



STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-2027

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INTRODUCTION

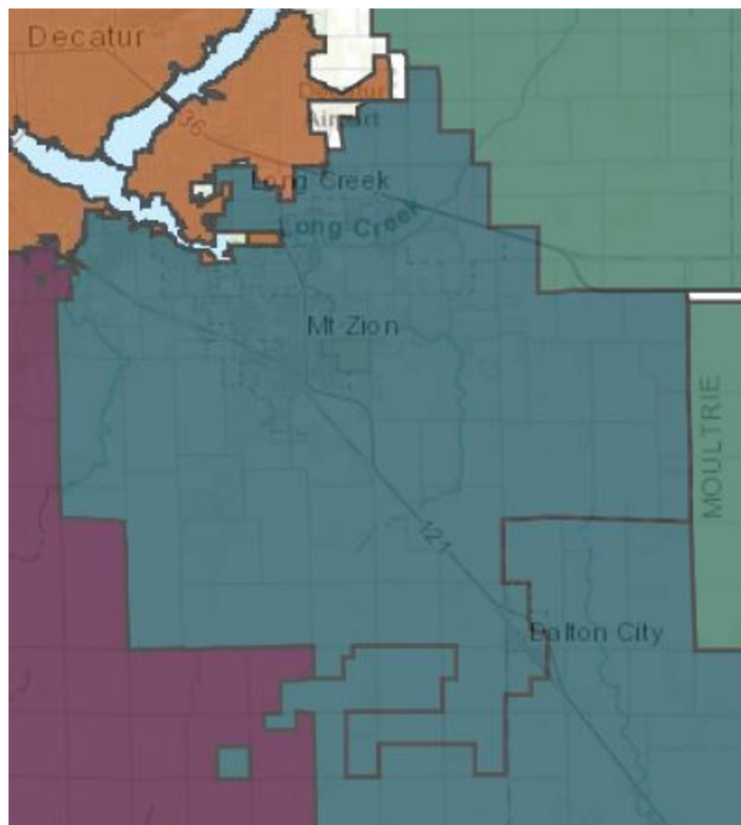
HISTORY

The Mt. Zion District Library began as a Township library in 1971, operating as a bookmobile stop for the Decatur-based Rolling Prairie Library System. The library's first permanent location opened in 1975 in a rented storefront on Main Street in Mt. Zion.

In 1984, a new building was constructed on the north side of Main Street in the village of Mt. Zion. At that time, the Mt. Zion Township Library served a population of 6,000. A referendum passed in March, 1990, extending the library's service boundaries to include Long Creek, South Wheatland and Milam Townships and Dalton City and creating the Mt. Zion District Library.

Based on the 2020 census, the library serves a population of 12,467.

The building at the current location, 115 W. Main Street in Mt. Zion, opened in September, 1998 and is open 59 hours per week.



OUR VISION

GOVERNANCE

The library is governed by a library board of trustees who are elected officials. The seven (7) member board has officers in accordance with the Library By-laws. These officers are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and three (3) at-large members. Appointments are made in case of any vacancy on the board before a member's term expires. Trustees serve a 4 year term. The trustees are volunteers.

Powers of the board include enacting, amending and rescinding ordinances, and making and adopting regulations and resolutions for their own guidance. The board has the exclusive control of the expenditure of all moneys collected for the library. It may also exercise eminent domain, reserve funds for self-insurance, and join the American Library Association and the Illinois Library Association.

The library complies with all Illinois Library Laws set forth by the State Legislature and monitored by the Illinois State Library. Currently there are three (3) library systems in the state of Illinois. The Mt. Zion District Library is located in the Illinois Heartland Library System. The system provides a number of services for the libraries in its geographic area including a shared database and delivery service.

STAFF

Library staff are responsible for the day to day functions of the Library. There are currently 5 full-time staff members and 6 part-time staff members. The part-time staff numbers may fluctuate depending on whether or not we see the need to add or take away positions when there is turnover.

The 5 full-time staff positions are as follow:

Library Director
Cataloger
Circulation Manager
Youth Services Coordinator
Youth Services Assistant

All full-time staff members work 40 hours per week and are hourly employees, save for the Library Director who is the Library's only exempt employee.

OUR VISION

VISION

Nurturing an educated, enlightened and enriched community.

MISSION

The mission of the Mt. Zion District Library is to provide the people of its community with access to a balanced collection of books and other materials, services and programming which will serve their educational, cultural and recreational needs.

VALUES

Relevance

Quality

Growth

Service

STRATEGIC PLAN PROCESS

The Board and Director knew of the need to update the Library's Strategic Plan. We waited until after the 2010 Census population figures were available and new Board members were elected and took office in June of 2011 to tackle creating a new plan that would take us through the next three years. A grant was applied for and received through The Lumpkin Family Foundation and The Community Foundation which allowed the Library to contract with a local consultant to guide us through the process of writing and then implementing an updated Plan.

Meetings with the Director and consultant began in January 2012. A community survey was conducted during the month of March and April via paper surveys as well as online surveys available on the Library's website and via email. Surveys were also sent to all the Mt. Zion Schools. Results were tabulated and presented to staff and the Board during separate meetings. The consultant met with Library staff to gather their input. The consultant also led a day long workshop for the Library Board to come up with a draft for the Plan.

A final version was presented to the Board and approved at the September 2012 Board Meeting. The Strategic Plan was reviewed and updated February 2016, May 2019, and again in March 2023 in order to guide the Library through Spring 2024.

CIRCULATION

The graph below demonstrates how our circulation has changed over the past four fiscal years. The effects from the Covid-19 Pandemic really showed in FY21-22. However, we did see an uptick in circulation in FY22-23, and are continuing to see an upward trend each month. We anticipate that the further we get from the Pandemic, the more circulation we will see. These numbers include not only physical materials, but digital materials as well.

	FY20-21	FY21-22	FY22-23	FY23-24
July	8,301	8,280	9,108	8,431
August	8,389	7,944	8,794	7,938
September	8,625	7,014	7,250	7,288
October	9,984	7,040	7,252	7,816
November	8,872	6,781	6,886	6,963
December	6,865	6,149	6,110	6,263
January	6,931	6,954	7,741	7,770
February	7,356	5,733	6,887	7,026
March	8,170	7,220	7,838	7,557
April	7,088	7,059	6,381	7,606
May	7,480	7,299	7,788	8,355
June	9,698	9,650	8,940	8,600
TOTAL	97,759	87,123	90,975	91,613

SERVICE PRIORITIES

- **Collection Management and Reader's Advisory** - Encourage lifelong learning and a passion for reading by providing patrons with up-to-date, relevant reader's advisory, and free access to a diverse collection of reading, audio, visual, and other materials.
- **Community Outreach and Partnerships** - Continue to foster and expand community relations and partnerships that target the needs and wants of the patrons within the Library's district.
- **Facilities and Grounds** - Continue to evaluate the interior and exterior of the Library to create a comfortable and welcoming environment that is viewed as a hub of the village.
- **Personnel, Governance, and Administration** - Improve upon customer service and internal procedures to provide the best service to our patrons as well as an environment that encourages staff and administration to attend continuing education programs and events.
- **Resources and Services** - Stay up to date on newest trends in Library services to provide the best possible resources to our patrons by removing barriers and providing access to all members of the community.
- **Technology and Marketing** - Engage the community through marketing and technology to raise awareness and increase access to programs and services.
- **Youth Services and Early Literacy** - Provide programs and services to children and families that will enhance their reading, writing, and listening skills to prepare them for school and beyond.

Collection Management and Reader's Advisory

GOALS

- Encourage lifelong learning and a passion for reading by providing patrons with up-to-date, relevant reader's advisory
- Provide free access to a diverse collection of reading, audio, visual, and other materials.

OBJECTIVES

- Continually review the current library collections for relevance as well as condition of the materials
- Stay up-to-date on new books and other materials in order to not only add new items to the collection, but to also offer reader's advisory to patrons
- Stay current on what new technology or items are in demand so as to both use them for the Library and add them to the "Library of Things"

ACTIVITIES

- Use the C.R.E.W. (Continuous Review, Evaluation, and Weeding) when managing the collection
- Read articles and reviews of new and upcoming books to assist patrons with readers advisory using platforms such as Kirkus Reviews, School Library Journal, Goodreads, etc.
- Attend conferences with exhibitor halls to speak with representatives that offer the most current library trends and technology
- Attend local meetings with other area librarians to get ideas for new books and services

Community Outreach and Partnerships

GOALS

- Continue to foster and expand community relations and partnerships that target the needs and wants of the patrons within the Library's district.

OBJECTIVES

- Continue to build the Friends of the Library group
- Foster relationships with businesses in the community
- Continue to partner with the Mt. Zion Schools for programs and services
- Continue to partner with local private preschools and assisted living centers to offer programs and services

ACTIVITIES

- Advertise the Friends of the Library through the website, social media, and digital sign
- Continue to offer fundraisers through the Friends of the Library such as Trivia Night, the Annual Book Sales, Monical's Community Days Fundraisers, etc.
- Continue to connect with the librarians at the Mt. Zion School District to provide programs and services such as the Annual March Madness Book Bracket and School Visits
- Reach out to local private preschools about offering services such as the mobile library service provided to Little Doves Pre-School
- Be visible within the community by attending events through organizations such as the Mt. Zion Chamber of Commerce

Facilities and Grounds

GOALS

- Continue to evaluate the interior and exterior of the Library to create a comfortable and welcoming environment that is viewed as a hub of the village.

OBJECTIVES

- Create a long term goal for Library interior and exterior
- Make the best use of interior Library space for materials, programs, and general Library usage
- Address any ongoing maintenance issues as well as any new issues that arise
- Make best use of Library building funds as well as utilize local, state, and national grants

ACTIVITIES

- Partner with the Friends of the Library to create a long term goal for any new landscaping, furniture, or other building needs that the Friends can help fund
- Perform an annual walk-through of the Library interior and exterior to address any visible issues
- Work with local companies to annually assess large utility items such as the furnace, sprinkler system, air conditioning units, etc.
- Annually assess the building and maintenance budget to allocate funds to any large projects that may need done
- Search for local, state, and national grants to help supplement the building and maintenance budget

Resources and Services

GOALS

- Stay up to date on newest trends in Library services
- Provide the best possible resources to our patrons
- Remove barriers to provide access to all members of the community

OBJECTIVES

- Identify the newest trends in Library services for patrons of all ages through journals, articles, consortium-wide meetings, conferences, and other areas
- Continue to evaluate our current services and resources to make sure that they are still relevant to our community
- Identify service gaps and take strides to fill in those gaps to make sure we are providing services for all groups and populations

ACTIVITIES

- Offer annual surveys for patrons to share their wants and needs from the library
- Partner with local non-profits to identify underserved groups within the community and gather ideas and knowledge about how to reach them with our services
- Attend local, state, and national meetings, webinars, and conferences to get updated information on the latest trends in Library services
- Offer programs and resources that are relevant to our community and weed or reinvent those programs and services that are no longer working well for the community

Technology and Marketing

GOALS

- Engage the community through marketing and technology
- Raise awareness for the Library's services to both those who are and are not currently using the Library
- Increase access to programs and services through marketing

OBJECTIVES

- Create engaging media on the Library's social media platforms as well as the Library website and digital sign
- Partner with local organizations such as the Mt. Zion Chamber of Commerce, Symphony Guild of Decatur, All-In Macon County, Birth-to-Five, and other organizations to market programs and services
- Keep up to date on the newest Library technology
- Increase access by doing more outreach within the community

ACTIVITIES

- Attend local meetings to have a representative from the Library in attendance
- Create ads for local publications such as Mt. Zion Chamber of Commerce's Thriving Times when possible
- Attend local, state, and national conferences, webinars, and meetings to be up to speed on the newest Library technology
- Utilize the latest marketing tools, such as Canva, to create fun and engaging content for displays, social media, the Library website, and digital sign
- Spend time designated staff on technology so they feel comfortable assisting patrons with using Library technology such as Libby, Hoopla, cloudLibrary, Mango Languages, and other in-house tech

Youth Services and Early Literacy

GOALS

- Provide free programs and services to children and families that will enhance their reading, writing, and listening skills to prepare them for school and beyond

OBJECTIVES

- Provide free programs and services to children of all ages
- Create programming that is not only educational, but fun as well
- Partner with local schools, including homeschool co-ops and families, to help fill in the gap of programming and services that they may not be getting elsewhere
- Encourage children and families to broaden literacy skills through a variety of materials, not just books

ACTIVITIES

- Continue to evaluate and offer alternative learning materials for children such as launchpads, Wonderbooks, Playaways, Tonieboxes, and STEAM Kits
- Continue to offer programs such as 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten to encourage parents and caregivers to help prepare their children for school by reading to them
- Reach out to local schools, including homeschool co-ops and families to offer services that they may not have otherwise - this includes but is not limited to school visits, Library tours, and mobile Library services
- Continually evaluate programming to make sure we are offering programs that are educational, but also fun and current