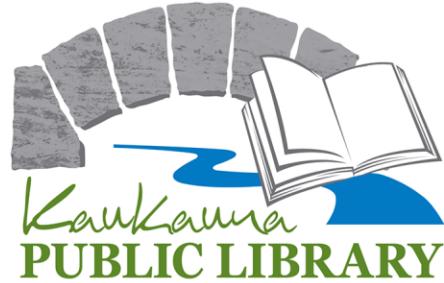


To: Kaukauna Public Library Board of Trustee  
From: Library Director Ashley Thiem-Menning  
Date: 1/20/2026  
Re: Long Range Plan Review and Future Plan



Our 2022-2026 Library Strategic Plan is ending this year. While it is early in this calendar year to review it, I think a brief review is appropriate, given that we will likely take most of 2026 to put together our next plan. I do plan to dig deeper into the numbers for the next plan.

### **Goal One: Build Collections**

**Objective:** The library strives to build Kaukauna Strong collections to meet the needs of our users. The library will advocate for increased municipal funding to meet the basic level (Tier 1) standard for library collection funding as established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction by 2026.

**Objective Outcome:** Based on the preliminary 2024 extended service area of 25,499 and our municipal population served, 18,250, we met our goal and became Tier I compliant with the 2026 materials allocation. When the 2025 figures are released, we may even be Tier II compliant in the category of Materials Expenditure, which means that we are offering above the basic level of service expected of a public library our size. Within the activities listed in the goal, we were able to offer digital services in the form of Hoopla, add Advantage titles in Overdrive, and add a very popular Lucky Day collection of books.

### **Goal Two: Expanded Access**

**Objective:** The library is a needed resource in support of education, employment, technology access, and entertainment. We will increase open hours to meet the basic level (Tier I) standard for operating hours as established by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. This will include five more hours of weekday service and additional weekend hours by 2024.

**Objective Outcome:** In 2023, the library utilized the morning hour that staff had previously used to prep the building. That hour became operational time, shifting hours from opening at 9:00a Monday through Friday, to opening at 8:00a Monday through Friday. This successfully added five operational hours at no extra cost to our municipality because staff were already in the building.

In 2024, the library was able to expand Saturday hours from seasonal to standard annually, now staying open through the summer months on Saturday's courtesy of an increase in the personnel line to cover the additional summer hours. The library is now open 61 hours a week in a standard schedule. 61 hours a week meets Tier I compliance in both the metric of municipal population and extended county population served. Saturday traffic in the summer remains even with other seasonal Saturdays.

### **Goal Three: Increase Engagement**

**Objective:** In order to meet the growing needs and wants of our community the library needs to have a staff that reflects the size of the community it is serving, one which also meets the state established Tier I standards of 10.9 full-time equivalent (FTE) to ensure the success of all the goals and objectives in this strategic plan.

**Objective Outcome:** While the activities for this goal changed dramatically between 2022-2026, the library has met this goal, but with a different vision of staffing thanks to our municipality. As of 2025, the library was at 11.24 FTE, which included converting two part-time positions to full-time. The inclusion of a full-time Assistant Director in the 2026 budget extends the success of the plan. The library was able to convert two part-time positions to full-time in 2025, with plans to consider more conversions in the future to ensure staffing sustainability and reduce consistent turnover in part-time positions.

### **Goal Four: Advocacy**

**Objective:** The library will develop a plan to bring more awareness of library programs, services, and resources to new and existing users, with the support of increased funding annually to meet growing print and digital advertising costs.

**Objective Outcome:**

In 2022, the library participated in the Wisconsin Marketing Mini-Grant project and used the grant funds for a postcard mailer campaign, inviting users who had lapsed library cards back to the library. Participation in that grant project resulted in a five-year marketing campaign. The Director meets with the Communications Coordinator annually to select a new focus area in marketing/advertising from a previously generated list.

We have also increased the operating budget for advertising by \$2,000 during this time. During the plan, we also converted a part-time Library Assistant into a full-time Communications Coordinator. Metrics that highlight the success in this goal in having focused advocacy, include the library Facebook page becoming monetized, library programming expanding from 10,983 participants in 2022, to 27,597 participants in 2025. Further, media mentions in the last few years have continued to increase to a point where we started to collect them. We began collecting statistics on print/radio/tv coverage in 2024, having 35 mentions each year since.

### **Goal Five: Create Connections**

**Objective:** The library will build community partnerships and diverse programs and events that better meet the needs and wants of our community.

**Objective Outcome:** The library responded to results of a library programming survey to ensure that the library was offering programs the community were interested in participating in. Program attendance growth was 16,614 participants between 2022-2025. Further, the number of programs increased over that period from 424 to 687. The average

participation for programs is roughly 40 people. This increase is reflective of the library curating programs of interest to the community, which in turn help to fuel circulation rates, which influence county allocations positively.

I am enthusiastic to report that we have successfully reached all the goals set forth in our current strategic plan. For the last five years I have used this guide to make decisions regarding collections, programs, services and general operations. We have advocated for the fiscal opportunities to make this plan a success, which could not have been done without the support of the City of Kaukauna. I am extremely grateful for their assistance over the period this plan was in place.

Moving forward, one of our major goals for 2026 is to complete a new strategic plan. After having a five-year plan, I do think it would be beneficial to focus on a three-year plan this time around because so many changes can occur in a five-year period. I would also like to complete this plan in-house. Our last plan was facilitated through UW-Extension at no cost to us. I did not budget for a facilitator this time around because I feel confident that the last process prepared us to complete this task well without a facilitator. We plan to do a few things in anticipation of writing the new plan: patron survey, community focus group, staff workshop, and a Library Board workshop.

