



2026 – 2029 STRATEGIC PLAN

At Willard Library, our Strategic Plan is a living guide that shapes the work we do every day. From maintaining welcoming, uplifting library spaces to ensuring our programs and services meet the needs of the community, the plan helps focus our efforts on what matters most. It also guides how we grow and care for our collections, keeping them fresh, deep, and reflective of the many interests of our community.

We stay actively engaged with the plan by tracking and measuring how our programs, services, and resources support our goals. Each year, librarians and managers set specific, measurable objectives that turn our priorities into meaningful outcomes, and we regularly review our progress throughout the year.

In this most recent update to the Strategic Plan, every Willard employee contributed ideas and feedback, helping shape a plan that reflects the insight, experience, and commitment of the entire team. Together, we are using this plan to guide our work and keep the needs of our community at the center of everything we do.

— Matt Willis, Willard Library Director

Strategic Plan Update Contributors

This strategic plan was developed with input and collaboration from all Willard Library staff.

Willard Library Board of Trustees

Kathleen Baker, Battle Creek Public Schools

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OUR PURPOSE

Willard Library sparks discovery, growth, and connection.

Discover. Grow. Connect.

OUR VISION

A proud, inspired Battle Creek.

OUR VALUES

Integrity, Stewardship, and Trust

We are responsible, transparent, and trustworthy caretakers of public resources.

Welcoming, Inclusive, and Compassionate Spaces

Everyone belongs at Willard, and everyone is treated with dignity and care.

Service Excellence and Responsiveness

Helpful, timely, consistent, high-quality service is at the heart of what we do.

Community Connection and Collaboration

The library serves as a hub that brings people together and works in partnership with the community.

Innovation, Creativity, and Adaptability

The library evolves by embracing creativity, change, and new ways of serving the community.

Lifelong Learning and Personal Growth

Willard supports curiosity, learning, and growth at every stage of life.

OUR STRATEGIES

ATTRACT AND ENGAGE USERS

Goal 1: Provide a safe, welcoming, and service-focused place for everyone.

Goal 2: Serve as a community hub for conversation, collaboration, and media engagement.

Goal 3: Inspire creativity by providing opportunities to explore, make, and share.

Goal 4: Expand awareness through a dynamic communication strategy.

NURTURE A CULTURE OF LITERACY

Goal 1: Curate collections that reflect the community and encourage discovery.

Goal 2: Empower people of all ages with lifelong literacy skills.

Goal 3: Champion reading for pleasure and personal growth.

Goal 4: Foster curiosity and a love of learning.

BUILD COMMUNITY

Goal 1: Enhance well-being through enriching experiences.

Goal 2: Tell Battle Creek's story and honor its diverse heritage.

Goal 3: Connect people to trusted and valuable resources.

Goal 4: Cultivate broad and meaningful community participation.

STRENGTHEN STAFF EXCELLENCE

Goal 1: Grow leadership capacity through professional development.

Goal 2: Ensure inclusive and equitable recruitment and hiring practices.

Goal 3: Value strengths and celebrate accomplishments.

Goal 4: Promote open communication and constructive dialogue.