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University of Missouri, School of Information Science & Learning Technologies, 9410 Public Library Communities in Context

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[JOPLIN PUBLIC LIBRARY COMMUNITY ANALYSIS]

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Introduction

This community analysis was conducted by the 9410 Public Library Communities in Context class in the University of Missouri's School of Information Science & Learning Technologies. The research team consisted of one professor and six students, each of whom contributed various types of expertise to the project. The course was primarily intended as an active and hands-on learning experience. The enrolled students developed, tested, and refined their ideas for community analysis.

Jacque Gage, the Director of the Joplin Public Library, helped the class connect with many Joplin community leaders. She also provided guidance and discussion of her needs as a library director, to help us shape the final report.

Community Analysis Methods

The team used several methods of gathering information, articulated below.

Review of Existing Data. Information and data about the City of Joplin were gathered from a variety of sources. These included the U.S. Census Bureau, which provided demographics and analyses of poverty and employment ratios; the City of Joplin web site, which allowed us to see local concerns; and the Joplin Public Works Department, which provided traffic data for the library locations. We also reviewed responses to Joplin Public Library surveys and questionnaires about what residents wanted in the new library.

Community Research. We read and analyzed several community reports to get a sense of Joplin's goals and directions. These included reports authored by the Citizens Area Recovery Team (CART), community coverage from the Joplin Globe, and reports from the Joplin Public Library's strategic planning process.

Surveys. Our team conducted surveys designed to elicit which library services and features were most valued by library users, and were most desired by library non-users. The team used two separate surveys, one for high school students which generated 102 responses, and one for the general public which generated 206 responses.

Interviews. Members of the team conducted formal interviews with business and community leaders about Joplin residents and their information needs. Informal interviews were conducted at Third Thursdays, Joplin Public Library, Parr Hill Park, Schifferdecker Park, Cunningham Park, Books A Million, Silver Creek Retirement Community, College View Manor Retirement Community, Joplin Senior Center, Starbucks and Walmart.

Observations. Lastly, team members conducted observations of Joplin residents' information use and desires. These public observations included the library, local coffee shops, popular dining venues, parks, and bookstores.

Team members shared information and results on a password-protected web site, and engaged in regular conversations with each other to confirm their sense of the community. Over a three-week period, they reviewed the data collected and made conclusions about how the Joplin Public

Library might be able to work with its community while it is in the process of moving to a new location.

Presentation of this Report

The next part of this report, *The Library and its Community*, goes into what we learned about Joplin and its surroundings as we were engaging in this process. That section grounds our recommendations, which focus on three angles: planning for the new library, promotion and marketing, and outreach and partnerships.

Following our recommendations, we include our references and the contact people we worked with in Appendix I. Appendix II contains comments from a survey we conducted asking what people wanted from the library.

The Library and Its Community

We started with several documents to help us establish a sense of the library's vision and the community's direction for the new library. These documents were the Joplin Public Library Mission, Joplin Public Schools' Mission Statement and Standards of Excellence, and the City of Joplin Vision 2016 materials.

The mission of the Joplin Public Library (JPL) is to meet the recreational and informational needs of its patrons, as well as their cultural enhancement and educational needs. JPL specifically emphasizes the role of technology and freedom of information. The library's services are primarily the loan of materials: books, audiovisual materials, and electronic materials. Additional services are the public availability of resources: computers, printers, microform readers, meeting spaces, wireless internet, and others. The library also provides programs and interactive events to engage the community.

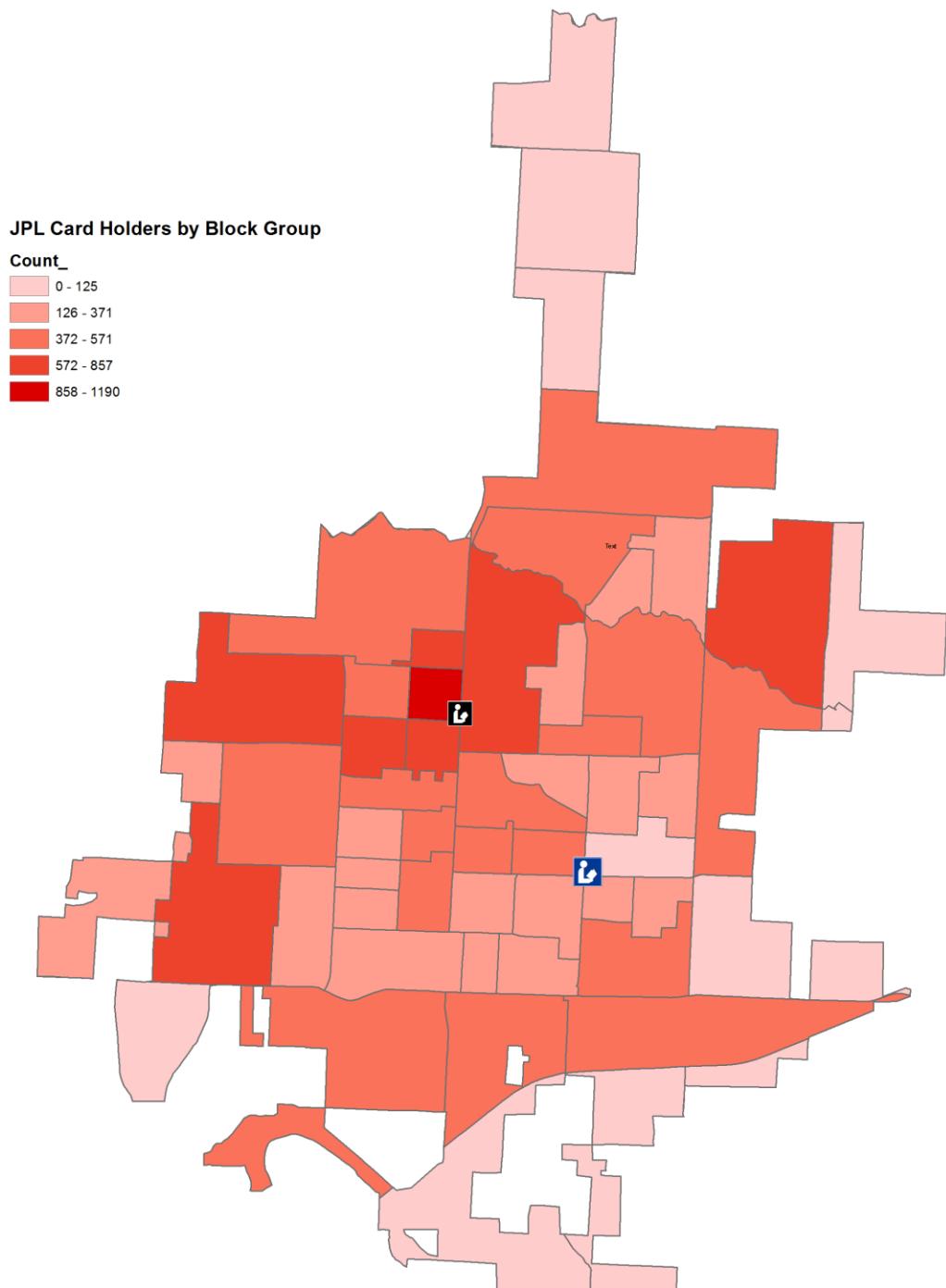
The City of Joplin Vision 2016 emphasizes post-tornado community development, with the goal of increasing population growth through redevelopment with an eye for long-term goals. Objectives identified by the city include developing synergy between areas of redevelopment and core institutions in the city, expanding economic growth through jobs and education, creating recreational and economic centers, and improving infrastructure.

The mission of the Joplin Schools is to inspire students to pursue excellence. This inspiration happens through the provision of learning and extracurricular opportunities, the development of safe and supportive learning environments, family and community partnerships, the hiring and continuing development of high-quality teachers, and a meaningful integration of technology into the educational situation. Joplin Schools' Standards of Excellence were adopted by the Board of Education in 2012. These include assuring that student achievement is at or above expectations, the production of college- and career-ready graduates, high measures of stakeholder satisfaction, the employment of high quality staff, and demonstration of financial stewardship of resources.

Comparing these documents, we see that the Joplin Public Library mission overlaps with the Joplin Public School's mission and the City's Vision 2016 in meaningful ways. The library supports the educational needs of Joplin's school population through its provision of informational resources, and helps to develop a love of reading and learning in children through its programming. The Joplin Public Library currently offers meeting space and job training materials, and serves as a de facto recreation area through its provision of spaces and leisure materials.

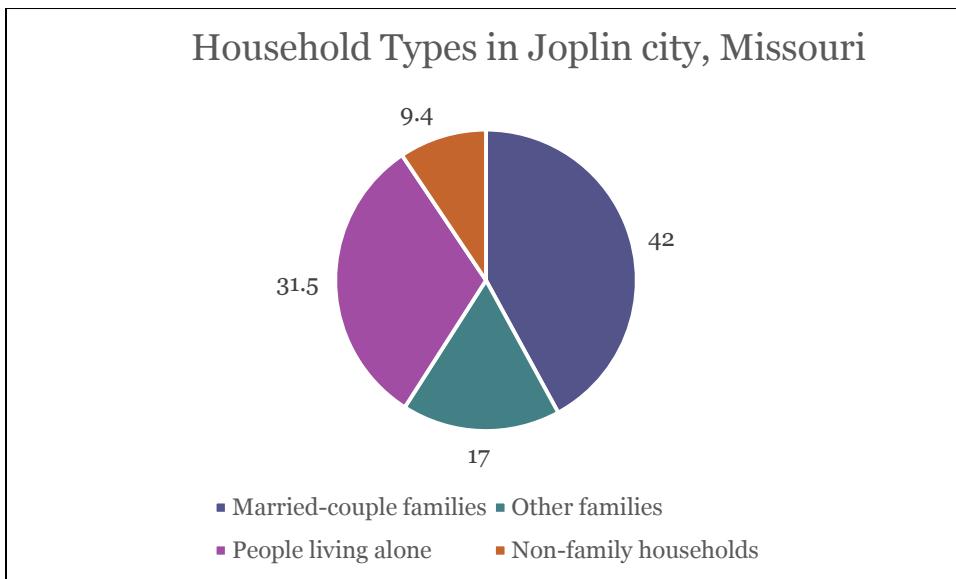
The Joplin Public Library is already entwined in its community. As they plan for a new branch, their challenge becomes finding new ways to integrate into the community and meet the needs of the city and its residents.

Joplin Public Library Cardholders February 2014



Families

Joplin claims over 48,000 people in 12,000 households. In 2010-2012 there were 21,000 households in Joplin city, Missouri. The average household size was 2.4 people. Nonfamily households made up 41% of all households in Joplin city, Missouri. Most of the nonfamily households were people living alone, but some were composed of people living in households in which no one was related to the householder.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Selected Social Characteristics in the United States, 2010-2012 American Community Survey

Families made up 59% of the households in Joplin city, Missouri. This figure includes both married-couple families (42%) and other families (17%). Of other families, 8% are female householder families with no husband present and own children under 18 years.

Of these families, approximately 8,000 are two-parent households; nearly 3,000 are headed by a single female parent, and the remainder is headed by a single male parent. The majority of the two-parent households are without children under 18; by contrast, approximately 58% of single-parent households have at least one child under 18.

These households are predominantly low-income: median household income is approximately \$36,000, and 18% of households earn less than \$15,000 per year. Joplin families are also heavily reliant on their automobiles, with nearly 93% of workers either driving or carpooling for their commute.

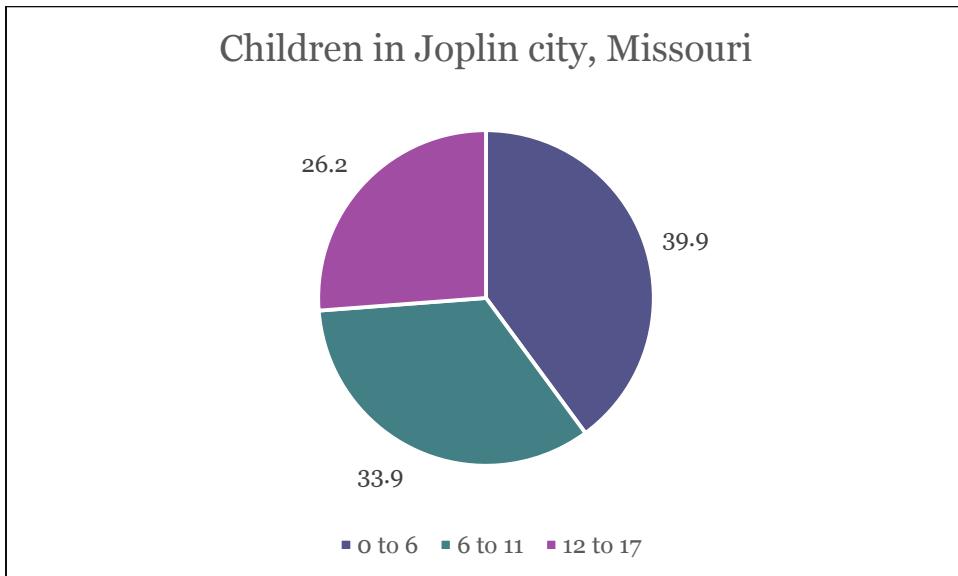
Families' Information Needs

The primary information need for Joplin families is educational in nature; parents require trustworthy and reliable resources to supplement their children's education. Several parents have expressed a desire for programming and materials to help them broach difficult topics with their children, such as gun safety and sexual education. Others expressed a desire for instructional programming teaching parents how to help their children access library resources.

In Joplin city, Missouri, 30% of all households have one or more people under the age of 18; 24% of all households have one or more people 65 years and over.

Children & Teens

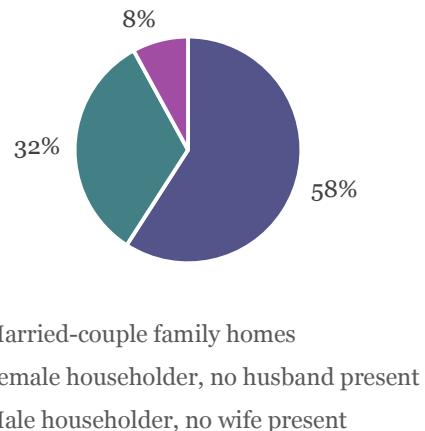
According to American Fact Finder's 2012 American Community Survey, there are 10,655 children under the age of 18 in households in Joplin, Missouri. Younger children make up a larger percentage of the population than teenagers.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Children Characteristics, 2008-2012 American Community Survey*

Children and teens in married-couple family homes make up the majority of Joplin youth, 6,169 of the 10,655 children counted. Another 812 children are in a “male householder, no wife present” situation and 3,436 are in a “female householder, no husband present” situation. The median income of households with children present is \$41,126.

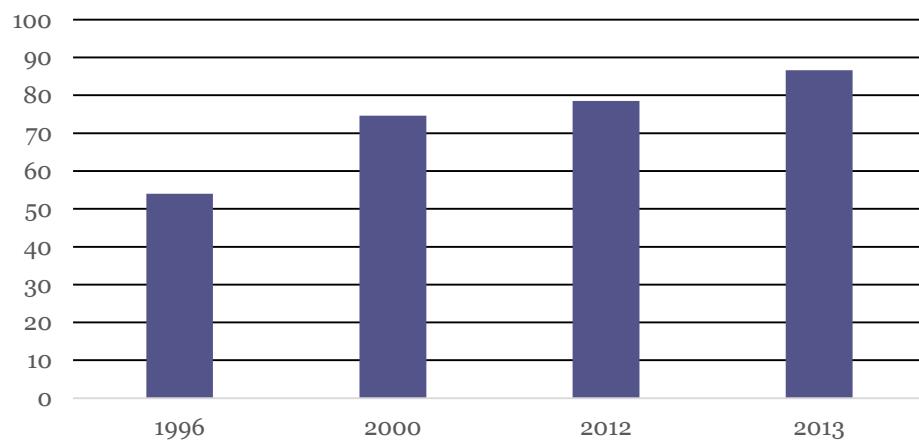
Children in Households in Joplin city, Missouri



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Children Characteristics, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

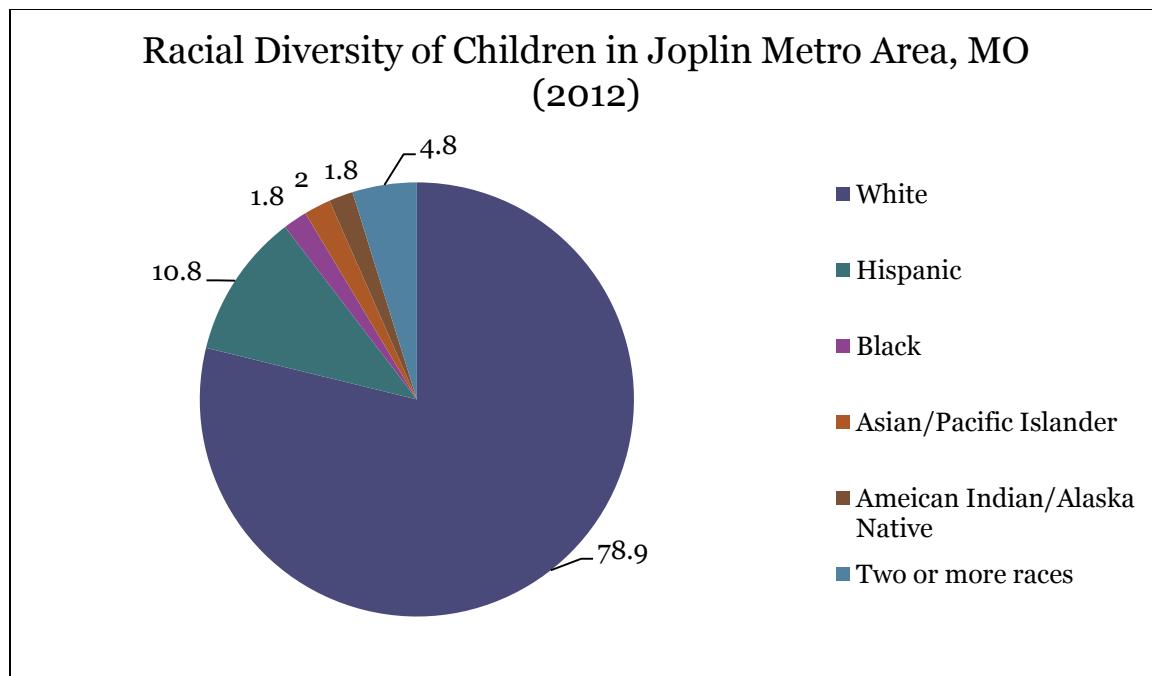
There are 7,962 children and teens enrolled in school, from preschool/daycare through 12th grade. Joplin's high school graduation rate in 2013 was 86.6% (a jump from a mere 54% in 1996).

Joplin Public School Graduation Rates, 1996-2013



Source: Joplin School District 2013 Annual Report.

Of the 10,655 children and teens in Joplin, 38.9% are living in households with Supplemental Security Income (SSI), cash public assistance income, or Food Stamp/SNAP benefits in the last 12 months. Almost 30% of children and teens in Joplin live in households below the poverty level. According to the Joplin School District's 2013 Annual Report, 60.57% of students qualify for the free/reduced lunch program.



Source: Joplin, MO Metro Area Population under Age 18. <http://www.diversitydatakids.org/>

According to diversitydatakids.org's 2012 data, 78.9% of children and teens in the Joplin metro area are white, 10.8% are Hispanic, 1.8% are black (non-Hispanic), 2% are Asian/Pacific Islander, 1.8% are American Indian or Alaska Native, and 4.8% are two or more races.

In 2009-2010, 14.4% of births in the Joplin area were births to teenage mothers.

Children's and Teens' Information Needs

Children and teenagers have similar information needs, as articulated by survey respondents and interviewees.

Children

- Homework help
- School readiness/early literacy
- Non-fiction resources
- STEM programming

Teens

- Internet access
- Homework help
- Teen materials
- College & career help
- Tutoring & GED assistance
- Development of soft skills for employment

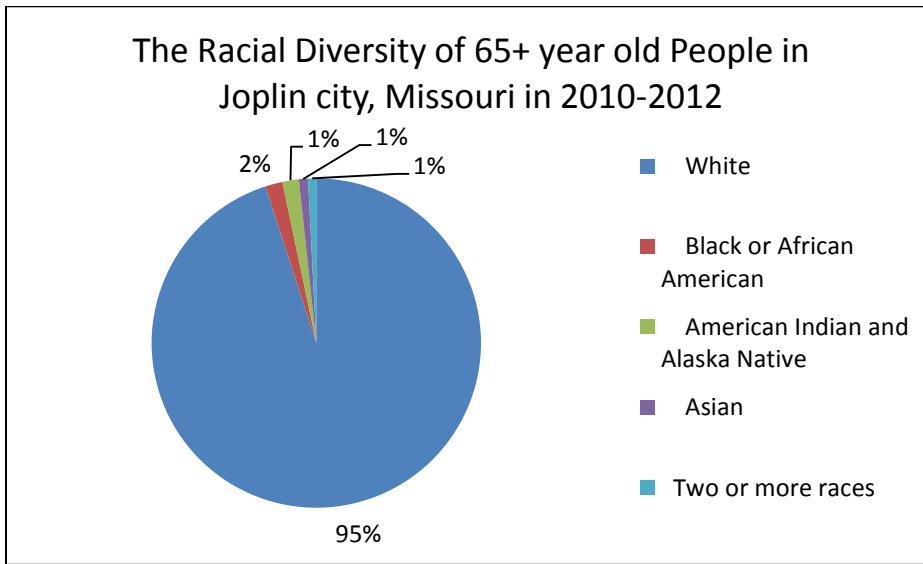
Children's and Teens' Other Needs

- Transportation
- Socialization
- Opportunities parents can't give them
- Access to library cards if out of district

Seniors

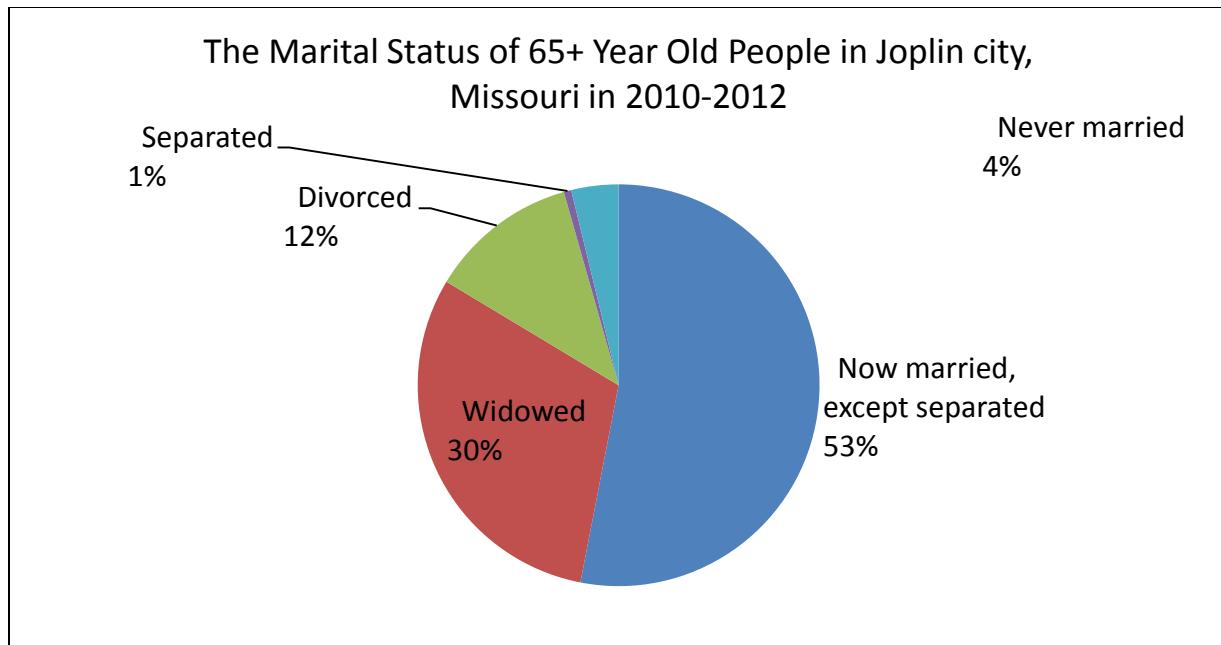
According to the 2012 American FactFinder, there are approximately 7,195 people seniors aged 65 or more in Joplin city, Missouri representing 14.4% of the population. Of that number 60.4% are female and 39.6% are male. However, total number of seniors will increase as a large number of Joplin residents are currently in the 45 to 64 age group age. Area social service agencies are already reporting an increasing demand for food assistance, affordable housing and transportation.

The senior population is mostly homogeneous consisting of 95% white. However, the population does consist of 1.7% black or African American, 1.6% American Indian or Alaska Native, 0.9% Asian, and 0.8% of two or more races. There is a small percentage (3.6%) of the senior population that speaks a language other than English. Of those 3.6%, 1.5% speak English less than "very well."



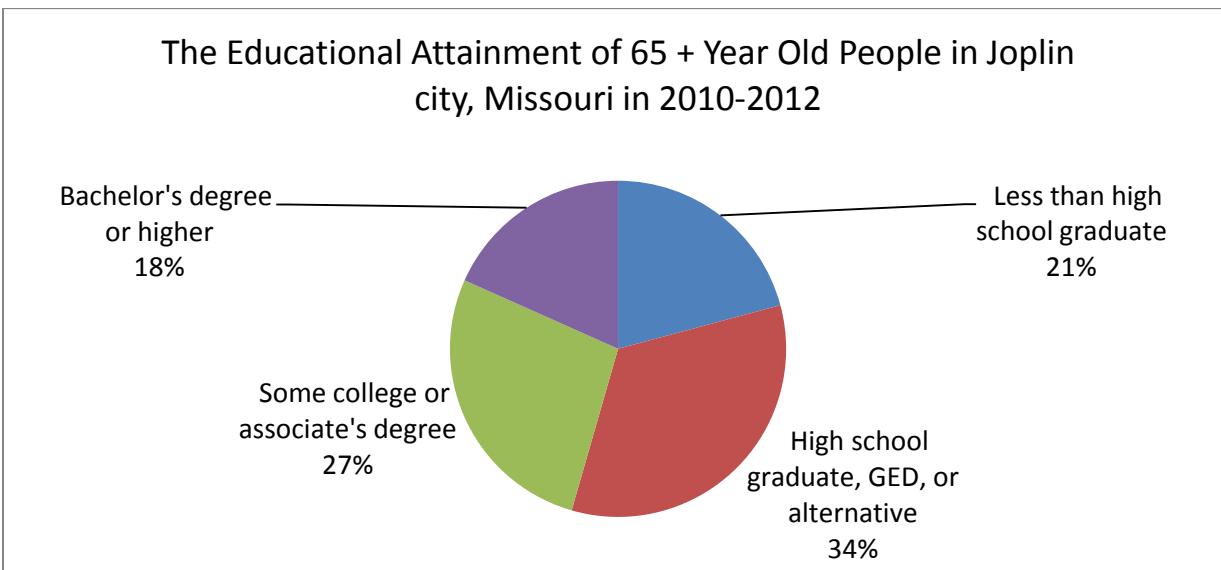
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population 65 Years and Over in the United States, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

Of the seniors in the Joplin community, 53.1% are now married, except separated, 30.6% are widowed, 12% are divorced, 0.6% are separated and 3.8% were never married.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population 65 Years and Over in the United States, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

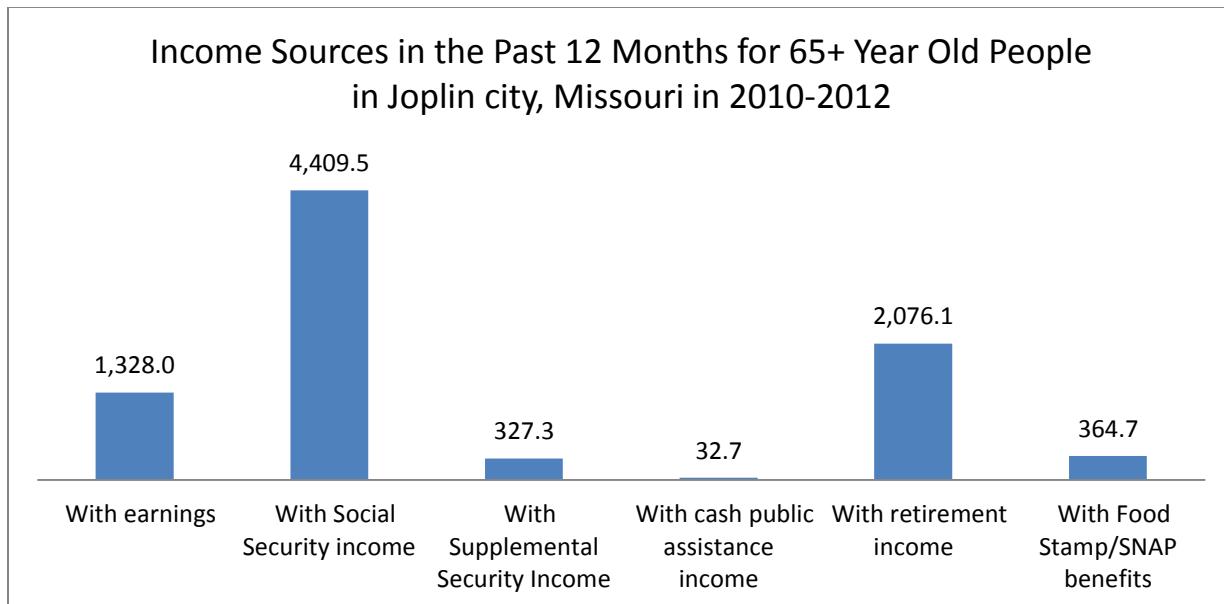
Joplin seniors' educational attainment is somewhat lower than the general Joplin population. While 21% have less than a high school education and 34% are high school graduates or hold equivalent certifications, only 27% have some college or associate's degree, and 18% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population 65 Years and Over in the United States, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

The majority of Joplin's senior population is retired. The 2012 American Community Survey

reported that 85.9% are not in the labor force. As a result, much of the senior population lives on a fixed or limited income. The 2012 American Community Survey found that 12.4% of the population age 65 and older fell below the poverty line. Additionally, 37.3% of the senior population is considered to be disabled.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population 65 Years and Over in the United States, 2008-2012 American Community Survey

The seniors are receiving most (94.3%) of their benefits through social security (\$17,361). 7% have supplemental security income. Fewer than 1% of Joplin seniors received cash public assistance income and 7.8% received food stamp/SNAP benefits.

The Area Agency on Aging runs the local Meals on Wheels program. It serves approximately 600 people within the Joplin city limits throughout the year. During 2013, the number of meals served increased by 12%. The program also serves approximately 3000 meals a month to 800 people at the Joplin Senior Center. The senior center offers nutrition education, health and wellness programs, exercise programs. The center has a small lending library of used books and computers available for seniors to use. However, the center has discontinued teaching computer classes due to budget cuts. It also offers recreational activities such as dominos and pool.

According to the 2012 American Community Survey, 37.3% of the senior population in Joplin is considered disabled. The Independent Living Center, which serves the disabled population in Joplin, estimates that 50% of their clients are senior citizens with age-related disabilities such as vision, hearing or mobility problems. Given the increasing number of seniors in the Joplin area, the library can expect to see an increase in demand for materials and services such as low vision readers, handicap accessible restrooms, large print books, audio books etc. The Center also estimates that about 350 of its clients in Joplin are homebound. Most have family or friends that provide assistance. However, many feel that they ask family and friends too much for assistance. They feel that asking someone to pick up materials at the library for them is a luxury that they can do without. Among the homebound population, only about 15% have regular paid internet

access. This makes it more difficult for the homebound population to know what materials the library offers and to request materials even if they have someone to pick up materials for them.

Seniors' Information Needs

- Access to library cards for those who live outside of Joplin (they would use it if they didn't have to pay the fee or as high of a fee) – potentially work with another agency to subsidize the cost of the card
- Computer classes
- Wheelchair accessible computers
- More help with the computers in the computer area
- More genealogy resources
- More large print items
- Homebound Book delivery
 - Library materials brought to the homebound – possible RSVP volunteers to bring the materials to the homebound
- Loaning of e-readers
- Screen readers for low vision
- Internet
 - Stephanie Denham from AAA stated that only 12% of the senior population has internet at home
- Readily available information for healthcare
 - Maybe have a consumer health section of the library.
- Health screening in conjunction with the hospital
- More audiobooks
- Newspaper and magazines
- Able to see movies or play video games through library programs

Other Needs

Currently, there are only three modes of public transportation: MAPS (Metro Area Public transit System), Sunshine Trolley or taxi.

MAPS is a curb-to-curb, accessible public transportation. This needs to be reserved at least 7 days before the scheduled pickup. With a Public Transit ID (retained from the MAPS office), seniors, disabled or those on Medicare can get a reduced fare of \$2.00 per boarding. Roundtrip with only one stop cost the senior \$4.00. For many seniors, this cost can add up for individuals who are on a limited budget.

Sunshine Lamp Trolley is a public transportation system for the city of Joplin. The trolley will deviate from its fixed route for anyone who is unable to get to the trolley stop and lives within 3/4 of mile of the trolley route. The cost of the trolley for seniors is \$.50 per boarding with the Public Transit ID. The fare for the trolley to deviate is \$2.00 per boarding so \$4.00 roundtrip. If the senior is able to get to the trolley this might be a viable mode of transportation. The deviation of the trolley can be scheduled at least one hour before scheduled pickup.

Joplin taxi coupons - Under the program, individuals now pay \$40 for \$100 worth of coupons. When they use the coupons, the city pays the cab companies the other \$60. The program is

available to individuals with \$11,300 or less in income a year, couples with less than \$11,900, and three-member households with less than \$12,500. This might be a feasible option for some seniors who are on a limited budget but it would probably only be used if the senior needed transportation quickly.

Unfortunately, because of the lack of transportation the seniors are having a hard time making to the library as much as they would like.

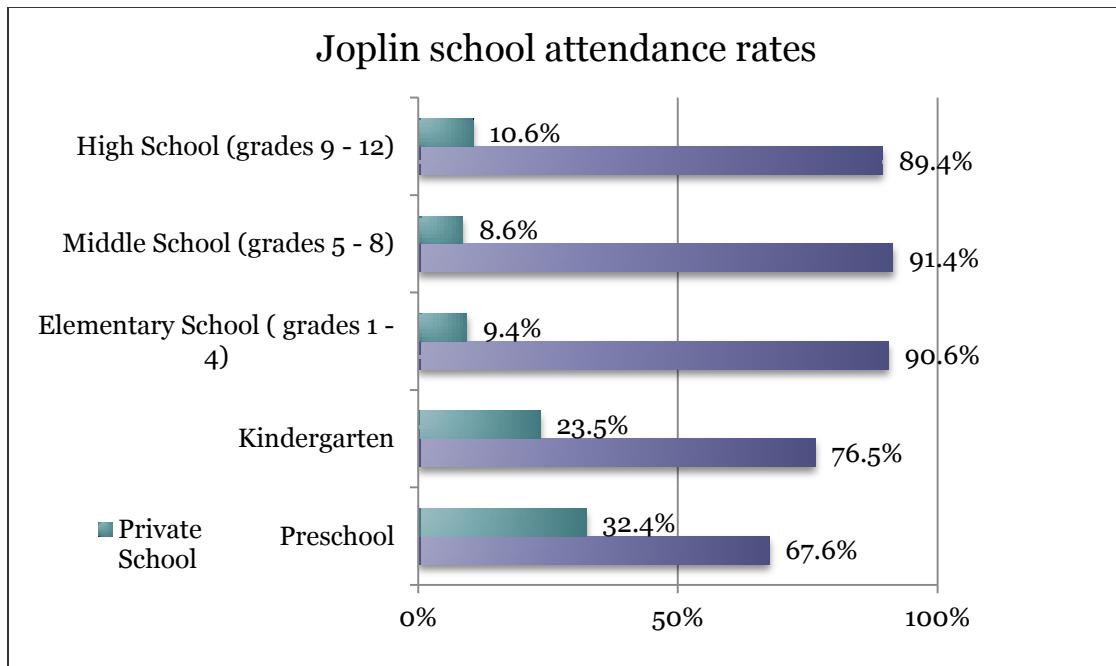
Education

Joplin has 8615 children enrolled in preschool through 12th grade. The majority of students attend the Joplin Public Schools. The Joplin Public Schools enrolled 7492 students in the 2013-14 school year. However, Joplin also has four private schools (Joplin Area Catholic Schools, Thomas Jefferson Day School, Martin Luther, and College Heights Christian). The following graph shows the percentage of students enrolled in public vs. private school.

Students in the Joplin Public School district are predominantly low-income. East Middle School has 70% of its students in free or reduced lunch programs, and most students' households do not have reliable access to the Internet. The district has a slightly worse dropout rate than the Missouri state average. The dropout rate spiked following the tornado, but it has largely returned to its original levels. Conversely, the district boasts slightly better attendance than the state average.

The district has labeled itself as a “21st Century Learning Center”, with a strong emphasis on technology in the curriculum. Beginning in 8th grade, the district provides every student with an iPad, and the school library collections have been strongly refocused on electronic resources. The district has also recently begun implementing the Common Core State Standards Initiative.

The district's “21st Century Learning Center” initiative has placed a severe strain on the information resources of the schools and their students. The emphasis on electronic resources has resulted in the majority of the schools' print nonfiction resources being removed, in spite of the Common Core requirements that teachers instruct on the use of informational texts. This coincides with a sharp decrease in recreational reading among students, especially among boys who enjoy reading nonfiction. Joplin students require regular reliable Internet access in order to complete their assigned work and fully participate in their education. The majority of the students are also latch-key children, returning to empty homes at the end of the school day, and they often need homework help and after-school recreational activities. Furthermore, as in all school districts, Joplin students also need regular help with tutoring, testing, and career and college exploration.



Source: U.S. Census, School Enrollment, 2010 – 2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimate.

Prior to the May 2011 tornado, the Joplin Public Schools had started the process of transforming themselves into a 21st Century Learning Center. The tornado accelerated that process. District staff, parents and community leaders believe this model will better prepare students for the global society they live in and expose them the skills necessary to succeed. Per the Joplin Schools web site, the hallmarks of 21st Century Learning are:

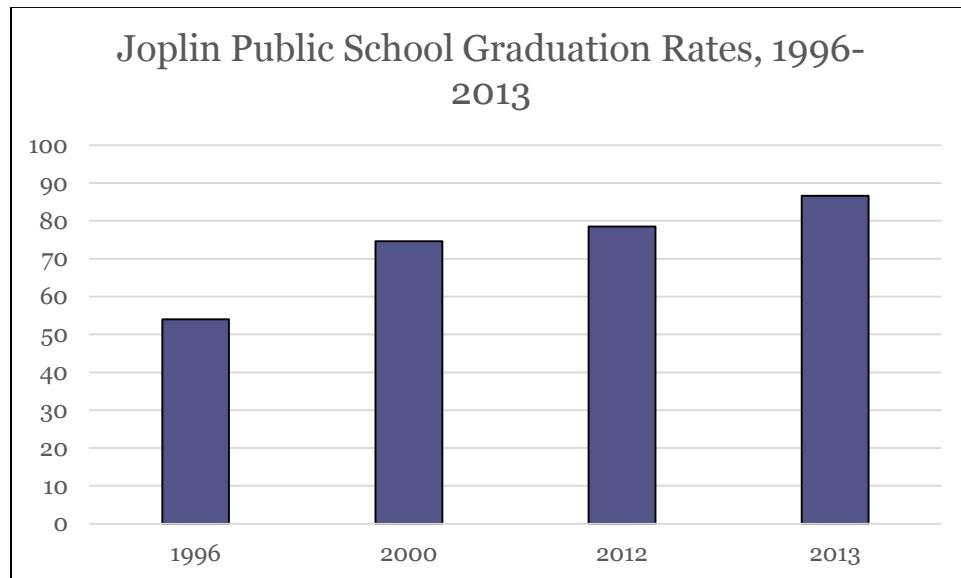
- 1) Collaborative work,
- 2) Experience-based learning,
- 3) Inquiry-based problem solving,
- 4) Real-world applications, and
- 5) Student-led study.

The move to a 21st Century Learning model has also prompted the district to move towards becoming a 1:1 district. Currently, all high school students have laptops. Eighth graders have iPads, and sixth and seventh graders will be getting iPads in the future. Eventually, the program will extend to elementary students as well.

The district also recently began implementing the Common Core State Standards Initiative. Common Core requires teachers to teach information literacy skills including instruction on the use of informational texts. Students and teachers now rely more heavily on electronic textbooks and resources rather than print materials. Conversations with teachers revealed that much of the print non-fiction collections are being replaced with electronic resources in the newly rebuilt middle and high schools. This has placed a severe strain on the schools and students. The Joplin Public Library can expect to see an increased demand for non-fiction resources related to topics in the school curriculum.

Many students in Joplin live in low to middle income families. The 2013 Joplin Schools Annual Report noted that 61% of its students qualified for the free or reduced lunch program. Joplin students require regular reliable Internet access in order to complete their assigned work and fully participate in their education. Unfortunately, many students lack access to the Internet at home and lack the ability to easily access free Wi-Fi or Internet connections at other community locations such as the library. The library has already seen an increase in demand for public computers and Wi-Fi. They can expect this trend to continue to increase once the library moves to its new location and becomes more accessible to high school students.

Poverty levels have also created issues with poor student performance and students dropping out of school to help support their families. Over the last few years, the district has focused on developing programs to help raise the district's low graduation rates. The Bright Futures program has been a key component in addressing graduation rates and test score improvements. As a result, between 1996 and 2013 high school graduation rates have increased by 32%.

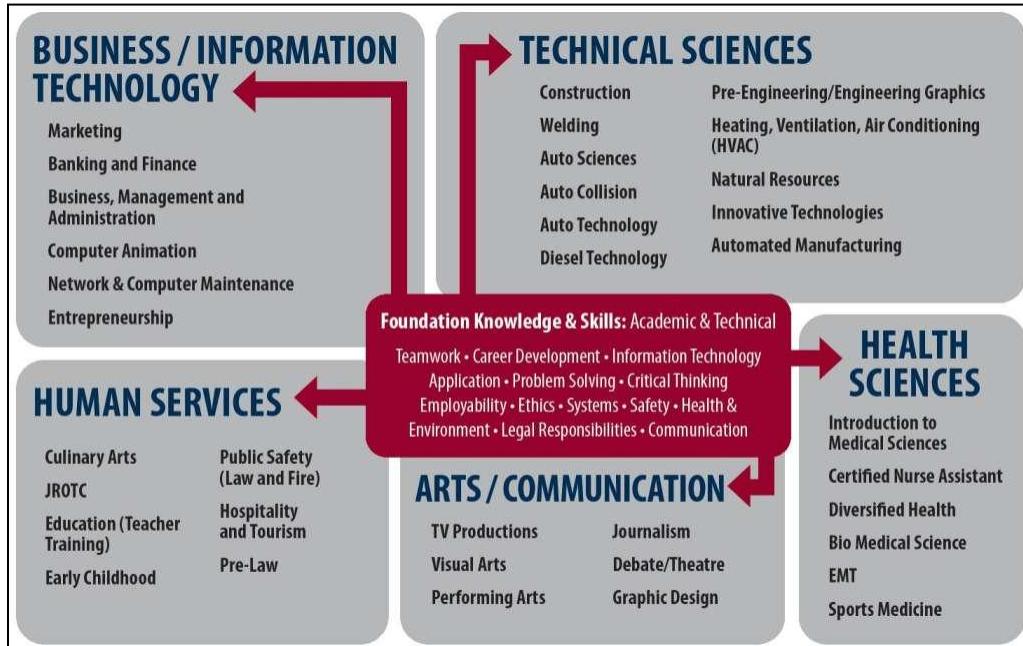


Source: Joplin Public Schools 2013 Annual Report

In general parent of high school graduates felt their children were ready for college or the workforce. However, regional employers and higher education institutions expressed concerns about the lack of soft skills, communication, life skills and basic academic skills such as math among area high school graduates. According to a community health needs assessment conducted by BKD CPAs and Advisors, the National Workforce Career Readiness certificate and vocational technical programs, such as those offered at the school districts Franklin Tech campus, have addressed some of these issues.

The Joplin Public Schools and local business partners have also developed a comprehensive college, career and technology focused curriculum. At the elementary and middle school level, the program provides activities that promote career awareness and exploration. At the high school level, students can choose one of five Career Paths (Human Services, Business and Information Technology, Health Services, Arts and Communication, and Technical Sciences). The curriculum will focus on foundational knowledge, soft skills, and real world experiences in

the field of their choice. (JSD website)



Source: Joplin Public Schools, <http://www.joplinschools.org>

Joplin Student and Teacher Needs

- Study rooms and small group workspaces with white boards, Wi-Fi, outlets etc.
- Tutoring/homework help
- Library cards for all students and teachers
- Access to computers, internet and cutting edge technology
- Expanded non-fiction collection
- Programs that emphasize literacy and STEM concepts
- Outreach programs to the schools
- Delivery system to the schools (will help alleviate some of the transportation issues student face)
- Library tours and information literacy instruction
- Programs on scholarships, financial aid, applying for college, ACT/SAT prep etc.
- Programs related to job skills, career planning, resumes, interviews etc.

Literacy

Literacy is a major issue facing both children and adults in Joplin. The area has a large number of working poor. For many teens school comes second to bringing home a paycheck. This results in a large number of non-traditional students that need tutoring and/or help with the high school equivalency exam. It also creates a transitioning workforce as jobs and the required job skills change. These workers need additional assistance in order to go back to school or get technical

training. In addition, children in these households are at greater risk. Because their parents were never taught the importance of literacy and education, they do not know how to expose their children to resources or assist them in these areas.

Joplin has a number of organizations and initiatives aimed at literacy. Joplin's Neighborhood Adult Literacy Action (NALA) and Missouri Adult Education and Literacy deal with adult literacy issues. NALA estimates that 8% of adults living in Jasper County lack basic literacy skills. They offer one-on-one tutoring in reading and math as well as a family literacy program. The family literacy program models reading to children for parents and provides resources to encourage them to read to their children. Missouri Adult Education offers test prep and tutoring services to help adults improve basic reading, math and writing skills for the purpose of finding a job, entering college or starting technical training.

The Joplin Public Library already participates in Reading Matters, an initiative by Bright Futures to provide books in homes and have parents read to their children 30 minutes a day from birth to age 5. They are also in the process of becoming a Family Place Library. This will allow them to develop a collection of parenting resources, offer parenting workshops and develop programming that encourages literacy and child development skills.

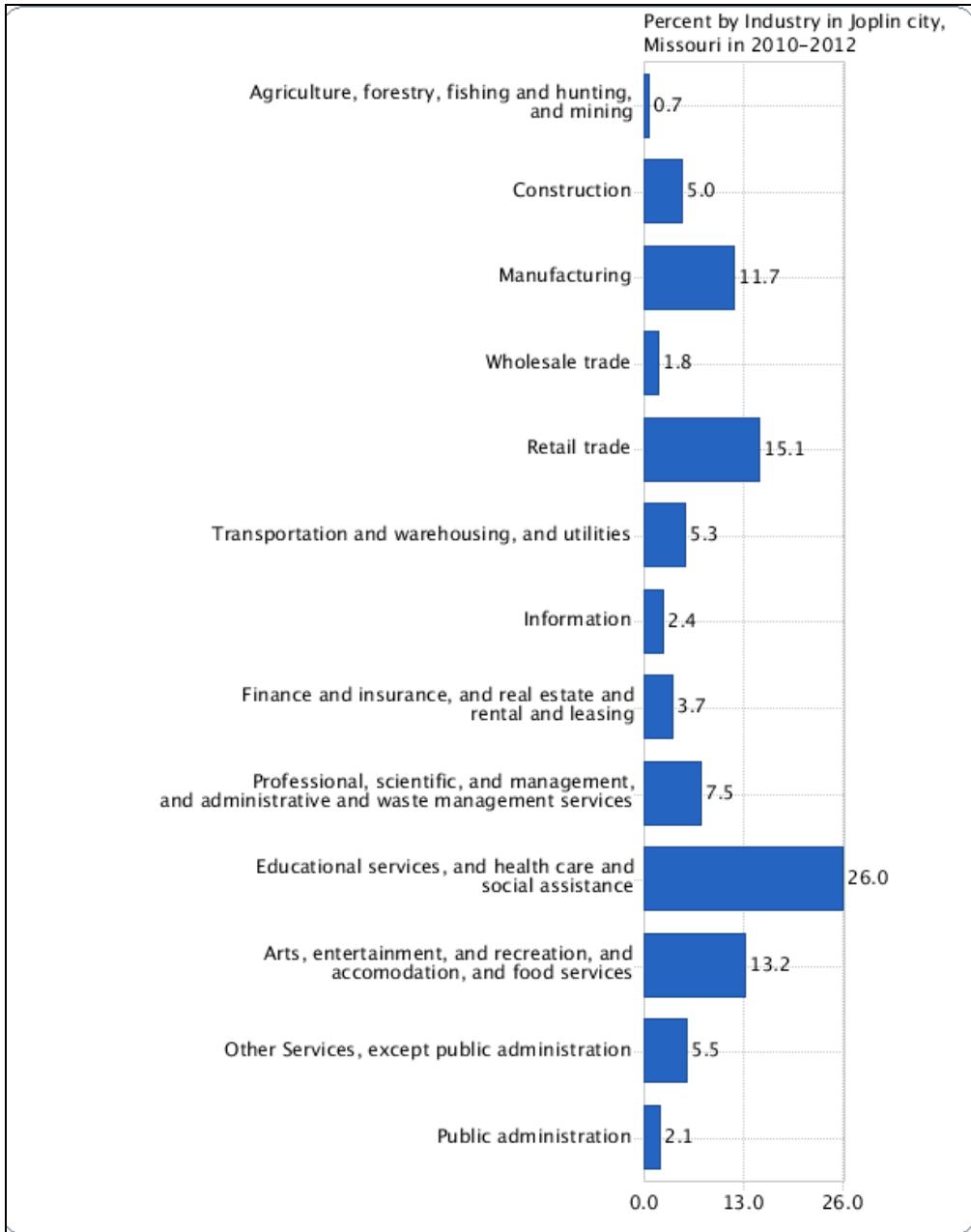
In addition to these programs, the Joplin Public Schools' Parents as Teachers program, the United Way's Success by 6, and the YMCA's Target Kids Reading Program also work with early literacy efforts. These efforts are critical since the 2012 American Community Survey estimates only 37.3% of 3 and 4 year olds in Joplin attend preschool. The library needs to continue and expand its efforts and partnerships in this area.

Joplin Literacy Needs

- Parenting resources
- Larger programming space
- Computer lab space for classes
- Activity stations for children's section
- Books and computer test preparation for the high school equivalency exam (HiSET)
- Programs and storytimes for families in the evening and weekends
- Outreach programs to daycares, School Plus and other child care facilities

Business

Joplin is home to many of the region's largest employers. The health care, manufacturing and retail sectors employ half of the area's residents. Freeman Health Systems, Mercy Joplin, Leggett-Platt, La-Z-Boy Midwest, Eagle-Pitcher Technologies, Conway, and TAMKO Roofing Products are some of the major employers in the area.

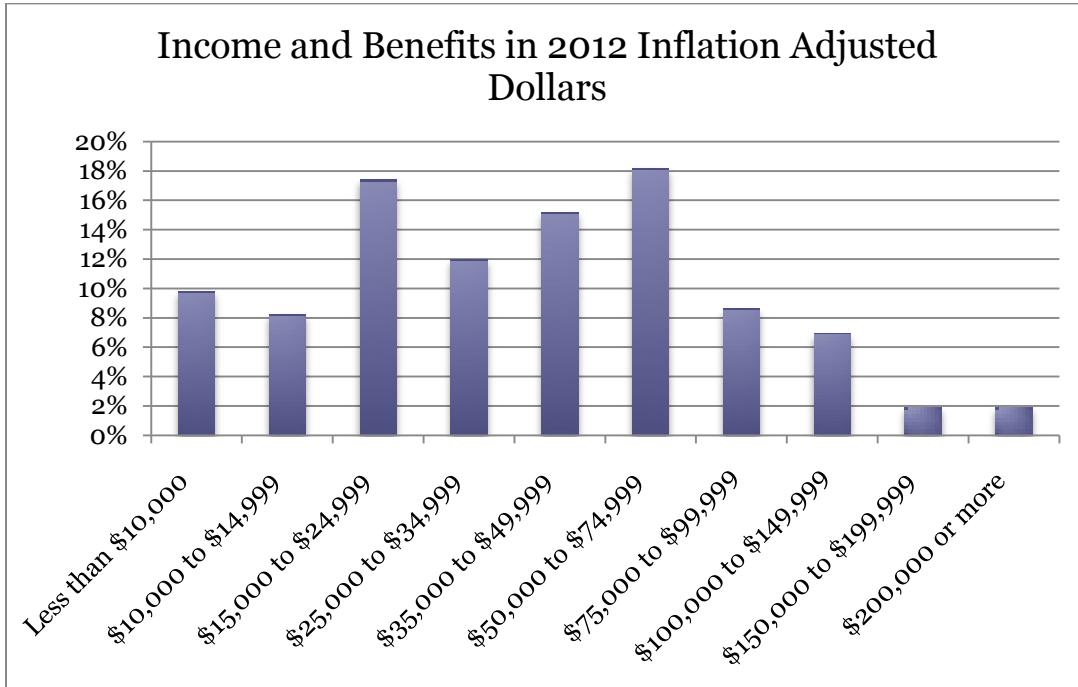


Source: U.S. Census, Population and Housing Narrative Profile: 2010-2012, 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates.

While employment levels in Joplin have held steady and its unemployment rate (6.5%) is below the national average, the area does face several challenges when it comes to business and economic development. Studies by the Citizens Advisory Recovery Team (CART) and the Joplin Regional Prosperity Initiative both found that the area has lost population in the 20 – 24 and 35 – 44 age groups. These age groups leave the area for college and jobs. However, they don't come back because they feel the area lacks amenities, activities, housing, competitive salaries and job opportunities for young professionals.

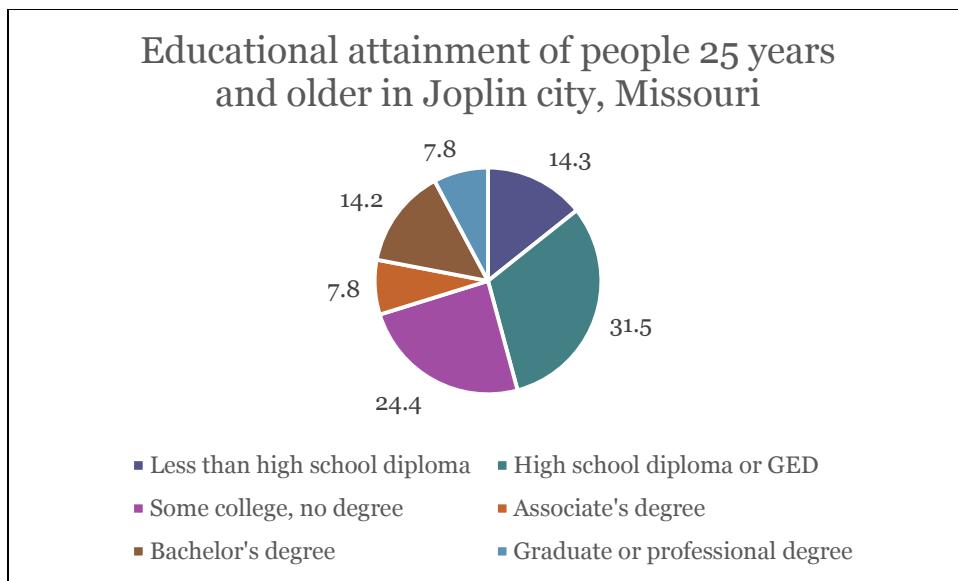
Joplin has a median household income as \$36,348 and 18% of households had an income below

\$15,000. Low paying jobs make it difficult for people to break out of poverty. As a result, poverty rates continue to increase and remain above state and national levels.



Source: U.S. Census, Selected Economic Characteristics, 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates

Educational attainment is directly related to wages and earning potential. While the dropout rate in the Joplin Schools has decreased, it still remains high when compared to similar communities. The fact that less than 25% of the population has a bachelor's or graduate degree may contribute to the lack of white collar and professional positions in the area, according to BKD's community health needs assessment.



Source: U.S. Census, Educational Attainment, 2010-2012 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates.

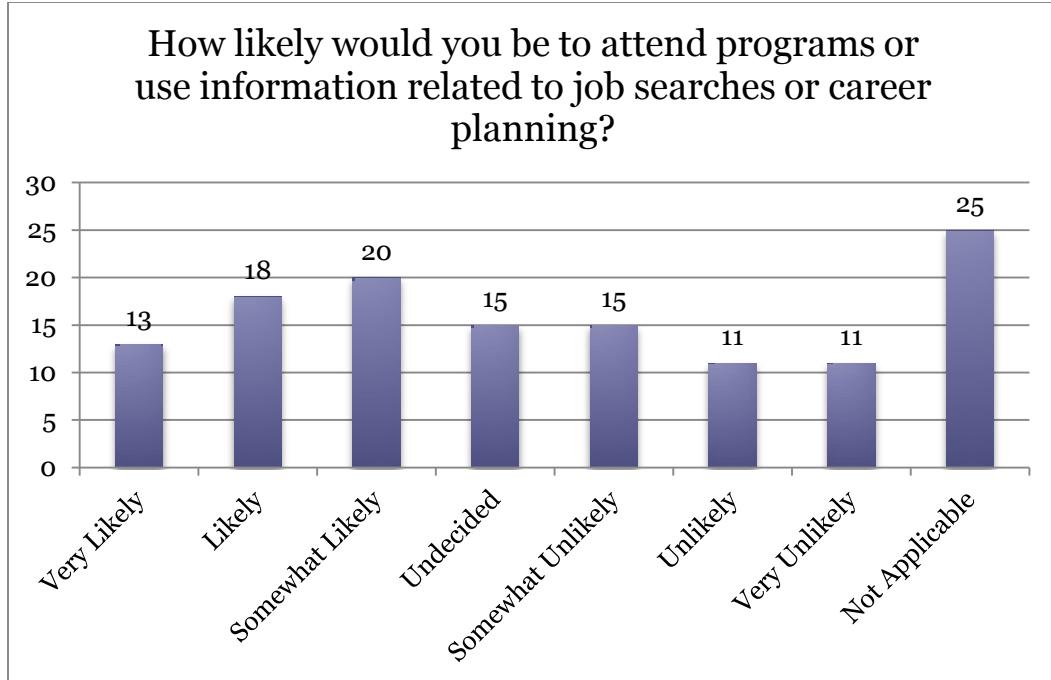
Members of the business community interviewed by our survey team, the CART team and the Joplin Prosperity Initiative all cited a concern about the lack of soft skills, communication, life skills and basic academic skills among job seekers. Partnerships between business organizations and the local schools are working to put programs in place to offset these challenges. The Workforce Investment Board has worked to make Jasper County the first ACT Work Ready Certified county in the nation. In Work Ready Communities, all businesses, job seekers and educators know the skills workers need. They create programs to expose students to careers and the skills and education necessary to succeed in those careers. Programs like Bright Futures work to lower dropout rates and alleviate the impact of poverty.

Business Community Information Needs

Interviews with local business leaders, the Chamber of Commerce and Workforce Investment Board indicated the following information needs:

- Access to tutoring, GED and career training resources
- Programs on interviewing, resume writing and business etiquette and other soft skills
- Computer and internet access
- Information on community resources for business and job seekers

The Joplin Public Library currently offers a variety of resources to assist patrons with job searches and career planning. However, interviews and survey responses indicate that portions of the target audience may not be aware of or familiar with the resources that are available through the library. The library can work with local business organizations to increase marketing of the resources available in the community.

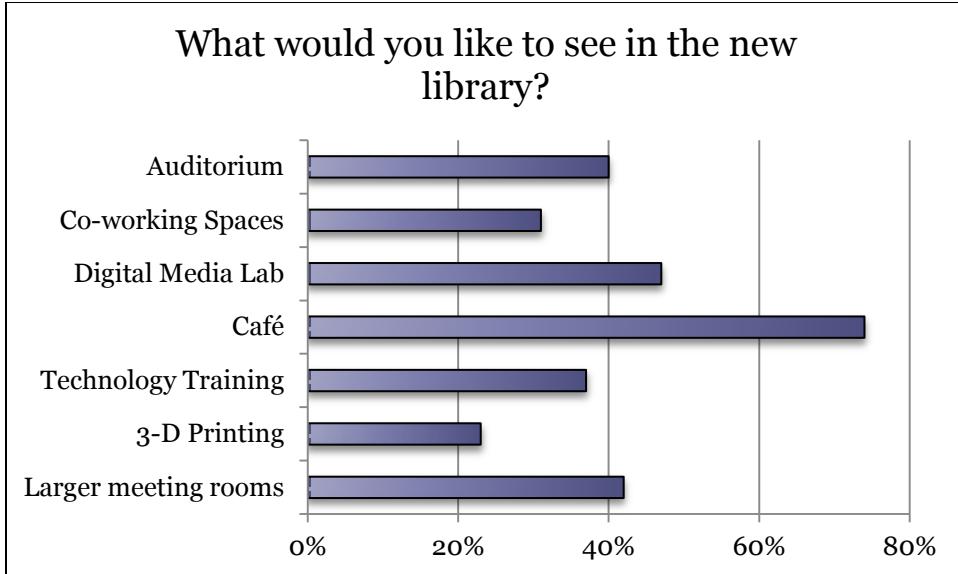


Small Businesses

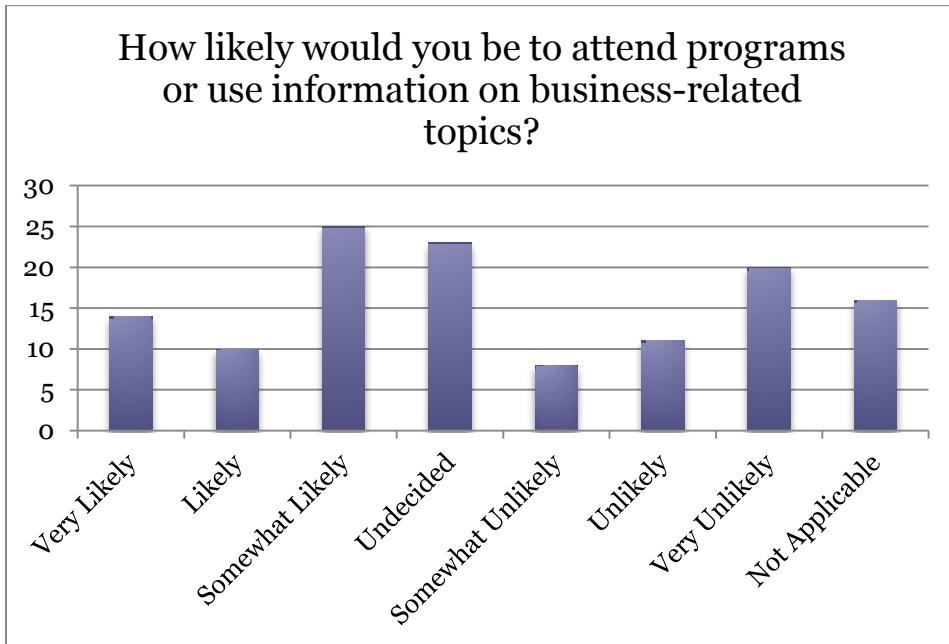
Prior to the 2011 tornado, the number of small businesses in Jasper County decreased while the number of small businesses in Newton County increased. Interviews conducted by the Joplin Regional Prosperity Initiative (JRPI) found that area stakeholders felt that “the region supports and encourages small business and has strong resources available for potential and existing entrepreneurs.”

JRPI’s study cited the Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC) at Missouri Southern State University, the Chamber of Commerce and the Joseph Newman Business and Technology Innovation Center. The SBTDC provides programming related to business planning, financial planning, marketing, management and more. The Newman Center serves as a business incubator. BKD’s community health needs analysis found that many people in the area are unaware of the resources available for small business in the region. They also noted that capital is a challenge for many small businesses.

Interviews with area business leaders uncovered an overwhelming need for access to affordable meeting spaces that can accommodate anywhere from 2 to 5 people to 75 to 150 people. Business leaders stated that the spaces should be flexible; able to accommodate large group presentations and smaller breakout sessions; have projectors, screens and white boards; Wi-Fi and computer access; and food prep space. Several business leaders also mentioned that small businesses need access to Wi-Fi, printers and specialized computer programs such as graphic design programs.



The Joplin Public Library has resources related to finance, business plan development, marketing, management and more. However, interviews and survey responses indicate that portions of the target audience may not be aware of or familiar with the resources that are available through the library. Library staff can work with the Chamber, SBTDC, Workforce Investment Board, and Newman Center to increase marketing of the resources available for entrepreneurs and small businesses.



Non-Profits

Joplin has a variety of non-profits. They cover the arts, health care, children, senior citizens,

business, education, literacy and more. These organizations provide a wealth of resources and assistance to community members. However, many of the organizations that the survey team spoke with expressed that they have difficulty ensuring they are reaching their target audience and getting the word out about the programs and services they offer. Many of the organizations expressed a desire for the library to serve as a community center and gathering places. They saw the library as a synthesizer of programs. The organizations provide the specialized knowledge. The library provides the space and both groups work together on marketing. Citizens also expressed an interest in have a community gathering space during the CART team input process. In addition to a community space, the second most common request from non-profits was for inexpensive meeting space.

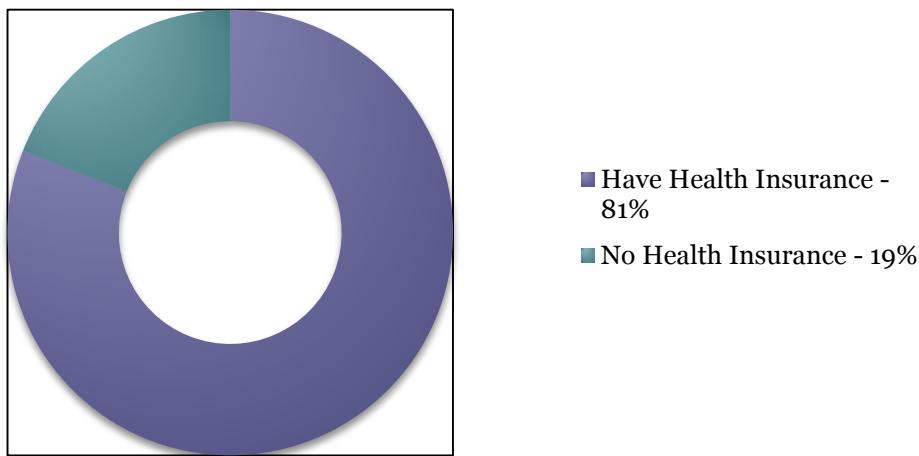
Health Care

Freeman Health System and Mercy Joplin are the major health care providers and are seen as assets within the community. Social service agencies such as the Area Agency on Aging, Independent Living Center, Joplin Community Clinic, Boys & Girls Club, United Way, and the YMCA also provide some health services or health and wellness education. However, the area has an extreme diversity in health and quality of life. There are large gaps between the haves and have-nots.

BKD's community health needs analysis cites projections that the population of Joplin will increase by 7.8% by 2017. The biggest increases will come among the population 65 years and older (14.5%) and the population under 18 years (10%). These groups use health care services the most. Census records indicate that Joplin has a high incidence of residents that fall below the poverty level. Low-income residents are more likely to postpone seeking medical treatment and to use emergency room services. The Joplin area also has lower levels of education attainment. This leads to lower wages, higher unemployment and less job stability. These factors will increase the strain on community and social service agencies as well as health care providers.

Because the majority of people get their health insurance through their employers this has a direct impact on health care. Currently, 19% of the population of Joplin does not have health insurance. That number includes 12% of the population less than 18 years of age.

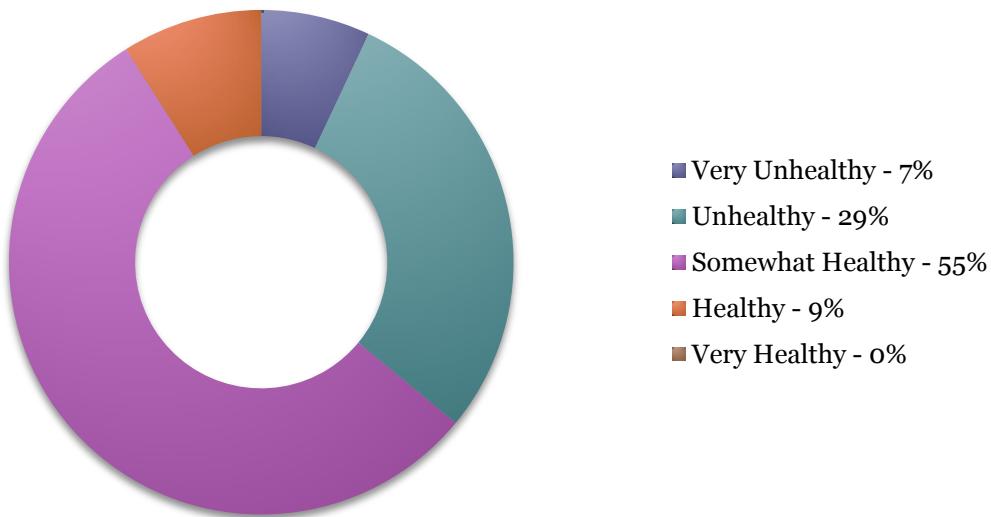
Joplin Residents' Health Insurance Coverage



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 – 2012 American Community Survey 3 – year estimates.

In 2013, Freeman Health System conducted a community health needs assessment. The survey found that 55% of respondents rated the community as somewhat healthy, 29% as unhealthy and 7% as very unhealthy.

How Would You Rate Your Community as a "Healthy Community"?



Source: BKD LLP, Freeman Joplin Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment, 2013.

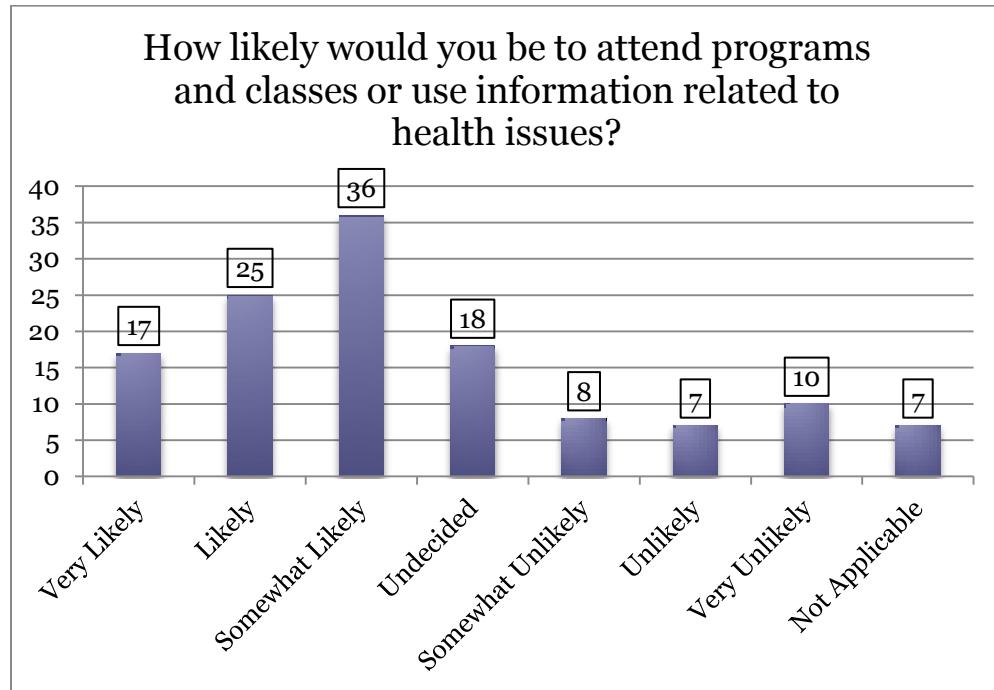
When asked where they went for health-related information, fewer than 1% of respondents listed the public library. However, 25.5% listed the Internet and 22% listed family and friends; which were second and third after medical professionals (38%). The assessment determined that an aging population, high poverty levels and low levels of educational attainment all contribute to an increasing strain on area health systems. Survey respondents cited the following needs (BKD

LLP, 2013):

- Educating the population on the importance of eating well, seeing a physician regularly, and diet and exercise.
- Incentives for people to become motivated to improve their habits.
- Battle the marketing of fast food chains and convenience foods.
- Provide more parks and trails to provide recreation opportunities for the community.
- Education about free and reduced cost health programs.
- Make it easier to get in to see a doctor for preventative care.

Our survey team spoke with staff at Freeman Health Systems and Mercy Joplin. Staff listed obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease as some of the most common health problems in the area. Staff concurred with the need for better health education and the easier access to information on area health programs, especially since the most common health issues can be prevented with lifestyle changes.

Staff also stated that with the Affordable Care Act the Joplin area has a significant number of people that are new to health insurance and Medicare. This population needs assistance in understanding insurance basics, especially in terms of how to acquire insurance and how to use their plan. Respondents to the online survey also indicated an interest in programs, classes and information related to health issues. More than 50% of respondents indicated that they would be somewhat to very likely to attend programs or use resources on these topics.



Housing

More than 17,000 people were affected by the tornado that touched down on May 22, 2011. A total of 7,500 residential dwellings in the City were damaged by the tornado, and approximately 4,000 homes were destroyed, causing an estimated 9,200 people to be displaced. The U.S. Small Business Administration has approved more than \$43.4 million in low-interest disaster loans for 521 tornado-impacted individuals, businesses and not-for-profits.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provided direct, temporary housing to 586 households occupying temporary housing units, among 15 sites throughout Joplin's metropolitan area. As of June 9, 2013, 586 households (100%) have moved out of FEMA temporary housing and into longer term or permanent housing.

To date, nearly 92% of private housing sector building permits have been issued for reconstruction in the recovery area. 2,090 single family residential homes have been rebuilt, repaired, or have permits to do so. The City's housing assistance program, JHAP, which provides qualified homebuyers up to \$30,000 in closing costs and down payment assistance, has currently placed homebuyers into 60 new homes.

Within a one mile radius of the new Joplin Public Library development at 20th and Connecticut Streets, 1,135 units of duplexes or multi-family developments have been completed to date, and 158 units are currently under construction. Of the total 1,483 multi-family units permitted, 751 units are occupied or ready for occupancy. Of those 751 units occupied or ready for occupancy, 406 are considered affordable housing.

Arts, Culture, & Entertainment

The arts and culture community within Joplin is vast. This is due to Joplin wanting to increase tourism and its sense of community. The city sits off of Highway 70 and has the Historic Route 66 running through the downtown area, the Sunshine Lamp District, which Joplin has been using to its advantage. Events around the downtown area, such as Third Thursday, heavily feature the business and organizations around Joplin. The city has several museums, some of which have formed a collective referred to as the Museum Complex. Institutions devoted to the arts, whether they are art galleries, art centers or theaters, are also found within Joplin. The city also boasts an extensive map of parks and trails. While not all trails are currently connected, there is an initiative to connect them all in the near future.

Several organizations help promote the arts and culture found in Joplin. The Joplin Convention & Visitors Bureau (JCVB) is a leading source for the development, promotion and marketing in order to attract visitors. JCVB has a grant program that has set aside funding specifically for marketing events exhibiting positive tourism in Joplin. Connect2Culture also provides Joplin support when it comes to local organizations. They provide services and resources to increase community involvement. They enhance the community through culture. Specific venues include the following:

- **Museums:** Museum Complex consisting of The Everett J. Ritchie Tri-State Mineral Museum and the Dorothea B. Hoover Historical Museum, Country Caboose
- **Arts and Entertainment:** Jorge Leyva Art Studio, Spiva Center for the Arts, 66 Drive in Theatre, Hollywood Theatre Northstar 14

- **Parks:** Route 66 Carousel Park, Schifferdecker Park, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center, Golf Courses, Grand Falls, Frisco Greenway Trail, Leonard Park
- **Shopping:** Candy House Gourmet Chocolates, Sandstone Gardens, Sunshine Lamp District, Historic Murphysburg District
- **Events:** Third Thursday, Foodie Friday

The library can also serve as a resource for the local arts and culture organizations. The library can also serve as a middle ground for people looking for information regarding the community and more specifically, events around the community. With many residents visiting the library, community involvement in local program and events can be increased as these residents are sure to see the marketing materials. Not only can the library serve as the epicenter for local events, the CART report finds a need for more gathering spaces in the city. These can serve as spaces for special events and activities for all age groups.

Information Needs of the Arts, Culture, and Entertainment Communities

- Library needs to be the "middle" ground/gathering spot for people looking for information about the community and events around the community.
- Library can also help increase community involvement with their programs and events
- According to the CART report, Joplin is in need of increased community gathering spaces and space for special events and activities for all age groups. The library can assist with that.

Recommendations

Planning for the New Library

Materials

Print materials are the primary source of information and entertainment for Joplin Public Library patrons. A majority of those asked in interviews and surveys state they depend on the Library for their print materials needs. While most surveyed state they are pleased with the current print collection, some of the most requested improvements come from those asking that the library increase its print materials to include more best-selling fiction and nonfiction. Large print fiction, particularly romance, historical fiction, and westerns made the list of materials requested.

Middle school and high school patrons need access to nonfiction print materials, according to school library media specialists. School libraries are transforming from print resource areas to digital, and most of their nonfiction print materials are no longer available.

Patrons would like to continue to browse magazines and newspapers. When asked, patrons stated they were satisfied with the current collection.

Most patrons are satisfied with the variety of DVDs offered, but many are dissatisfied with the availability of DVDs, particularly new releases in the action, drama, and romantic comedy genres. Patrons state that they often find the new releases are checked out and there is usually a waiting list. More than one or two copies of new releases might help with the issue, according to patrons. When asked about adding television series to the collection, most movie watchers agreed that they would like to have access to more TV dramas and sitcoms, both new shows and the classics.

Patrons seem satisfied with audiobooks, but many are unaware they can access eBooks through the library's website. Those who are aware suggest the library purchase more popular fiction, both adult and YA. Patrons are also interested in downloadable audio music. Companies such as Freegal Music (www.freegalmusic.com) offer libraries downloadable music for a yearly fee. Patrons are then allowed a limited number of free music downloads per month that they are permitted to keep. This is an effective way to reach teens and young professionals who primarily listen to their music through electronic devices.

Genealogy databases, such as Ancestry.com and Heritage Quest, appeal to many patrons. They would like to see free electronic access to genealogy websites, and also more print materials for genealogy. Other databases that specialize in a certain field such as medicine or business could provide access to not only historical information, but also information that is not easily found through search engines like Google. The in-depth and historical information can make these databases one of the most valuable resources in the library.

Programs

Several program areas were suggested by interviewees and survey respondents. We have combined those areas by theme. We suggest that the Joplin Public Library consider implementing some of the program ideas and assess their success prior to adding new program

areas, rather than implementing all ideas at once.

Computer Skills

- Basic and more advanced computer skills instruction.
- Basic Internet classes.
- E-mail basics.
- Microsoft Office, especially Word and Excel.

Employment Skills

- Resume writing.
- Improving job interview skills.
- Class for online job hunting resources.
- Learning and improving customer service skills. Perhaps a certificate of some sort that job seekers would be able to include on their resumes.

Programs for Children and Teens

Children and teens have special needs, and among the requests from young patrons and their parents are:

- After school programming, including homework help. This idea has been suggested for middle school and high school students.
- Internet access for teens, away from the public computers. Teens often need to use the Internet for homework and need extra time on the computers. If they have their own computers, they will not have to compete with the public to complete their homework. WIFI is important, too, for students who have laptops and tablets of their own.
- Programming and materials to help parents broach difficult topics with their children, such as gun safety and sexual education.
- Instructional programming to teach children how to access library resources. Several parents are interested in attending classes themselves in order to help their children better understand library resources.
- Book club for teens, especially during the summer. One parent suggests the club have an official name and elected officers among the teen members. It would be good experience for teens to learn responsibility and it would keep them interested in the book club. A “door prize” type of reward is also mentioned as a way to keep teens returning every month.
- Visiting authors.
- More video games and designated times for game playing.
- Movie time, exclusively for teens, particularly in the summer.

General Programs

Other suggestions for the general population include:

- Library tours for professional organizations. If tours coincided with lunch, more members would likely attend. It is suggested that this will help the library reach Joplin citizens who don't use the library and are unaware of all the library has to offer.
- Health screening in conjunction with the local hospital. The library could host a program with speakers in the healthcare professions and have professionals to check patrons' blood pressure, for example, and present them with brochures related to health issues. Respondents to the online survey indicated an interest in programs, classes and information related to health issues. More than 50% of respondents indicated that they would be somewhat to very likely to attend programs or use resources on health topics.
- Programs to aid in understanding insurance basics, especially in terms of how to acquire insurance and use the health coverage plans.
- Book delivery to the homebound. A monthly delivery to patrons who cannot come to the library, and a delivery to local nursing homes, or a liaison from the library who can gather materials for employees of nursing homes to pick up on a monthly or biweekly basis.
- A morning book club. Many retired patrons do not want to attend programs at night and would like to have book discussions during the day, particularly in the late mornings.

Space

One of the areas of greatest concern was parking. Joplin is a community that is heavily reliant on automobiles, and the current parking facilities have been deemed inadequate by many users, who complain of a lack of easy access. Expanded parking facilities will help to correct this and accommodate more users. Some patrons suggested the idea of a drive-through facility or curbside service, which may also help to alleviate these concerns. Even a drive-up book return box, so patrons can return materials without leaving their car, would be appreciated.

Patrons have also expressed an interest in larger ancillary facilities, such as meeting rooms and study areas. Current meeting rooms are poorly advertised, and their physical separation from the rest of the library facilities makes them difficult to find. The patrons that do use them have reported that the meeting rooms are inadequate. Similarly, several survey respondents have expressed a wish for quiet study areas, separate from the rest of the library.

The main library area could benefit from similar enhancements, according to many patrons. Several noted that what seating does currently exist is often filled to capacity, and they expressed a wish for more seating in the main area, including more tables and more comfortable chairs. Some patrons also proposed adding an outdoor space, either as a fenced-in area or a courtyard enclosed by the building proper. This could serve to open up the library space, and may offer alternative settings for library programming.

Some patrons expressed dissatisfaction with the current children's facilities. Larger facilities were requested for the summer programming, and some survey respondents proposed a space for birthday parties and similar events. There were also calls for expanded young adult facilities; the

library may wish to consider establishing a separate space for YA materials and programming. These may also present opportunities for community outreach by letting patrons in the target demographics decorate their spaces. This will help to establish a connection with these communities and to invest them in the quality of the library as a whole.

Some patrons expressed a desire to add a café or coffee shop to the new library. Other libraries such as Springfield-Greene County have done this and met with great success. The library could operate such a service directly, as a revenue generator, or it could contract with a private third party, strengthening their ties to the business community. If this is not an option, a self-service beverage area may be worth considering as a low-overhead, low-cost alternative.

The library stacks are also an area of concern for some patrons. The current stacks extend to fill a far corner of the building, leaving patrons feeling isolated and concerned for their safety.

Keeping the stacks in a more central, visible location would improve patron morale and open up the edges of the library space for services like meeting and study rooms or programming areas. The new library building may also incorporate a larger office space compared to current facilities. Current office facilities are cramped and have the potential to pose significant risks in terms of evacuation and fire safety. Additionally, the close quarters and lack of individual working areas pose concerns about the potential for violations of patron confidentiality. A larger, more orderly office area would largely eliminate these concerns.

Sustainability

Some respondents have expressed interest in a more environmentally-friendly building. There are a multitude of architectural techniques to achieve this. For example, solar water heating can be employed to provide the library's hot water needs while cutting energy costs. To this end, the library may wish to explore LEED energy efficiency certification standards. If the library is feeling especially ambitious, it may wish to install roof-mounted photovoltaic panels or wind turbines; these sources are not powerful or reliable enough to supply the library's energy needs, but they can serve to supplement the library's electrical supply.

The media center at Joplin East Middle School makes use of motion-sensitive lighting. Joplin Public Library may wish to employ motion-sensitive lighting in select areas as well. While this may not be adequate for the main library area, it can be a welcome feature for ancillary facilities like meeting rooms or programming spaces, ensuring that lights are not left on in unused rooms. The current library facility makes extensive use of natural lighting, as demonstrated here. Replicating this feature in the new building — perhaps with skylights in the roof of the building — will help to control energy costs, as well as provide a bright, welcoming atmosphere for patrons.



Photo by Joseph Quinlisk. Joplin Public Library building, showing skylights.

Equipment

Computers are a major source of concern for Joplin Public Library users. Many report that current computer facilities are overused and underpowered, with patrons filling up otherwise useful space simply waiting for a public computer to become available. With Joplin Public Schools moving toward a technology-focused education, this demand can be expected to increase. A specialized computer lab in the new facility would go a long way toward alleviating these concerns.

This computer lab can also serve as a multipurpose technology facility. Business leaders have expressed interest in using it as a testing facility for the ACT. Other patrons have expressed interest in a media lab, which would provide local small businesses and nonprofits with access to software and computer resources that would normally be unavailable to them. As some of these uses will likely involve some noise on the part of the patrons, the library may also wish to provide headphones with the computers, or to sell some inexpensive earbuds for a nominal fee.

The library could also help alleviate demand for the computer lab by offering tablet computers for patrons to use. This would allow patrons the flexibility to use the library's computer services from any public area in the building. Restricting the computers to on-site use only and forbidding patrons from taking them out of the library building should render the maintenance of these tablets no more difficult than with any of the publicly accessible desktops which the library already offers.

Additionally, with Joplin schools issuing computers to their students in lieu of textbooks, the demand on the library's public wireless can also be expected to increase, as many students do not have reliable home Internet access. This will likely be accompanied by a commensurate increase in demand for electricity to power these devices and others. These infrastructure components — the electrical power grid and wireless Internet access — should be high priorities for the new library facility.

The library may also wish to acquire a small number of video game consoles for use in library programs, especially teen programming. The Nintendo Wii has proven especially popular for such uses, and the library may be able to greatly improve participation in its teen programming with one or two such acquisitions. This may also be able to serve as an informal pilot program if the library is interested in building a collection of video games for general circulation.

Promotion & Marketing

We recommend that the Joplin Public Library develop a clear, concise, flexible and sustainable marketing plan. The Joplin Public Library can rebuild its goodwill and retain its relevancy in the community through this marketing plan. Dedication and long term commitment is needed by the entire staff as well as board members and community partners.

We initially present a series of potential messages to Joplin Public Library's stakeholder groups and some ideas of the services most important to those groups. Following that, we discuss some specific marketing strategies and challenges that Joplin Public Library faces.

Marketing Challenge: Preconceived Notions

Throughout our surveys and interviews with community members, several respondents said that they do not have time to read, they do not like to read much, or they find all their information on the internet. They believe that the library is irrelevant to their lives. A 2010 OCLC survey, "Perceptions of Libraries," showed that 75% of all respondents thought of books when they thought of the library. As we know, the library is more than just books and the Joplin Public Library needs to begin now to change the perceptions of the library and develop a better goodwill within the community.

We recommend that the JPL develop a branding and marketing plan to address the relevancy of the library. We feel that this process should begin now to develop a strong message stating that the library is a credible, reliable and an awesome place that provides more resources than just books.

Marketing Challenge: The New Library Location

The surveys and interviews indicated that the residents of Joplin infrequently hear about news regarding the library, its services and programs. We received many comments indicating people did not know about the new library location. Some people don't want the library to move as it is currently in a convenient location, while some want it to move in order to update the facility. Others just have no idea why the library is moving at all. Whether it was because these people are not seeing the information or if they are wary about how the library is going about planning, the Joplin Public Library should make its mission to rebuild goodwill.

Either way, the thoughts on the library mixed, so the library needs to be open and honest with the public. Willingly share information and create positive discussion. Make a strategic plan and link to the plan on the website. Those who are interested in the library's goals and how they plan on achieving those goals will have full access.

We also suggest that the library share the process of the new library on a library run platform. Create a social profile for the library. This ensures that all information regarding the library can be found in several, easily accessed places. We also recommend devoting wall space or a bulletin board to share the progress of the new library. With the library sharing the information, this shows the community that no information is being withheld, and that the library is happy and open to sharing.

We further suggest hosting open house type events that encourage residents of Joplin and library users to visit in order to learn more about the library. This will be a time for patrons and potential patrons to ask questions and get answers in a social, more comfortable setting.

Additionally, it might be useful to create a Friends of the Library type group that allows member of the community to volunteer their time and interact outside of the library setting, all while working FOR the library. All of these ways will show that the library is willing to work with and participate in the community.

Marketing Strategy: A Consistent Message

An example of a clear, concise, flexible and sustainable marketing plan is found at the Mid-Continent Public Library (MCPL). In 2012, MCPL launched a marketing campaign that focused on the true nature of their library: providing access. They even changed what they call their library cards, which are now "access passes." These "access passes" imply that the library is more than just books. People can get access to multiple facets within the library: information, resources, services and programs.

An important aspect of developing the marketing plan is identifying the stakeholders and the messages that will be relayed to each group. This report identifies 5 stakeholders (community members, noncustomers, out of district noncustomers, customers, and community leaders) along with example messages from the MCPL.

1. Community members: Libraries aren't just books.

- a. These individuals are general public.
- b. JPL will want to have a general message indicating that libraries have and can provide more services and resources than just book.
- c. An umbrella message over the entire marketing campaign

2. Noncustomers in Joplin: The library has services that will improve your life.

- a. Those individuals who live within the Joplin library district however do not use the library or its resources
- b. Message needs to indicate how the library can be relevant and impact the lives of the noncustomers.

3. Noncustomers out of district: The library can provide a full year's worth of access and entertainment for the cost of a movie night for family of four. (Not taken from MCPL)

- a. These individuals are residents who live outside of the Joplin library district. They might want to use the library but are upset that they have to pay a fee.

- b. The message needs to address their concerns about the fee that comes with using the library. Maybe discuss that the Joplin residents pay a library tax and they do not. Provide analogy to the cost of the using the library.

4. Customers: We have more to offer you.

- a. The individual use the library but might not be aware of all of the services and resources that are available
- b. Message

5. Community leaders: The library remains as relevant as ever.

- a. The individuals who recommend things to others and who are looked up to in the community.

Having these messages will enable the Joplin Public Library to promote the most important, but underutilized, services that the library has. This report identifies these services as e-books, online databases and the meeting rooms. It is recommended that the marketing campaign begin with focusing on these three services and later shifting focus to other underutilized services.

Services to Market

We initially recommend focusing on only one or two services for a period of time, then changing your message to keep promotions fresh.

1. Services and resources

- a. Initial focus
 - i. ebooks for adults and kids
 - ii. meeting rooms
 - iii. Online databases
- b. Other underutilized services
 - i. Computers
 - ii. DVDs
 - iii. CDs
 - iv. Low vision readers
 - v. Playaways

2. Programs

- a. Teen Club
- b. Young Adult Advisory Council
- c. Volunteer
- d. Lego Club

Many survey and interview participants indicated that they did not know that the library offered e-books. This indicates that this is one of the services that need to be promoted more. E-books are becoming even more prevalent in schools especially with the Joplin Schools' conversion to a one to one school. The library can help provide access to the materials that they need and want through e-books. The Pew Research Center found that nearly 50% of those younger than 30 year old are reading e-books and 28% of the population has read an e-book. This is just a trend the

library has to be aware of and the must address before the community believes that the library is irrelevant. A few promotional ideas can be found at <http://goodereader.com/blog/e-book-news/how-to-make-library-ebooks-more-visible>.

Survey participants indicated that they would like to have access to online database such as Ancestry.com, Business Insight, and MEDLINE. The library already subscribes to these databases, but customers are unaware that they exist. The library must identify a way to promote these resources. This report recommends creating classes in order to teach the community what information each of the database can provide and how to navigate the site.

Lastly, this report recommends promoting the Joplin Public Library's meeting rooms to businesses, especially small businesses, as many business leaders mentioned the lack of meeting room space that can accommodate different size groups in Joplin. When it was mentioned that the JPL had meeting rooms, they were excited about the possible opportunity to use them. Once the new building is open, the businesses will already be aware and can continue to utilize the new rooms. In addition, this will bring people into the library building and hopefully into the library itself.

The Joplin Public Library provides wonderful programs that allow customers to learn something new and to interact with each other. However, individuals mentioned that they did not know when the programs were going on or even what types of programming you have going on.

In the surveys, most participants revealed that the library lacks the promotion and marketing needed to draw them into the library. Most did not even know that the library was moving to a new location. To ensure that the library remain a relevant resource in the community, we suggest the library pay special attention to where they market and use the community to its advantage. When analyzing the data that we have gathered, we have identified 5 major stakeholders within the community. They are general community members, Joplin resident noncustomers, out of district noncustomers, customers and community leaders. The potential messages are taken from the Mid-Continent Public Library marketing campaign, discussed further below. These messages should be adapted to suit JPL's specific needs.

Marketing Strategy: Word of Mouth Marketing

Survey results show that most patrons learn about the library from others they know, essentially, word of mouth. We recommend Joplin Public Library invest some of their resources in developing a Word of Mouth Marketing campaign.

Word of Mouth Marketing (WOMM) is a powerful tool that a library on a limited budget with limited staff can implement successfully. In order for the marketing campaign to be effective, the entire staff must take part. WOMM is not passive, but an active effort to raise awareness for the library within the community. A word of mouth task force should be established to make sure the information and messages within the library are clear and consistent. The task force can also deal with the negative feedback. Staff should not answer questions they are not comfortable answering. Instead, they should hand them over to someone who can. To assist with questions that you will receive on a regular basis, consider creating a frequently asked question sheet that library staff can point to as a starting point for patrons. Having all the easily answered questions

with detailed answers available for patrons will make sure that staff are not constantly answering the same question. Consider having specific days and times set aside to train staff on how to present the message. Explain to them how and why their role in WOMM is important. Encourage them to talk up programs related to patrons, for example if a patron is checking out children's books, let them know about the children's programs. Most importantly, make sure that circulation staff are involved. Studies show that circulation staff are the first, and sometimes only, contact the patrons have when visiting the library. Encourage them to promote the library and interact with patrons. If staff interact and develop relationships with patrons, inside and outside of the library, patrons will see that the staff value the library and this will transfer over to patrons and potential patrons.

An important part of WOMM is finding library champions. Champions are regular users of the library who place a special value on the library. They have the most influence when it comes to attracting people to the library and can create an authentic buzz. They use the library, but are not directly related, which shows how genuine their opinions are. You have these champions and they spoke highly of what the library had to offer during interviews. We heard comments like "the library has an amazing collection of books," "everyone is friendly and helpful," and "thank you for the enrichment of our lives." Encourage them to be advocates of the library by sharing their own personal messages. Have them repost social media posts, talk up programs with their friends. Use them to your advantage. Even though WOMM is important and effective, it cannot be the only marketing tool. It should be used in conjunction with other marketing avenues to ensure that everyone is marketed to.

Marketing Strategy: Social Media and Web Site

Survey results show that the website is the second most used tool to learn about library events, but is lacking. Participants revealed that it is hard to navigate and find relevant information. The website is the hub of the library's digital presence and should interpret that. We know this is on JPL's radar, but it is important that this become a priority. This will also help with your social media presence. We recommend a usability test to pinpoint the specific weaknesses and strengths the website has. Then, take those suggestions to develop a more concise, cleaner, and more user friendly site. This way, those who use the website will be placated and social media can be integrated all in one place.

Social Media, while used by the library, is not as effective as it could be. Some platforms are rarely updated while others are used, but are not as relevant as they could be. This can be offset by a more interactive approach. Consider posting information that allows patrons to interact and post their own thoughts. For example, have patrons comment on what they are reading that week or posts polls in order to learn more about your patrons. Creating catchier and shorter posts will keep the viewer interested and encouraging sharing. This will also assist with the WOMM, but on another level. Have your WOM task force members, as well as your entire staff repost and share on their personal social media profiles in order to assist with driving traffic to the library. Sharing creates more sharing and it creates sharing on other platforms.

Facebook is not the only type of social media website. Tumblr, Instagram, Twitter etc. are all social media that are very popular. According to a survey participant, "they receive so much information on a daily basis, so they need to [something to] catch their attention. [They are]

attracted to things that look funny, edgy or dynamic in some way. They use social media and their phones all the time. Anything that is sent to them needs to be short, informative and have good content. For example, don't just post program title, date and time. [The posts] needs to catch attention and give them a reason to attend. If you catch one person's attention they will be more likely to repost and share with friends. You cannot just expect them to go to your Facebook, Pinterest or Instagram page. [You] need to drive traffic and give them a reason to visit and keep coming back."

Marketing Strategy: Inside the Library

Aside from word of mouth and digital marketing, make sure to market within the library. Bulletin boards should be easily accessible, with up to date flyers and information. Make sure to leave information sheets or cards around the library that patrons can take home with them. Also, market within partnerships or other gathering spots that residents frequent. Organizations and businesses support your library and want to see it succeed. This will also help building goodwill in general within the community.

Marketing Resources

To assist with your new promotion and marketing campaign, here is a list of potential resources that we find will be most helpful to refer to:

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- Weiss, Luise. (2011). Small Business and the Public Library: Successful Strategies for Partnership. Chicago: American Library Association.
- BRAND: The emotions you and your product emote and evoke, based upon your and your product's behaviours. Behind every brand is: a compelling idea, a resolute core purpose and supporting values [behaviours] - a central organizational principle from which all marketing and on-the-job activities originate. Your brand is your greatest form of passive income. It is your preceding reputation as well as your lingering perception. [from Tia Dobi (October 2004). Press, Profit and Provocation: Library promotion for the Over-educated. ExLibris: Weekly E-Zine for Librarians blog. www.marylaine.com/exlibris/xlib229.html

Outreach & Partnerships

Outreach and partnerships are integral services for the library. They provide a way for the library to step outside its own four walls and reach people through services and relationships. Our survey found the three biggest barriers to library use were: 1) Time Poverty 2) Lack of Awareness and 3) Transportation. These ideas for outreach and partnership can help offset these barriers. They will ideally help the library to gain support from the community and develop library advocates.

1) Membership in Local Organizations by library staff

Partners: Schools, Chamber of Commerce, Joplin Downtown Alliance, Workforce Investment Board, Churches, NALA, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA etc.

Time Frame: Ongoing

While JPL Director Jacque Gage and some of the department heads participate in area organizations, the library needs to look at increasing staff and board involvement at all levels in local groups. For example, some of the circulation staff might join YPN or area art organizations. The reference staff might attend Chamber events. This gets the library staff out into the community and visible. As community groups, become familiar with staff the will see the library as a resource.

Benefits:

- Library becomes more visible in the community as people get to know library staff
- Library understands the community and local organizations better
- Word of mouth marketing opportunities

2) Third Thursdays

Partner: Joplin Downtown Alliance

Time Frame: Ongoing

Third Thursdays takes place outside of the library. The event attracts several thousand people from Joplin and the surrounding area to the area between 1st and 7th streets. The library is open

during the event. People do go into the library during the event. However, the library does not have much of a presence at the event. The library can set up tables on the lawn with information on library cards, programs and events. They might also offer an activity for children or teens.

Survey participants expressed concerns about the transparency of the new library planning and construction process. There are a significant number of people that are either opposed to the new library, misinformed about the project or unaware of the project. This is one way for the library to address the public's concerns and keep them informed as the project progresses. Participation once the library moves will also give the library a presence downtown.

Benefits:

- Increase library visibility
- Share information related to the new building
- Share information related to library materials and services
- Promote library usage

3) Library Tours/Networking Events

Partners: Chamber of Commerce, Young Professionals, Arts Organizations, Schools etc.

Time Frame: Ongoing

A number of people and organizations interviewed did not have a good understanding of the new library project or the resources currently available in the library. By offering breakfast or after hours networking events at the library, library staff can become familiar to members of these groups and organizations, answer questions about the library project and show off library resources. Tours of the new library as construction nears completion can also provide a sneak peek at the new building and its amenities such as meeting spaces, technology etc.

Benefits:

- Raise awareness about new library building
- Promote transparency related to the project
- Promote new library features
- Opportunities for word of mouth marketing

4) Adult Programming Partnerships

4A) Health Care

Partners: Freeman Health System and Mercy Joplin

Time Frame: medium-term

The community has a need for more education on health related topics. By working with the area hospitals, the library can provide space for them to present programs related to health care. Staff from Freeman especially expressed an interest in having the ability to have a presentation on topic and then have access to computers to work one-on-one with participants to help them find diet, medicine, exercise information related to the topic. As health system staff becomes familiar with library resources, they will point people in the library's direction. Marketing materials related to consumer health resources can be placed in area medical clinics and offices.

Benefits:

- Creates partnerships with local organizations
- Provides the public with access to reliable information on various health care topics
- Exposes patrons to on-line and print resources on health related topics

4B) Businesses/Job Seekers

Partners: Missouri Career Center, Workforce Investment Board, Joplin Schools Career Paths, Joplin Chamber of Commerce, Newman Center, Missouri Southern SBDTC

Time Frame: immediate to long term

The number one concern for area businesses, schools and job seekers is increasing the training and development of soft skills for area job seekers and workers. In the short term, the library can provide brochures on library resources to local agencies and link to their websites and vice versa. Once the new library is built, partnerships with these organizations can provide staff and volunteers to provide computer training as well as programming on topics such as resumes, interviewing, business etiquette, networking, leadership etc.

Workforce Investment Board staff may also be willing to work with the library to develop a teen volunteer program where teens are available in the computer area at designated days and times to provide one-on-one computer assistance. If the new library has audio/video production capabilities, they may also be able to produce video tutorials for online resources and computer applications that can be posted on the library website.

Benefits:

- Helps area businesses and schools fulfill one of their biggest needs
- Gets information on library resources out into the community
- Attracts new patrons to the library both in-person and online

4C) Education

Partners: Joplin Schools, Missouri Southern State University, and other area colleges

Time Frame: Long term

Area schools and businesses are working to lower the dropout rate in Joplin and encourage college or technical training for students after graduation. Many students come from families where they would be the first generation to consider school/training after high school. Their parents are unable to assist them in the application, planning and financial aspects of the process. The library can serve as a meeting place for area schools to provide programs and workshops for students and parents.

Benefits:

- Exposure for the library to a segment of the community that may not be regular patrons
- Strengthen partnerships with area schools
- Provide another avenue for the library to market library resources

4D) Arts/Entertainment and Culture

Partners: Post Library, SPIVA, Connect2Culture, Joplin Writers Guild, area restaurants

Time Frame: medium to long term

The library already does some programming in conjunction with area arts and culture organizations. Interviews and surveys revealed a desire by adults of all ages for more programming related to arts, culture and entertainment. The library can work with area groups to offer poetry slams, programs related to art exhibits, exhibits or performances within the library, writer's workshops, movie/book clubs and programs, programs for local foodies or potentially off-site book clubs.

Benefits:

- Provides programming requested by adults in the community
- Makes the Joplin area more attractive to young professionals and white-collar jobs
- Exposes community groups to the variety of materials offered at the library

5) Website

Partners: SPIVA, Connect2Culture, Workforce Investment Board, Chamber, Missouri SBDTC, Joplin Museum, Art Feeds, Newman Center etc.

Time Frame: ongoing

The website is one of the best ways the library can make people aware of the resources the library has to offer and community resources. The library should look at developing pages related to specific topics (Job Seekers, Genealogy, Health, Business, Arts, Homework Help, etc.) The pages should have links to other organizations in the community related to the topic. Those organizations can then link back to the library from their website. The page would highlight print and online resources, programs, tutorials for using online resources, and what's new on the topics. The key to keeping people coming back is updating the pages and keeping information fresh. The library might consider looking at the Johnson County Library, Topeka & Shawnee County Library and the Springfield Green Library for examples

Benefits:

- Creates partnerships with area organizations
- Provides patrons with access library resources from outside the library
- Provides basic reference on common topics
- Gives patrons an easy way to contact a librarian

6) Literacy

Partners: Bright Futures, NALA, Parents as Teachers, United Way, School Plus, Boys & Girls Club, Missouri Adult Education and Literacy

Time Frame: Ongoing

The city of Joplin has a focus on literacy. The library is in the process of becoming a Family Place Library. There is a need in the community for resources related to literacy at all age levels. In the short-term, the library can work with these organizations to get information on library programs and resources related to literacy out into the community. Links on their websites to the library website and flyers and brochures at their locations can help. The library is currently working with Bright Futures to try and get library cards subsidized for all Joplin School students and that should continue.

Once the new library is built, staff or volunteers from these groups might offer programs at the library. As library staff has more time to conduct outreach, going out to groups like Schools Plus and Boys & Girls Club to offer storytimes or other children's literacy activities is a must. The library should also look at offering more evening or weekend activities because the target audience lives in single parent households or families where both parents work full-time. They are not able to attend current program offerings.

Benefits:

- Library becomes more active in the community
- Ability to serve a group in need
- Gets students in the library and exposes them to services/materials
- Another venue for marketing library resources

7) Tutoring

Partners: Bright Futures, YPN, Joplin Area Retired Teachers Association

Time Frame: Medium to Long Term

Tutoring/homework help was a common request on interview and surveys. While the library does not have the space with computer access, Wi-Fi and tables and chairs in the current building; this will most likely be available in the new building. The library can work with the organizations to have advertised times where volunteers would be available to answer questions on certain subject areas and provide assistance to students. The library would provide the space and resources and other organizations invested in Joplin students would provide staff and academic expertise.

Benefits:

- Library becomes more active within community in promoting school success
- Gets students into the library and exposes them to library resources
- Provides another venue for marketing library resources to the community

8) Seniors

Partners: Joplin Senior Center

Time Frame: Medium to Long Term

Seniors we talked to at the community had a negative view of the new library and did not want the library to move. The library should look at offering a monthly or bi-monthly program series at the Senior Center. It could be offered on a weekday after the noon meal service. Topics might include genealogy, memoir writing or oral history, the new library construction, a computer related topic, using e-Readers etc. They might also consider working with the Area Agency on Aging to see about subsidizing library cards for seniors in Jasper or Newton County that are outside the library district. Together might be able to find a granting agency to assist with this.

Benefits:

- Builds good will with the senior community toward the new library
- Keeps the library closer to downtown once the library moves
- Alleviates some of the transportation issues seniors face

9) Homebound Services

Partners: Area Agency on Aging; Retired Seniors Volunteer Program

Time Frame: Long- Term

The homebound population has a need for services. As Baby Boomers in the area continue to age, demand for these types of services will grow. The Area Agency on Aging used to offer homebound delivery of books as a part of their Meals on Wheels program. The service was dropped due to staff and time constraints. The library can partner with these organizations to look at using RSVP volunteers to deliver books to homebound residents. Together the organizations may be able to find grant opportunities to help fund the project.

Benefits:

- Reaches an underserved and growing population within the community
- Increases the accessibility of the library to the community

10) Outdoor Programming/Reading Space at New Library

Partners: Parks and Recreation Department, retail partners

Time Frame: Long term

Survey respondents expressed interest in the library developing outdoor programming and reading spaces at the new library. The library might offer family and children's programs in the area. A storybook walk might also be created in the area around the library or in a community park. This gets the library into the community and makes literacy materials available outside of regular library hours.

Benefits:

- Increases visibility of the library in the community
- Provides a literacy activity for parents outside of the library
- Fits with CART team desire to have walkable, mixed-use spaces for the community

Appendix I: References and Sources of Information

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Agencies Contacted

Area Agency on Aging Region X
 531 E 15th St
 Joplin, MO 64803

417-781-7562

Stan Heater - Executive Director

Stephanie Denham - Nutrition Director

Boys & Girls Club of Southwest Missouri

317 Comingo Ave., Joplin MO 64801

417-623-8072

Development Director - Mackenzie Garst

Bright Futures (www.brightfuturesjoplin.org)

Program Administrator - Melissa Winston (melissawinston@joplinschools.org), 417-625-5200

x2229.

Connect 2Culture

417-625-6683 x1047

Program Coordinator - Emily Frankoski

Freeman Health Systems

1102 W 32nd St

Joplin MO 64804

417-347-1111

www.freemanhealth.com

Lisa Nelson

Independent Living Center

2639 E 34th St

Joplin MO 64804

417-659-8086

Program Coordinator - Stephanie Brady

Joplin Area Chamber of Commerce

320 E. 4th Street

Joplin, MO 64801

Phone: (417) 624-4150

Email: info@joplinecc.com

Ginger LaMar - Leadership Joplin

Lindsey Hayes - Young Professionals Network

Joplin Area Citizen Advisory Recovery Teams (CART)

www.joplinareacart.com

Chair - Jane Cage

Joplin Area Retired Teachers Association

417-624-5698 (meets at Nettie's Restaurant on Maiden Lane)

Joplin City Hall

602 Main St
Joplin MO
417.625.4789
800.657.2534
FAX: 417.624.7948

Joplin Neighborhood Adult Literacy Action
123 Main St Joplin MO 64801
417-782-2646
Executive Director - Marj Boudreaux
Program Coordinator - Joan Doner

Joplin Regional Business Center/Joseph Newman Innovation Center
417-624-4150
Steven Russell

Joplin Schools
3901 E 32nd St
Joplin MO 64802
www.joplinschools.org
Janie Jarrett - Career Pathways Coordinator
417-625-5200 x2236
janiejarrett@joplinschools.org

Joplin Schools Parents as Teachers
417-625-5365
Coordinator - Patty Wheeler

Joplin Senior Center
2202 Jackson
Joplin MO 64804
417-781-9353

Joplin Writers Guild
417-624-0995 (meets 2nd Thursday of month at JPL)

Joplin YMCA
Downtown Branch
510 S Wall St
Joplin MO 64801
417-623-4597
School Plus Director - Amanda Boykin
Daycamp Director, Teen Coordinator - Mallorie Larson

Missouri Adult Education and Literacy
123 Main St Joplin MO 64801

417-625-5263
Director - Linda Dishman

Mercy Joplin
2817 St John's Blvd
Joplin MO 64804
417-781-2727
www.mercy.net/joplin.mo
VP Mission - Service Excellence - Joel James

Missouri Southern State University
3950 Newman Rd
Joplin MO 64801
www.mssu.edu
Registrar - Cheryl Dobson

Retired Senior Volunteer Program
2639 E 34th St
Joplin MO 64804
417-659-8086
Shelly Goerz

Southwest Missouri Workforce Investment Board
105 N Range Line Rd
Joplin MO 64802
417-206-1717
www.workforcezone.net
VOICES Coordinator - Kris Baldwin
Leslie Abrams
Troy Roland

Appendix II: User Requests and Ideas from Surveys

Comments here have been taken more or less verbatim from the survey.

Library Collections

The collection of e-books is disappointing. I can never get the books I want because they are on hold forever. There is an overabundance of romance novels etc. (x2)

The newer books are on such a wait it is frustrating. The DVD & audiobook collection is also lacking

There is great need for additional resources for visually impaired patrons. Audiobooks are minimal at this library.

Need more new and up-to-date books/dvds/music/etc... (x6)

Need more homeschool items. The Great Courses. Apologia science for elementary thru high school. Wish you had ALL Newberry winners. Homeschoolers have a lot of book lists suggesting the same books but can't get them here. I.e., D'aulaire books.

I use the library for audio books. I wish there was more of a selection. I check out at least 8 a month and sometimes more than that.

Could use more craft books

The library's comic book selection needs some help. There aren't very many kids' comics to choose from in the children's department ("itty bitty hellboy" and "adventure time" come to mind as possible choices); The selection in the teen department is outdated and a little sad (there are plenty of new manga titles out there, why does the library still have Deathnote and Frutis Basket?); The selection in the adult department is missing some major, critically acclaimed works as well ("Y the Last Man", more current trades of "Sixth Gun", much of the "New 52" stuff from DC, "Revival", "Manhattan Projects", "East of West", etc etc etc). Also, Missouri has a TON of comic book creators in Kansas City, St. Louis, and even one in Joplin. Why not feature their works in your library?

Website

I have issues with browsing the web site at home. I have tried several browsers (Firefox, internet explorer, chrome) and still cannot complete all functions in one site.

The website could be a lot better. I have to use Firefox now since it won't work w/ Internet Explorer.

Computers/Technology

The library should have a computer lab that is separate from public access computers where

groups like RSVP, AAA and Workforce can offer training and conduct classes. (x3)

It would be great if the library constructed a computer lab that met with ACT testing standards so that the National Career Readiness Test could be offered at the library. (x2)

The library should be the place that people can go to understand cutting edge technology.

Currently there is no one in the community providing that service. Place where people can see the latest in technology (smart boards, table top screens, apps, software, 3-D printing, other printing/publishing equipment). Library would be a resource for new ideas.

Would like see the ability to check out ereaders. The library should see about the possible of getting a grant to make this possible. (x3)

Computer classes – wouldn't have to just offer them for seniors; there are younger people who can't afford the classes at Franklin Tech that would love to have this. Classes in basic Internet, computer skills, word, social media (Facebook, Instagram) etc. (x5)

The library could also use more staff or volunteers in the computer area. Many of the Center's clients have difficulty with the library computers because the interface looks different than what they use at home or other places.

Computer classes would be useful. We have had these classes in the past but funding cuts have forced us to discontinue them. I can see a benefit in book delivery to home bound seniors as well as a weekly delivery to nursing homes. Perhaps a loaner program for e-readers like Kindle etc.

Video games (x6)

Programs

Adult reading coordinator is so creative in program development

Need more relevant programs for early adults (20-30's)

I do love the children's programs and take my two year old as often as possible.

Friendlier staff, more program times or offerings. Better communication with patrons. Would like to see more reading areas - i.e. Reading area for kids, more areas for adults

It would be nice for the library to be able to have more room for children's activities and maybe field trip opportunities (x4)

Would be great to be able to take students to the library for tours and instruction in how to use library resources. This is not something that many kids are exposed to at home. (x3)

Need children's programs offered at more times to meet the needs of parents that work. (x4)

It would be great if kids could be bussed to a space at the new library where they have access to homework/tutoring help, computers, programming that helps improve literacy skills. This would help them to engage with books and literature. They would also get support and assistance with school that they don't get at home. (x7)

Hobbies - like gardening, cooking, etc., increase in kids program offerings. The issue is they have adult programs offered at inconvenient times, or that are targeted to older adults. Again, look to the Springfield, Mo library system. (x6)

Discussion or lectures of film, literature, music arts of any kind really. (x6)

Creative programming. Healthy cooking on a budget. How to stay active for all ages. (x5)

Joplin History (x5)

Grant writing and development (x2)

Nat'l recognized author visits w/ autographing sessions!!!

I would come to author signings. It would be cool to have a Library themed dinner at Instant Karma (they have beer dinners every once in a while) with a different book featured in each course. That would have to be outside the library though.

Programs related to financial, scholarships, college application process (x4)

Apathy and time poverty are big obstacles. They are stretched for time with work and family.

They don't want to add commitments and want to have personal time. Look at non-traditional times and places to offer programs for young professionals. For example, they may want a book club but not come to a traditional monthly book club. Consider doing a virtual book club or a Twitter chat about a book or a group Skype session. This way they can participate from home or another location.

She would like to see a fun, creative space for children that brings the characters from books alive. Might have activity stations (can be low tech) that allow parents and children to interact and develop school readiness and early literacy skills but seem like play. (x2)

Hobby type programs – have a once a month woman's group at the Center that does different crafts/hobbies

Speakers on topics related to the legislature and politics

Ideas for programs/materials that the library could offer:

- Programs related to networking and professional development (ex. Using LinkedIn, networking events)
- Resources related to business skills

- Boardwalk – United Way used to offer a training session for current and future board members related to what their role is and what to expect. Many of the Young Professionals and non-profits would love it if the library could host this kind of workshop again.
- Programs for young adults (20s – 30s) and teens related to job hunting, developing a resume, finances, interviewing etc.
- Trivia nights
- Book club for younger adults – current book clubs in the community seem to be geared towards older people
- Social mixers/networking events
- Programs on recycling/green movement

Thought it would be nice if the library could offer different kinds of writing groups. Software and printers that would allow people to self-publish would be cool. (x4)

Would be interested in any outreach programs that the library might offer. A pie in the sky dream would be a traveling storyteller. Program wide we have staff who read out loud to our students, but it would be amazing to have other adults come in and stress the importance of becoming readers (x2)

There are a large number of non-traditional students in credit recovery. They need tutoring and help with the GED. This group especially needs to work on soft skills, business etc. (x10)

Space

It's good but there should be more quiet rooms available to study. (x5)

I would enjoy having more private seating, a little more secluded from the rest of the general population...if I could be seated away from distracting noises or traffic, I'd be in heaven.

There could definitely be more chairs and tables in the library. Most are occupied on the days I am there. This is just one of the reasons I am very excited about the new library being built.

Need more enclosed spaces for computer labs, study spaces, meeting rooms. Like the high school at the mall.

For work, I have used the one and only meeting room (with the smaller side room) for meetings. I would like to see meeting areas and rooms where businesses can hold retreats, etc. It would be nice to have access to kitchen type facilities too for these meeting spaces. (x12)

Definitely in need of new everything. More spaces to study (both open and more private). More comfortable chairs for reading. The Post Reference Library needs to have more of a presence and not be located in the back. It should have a proper entrance at the front of the new building. Currently...many don't even know where it is! Need more nice rooms for renting out for meetings/community programs. Need more creative and art-centric spaces that will encourage creative thinking.

There needs to be more areas with computers instead of cluster! (x12)

The facility seems dated, as in, none one ever thought of updating/upgrading it to the times. It looks the same as it did 15 years ago. Would like to see the new library modeled after the Springfield-Greene County Library System. Facilities are up to date, are clean, and provide ample space for patrons. The Library Center location is exceptional. There is a cafe, large meeting rooms, several computers linked to the library catalog, an entire separate area for teens and for kids, as well as study rooms (with doors!), and lots of seating - including tables, couches, and soft chairs. One of my biggest issues with the current library is that when I go during the day, it feels more like a homeless shelter than a library. I don't have a real safe feeling when I am there, and I am sure to keep my child close to me at all times. I know the library is for everyone, but there seems to be quite a bit of loitering.

The building is pretty outdated though they do the best they can. Parking is very limited so you have to get there early if it's a busy day. It's not easy for people with disabilities to get around or get books. More restrooms would be great and I'd love it if there were a coffee shop.

Coffee shop (x10)

Partnerships

The library needs to be a synthesizer of programs. The library should be a gathering spot for people, information and programs. A place where people can find out about services offered in the community and how to access it. The library should be a place to display resources as well as space for groups to do things (speakers, programs, workshops etc)

I would like for the library to partner more with other agencies within the community to provide information to parents.

Lower cost for families living in the Joplin School district but do not live in the city limits for a library card. The Newton County library or the Jasper county library is not accessible for many families.

It would be nice if there was program where kids could request books and then pick up/drop off the books at school rather than having to go to the library to do it.

Marketing

I wish that the library would market itself to families more, unfortunately with the increase in e-readers and technology, some kids don't even know that the library is a place they can go.

Need to attract middle and high school students to the library so that they see it as a resource to help them succeed in life. They need to know the importance of literacy and how to find out information on school, careers, job searching etc. Their parents were never taught or exposed to these things, so they don't know how to expose their children to them.

Talk with the human resource directors of companies and develop relationships with them. They can get information in the hands of employees. Especially larger companies involved in manufacturing have break rooms. Employees spend time sitting in the break room, so having

posters/flyers in the break room can help raise community awareness. Might also talk to HR people about inserting information about resources or programs in employee paychecks.

A lot of these kids have not been exposed to a library or unlikely to go somewhere that they don't know anyone and are unsure of the reception that they will receive. Might offer some kind of orientation to library resources for middle schoolers or freshman. That would help them have a face and name to put with the library. Might make them more likely to use the library.

Young professionals are more likely to rely on the opinions of friends/co-workers and professional contacts for information and when looking for things to do. Have an employee join the Young Professionals Network and get involved in its activities. That will allow them to talk about the library and what is going on in a more informal manner.

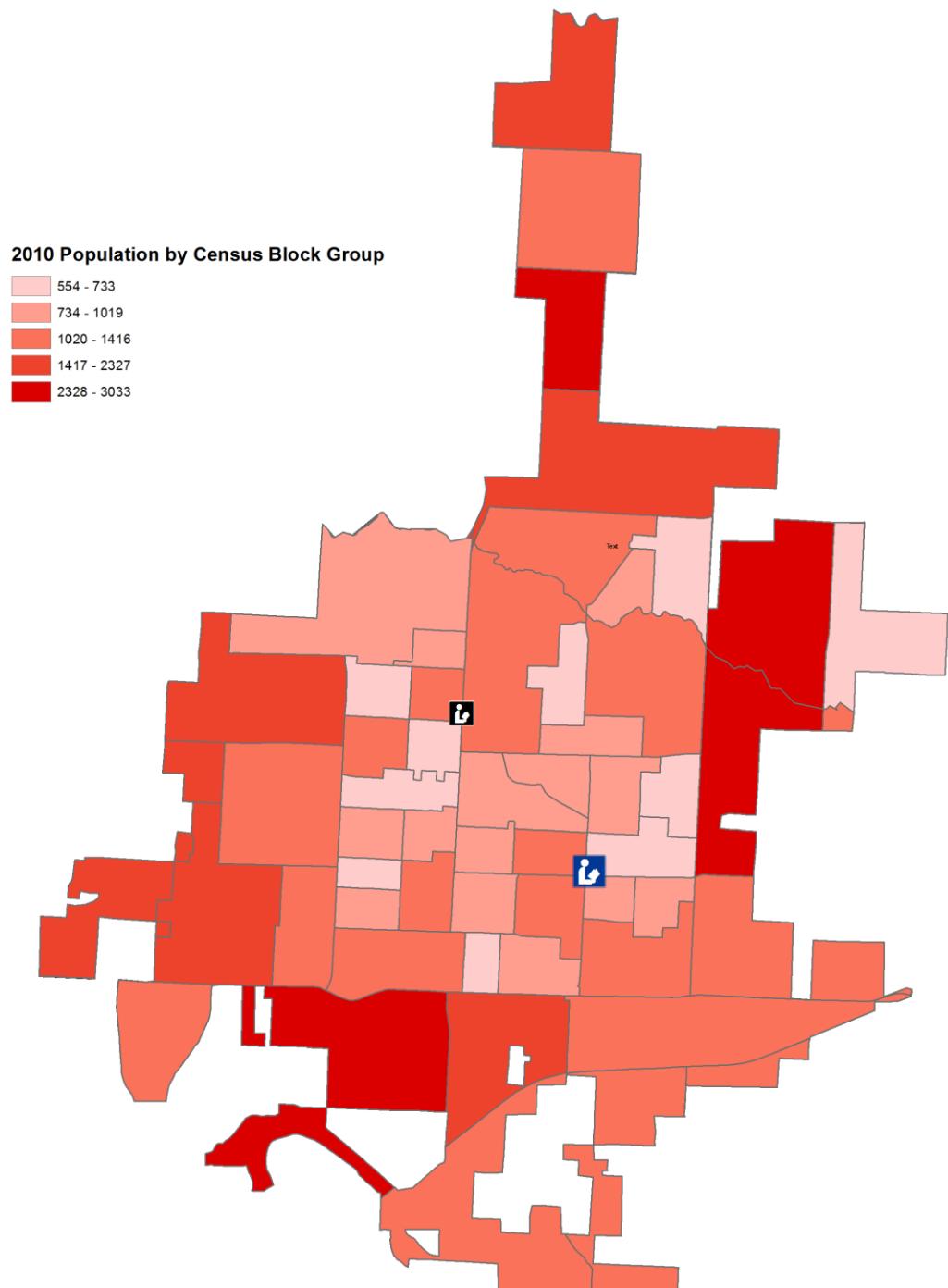
Other

Making sure that the new library is on the trolley system will be important not just for MSSU students, but also for seniors and members of the community without transportation.

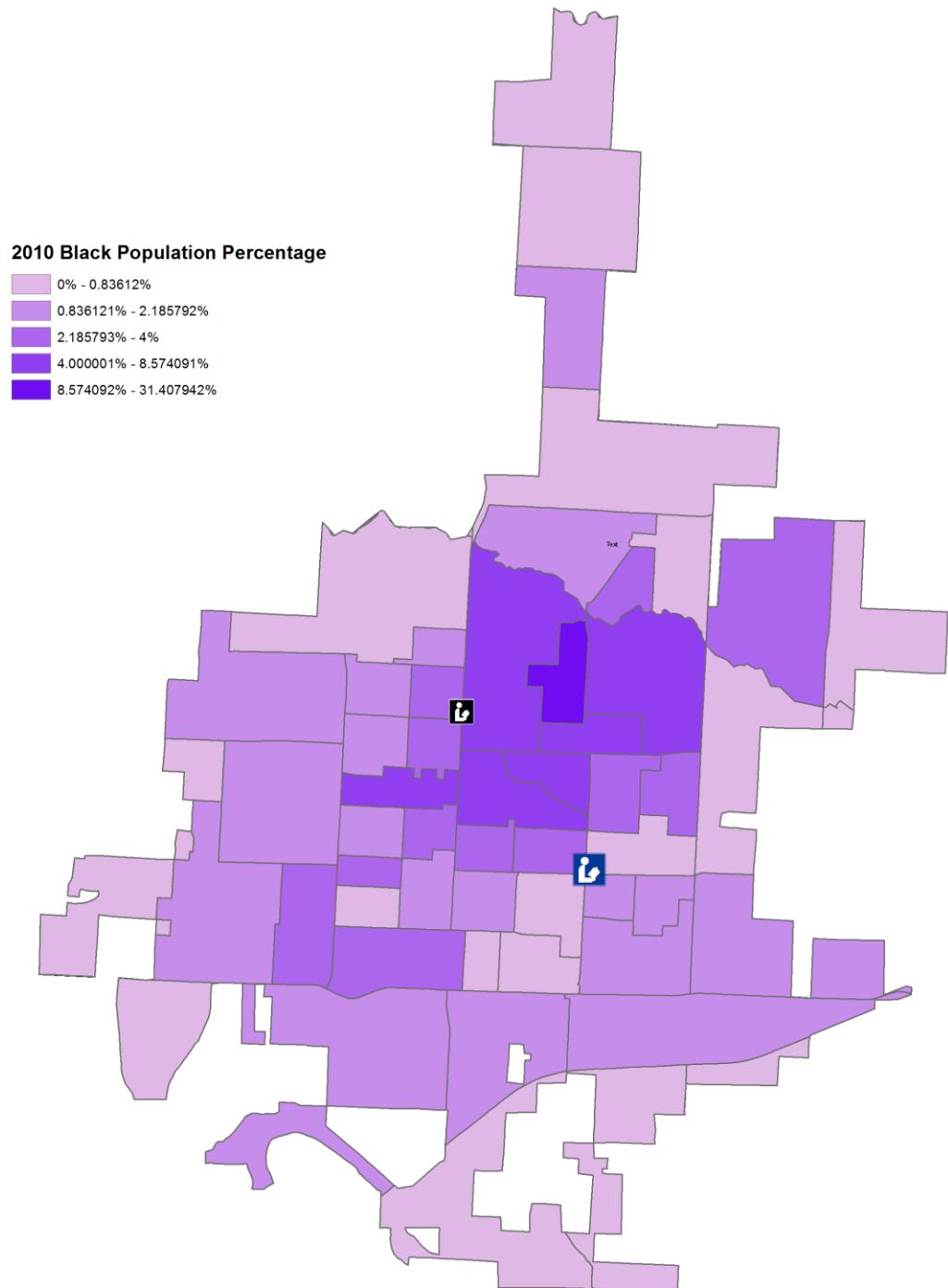
Businesses want a vibrant lifestyle that provides entertainment and social opportunities for singles and families. The library can provide a nice, relaxing environment and places to sit and hang out individually or in groups. Provide programs that are entertaining and give people a chance to socialize and meet new people or hang out with friends.

Many of the students don't participate in library programs even though all the teachers and media specialists send home information on library programs with students. The biggest issue is that they have to go to the library to participate. Students lack transportation unless their parents can take them. Most live in households where both parents work. Because of the high poverty levels parents don't have time to take them to the library.

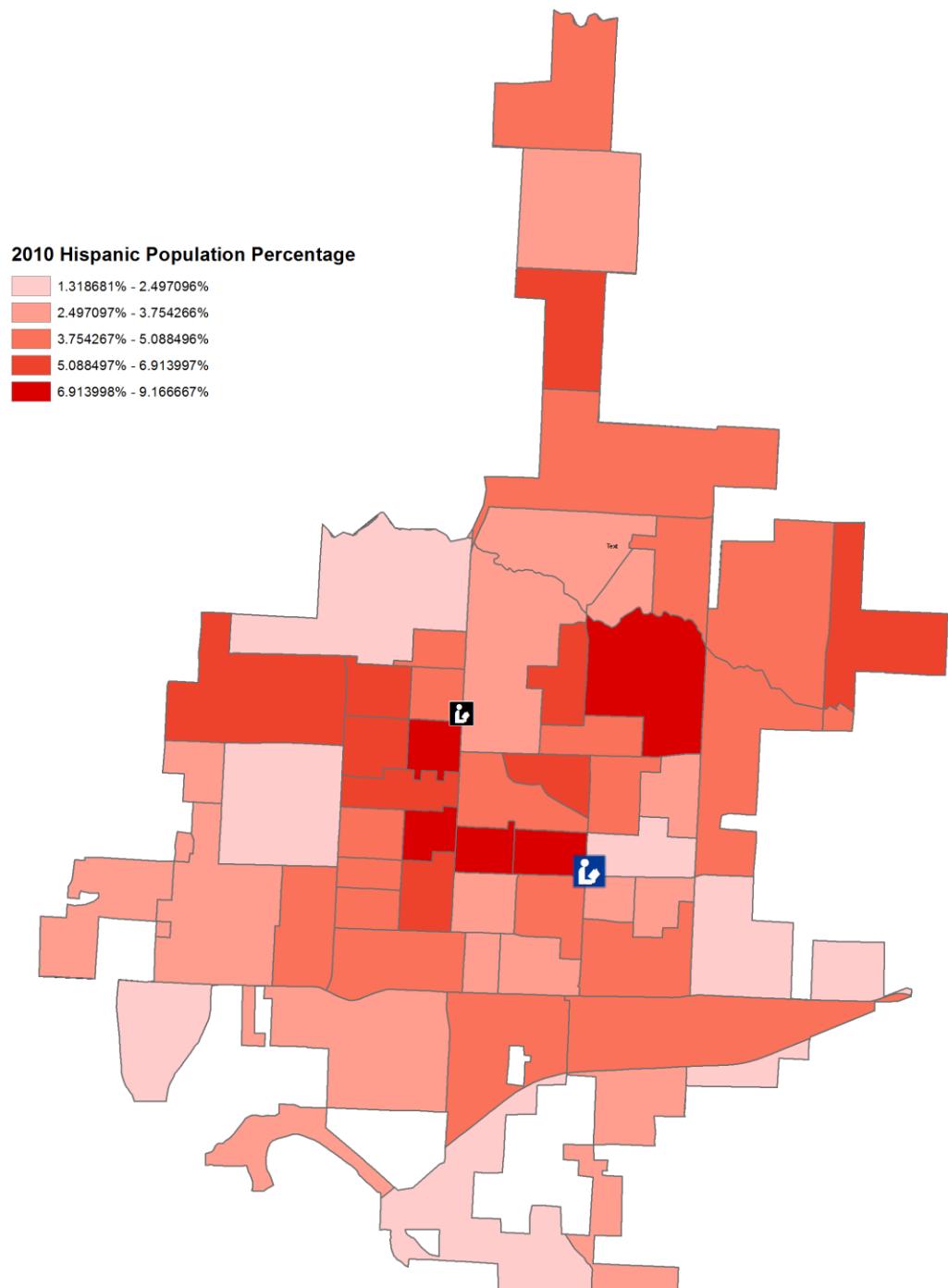
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