

Marble
Public Library
2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan

Adopted by the Library Board:
January 26, 2011

*Prepared by:
Whitney Crettol Consulting*

THE PLANNING PROCESS:

The Marble Public Library completed a full strategic planning process between August and December 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, library staff, and interested community members.

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. Unlike many surrounding Iron Range towns, the City of Marble has seen a slight increase in population since 1990. And although the population is generally aging, new families with children are arriving, often as renters. According to Census data, Marble's residents experience a disproportionately high rate of poverty.

The public library has seen significant increases in utilization over the past five years, far beyond the rate of population growth. The number of active borrowers has climbed 40 % since 2005, accompanied by increases in circulation, inter-library loans, program attendance, and public access computer usage. However, being located on the second floor of a non-accessible building has been a major limitation. At the time of this writing, a new City Hall/Library facility is in the final stages of construction. Moving into this accessible, ground-level location is expected to further expand utilization of the library and its resources. In addition, the building includes a shell for future completion as a community center. Once finished, this gathering space will provide additional opportunities for library-sponsored activities.

Local leaders emphasized the community's children and youth as top priorities. It is widely acknowledged that the Library plays an important role in serving the community's youth, and is the only after-school option currently available. There was a desire to build upon this "safe haven" status. Community members also identified the need to provide residents with help to find local resources that address their basic needs. Finally, there was strong sentiment about increasing community involvement and offering activities that bring people together. These priorities mesh well with the City's recently completed Comprehensive Plan which includes a goal of providing residents with opportunities to recreate and develop community pride.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES:

Accessibility–

The Library provides free and open access to everyone, and maintains a barrier-free facility.

Friendly Atmosphere–

The Library is a friendly gathering place where everyone is made to feel welcome.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Marble Public Library improves the quality of community life by providing materials and experiences that stimulate people's imaginations, encourage young readers, and connect residents with local resources that meet their needs.

LIBRARY GOALS (In order of priority):

1. Everyone will find resources that entertain and stimulate their mind, and open their eyes to new things in the world.
2. Children will enjoy reading at an early age, improve their listening skills, and continue to read throughout their lives.
3. The community will have a place to obtain information and resources to improve their everyday lives, and to find opportunities for volunteering.

PROGRESS INDICATORS:

Goal 1 (Stimulate Imagination)

- ✓ Program attendance (children and adults).
- ✓ Legacy event participant evaluations.
- ✓ Annual “year-end” (May) program participant feedback surveys (Story hour - adults, knitting class, adult book club).

Goal 2 (Create Young Readers)

- ✓ Program attendance.
- ✓ Annual teacher feedback survey for preschool story hour.
- ✓ Circulation figures for Grab ‘N Go Bags.
- ✓ Total number of Summer Reading Program participants and number completed.

Goal 3 (Know Your Community)

- ✓ Number of community resource guides distributed annually.
- ✓ Number signed up for e-mail newsletter.
- ✓ Attendance at Library Open House.
- ✓ Number of new volunteers assisting the Library.
- ✓ Number of blog/website hits.

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.	January 2011
2. Communicate the new plan to other stakeholders and the public.	February 2011
3. Review strategic plan progress as a regular agenda item at staff meetings; make mid-course corrections.	Monthly
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 (September)
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 (September)
7. Staff develop action plans for the next year.	Annually 2011 - 2014 (October - December)
8. Full round of strategic planning.	Fall 2015 (New plan in place by January 2016)

Appendix A:

YEAR 1 Action Plans January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2011

GOAL # 1: Everyone will find resources that entertain and stimulate their mind, and open their eyes to new things in the world.

Strategy A: Youth Activities		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Plan, promote and hold Kid’s Craft Night/Story Hour targeted at ages 5-9.	Alicia	Weekly (Jan – May & Sept – Dec 2011)
2. Family Movie Nights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchase TV & DVD player (Blandin grant). ▪ Obtain movie license. ▪ Promote & hold movie nights featuring new releases and patron-voted selections. 	Tanja Tanja Tanja	March 31, 2011 April 1, 2011 Monthly (Jan – Dec 2011)
3. Knitting class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ List kid’s knitting class in Community Education bulletin. ▪ Offer 4 weekly “Knitting with Mary” sessions. 	Tanja Mary Lind	April 30, 2011 October 31, 2011
4. Youth Book Club: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop fun incentives. ▪ Promote and recruit participants ages 12 – 16. ▪ Hold monthly book club gatherings. 	Alicia Alicia Alicia	May 31, 2011 June 30, 2011 Monthly (July – Dec 2011)
5. Plan, promote and hold youth gaming events utilizing ALS equipment.	Tanja	Quarterly (Beginning March 2011)
6. Host weekly Youth Center summer program with a variety of activities (e.g. games, crafts, art, cooking) targeted at ages 8 – 12.	Susan Bourdahl (Teen Volunteers)	June 30, 2011
7. Legacy programming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Host Creativity Tank program in collaboration with preschool. ▪ Host additional child-oriented events as available. ▪ Promote and provide museum passes. 	Tanja (Marble Preschool staff) Tanja Tanja	April 30, 2011 TBD by Legacy Jan – Apr 2011 & TBD

Strategy B: Adult Activities		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Adult Book Club: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Conduct outreach to senior center, early childhood parents, etc. to expand membership (goal = 5 new members). ▪ Divide into two groups if membership exceeds 16. ▪ Hold monthly Book Club meetings. 	Current Book Club members Tanja Tanja	May 31, 2011 TBD Monthly (Jan – Dec 2011)
2. Plan, promote and hold 6-week Adult Summer Reading Program with incentives.	Tanja	June – July 2011
3. Coffee Klatch: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Purchase new coffee maker. ▪ Establish and hold Men’s Coffee Klatch one morning per week. 	Tanja Axel	January 31, 2011 Weekly (Feb – May & Sept – Dec 2011)
4. Legacy programming: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Host adult-oriented events (e.g. PhotoShop, folk dancing, musical performances) as available. ▪ Collaboratively host author visit. 	Tanja Tanja (Neighboring Libraries)	Jan – June 2011 & TBD March 2011

GOAL # 2: Children will enjoy reading at an early age, improve their listening skills, and continue to read throughout their lives.

Strategy C: Preschool Story Hour		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Host Invest Early class visits to the library, including story time, issuing library cards, and materials checkout.	Tanja	Weekly Jan – May (2 classes) Sept – Dec (1 class)

Strategy D: Grab ‘N Go Bags		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Increase circulation of Grab ‘N Go Bags through new promotions (e.g. newsletter, flyers to Invest Early parents – see Goal 3).	Tanja	September 30, 2011

Strategy E: Summer Reading Program		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Plan weekly activities based on annual theme (traveling).	Alicia	April 30, 2011
2. Collaborative promotion in the schools: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop joint SRP flyer. ▪ Approach principal to arrange outreach visits to classrooms. ▪ Library Directors visit classrooms to promote SRP. 	Tanja (Coleraine, Calumet & Bovey Library Directors)	March 30, 2011 March 30, 2011 May 31, 2011
3. Conduct 6-week program with events.	Tanja (Alicia)	June – July 2011
4. Program finale with “Library Store” shopping for prizes.	Tanja (Alicia)	July 31, 2011

GOAL # 3: The community will have a place to obtain information and resources to improve their everyday lives, and to find opportunities for volunteering.

Strategy F: Community & Library Information		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Community Newsletter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Approach Mayor to contribute information for a monthly column. ▪ Approach local organizations (Girl Scouts, Senior Center) to submit event information on a regular basis. ▪ Develop newsletter to include library happenings, local events and news, and highlight a community resource each month; distribute via email list, posting at Post Office, and hard copies at the library. 	Tanja Tanja Tanja	December 2010 February 2011 Monthly (March – Dec 2011)
2. New Library Building Open House: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make plans for event with refreshments, musical entertainment, Council/Mayor/ALS as guests. ▪ Promote event to the public through community newsletter, radio announcements, press release to area newspapers, and invite media to attend/cover the event. ▪ Hold Open House and collect email addresses for newsletter distribution list. 	Tanja (Board members)	TBD (February ?)

3. County Resource List: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Locate current County Resource Guide. ▪ Obtain and distribute copies of Resource Guide at Library. ▪ Promote the Guide through newsletter and web outlets. 	Grace Tanja Tanja	April 1, 2011 April 30, 2011 April 30, 2011
4. Web Presence: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Set up Library Blog and add link from City website. ▪ Maintain Library Facebook page. 	Tanja (City Clerk) Tanja & Alicia	March 31, 2011 Twice per Month (Jan – Dec 2011)

Strategy G: Promote Community Volunteer Opportunities		
ACTION STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE	COMPLETION DATE
1. Library volunteers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Recruit at least 3 additional community volunteers to assist with library activities this year (cultivate “Friends”). 	Tanja	Jan – Dec 2011
2. Other community volunteer opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Make initial contact with local organizations (churches, Senior Center, Christmas Party committee, reviving Marble Days/community picnic, etc) to collect information about local volunteer opportunities. ▪ Promote volunteer opportunities through newsletter and web outlets. 	Tanja Tanja	April 1, 2011 Monthly (March – Dec 2011)

Appendix B:

Library & Community Profile

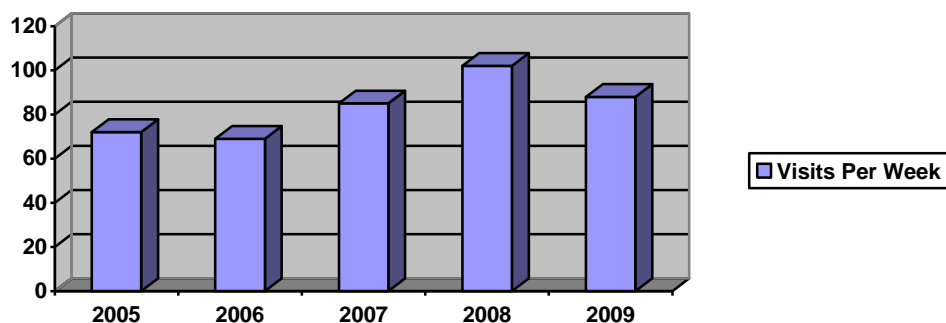
September 2010

Library & Community Profile: Marble Public Library

I. LIBRARY STATISTICS

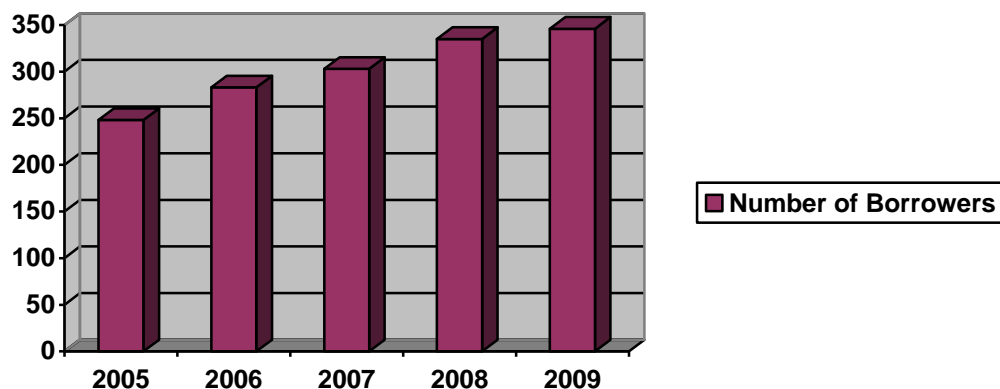
Library Traffic

Hours of operation at the Marble Library have remained consistent at 25 hours per week (20 in summer) over the past five years. However, traffic into the library has been increasing during this time period. Despite peaking in 2008, the average number of weekly visits in 2009 was 22 % higher than in 2005.



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 in Marble has increased by 40 % since 2005. According to the most recent population estimates, about 47 % of Marble residents have library cards.



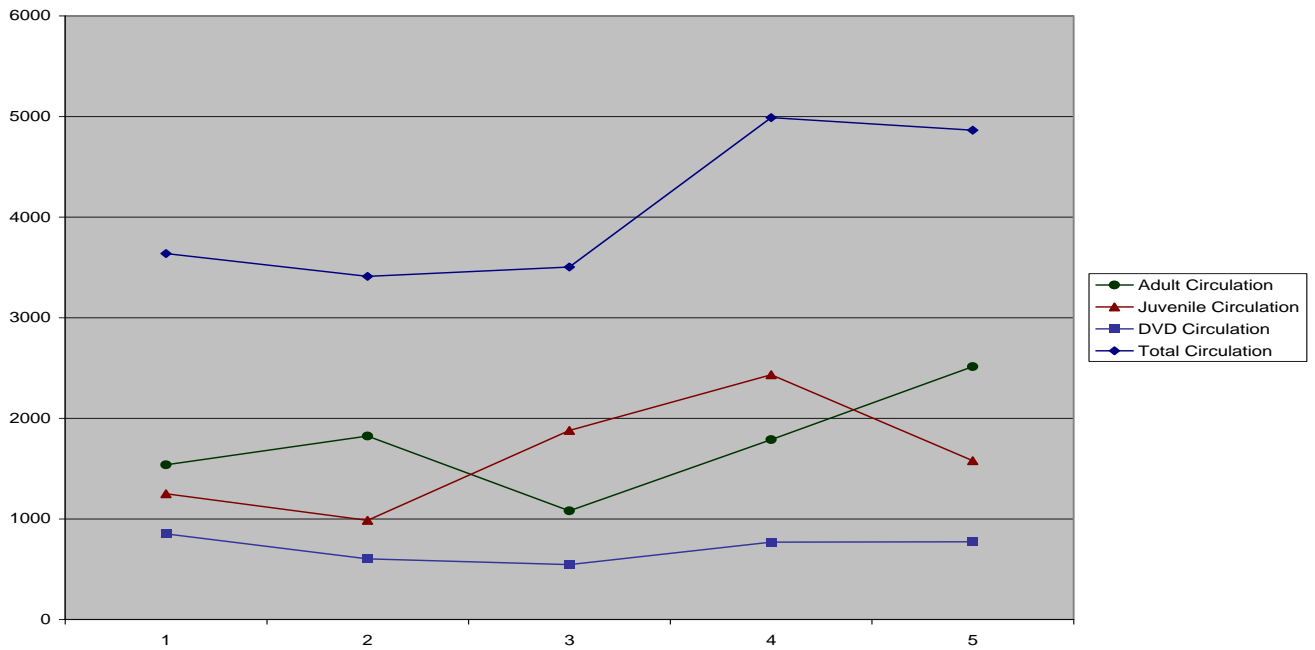
Collection Size

Type of Material	2005	2009	Change
Print	11,382	9,872	- 1,510
Audio	15	62	+ 47
Video	218	291	+ 73
Multiformat	57	53	- 4
Total Collection:	11,672	10,278	- 1,394

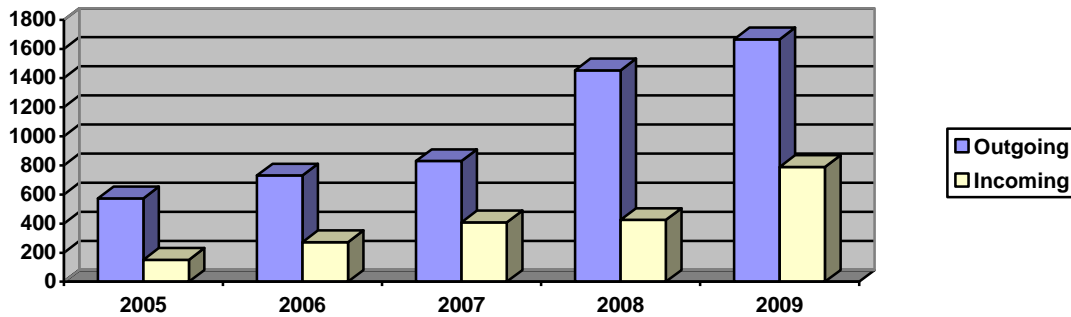
An August 2010 review of last check-out date identified 1,377 items, approximately 13 % of the library's total collection, that have not circulated during the past three years.

Circulation

The overall circulation trend in Marble is one of growth. Total circulation for 2009 was 34 % higher than five years ago. Both adult and juvenile circulation have fluctuated during this time – sometimes in opposite directions. Even with a drop from 2008 to 2009, juvenile materials still account for 32 % of total circulation.

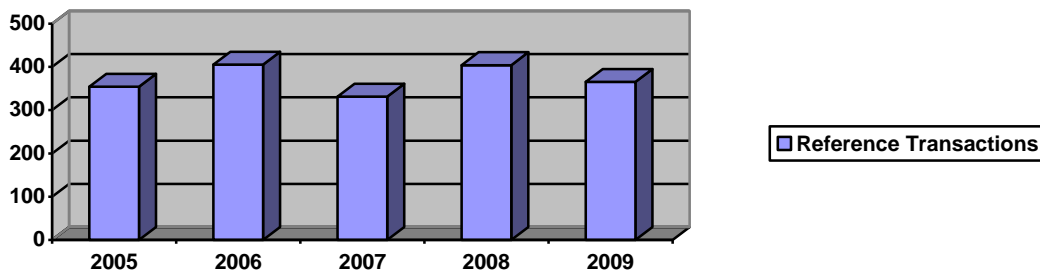


Inter-Library Loans



Inter-library loan activity has increased dramatically, especially for outgoing materials. Marble is a net provider in this system.

Reference Requests

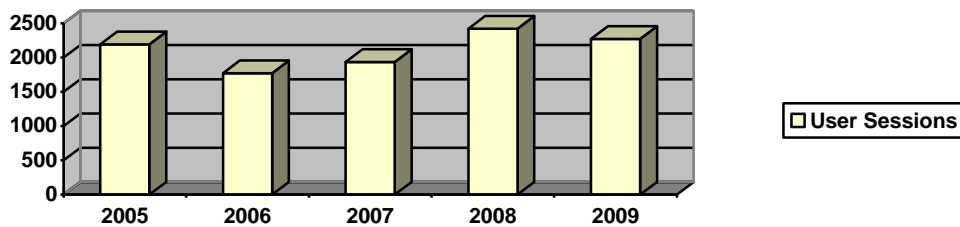


Programs & Meeting Room Usage

Programming is focused mainly on children. The number of programs and attendance have risen steadily for both children and adults. The second-floor Reading Room is available to the public, but is not being utilized.

Target Audience	Number of Programs	Type of Programs	2009 Attendance
Adults	1	Book Club	42
Children	15	Summer Reading Program, Winter Reading Program, preschool story hour, children's performers.	582
Total Attendance:			624

Public Computer/Internet Usage



The number of public access terminals has remained at five since 2005. Usage has been generally increasing. Wireless service also became available at this location in 2007. The Library does not have a webpage.

Operating Expenditures

Year	Staffing	Collection	Other	Total
2005	\$ 17,027	\$ 895	\$ 4,323	\$ 22,245
2009	\$ 21,565	\$ 2,101	\$ 2,833	\$ 26,499

Current staff includes a part-time Library Director and one Library Assistant totaling .72 FTEs.

COMMUNITY DEMOGRAPHICS

The City of Marble has experienced a 7 % 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	618	
2000 Census	695	+ 77
2010 Estimate (<i>MN Demographer</i>)	731	+ 36

Race & Age

The vast majority (97 %) of residents are Caucasian, but the 2000 Census recorded 22 persons of color residing here. In addition, 6 individuals identified themselves as Hispanic.

Age Group	Number of Residents	Percentage of Total Population
Children 0-17	188	27 %
Adults 18-64	400	58 %
Adults 65 & over	107	15 %

Education

Marble is served by the Greenway School District, and one school facility is located within the city (Marble Preschool – enrollment 29). The District’s 2009 AYP graduation rate was 97 % [*Source: MN Department of Education*]. In addition, there are 38 children being home-schooled in the district. Of the population age 25 and over, 12 % have an associate’s degree and 9 % have a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Income

At \$27,361, the median household income in Marble was significantly lower than the countywide figure of \$36,234. The 2000 Census also indicated that 15.8 % of Marble residents, or 107 individuals, were living below the poverty line. The County’s unemployment rate of 8.9 % is higher than the state’s overall figure of 6.8 % [*July 2010, DEED*].

Housing

Housing Type	Percentage of Total
Homeowner (% of all occupied housing units)	76 %
Rental (% of all occupied housing units)	24 %
Vacant housing units	6.8 %

In the year 2000, the City’s median assessed home value was \$ 44,300, and average rent was \$ 438.

Appendix C:

Community Focus Group Summary

September 2010

Community Focus Group – Summary of Responses

Marble Public Library

9-17-10

A total of 7 community members participated in the focus group. Representation included early childhood, seniors, local elected officials, municipal staff, nursing, and local business.

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
Children	A positive, significant adult relationship in every child's life.
Babies & preschoolers	Children have early experience with books and the Library and are better prepared to succeed in school.
Latch-key children / working parents	Have a structured, safe place to be after school with social interaction and access to computers and are not getting into trouble.
Tweens	Learn how to make good choices and stay safe.
Parents	Have support in parenting and opportunities to interact with other adults.
Youth & adults who need help with literacy	Have access to help to improve their reading and writing skills.
Low-income / Everyone	A centralized place to get information about community services, resources, and organizations (e.g. food shelf, churches).
Seniors	Have social contacts and know how to use technology.
Everyone	Everyone is involved, takes pride in the community, and volunteers.
Everyone	Free programming and activities that bring people together, educate, and entertain.
Everyone / City government	Have sufficient resources to maintain our local priorities.
Everyone / Local governments	Local communities are exercising leadership and pooling their resources to have an impact on our common needs.

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

- + Marble School (ECFE, ECSE, Invest Early, Head Start).
- + The Library and the new building.
- + Influx of young families with children.
- + Active Girl Scouts.
- + Investment in new equipment for the City park.
- + Skating rink and ball park repairs are scheduled.
- + Do have some small businesses still; several sole proprietors.
- + Are people who get things done.
- + Bar.
- + Fire department / EMT.
- + Post Office.
- + City Christmas party and Santa.
- + Community “Give-Away” free garage sale.
- + Senior Citizen Center.

Weaknesses/Threats

- Not enough parent involvement with their children.
- Money is tight.
- Not all local elected officials see the Library as an important community priority.
- Too many short-term residents/renters who do not stay long and do not get invested in the community.
- Lack of job opportunities/business loss; must work elsewhere.
- No police anymore.
- People don’t feel a reason to be involved locally.
- Residential and business properties are not being kept up, showing a lack of pride.

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?

- Search for alternative funding to support what is a priority.
- Advocate at the state level for funding to rural communities.
- Recruit involvement of new people (both homeowners and renters) in community projects.
- Provide incentives for safe, decent, affordable housing, such as a rehabilitation program with grants/low-interest loans.
- Assess what community programming is currently available for children and families, and collaboratively develop a plan to fill the gaps.
- Develop a civic club that is open to all in order to increase community involvement.
- Raise money to complete interior of the new community center.
- Hold an Open House celebration to introduce community members to the potential uses of the new City/community center building.

LIBRARY PRIORITIES

Finally, participants were asked to vote on 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
Create Young Readers: Early Literacy	7
Succeed in School: Homework Help	5
Know Your Community: Community Resources & Services	4
Make Informed Decisions: Health, Wealth, and Other Life Choices	4
Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access	3
Learn to Read & Write: Adult, Teen, and Family Literacy	3
Understand How to Find, Evaluate, and Use Information: Information Fluency	3
Be an Informed Citizen: Local, National, and World Affairs	2
Get Facts Fast: Ready Reference	2
Make Career Choices: Job & Career Development	2
Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning	2
Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing & Listening for Pleasure	2
Build Successful Enterprises: Business & Nonprofit Support	1
Express Creativity: Create and Share Content	1
Visit a Comfortable Place: Physical & Virtual Spaces	1
Celebrate Diversity: Cultural Awareness	0
Discover Your Roots: Genealogy & Local History	0
Welcome to the United States: Services for New Immigrants	0

Appendix D:

Library SWOT Analysis

October 2010

SWOT ANALYSIS
Marble Public Library
10-1-10

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

STRENGTHS: *What does the library do best?*

- Children's programming.
- InterLibrary Loans.
- Good hours.
- Knowledgeable staff.
- Good programs.
- Computer access.
- Easy to obtain material.

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

- Advertising.
- Location.
- More advertising.

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

- New building – morning papers for seniors.
- Partnerships with seniors.
- Promote service for homebound.
- Shut-ins.
- Youth & teens.

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

- City (2).
- Funding (3).
- School (computer lab at preschool).
- Other nearby libraries ("turf" vs. working together to maximize resources).