE	15,519
2	VERMONT, TOWN	3,516
3	BLACK EARTH, TOWN	2,736
4	BERRY, TOWN	1,521
5	MAZOMANIE, VILLAGE	1,440
6	MAZOMANIE, TOWN	955
7	ROXBURY, TOWN	612
8	CROSS PLAINS, TOWN	555
9	MADISON, 24.01 CITY CENSUS TRACT	259
10	CROSS PLAINS, VILLAGE	248



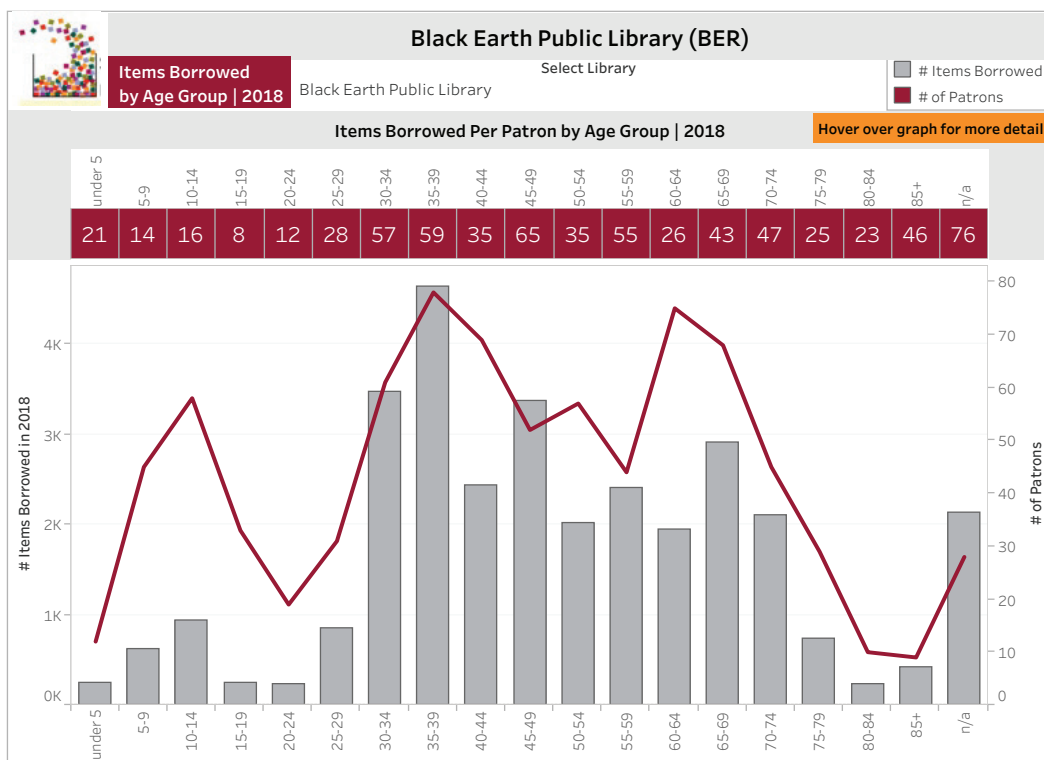
Age and Usage

Patrons who chose Black Earth Public Library as their home library in 2018 by age:



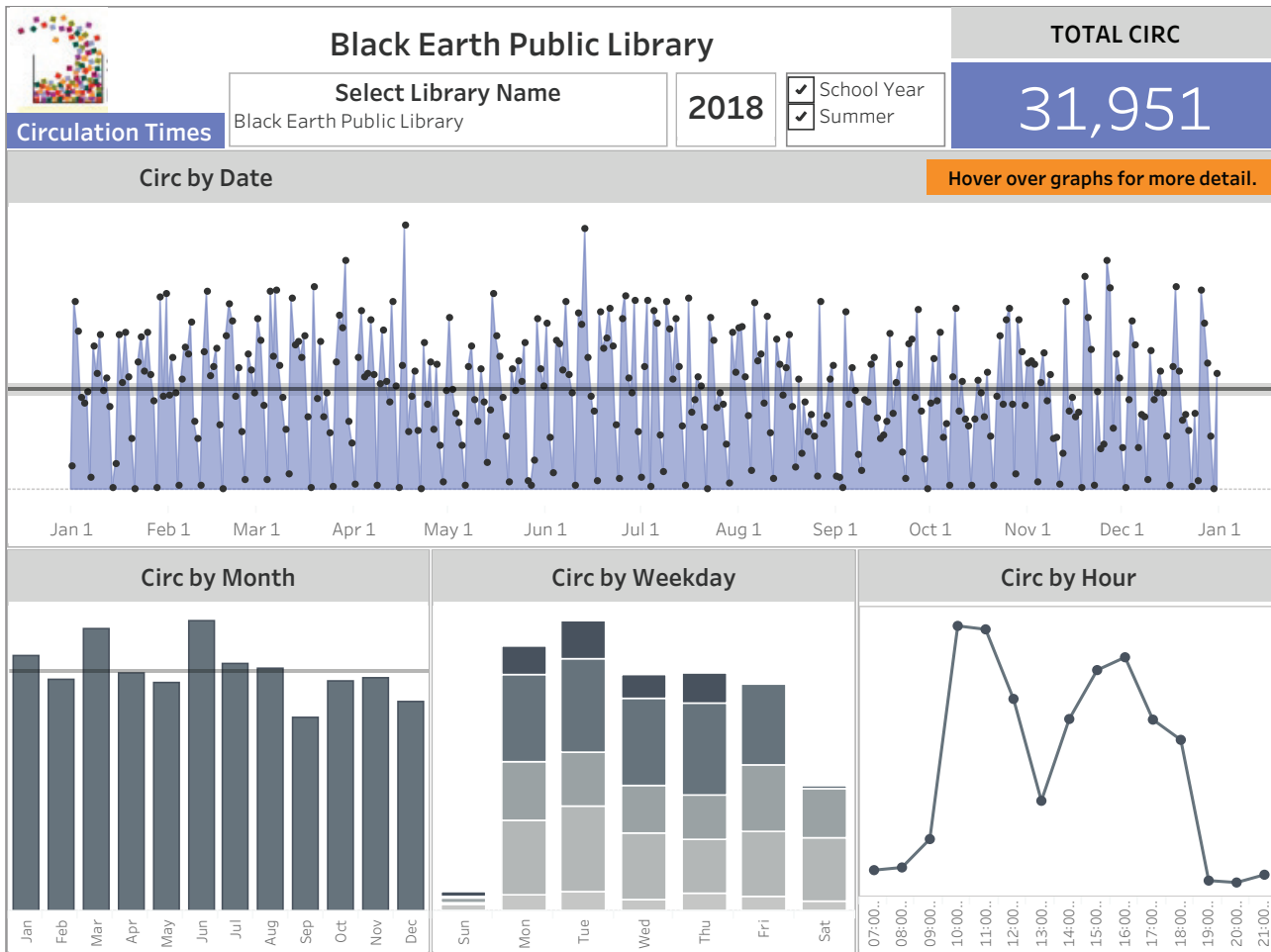
https://public.tableau.com/shared/PPKQWW47H?:display_count=yes&:origin=viz_share_link

Number of items borrowed in 2018 by age group.



https://public.tableau.com/shared/MCHSJZ1X5?:display_count=yes&:origin=viz_share_link

Library materials checkout by date and time



2018 CKO (issues) by weekday and hour

https://public.tableau.com/shared/6RRP2KD8H?:display_count=yes

School District Data : Per the 2017-2018 school report card:

- School enrollment was 781, an increase of four percent over five years
- 54 homeschooled students
- 90 percent white
- 25 percent of students approved for free and reduced lunch

In 2018, the Wisconsin Heights School District completed a strategic plan with a four-day series of community meetings. In 2019, there was a one-year follow-up meeting for attendees to see the progress on meeting the goals established the year prior. One goal with far-reaching implications for Black Earth will be the one-site campus where the middle school and high school currently reside. It is a goal to combine Black Earth Elementary School and Mazomanie Elementary School at the site of the middle and high school.



Employment snapshot

The majority of Black Earth residents travel out of Black Earth to employment, with the highest number of residents working in the City of Madison:

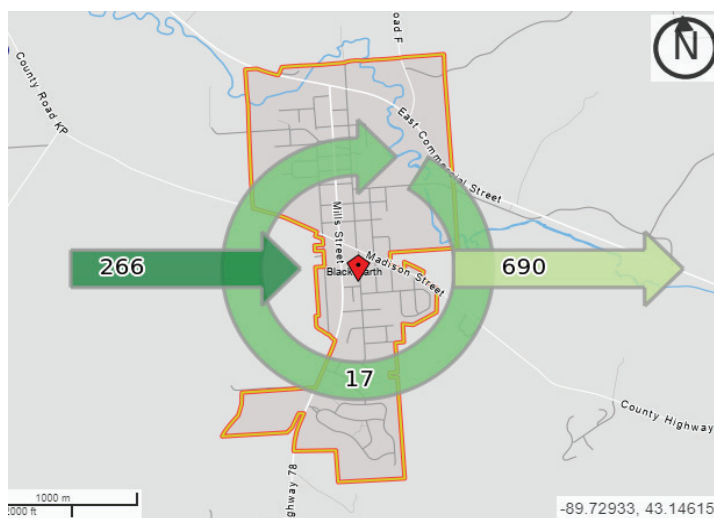
Work Destination Report—Where Workers are Employed Who Lives in BER-V—by County Subdivision

Total Primary Jobs

	2015	
	Count	Share
Total Primary Jobs	707	100.0%

Jobs Counts by County Subdivisions Where Workers are Employed

	2015	
	Count	Share
Madison city (Dane, WI)	226	32.0%
Middleton city (Dane, WI)	79	11.2%
Mazomanie village (Dane, WI)	37	5.2%
Cross Plains village (Dane, WI)	30	4.2%
Sauk City village (Sauk, WI)	27	3.8%
Black Earth village (Dane, WI)	17	2.4%
Black Earth town (Dane, WI)	14	2.0%
Madison town (Dane, WI)	14	2.0%
Fitchburg city (Dane, WI)	13	1.8%
Monona city (Dane, WI)	13	1.8%
Prairie du Sac village (Sauk, WI)	12	1.7%
Milwaukee city (Milwaukee, WI)	10	1.4%
Baraboo city (Sauk, WI)	10	1.4%
Verona city (Dane, WI)	8	1.1%
DeForest village (Dane, WI)	7	1.0%
Mazomanie town (Dane, WI)	7	1.0%
Waunakee village (Dane, WI)	7	1.0%
Spring Green village (Sauk, WI)	7	1.0%
Portage city (Columbia, WI)	6	0.8%
Roxbury town (Dane, WI)	5	0.7%
Sun Prairie city (Dane, WI)	5	0.7%
Janesville city (Rock, WI)	5	0.7%
Westport town (Dane, WI)	4	0.6%
Arena town (Iowa, WI)	4	0.6%
Middleton town (Dane, WI)	3	0.4%
Mount Horeb village (Dane, WI)	3	0.4%
Shorewood Hills village (Dane, WI)	3	0.4%
Fond du Lac city (Fond du Lac, WI)	3	0.4%
Beloit city (Rock, WI)	3	0.4%
Lake Delton village (Sauk, WI)	3	0.4%
Spring Green town (Sauk, WI)	3	0.4%
Whitewater city (Walworth, WI)	3	0.4%
Menomonee Falls village (Waukesha, WI)	3	0.4%
Allouez village (Brown, WI)	2	0.3%
Green Bay city (Brown, WI)	2	0.3%
Burke town (Dane, WI)	2	0.3%
Dunn town (Dane, WI)	2	0.3%
Windsor village (Dane, WI)	2	0.3%
Platteville city (Grant, WI)	2	0.3%
Dodgeville city (Iowa, WI)	2	0.3%
Dodgeville town (Iowa, WI)	2	0.3%
Wausau city (Marathon, WI)	2	0.3%
Greenfield city (Milwaukee, WI)	2	0.3%
Wauwatosa city (Milwaukee, WI)	2	0.3%
Greenville town (Outagamie, WI)	2	0.3%
Plain village (Sauk, WI)	2	0.3%
Westfield town (Sauk, WI)	2	0.3%
Germantown village (Washington, WI)	2	0.3%
Pewaukee city (Waukesha, WI)	2	0.3%
Waukesha city (Waukesha, WI)	2	0.3%



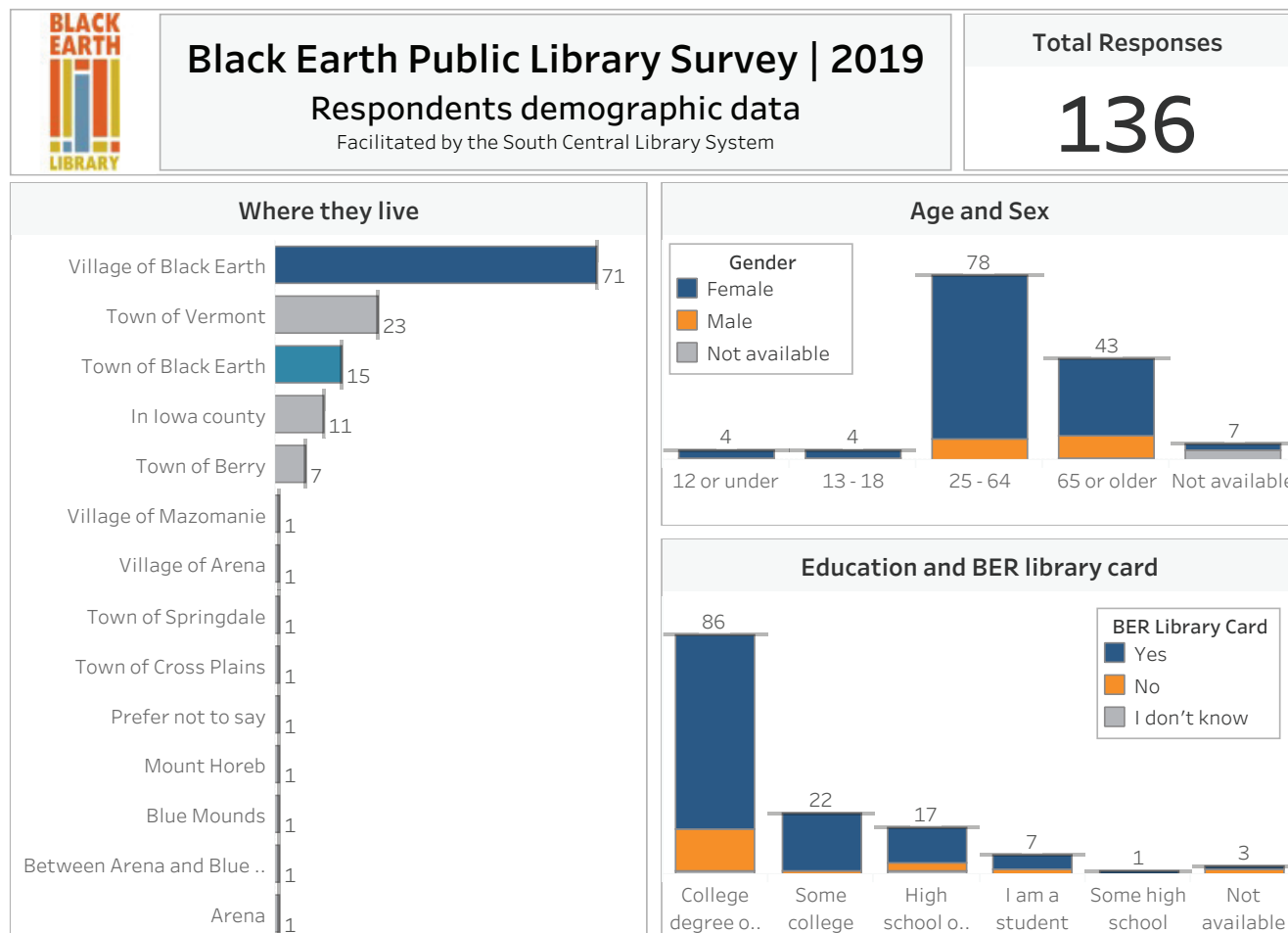
otm_dea842d98b554825b934e08668404dc8


U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, On-TheMap <https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

Library Services Survey

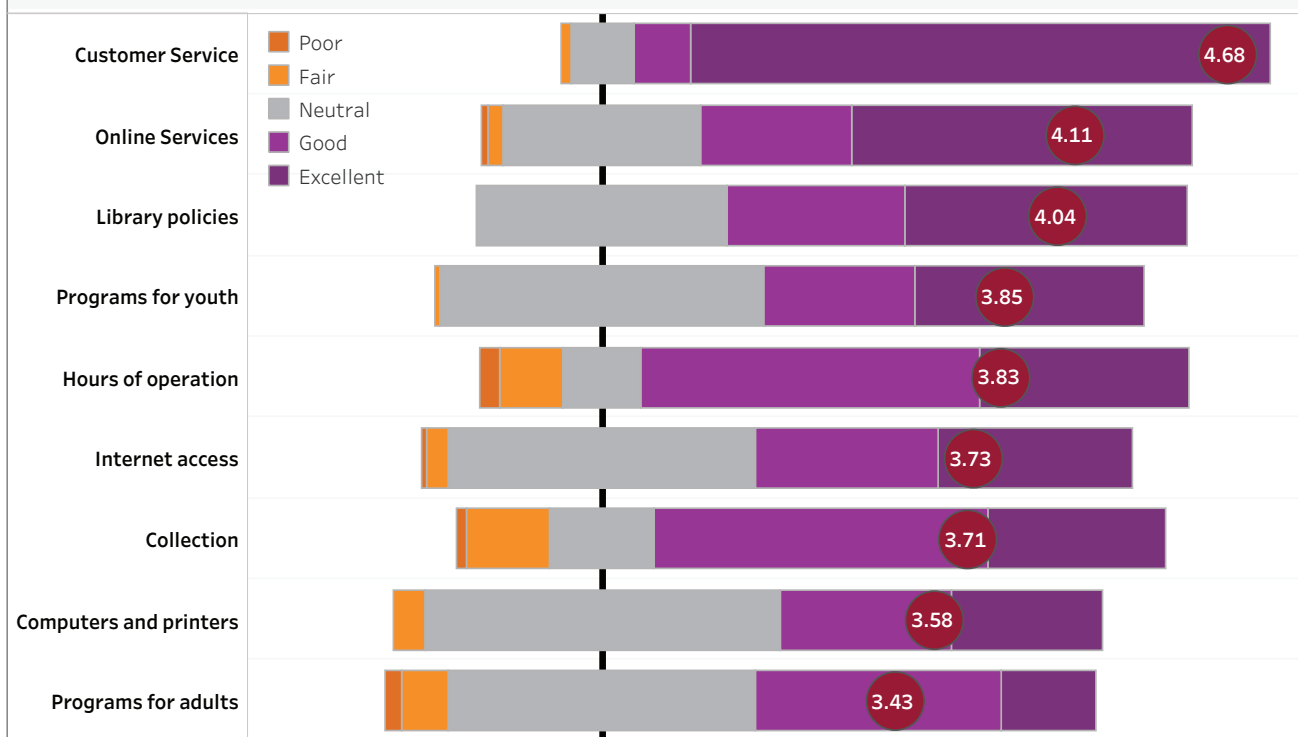
During the summer of 2019, the Black Earth Public Library conducted a library services survey; 136 people responded to the survey, providing feedback on current library services and spaces and input about future library use:

<https://public.tableau.com/profile/scls#!/vizhome/BlackEarthSurveyResults2019/Response-Demographics>



	Age	Gender	Responses	How would you rate the library?			
	All	All	136	Fair	Neutral	Good	Excellent
	BER Visit Frequency All	BER Library Card All		3	14	39	80

Black Earth Library Survey | Service Rating



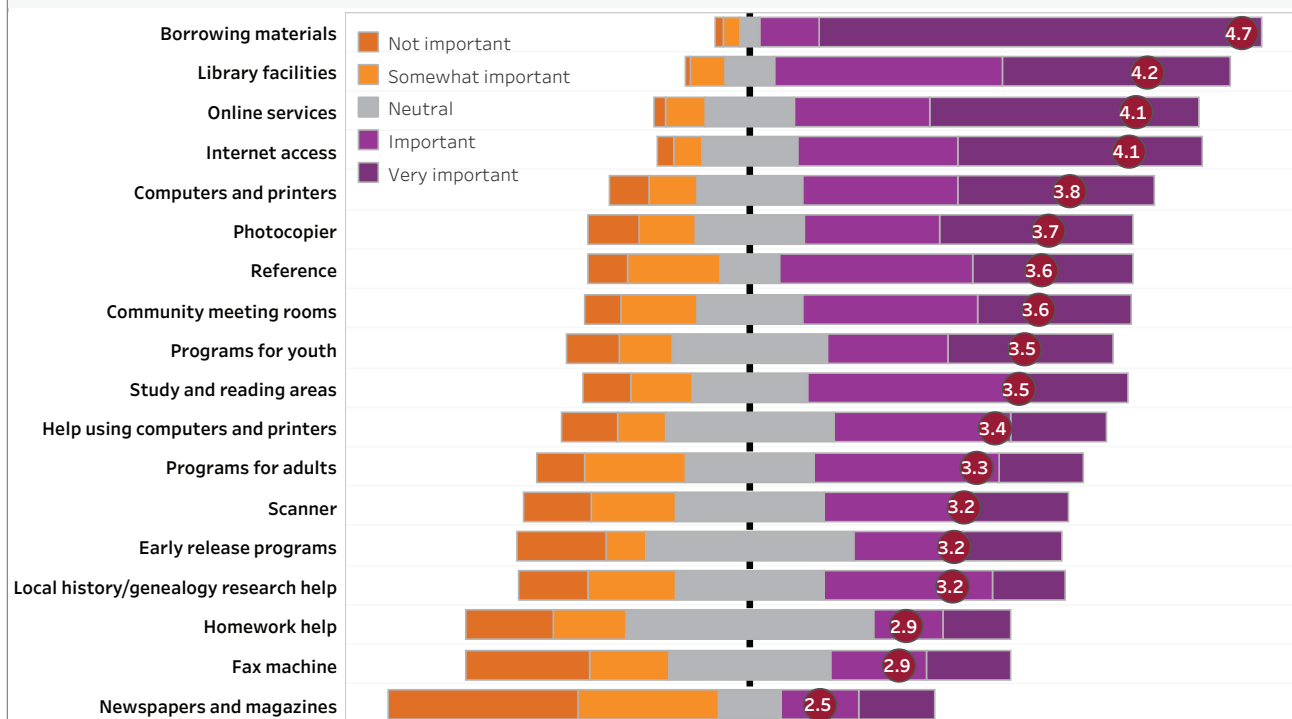
Importance and personal values

When asked, “how important is the library to you?” 105 survey respondents reported the library is very important to them. The top four services rated by respondents are: 1) borrowing materials, 2) library facilities, 3) online services and 4) internet access:



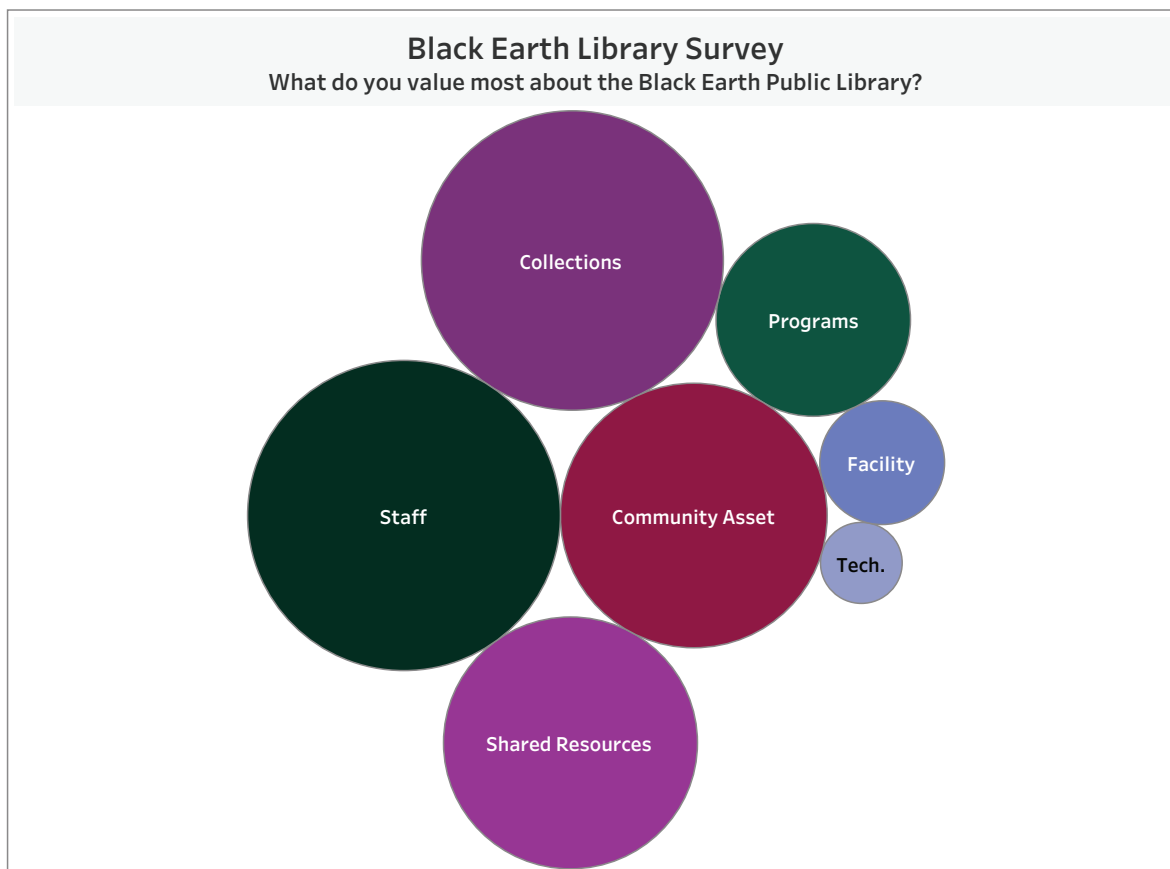
	Age All	Gender All	Responses 136	How important is the library to you?				
	BER Visit Frequency All	BER Library Card All		Not important 1	Somewhat important 2	Neutral 5	Important 23	Very important 105

Black Earth Library Survey | Service Importance



Library values

Survey respondents indicated the Black Earth Public Library is a community asset; survey participants appreciate the staff and the collections they build, the programs they provide, and the access to shared resources from the South Central Library System:



Quotes from the library services survey indicate respondents feel connected to their library staff members, the programs they provide, and the library collection:

The kids programs are wonderful.

The staff is truly dedicated to what they do, always in a friendly and helpful manner, whether it is kids programming or helping solve a mystery with their knowledge of how to use information.

I am a big reader of books and also get many DVDs there. With inter-library loan, I am able to get just about anything I want or need. If I want to learn more about a topic or a language or audio books or anything, the staff is invariably knowledgeable and helpful.

For a tiny library, they ROCK.



Respondents indicated ways the Black Earth Public Library benefits them and the community:

- *A central place for folks to get information, to come together, to learn, to hear about community events and opportunities.*
- *Exposure to books and reading is one of the biggest assets we can give to our youth!*
- *Best deal in town!!!!*
- *Libraries are key to people who can't afford books or other resources. It makes our community smarter and more self-reliant.*
- *Libraries are a huge benefit and necessary to keep kids engaged in learning during the summer.*
- *The library is absolutely essential to me, my family, and the community.*

Additionally, respondents provided suggestions for library improvement:

- *MORE SPACE!!!*
- *Additional funding.*
- *Expanded collection.*
- *More kid computers.*
- *More hours.*
- *Quiet spaces.*
- *Meeting rooms.*
- *More summer programs for everyone.*



■ Core Community Priorities

Community conversations:

Three community conversations were held in late spring and early summer 2019. The intent of the conversations was to give community members opportunities to discuss current community assets, points of appreciation, and aspirations for future community life.

Participants indicated they chose to live in Black Earth for its safety, small-town atmosphere, natural beauty, and school district; several participants indicated they intentionally moved from neighboring communities and different parts of the nation to the Village of Black Earth and Town of Black Earth for these reasons. For these individuals, the Black Earth region was a habitation destination, one they researched and chose for their households.

Shared themes participants identified at the three conversations include:

History and culture:

Historically, Black Earth has been a community which has welcomed and supported new ideas, and participants at the community conversations report they want to live in a community that understands and values its history and one that respects its elders and their knowledge. Participants of all ages requested more opportunities for community members of all ages to gather together, learn from one another, and help each other. Examples of these opportunities include: oral history programs in which younger people collect information from community elders, opportunities to learn about the history of the region, and programs connecting community members who are curious about learning a new skill from experts.


Examples of comments indicate the significance of regional history to current residents include:

*I'm proud when I tell people that the Cap Times was formed at Heiney's
The Farmer's Co-op here was the first one in the United States.
How we treat our elders tells us who we are as a society.*

Conversation participants enforced the important role connection to culture and history plays in community life. The Black Earth Public Library will continue to work closely with area historical societies, connecting residents with materials and resources to educate them about culture and history, and host public cultural programs and events informing residents about regional history.

Sense of place:

People have long inhabited the Black Earth region. Mound builders and the people of the Ho-Chunk Nation lived in the region long before European immigrants moved to the area to settle the Village of Black Earth and surrounding towns. The natural beauty (often referred to as the Gateway to the Driftless region) and fertile farmland continue to draw people to the region and participants at community conversations frequently referred to agricultural life and connection to nature as prominent points of pride.



In all conversations, participants noted they want to live in a safe, walkable community with a welcoming and inclusive environment. Participants feel connected to local law enforcement and appreciate the monthly Coffee with a Cop programs, in which the library participates with its monthly Sample Day for the Library Recipe Club. Community members want to be connected to each other and know about community events and happenings. Participants want to know how they can use their knowledge, talents, and experiences to help each other in times of need. The 2018 Flood was often mentioned as a time when people came together to help their neighbors. A participant at the April 25 discussion noted,

“People came together right after the flood to help each other out with the physical work that needed to be done. Some of the flood recovery group still meets before Coffee with a Cop. I’m worried about how people are doing emotionally - are they ok? Do they feel nervous about future flooding? Do they feel safe?”

Residents are not only concerned about physical well-being and safety, but they also care about their neighbors’ well-being, access to community services, and access to help when they need it. All three Community Conversations included a discussion about a desire to connect people with specific needs, such as lawn care and side-walk shoveling assistance, to community members who want to help their neighbors; teens especially want to be a part of their community and want to be involved in volunteer programs.

Conversation participants are proud of the unique offerings of their small town and noted many people are drawn to Black Earth for specific reasons, including:

- Shopping at the Shoe Box
- Attending concerts in the Park, which in turn helps support community organizations with their fundraising efforts
- Visiting the Children’s Museum
- Taking in the area’s natural beauty, parks, and trout streams
- And eating at Heiney’s before it closed

The Black Earth Public Library is central to community life and provides opportunities for community members to connect with one another through programs, classes, and events.

Education:

“We have a lot to offer kids.”

-Community conversation participant, May 9, 2019

Schools are the center of community life in Black Earth. Educators are active community members who take on leadership roles outside of school district work and are respected by residents, especially students and their families. Conversation participants indicated they moved to Black Earth for the high quality school system, for the smaller class sizes, more opportunities for their children, and for connections with stellar educators.

Participants crave opportunities to learn. They noted the need for formal opportunities to learn as well as a desire for a community supportive of a culture of education and lifelong learning. Black Earth values creativity and curiosity and participants expressed desires for a space where:

Teens are welcome to gather together to create things

Adults are welcome to connect with and learn from one another

All community members feel welcomed, included, and supported in exploring their interests

All citizens learn about community events.

Discussions at the Community Conversations often centered on children and the quality of life for the region's youth. The Black Earth Public Library offers many programs for children and families and has a strong collection of books and other materials for youth. As a result of the community conversations and Library Services Survey, a new teen space was created in December 2019.

■ Core Community Priorities

Community members care about shared futures and identified the following key concepts as priorities for supporting community aspirations and the civic health of the Black Earth region:

Welcoming and inclusive spaces: We want to meet one another. We desire shared and safe spaces for diverse community members to connect in a neutral place, one in which all people feel safe, welcomed, and treated with dignity.

Cultural and civic connections: We want to live in a safe and welcoming community. We value our way of life: we are proud of our unique history and look forward to the future. We embrace the contributions of all community members, long-time and new residents alike, and want to connect with and learn from each other.

Educational and learning opportunities: We value lifelong learning and the education of our youth is a community priority. We support diverse ways of learning and strive to be a community supportive of education, curiosity, and the quest for ideas and information.



■ Black Earth Public Library's Service Priorities

We will provide welcoming and inclusive spaces: The Black Earth Public Library will be a safe, inclusive, and welcoming space where all residents feel empowered to interact with ideas, library services, and each other.

We will provide cultural and civic connections: The Black Earth Public Library will provide opportunities for community members to gather together, learn from one another, and make connections to people and ideas.

We will support educational and learning opportunities: The Black Earth Public Library will connect community members with information to help fulfill their educational needs, feed their curiosity, and connect them to the world of knowledge.



Framework to measure the impact of the strategic plan

Service Goals	Strategies	Activity Examples	Assessment
Goal 1: The Black Earth Public Library will be a safe, inclusive, and welcoming space where all residents feel empowered to interact with ideas, library services, and each other.	Strategy 1: Be a safe and welcoming community gathering place for all residents of the Black Earth region. Strategy 2: Provide spaces for community members to engage with ideas, study, and prepare for their futures. Strategy 3: Provide spaces for community members to meet with one another.	Work to provide equitable levels of service and program offerings to all patrons, including underserved populations (Strategies 1, 2, & 3). Ensure staff members are knowledgeable by providing training and continuing education opportunities. (Strategies 1 & 2).	Patron feedback Collect annual library space use data. Staff observation and feedback. Social media feedback. Count number of staff who attend professional development programs.
Goal 2: The Black Earth Public Library will provide opportunities for community members to gather together, learn from one another, and make connections to people and ideas.	Strategy 1: Plan, implement, and evaluate innovative public programs for residents of all ages and varying interests. Strategy 2: Provide opportunities for patrons of all ages to meet, gather, and interact. Strategy 3: Connect community members with community events, volunteer opportunities, and community services.	Library staff members will plan, execute, and evaluate public programs, such as intergenerational storytimes, Beyond the Page programming, and events that highlight local resources and organizations (Strategy 1). Library staff members will plan, implement, and evaluate programs. Community members will be given opportunities to facilitate discussions, lead program activities, and present programs on topics of regional interest (Strategy 2).	Participant feedback and attendance. Count number of programs. Collect anecdotes from community members who lead programs. Staff observation and feedback. Count number of hits on social media pages and library website.

Service Goals	Strategies	Activity Examples	Assessment
		The library will publicize community-wide events and services and connect residents to area resources (Strategy 3).	
Goal 3: The Black Earth Public Library will connect community members with information to help fulfill their educational needs, feed their curiosity, and connect them to the world of knowledge.	Strategy 1: Provide access to materials, both physical and electronic, to help meet patrons' informational and recreational needs. Strategy 2: Provide professional and helpful customer service in inclusive, safe, and welcoming environments. Strategy 3: Provide materials, programs, and services to support the educational and developmental needs of all learners in the Wisconsin Heights School District.	Regularly identify the strengths and weaknesses of the library collection (Strategy 1). Provide patrons opportunities to suggest additions to the library collection (Strategy 1). Assess facilities to ensure they are comfortable and safe (Strategy 2). Ensure staff members are knowledgeable by providing training and continuing education opportunities. (Strategies 2 & 3).	Collections: Evaluate and cull specific library collections annually. Count number of new items added each year. Count usage of electronic resources. Use library catalog software to analyze collection use data. Count number of staff who attend professional development programs.

■ Sharing Results:

The library director of the Black Earth Public Library will share progress reports with the library and village boards of trustees at board meetings. Staff members will receive updates about the actions of the plan, with special attention paid to identifying ways their work supports the strategic plan. Community members will learn about new collections, materials, services, and programs resulting from the new strategic plan via local media outlets, newspaper articles, social media updates, in-library publicity and community forums and discussions. The library director will refer to goals of the strategic plan when hiring new staff; newly-elected board members will be introduced to the strategic plan and goals as a component of trustee training.

APPENDIX 1, Sources

American Fact Finder: <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

Dane County Plan for Library Services:

<https://www.dcls.info/sites/www.dcls.info/files/docs/2016%200602%20Approved%20POS%20Brief.pdf>

Department of Administration (DOA) Population Estimates:

https://doa.wi.gov/Pages/LocalGovtsGrants/Population_Estimates.aspx

Department of Public Instruction School Report Cards:

<https://apps2.dpi.wi.gov/reportcards/>

Rising to the Challenge: Re-Envisioning Public Libraries:

<https://csreports.aspeninstitute.org/documents/AspenLibrariesReport.pdf>

Town of Black Earth Comprehensive Plan 2009:

<http://town.blackearth.wi.us/comprehensive-plan/>

Village of Black Earth Comprehensive Plan 2009-2028:

https://www.blackearthwisconsin.com/vertical/sites/%7B0399ABA5-FEDA-4D1C-BC51-5A4A68AC4D79%7D/uploads/Village_of_Black_Earth_Comp_Plan_2009-2028.pdf

Wisconsin Public Library Standards:

https://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/pld/pdf/wisconsin_public_library_standards_6th_edition_2018_final.pdf (Appendix B)

Appendix 2, SOAR Assessment Discussions

Appendix 3, Library Services Survey Questions

Appendix 4, Community Conversation Summary, July 2019

APPENDIX 2, SOAR Assessment Discussions

SOAR Discussion Notes, Black Earth Public Library January 16, 2018

STRENGTHS

What makes you proud of your library? And how do these points of pride reflect your organization's greatest STRENGTHS?

- We offer a wide variety of programs:
 - o programs for youth
 - o Coffee with a Cop
 - o Antiques assessment
 - o We are proud of the many programs that library staff present for our community.
- Carolyn and the library staff are very involved in the community
 - o They are the public face of the library and they present the library in a positive light
- Knowledge of the staff
 - o Staff members know people by name
 - o "It's like the tv show, Cheers. This is the place where everyone knows your name. It feels like we all get treated the way Norm did whenever he entered Cheers."
- Library staff members are the strongest asset:
 - o Carolyn is proud of the staff.
 - o Carolyn is proud of the teen shelveers who work at the library
 - o Kirsten is especially proud of the kids and teens she works with and is seeing some of the first kids she worked with as youngsters graduate high school!
- There is a strong sense of community here at the library
- A lot gets done on a small budget – especially programs
- Collaborative spirit
 - o The library schedules programs and has partnerships with the Mazomanie Public Library.
- LinkCat
- Being a member of the South Central Library System

Of what achievement in the last two years are you most proud?

- In 2017 we started looking at the future of our library, especially the physical space.
- The attractive mural
- Creating the new web site
- The facebook presence

What are your greatest assets?

- STAFF!
- Being a member of the South Central Library System & LinkCat (this is a distant 2nd place when considering the strength of library staff.)

What do your **STRENGTHS** indicate about your capabilities?

- Community members respect and appreciate the library staff and the programs and services they provide. This indicates that they will be responsive and engaged in a strategic planning process.

OPPORTUNITIES

What are the OPPORTUNITIES that you would like to focus on for your library?
Identify the top three from your list.

- Long range planning
 - Identify short term goals
 - Identify long term goals
 - Be aware of staff needs and make sure that staff isn't stressed out by planning processes
 - Create a survey about library use
 - Provide opportunities for community input on long range plans
- Explore funding opportunities
 - Tax opportunities
- Opportunity to interact more w/village board

How can you best meet the needs of your community members?

- We need to get information and input from community members in order to understand how we can meet their needs.

What skills or resources do you need to move forward?

- We can determine this after we get community input.

ASPIRATIONS

What kind of library do you want? What are the most important attributes or essential components?

- A more visibly appealing library, "we should have a nice library like Barneveld."
- We want our library to be a gathering place
 - Right now the taverns are the gathering places
- A bigger library
- Game programs are popular here
 - We should have space for people to play games as well as space to store games.

If you could wave a magic wand and accomplish 3 – 5 things to strengthen the health and vitality of your organization, what would they be?

- More staff
- Off-desk time for the director to do planning work – to do the big-picture planning work that library directors need to do
- More financing

- A current strategic plan
- More community involvement and collaboration
- Visibility of the library – people will see that things are happening at the library and that there are things going on that will interest them.

Imagine that it's now 2 – 3 years in the future and your library and community have a thriving productive relationship. What does this look like? What steps were critical to making this happen?'

- We conducted a community survey to identify the direction we need to take the library in the future
- We identified ways to get the survey out to residents, i.e., online, mail, in the library
- We identified the data we need to tell the library's story and to plan for the future, i.e., age demographics, library card holders

RESULTS—think of this as ACHIEVEMENTS

What are some key accomplishments that have already resulted in successful library programs, services, partnerships, facilities, etc.? What did it feel like?

- Beyond the Page grants and programs pays back in dividends
 - It continues past the official project period, i.e. Humanities programs like Bard on Broadway came from Beyond the Page projects.
- It feels great to bring something to Black Earth that residents typically would have to travel to Madison to attend.

How have you traditionally measured achievement and/or success? How might you measure it in the future?

- Surveys and evaluations for Beyond the Page programs
- Quantitative measures have typically been ways we've measured success
- Building plans are done, but we haven't moved forward
- We don't have criteria for measuring success – this calls for the need for a strategic plan

What are some areas of library service that you might like to work on or enhance upon based on today's conversation?

- Strategic plan
- Evaluation plan
- Mission statement
- Vision statement

Other thoughts/Ideas to remember?

- We need to start at the very beginning – this could be quite exciting!
- Let's take our time to gather the information we need
- We need to create a mission statement
- We need to have a current strategic plan

APPENDIX 3

Black Earth Public Library: Library Services Survey

Please take a few minutes to answer this anonymous survey about the library. It should take less than five minutes. All questions are optional. We want as many opinions as possible, so please encourage other members of your household to complete this survey.

1. Do you have a Black Earth Public Library card?

Mark only one.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ I don't know

2. On average, how often do you visit the Black Earth Public Library?

Mark only one.

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Less than once a month
- ☐ Never

3. How would you rate each of the following library services at the Black Earth Public Library?

Mark only one box per row.

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't know/not applicable
Customer Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Collection (books, DVDs, music, newspapers, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online services (website, LINKcat, research databases, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library policies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers& printers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hours of operation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, how would you rate the library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. How important is each of the following library services to you?

Mark only one box per row.

	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know/not applicable
Borrowing materials (books, DVDs, music, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Newspapers and magazine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Very important	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Don't know/ not applicable
Programs for youth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early release programs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Programs for adults	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reference (research assistance from librarians)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Online services (website, catalog, research databases, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Homework help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help using computers and printers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Local history and genealogy research help	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study and reading areas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Community meeting rooms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Library facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Internet access	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Computers and printers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Photocopier	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fax machine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Scanner	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overall, how important is the library to you?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How could the Black Earth Public Library's services or its facilities be improved, if at all?

6. How do you typically learn about Black Earth Public Library programs?

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Library website
- ☐ Social media (Facebook or Twitter)
- ☐ Newspaper
- ☐ Signs or flyers in the library
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Library staff
- ☐ Don't know/not applicable
- ☐ Other: _____

We value your opinions. Please answer the following questions:

7. What do you value most about the Black Earth Public Library?

8. What other programs, services or facilities would you like to see offered at the Black Earth Public Library?

9. How does the Black Earth Public Library benefit you or the community?

Please tell us about yourself so that we may better serve you.

10. How old are you?

Mark only one.

- ☐ 12 or under
- ☐ 13 - 18
- ☐ 19 - 24
- ☐ 25 - 64
- ☐ 65 or older
- ☐ Prefer not to say

11. What gender do you identify as?

Mark only one.

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Prefer not to say

12. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Mark only one.

- ☐ I am a student
- ☐ Some high school
- ☐ High school or GED
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ College degree or higher
- ☐ Prefer not to say

13. What is your preferred language?

Mark only one.

- ☐ English
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Other: _____

14. What is your employment status?

Mark only one.

- ☐ I am a student
- ☐ Employed or self-employed
- ☐ Stay at home parent
- ☐ Day care provider
- ☐ Head of homeschool
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Unable to work
- ☐ Prefer not to say

15. Where do you live?

Mark only one.

- ☐ Village of Black Earth
- ☐ Town of Black Earth
- ☐ Town of Vermont
- ☐ Town of Berry
- ☐ Town of Mazomanie
- ☐ Town of Roxbury
- ☐ Town of Cross Plains
- ☐ In Iowa county
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other: _____



APPENDIX 4

Community Conversations: Summary, themes, shared aspirations

April 4, 2019 (audience: older adults)
May 9, 2019 (audience: general public)
June 25, 2019 (audience: teens)

Participants indicated that:

- They value Black Earth as a unique community that has its own personality and characteristics.
- They are proud of the natural beauty
 - o Trout stream
 - o Driftless
- People come from out of town to do things here:
 - o Children's Museum
 - o Shoe Box
 - o Natural spaces
 - o Concerts in the Park
 - o Gandy Dancer festival
 - o Heinies, before it closed.
- 7 new businesses started in Black Earth in the past 5 years
- We're close to Madison, without being Madison
 - o Still small
 - o Affordable
 - o Safe
- They would like a community gathering/meeting space that is free and welcoming
 - o For all ages
 - o A maker space/space to learn skills, such as wood working, coding, basic home repair skills, cooking, canning, gardening, etc.
 - o Not affiliated with a specific church
 - o Not at a tavern
- There is A LOT going on at the library
- They are proud of the school district
 - o Good schools are a draw to the community
- Black Earth is good for families and children
- They want to have one source for discovering:
 - o what is going on in the community
 - o ways to get involved in community groups
 - o ways to volunteer to help others (this came up in all 3 discussions!)

- o ways to ask for help from others
 - *“People will help out if they’re asked.”*
 - *“It seems to fall on one person to take the lead and make the ask/lead events.”*
 - *“ONE driving force makes a difference.”*
 - *“We need younger people to get involved in community life.”*
- People want to CONNECT with each other and with the community.
- The 2018 Flood is on community members’ minds:
 - o The community came together during the flood, but are some people drifting away?
 - o People are still nervous – there is a sense that there’s PTSD out in the community
 - o The volunteer fire dept. lost vehicles and is having a hard time filling positions

Participants want:

- To be connected to each other – to feel that they are a part of something
- A safe community for all ages
 - o Childhood safety is very important – we want to keep our children safe and healthy (emotionally, physically, mentally)
 - o We don’t want to lose our teenagers.”
 - o “How we treat our elders tells us who we are as a society.”
 - o “Everything we do is in Mazo.” (teens)
- A community that is welcoming and inclusive
- A community that values creativity and curiosity
 - o Teens want a maker space, “there is no where we can go to create things.”
 - o Adults want a space where they can gather and connect with and learn from one another
- Clear municipal licensing rules
- A walkable community (safety concerns and issues with Hwy 14 came up here)
- A community that values its unique local history
 - o The history of the co-op was mentioned several times
 - o Railway history
- More transportation
- More social services
- Affordable housing
 - o A participant at the 4/4 conversation indicated that there is no Section 8 housing.
- To celebrate the agricultural history, families, and ties to farming

Thoughts about implications for the library's strategic plan:

- Community is at the core of everything the library does
- Celebrate the unique characteristics of Black Earth – past and present
- Welcoming and inclusive environment
- Being creative and curious and learning from each other is important
- Community members WANT to connect with each other, they just need to have that one place to turn to when they want to find out what's going on – how to connect.
- This is a caring community – children and elders matter here!
- This is a community that cares about its residents
- The library and its staff are already valued here.