



# Leelanau Township Library

2025 to 2029

## High-Level Strategic Plan

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_ 202\_

# Mission-Vision-Values

## MISSION

TBD

## VISION

TBD

## VALUES (current suggested values)

**Community Focus:** Empowering and connecting our community through tailored resources and engaging programs.

**Excellence:** Inspiring passion and dedication in all our initiatives.

**Discovery:** Igniting a love for exploration and lifelong learning.

**Responsiveness:** Adapting and innovating to meet our community's evolving needs.

**Welcoming:** Building an inviting environment that values and respects all.

## The Library's Why

- The Library is a community and social connector/a third place for many
- The Library is the only community resource open to everyone without a fee
- It is a busy and highly utilized community resource (especially in the summer months)
- It is the only organization providing life-long learning without a fee or commitment
- The community HIGHLY values education, but the library's current facility is not a reflection of that

## The Legacy Desired

- A library reflecting the community's strong commitment to education and learning for all ages
- Resource and service assets benefitting everyone in the community
- A central hub creating better community connections
- A center promoting life-long learning and creativity throughout the community

## Who Isn't Being Served Well?

- Families with young children don't have sufficient space or amenities (adequate restrooms, interactive play, and imagination areas) to support their learning and educational development
- Teens, Tweens, and Students in general do not have an appropriate space
- Residents of all ages who don't have an easy-to-access building, appropriate social connection spaces, technology training zones, or other needed tech & resources
- Remote workers/telecommuters who need a reliable non-home-based office location to work

## How Do We Communicate This?

- Work across the community and with local leaders to define the role/importance of the Library
- Develop community champions engaged in furthering the story and importance of the library
- Communicate the needs, the whys, and the consequences of non-action
- Utilize digital technologies to reach residents but don't forget about traditional mediums too

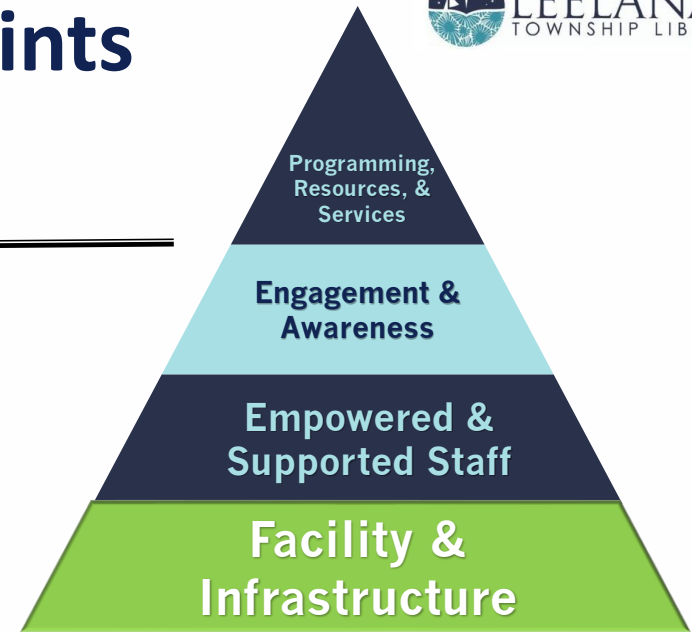
## How Can We Fund and Support It?

- Work across the community and with local leaders to determine the appropriate options and forward paths for consideration.
  - A voter supported initiative might be required
  - Build up a foundation/endowment to increase the private funding channels for the Library
  - Explore corporate partnerships, grants and other channels for additional financial support

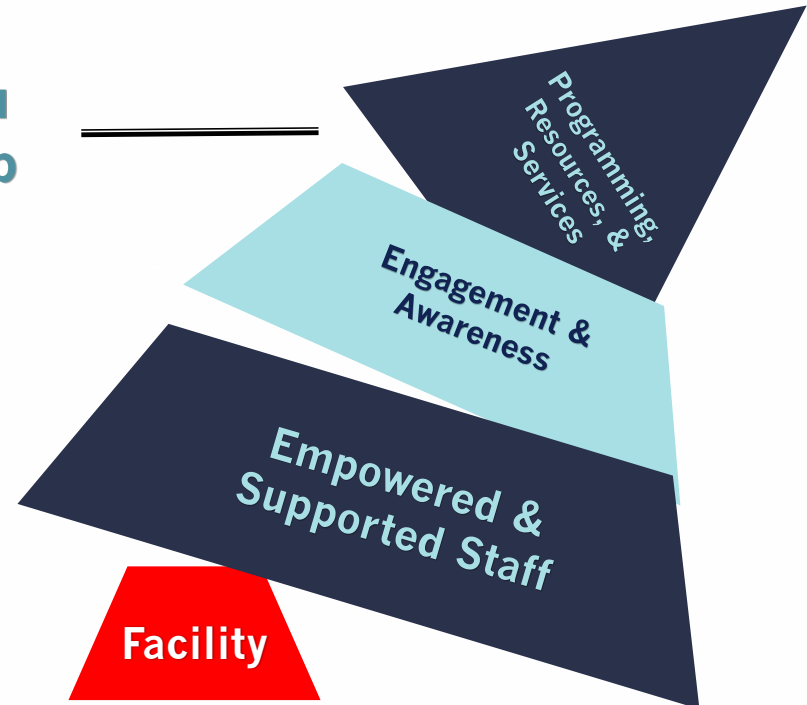
# Strategic Overview – Focus Points

- A library **Facility** should sit as the strong foundation of library services, enabling and empowering all service and strategic aspects of the library.
- In the case of LTL, the **Facility is a major limiter. It does not support the weight of public demand, staff needs, and the necessary resources the community needs and wants.** The library can not effectively serve the community in its current facility.
- **Engagement and Communication** will need to focus on sharing the message and expanding the understanding of the depth of the limitations to coalesce community support around a major facility upgrade/replacement.
- **Programming, Resources, Services, and Staff Effectiveness** will remain largely status quo until the Facility's limitations can be addressed.

Goal /  
Ideal



Leelanau  
Township  
Library  
Today



*Note: Through the community-based Strategic Retreat that informed this plan, the voting exercise to determine the highest priorities resulted in 129 votes for facilities-related needs. This was 16 more votes than all other areas combined, further emphasizing the importance of addressing the Library's facility.*

# Facility & Infrastructure

**Get community-wide agreement on the need to improve access to resources, services, and spaces leading to popular support for a major facility improvement plan. A new facility should ensure all residents feel welcome and comfortable using the Library.**

- Develop a plan, supported by the community, that overcomes the Library's physical shortcomings.
- Ensure the plan addresses the Library's ability to provide safe and welcoming spaces for all with the technology and infrastructure to support users, both today and tomorrow.
- Address the need to provide a facility supporting the staff and their ability to effectively deliver services and resources.

## Suggested Possible Initiatives (from the Strategic Retreat):

- Work in partnership with community leaders across the district/township to evaluate the options for, what is likely, a new library building. Agree on a library plan that meets the economic and service needs of township residents that is likely to receive public support through private donations and funding and potentially ballot support, potentially seeking outside help with this effort.
- A new building should prioritize the following: universal accessibility, flexible program and meeting spaces, small and medium group meeting/study spaces, dedicated teen and tween spaces, both active connection zones and quiet areas, a cozy atmosphere, technology and creative spaces, attractive outdoor space for dwelling and supporting outdoor programs.
- Explore affordable short-term improvement options for the current space in the meantime (restrooms, youth space, increased space flexibility).

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## **Overall Outcome:**

All community members can comfortably access and use the library building and services, including appropriate spaces for the patrons and the resources they need, and sufficient staff spaces and resources that allow them to effectively serve the community.

## **More Specific Outcomes:**

- Overall increase in the use of library resources.
- Users experience a larger variety of library services and resources on each visit.
- Staff are more satisfied with their working environment and feel supported to do their best work, leading to higher job satisfaction and staff retention.
- The Library offers more creative and collaborative opportunities and appropriate meeting and study spaces including support for summer and after-school activities.
- The community highly utilizes and appreciates the resources and spaces.
- The library's facility becomes a key point of pride within the community and adds additional attraction to the community as a place to live.
- Users attest to the Library and its facilities being key community service and resource cornerstones.
- Increases the level of community members who believe the Library makes Leelanau Township a great place to live.

# Empowered & Supported Staff

**Ensure the well-being and effectiveness of staff by providing essential infrastructure and support, empowering them to confidently meet the community's evolving needs and cultivate the partnerships vital to a successful, community-centered library.**

- Together, leadership and staff inspire a culture of organizational excellence and shared satisfaction in the impact of their work.
- Have staff be a key resource in seeking to address the facility needs of the Library and its users with strong support from the Library's Board of Trustees.
- Offer comprehensive professional development and training opportunities that empower all staff in effectively advancing the Library's mission.

## Suggested Possible Initiatives (from the Strategic Retreat):

- Seek to increase staffing levels to support usage and community demand now and into the future with an emphasis on programming.
- Increase investment in staff (training, compensation, benefits, mental health support, family support, etc.).
- Ensure staff are engaged as an active partner in the advocacy and the planning efforts for the facility.

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## **Overall Outcome:**

A professional and more empowered staff, who are better positioned to support the community and deliver needed services and resources.

## **More Specific Outcomes:**

- Overall library organization and staff levels fully support day-to-day work, consistently empowering staff to do their best work and enable the highest level of effectiveness.
- Staff report high levels of job satisfaction with a healthy organizational culture, providing all staff with what they need to drive success for themselves and LTL.
- Staff have access to training, professional development, and resources they need to thrive as LTL team members.
- High retention of employees who are empowered to build firm relationships with library users and partner organizations.
- Seek to establish some opportunities for career growth within the Library, despite being a small organization.
- The Library is seen as a friendly, welcoming place where users have their service needs met.

# Engagement & Awareness

**Develop and communicate a compelling story about both the Library's impact and the limitations of its current infrastructure, inspiring strong community support and agreement for a new library facility.**

- Tell the story of a library's facility limitations, and how the building is failing the community and staff.
- Empower resident champions to tell the story broadening their engagement with and commitment to the Library.
- Show up where people live, work, and play to provide services and share the Library's story.
- Strengthen new and existing partnerships to boost visibility, engagement, and usage, fostering deeper connections and building stronger relationships throughout the township.

Suggested Possible Initiatives (from the Strategic Retreat and RTL experience):

- Spend focused leadership time to develop the Library's story and ways to spread it throughout the community (multi-modal).
- Establish a Library Advocates Group that includes residents of all ages, engaging them in raising awareness across the community about the facility's limitations and the Library's impact.
- Create a 360° Tour of the Library's facility that highlights key problem areas and limitations, along with images showcasing possibilities for an improved facility, drawing inspiration from great libraries in similar communities.
- Engage local groups (e.g., local Indigenous communities) to build ties, partnerships, and services for those groups and their members.
- Enhance marketing and promotional efforts and investment to strengthen the library's ability to showcase its services and reach a broader audience.

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## **Overall Outcome:**

Elevated awareness of the Library in all corners of the community, leading to a deeper realization by more that it is a truly vital asset in need of a deeper investment to protect its positive impact on the community and its success.

## **More Specific Outcomes:**

- Increased community awareness of library resources and services by residents from across the Leelanau Township Library district.
- The community is more fully aware of the library facility's severe limitations and builds commitment toward finding and funding a solution.
- Increased awareness of how the Library contributes to making Leelanau Township a great place to live.
- A core group of library advocates across all age groups become passionate about sharing the story of the Library's positive impact on the community.
- Expand existing partnerships with schools and community organizations and cultivate new partnerships to increase awareness of library resources and services.
- The Library is successful in supporting fundraising events that provide positive financial support and generate further buzz about the Library.

# Programming, Resources, & Services

**Foster enriching learning experiences, programs, resources, and services both within and beyond the Library's physical and digital walls, all curated to reflect the needs and expectations of township residents.**

- Recognition that improving/expanding the facility is a necessary component of the library's continuing to deliver high-quality programs that meet the level of community demand.
- Develop a stronger commitment to youth and teen services seeking to expand the base of their use of the library.
- Once the building is addressed further elevate adult services through programs, technology, and collections aligning with their needs.
- Until the building is addressed seek the expansion of programming through partnerships and programs delivered at offsite locations throughout the community.

## Suggested Possible Initiatives (from the Strategic Retreat):

- Expand offsite programming and programming partnerships.
- Increase efforts around all types of literacy (technology, civic, financial, media, reading) throughout the community.
- Given current space limitations, prioritize an increase in digital materials and eBook budgets until the facility limitations are addressed.
- Once the facility challenges are resolved, focus on increasing investments in physical resources and materials that resonate with resident interests and passions. Engage the community in the development and growth of these collections and resources.

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## **Overall Outcome:**

A more robust ecosystem of connections, programs, and learning opportunities for the community positioning the Library as the area's learning and cultural hub and de facto community center.

## **More Specific Outcomes:**

- Increased community visits, usage, and satisfaction with the Library.
- Community members experience a larger array of library services and resources on each visit.
- Increased use of physical spaces and digital resources.
- Increased community support for LTL.
- Teens acknowledge the Library as an important part of their social and educational ecosystem.
- The Library is seen by even more residents as "THE" place to turn to for information about where resources and solutions can be found in the area.
- The library user base expands to more residents, especially seasonal residents.
- Overall awareness and appreciation of how library resources and services impact and support the whole of Leelanau Township is expanded.



# LTL SWOT Analysis

## Strengths

- *HIGHLY engaged community*
- *Committed customer-focused staff*
- *Strong overall usage of the library which peaks in the summer months*
- *Some strong partnerships within the community*
- *Positive community perception of the Library*
- *Very strong programming: offerings and attendance*
- *Operational funding for the Library is strong*
- *Very motivated and engaged Board of Trustees*

## Weaknesses

- *Facility is too small and does not support current usage and community needs*
- *The age and condition of the facility create issues that restrict the ability to make upgrades, impacting staff efficiency and user satisfaction*
- *Lack of program and meeting space*
- *Lack of small study rooms*
- *Lack of appropriate and intentional spaces for the needs of different age groups' usage and engagement*
- *Building is not ADA accessible*
- *Lack of programming during the winter months*
- *Lack of strong identification of the building as a library*
- *Marketing and branding needs attention*
- *Seasonality puts asymmetric strains on resources*

## Opportunities

- *Highly educated community that embraces diversity and the mission of libraries*
- *Increased partnerships with other community organizations*
- *Leveraging partners as conduits for mutual outreach and marketing*
- *Lack of community activities for all ages particularly during the winter months*
- *Education focus and importance in the community*
- *High interest and demand in services for families and youth in the community at least during the summer months*
- *Leveraging strong support and engagement into needed support for new or renovated library facilities*
- *Strong pool of active, interested, and able Seniors*
- *An appetite and need for the Library to be a key community connector*

## Threats

- *Aging population*
- *Highly reliant on secondary residences for income*
- *Public transportation is non-existent*
- *Community size is small and has declined some*
- *Long term risk of growth in temporary renters (shifts to Airbnb types) could weaken overall community support (has happened in other similar communities)*