

**WHITEFISH BAY  
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

**STRATEGIC  
PLAN  
2026-2030**

# From the Library Director Nyama Y. Reed

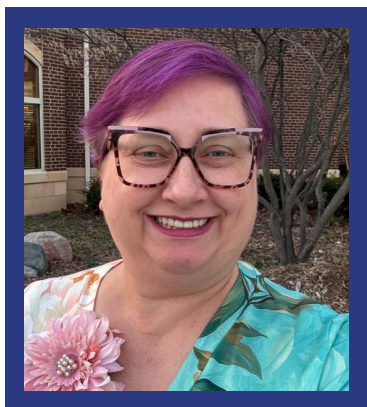


Libraries are more than buildings with books. They are places where a community's curiosity, creativity, and connection come to life. In Whitefish Bay, long known as a "community of readers," the library reflects our shared commitment to learning and discovery.

Library service in the Village began in 1899 when a small collection of 35 books was housed at Klann's Drug Store on Silver Spring. In 1937, with support from the Whitefish Bay Woman's Club, the Village established its own library in the basement of the old Village Hall. As the community grew, so did the Library. Many residents still have fond memories of the Library built in 1955, which served the community well for nearly 50 years. The current library opened in 2002 and I regularly receive compliments on how beautiful and welcoming it is.

Today, the Whitefish Bay Public Library offers books and eBooks, technology access, media, Take & Tinker tools, games, and puzzles, programs, workshops, and educational experiences for residents of all ages. Our staff members work every day to help people explore ideas, learn new skills, and connect with one another.

Thank you for your support of the Whitefish Bay Public Library!

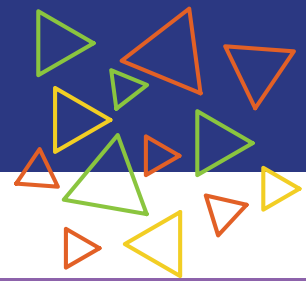


*"Ambiance of the library for reading and quiet study is unparalleled."*

*"I bring our 2- year-old granddaughter to story time on Monday mornings. She loves it! Also, when we walk in, the two librarians at the front desk are so friendly and happy to see us. The library is bright, has a lovely children's section and is a fun way to start our Monday each week."*

*Comments from the 2025 Library Community Survey*

# About the Library

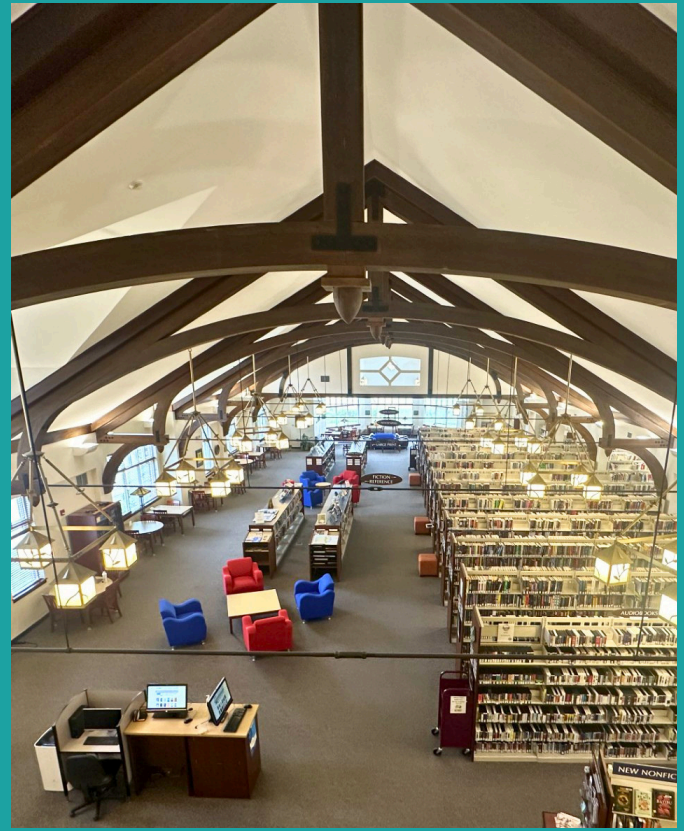


*“Everything positive--friendly and helpful staff, amazing library book sales all year round as well as big sale twice a year, and great volunteers. We also love the beautiful wall art in children's section, and beautiful local artwork throughout the library. Such a wonderful and cozy atmosphere.”*

*Comment from the 2025 Library Community Survey*

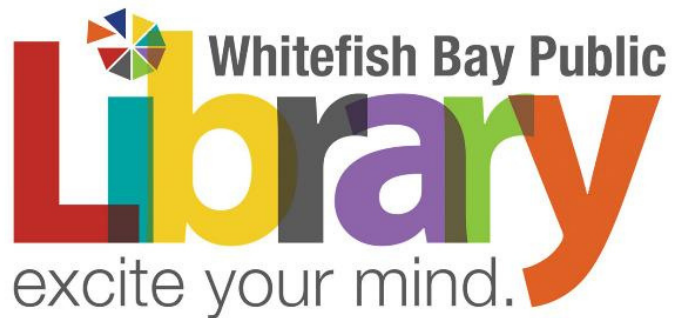


excite your mind.



# Our Mission

The Whitefish Bay Public Library, as a cornerstone of the community, is dedicated to connecting all people, inspiring a love of learning, and providing access to ideas, information, and resources.



CONNECT PEOPLE

INSPIRE LEARNING

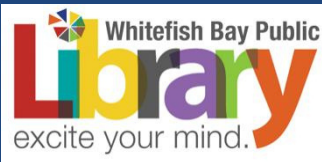
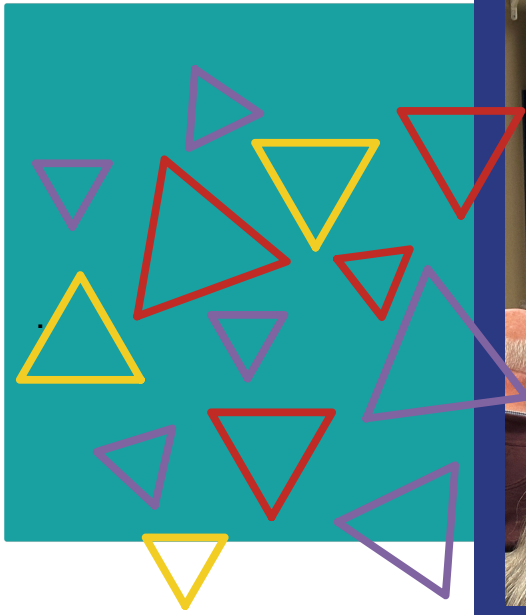
PROVIDE ACCESS

# Our Guiding Principles



We will:

- Provide a welcoming place for all who enter
- Interconnect and engage our community
- Be flexible, creative and forward looking
- Support an informed public
- Offer an exceptional workplace
- Follow a thoughtful and measurable approach



## 2025 By the Numbers

**46%**  
of residents hold  
active cards  
(state avg: 22%)

**90%**  
of survey  
respondents  
visit monthly or more

**500**  
people through our  
doors daily in 2025

**11x**  
visits per resident  
annually  
(state avg: 6)

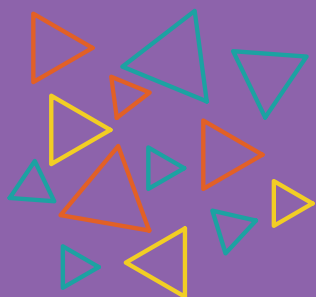
# Process, Implementation, & Evaluation



In 2025, the Whitefish Bay Public Library launched a strategic planning process to continue to better understand how our patrons use our services, what is working well, and where we can improve. We received input from community members (803 Community Survey responses, 20% more than 5 years ago), Library staff, and partner organizations to craft a plan to guide the Library for the future—to deliver outstanding services, enrich lives, and strengthen our role as a hub for learning, culture, and community.

Our strategic plan focuses on sustaining excellent service, using staff and resources efficiently and effectively, maintaining welcoming and functional spaces, and practicing responsible financial stewardship. The Library Board of Trustees reviewed the findings in detail and approved the plan. Implementation relies on clear communication and strong partnerships. A summary of the plan is being shared with the Village of Whitefish Bay Board of Trustees, staff, partner organizations, stakeholders, and the community. Library staff will be actively leading plan implementation.

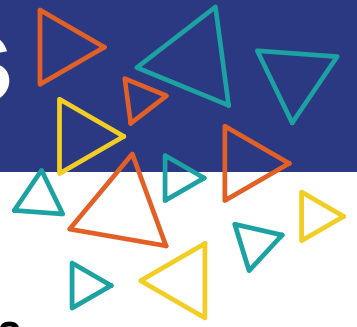
Progress will be monitored through alignment with the Library’s annual budget, quarterly updates to the Library Board of Trustees, and ongoing feedback from residents, staff, and community partners. We want to ensure the Library remains responsive to community needs while advancing the objectives of the strategic plan.



*“All of my interactions with both staff and volunteers have been exceptional. Professional, helpful and most of all, very approachable and friendly. I always leave with a positive feeling.”*

*Comment from the 2025 Library Community Survey*

# Goals & Priorities



- ◀ **Strengthen Connection and Belonging**
- ◀ **Deliver Responsive, High-Quality Library Services**
- ◀ **Invest in an Exceptional Workplace**
- ◀ **Optimize Spaces and Facilities for Community Use**
- ◀ **Strengthen Connections and Community Impact**
- ◀ **Ensure Financial Sustainability and Stewardship**
- ◀ **Cultivate Communication, Transparency, and Engagement**



# GOAL: STRENGTHEN CONNECTION & BELONGING



The Library will continue to serve as a central gathering place that fosters community connection, learning, and engagement for residents of all ages.

The Whitefish Bay Public Library welcomes an average of 500 visitors per day and 90% of Survey Respondents visit at least monthly. Community members consistently report that the Library is an essential part of daily life in the Village.

## Action Steps

- ◀ Expand programs that connect residents across generations and interests
- ◀ Continue offering high-quality educational, cultural, and civic programming
- ◀ Increase outreach to residents who are not fully connected to library services
- ◀ Ensure welcoming and inclusive spaces for all members of the community



*“...my partner and I have especially enjoyed the craft supplies swap event and the monthly social hour. My partner is relatively new to Whitefish Bay, and that gave him the chance to meet more people.”*

*Comment from the 2025 Library Community Survey*

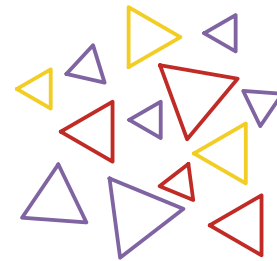
# GOAL: DELIVER RESPONSIVE, HIGH-QUALITY LIBRARY SERVICES

**Demand for library services continues to grow. The Library consistently ranks among the top libraries in the Milwaukee County Federated Library System (MCFLS) for circulation and use.**

Maintaining excellent service requires thoughtful investment in collections, programs, and technology.

## Action Steps

- ◀ Continue building strong collections in formats our patrons use most
- ◀ Minimize wait times for high-demand materials where possible
- ◀ Deliver engaging, high-quality programs for all age groups
- ◀ Ensure excellent customer service through knowledgeable and well-trained staff



# GOAL: INVEST IN AN EXCEPTIONAL WORKPLACE



**The Library's success is built on the dedication and expertise of its staff. Staff survey results show strong teamwork, pride in service, and a highly collaborative workplace culture.**

Staffing levels currently do not match the high level of service demand.

## Action Steps

- ◀ Expand staffing levels to better match the Library's high rate of use
- ◀ Continue reviewing wages and benefits to remain competitive with peer libraries
- ◀ Improve internal communication and collaboration across departments
- ◀ Enhance staff workspace to support productivity and privacy
- ◀ Support professional development and training opportunities

## Priority A: Increase Staffing to Support High Usage

**The Library will gradually increase staffing to better support community demand and maintain high service levels.**

Benchmarking indicates that a library with Whitefish Bay's level of use would typically operate with approximately **17.0 full-time equivalent staff**, compared with our Library's current **11.27 FTE**.

## Action Steps

- ◀ Convert a part-time Adult Services Librarian position to full-time to reach 11.5 by 2027
- ◀ Explore converting a part-time Circulation Services Assistant to full-time to reach 12.0 by 2028
- ◀ Explore adding additional part-time hours to reach 13.3 FTE by 2029

# GOAL: OPTIMIZE SPACES & FACILITIES FOR COMMUNITY USE



The Library building remains a beautiful and welcoming space, but after nearly 25 years of heavy use, modest, functional updates are needed.

Community and staff feedback indicates strong demand for additional study rooms, improved staff workspaces, and other facility enhancements.

## Action Steps

- ◀ Develop a facilities plan, including evaluating space needs, potential renovations, and long-term building improvements.
- ◀ Work closely with Village leadership to determine feasibility of capital projects.
- ◀ Manage smaller facility improvements internally.

## Priority B: Develop & Implement Facilities Plan

To ensure the Library building continues serving the community effectively, the Library will undertake a professional pre-design facilities study.

### Needed Improvements

- ◀ Additional study rooms
- ◀ Improvements to staff workspaces and operational areas
- ◀ Accessibility improvements such as automatic door openers on public restrooms
- ◀ Second-floor public restroom



# GOAL: STRENGTHEN CONNECTIONS & COMMUNITY IMPACT

**The Whitefish Bay Public Library serves not only as a provider of services, but also as a collaborative community partner.**

By working with local organizations and community groups the Library expands its reach and strengthens connections between residents and community resources.



## Action Steps

- ◀ Strengthen partnerships with local organizations and community groups
- ◀ Expand collaborative programs and events with community partners
- ◀ Identify opportunities for joint programming, resource sharing, and community engagement initiatives
- ◀ Promote the Library's role as a hub for learning, information, and civic engagement



***“Excellent learning experiences from partner programs”***

*comment from the 2025 Library Community Survey*

# GOAL: ENSURE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY & STEWARDSHIP

The Whitefish Bay Public Library is the most cost-efficient library in the region.

Maintaining this efficiency while continuing to provide exceptional service requires careful financial planning.

## Action Steps

- ◀ Develop a long-term financial plan aligned with strategic priorities
- ◀ Ensure responsible stewardship of Library and Village resources
- ◀ Continue maximizing non-property tax revenue through strategic collection development
- ◀ Maintain strong partnerships with Friends of the Whitefish Bay Public Library and the Whitefish Bay Public Library Foundation
- ◀ Seek grants and external funding opportunities when appropriate

## Priority C: Develop Financial Plan

A financial plan will help ensure we can sustain high-quality services while responding to changing funding conditions.

## Action Steps

- ◀ Property tax levy limits (currently 84% of budget)
- ◀ Other revenue (i.e. fines, room rentals, etc. 16%)
- ◀ Contributions from the Friends of the Library, Whitefish Bay Woman's Club, and Whitefish Bay Public Library Foundation
- ◀ Opportunities for grants and additional funding

# GOAL: CULTIVATE COMMUNICATION, TRANSPARENCY, AND ENGAGEMENT

**Strong communication with residents, stakeholders, and Village leadership is essential to maintaining public trust and support.**

## Action Steps

- ◀ Share clear information about Library services, impact, and priorities
- ◀ Continue gathering community input through surveys and outreach
- ◀ Maintain transparent reporting on Library performance and finances
- ◀ Strengthen communication with Village leadership and community partners

# CONTINUED OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

The Library will continue regular review and improvement of operational areas including:



- ◀ **Communications**
- ◀ **Technology planning**
- ◀ **Policies and procedures**
- ◀ **Collection development**
- ◀ **Partnerships and collaborations**
- ◀ **Continuous service improvement**



# Acknowledgements



We extend our sincere appreciation to the many individuals who contributed to the development of this strategic plan. Community members who participated in the survey and Library staff who shared their perspectives provided valuable insights that helped shape our priorities and direction. Special thanks to Trustee DeGuire and Library Director Reed for their leadership in guiding the strategic planning process. Their coordination, research, and thoughtful facilitation helped ensure that the plan reflects community input, organizational priorities, and a clear vision for the Library's future.

## LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES as of April 30, 2026

Nathan Christenson, School District Rep, 2024-2026

Nikki DeGuire, Member, 2024-2027

Sam Dettmann, Village Board Rep, 2024-2026

Claire Flannery, Member, 2020-2026

Ellie Gettinger, Member, 2019-2026

Erin Jelenchick, Vice President, 2020-2027

Sarah Leinweber, President, 2017-2026

## LIBRARY LEADERSHIP TEAM

Nyama Reed, Director

Scott Lenski, Head of Adult Services

Theresa Hoge, Head of Circulation Services (through 5/2026)

Katie Kiekhaefer, Head of Youth Services (through 1/2026)

Valerie Morris, Head of Youth Services (as of 2/2026)



For comments or questions, please contact:

Library Director Nyama Reed

[nyama.reed@mcfls.org](mailto:nyama.reed@mcfls.org)

Whitefish Bay Public Library

5420 N Marlborough Drive, Whitefish Bay, WI 53217

414.964.4380 / [wfblibrary.org](http://wfblibrary.org)

# Our Public Library Thrives Thanks to Generous Supporters Like You!



## Donate to the Whitefish Bay Public Library Foundation

◀ Via QR code

◀ In-person or via mail:

Whitefish Bay Public Library Foundation  
5420 N Marlborough Dr  
Whitefish Bay, WI 53217



◀ <https://www.wfblibrary.org/donate/foundation.php>



## Support the Friends of the Whitefish Bay Public Library



- ◀ Donate used books in the Library lobby.
- ◀ Purchase books in the book sale room, at the semi-annual book sales, and on eBay:  
<https://www.ebay.com/str/friendsofwfblibrary>
- ◀ Join the Friends:  
[https://www.wfblibrary.org/friends/become\\_a\\_friend\\_renew\\_membership.php](https://www.wfblibrary.org/friends/become_a_friend_renew_membership.php)