



Collection Development Policy

I. Mission Statement

Watsonville Public Library acquires, organizes, and provides access and guidance to a wide variety of information and materials of contemporary interest and permanent value for the education, intellectual stimulation and social needs of its diverse community.

II. Purpose of Policy

The collection development policy is intended to provide guidance within budgetary and space limitations for the selection and evaluation of materials. It anticipates and meets the needs of the Watsonville and Freedom community as outlined in the Strategic Plan. As the community changes, the library will reassess and adapt its collections to reflect new and differing areas of interest and concern. This document provides a framework for continuous collection development and improvement and will be periodically evaluated and revised to provide guidance for implementing changes in the collection.

III. Philosophy of Selection

The Watsonville Public Library fully endorses the principles documented in the [American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to Read Statement](#) and [Freedom to View Statement](#). Further, California State Law, AB 1825 passed in 2024, requires the following statements to be included in public library collection development policies:

1. The collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.
2. The public library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.
3. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.
4. The right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences is acknowledged.

The library upholds the right of the individual to secure information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others. Materials available in the library represent a spectrum of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make informed choices that are necessary in a democracy.

IV. Scope of the Collection

The primary responsibility of the Watsonville Public Library is to serve the citizens of Watsonville by providing a broad choice of materials to meet their educational, cultural and recreational needs. Materials are selected to aid individuals, groups, and organizations to attain practical solutions to daily problems, and to enrich the quality of life for all community members.

Budget and space limitations, as well as local needs, preclude the library from purchasing materials for obscure or specialized materials. Access to such materials is made available through interlibrary loan or by referral to other institutions.

V. Scope of the Library

The Library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas for its Watsonville residents. Users from Santa Cruz County may also use the facilities, but the main purpose is to serve the citizens of Watsonville. A broad choice of circulating print and non-print materials are selected to accommodate the diversity of interests, reading levels, and languages of users of all ages thus respecting both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.

Scholarly and highly technical or specialized materials are not purchased unless they add body and substance to the collection, and at the discretion of the subject librarians. Access to these materials is made available through interlibrary loan or by referral to other institutions.

VI. Selection Criteria

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the criteria listed below. An item need not meet all of these standards in order to be added to the collection:

1. Popular interest
2. Contemporary significance or permanent value
3. Currency of information
4. Accuracy
5. Local emphasis
6. Readability or ability to sustain interest
7. Treatment of subject is suitable for age of intended audience
8. Reputation of author, publisher, producer or illustrator
9. Creative, literary or technical quality
10. Critical assessments in a variety of journals
11. Format and ease of use
12. Cost and availability
13. Durability/type of binding
14. Relationship to existing materials in collection
15. Relationship to materials in other area libraries

VII. Selection Tools

Reviews in professionally recognized periodicals are the primary source for materials selection. Standard bibliographies, booklists by recognized authorities and the advice of experts in specific subject areas are used.

Items in any format which have received significant awards or critical acclaim are evaluated for inclusion in the collection. This includes (but is not limited to) bestsellers on lists generated by the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Publishers Weekly, and Library Journal.

VIII. Suggestions for Purchase

The library strongly encourages input from the community concerning the collection. A suggestion for purchase procedure enables citizens to request that a particular item or subject be purchased by the library. All suggestions for purchase are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials and are not automatically added to the collection. Suggestions can be made using forms available at the public service desks, [online](#), or in person to any library staff member.

Multiple copies of materials are purchased in response to user demand as evidenced by number of requests, anticipated popularity, and monitoring of the collection. All things being equal, an additional copy may be purchased or leased.

IX. The Collection

The library and staff recognize there are differences between various collections at the library. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.

The library purchases print and audio materials in the following areas:

1. Fiction
2. Non-Fiction
3. Foreign Language
4. Periodicals
5. Reference
6. Media

The library purchases and/or maintains materials for the following Special Collections:

1. California Agricultural Workers History
2. Local History
3. Local Government Documents
4. Genealogy
5. Graphic Novels
6. Web Archive

The library purchases digital resources in the following formats:

1. Media
 - a. Streaming platforms
2. Databases
3. E-resources
 - a. Digital catalogs
4. Future Media

The library must continually assess new electronic media and evaluate the capabilities and enhancements that they offer over existing formats. When deciding whether to replace or augment existing formats with future media, the following factors will be considered: anticipated improvements in information storage and retrieval, user demand, quality of the product, ease of use, equipment requirements, cost, and staff requirements for processing, maintenance, and training.

X. Collection Replacement and Withdrawal

It is not the library's policy to automatically replace all books withdrawn because of loss, damage or wear. Need for replacement in each case is weighed with regard to several factors: number of duplicate copies; existence of adequate coverage in the subject area; other similar material in the collection; and demand for a particular title or subject.

Maintenance of the library's collection through constant re-evaluation by the library staff ensures its usefulness and relevance to the community. This evaluation depends heavily on the staff's professional expertise in assessing the needs of the community and the content of the collection. Those materials determined to no longer be of value are withdrawn from the collection.

Library materials are discarded for one or more of the following reasons:

1. Obsolescence: subject matter is no longer timely, accurate, or relevant
2. Damage or poor condition
3. Space limitations
4. Insufficient use

Additionally, staff refers to the standard resource [*CREW: A Weeding Manual for Modern Libraries*](#) (CREW = Continuous Review, Evaluation and Weeding) for guidance on specific Dewey/subject categories in the collection.

Each Dewey class is addressed, listing considerations for retention and age of item suggestions. In addition, at the library, last copies of a work are evaluated in terms of their value to the community, with consideration to the following:

1. Local interest
2. Reputation of author, publisher, producer, illustrator
3. Significance as identified in standard bibliographies
4. Quality of graphics
5. Uniqueness of information for research

Depending on the condition of the materials, withdrawn items are disposed of or surplus to the Friends of the Library for sale or given to other libraries.

XI. Gifts

Watsonville Public Library will encourage and accept gifts with the understanding that all gifts of materials become the property of the library whether or not they are added to the library collection. Gift items selected to become part of the regular library collection are integrated into the collection in normal sequence, available to all patrons, and otherwise handled according to the same rules as any other material belonging to the library, including the book withdrawal policy. The library makes every effort to dispose of gift materials not added to the collection to the library's best advantage, such as through Friends of the Library book sales.

Monetary gifts to the collection are welcome and may be designated as "in honor" gifts or memorials. Donors of the funds may suggest subjects or titles to be acquired with their donation, but the library reserves the right of final selection to meet the collection development needs and criteria of the library. Items purchased with gift funds may be marked with an appropriate bookplate. A letter for tax purposes may be sent to the donor if requested at the time of donation is made, acknowledging the receipt of the gift.

XII. Objections to Material

The library commission and staff believe that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy and hereby adopt the [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read Statement](#).

Objections to library materials can be voiced by filling out a [Reconsideration of Materials Form](#). This includes copyright concerns and take down requests for digital and web archive items. Library staff will review all objections in an unbiased and fair manner, considering the nature of the objection against the Watsonville Public Library Collection Development Policy.

XIII. Revision of Policy

This policy will be reevaluated periodically as circumstances require and/or every five years from date of adoption.

Approved by the Library Commission: January 2019

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