

# 2024

**LIBRARY REPORT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH DECENNIAL COMMITTEES  
ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT**



McHenry Public Library District  
809 Front Street  
McHenry IL 60050

## **LIBRARY REPORT FOR COMPLIANCE WITH DECENNIAL COMMITTEES ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY ACT**

### **A. Unit of government submitting this report:**

1. Name of Library: McHenry Public Library District
2. Address of Main Library Office: 809 Front Street, McHenry, IL 60050

### **B. Information about our Library**

1. We are located in McHenry County. There are 15 libraries in our County.
2. The population of the territory in which our Library is located is 310,227 (as of the 2020 census), and our district population is 41,852.
3. The Library was adopted as a City Library in 1943. In 1987, the Library moved from being a City Library to a District, and in 1988, we expanded the library service boundaries from the McHenry city limits to include all of McCullom Lake and Holiday Hills, the eastern half of Wonder Lake, and small sections of Bull Valley, Lakemoor, and Island Lake increasing the size of the district to approximately 37 square miles. The Library moved into its current facility in 1955, and it was last remodeled in 2010.
4. We have 31 employees in the Library (not including board members).
5. Our annual budget for FY 2023/2024 is \$3,968,480.51 with an additional approximately \$2,700,000.00 in reserves.
6. Our Library's equalized assessed valuation (EAV) for 2023 is \$1,288,926,948.

### **C. Information About Our Committee**

1. Committee Members:
  - Charles Reilly, Board President
  - Bud Alexander, Board Vice President
  - Terry Weingart, Board Treasurer
  - Monica Leccese, Board Secretary
  - Michele Madsen, Trustee
  - Thomas Sutliff, Trustee
  - Nikki Wallace, Trustee
  - Georgann Caputo, Resident
  - Bill Edminster, Resident
  - Lesley Jakacki, Library Executive Director

2. Dates that our Committee Met (50 ILCS 70/20)

- First Meeting: May 16, 2023
- Second Meeting: August 15, 2023
- Third Meeting: February 20, 2024

**D. Core Programs or Services Offered by our Library**

1. Our Library offers the following core services and programs:

- An extensive collection of physical and digital materials for recreation and research. From books, music, movies, and video games to digitizing equipment and STEM kits, the Library offers its community a broad range of materials.
- We lend materials through our physical and digital collections and through partnerships with the CCS Consortium, NSDC Consortium, OCLC Interlibrary Loans, and Find More Illinois.
- We offer various reference and research assistance and media advisory services (books, movies, music, and more).
- Access to various reference and research databases
- Genealogy and Local History Collections
- Programming and events for all ages, including reading programs, book clubs, virtual and passive programming, early literacy storytimes, crafts, and lectures.
- Quarterly print newsletters and weekly e-newsletters informing recipients of upcoming events
- Outreach services, primarily for youth and children in school, senior citizens, non-English speakers, as well as families and members of the general public
- There is free space to read, study, work, meet, and browse the collection, including meeting rooms, study rooms, and a Discovery Hub play area.
- Computers and other mobile devices to use and access the Internet for free, along with printing, faxing, and scanning services.
- Homebound materials delivery
- Museum and Attraction Passes, voter registration, test proctoring

2. Other core services/programs we could possibly provide:

Our library is responsive to our community's needs and trends in library services and offers various core services and programs to fulfill those needs and demands. As such, it is an improbable and inefficient use of time to list all those we could be offering; however, a few are:

- More outreach to adults, seniors, and non-native English speakers
- Services like notary, passport acceptance, and license plate sticker renewal
- Off-site services like pop-up programming, hold lockers, returns boxes, and an outreach vehicle to make it possible
- Patron access to social services onsite
- A facility that better suited to the needs of today's library user

**E. Awards and Recognitions**

Our Library has received the following awards, distinctions, and recognitions:

- Per Capita Grant from Illinois Secretary of State— (all years)
- IEEE Science Kits for Public Libraries Grant—2021
- PPE Grant from Illinois State Library—2020
- Digital Network Access Grant from Illinois State Library—2020
- Census Sub-grantee from Illinois Department of Human Resources—2019
- Digital Book Download Station LSTA Grant from Illinois State Library—2014

## F. Intergovernmental Agreements

We partner with or have Intergovernmental Agreements with the following governments, which wholly increases collective efficiency. Descriptions of the organizations listed were taken from those specific organizations' promotional materials and websites to aid in the creation of this report.

- **Cooperative Computer System (CCS)**— CCS is a consortium of public libraries in Chicago's north and northwest suburbs that share a database for circulation, acquisitions, cataloging, interlibrary loans, and an online public access catalog.
- **Illinois Libraries Present (ILP)**— ILP is a consortium of public libraries across Illinois that provides premier online events at equitable prices for participating member libraries of all sizes and budgets. They connect communities and audiences across the state through shared event experiences.
- **Illinois Secretary of State**— The Secretary of State also serves as the State Librarian and assists libraries throughout Illinois. In addition, the Library is participating in a pilot Court project conducted through the Secretary of State Office. The project aims to allow self-litigants to attend court proceedings virtually at the library. Moreover, library staff will be trained to provide court navigator services.
- **Illinois State Library**— The Illinois State Library supports libraries statewide through various grant programs and initiatives. These programs aim to enhance interlibrary cooperation and expand libraries' role in meeting the information needs of their communities. They cover a wide range of library types and user populations, serving all regions of the state. The programs address important areas such as library construction, online access, resource sharing, literacy, and diversity.
- **Illinois Treasurer's Office**— We utilize the Illinois ePay Service for credit card transaction processing. They have been able to negotiate lower processing fees because of the number of local governments using the service.
- **Library Administrators Council of Northern Illinois (LACONI)**— A consortium that provides access to reasonably priced or free training and continuing education opportunities for library staff to introduce new technologies and ideas, best practices, and popular programs for adults and children.
- **McHenry, City Of**— The City of McHenry is the largest portion of the Library's District, and the Library has a good working relationship with the City. This cooperation is evident in events such as Coffee with the Police Chief, a StoryWalk in a City-owned park, Library access to local parks for traveling storytimes, participation in City events, and resource sharing. As a taxing body, the Library considers any tax proposals, such as TIF Districts and tax abatements for vacant properties that the City proposes. The Library participates in such proposals when they align with the overall economic development goals of the community and our services to our patrons. A Library staff member also serves on the City's **Landmark Commission** to promote and preserve the community's heritage.
- **McHenry, County Of**— The Library district is entirely in the County of McHenry. The library serves as an election polling place, and library staff are deputy voter registrars. The Library is also part of the County's **Workforce Network**, offering services to those looking for employment or workplace skills development.

- **McHenry County College (MCC)**— The Library collaborates with MCC to promote services and resources. It provides space for MCC's Adult Basic Literacy Education Volunteers to hold tutoring sessions.
- **McHenry County Conservation District**— Works to preserve McHenry County's public open space, natural resources, water, and wildlife. We work together to share resources and promote services. The library hosts the Conservation District's annual photo exhibition highlighting local land and wildlife, and the district hosts an outdoor library storytime during the summer.
- **McHenry County Libraries**— The McHenry County Libraries and their staffs work together to provide networking, best practices, and joint programming like the Library Lover's Expedition to benefit all public libraries in the county and their patrons.
- **McHenry School District 15**— District 15 is responsible for educating elementary and middle school students in McHenry. The district and the library have collaborated to enhance learning opportunities by sharing resources. We are currently working together to develop an Inter-Governmental Agreement (IGA) that will enable all students to obtain library cards through school registration. Library staff also regularly attend and assist when possible at the **BPAC (Bilingual Parents Advisory Committee)** events.
- **McHenry School District 156**— District 156 educates McHenry's high school students. The district and the library have collaborated to enhance learning opportunities by sharing resources. The Library utilizes group purchasing for paper with the District to lower costs. The Library also accepts teen volunteers from the high school who are looking for service hours to fulfill graduation requirements or for service clubs.
- **McHenry Township Fire District**— The Library works with the McHenry Township Fire District to share information about fire prevention through programming and utilizes their AED/CPR training courses for staff.
- **North Suburban Digital Consortium (NSDC)**— A consortium of eight libraries with a shared collection of digital audiobooks and magazines, ebooks, and streaming video for patron circulation.
- **Reaching Across Illinois Libraries System (RAILS)**— RAILS is a regional library system and government agency that provides services to libraries in the northern and west-central areas of the state of Illinois. It connects over 1250 libraries of different types to networking, interlibrary loan services, sharing purchasing, continuing education, and much more.
- **Wonder Lake School District 36**— District 36 educates elementary and middle school students in Wonder Lake. The district and the library have collaborated to enhance learning opportunities by sharing resources.

## G. Community Partnerships

Descriptions of the organizations listed were taken from those specific organizations' promotional materials and websites to aid in the creation of this report.

The Library collaborates with local and national organizations that strive to improve our shared community in different ways. We carefully assess all partnership requests and explore opportunities to work towards our shared goals. Although we have listed some of our most recurring and recent collaborations below, this is a limited list of organizations we partner with.

To fulfill our role as a source of community information, we provide designated bulletin boards and literature rack space in the library for local individuals and groups to display community, cultural, and educational information and to announce events and services that are of general and current interest. We also provide space for these organizations to share information through tabling events in our lobby and offer meeting room space at a reduced cost.

- **4-C: Community Coordinated Child Care**— A local non-profit dedicated to helping providers of early childhood services. We work together to share resources and promote services.
- **AARP**— AARP provides free Senior Safe Driver courses at the library and annually runs the local Tax-Aide program, which provides seniors and low-income individuals with free tax preparation.
- **Bernie's Book Bank**— A nonprofit organization, Bernie's Book Bank, provided new and gently used books for families to keep during the pandemic. The books were delivered during the library's free meal services for kids.
- **British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois (BIGWIL)**— BIGWIL provides public access to its genealogical collection by housing it in our library. We also coordinate presentations and share resources related to genealogy.
- **Birth to Five**— A statewide council to promote the expansion of quality early literacy education in communities across the state. We work together to share resources and promote services.
- **CASA of McHenry, Home of the Sparrow, Live4Lali, McHenry Youth and Family, NAMI, PADS of McHenry, Pioneer Center, Rotary Club of McHenry** — Various non-profit organizations like these in our community provide social services for mental health, addiction, homelessness, job placement, workplace skill development, tutoring, advocacy, citizenship, ESL classes, and more. We collaborate with these organizations to share resources and promote their services through events, literature sharing, informative sessions held at the Library, and inviting them to our all-staff meetings to discuss their services. This helps us to refer patrons for services more effectively.
- **FISH McHenry and Neighbors Food Pantry of Wonder Lake**— Local food pantries in the Library District with whom we collaborate to share resources and promote services. They benefit from Library initiatives like donating overdue fines collected during certain periods to local non-profits.
- **Friends of the McHenry Library**— The Friends of the McHenry Public Library is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the library's value, enhancing its resources, and improving its services. The Friends group members support the library by volunteering their time, raising funds, and promoting programs. The library has a book sale room run by the Friends where gently used books and audio/visual materials are sold. Donated materials are stored in the Library's warehouse for bi-annual sales.
- **Lions Club International of McHenry**— An international non-profit organization to help those in need. We work together to share resources and promote services. The Library has hosted mobile vision and hearing screening clinics and served as a collection site for their used eyeglasses program.
- **McHenry County Genealogy Interest Group (MCGIS)**— MCGIS provides public access to its genealogical collection by housing it in a library. We also coordinate presentations and share resources related to genealogy.
- **McHenry Area Chamber of Commerce**— The Chamber offers the Library various opportunities to connect with its community through events such as the Fiesta Days Parade, Farmer's Market, and Murder Mystery Scavenger Hunt. The Library promotes its services to new community members through Chamber welcome boxes. In addition, the Library extends its support to the Chamber's initiatives by providing resources like the library's hotspots so that Chamber staff can work on-site at these events.
- **McHenry County Historical Society**— This local organization and the Library collaborate to coordinate presentations and share resources related to genealogy and local history.
- **McHenry Garden Club**— A local organization dedicated to promoting gardening and other agricultural sciences in the community. We work collaboratively to share resources and promote various services. They donate funds annually to the library to increase the

availability of agricultural sciences resources. Additionally, they facilitate children's programs on gardening at the library to encourage interest.

- **McHenry Moose Lodge #691**— The local chapter of an international organization that volunteers and raises funds for various community causes. The Library and the Lodge are coordinating a paper shredding event for the community.
- **Northern Illinois Food Bank**— The Library serves as a site for the Northern Illinois Food Bank's Child Nutrition Programs by serving meals to kids ages 18 and under at the Library through the Summer Food Service Program and the After School Meal program.
- **Options and Advocacy**— A nonprofit that supports families with Parent Support Services, Early Intervention, Playgroups, and the Autism Resource Center. We work together to share resources and promote services, and the Library has hosted their pre-kindergarten early intervention screenings.
- **PCs for People**— The Library is one of the few distribution sites in Northern Illinois for PCs for People. This national non-profit organization aims to provide low-cost quality computers and internet to low-income individuals, families, and non-profit organizations.
- **Preschool centers**— The library provides a range of services to local preschool centers, which include classroom visits for early literacy story times, library tours, teacher checkouts, a Preschool Teacher e-newsletter about library services and resources, an art display wall for centers to showcase their students' artwork to the community, and a local Preschool Fair where different centers can set up booths to share information about their services with local families.
- **Senior Centers and Assisted Living Communities**— The Library works in collaboration with local senior centers and assisted living facilities to offer library services to residents who are mostly homebound. We deliver materials to residents with limited transportation, share bins of books for facility book exchange, support the book clubs with additional copies, and attend events to promote the advantages of library services.

## H. Review of Laws, Policies, Rules and Procedures, Training Materials, and other Documents

The Decennial Committee, Library Board of Trustees, and Library Administration have reviewed the following non-exhaustive list of laws, policies, training materials, and other documents applicable to the Library in order to evaluate our compliance and to determine if any of the foregoing should be amended.

- State laws applicable to Libraries
- Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/1 *et seq.*)
- Policy on public comment
- Designation of OMA officer (5 ILCS 120/1.05(a))
- All Board Members have completed OMA Training (5 ILCS 120/1.05(b))
- Schedule of Regular Meetings of the Library Board (5 ILCS 120/2.03)
- Illinois Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 *et seq.*)
- Designation of FOIA Officer (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- FOIA Officer Training (5 ILCS 140/3.5(b))
  - Computation and Retention of FOIA Requests (5 ILCS 140/3.5(a))
- Posting Other Required FOIA Information (5 ILCS 140/4(a); 5 ILCS 140/4(b))
  - List of Types or Categories of FOIA Records under Library Control (5 ILCS 140/5)
- Periodic Meetings to Review Closed Meeting Minutes (5 ILCS 120/2.06(d))

- ☑ IMRF Total Compensation Postings (5 ILCS 120/7.3)
- ☑ Designation of Whistleblower Auditing Official (50 ILCS 105/4.1 et seq.)
- ☑ All applicable officials have filed statements of economic interests (5 ILCS 420/4A-101; 5 ILCS 420/4A-101.5 et seq.)
- ☑ Sexual harassment prevention training (775 ILCS 5/2-109(C))
- ☑ Our Intergovernmental Agreements
- ☑ Our budget and financial documents
- ☑ State Ethics Laws, including, but not limited to, the State Officials and Employees Ethics Act (5 ILCS 430/1-1 et seq.)
- ☑ MPLD Board and Employee Ethics Policy
- ☑ Reports on government efficiency, including "[Local Government Efficiency and Size in Illinois: Counting Tax Revenues, Not Governments](#)" by Wendell Cox (2016);

## I. What Have We Done Well?

The McHenry Public Library District is committed to being financially responsible with taxpayer funds. The Library has utilized repurposed buildings as facilities rather than constructing new ones. Since 1999, the last time the Library had a referendum approved for a millage increase, it has worked to increase funds for library services and collections within the framework of PTELL.

In the fiscal years of 2013-2014, 2015-2016, 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019, 2019-2020, and 2020-2021, the Board decided against any levy increase with the taxpayer in mind. However, due to significant new property developments in the two biggest cities within the district, the library has requested an increase above the CPI or PTELL limits in recent fiscal years to meet our community's increased service demands.

The Library is dedicated to maintaining transparency and ethical practices as a government entity. We conduct our meetings in compliance with the Open Meetings Act and keep information about our finances and governance readily available on our website. We retain all necessary documents and respond promptly to all FOIA requests.

As demonstrated earlier in this report, the Library works well with other organizations in the community and nationally to ensure that our community is provided with the best possible service. When a need is identified that we cannot meet, we use our extensive network to refer the patron to better-suited providers.

The Library hires well-qualified individuals who have the best interests of the Library and the community in mind. They provide a welcoming environment and excellent customer service to all.

Furthermore, we are a responsible employer in our community. We provide fair pay and benefits and adhere to state and federal employment laws while operating a safe, socially responsible, and ethically sound organization.

## J. What are the Inefficiencies We Identified, and What Can We Do Better or More Efficiently?

- As a District Library, we serve more than just one city or town. However, our primary focus has been on the largest city where the library is located. To better serve all residents in



our district, we need to make a concerted effort to become more familiar with the other cities, towns, and villages in our district. This can be achieved by meeting local officials, coordinating services, and participating in community events in other areas of the district. We must also listen to how those residents' needs may be different from those we tend to focus on.

- The Library will need to address the current building and its location in the near future. As the building is over 50 years old, the cost of maintaining, retrofitting, and repairing the facility may begin to outweigh the benefits of doing so. We also need to consider that the population using library services is increasing, and the needs of library users are changing along with the demographics of our community. Although the library has done an excellent job of repurposing an existing building into a library, in the future, creating a facility that is customized to a library may bring overall better benefits to our community.
- The Library's district boundaries are directly adjacent to parts of underserved communities of Bull Valley, Prairie Grove, and Woodstock, IL. While many members of those communities utilize our services on a limited basis or through purchasing a non-resident fee card, we should begin investigating offering pop-up services in these areas in our future strategic plan. This might result in an interest from those communities in joining our Library District.
- The Library has the largest service population in the county, and some of the surrounding libraries adjacent to us have the smallest. It might be worth investigating in the future whether merging districts could offer better services to both groups of customers while saving costs.
- The Library currently hires external vendors for various building and grounds projects and capital projects such as lawn care, landscaping, snow removal, window washing, and parking lot resurfacing/restriping. These types of projects are also needed by other local governments. The Library should explore collaborating with other local governments to utilize their in-house workforce or hire external vendors for group contracts. This could lead to cost savings for taxpayers.
- By reviewing the data we currently collect, we can identify areas where we can make improvements and become more efficient in our decision-making processes. This will lead to greater insight and reduced risks, allowing us to allocate resources more effectively to the areas and services that need it the most. In addition, it is important to stay informed about the changing demographics of our community and how it impacts our Library services.
- Our Board, administration, and staff must continuously explore ways to expand our collections, programming, services, and outreach to non-library users who are district taxpayers. We should increase the awareness of the resources available because they ultimately fund the library, and we should be encouraged to utilize them.
- The Library should focus on enhancing its support for staff by improving the employee experience. This can be done by promoting better communication, providing better training and onboarding programs, offering mentorship opportunities, and creating a succession plan that prioritizes employee growth and fosters a sense of ownership and commitment to the organization, community, and the field of librarianship.

## **K. Studies on Governmental Efficiencies**

In preparing this report, we reviewed several studies on local government efficiency. These studies show that the average local government in Illinois serves 1800 residents compared to the national median of 2850 individuals.

- An Inventory of Local Governments in Illinois
  - <https://www.civiced.org/inventory>

- Local Government Efficiency and Size in Illinois: Counting Tax Revenues, Not Governments by Wendell Cox.
  - <https://www.toi.org/Resources/233dd69f-b58c-471c9c26-290460a3502b/Local%20Government%20Efficiency%20%202016%20Cox%20report.pdf>
- Local Governments in Illinois: How Many is Too Many? By Alden Loury
  - <https://www.metroplanning.org/news/6991/Local-governments-in-Illinois-How-many-is-too-many>

**L. Our Committee's Recommendations Regarding Increased Accountability and Efficiency:**

The Board of Trustees and the Decennial Committee have conducted a thorough evaluation of the existing services, partnerships, policies, and procedures that impact the organization's accountability and efficiency levels.

Based on the evaluation, it has been determined that the organization currently meets a high standard of efficiency and responsibility. The identified inefficiencies will be reviewed over the next decade to determine whether they are feasible and beneficial to the taxpayer. We will address those that we can.

The organization recognizes that continuous improvement and attentiveness to surveying the landscape for new opportunities not addressed in this report to serve the community better are crucial to the library's success and to the efficiency of a local government entity.

Submitted by: /s/ Charles Reilly  
 Charles T. Reilly, Chairman  
 Decennial Efficiency Committee

Date of Committee Approval of Report: February 20, 2024