

**APPENDIX E:
JACOB EDWARDS LIBRARY
SOUTHBRIDGE, MA
STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS
THE S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS OF THE LIBRARY**

S.W.O.T Analysis is a tool to help the Planning Committee analyze the current and future conditions that effect the library and its ability to provide the services it deems necessary.

Strengths and weaknesses normally are discussed in the context of *existing* conditions that the library operates under. The conditions might include current programs, economic factors, staffing, and age of the building. Strengths and weaknesses might include the strength of a well trained, computer literate library staff or the weakness of the lack of availability of an adequate audiovisual collection.

Opportunities and threats are discussed in the context of *scenarios* that may occur in the future. The conditions may include bond referendums, economic recessions, state legislative mandates, and funding issues. Opportunities and threats might include the opportunity to work with the school librarians or the threat of budget cuts that would have a negative impact on collection development.

The Long Range Planning Committee discussed the library and identified the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the Jacob Edwards Library. These factors include:

▪ **LIBRARY STRENGTHS – WHAT DO WE DO WELL?**

1. Excellent staff (well trained, computer literate)
2. Responsive reference and children's departments
3. Good public access because of building location in the center of town
4. Space open to community (the physical plant and/or facility)
5. Outreach to the community
6. Literacy Coalition
7. Place for children to go and children's programming
8. Library investment in technology and resources
9. Materials in the Ammidown History Room
10. Open to all
11. Volunteer Programs
12. Potential of community members to provide adult Programs

▪ **LIBRARY WEAKNESSES – WHAT DON'T WE DO SO WELL?**

1. Lack of service availability (more hours, different hours—more evenings)
2. Inability to be open more than the minimum required 50 hours—under-staffed and under-scheduled
3. Location near the schools (students pour out of the schools at 2:30 and flock to the library)
4. Low circulation of materials (need more patrons)
5. Residents do not know about library services—need to **market** services
6. The Library does not control website (cannot be as proactive as library wishes)
7. Lack of funds due to library budget cuts
8. Lack of availability of audiovisual materials (small collections)

9. Patrons cannot use the collection without staff intervention—need to have archivists or dedicated staff for some scheduled access time History Room is locked—
10. Significant number of public accessible computers requires an IT person to maintain them in working order
11. Kids come to the library alone cause problems due to boredom, acting out
12. No programs for young adults (12-18 years of age)

▪ **OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LIBRARY – WHAT’S HAPPENING THAT CAN BENEFIT US?**

1. Better interaction with the schools
2. Partner with other organizations for educational opportunities
3. Parents involvement
4. Urban Renewal Plan
5. New housing/increased population/expanded tax base
6. Reach out to new populations
7. Small group classes (ESOL)
8. Activate people to use the library through religious and ESL groups
9. Better signage
10. Apply for grants for ‘fun’ marketing
11. Literacy Coalition can apply for grants
12. Use cutting edge technology (C/WMARS and Internet)
13. Retired people who have skills to bring to the library
14. Empower people to be leaders
15. The Library as a destination
16. Monitors in the library in afternoons—2:30-5:00—control school kids, allow librarians to work with patrons
17. Encourage library use—provide library cards at an early age
18. Diversity training and programming
19. Joint school and public library breakfasts
20. Café in library
21. Internationalism of community

▪ **THREATS TO THE LIBRARY - – WHAT’S HAPPENING THAT COULD HURT US? (CAN WE TURN THESE INTO OPPORTUNITIES?)**

1. Use of library statistics—read all the library use information not just statistics
2. Budget cuts have a negative impact on the collection development
3. Lack of control of library website
4. Internet—patrons think they have the answer to everything because they have Internet access (without using the library)
5. Patriot Act
6. Neighborhood around the library—poor image—potential volunteers and donations go down
7. Occasional disruptive behavior by students