2018-2022
Strategic Plan

Approved by
Menomonee Falls
Public Library Board
October 17, 2017

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MENOMONEE FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY
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Menomonee Falls Public Library is important to its community, according to nearly 86% of people completing a community survey as part of this strategic planning process. The Library takes this belief to heart and in turn, puts the community at the heart of this plan. Understanding the needs of the community is paramount to the mission, values and goals of this strategic plan, from dedicated users that have been longtime residents of Menomonee Falls to newcomers and those who do not yet frequent the library.

The Menomonee Falls Public Library Board formed a strategic planning committee, comprised of members of the community, as well as Library staff, Friends of the Library and the Library Board. The Planning Committee, with the assistance of consultants, began their work in March of 2017. This work began by developing a community map, or visual representation of the community, to consider both current and potential partners of the Library and to envision where the Library intersects with the people, businesses and organizations in the Village of Menomonee Falls. The committee then used the following sources of information to help determine the five-year goals for the library:

- Annual report data submitted to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) for the years 2009-2016
- Results of a survey of convenience conducted between May 13, 2017 and June 17, 2017 (627 total responses received)
- Two Community Conversations, held May 24, 2017 with six attendees and May 30, 2017 also with six attendees (One written questionnaire was received as well.)
- Issues and Needs Questionnaire completed by members of the Planning Committee
- Value of Current Resources and Services completed by Menomonee Falls Public Library staff
- Demographics from the American Community Survey and the 2000 and 2010 Census

The Planning Committee met on July 16, 2017 to review and refresh the Library’s mission statement as well as to develop value statements. This work and the data was used as the foundation of a meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee on July 31, 2017 to develop the strategic directive, goals and activities outlined in the plan.
This plan would not have been completed without the participation of the community of Menomonee Falls. The Library and Board sincerely thank those who offered their ideas and time by completing surveys and attending a community conversation. Their feedback was invaluable to the process and the Library hopes this sharing of information and understanding will continue well past the adoption of this plan.

The staff of the Menomonee Falls Public Library was also actively involved in the creation of the strategic plan as well as the revisions to the Mission and Values of the Library. Their expertise and dedication are invaluable contributions to the Library and the community.

Thanks are also extended to the Strategic Planning Committee for their time, ideas and commitment to the Menomonee Falls Public Library and the development of this plan.

Strategic Planning Committee
Karol Kennedy, Library Director
Ellen Rohr, Business Manager
Leah Gentry, Librarian
Kathleen Lysaght, Board Member
Anna Listwan, Friends of the Library
Elizabeth Stanley, Community Member

The Planning Committee would also like to thank the Library Board for their support for the strategic planning process.

Library Board of Trustees
Kathleen Lysaght, Current President
Janet Dake, Secretary/Treasurer
Corey Golla, School District Representative
Peggy Haas
Carole Knobil
Trustee Paul Tadda, Village Board Representative
Stephen Roberts, former Board Member and President

Lastly, the Library would like to thank Melissa McLimans and Bruce Smith from WiLS (Wisconsin Library Services) for providing planning process management and facilitation services to develop this strategic plan.
The Village of Menomonee Falls is a special place. Green space, a healthy economy, a revitalized downtown with increasing services and amenities, and most importantly, a community that cares deeply about their Village. Parades, festivals and sporting events bring the community together and residents are willing and able to support special events and each other in time of need. It was clearly articulated at community conversations, in the community survey, and throughout the planning process that the people of Menomonee Falls value the Library and think of it as personally important and central to the entire Village. In fact, the Village website (www.menomonee-falls.org/1058/Why-Menomonee-falls) highlights the Library as one of many reasons to live in or locate a business in Menomonee Falls.

The Village and its residents consider the Library’s collection, both print and electronic, important and central to the Library’s success. Survey respondents considered access to a well-rounded collection the most important service the Library provides. The Menomonee Falls Public Library is committed to purchasing, making accessible and promoting the best resources possible for the residents of Menomonee Falls. Additionally, the Menomonee Falls Public Library will ensure strong collection sharing through strong interlibrary relationships.

The Library convened two community conversations to hear from people who live and/or work in the Village about the strengths and needs of Menomonee Falls to ensure that the Library’s strategic plan will align with those very needs. Themes from those conversations included:

- The resources the Library has to offer are deeply appreciated and valued, not only as personal resources, but also as resources to be shared throughout this and neighboring communities.
- The Village of Menomonee Falls is seeing rapid growth, and based on the new construction, it is across demographics. There are new building locations for single-family homes, senior living and apartments that cater to young professionals.
- There is a desire for open, welcoming spaces where members of the community can come together. In particular, outdoor gathering spaces are of interest.
- There may be opportunities for the Library to partner with the public schools to
enhance offerings for youth, create efficiencies and reduce duplication of services.

- Residents are generous in their donations of time and money.
- There is not an established online or physical space where events and information about community happenings are shared or collected.

Many of these themes were also found in the survey data. In addition, the survey showed that the community would use the Library more if programming better met the needs and interests of those responding and their families. Although most survey respondents felt that the Menomonee Falls Public Library fully met their needs, the top method to increase Library use for frequent and infrequent (use the library less than six times a year) users is to improve programming. This is particularly true for teen programming. The Library reported hosting just 12 teen programs in 2016, with minimal participation. Increased teen programming and exploring teen space alternatives are just two ways the Library plans on appealing to this very important segment of their community.

One of the overarching themes, brought up in community conversations, and also by staff and the Planning Committee, was the anticipated growth in the Village. Indeed, statistics from the Village Development Report (www.menomonee-falls.org/DocumentCenter/View/8395) show:

- In 2016, the Village issued the greatest number of building permits ever recorded.
- In 2016, building permits were issued for 102 single family homes, totaling $35 million in construction value, a 19% increase in single family home starts from 2015 to 2016.
- The Village had the sixth highest gain in net new construction value in Wisconsin in 2016.
- A population gain of 5,253 is projected over the next 20 years.

Additionally, demographics from the U.S. Census and the American Community Survey clearly show that the population of Menomonee Falls is aging and at a rate higher than the state and the county. The median age of residents in the year 2000 was 39, in 2015, it was 44.5. Those that are 55+ made up nearly 26% of the population in 2000, and in 2015 accounted for 34% of the population. This is a significant increase and the Library is dedicated to understanding how it can serve this population to its best ability.

Overall, the economic health of the Village is strong. The median income has risen
between 2000 and 2015. Poverty and children in poverty rates are lower than state and county averages. However, poverty and especially children in poverty rates have increased during this time period. This indicates that although much of the Village enjoys economic stability, there are community members that do not. These community members may have needs that are unique. The Library understands and values their role as a provider of services for all community members, regardless of their background and needs. Indeed, it is the role of the Library to understand and respond to the needs of those that may not always show in survey data or focus groups.

In order to be prepared for anticipated changes in Menomonee Falls, from an increase in older adults to an influx of young professionals living in newly constructed apartments, the Menomonee Falls Public Library must be aware of and in front of changing demographic trends. The Library’s collection, services and programs should reflect the needs of the community. To grow use of the collection and services and participation in events, the Library will work to build connections in all areas of the community.
Mission and Values

As part of the strategic planning process, the Menomonee Falls Public Library considered and revised their mission and values. This work started in a two-hour meeting of the Planning Committee and continued with the Library staff, fine-tuning the ideas to be the guiding principles for this plan and the Library’s work.

Mission

To enrich our community by providing a welcoming and dynamic environment where all can explore, learn, grow and connect.

We Value

*Excellence in customer service:* We are patron-focused – dedicated to friendly, reliable, convenient and caring service.

*Access for all:* We provide resources, programs and services that are inclusive and contribute to the success of all community members.

*Innovation, learning and the open sharing of ideas:* We strive to spark curiosity and creativity, inspire learning, and connect people to resources, ideas and each other.

*Making the world a better place:* We aspire to have a positive impact on the lives of individuals and our community and, by doing so, improve our world.

*Awareness and responsiveness to community needs:* We are here to serve our community and our success is tightly woven with its success. Our actions will honor the public trust.

*Our staff, as employees and people:* We are committed to the professional and personal growth of our staff and volunteers.
Menomonee Falls Public Library seeks to understand the needs of Menomonee Falls residents, and anticipate and respond to changes in the community.

The growth of Menomonee Falls, the changing demographics, the Village’s wide footprint, and the desire to understand the needs of the community were important themes in the strategic planning process. The Library will ensure that each strategic initiative’s goals and activities will, at least in part, address this strategic directive. This will take the form of research, community engagement and data monitoring.

**Strategic Initiative 1: Programming, Resources & Services**

Menomonee Falls Public Library will provide innovative activities, services and programs tailored to the needs and interests of the community. The Library will provide access to a wide range of reliable and trusted resources.

**Service Goal: Improve and expand services, programs, resources and spaces available for pre-teens (10-12) and teens.**

- Develop a teen advisory board to understand and respond to the needs of teens
- Ensure the collection reflects needs and interests
- Develop programs to address educational and recreational needs
- Develop inviting spaces for pre-teen and teens to gather, engage and interact
- Enhance youth volunteer opportunities
- Seek and strengthen partnerships with agencies and organizations serving pre-teens and teens

**Service Goal: Improve and expand services, programs and resources for older adults.**

- Engage in outreach and assessment to understand the needs and interests of the older adult population, from active retirees to those with limited mobility
- Ensure the collection reflects needs and interests
- Develop programs tailored to the growing older adult population
- Implement Library Memory Project programs with partner libraries
- Explore the use of the Library’s integrated library system (ILS) outreach module to enhance and create efficiencies in home delivery service
• Seek and strengthen partnerships with other agencies, organizations and businesses that support the older adult population

• Develop opportunities for home delivery patrons to participate in library reading programs

**Service Goal: Continue to plan for and incorporate new technologies into library services, programs and spaces.**

• Evaluate technology needs and uses from digital content to computers

• Develop a technology plan

• Increase one-on-one technology assistance

• Install and support early literacy and school-age educational computer stations

• Update audiovisual equipment in both public meeting rooms

• Implement WiFi hotspot circulation

**Service Goal: Identify and implement measurement tools for programming to ensure the needs of the community are met and exceeded.**

• Explore the Public Library Association’s Project Outcome, a platform for public libraries to measure the impact of their programs and services.

• Create a culture of assessment

• Provide and promote opportunities for evaluation by patrons

**Service Goal: Provide innovative programs, in content and availability.**

• Seek partnerships to enhance program offerings

• Explore the creation of online connections to programming

• Expand offsite programming
Strategic Initiative 2: Facilities and Spaces

Menomonee Falls Public Library will create welcoming, accessible and dynamic physical and online spaces to meet the needs of the community.

Service Goal: Evaluate current access and convenience to the library building.
- Participate in accessibility scan project offered by Bridges Library System, to assess Library compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements
- Get professional space consultation to determine how to modify Library physical space to best meet the varied needs of the community
- Explore expanded Library hours
- Investigate parking convenience options for patrons
- Explore addition of hearing loop technology in youth meeting space and service desks

Service Goal: Reimagine and redesign the use of library spaces.
- Develop a dedicated teen space
- Update and modernize children’s library space
- Explore additional outdoor community gathering/seating spaces
- Explore innovative, flexible and collaborative spaces with specific attention to:
  - Better use of the underutilized computer lab
  - Creation of a maker/creative space
  - Enhancing or increasing the number of available study rooms

Service Goal: Improve existing spaces to make them more accessible and useful.
- Improve amenities where needed or desired
- Make building modifications based on accessibility scan
- Improve sound-proofing in vending area and computer lab
- Make the History Room more discoverable through increased access, both online and in-person
- Explore the possibilities of including community events and information on the Library website
Menomonee Falls Public Library will create awareness of the role the Library plays in the community and the value it offers through marketing, outreach and community engagement. This includes the creation and dissemination of effective, wide-reaching, ongoing communication through multiple channels.

**Service Goal: Deploy a strategic approach to marketing that further improves community awareness and perception of services to users and non-users**

- Assess current marketing strategies
- Assign a staff member to coordinate all Library public relations and marketing
- Investigate new and unique outreach activities and channels
- Create a marketing plan
- Develop relationships with local media
- Create compelling messages, using data and personal stories that can be communicated broadly
- Participate in and utilize Bridges Library System marketing initiatives

**Service Goal: Create strong partnerships throughout the community to learn about local trends and needs and to cultivate library advocates.**

- Build off the community mapping processes completed during the strategic planning process to create a community engagement plan, which includes partnerships with area organizations, businesses and schools
- Explore membership in community organizations
- Connect with partners to explore resource sharing and collaboration for services and programs
- Work in partnership with the Menomonee Falls Library Friends group to grow Friends membership and participation

**Service Goal: Become more outward facing**

- Be more present at community events
- Explore ways to expand library services outside of the library building
Implementation

The director and Library staff, in consultation with the Library Board, will prioritize and identify service goals and activities from the plan annually. These service goals and activities will be determined based on available resources and capacities.

The director and Library staff will develop an action plan to prioritize activities. Action plans may include staff responsibilities and timelines, needed resources, data and information gathering for measuring progress and impact, as well as a plan to communicate assessments and progress to stakeholders.

Assessment and Communication

The director will update the Library Board on the progress of implementing the strategic plan on a quarterly basis. The Library will continue to monitor the needs and priorities of its community and adjust services to meet changing needs.