

Collection Development Policy

Purpose of the Collection Development Policy

The Collection Development Policy is one of the Library's fundamental policy documents. It outlines the philosophies that create and shape the Reuben Hoar Library's collection, the practices that maintain it over time and the guidelines that help the collection respond to community needs. The Collection Development Policy ensures that over time, the Reuben Hoar Public Library's collection will remain on course, reflecting the needs of Littleton's community.

Philosophy and Scope of the Collection

The Reuben Hoar Public Library collects materials in a variety of popular formats. The collection supports its function as a major information source for the demanding needs of the Littleton population. The collection also serves the popular and recreational needs of the general public.

Customer use is the most powerful influence on the Library's collection. Circulation, customer purchase requests, and hold levels are all closely monitored and trigger the purchase of new items and additional copies of high demand items.

In addition to customer demand, selections made to provide depth and diversity of viewpoints to the existing collection is inherent in the collection development philosophy. The Library upholds the right of the individual to access information, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to others.

Materials for children and teenagers are intended to broaden their vision, support recreational reading, encourage and facilitate reading skills, supplement their educational needs, stimulate and widen their interests, lead to recognition and appreciation of literature, and reflect diversity of the community. The reading, viewing, and hearing activity of children is ultimately the responsibility of parents/guardians, who guide and oversee their own children's development. The Reuben Hoar Library Staff support this relationship.

Scope of the Collection

The Reuben Hoar Library serves the needs of the community in which it is located. It contains a core collection of fiction and nonfiction materials for adults, children and teens. In addition, the Library maintains an extensive DVD and Blu-Ray collection, audiobooks, periodicals and a variety of electronic format materials. The Reference collection contains current and historical non-circulating publications, to support extensive and in-depth reference service for the general public. The collection, including online resources, represents the diverse viewpoints and interests of the entire community the Library serves. The Library may also collect materials, tools or equipment which may be of interest or of use to the local community.

Selection Criteria

The collection development staff, guided by their training, knowledge and expertise, use the following general criteria to select materials for the collection:

- Relevance to interests and needs of the community
- Extent of publicity, critical review, and current anticipated demand
- Current or historical significance of the author or subject
- Local significance of author or subject
- Relevance to the existing collection's strengths and weaknesses
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, publisher or producer, with preference generally given to titles vetted in the editing and publishing industry
- Suitability of format to Library circulation and use
- Date of publication
- Price, availability and Library materials budget

Patron Recommendations

Patrons may request items the Library does not own. Each request is reviewed for inclusion in the collection or for loan through InterLibrary Loan. Requests made to staff will be communicated to the Library Director and Assistant Director for consideration.

Collection Management

The Library's collection is a living, changing entity. As items are added, others are reviewed for their ongoing value and sometimes withdrawn from the collection. Great care is taken to retain or replace items that have enduring value to the community. Decisions are influenced by pattern of use, the capacity of our shelves, and the holdings of other libraries. Staff review the collection regularly to maintain its vitality and usefulness to the community.

Responsibility for Collection Management

Staff are welcome to suggest materials based on a wide variety of sources, including, but not limited to, reviews in subject area journals, colleague recommendations, as well as suggestions by patrons. The Library Director may, as needed, authorize the Assistant Director or other staff as needed to purchase materials for the Library on an on-going basis within the limits of the Library's materials budget. The final authority for the Library collection rests with the Library Trustees. As the governing body of the Reuben Hoar Library, the Library Trustees will review any appeals by the public concerning the Collection Development Policy.

The Reuben Hoar Public Library disposes of materials that have been withdrawn according to the criteria for weeding and withdrawal outlined below. The Friends of the Library may assist the Library by selling or redistributing Library materials that are withdrawn from the collection or donated to the Library and designated by the Library Director for sale.

Criteria for Weeding and Withdrawal

The following criteria are used in selecting materials for withdrawal:

- Damage or poor condition
- Number of copies in the collection
- Relevance to the needs and interests of the community
- Current demand and frequency of use
- Accuracy and timeliness
- Local interests
- Availability elsewhere, including other libraries and online

Gift of Materials

The Library welcomes gifts. Its collection has been greatly enriched by many fine donations. Please note, due to space constraints, the Library is unable to add all materials offered to us into the collection.

All donated materials become the property of the Reuben Hoar Public Library and are examined by the Library Director or designated staff to determine which items will be added to the collection. If the Library cannot accept the donation, it may be given to another Library or may be placed for sale with the Friends of the Library.

Requests to return any materials not added to the collection must be made at the time of donation. The Library cannot guarantee that any gift/donation will be returned. The Director and staff will make all attempts to make this policy known to the donor at the time of any gift exchange.

If a donation is added to the collection, it may not remain there in perpetuity and may be removed as part of ongoing collection maintenance.

Materials chosen to be added to the collection will be made on the following criteria at the discretion of the Library Director:

- Only materials that have been published in the past 24 months will be added to the collection. They must also be in acceptable physical condition, relevant, and timely. Gifts of video games or other electronic media must be compatible with technologies created within the past two years.
- Materials published before the 24 month period will be added at the discretion of the Library Director or submitted to the Friends of the Library for sale.

- Gift subscriptions to periodicals are welcome and should be discussed with the Library Director prior to a subscription order being submitted.
- Gifts commemorating both the happy and sad events of life are encouraged. The donor should contact the Library Director and discuss the suitability of the donation as well as any special requirements. The staff can provide a list of well-reviewed materials on specific subjects.
- The Library Director may discuss the acceptance of any gift with the Trustees.

Donations by Local Authors

Local authors wishing to donate a copy of their work to the Library for consideration are welcome to do so. Each book will be evaluated by the Library Director or designated staff. If the title is determined to meet the criteria for selection, we will be happy to add the title to the collection.

Titles that are self-published are not added to the collection unless there is a compelling reason to do so. Self-Published titles must meet a subject need the collection has, represent the Littleton community or provide a point of view that does not exist within the collection. The author may be encouraged to provide any available professional reviews of the material. Reader reviews on Amazon or other online sites are not considered as part of the review process. The decision on inclusion of self-published materials will be made by the librarian who oversees that area as well as by the Library Director.

Donation of Religious Materials

The Library may accept as gifts materials on religion that fit its normal collecting criteria and that it would consider purchasing. The Library Director will review the material, along with staff, to determine if it meets the selection criteria noted above.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Intellectual Freedom:

The Library provides an impartial environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions, in support of an informed citizenry and a democratic society. The Library believes that censorship is a purely individual matter and declares that, while anyone is free to reject materials of which one does not approve, one cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict others' freedom to read. The Library Trustees affirm the American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to View](#), and [Freedom to Read](#) policy statements in support of acquiring and managing collections.

Reconsideration Policy:

The Library fully endorses the principles documented in the [Library Bill of Rights](#), [Freedom to View](#), and [Freedom to Read](#) statements of the American Library Association. Materials available in the Library present a diversity of viewpoints, enabling citizens to make the informed choices necessary in a democracy. The Library also selects a wide variety of Library materials that satisfy the diverse interests of our community. The Library upholds the right of the individual to secure these resources, even though the content may be controversial, unorthodox, or unacceptable to some. The Library's varied collection is available to all; however, it is not expected that all of the collection will appeal to everyone.

It is most desirable to solve problems through free and informal communication, and it is preferred that complaints be resolved through this informal process. Patrons who wish to request the withdrawal or reclassification of materials currently owned by the Library are encouraged to discuss their concerns with the Library Director. If the patron is not satisfied with the response to their request, the Director will provide the patron with information and a form to request formal reconsideration of the Library resource. Withdrawn books are donated to the Friends of the Library for book sales. The proceeds from such sales are used for the benefit of the Library. Books that are not sold will be disposed of at the discretion of the Friends of the Library.

Approved by
Reuben Hoar Library Trustees
February 10, 2023