



ALGANSEE • BRONSON • COLDWATER  
QUINCY • SHERWOOD • UNION TWP.

## TECHNOLOGY PLAN (2025-2029)

Adopted: August 19, 2024

Revised: n/a

### Background

The Branch District Library (BDL) has been at the forefront of technology for a long time. We computerized our circulation system shortly after the district formed in the early 1990s. BDL was the first Internet service provider for Branch County in the mid 1990s, before passing it on to the Coldwater Board of Public Utilities. In the early 2000s, we more than doubled the number of public access computers available to the public, and ensured they were pre-loaded with useful software to help our patrons accomplish a wide array of tasks.

BDL began providing wireless Internet access to our patrons at all locations in 2004. In 2007, we helped to bring high-speed wireless Internet service to Algansee township, an area underserved with connectivity. In 2008, we became the first public library in Michigan to switch to the open-source Evergreen Integrated Library System, saving money while increasing features and future potential. In 2010, we began circulating digital materials to our patrons. In 2015, we upgraded our internal network connections to gigabit ethernet at all branches.

In 2016, we began offering digital video to our patrons, and first offered the ability for patrons to print from their own wireless devices. In 2017, we rolled out tablet computers for the youngest BDL patrons, deployed document scanners for the public at all branches to help our adult patrons with their business and office needs, and installed a modern voice-over-Internet-protocol telephone system at all locations. BDL upgraded our WiFi in 2020, made it possible to send print jobs from home and pick them up at the library, and began circulating cellular hotspots for patrons to use at home.

There are additional new and exciting services we would love to offer our patrons—maker spaces, audiovisual labs, self-checkout, and more—but our existing space and budgetary constraints are the limiting factors at this time. The availability of sufficient network speeds in our more rural locations will continue to be a problem, especially with continually increasing usage of the public’s own mobile devices in our facilities.



**BDL ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**

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## **BDL Mission Statement**

To provide the people of our communities with library collections and services to meet their educational, informational, and recreational needs.

## **BDL Vision Statement**

Our vision is to provide vibrant resources and inclusive spaces for people to thrive through innovation, education, and entertainment.

## **Technology Goal**

A robust technological infrastructure is a requirement for the Library to achieve the goals in the above Mission and Vision statements. Technology comprises an ever-increasing part of what it takes to be a successful library, something that BDL has recognized for decades. It is our goal at BDL not only to continue to offer high-quality technology resources, but to stay at the forefront of technological trends that will maximize the impact of our library services on our community.

## **Strategies**

Achieving the above goal will require continued financial investment in hardware and software, digital services, and training to library staff and the public. We will maintain our Library's computer resources at approximately the levels they were in 2024, while carefully examining usage statistics, patron needs, and feedback to determine if our computing and network infrastructures need changes.

Recognizing that library services—and education and entertainment in general—are increasingly relying on delivery over the Internet, BDL will always seek to maximize our Internet connectivity. We prioritize reliable wired connections for Internet access, whenever possible, and will upgrade speeds whenever there is need and operating budgets allow.

We will continue to stay highly engaged with our patrons through our web site, social media presence, and other online communication.

Change is a fact of life when dealing with technology. BDL will continue to train staff on what they need to know to successfully perform their duties via in-house training, remote workshops, online courses, and any other effective means that is available. Library staff will continue to foster technological literacy to our patrons through group training and special events, guest presenters, and interactive one-on-one classes to address patron needs.

## Evaluation

BDL will conduct periodic technology user surveys, either on their own or as part of larger, library-wide user surveys. Shortcuts are on the desktops of all library-provided computers so that patrons can easily and anonymously offer their feedback on our technology, or any other aspect of library service. We also offer pre-paid postcards for patrons to send handwritten feedback to the library.

Library staff, for whom technology is a key job skill, will be evaluated on their technological skills at minimum as part of their annual performance review, and throughout the year as needed. Periodic quizzes will be administered to staff to help assess their technological readiness.

## Funding

To maintain our 2024 levels of service, BDL will attempt to provide at least \$50,000 - \$60,000 per year from the Operating Budget to fund system-wide hardware maintenance. In addition, materials budgets will also include dedicated funding for digital resources and online services selected by the library to best meet the needs of our patrons. Utility budgets will include funding for robust Internet connectivity and telecommunications support. Wherever feasible and available, grant monies or reimbursements will be used to offset costs of our technological offerings or enhance technological services.

## Bidding

Competitive bids will be sought for all major purchases, per the BDL Financial Controls and Purchasing Policy.

## Inventory Overview and Replacement Schedule

At BDL we strive to keep the actively used public and staff computers on a five-year replacement schedule. "Computer" in this case is defined broadly as a server, desktop, laptop, router, tablet, or other mobile device that is directly involved in supporting staff or patron general purpose computing needs. There are approximately 170 computers as part of this rotation (95 public-use computers, 58 staff-use computers, 10 servers, 7 routers). The computers providing access to our online catalog are not part of this rotation. These less-critical machines are pulled from public- and staff-use computers that have aged out.

Printers and scanners are also kept on a five-to-ten-year replacement schedule, as much as possible. Displays, networking gear, barcode scanners, and other sturdier technology that do not require operating system drivers are generally kept for the duration of their functional life, or until a major upgrade is planned.

Hardware that has aged out and is no longer needed is donated to eligible non-profit organizations, sold in accordance to library policy and any applicable grant terms, or recycled, as the situation warrants.

### Planning Assumptions

While technology costs generally decline over time, the cost of a decent PC workstation capable of withstanding abuse from public use for five or more years is relatively pricey. Prices assumed for 2025 are in the chart below. For planning purposes, we will assume an increase of 2% each year to account for inflation. The totals based on these increased prices are what are seen in the tables for years 2-5.

Tech Item	Price
PCs	\$ 1,000
Tablets	\$ 350
Servers	\$ 5,000
Document Scanners	\$ 400
Large Printers	\$ 2,000
Small Printers	\$ 500

Macintosh desktops count as 2 PC desktops; the IT Director’s and Assistant Director’s Macintoshes each count as a server. Other less-common items will have their cost estimates noted in the plan below.

## Year 1: 2025

### Replacing Tech from 2020

	Staff PCs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
<b>Algansee</b>					0
<b>Bronson</b>	4	1			5
<b>Coldwater</b>	10	22		3	35
<b>Quincy</b>		1			1
<b>Sherwood</b>					0
<b>Union Twp.</b>					0
<b>Bookmobile</b>					0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>41</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$14,000</b>	<b>\$24,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$53,000</b>

*Algansee*

Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Bronson*

Staff: Office, Service Desk 1-3  
 Public: Microfilm  
 Server: none

*Coldwater*

Staff: IT (2), Marketing (2), Workroom (2),  
 RFID (4)  
 Public: Microfilm, Adult Lab (8), Teen Lab  
 (6), Kids' Place (6), HHR  
 Server: Asst. Dir., DeepFreeze, Public  
 Gateway

*Quincy*

Staff: none  
 Public: Microfilm  
 Server: none

*Sherwood*

Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Union Twp.*

Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Bookmobile*

Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

## Year 2: 2026

### Replacing Tech from 2021

	Staff PCs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
<b>Alganssee</b>	4				4
<b>Bronson</b>				1	1
<b>Coldwater</b>	12	10		1	23
<b>Quincy</b>	6				6
<b>Sherwood</b>	4				4
<b>Union Twp.</b>	6				6
<b>Bookmobile</b>	1				1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$33,660</b>	<b>\$10,200</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$10,200</b>	<b>\$54,060</b>

*Alganssee*

Staff: Service Desk, Public Gateway (2), router  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Bronson*

Staff: router  
 Public: none  
 Server: Public Gateway

*Coldwater*

Staff: Bookkeeper, HHR, ILL (2), Kids' Place (2), Service Desk (3), Teen Space, Laptop (2)  
 Public: Laptops (10)  
 Server: router

*Quincy*

Staff: Office, Service Desk (2), Public Gateway (2), router  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Sherwood*

Staff: Service Desk, Public Gateway (2), router  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Union Twp.*

Staff: Office, Service Desk (2), Public Gateway (2), router  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Bookmobile*

Staff: router  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

## Year 3: 2027

### Replacing Tech from 2022

	Staff PCs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
<b>Alganssee</b>	2	4	2		8
<b>Bronson</b>	2		4		6
<b>Coldwater</b>	2		8	1	11
<b>Quincy</b>	2	4	3		9
<b>Sherwood</b>	2	4	2		8
<b>Union Twp.</b>	2	9	4		15
<b>Bookmobile</b>	2				2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$14,560</b>	<b>\$21,840</b>	<b>\$8,372</b>	<b>\$5,200</b>	<b>\$49,972</b>
<b>New Tablet Mounts</b>			<b>\$10,000</b>		<b>\$59,972</b>
<b>New Telephone Server / System</b>				<b>\$\$\$</b>	<b>\$70,000+</b>

*Alganssee*

Staff: Cash Register, smartphone  
 Public: Public Lab (4), Tablets (2)  
 Server: none

*Bronson*

Staff: Cash Register, smartphone  
 Public: Tablets (4)  
 Server: none

*Coldwater*

Staff: Cash Register, smartphone  
 Public: Tablets (8)  
 Server: IT

*Quincy*

Staff: Cash Register, smartphone  
 Public: Tablets (3), Public Lab (4)  
 Server: none

*Sherwood*

Staff: Cash Register, smartphone  
 Public: Tablets (2), Public Lab (4)  
 Server: none

*Union Twp.*

Staff: Cash Register, smartphone  
 Public: Tablets (4), Public Lab (9)  
 Server: none

*Bookmobile*

Staff: smartphone  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

## Year 4: 2028

### Replacing Tech from 2023

	Staff PCs	Public PCs	Large Printer	Small Printer	Totals
<b>Alganssee</b>	1	1		1	3
<b>Bronson</b>		11	1		12
<b>Coldwater</b>	6		3	9	18
<b>Quincy</b>		1	1		2
<b>Sherwood</b>	1	1		1	3
<b>Union Twp.</b>		1	1		2
<b>Bookmobile</b>	2	4		1	7
<b>Totals</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$10,600</b>	<b>\$20,140</b>	<b>\$12,720</b>	<b>\$6,360</b>	<b>\$49,820</b>
<b>Document &amp; Flatbed Scanners</b>			<b>\$11,000</b>		<b>\$60,820</b>

*Alganssee*

Staff: laptop, small printer  
Public: laptop

*Bronson*

Staff: large printer  
Public: Public lab (10), laptop

*Coldwater*

Staff: cataloging (2), director (2), IT (2), large printers (3), small printers (9)  
Public:  
Server:

*Quincy*

Staff: large printer  
Public: laptop

*Sherwood*

Staff: laptop, small printer  
Public: laptop

*Union Twp.*

Staff: large printer  
Public: laptop

*Bookmobile*

Staff: laptop, small printer, public gateway  
Public: laptops (4)  
Server: none



## Year 5: 2029

### Replacing Tech from 2024

	Staff PCs	Public PCs	Tablets	Servers	Totals
<b>Alganssee</b>					0
<b>Bronson</b>					0
<b>Coldwater</b>				2	2
<b>Quincy</b>					0
<b>Sherwood</b>					0
<b>Union Twp.</b>					0
<b>Bookmobile</b>					0
<b>Totals</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Cost</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$10,800</b>	<b>\$10,800</b>
<b>Coldwater Security Cameras &amp; 5-year License</b>			<b>\$50,000</b>		<b>\$60,800</b>

*Alganssee*  
 Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Quincy*  
 Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Bronson*  
 Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Sherwood*  
 Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Coldwater*  
 Staff:  
 Public:  
 Server: web server, file server

*Union Twp.*  
 Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none

*Bookmobile*  
 Staff: none  
 Public: none  
 Server: none