



TOWN HALL
LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN 2026-2030



ABOUT TOWN HALL LIBRARY

The mission of the Town Hall Library is to offer all people a welcoming and accessible gathering place conducive to research, enlightenment and enjoyment. Through innovative programming, relevant collections and responsive services, the Town Hall Library aspires to be an information-based community center which supports lifelong learning and the joy of reading.

The Merton Town Hall, which later served as home to the Town Hall Library, was built in the 1870s. It sat empty for many years before the Lake Keesus Women's Club worked to create a local library in the 1960s. By 1966, the old town hall was renovated, the building was dedicated as a library, and the collection grew to 2,643 books. The facility quickly filled, and by the end of the 1970s, an addition doubled its size.

The Town Hall Library began experiencing growing pains again in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Thanks to incredible community support and involvement, a \$1.25M referendum to triple library space passed in 2008. Even before the referendum, volunteers and staff secured donations to fund the other half of the projected cost, which enhanced the popularity of the referendum. Ground was broken in July 2008 and the new and improved Town Hall Library opened on August 30th, 2009.

Today, the Town Hall Library continues to grow and evolve. The community room, children's area, study rooms, and Makerspace are popular and well-utilized. Physical and digital collections are thoughtfully curated to reflect the community's needs and interests. The Town Hall Library continues to introduce innovative services while maintaining its traditional offerings valued by patrons. Programs such as book clubs, storytimes, and engaging events all meaningfully advance the Library's mission.



**1870s:
MERTON TOWN HALL
BUILT**

**1966:
LIBRARY DEDICATED**

**1970s:
FIRST RENOVATION &
ADDITION**

**2009:
SECOND RENOVATION
& ADDITION**

**2013:
LOWER LEVEL ADDITION**

**2026:
LIBRARY CELEBRATES
60 YEARS OF SERVICE**



ABOUT THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The Town Hall Library embarked on a strategic planning process beginning in June 2025 in order to hear from community voices, understand the library's strengths and needs, and build a plan that carefully considered both. While the library is located in North Lake (part of the Town of Merton) it serves a broad and varied community. The library is a destination for many throughout Waukesha County and beyond. Many families attend area schools, visit seasonally, or simply enjoy the quaint and comfortable Town Hall Library. Each of these community perspectives was carefully considered in the planning process and resulting plan.

As part of this process, **a planning team was formed to guide decision-making, represent community voices, review collected data, and contribute to writing the library's strategic plan.**

The team drew on the following data and input to inform their work:

- *A community demographics handout*
- *Access to a data dashboard presenting library data in multiple formats*
- *A community survey completed by 222 respondents*
- *A staff questionnaire gathering perspectives on the library's strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and desired outcomes*
- *A board conversation involving all members of the board of trustees, focused on the library's strengths and future needs*
- *A qualitative questionnaire completed by seven individuals, including Friends of the Library, Library Foundation members, and community partners*



KEY TAKEAWAYS

The planning team reviewed a data webinar, completed theming worksheets to analyze the information, and met to develop the library's strategic goals and objectives. The planning team identified several key takeaways from the information gathered from staff, library leadership, and community members.



1. RESPONSIVE SERVICES ROOTED IN COMMUNITY NEEDS

Throughout the process, **the community shared overwhelmingly positive feedback about the library's staff, services, and atmosphere.** It recognized the library's ability to adapt to community needs and offer up-to-date resources. The library will continue to evolve its services, collections, and spaces to reflect the diverse needs of children, adults, and seniors. **Personalized customer service and a robust, relevant collection remain central to this work, ensuring every visitor feels seen, supported, and inspired.**



2. COMMUNITY CONNECTION AND COLLABORATION

Seen as a logical place of connection and collaboration, the Town Hall Library will **find ways to strengthen its role as a connector across neighborhoods, schools, and generations.** By co-creating programs with local schools, hosting events that celebrate local culture, and serving as a trusted hub for community updates, the library will focus on fostering belonging and shared experiences.





3. CLEAR, INCLUSIVE, AND IMPACTFUL COMMUNICATION

To serve all residents, especially those newer to the area or living in geographically dispersed neighborhoods, the library will **continue to elevate its visibility and clarify its offerings**. Outreach efforts can highlight the library's role as a dynamic community resource, extending far beyond books and welcoming visitors and patrons from around the area.



4. ORGANIZATIONAL STRENGTH AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Town Hall Library is committed to maintaining a strong foundation that supports its mission and long-term impact. This includes **investing in staff through competitive compensation, professional development, and retention strategies; ensuring facilities are safe, accessible, and well-maintained; fostering clear internal communication; and cultivating public awareness of the value the library provides**.



These takeaways are reflected in the library's goals and objectives that will guide its work in the coming years.





GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1

SERVE AS A VIBRANT COMMUNITY HUB

The Town Hall Library welcomes everyone and provides inclusive opportunities for learning, connection, and enrichment across all ages and abilities.

- Curate and maintain a robust collection that reflects community interests, needs, and emerging topics.
- Develop and promote appealing and meaningful programming.
- Support community members and groups by sharing our space and offering helpful resources through educational and entertainment opportunities.
- Reevaluate and improve physical spaces to support diverse community use.
- Implement clearer, more consistent in-library signage and appealing displays to support service awareness and access.

2

EXPAND OUTREACH AND VISIBILITY IN THE COMMUNITY

The Town Hall Library provides our community members with the information they need to understand, utilize, and appreciate the library's offerings.

- Launch targeted outreach campaigns to better communicate library resources and opportunities.
- Strengthen partnerships with schools, businesses, and civic organizations to create and co-promote services and events.
- Develop methods to increase library presence at local events, from neighborhood happenings to community activities.

3

ENSURE ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND STAFF EXCELLENCE

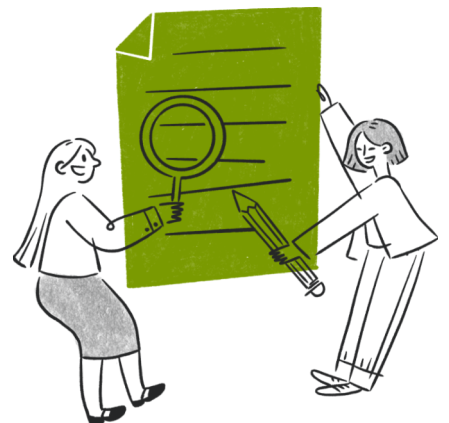
The Town Hall Library delivers high-quality services by investing in staff, culture, and infrastructure.

- Advocate for competitive wages and evaluate approaches to compensation that reflect performance and support library staff.
- Implement cross-training, regular staff development, and strengthen methods of communication to ensure consistent service quality and resource knowledge.
- Promote opportunities for community involvement at the library.
- Align budgeting and planning with community priorities, feasibility, and long-term sustainability.

ACTIVATION AND COMMUNICATION

A strategic plan is a living document. The library director and staff, in collaboration with library board members, will identify specific service priorities and coordinate strategic plan activities on an annual basis. Progress on the strategic plan will be regularly reviewed during meetings by the management team, staff, and board. Implementation decisions will be guided by potential impact, available resources, such as funding and staff time, and insights from ongoing community engagement and evolving trends in library service.

The Town Hall Library will share progress on the strategic plan with the community by providing consistent and regular updates, as well as ensuring opportunities for two-way conversations with community members, partners, and area leaders.





ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Library extends heartfelt thanks to all community members who generously shared their time, ideas, and feedback through surveys, questionnaires, and ongoing conversations.

We are especially grateful to the strategic planning team, whose thoughtful contributions and many hours of work helped shape the Library's priorities and direction for the next five years.

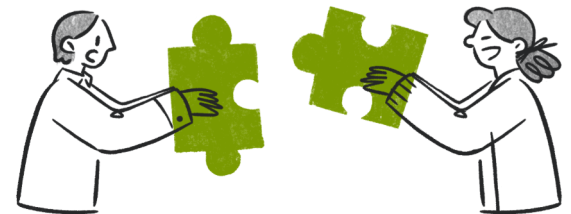
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