



2026-2030

Strategic
Plan

James E. Wickson Memorial Library

Die Bibliothek

"He who loves reading has
everything within his reach"
- adapted from William Godwin

"Libraries are not made; they grow."

- Augustine Birrell

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For generations, the Frankenmuth James E. Wickson District Library has been a trusted and cherished presence in the community — a place where curiosity is nurtured, stories are shared, and lifelong learning begins. As planning for the library’s future is underway, the goal was to develop a strategic plan that reflects both its current state and long-term aspirations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DKR Marketing, LLC (DKR), was contracted by Frankenmuth James E. Wickson District Library to execute the strategic plan from 2026 - 2030, which formally began in August 2025 and concluded with this report in January 2026. Michelle Duclos and the Library Board served as the sponsor for the project and worked closely with DKR Marketing, LLC. This document serves as the key deliverable for the project work, summarizing the activities facilitated and Strategic plan provided by DKR Marketing, LLC for the Frankenmuth James E. Wickson District Library.

We extend our sincere thanks to the many individuals who contributed to the development of this strategic plan, including the community members who participated in the survey, focus group attendees, the Library Board and staff, and representatives from the City of Frankenmuth and the Friends of the Library. Their thoughtful input and collaboration were invaluable in shaping a shared vision to guide the Library’s future.

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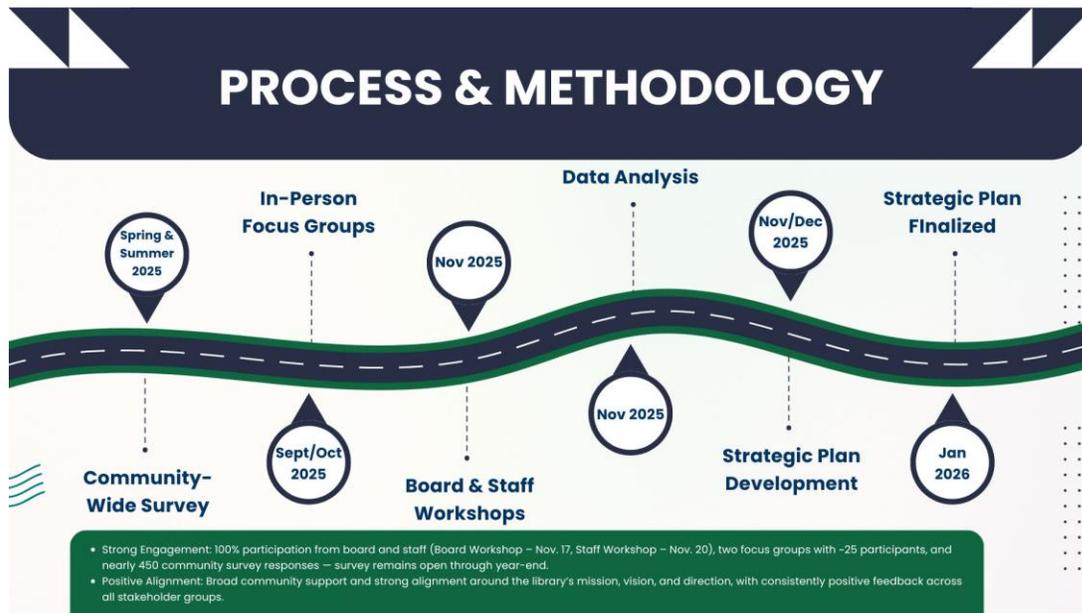
METHODOLOGY

DKR Marketing joined the strategic planning process in late summer 2025, working closely with Library Director Michelle Duclos and Adult Services & Outreach Librarian Jennifer Harden. The library’s community survey was originally released in late spring 2025 and extended through December. In August, DKR initiated an additional outreach push to increase participation.

As of early December 2025, the survey had collected 450 responses—representing approximately 10% of Frankenmuth’s population—and included a diverse mix of both library users and non-users.

In addition to the survey, DKR Marketing facilitated two community focus groups, one in September and one in October, with a combined total of nearly 25 participants. Attendees represented a broad range of ages—from teens to retirees—and included voices across genders.

DKR also conducted separate workshops with the Library Board and with staff to gather deeper insights into priorities, challenges, and opportunities, both of which had 100% participation.



All collected data and artifacts were then organized, synthesized, and analyzed to inform the findings and recommended actions presented to Library Director Michelle Duclos for the development of the strategic plan.

CURRENT STATE OVERVIEW

As a beloved cornerstone of the community, the overwhelmingly positive feedback about the library is no surprise. Serving Frankenmuth and the surrounding areas, the library has over 5,000 cardholders and hosts a wide range of programming, attracting nearly 12,000 attendees annually. In the past year, the library offered more than 90 children’s programs, 88 tween/teen programs, and 160 adult programs, including storytimes, craft activities, and book discussions. Summer Reading participation increased by 30%.



Each day, the library is bustling with groups and individuals utilizing resources such as meeting and study rooms, as well as its extensive collection. Home delivery services grew to 135 deliveries, a 48% increase over the previous year. Library visits totaled 156,000, with 510 registered study room sessions and 400 community room reservations. Circulation included 71,004 check-outs of

physical materials and 15,952 digital items from a collection of 34,045 physical and 68,266 digital materials.

Key accomplishments include becoming a fine-free library, which removes barriers to access, expanding the Library of Things collection to provide essential community resources, and enhancing digital services.

The library is primarily funded through millage funds, which cover basic operations. Community donations and grants allow this small library to offer larger programs and services. However, financial realities remain challenging. Rising costs for materials and staffing, coupled with limited funding opportunities, require careful evaluation and planning for the library's future (**Source:** Wickson District Library, 2025 Annual Report).

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Frankenmuth James E. Wickson District Library is to provide quality services including books and other materials, program, facilities and access to all forms of available media to help meet the educational, informational, cultural, and leisure time needs of the Frankenmuth service area (**Source:** [Wickson Memorial Library – “About Us” page](#)).

HISTORY

Prior to 1971, the Saginaw Public Library delivered library service to the Frankenmuth area via its bookmobile. In the spring of 1971, the Frankenmuth Women's Club spearheaded a campaign to form a library in the community. They were instrumental in garnering the support of the City Council and the residents of Frankenmuth. The library was operated as a department of the city of Frankenmuth.

James E. Wickson and his wife, the former Meta E. Link, contributed most of the funds for the building construction through the Wickson-Link Foundation.

Wickson Memorial Library opened in 1974. The original building was 5,000 square feet and the collection contained 6,500 items.

The Meta E. Wickson Children's Wing and the Arno and Caroline Mossner study were built in 1986.

The second floor and the community room were added in 1998. The entire cost of the construction was raised through donations from foundations and individuals. With this addition, the library encompassed 14,400 square feet and held more than 45,000 items.

In 2008, the Frankenmuth City Council and the Frankenmuth School District collaborated to form the Frankenmuth James E. Wickson District Library. The formation of the district allowed for equitable and secure library funding spread across the Frankenmuth School District boundaries (**Source:** [Wickson Memorial Library – “About Us” page](#)).

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Sustaining the Library's Core Assets

Through surveys, focus groups, workshops, and financial review, one message came through clearly: **the community deeply values the Frankenmuth Wickson District Library as it exists today.** The physical collection, the staff, and the library's space together form the foundation of the library's success—and preserving these strengths must remain the central priority of the strategic plan.

At the same time, sustaining and thoughtfully growing these core assets will require the Library Board and Library Director to address the library's long-term financial reality. To remain strategic, successful, and responsible stewards for both current and future generations, the library must address its operational financial reality. While the library maintains a healthy reserve fund for capital improvements, the operating budget continues to run at an average annual net loss of approximately \$52,000¹. The following goals and initiatives reflect how community feedback, operational data, and financial considerations intersect across these five core areas. Their successful implementation is dependent on maintaining a balanced operating budget; without additional revenue or adjustments, difficult prioritization decisions may be required.

CORE STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

Initiative One: Collection

The physical collection is the library's most valued asset and will remain the top strategic priority. Following the second-floor expansion in 1998, the library's physical collection exceeded 45,000 items; it currently totals approximately 34,045 items. While overall collection size provides helpful context, the library's primary focus will be on maintaining a high-quality, relevant, and well-curated collection that reflects community needs and supports lifelong learning.

The library will pursue intentional, incremental growth of the physical collection over time, guided by regular evaluation. Through department-level collection audits, the library will ensure complete series, current and accurate nonfiction, and a strong foundation of core classics. Collection development decisions will be led by librarian expertise and community demand, not publisher trends alone. As resources allow, modest annual increases to the collection will support steady improvement in depth, balance, and relevance, reinforcing quality as the defining measure of success.

Initiative Two: Personal & Volunteer Development

Staff emerged as the library's second-greatest asset across surveys and focus groups, with community members consistently highlighting the knowledge, warmth, and dedication of the team as central to their positive library experience.

To sustain and strengthen this asset, the library will prioritize intentional investment in staff support, professional development, and retention over the next five years. This includes providing

¹ This amount is based on an average calculated using budget actuals and forecasted figures from fiscal years 2022 through 2031.

ongoing training opportunities, dedicating time and resources for skill development, and equipping staff with the tools and operational support needed to perform their work effectively. Maintaining a stable, well-supported staff is essential to service quality, thoughtful collection curation, and the effective use of library spaces, ensuring the library continues to meet evolving community needs.

Initiative Three: Programming & Services

Community feedback and usage data indicate strong appreciation for the library's wide variety of programs serving all age groups. Maintaining this momentum while supporting staff capacity and strengthening community collaboration will remain essential.

Rather than expanding programming indiscriminately, the library will take a strategic, intentional approach to program and service development by:

- Sustaining current, well-attended programming across all age groups
- Continuing to build and strengthen local partnerships to expand reach, share space, and increase community awareness
- Centering book-based programming as a core library strength
- Serving as a program leader and mentor by contributing ideas, structure, and encouragement to community-wide programming efforts
- Encouraging staff creativity and innovation while providing clear guidance, support, and alignment with library priorities

This approach positions the library as a trusted programming hub while responsibly balancing operational capacity, staff workload, and long-term sustainability.

Initiative Four: Facilities Management

While approximately 70% of survey respondents rated the current space as 5 out of 5, feedback also identified limitations related to collection capacity, seating, staff work areas, teen space, and meeting rooms.

Rather than assuming responsibility for all community meeting needs, the library will take a strategic, intentional approach to space planning by:

- Defining and reaffirming the library's core spatial priorities
- Actively exploring partnerships with other community organizations to address broader meeting-space demand
- Planning future space enhancements in alignment with operational capacity and long-term funding realities

Any space expansion beyond the operating budget will follow the library's established practice of leveraging donor support, foundation funding, and capital campaigns, consistent with the successful second-floor expansion and prior facility investments.

Initiative Five: Strategic Financial Planning

To sustain the library's core assets without compromising access:

- Core services should remain free and accessible, consistent with the library's mission and the successful elimination of fines
- Limited, mission-aligned fees (such as after-hours meeting room use or adjusted non-resident card fees) may be considered
- Any major expansions or enhancements should be pursued through community donations, foundations, and capital campaigns rather than the operating budget
- In the interest of fiscal responsibility and stewardship, the library will operate within a balanced budget, actively pursuing a range of strategies and resources to achieve financial sustainability.

YEAR ONE STRATEGIC PLAN GOALS

Initiative One: Collection

Goal 1.1. - Maintain the current collection status while identifying donors for special collections and increasing the collection by 3%.

The library will prioritize strengthening and expanding the physical collection while ensuring quality, relevance, and staff expertise.

- Increase the physical collection by 3% annually, with a focus on maintaining a high-quality, well-curated collection.
- Complete a full collection audit with department-level purchasing and weeding led by professional staff
- Invest in professional development through book webinars and training
- Encourage staff-written reviews and at least one book-related program or professional presentation

Goal 1.2. - Strengthen the library's role as a trusted community resource by providing diverse, credible information and promoting transparency in how sources are evaluated.

The library will strengthen its role as a trusted source of information by providing diverse, credible resources and promoting transparency in how information is evaluated.

- Expand newspaper and news source offerings to reflect a broad range of perspectives.
- Seek ongoing training to strengthen staff skills in reference services and information evaluation.
- Designate staff to research, review, and communicate the credibility and transparency of news sources to the community.

Initiative Two: Personal & Volunteer Development

Goal 2.1. - Cultivate a sustainable, skilled, and engaged library staff by providing clear roles and coverage, fostering morale, and supporting professional growth.

The library will support a sustainable, knowledgeable, and engaged staff through clarity, coverage, and morale-building initiatives.

- Create a substitute pool to provide coverage for vacations and sick time
- Develop a clear organizational chart
- Implement staff morale activities such as reading challenges
- Host an annual staff celebration for team building
- Explore alternative configurations for the staff work area
- Establish policies guiding ethical AI use for collections, staff, and public access.
- Train staff on AI literacy and responsible use within library operations.

Goal 2.2. - Provide effective leadership, oversight, and accountability to support the library's long-term success and responsible stewardship of community resources.

The library board will provide leadership, oversight, and accountability to ensure the library's long-term success and responsible stewardship of community resources.

- Provide strategic oversight and guidance to the Library Director, ensuring alignment with the library's mission, policies, and strategic goals.
- Develop a new mission and vision statement
- Fulfill fiduciary responsibilities by maintaining fiscal responsibility, transparency, and accountability to the community.
- Actively participate in governance through meeting attendance, preparation, and informed discussion.
- Support the Library Director and staff by ensuring appropriate resources are in place and advancing capital improvement priorities.

Initiative Three: Programming & Services

Goal 3.1. - Provide effective leadership, oversight, and accountability to support the library's long-term success and responsible stewardship of community resources.

The library will maintain strong programming while aligning offerings with capacity and expanding reach through partnerships.

- Maintain the current programming schedule
- Align programs with staff capacity and community demand
- Encourage staff participation in community committees
- Expand programming through strategic partnerships and shared resources
- Support community understanding through AI-focused education and programming.

Goal 3.2. - Address strategic communications solutions to market the programs, services, and collection to the community

The library will pursue both traditional marketing strategies and innovative solutions to bridge the gap between what the community knows about the library and the full range of its programs, services, and collections, including highlighting lesser-known offerings.

- The library will continue to communicate through established channels such as the *Frankenmuth News*, *Frankenmuth Living*, email newsletters, social media, the library website, flyers, and posters.
- It will also maintain active communication with local organizations and entities in and around the Frankenmuth area, including schools, churches, and civic groups, to ensure broad awareness of library offerings.
- In addition to these methods, the library will develop strategic partnerships to expand reach through word-of-mouth promotion.
 - Examples include meeting regularly with schools, engaging staff in local committees, and mentoring other organizations in Frankenmuth, reinforcing the library's role as a connected and trusted community resource.

Initiative Four: Facilities Management

Goal 4.1. - Optimize and plan library spaces to support current operations while preparing for future growth, flexibility, and community needs.

The library will thoughtfully evaluate and reimagine its space to support collection growth, patron needs, staff efficiency, and safety.

- Reimagine the library layout to accommodate collection growth and additional seating
- Evaluate basement use, including relocation of the Friends Book Sale
- Explore opportunities for teen or study spaces
- Assess potential for expanded or after-hours meeting room access
- Conduct a safety and security assessment
- Update Capital Improvement Plan

Initiative Five: Financial Sustainability & Strategic Expansion

Goal 5.1. - Ensure financial sustainability by responsibly balancing the operating budget while pursuing strategic partnerships and donor support to enable future growth and expansion.

The library will focus on balancing the operational budget while exploring future expansion through partnerships and donor support.

- Balance the operating budget through responsible financial planning including the decision on what alternative funding options there are to maintain services
- Review operating expenses to identify efficiencies
- Initiate conversations with partners and donors about capital expansion opportunities
- Explore funding support for special collections or dedicated spaces

THREE TO FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC OUTLOOK

Over the next three to five years, the library will build upon its strong foundation by strengthening partnerships, formalizing internal systems, and preparing for long-term growth.

Key areas of focus include:

- **Partnerships & Community Engagement:** The library will strengthen relationships with local organizations, schools, and civic groups through regular collaboration, shared initiatives, and coordinated programming to expand community-based offerings.
- **Operations & Internal Systems:** The library will document and implement internal processes and workflows to ensure operational consistency, support staff training, and maintain long-term sustainability.
- **Staff Development:** The library will provide ongoing staff training and professional development opportunities to support evolving services and meet community needs.
- **Space & Collections:** The library will optimize existing space, strategically grow the physical collection, and plan for future space needs in alignment with operational capacity and financial resources.
- **Programming & Services:** The library will continue to evolve its programming and services to meet the needs of the growing community while collaborating with other organizations to enhance offerings and reach a broader audience.
- **Safety & Security:** The library will enhance security measures to meet modern standards and ensure a safe environment for both patrons and staff.
- **Communications:** The library will prioritize innovative, community-embedded communication strategies—such as partner toolkits, collaboration with first responders, and cross-promotion—to ensure library resources reach residents where they already are.
- **Long-Term Planning:** The library will assess readiness for larger capital improvements or expansion initiatives, ensuring all projects align with community priorities and financial capacity.

TEN TO TWENTY YEAR STRATEGIC VISION

Looking ahead 10 to 20 years, the library will proactively plan how its physical space can evolve to meet the needs of a growing and changing community. The library will assess and pursue opportunities for remodeling or expansion—such as the addition of another floor—within a long-term vision that reflects community priorities, usage trends, and operational capacity.

Any significant expansion will leverage the library’s history of donor support, be guided by robust community engagement, and be funded through dedicated capital campaigns rather than the operating budget. These actions will ensure sustainable growth, maximize community investment, and maintain the library’s role as a valued and accessible resource for future generations.

APPENDIX

To gather community input for the strategic planning process, the Frankenmuth Wickson District Library launched a Community Survey in late spring 2025. The survey was shared in person at the library through flyers, postcards, and program handouts, and promoted across local media channels including the *Frankenmuth News*, *Frankenmuth Living*, the library’s website, and social media. It was also distributed to civic organizations, local businesses, government offices, and service groups.

The survey received 450 responses—about 10% of Frankenmuth’s population—and included a diverse mix of users and non-users. Feedback highlighted the library’s welcoming environment, exceptional staff, and strong, wide-ranging collection.

In addition to the survey, DKR Marketing facilitated two on-site focus groups, one in September and one in October, scheduled in both morning and evening sessions to accommodate participants. Attendees represented a wide cross-section of the community, including teens, adults, retirees, city representatives, Friends of the Library, local businesses, local organizations, the Teen Advisory Board, and residents.

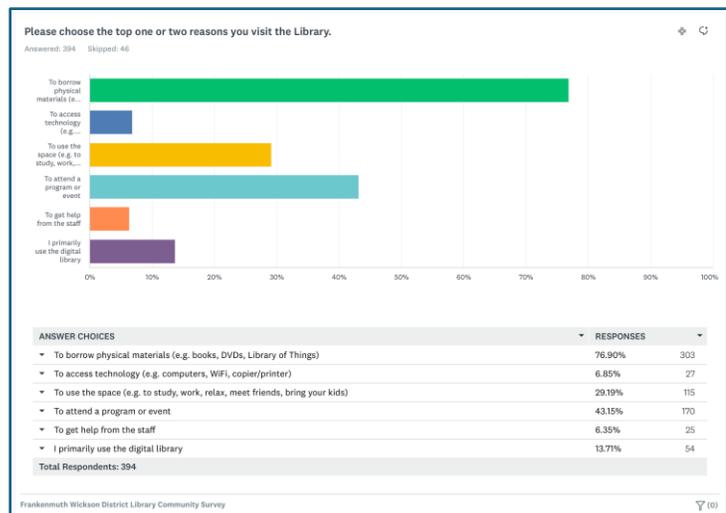


Across both focus groups, participants expressed deep appreciation for the library’s friendly atmosphere, high-quality materials, and meaningful programs, while also identifying opportunities to increase visibility, expand space, and strengthen partnerships to sustain and grow the library’s impact.

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

The community survey was overwhelmingly positive and affirmed strong support for the library’s work from both staff and the board. Respondents expressed deep appreciation for the library’s collection and programs, with the physical collection emerging as the library’s greatest asset. Many patrons emphasized how essential resources like Libby and MeLCat are to their library experience.

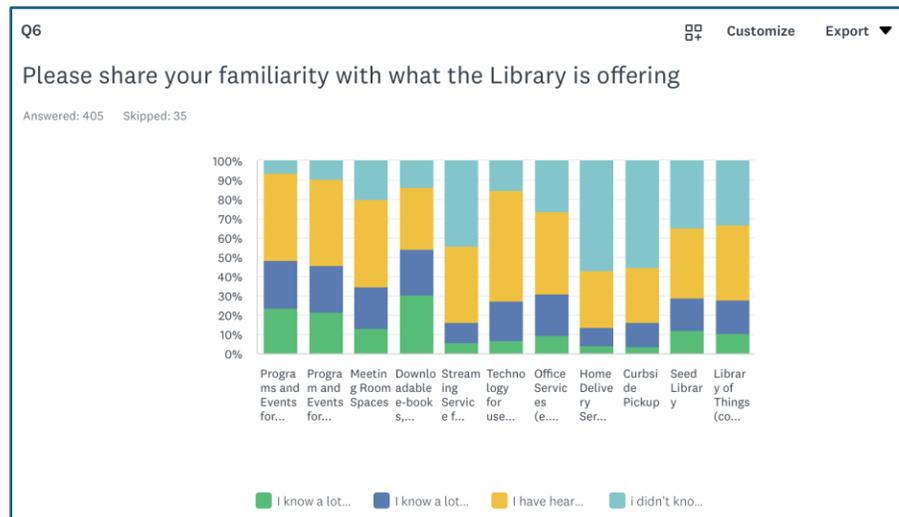
Other major themes included the library’s welcoming, family-friendly atmosphere, its helpful and exceptional staff, and the quality of its programming—especially storytimes, educational activities, and seasonal events for children. Survey comments consistently described the library as inviting, peaceful, and comfortable. Some notable comments include the following:



- “This library is an incredible community asset and service. While I can’t use everything (likely none of us do) -- it’s critical that all these things exist to respond to what the whole community wants.”

- “I always feel a sense of "ahhhh!" when I walk in (relief; calming). I LOVE the library. You've done a great job. I am old-school, so was sad when the physical inventory was reduced dramatically, but I understand that we are in a digital era.”
- “The library offers a wide variety of spaces and materials to accommodate a broad spectrum of patrons. Unfortunately, due to limitations (space and money), the library can't provide all things for all people. I believe our library staff and Director do an outstanding job of providing quality materials and programming for our community.”
- “I LOVE coming to study at the library!”
- “I mainly use the library for borrowing books so I wouldn't have much use for all this extra stuff but I understand others would benefit from it. I just hope if it does get added that it won't take away shelf space and the books won't get booted.”
- “All of you do a phenomenal job with everything at the library!!”
- “I always feel more relaxed when I step into the library. It is a calming welcoming place for me.”
- “Very sufficient for a community our size.”
- “It is a welcoming space staffed by dedicated and passionate people.”
- “It's a wonderful space and I love that there's areas for everyone. Whether you're with a chatty group or want a quiet space there's a place to go. The staff is always super kind and helpful.”
- “The people who work there, the leadership, and the ability to check out books for free.”

Most suggestions were not criticisms but ideas for future enhancement. These included expanding space, increasing program capacity, and improving communication about available services. Some respondents were unaware of all the resources the library offers, indicating an opportunity for more outreach and visibility. Space limitations were also noted, with requests for additional seating, more study rooms, and designated teen spaces. A number of respondents also expressed interest in expanded hours, particularly evenings and weekends. Some of those comments include the following:



- “Increase the volume of books, maps, reserved books, and classical books.”
- “Need weeknight events/hrs and better hours on the weekends. Would love a weekly meditation class since we don't offer this anywhere in Frankenmuth.”
- “Longer hours or ways to get books to local school for pickup/checkout.”
- “Open later in the evening and on Sundays.”
- “Increased size.”
- “It would be incredible to have a total remodel of the whole space.”
- “Later evening hours and Saturday afternoons to 4:00.”

- “To find ways to notify the community more on where is offered and how to utilize the resource.”
- “I would love to see more space added to our library.”
- “Longer hours especially on Saturdays. Would like to see possibly open until 4pm. Especially in the Winter months. Suggest even if every other Saturday could be open longer.”
- “I think the library is great. I think it just needs a bit of a makeover to make it more inviting. It certainly meets the community’s needs but possibly changing the layout and decor could make it more inviting.”
- “I would like longer hours. Many time I can not get to the hours. I would Sat in the morning and it closes but the time I could get there and at night working until 5:30 drive home I can not get there before it closes. The meeting room I would like use. But to be done with a meeting by 7 would have to start at 5 and most people can not get there by then.”

While the majority highlighted strong satisfaction with the collection, a few respondents asked for more materials in specific genres (large print, nonfiction, children’s books, audiobooks) or content areas reflecting Frankenmuth’s history as a missionary settlement. A smaller portion expressed interest in expanding diverse materials as well.

Overall, the survey demonstrates that the library is a highly valued community resource. Patrons enjoy the services offered, care deeply about the collection, and are broadly supportive of future growth in space, services, and programming.

APPENDIX B: FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

The two focus groups held in the fall of 2025 echoed many themes from the community survey. Participants overwhelmingly praised the library’s welcoming environment, helpful and knowledgeable staff, and high-quality collections and programs.

In the first focus group, the collection emerged as the library’s strongest asset, with frequent mention of MeLCat, Libby, the historical collection, the seed library, and the “library of things.” Participants emphasized how essential these resources are to their daily lives. The friendly, attentive staff also stood out as a defining strength. Some comments include the following:



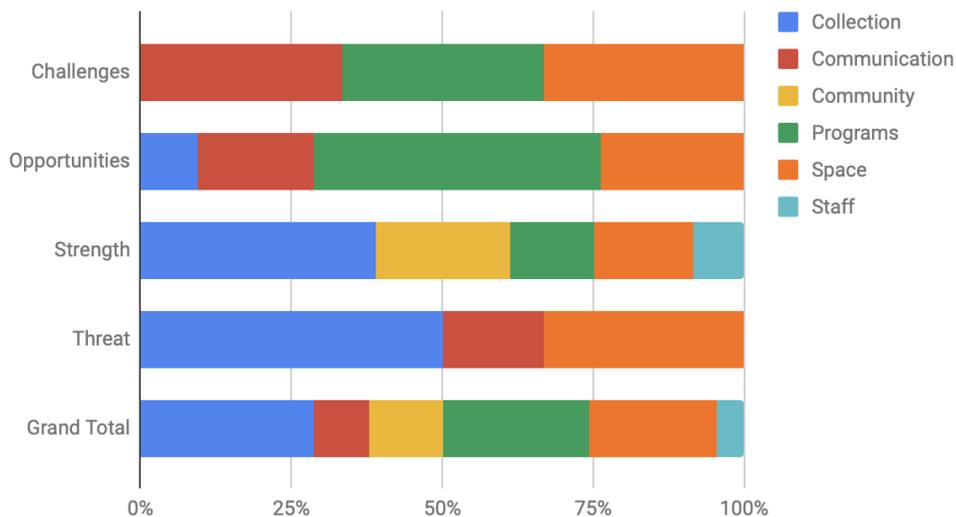
- “Librarians are #1.”
- “The library is an avenue to escape into other worlds.”
- “People get a great sense of community through the library.”
- “The hustle and bustle of Frankenmuth can be a lot and it’s nice to have a quiet place where people can gather.”
- “I value the depth of the collection the most at the library.”
- “The strength of the library is its children’s and teen programs.”
- “The strength of the library is its adult programming (crafts).”

The second focus group highlighted appreciation for additional services such as faxing, printing, home delivery, and diverse programming. Intergenerational programs—particularly those involving teens working with younger children—were seen as meaningful and valuable for building community connections. Some comments include the following:

- “I value the youth programs, the opportunity for kids to connect and learn & grow.”
- “There is a wide range of resources available including books, games, crafts, movies, lectures, seed library, and music. Opportunities for all ages.”
- “I think that the weekly summer programs are the most impactful because they keep kids engaged with literacy in a super fun way over the summer break.”
- “I value the role that the library plays in the development of knowledge and curiosity. For example, young kids can get a huge head start in literacy by way of the several resources and activities the library provides.”
- “Community space, meetings, clubs, activities, and events.”
- “Free access to information.”

Although both groups were overwhelmingly positive, several challenges surfaced. Participants acknowledged the library’s ongoing space limitations, communication gaps, and need for expanded and updated technology. Many stressed the importance of having more community space, larger programming areas, and additional rooms to help reduce program waitlists. Communication emerged as a key theme, including clearer promotion of programs, resources, and services, as well as improved awareness of policies. A strong desire was expressed for annual communication about children’s library card policies so parents clearly understand borrowing parameters and their rights regarding their child’s account. Some of these comments include the following:

Wickson Library SWOT Analysis - Focus Group 1



- “Awareness for parents. It rests on parents to be aware of what their kids are checking out and listening to on libby.”
- “Send an annual letter or newsletter reminding and informing parents of kids and teen library card access. Inform parent they can turn on their kids and teen check out history.”

- “Allow a small group of community book selectors to use a modest, budgeted amount to purchase rare or meaningful out-of-print books, ensuring a robust collection not limited to current publishing houses.”
- “Work with Parks & Rec to provide programs anywhere in town.”
- “Lack of property to add space for programs.”
- “I just hope the library has the tools to maintain the current offerings while having the freedom to adapt where they see fit.”
- “Libraries can help with the information overload.”
- “Lean into what you do best - collab. for what you need to do it.”

Participants also discussed many opportunities for strengthening partnerships and expanding outreach. Suggestions included collaborating with schools, parks, and local nonprofits; developing awareness campaigns; and placing library resource information in nontraditional locations such as food banks or community assistance sites. One idea included providing the police department with resource packets to share with underserved residents during home visits.

A major concern raised in both groups was the growing challenge of misinformation. Participants identified the library as a trusted community resource and stressed its important role in promoting accurate information, supporting media literacy, and helping the community navigate



misinformation in a healthy way.

Overall, the library was viewed as a deeply valued and essential part of the community—one that is well supported and greatly appreciated. While participants recognized the constraints of limited

funding and physical space, they emphasized the importance of maintaining the library's current high-quality services. From that strong foundation, they encouraged expanding through partnerships, increasing community meeting spaces, and continuing to grow programming and outreach in sustainable, strategic ways.

APPENDIX C: LIBRARY BOARD WORKSHOP

On November 17th, DKR Marketing met with the library board to review the progress of the community survey and focus groups, as well as to conduct a strategic plan visioning workshop. The board expressed deep appreciation for the direction, innovation, and leadership demonstrated by the current library director. They praised her ability to bring in high-quality programming and secure grants, noting that the library's strength and forward-thinking approach are a direct result of her leadership.



The staff was recognized as a valuable resource, described as welcoming, knowledgeable, and committed to growth and professional development. Board members highlighted the increase in programming, noting both its expansion and the resulting need for additional space. Programs such as Destination Storytime and Brews & Books received special mention for their impact and popularity.

Serving the community remains a central focus for the board. They acknowledged the thoughtful way the library considers community feedback, identifying key areas where the library could provide even greater value, including addressing loneliness, screen time concerns, and family or caregiver challenges. The board also noted the importance of increasing awareness of lesser-known services, such as technology assistance, the Library of Things, the seed library, and home delivery.

Expanding partnerships, particularly with schools and community education programs, was discussed as a way to support communication, space utilization, and program delivery. The board also acknowledged the challenges posed by limited meeting space, observing that the library is growing faster than the current building can accommodate. They discussed long-term solutions ranging from improved space utilization to facility expansion or even satellite locations. These conversations naturally led to discussions around funding, including potential funding sources to sustain growth and meet community expectations. Board members emphasized the importance of

being strategic to avoid overextending staff, with sustainability, accessibility, and community leadership emerging as key themes.

Overall, the board affirmed that the library is performing at a very high level and is widely valued by the community. They view the strategic planning process as an opportunity to build upon the strong foundation established by the director and her team, ensuring continued excellence in service while responsibly addressing space, funding, and growth challenges.

APPENDIX D: LIBRARY STAFF WORKSHOP

The Frankenmuth Library staff focus group, held on November 20th, provided key insights for the library's five-year strategic plan. Staff highlighted the library's greatest strengths as the personal connections they build with patrons, their responsiveness to community needs, and the welcoming, safe environment the library provides. Staff serve as trusted contacts, particularly for older adults, and fulfill approximately 95% of patron book requests.

Programming is diverse and multigenerational, from children's storytimes to adult book clubs, memory care programs, and innovative initiatives like Destination Storytime. The library's collection, including digital resources and the Library of Things, was recognized as a core strength, with a focus on serving local residents while also welcoming visitors.

Staff identified several challenges, notably space limitations and communication gaps. There is a need for quiet study areas, expanded teen and storytime spaces, more community rooms, and improved staff work areas. Internal communication could be better coordinated, and the community is not always aware of lesser-known services such as technology assistance, home delivery, and the seed library. Rapid growth—daily visitors rising from 50 to 600 in three years—has strained staff, who manage both front desk and specialized reference work. Infrastructure issues, including lighting, parking safety, and lack of staff lounge or maintenance support, were also noted.

Looking ahead, staff recommended improvements to space, programming, and organizational systems. Suggested enhancements include more meeting rooms, accessible furniture, outdoor gathering spaces with patios and gardens, and better organization of stacks and basement areas. Expanding programming, including chair yoga, literacy support, and multigenerational workshops, was encouraged, along with stronger collaboration with Parks & Rec and local schools. Organizational improvements, such as documented procedures, unified communication channels, and a Friends of the Library group, were seen as essential. Technology improvements include completing the website rebuild and enhancing digital services. Please note the following categories and notes given during the staff workshop:

Staff Support & Operations

- *Dedicated staff work areas and offices for focused tasks*
- *Staff lounge/lunch room separate from public areas*
- *Substitute pool for coverage during vacations/sick leave*
- *Cushioned flooring, new carpeting, and improved ergonomics*

- *Dedicated phone extensions and business cards for staff*
- *Organizational chart reflecting staff growth*
- *Budget for professional development, conferences, and cost-of-living increases*
- *Staff morale and team-building activities 2–4 times/year*

Facilities & Infrastructure

- *Reliable maintenance and deep cleaning*
- *Improved lighting with zones, non-fluorescent options*
- *Better IT support*
- *Enhanced safety: emergency exits, cameras, clear sightlines*
- *Reorganized basement storage and stacks for better collection display*

Space & Collection

- *Additional community meeting rooms, after-hours access*
- *Soundproof quiet areas for focused work and study*
- *Modular, accessible furniture and seating pods*
- *Expanded teen/after-school and children's programming spaces*
- *Dedicated Library of Things display*
- *Book lockers for before/after-hours pickup*
- *Continued investment in physical collections and large print*

Programming & Community Engagement

- *Varied adult, youth, and early childhood programs*
- *Author visits, summer reading, after-school, and tween/teen programs*
- *Outreach for elderly/homebound patrons, bookmobile for events*
- *Sound system for Children's Wing announcements*
- *Ensuring programs complement, not replace, core library services*

Volunteers & Fundraising

- *Evening Friends of the Library group for fundraising and special initiatives*
- *Support for celebrations, staff appreciation, and community events*

Outdoor & Sustainability

- *Enhanced outdoor spaces for programs and relaxation*
- *Green/sustainable features: bee hives, butterfly gardens, solar panels*
- *Digital outdoor signage*

Key Community Strengths

- *Multigenerational, inclusive engagement*
- *Free access to books, audiobooks, and ebooks*
- *Strong children's and family programming*
- *Accessible, welcoming space for all community members*

Overall, the staff focus group emphasized the library's role as a trusted, essential resource. Staff dedication is central to the library's impact, and while growth and community demand present challenges, there is strong alignment on the vision for thoughtful expansion, improved access, and

sustainable development. Staff input underscores the importance of balancing continued excellence in service with strategic planning around space, staffing, communication, and infrastructure to meet evolving community needs.

APPENDIX E: DATA & ANALYTICS

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Board Workshop Notes 2025](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Budget 2025.xlsx](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Capital Improvement Plan 2022.docx](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Capital Improvement Summary 2022.docx](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Community Survey Analysis 2025](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Focus Group Analysis 2025](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Reserve Study 2023.pdf](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Staff Workshop Notes 2025](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Staff Workshop Notes 2025.pdf](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Staff Workshop Recording 2025.mp3](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Strategic Insight & Key Findings Report - 2025.docx](#)

[Frankenmuth Wickson District Library - Three to Five Year Strategic Action Plan - 2025 .docx](#)

[Wickson District Library Strategic Plan Organizer](#)