

Hoyt Lakes
Public Library
2010 – 2015 Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Library Board:
June 15, 2010

*Prepared by:
Whitney Crettol Consulting*

THE PLANNING PROCESS:

The Hoyt Lakes Public Library completed a comprehensive strategic planning process between January and May 2010. This process was made possible through financial support from the Arrowhead Library System. Composition of the Planning Team included representatives from the library board, city officials, and library staff.

A community-based process was utilized, which centered on answering the questions: 1) *What are the pressing needs in our community?* and, 2) *What is the library's role in helping to address those needs?* Major steps included conducting a focus group with community leaders, reviewing community demographic data and library statistics, discussing organizational values and mission, identifying service priorities, and developing detailed action plans for the first year of implementation. In addition, preliminary indicators were established to track progress toward achieving the library's new goals.

The resulting strategic plan is intended to guide the library for the next five years, with action plans to be revised annually.

WHAT WE FOUND:

Several themes emerged through our environmental scan process. First, the City of Hoyt Lakes has experienced an estimated population decline of 17% over the past two decades. A significant factor in this loss was the closure of nearby LTV mining in 2001. Although new mining activities are anticipated, they are still in the planning or early implementation phases. Continued support for small business development is also seen as an important job creation strategy by community members.

Despite this smaller population base, the Library has seen an upward trend in usage of its services in recent years. Library visits, the number of residents with library cards, items circulated, and reference requests have all increased since 2005. Most notably, juvenile circulation has risen by 125% during this time! The library is doing more with less due to budget constraints that resulted in a reduction in the number of staff last year.

Among the top concerns on the minds of community leaders were children and youth. Their vision emphasized the need for and importance of preschool educational opportunities, tutoring support for school-age youth, and constructive recreation and leisure activities. This focus was reinforced by a review of local school data which indicated that the percentage of our youth who are *not* attaining high school diplomas on time is considerably higher than in other parts of the region. Although there are limited tutoring resources through the school, there are none available in Hoyt Lakes. In addition to opportunities for the library to partner with the school district, there is also a strong presence of families engaged in home schooling in our area.

The cities of Hoyt Lakes and Aurora are close in proximity and share a number of services, including the hospital and school. Because the new school building is not located in Hoyt Lakes, however, community members expressed a need for alternative places and opportunities for people to gather and interact. The Library is viewed as an important resource toward this end.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

Community Awareness –

The Library focuses its resources to best address community needs. A wide variety of materials are available to meet the individual needs of patrons.

Respectful Atmosphere –

The Library provides a friendly, non-judgmental atmosphere that is welcoming to all.

Accessibility –

The Library provides free and open access to the community with our helpful/knowledgeable staff and accommodating service hours.

Relevant Technology –

The Library offers cutting-edge technology that informs, educates, entertains, and connects users with the outside world.

Lifelong Learning –

The Library promotes, facilitates, and nurtures the lifelong love of reading and learning.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Hoyt Lakes Public Library enhances our community by providing a variety of educational and relaxation materials and events in a welcoming environment that promotes literacy, supports student success, and draws people of all ages together.

LIBRARY GOALS (In order of priority):

- 1. Youth and adults will develop, use, and share personal interests and knowledge to benefit themselves and the community.**
- 2. Young children and their caregivers will be enthusiastic about gaining early literacy skills and together will discover the joy of reading. (*Focus on ages 0-5*)**
- 3. Students will have the resources, inspiration, and motivation to achieve their personal learning potential.**

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Goal 1 (Lifelong Learning)

- ✓ Number of programs and participants in lifelong learning program series, and survey regarding whether they learned something new (and/or Legacy program evaluations).
- ✓ Number of participants in the Winter Reading Program and percentage completing.
- ✓ Number of local displays featured in the library.

Goal 2 (Create Young Readers)

- ✓ Number of preschool story times (on and off-site), and number of children and adults participating.
- ✓ Number of check-outs for early literacy kits.
- ✓ Number of Read-to-Me participants in the Summer Reading Program.
- ✓ Number of participants in early literacy skills training and survey regarding whether they learned new skills to use at home.

Goal 3 (Succeed in School)

- ✓ Number of Summer Reading Program participants and percentage completing.
- ✓ Number of classes and number of youths participating in library resources/research skills presentations.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS:

<i>Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Timeline</i>
1. Present strategic plan to Library Board for adoption. Presentation of newly adopted plan to City Council.	June 2010
2. Communicate the new plan to other stakeholders and the public.	June – July 2010
3. Review strategic plan progress as a regular agenda item at staff meetings; make mid-course corrections.	Quarterly
4. Discuss strategic plan progress as regular agenda item at Library Board meetings.	Monthly
5. Compile progress indicator data for annual review.	Annually 2011 - 2015 (May)
6. Board/staff annual ‘retreat’ to review implementation successes and challenges (including indicator data), review goals, revise strategies, and project budget needs.	Annually 2011 - 2014 (May)
7. Staff develop action plans for the next year.	Annually 2011 - 2014 (August)
8. Full round of strategic planning.	Spring/Summer 2015 (New plan in place by September 2015)

Appendix A:

YEAR 1 Action Plans July 1, 2010 – August 31, 2011

GOAL # 1: Youth and adults will develop, use, and share personal interests and knowledge to benefit themselves and the community.

Strategy A: Programming		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Gear up an active Friends group to support programming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gather resources for successful Friends organization. ▪ Outline Friends' roles (including public relations, etc). ▪ Recruit champion(s) to provide initial leadership. ▪ Grow and activate Friends to take on designated roles. 	Sue Sue Sue Friends "Champion"	May 30, 2010 May 30, 2010 May 30, 2010 December 31, 2010
2. Develop 2010-2011 adult program series: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop program plan in conjunction with Friends. ▪ Conduct 3 programs (fall, winter, spring) that support the lifelong learning goal. 	Sue (Friends)	April 30, 2011 August 31, 2011
3. Promote and conduct Adult Winter Reading Program.	Sue (Staff)	March 31, 2011
4. Teen Advisory group: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit members (grades 7-12). ▪ Generate ideas for future youth programs (including tutoring). 	Judy Teen Advisory members	August 2011
5. Initiate a library-supported book club.	Friends	TBD

Strategy B: Displays		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Schedule displays of local collections/art and coordinate display case rotation every two months.	Carol	Bi-monthly (Beginning September 2010)
2. Utilize bulletin board for displays that promote current library programs.	Judy	Monthly (Beginning June 2010)

Strategy C: Collection		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Weeding of adult non-fiction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Full weeding process. ▪ Develop schedule for ongoing weeding of these sections. 	Sue Sue	July 15, 2010 July 15, 2010

GOAL # 2: Young children and their caregivers will be enthusiastic about gaining early literacy skills and together will discover the joy of reading.

Strategy D: Children's Programming		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Add Read-to-Me component to Summer Reading Program that reinforces the six pre-literacy skills.	Sue	June 7, 2010
2. Conduct preschool Story Time focusing on pre-literacy skills.	Sandy N.	Monthly (Beginning June 2010)
3. Early literacy kits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete kits. ▪ Introduce kits to parents and educators and make available for check-out. 	Sue Sue (Sandy N.)	June 7, 2010 September 30, 2010
4. Story Time Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Coordinate with Aurora Library. ▪ Conduct story time at early childhood sites (e.g. Head Start, ECFE, child care homes, Kindergarten). 	Sue (Volunteers ?)	September 30, 2010 December 31, 2010

Strategy E: Children's Resources		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Promote Imagination Library: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Obtain additional application materials. ▪ Include flyers in SRP packets for Read-to-Me participants. 	Sue Sue	June 7, 2010 June 7, 2010
2. Secure funding to add one early literacy computer learning station.	Sue	April 30, 2011
3. Improve organization and labeling of early readers.	Carol	May 1, 2011

Strategy F: Parent / Caregiver Training		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Literacy skills training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan and conduct parent training on early literacy skills and how to motivate children's reading. ▪ Record training event and make available online and through DVD check-out. 	Sue (Aurora Library) Sue	May 1, 2011 May 31, 2011

GOAL # 3: Students will have the resources, inspiration, and motivation to achieve their personal learning potential.

Strategy G: Teaching Library Skills		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Outreach: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approach school to collaborate. ▪ Conduct presentation on library resources and research skills in 9th & 10th grade classes. 	Sue Sue	October 1, 2010 October 31, 2010
2. Develop “Know Your Library” self-guided tour materials, including library map, guide to Dewey system, and other resources (e.g. databases, InterLibrary Loan, etc.).	Judy & Carol	October 31, 2010

Strategy H: School Success Programming		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Plan and implement Summer Reading Program with events.	Sue (All Staff)	August 1, 2010 & 2011
2. Develop plan for homework help programming (e.g. online or on-site volunteers), including input from Youth Advisory group.	Sue (Judy)	August 31, 2011
3. Approach school administration to open lines of communication regarding student project schedules in order to better provide materials and support.	Sue (Aurora Library)	October 31, 2010

Strategy I: Homeschool Support		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Research parameters for homeschooling in Minnesota.	Sue	May 31, 2011
2. Determine local homeschool support needs and plan response.	Sue (Aurora Library)	August 31, 2011

Appendix B:

Community Focus Group – Summary

February 2010

Community Focus Group – Summary of Responses

Hoyt Lakes Public Library

2-11-10

A total of 16 community leaders participated in the focus group. Representation included educators, seniors, business/Chamber of Commerce, financial services, health care, early childhood, fraternal and service organizations, and the faith community. In addition, participants indicated volunteerism in a wide range of other community causes and events.

ELEMENTS OF A COMMUNITY VISION

Participants first imagined a time in the future when the community has achieved its full potential and everyone is proud to call it home. They then answered the question: *What does that success look like, and for whom?*

Who	Result
Families with Young Children	Have access to a child care center with structured educational opportunities, including during shift hours.
Elementary & Secondary Students	Tutoring for both struggling students and gifted & talented.
Youth & Middle-age + Adults	Leisure time opportunities for everyone, including strong youth programs.
Job Seekers	Co-location of job seeking services with child care in a Family Resource Center.
Working Age	Diversified economy with a variety of jobs that pay well.
Everyone	Solid infrastructure that supports the attraction and growth of business (e.g. fiber optic, good roads, etc).
Seniors	Range of housing and care options so people can age in the community (e.g. assisted living).
Seniors	Public transportation.
Everyone	Thriving arts community.
Everyone	Updated shopping center that attracts businesses.
Everyone	Widespread volunteering and involvement in the community by all ages; especially cultivating young people.
Residents / Prospective Residents	Raised awareness about our town through greater communication.

STATE OF THE COMMUNITY TODAY

Considering the community's current situation, participants were asked to identify: 1) conditions that could help the community move toward the vision outlined above (strengths & opportunities), and 2) conditions that might impede progress toward that vision (weaknesses & threats).

Strengths/Opportunities

- + Space available for small businesses; Laskin Energy Park is a tax-free zone.
- + Variety of active churches.
- + It is a caring community.
- + Affordable housing.
- + Original residents came from a wide variety of backgrounds.
- + Close to nature with great all-season recreation (fishing, campground, snowmobile trail, golf course, walking trails, lakes, Superior National Forest).
- + Good school district.
- + Low taxes – affordable cost of living.
- + City Hall / Library building is very accessible.
- + Good public services (fire, police, ambulance).
- + Low occurrence of crime.
- + Good library.
- + Senior Center.
- + Mesabi Nugget is up and going; hopefully PolyMet will be soon.

Weaknesses/Threats

- No functioning teen/recreation center.
- Lack of local activities for children.
- Unemployment.
- Lack of retail businesses in town.
- Insufficient and aging infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, shopping center).
- We are at the end of the road.
- Funding.
- Not enough volunteers.
- No schools actually in town due to decreased population of children.
- No road accessibility in/out of Hoyt Lakes to the north or south.
- Lack of land for new housing with larger lots.
- Housing stock is aging.
- Lack of recreational facilities - no beach, park, outdoor skating, or indoor free-skate ice time; playground has not been updated.
- Lack of activities and places to gather in absence of a school.

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Given where we are today, and where we want to go, participants responded to the question: *What needs to be done to make progress toward the vision?*

- Draw additional businesses / employment (fill up the business park, develop needed infrastructure, etc).
- Re-open the teen center.
- Support development of a local child care center.
- Promote our town and its assets – communication to residents and the outside world (monthly newsletter, on-line sources, radio, local paper, TV spots developed by youth, etc).
- Availability of building lots on local lakes.
- Seek grant funding for tangible projects such as a new playground.

LIBRARY PRIORITIES

Finally, participants were asked to vote on recommended library priorities by answering: *What roles can the Library focus on to make the greatest contribution toward addressing community needs?*

Library “Service Responses”	Number of Votes
Build Successful Enterprises: Business & Nonprofit Support	13
Know Your Community: Community Resources & Services	11
Visit a Comfortable Place: Physical & Virtual Spaces	10
Create Young Readers: Early Literacy	9
Be an Informed Citizen: Local, National, and World Affairs	7
Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning	7
Succeed in School: Homework Help	7
Make Career Choices: Job & Career Development	6
Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access	4
Make Informed Decisions: Health, Wealth, and Other Life Choices	4
Express Creativity: Create and Share Content	4
Understand How to Find, Evaluate, and Use Information: Information Fluency	3
Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing & Listening for Pleasure	3
Learn to Read & Write: Adult, Teen, and Family Literacy	3
Get Facts Fast: Ready Reference	3
Celebrate Diversity: Cultural Awareness	2
Discover Your Roots: Genealogy & Local History	0
Welcome to the United States: Services for New Immigrants	0

Appendix C:

Library SWOT Analysis

March 2010

SWOT ANALYSIS
Hoyt Lakes Public Library
3-4-10

The Library's Strategic Planning Team completed a traditional SWOT analysis, with the following results.

STRENGTHS: *What does the library do best?*

- Customer services.
- Children's programming.
- Welcoming.
- Collection size for size of the city.
- Opportunities for children's learning.

WEAKNESSES: *What do you think the library could improve?*

- Promotion.
- Physical appearance of the facility.
- Layout with regard to accessibility.
- Hours.
- Financial resources of the city.
- Adult programs.

OPPORTUNITIES: *What needs do you see in the community that could be opportunities for the library to make a difference?*

- Information to the community about the community.
- Workshops.
- Early reading.
- Handicap accessibility.
- Hold our own in a tough financial time.
- Tutoring.
- Job skills – resume assistance.
- Assist in bringing in businesses.
- Help search for grants.
- Book clubs.

THREATS: *What outside forces do you feel could negatively affect the library?*

- People unfamiliar with library's services.
- Limited employment opportunities locally.
- Funding cuts.
- Loss of future council support.
- "Lost youth".

Appendix D:

Library & Community Profile

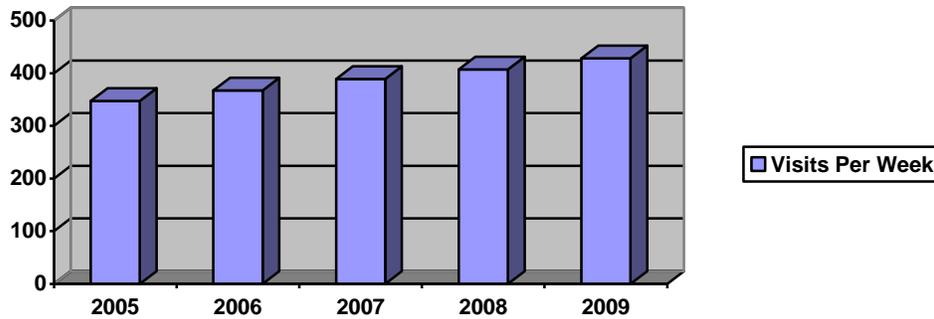
February 2010

Library & Community Profile: Hoyt Lakes Public Library

I. LIBRARY STATISTICS

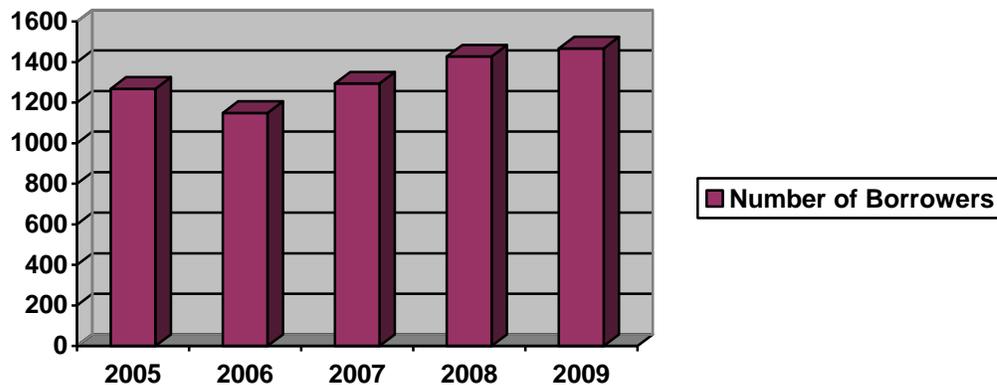
Library Traffic

In 2009, the Hoyt Lakes Public Library decreased its hours of operation to the current 39 hours (35 summer). Nonetheless, traffic into the library continued its gradual climb, with the average number of weekly visits 23 % higher than five years ago.



Number of Resident Borrowers

In the past, all library card holders were maintained in the system regardless of whether they were active. In 2004/2005, ALS began purging inactive users on a periodic schedule. Even with the removal of these records every two years, the number of active borrowers has increased by 16 % since 2005.



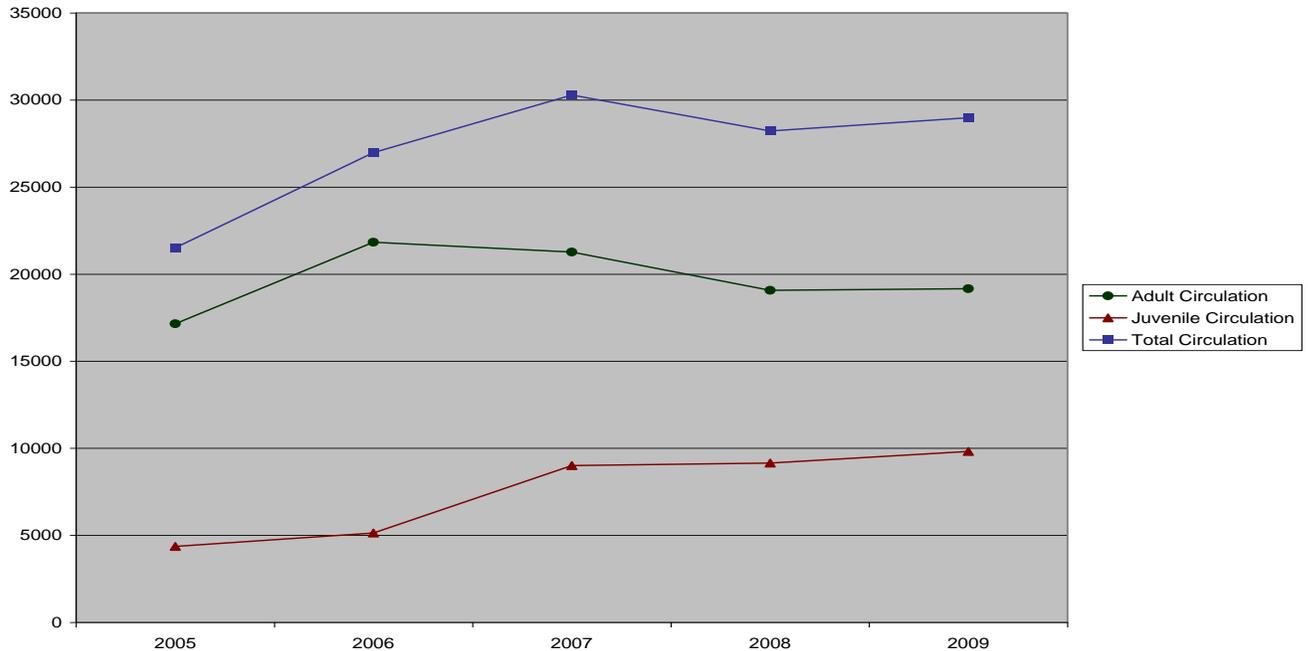
Collection Size

Type of Material	2005	2009	Change
Print	23,343	23,357	+ 14
Audio	282	386	+ 104
Video	718	1,024	+ 306
Total Collection:	24,343	24,767	+ 424

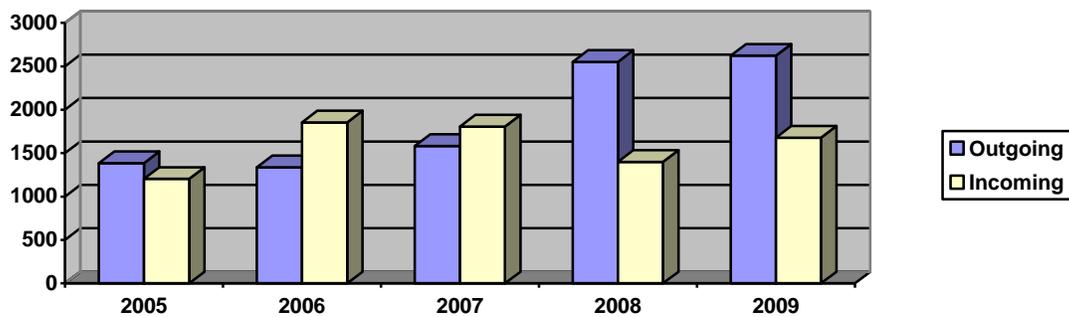
A January 2010 review of last check-out date identified 4,271 items, approximately 17 % of the library's total collection, that have not circulated during the past three years.

Circulation

The overall circulation trend in Hoyt Lakes is one of growth. In fact, circulation has increased at a pace that exceeds the increase in traffic during this time period. Total circulation for 2009 was 35 % higher than five years ago. However, this trend is largely due to *juvenile* circulation. While adult circulation has fluctuated up and down, juvenile activity has risen by 125 % (!), and now accounts for over one-third of the library's total circulation.



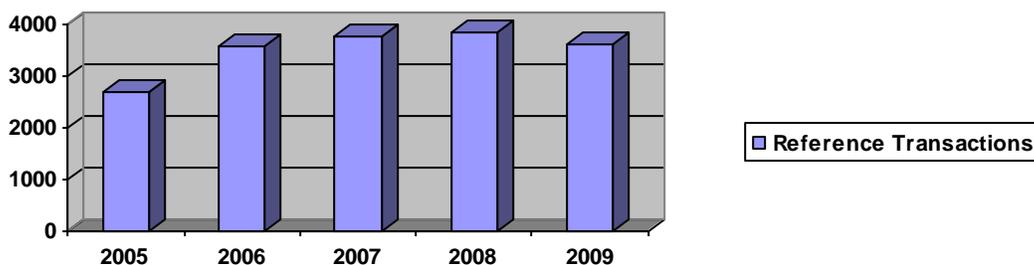
Inter-Library Loans



Inter-library loan activity has increased significantly, especially for outgoing materials.

Reference Requests

The number of reference transactions has grown over the past five years, contrary to the national trend for this service.

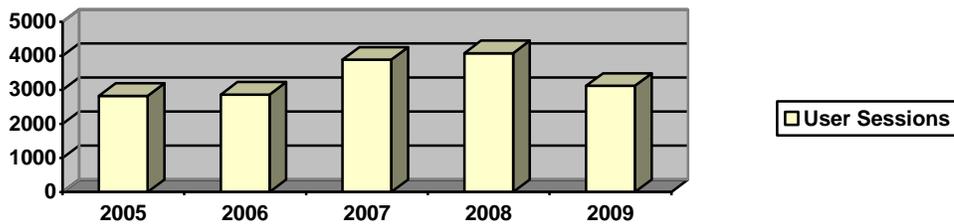


Programs & Meeting Room Usage

Programming is focused mainly on children. Although the number of programs has increased over the past five years, there has been a slight decrease in participation. There are no public meeting rooms available in the library.

Target Audience	Number of Programs	Type of Programs	2009 Attendance
Adults	2	Winter Reading Program, art show.	180
Children	20	Summer Reading Program with performers, Teen game nights, story times, art & music events, movie nights, carnival, early childhood fun fair.	723
Total Attendance:			903

Public Computer/Internet Usage



One computer was added in 2007, bringing the total number of public access terminals to six. Usage has been generally increasing, but peaked in 2008. Wireless service is also available at this location. The Library has a page within the City’s website. The number of hits to this page is not known.

Operating Expenditures

Year	Staffing	Collection	Other	Total
2005	\$ 74,799	\$ 19,995	\$ 4,580	\$ 99,374
2009	\$ 87,150	\$ 20,650	\$ 5,125	\$ 112,925

The staffing level was decreased by .4 FTEs during this timeframe. Current staff includes a full-time Library Director and 2 part-time clerks.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

The City of Hoyt Lakes has experienced a 17 % decline in population since 1990. Below are some key demographic indicators [*Figures taken from the 2000 U.S. Census unless otherwise noted*].

Time of Count	Number of Residents	Change from Previous Period
1990 Census	2,348	
2000 Census	2,082	- 266
2008 Estimate	1,956	- 126

Race & Age

The vast majority (99 %) of Hoyt Lakes residents are Caucasian, but the 2000 Census recorded 18 persons of color residing here. In addition, 4 individuals identified themselves as Hispanic.

Age Group	Number of Residents	Percentage of Total Population
Children 0-17	413	20 %
Adults 18-64	1,225	59 %
Adults 65 & over	444	21 %

Education

Although the district serves multiple communities, Aurora is home to the newly-reconstructed Mesabi East K-12 School. The District's 2008 on-time graduation rate was only 75.4 % [*Source: MN Department of Education*]. In addition, there are 45 children being home-schooled in the district, 6 of whom live within the City of Hoyt Lakes. Of the population age 25 and over, 18.2 % have a bachelor's degree or higher.

School	Number of Students [January 2010]
Mesabi East (Elementary level)	515
Mesabi East (Junior/Senior High level)	336
Total Students:	851

Income

In 2007, the average wage of \$ 34,684 in St. Louis County was \$ 8,000 below the state average [*Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics*]. The County's current unemployment rate of 8.1 % is higher than the state's overall figure of 7.3 % [*December 2009, DEED*]. The 2000 Census indicated that 9 % of Hoyt Lakes residents, or 185 individuals, were living below the poverty line.

Housing

Housing Type	Percentage of Total
Homeowner (% of all occupied housing units)	92 %
Rental (% of all occupied housing units)	8 %
Vacant housing units	8 %

In the year 2000, the City's median assessed home value was \$ 39,100, and average rent was \$ 397.