



Strategic Plan 2026 – 2029

INTRODUCTION & CONTEXT

The Genesee District Library (GDL) is a 19-branch district library system formed in 1980 under the District Libraries Establishment Act Revised 1989 PA 24 (MCL 937.171). GDL serves the residents of Genesee County, Michigan. Our legal service area covers all communities within the county except for the City of Flint.

Over one million visits are made annually to the GDL for books, movies, music, technology and programs. Residents within the service area also have online access to books and music.

In Q1 2025, the GDL conducted three surveys which included questions about services, programs, and spaces respondents wanted from the library in the future. A total of 1,172 patrons, staff, Board members, and partners completed the survey. The data from all three surveys was reviewed to analyze both quantitative and qualitative data by GDL's Strategic Planning Committee.

Key themes that emerged were structured into a strategic plan to guide the library over the next four years. After the plan is reviewed and refined by the Strategic Planning Committee and the Board approves the plan in May 2026, staff members will turn their attention to implementing the plan and tracking progress towards meeting plan goals.

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION

To be a community destination for traditional and modern resources, which empower and enrich the communities we serve.

The vision statement articulates the aspiration we hope to achieve in our community and guides our operational decisions. We want to evolve the perception in the community that the library is “not just about books” – it’s so much more than that! The resources we provide empower and enrich the community and continue to change as we respond to community needs.

MISSION

We will provide our local communities with access to informative, entertaining, educational, and culturally enriching resources, while maintaining a high standard of fiscal responsibility.

The mission statement articulates how we will carry out our work in order to achieve our aspirational vision. The mission communicates to our community what they can expect from their library and guides staff work on a daily basis. Key to carrying out the mission is providing access to resources while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

This plan is divided into five goals with corresponding objectives. The five goals are:

Professional Development | Improve Catalog Efficiency

Leverage Social Media| Meaningful Partnerships |

Fiscal Responsibility

During the Strategic Planning Committee’s review, the discussion focused on the key ways the library should move forward to support staff development, improve the collection, foster meaningful partnerships, leverage social media and practice fiscal responsibility.

GOAL 1: *Professional Development*

Connect staff to resources and training to support and encourage them to learn and grow.

Libraries are only as good as the staff that serve their communities. Even as our methods for assessing staff grow and change, traditional customer service skills are incredibly valuable to our community. We will increase our focus on various forms of professional development while maintaining focus on customer service.

OBJECTIVES:

1.1 Identify and develop training courses and guides for library equipment.

1.2 Support and encourage staff to complete training opportunities by developing a professional development landing page and purchasing books and materials for staff use.

1.3 Identify and develop training courses for library resources.

Possible measures of success:

- Annual reviews show improvement in staff skill
 - Staff requests for training increases
 - Staff confidence level increases
 - Staff proficiency increases
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GOAL 2: *Improve Catalog Efficiency*

Identify and delete unused bibliographic records, purge unnecessary item records and leverage advances in technology.

Library catalogs are only as good as the data they contain. Even the most efficient software produces bad search results when the data it searches is bad. We will produce training documents and classes that will enhance the techniques staff use to help keep records clean.

OBJECTIVES:

2.1 Migrate to new Online Public Access Catalog

2.2 Develop procedures to reduce the number of empty records

2.3 Review accuracy of item records

2.4 Create tips and tricks guide for users

Possible measures of success:

- Number of empty records reduced
 - Many manual updates become automated
 - OPAC searches become more efficient
 - Number of “on-the-fly” item records reduced
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GOAL 3: Leverage Social Media

Leverage social media platforms to engage with patrons, and promote literacy, resources, and services.

Modern libraries employ social media as a means of communication, information distribution, and knowledge sharing. Social media platforms have emerged as powerful tools to connect with users, facilitate access to information, and foster a sense of community.

OBJECTIVES:

3.1 Hire a Community Engagement Specialist.

3.2 Identify popular and effective social media platforms.

3.3 Expand frequency and content on popular platforms with polls, quizzes and open-ended questions.

3.4 Develop procedures and pathways for frontline staff to become more involved in social media.

Possible measures of success:

- Number of virtual programs increase
 - Virtual program attendance increases
 - Create weekly content for online multimedia presence
 - More staff involved
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GOAL 4: *MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS*

Extend the Library's reach through meaningful and intentional collaborations.

Outreach to our community beyond the library building is a critical part of raising awareness with unserved and underserved community members as well as serving existing patrons in new ways. Expanding partnerships with community organizations will help us better serve a variety of populations in our community while increasing the Library's relevancy and improving public knowledge of our services.

OBJECTIVES:

4.1 Each branch completes an inventory and assessment of current partners.

4.2 Create partner collaboration plans.

4.3 Develop a District-level plan to implement the partner collaboration plans.

Possible measures of success:

- Inventories completed
 - Collaboration plans created
 - Notable increase in outreach events
 - GDL's Community Resource list grows thereby increasing public awareness of resources.
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GOAL 5: *Fiscal Responsibility*

Fiscal responsibility is essential to create a better, stronger, and stable library for future generations.

It is important that the library plan and implement budgets that account for public services, short and long-term liabilities, and reserves for unforeseen hardships. The library will prepare conservative annual budgets that maximize savings opportunities and minimize expenditures.

OBJECTIVES:

5.1 The library will prepare conservative annual budgets.

5.2 The library will complete annual audits.

5.3 The library will pass annual budgets in a timely fashion.

Possible measures of success:

- OPEB funded percentage
- Defined Benefit Retirement System funded percentage
- Clean Annual Audits
- Operating expenditures do not exceed revenue

NEXT STEPS

After this plan is adopted by the Trustees, staff will develop activity plans to guide implementation. Implementation is a continual process, as the timing of certain activities will be determined by priority. Review and adjustment of activity plans will happen on a regular basis.

Evaluation of plans will be ongoing once implementations are underway. Measurements for each goal will vary, and some activities will be best evaluated by collecting data through patron and community surveys. Other activities will be evaluated based on information collected in-house such as circulation and usage statistics, program participation, and staff feedback. Some goals will be met by creating deliverables, like patron and staff resources and guides.

The library commits to a comprehensive review and update of the overall plan at its completion. This plan will move the Genesee District Library significantly forward in meeting key community needs and building organizational capacity to provide a welcoming presence in the community. This plan is an investment in the future of the GDL as a critical asset of the overall community.