

COLLECTION MANAGEMENT

Purpose

This policy is a framework for developing, managing, and maintaining a balanced and broad collection that meets the diverse and ever-changing needs of the Mountainside community. This policy provides the criteria for selecting, retaining, and discarding resources (print, nonprint, and electronic) in support of the library's mission. It guides the staff in building and maintaining meaningful and responsive collections and informs the public regarding the methods, strategies, principles that drive the collection management process.

The Mountainside Public Library adopts as its basis for its collection development policy, the following statements as approved by the American Library Association:

- Library Bill of Rights
- Freedom to Read Statement
- Freedom to View Statement Libraries
- Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors

These statements are included in entirety as an Appendix to this policy and can be accessed electronically by clicking the links above.

Principles

Providing access to information, ideas, culture, and recreation is fundamental to the mission of the Mountainside Public Library. The purpose of the library is to offer a collection that reflects diverse interests, views, treatment, and level of difficulty in multiple formats within the limitations of space and budget. Selected materials may include items that are controversial in nature, uninteresting, or unpopular with some members of the community. Individuals may choose to limit their library use (and that of their children's use) to books and materials which are consistent with their individual tastes and values, but they may not restrict the freedom of others to read or inquire.

The Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in its collections and the acquisition of an item does not constitute an endorsement official or otherwise, by the Library or Library staff, of its content.

Responsibility for Selection of Material

The Library Board of Trustees has the ultimate authority with regard to the policies that govern the Library. The Library Director is responsible for overseeing material selection and overall collection management within the framework of the policies determined and approved by the Board of Trustees. The Library Director may delegate the day-to-day work of material selection and evaluation to designated staff who have appropriate professional expertise and knowledge to make such decisions.

Criteria for Selection of Material

To build balanced collections of merit and significance, materials must be selected based upon objective guidelines. All acquisitions, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the standards listed below. An item need not meet all of the criteria in order to be acceptable. Due to limitations on space and budget, the Library cannot acquire all materials on any one subject, nor does the Library deem this to be desirable. The following principles will guide selection:

- Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Interest of and suggestions by library members
- Informational, educational, or recreational value
- Literary merit and/or artistic quality
- Contemporary significance, popular interest, or permanent value
- Accuracy and authoritativeness of content

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- Date of publication
- Reputation and/or popularity of author, editor, or illustrator
- Relation to existing collection and to other materials on the subject
- Opinion of critics, reviewers, and media
- Local importance and/or historical value
- Price, availability, and budget limitations
- Suitability of format and ease of use
- Availability of the same or similar material in other local libraries
- Usefulness to the staff as a professional tool

Tools for the Selection of Material

The selection of materials is based on accepted professional standards. Recommendations may come from the following sources:

- Nationally recognized professional library-oriented journals such as Booklist, Library Journal, School Library Journal, Kirkus Review, and Horn Book.
- Standard collection tools, bibliographic sources and recommended lists prepared by professional organizations and reputable specialized vendors.
- Publishers' catalogs
- Media reviews
- Professional organizations and recommendations of library professionals
- Subject authorities
- Suggestions from library members
- Award lists including notable and recommended lists published by professional associations

Special Collections

- **Professional Material:** Items specifically geared toward professionals in fields such as law, medicine, and engineering, and religion, are purchased only if they are of general interest to lay people.
- **Local Authors and Self-Published Work:** All works including those by local and self-published authors are subject to the selection criteria detailed in the previous section. While the Library supports collections that are of local interest, not all works created by local authors will meet the criteria necessary for inclusion in the Library's collection.
- **Local History:** Although the library does not serve as an archival center, to the extent possible and practical within time, space, and budget limitations the library will house and provide access to information, material, and images pertaining to local Mountainside history.
- **Curriculum-related Material:** The Library supplements local curricular needs, but does not purchase textbooks unless they provide the best or only source of information on a subject, or complement an existing area with another perspective.
- **Collections for Youth:** In selecting library materials for children, the Library's objective is to provide a collection that meets the informational, recreational, and cultural needs of children from preschool age through twelfth grade. However, resources of the entire Library are accessible to both minors and adults. It is solely the responsibility of parents or legal guardians to guide the selection of reading, viewing, and listening choices of their children and young adults. Parents and legal guardians, not library staff, must decide what their children may or may not use from this collection. In addition, the selection of adult material will not be restricted by the possibility that these materials may come into the possession of minors.

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- **Large Type:** This collection serves populations of readers who have difficulty reading standard type size. As with any collection, this collection is subject to regular assessment and evaluation and will be expanded or reduced as demand and space restrictions dictate.

Gifts and Donations

The Library welcomes monetary gifts specified for the purchase of library materials. Whenever possible and in keeping with the library's collection management policy, the Library staff will choose items which accommodate the donor's subject or title preferences. If desired, a bookplate or media label with the donor's name or the designated honoree will be affixed to each item.

Due to constraints on shelf space, suitable storage areas, and staff time the library cannot accept donations of library materials such as books or media. Patrons are asked to refrain from leaving such donations outside of the library or in the book drop. Leaving material donations without the library's consent is a form of littering and may be subject to fines.

The Friends of the Mountainside Public Library accept material donations only on designated dates immediately prior to their scheduled book sales. These donations are accepted with the intent of selling them at The Friends of the Library book sale and are not for consideration as part of the Library's collections. Items that are not sold at the book sale will be donated or destroyed at the discretion of the Friends of the Mountainside Public Library.

Collection Maintenance

Collection maintenance comprises all decisions and actions involved in ensuring that the collection remains current, relevant, and accessible to the community. Collection maintenance includes:

Organization and Location: Materials are generally organized by standard library cataloging convention such as the Dewey Decimal System. Based on patron behavior and professional judgement, the Library Director along with designated staff may deem it appropriate to use modified or alternative organizational conventions for specific collections or parts of collections in order to increase access and appeal or to best utilize space.

Assessment and Evaluation: Ongoing assessment and evaluation serve as guides for the addition, removal, and relocation of resources. The Library Director and designated staff regularly use qualitative and quantitative tools to ensure that the collection is serving the community. Means of assessment and evaluation such as circulation reports, material turnover rates, fill rates, volume counts, customer requests, and community surveys may be employed to determine how the collection is being used and how it needs to change to better serve the community. The collection may be checked against standard bibliographic tools, subject specialty catalogs, and other professional resources. Staff examine the physical condition and frequency of use of items in the collection as well as the available space and budget allocations of the library to determine the overall parameters and composition of the collection.

Preservation: The library's facility, staff expertise, and budget do not accommodate conservation and preservation activities for most materials. Reasonable attempts of cleaning, mending, and repair will be made in an effort to keep valuable material in the collection. Other preservation efforts may include the transfer of information between formats such as print-on-paper to digital in order to preserve the content when copyright allows. No extraordinary efforts are made to retain or preserve last copies or out-of-print titles.

Elimination/Deaccession: The library strives to maintain a vital and dynamic collection that is relevant to the current and ever-changing community. Because the main goal of the library's collection is not archival in nature and because materials become damaged, outdated, and obsolete, items and sometimes

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entire collections must be withdrawn on a systematic and continuing basis in order to maintain a current, accurate, and appealing collection.

The Library Director or designated staff may withdraw materials for one or more of the following reasons:

- Item is damaged or in poor condition
- Material is no longer considered accurate or factual
- The content or format is obsolete and of no historical value
- The item or collection experiences insufficient use or interest
- There are more copies than needed in the collection
- Better subject coverage is available in the collection
- Space limitations make it an imprudent choice

Replacements: The library does not automatically replace all materials that are withdrawn because of loss, damage, or wear. Replacement is considered on a case-by-case basis and is determined based on the demand for the specific title, the existence of adequate coverage of the subject, and the cost and availability of an identical replacement or suitable replacement in-kind. Discarded library materials may be offered for sale or given away at the discretion of the Library Director and designated staff.

Request for Reconsideration

The library upholds the right of the individual to secure resources even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to some. The library's varied collection is available to all; however, it is not expected that all of the collection will appeal to everyone. Anyone who qualifies for a free Mountainside Public Library card may request that an item be reclassified or removed from the collection.

If a patron wishes to make a request for reconsideration, the patron is encouraged to discuss the matter with the staff person responsible for the selection of the material or the Library Director. If the patron is not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion, the patron will be invited to initiate a formal request for reconsideration. Patrons wishing to file a formal request must complete and submit a "Request for Reconsideration" form. The Library Director will review the completed form, evaluate the original reason for the purchase, and will consider the complaint within the framework of the Collection Development Policy. The director will reply to the patron in writing regarding the request. The director will not respond to incomplete request forms. If the patron is not satisfied with the director's response, the patron may request a review by the Mountainside Public Library Board of Trustees. The patron will be notified in writing of the Board of Trustees decision. The decision made by the Board of Trustees is final. The same patron may not request that the same item be reviewed again. Items that have been reviewed for reconsideration for one patron will not be reviewed again for a minimum of 3 years.

The Mountainside Library does not review reconsideration requests for materials that are the property of other libraries and that were obtained for a patron as a result of a joint sharing agreement or interlibrary loan. An individual or group may request reconsideration of no more than 3 items within a 6-month time frame. Items being reviewed for reconsideration will remain in the collection during the entire review process.