



Friends of Michigan Libraries

Information * Support * Advocacy

Friends of Michigan Libraries Strategic Plan 2025-2028

Mission Statement

Friends of Michigan Libraries (FOML) is a non-profit, volunteer organization dedicated to helping Friends groups throughout the state succeed in their mission to support the needs of public and school libraries.

Vision Statement

The Friends of Michigan Libraries is committed to delivering valued services to a growing number of members throughout the state by offering access to useful information and timely assistance in identifying and developing viable solutions for members' needs.

Key Values

Key values say a lot about what intangibles will guide the decision-making of an organization. They are concepts and characteristics that clearly signal to both outsiders and insiders what standards of behavior we expect of ourselves and them in any interaction.

- **Open Communication:** Frequent, clear and actionable communications with all relevant audiences.
- **Collaboration:** Bring groups with similar needs and goals together to their mutual benefit.
- **Sharing:** Make our resources of knowledge, time and experience accessible to members to help them succeed.
- **Integrity:** Be honest and candid in our dealings with members, prospects, vendors and all other entities we engage with.
- **Fairness:** Treat all individuals and groups equally and in accordance with legal and ethical norms.
- **Innovation:** Put a high emphasis on an attitude of constant improvement and resistance to the inertia of the status quo.
- **Advocacy:** Help the public better appreciate the purpose and importance of Friends groups.

Key Strategies & Tactics

Strategies and the tactics associated with them are only as good as the availability of the resources needed to execute them. Here is a list of the strategies and tactics that FOML would like to pursue over the next several years. The strategies are listed in order of priority, as are the tactics listed beneath each of them. This is a dynamic document which is likely to experience reprioritization and modification over time.

STRATEGY 1:

Adjust organizational and operational structure and procedures to align with the key strategies more closely.

- Tactic 1-A: Adjust the board's committee structure to better reflect FOML's priorities.
- Tactic 1-B: Revise board recruitment process to better establish performance expectations and selection criteria.
- Tactic 1-C: Explore recruiting non-board volunteers to fill critical time and skill needs.
- Tactic 1-D: Determine if we are collecting necessary data on all audiences and, if not, expand our database capabilities.
- Tactic 1-E: Establish and implement procedures for the collection, storing and preserving of archival history at the University of Michigan's Bentley Library.

STRATEGY 2:

Increase our visibility among and communications with Friends groups and increase their knowledge of who we are and how we can assist them.

- Tactic 2-A: Redesign and enhance our website to make it more interactive and provide access to a wider variety of training and informational tools for members. (Also supports Strategy 3.)
- Tactic 2-B: Conduct timely, relevant, and localized workshops that tie into key themes that are of value to Friends groups. (Also supports Strategy 3.)
- Tactic 2-C: Create and deliver targeted communications for each phase in our relationship with a Friends group (e.g., solicitation, welcome, touching base, renewal, etc.) ...called a Lifecycle Communication Plan.
- Tactic 2-D: Investigate expanding the reach of the newsletter to non-members and publicize case studies. (Also supports Strategy 3.)
- Tactic 2-E: Maintain our social media presence and integrate it with other communications media.
- Tactic 2-F: Conduct a benchmarking survey of all Friends groups to establish current levels of awareness and perceived value. The results would tell us what we need to focus on and establish starting points for the establishment of goals and measurement of progress in achieving them.
- Tactic 2-G: Increase content in a variety of media (print, video, website, email, events, etc.) that will give members easy access to useful information and tips.

STRATEGY 3:

Increase the perceived value of FOML in the marketplace.

- Tactic 3-A: Create and promote a comprehensive Consulting/Mentoring Program that will provide meaningful action plans for individual Friends groups to achieve their objectives.
- Tactic 3-B: Increase the frequency and impact of guest speakers at key events (dependent upon the success of Strategy 5) and do more to promote them in advance of the events.
- Tactic 3-C: Investigate possible additional services we might provide to members that need assistance (e.g., Volunteer Exchange Program, where groups share volunteers on an ad hoc basis; communication templates; newsletter design; surrogate web page; etc.).
- Tactic 3-D: Identify opportunities to deliver on our promise of advocacy and develop action plans to leverage them and communicate them to Friends groups.

STRATEGY 4:

Make our involvement with Friends groups more local/personal to expand our reach beyond our traditional southeast Michigan roots.

- Tactic 4-A: Create regional leads/teams to help plan and execute more targeted communications and events relevant to the Friends groups in their area.
- Tactic 4-B: Get invited to Friends board meetings and other events to share in-person information about FOML and the assistance we can provide while gathering information about their needs.
- Tactic 4-C: Explore the viability of building a working relationship with other entities—e.g., KDL Friends Alliance—to the mutual benefit of both organizations.

STRATEGY 5:

Increase revenues from donors and sponsors to reduce our financial dependency on dues and fees from members (i.e., make it more affordable for Friends groups to become members and take advantage of our services).

- Tactic 5-A: Create a dedicated 2-3 person Fundraising Team to specifically identify potential donors and solicit support.
- Tactic 5-B: Develop materials (print, presentations, letters, etc.) to support the solicitation efforts of the team.
- Tactic 5-C: Develop a list of organizations or individuals to target for donations and/or sponsorships; maintain a database of leads to show what phase each is in (e.g., “Not Contacted,” “Awaiting Response,” “Discussed via Phone/In Person.” Etc.)