

State of the Library 2026

Library Director Jordan Wright
February 10, 2026



Facilities

The library's building is nearly 65 years old, but it has good bones. In 2025, the library made significant investments in equipment upgrades and in repairs and maintenance to both building and grounds. These included replacing all public and staff PCs and installing four new furnace/air conditioning units – necessary investments to support the library's long-term operations.

Smaller projects, such as adding a chimney cap and repairing handrails, were completed to prevent future repairs. While the library's roof is still within its expected lifespan, a costly replacement or major maintenance should be anticipated within the next 5–10 years. With creativity, continued capital investment, and regular maintenance, the building should continue to meet the community's needs for decades to come.

The library is currently in the process of selecting a firm to complete a facilities master plan. This plan will help guide and prioritize future improvements and maintenance, including addressing the children's room, public quiet areas, outdoor spaces, the staff workroom, and the library's carpet, which is overdue to be replaced.

Finances

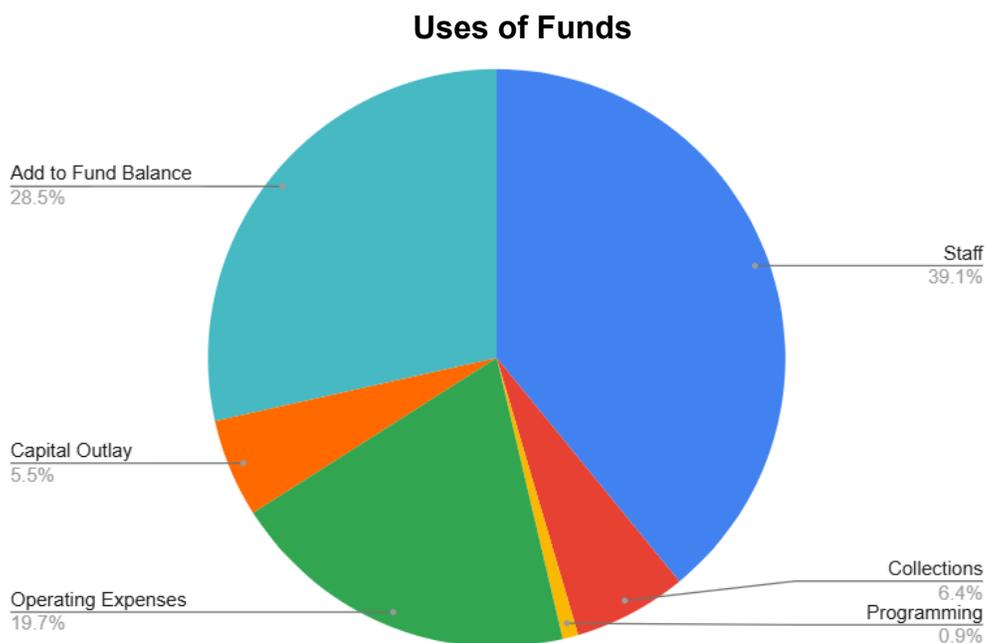
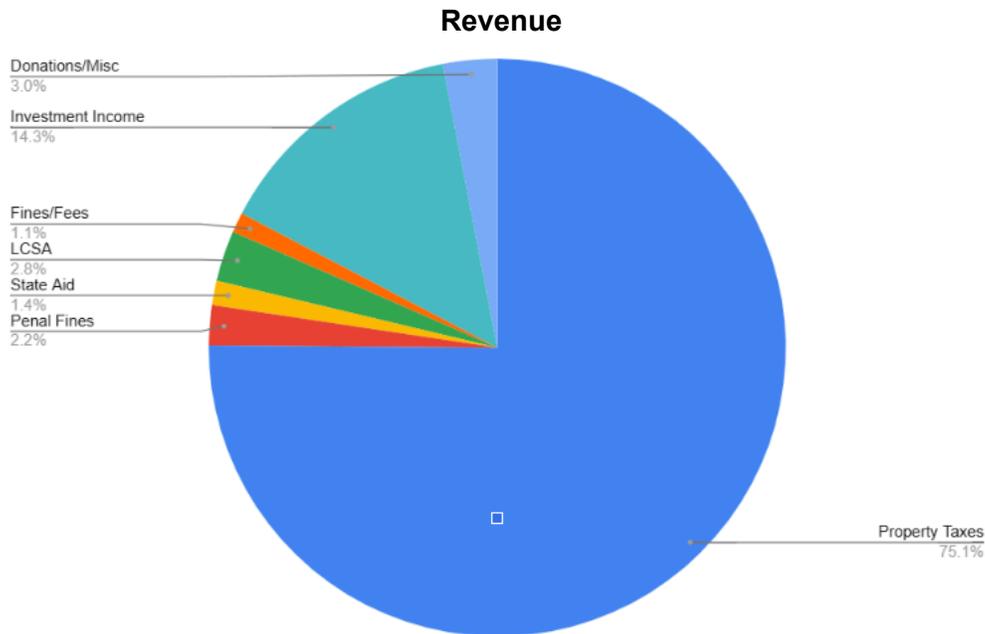
The library is in a strong financial position. A dedicated 10-year millage ensures stable operating funding through fiscal year 2033, and a healthy fund balance allows the library to prioritize facility improvements. The library's high fund balance generates significant additional revenue, most recently accounting for over ten percent of total revenue.

There has been consistent and moderate growth in our service area's tax base, and the most recent annual Headlee rollbacks have been manageable, resulting in an annual increase in operating revenue that is, for the time being, keeping pace with inflation. Health care costs are trending more than 10% increases year over year, which could affect which plans we are able to offer in the future, particularly if more of our eligible employees choose to enroll.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2025, the library recorded total revenues of \$1,426,170, with millage revenue comprising approximately 75% of that amount. Investment earnings from our endowments and bank accounts earned \$203,655, or approximately 14% of total revenues.

Total expenses for the year were \$1,031,654, with staffing costs representing 55% of expenditures – well within a healthy range for a public library. As a result, the library’s fund balance increased by \$394,516 during FY 2025. As the library invests in its facilities and strategically draws down its fund balance, interest revenue will decline, considerably tightening year-to-year operating margins.

The most significant long-term financial risk is a potential economic downturn – particularly one that could significantly affect the real estate market – which would have long-term effects on revenue due to Michigan’s Proposal A and the Headlee Act.



Staff

2025 was a year of transition for Tecumseh District Library. Following the departure of the library director and two long-time employees in late 2024, the library welcomed a new Children's Librarian, Library Director Jordan Wright, a new Programming Supervisor, and several new part-time Library Assistants. As a result, the TDL of 2026 looks noticeably different from the TDL of 2024.

The library employs 8 full-time and 7 part-time employees. The staff is led by several experienced, long-tenured employees, while many newer hires bring valuable experience from other fields that translates well to library work. Overall, TDL's employees are self-reliant and solution-oriented. Several of the library's most experienced and highest-ranking staff members are approaching retirement age, making succession planning a priority for leadership within the next couple of years.

Currently, the Library Director is the only employee who holds a Master of Library Science degree, which is required by the State of Michigan in order to receive state aid payments. Hiring another MLIS staff member, or encouraging/incentivizing a current staff member to attain an MLIS should be a priority in the next 5 years.

Collections

While e-books and downloadable audiobooks continue to grow in popularity, the trend is slowing, and print books still dominate both the library's circulation and the publishing market overall. The library has made significant investments in print materials, particularly new and high-demand titles. The travel guides collection has seen significant investment to ensure materials are current and accurate. In addition, the library is exploring the creation of a Spanish-language collection to better serve all members of our community.

The library offers e-books and e-audiobooks primarily through two platforms: Libby (OverDrive) and Hoopla. Hoopla operates on a pay-per-use model, and as its use has increased, it will be financially unsustainable within the next few years, assuming current trends continue. Currently, over 50% of the library's total print book budget is spent on Hoopla *alone*. Patrons are currently allowed five Hoopla checkouts per month; it is likely this limit will need to be reduced within the next 12 months to manage costs. Many other public libraries are also making tough decisions regarding Hoopla.

Books on CD and DVDs remain popular formats, though they present their own challenges. The website Audible, owned by Amazon, has significantly disrupted the audiobook market by releasing many high-demand titles *exclusively* on its platform. As a result, some popular audiobooks are not available on CD or through library services like OverDrive or Hoopla, leaving libraries unable to provide access. Similarly, it is increasingly common for new films and television series to bypass DVD release entirely.

The Library of Things saw significant expansion in 2025. The collection was relocated, reorganized, and remarketed, resulting in significant increase in circulation and patron awareness. Patrons can now check out items like acoustic guitars, ukuleles, radon detectors, binoculars, automotive diagnostic readers, a carpet drying fan, and more.

Community

Community support for the library remains strong. The library is a cherished local institution and has a strong reputation for reliable and friendly service. Despite the passing of one of the library's most consistent and generous donors, Tecumseh District Library continues to receive regular and generous private donations from supportive residents. The Friends of the Tecumseh District Library has over 60 dues paying members, active programming, a regular income stream, and a desire and ability to help fund special events and library improvements.

Library administration has remained in close communication with city officials and downtown stakeholders regarding the library's role in future development efforts. The library continues to participate in community events such as the Ice Sculpture Festival, Leprechaun Hunt, and Wizarding Weekend, and has strengthened partnerships with Tecumseh Public Schools, including hosting a teen book club at the high school.

Marketing

The library's new logo and rebranding have been met with strong enthusiasm from our patrons. The redesigned website is ADA compliant, mobile-friendly, and easy to navigate.

Both the e-newsletter and print newsletter remain popular and effective tools for promoting programs and services. The library should consider mailing a newsletter once per year to every address in the service area in an effort to reach non-library users.

The library advertises its services quarterly in *Homefront* magazine and regularly promotes programs in the *Tecumseh Herald*, including two frontpage stories in 2025.

Programming

Summer Reading was revamped in 2025 to make participation more accessible and flexible. More than 400 individuals participated, including strong adult engagement. With the support of the Friends of the Tecumseh Library, 2026's reading program will encourage patrons to track their reading progress on an app – Beanstack.

Storytimes and youth programming have grown dramatically in popularity since 2024. Teen programs – particularly those held after school – remain popular and are instrumental to building relationships with the library’s after-school crowd and their families.

The new Programming Supervisor has stepped into a role previously held by one employee for well over a decade, and is beginning to shape a new direction for adult programming. Some highlights for adult programming this year include high-interest adult crafting programs, a new monthly open mic poetry event, drop-in tech help sessions, and visits from bestselling novelist Leif Enger and Detroit Lions beat writer Dave Birkett.

In Summary

Tecumseh District Library enters 2026 with a strong financial outlook, an experienced and welcoming staff, and evolving collections and programs that remain relevant to the community. Certain aspects of our facility are showing its age, but TDL is committed to proactive maintenance and planning for future improvements. Despite ongoing technological, political, and cultural changes, the library is well positioned to continue experimenting, evolving, and remaining an inclusive and vital community resource in the years ahead.