

Hancock Area District Library Millage Proposal — Frequently Asked Questions

This document is intended to provide factual, nonpartisan information about the proposed millage for the Hancock Area District Library (HADL). It was prepared with the assistance of the Keweenaw Community Foundation.

Election Date: Tuesday, November 3, 2026

Voters In: City of Hancock, Hancock Township, Franklin Township, and Quincy Township

Find your polling location: [Houghton County Clerk voting information](#)

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What is the Millage Proposing?

The goal of the millage is **to continue current service levels** as the library transitions from being funded by the Hancock Public Schools to a publicly funded operation overseen by its own board of trustees. This includes:

- Staffing the library outside school hours
- Purchasing new books and materials
- Supporting library programming (summer reading, The Library of Things, the Book Vending Machine)
- Maintaining digital service subscriptions (e.g., Libby, Hoopla, Kanopy, etc)

If the millage passes, the Hancock Area District Library (HADL) will continue to exist and provide current service levels.

If the millage does not pass, the library would revert to operating as a School Public Library. This would mean the library is funded by the local school district and operates with a narrower scope of services.

Service	Millage Does <u>Not</u> Pass - School Public Library	Millage <u>Passes</u> - Hancock Area District Library
Book lending of existing materials	Yes - with more limited hours	Yes
School day hours	Yes	Yes
Evening and weekend hours	Limited, volunteer-staffed	Yes
Librarian on staff	No	Yes
Interlibrary loan	Yes, limited	Yes
Purchasing of new books and other materials	No	Yes
Computer and internet access	Yes - with more limited hours	Yes
Copying and printing services	No	Yes
Children's reading room	Yes - with more limited hours	Yes
The Library of Things	No	Yes
Digital Services: Libby, Hoopla, Kanopy, Michigan eLibrary	No	Yes
Summer Reading Program	No	Yes
1000 Books Before Kindergarten Program	No	Yes
Storytime Program	No	Yes

If the millage does not pass, would the library close to the public?

No. If the millage does not pass, the library would continue to operate as a School Public Library, providing minimum book-lending services. It would not close entirely—but hours, staffing, material purchasing, and programming would be reduced.

Why didn't the library just become a branch of the Portage Lake District Library?

This option was explored, but members of the Portage Lake District Library must pay a tax rate of 1.96 mills. The .7 mill proposal can supply an excellent library at a much lower cost.

How the Millage Works

What is a "millage" and how is it calculated on my property?

A millage is a property tax rate. One "mill" equals \$1 of tax for every \$1,000 of a property's taxable value. This is not the market value of your home. Taxable value is the figure shown on your property tax statement—at most, half of your home's market value.

The proposed millage is 0.70 mill, meaning \$0.70 per \$1,000 of taxable value.

What would this cost me specifically?

Using the 0.70 mill rate, here is what the millage would cost annually at different taxable values:

Market Value of Home	Taxable Value of Home (≤ ½ of your home's market value)	Annual Cost in Property Taxes
\$50,000	\$25,000	\$17.50
\$100,000	\$50,000	\$35.00
\$150,000	\$75,000	\$52.50
\$200,000	\$100,000	\$70.00

To estimate your own cost: Take your property's taxable value (found on your tax statement or your county's online property search), and multiply that figure by 0.0007. The taxable value is usually less than or equal to 1/2 of your home's market value.

Example: For a home with a market value of \$80,000 and a taxable value of \$40,000 → $40,000 \times 0.0007 = \$28.00$ per year in property taxes.

What would this cost my neighbors?

Using the 0.70 mill rate, here is what the millage would cost households given the median residential taxable value in each community.

	Median Residential Taxable Value	Annual Cost	Monthly Cost
City of Hancock	\$55,025	\$38.52	\$3.21
Franklin Township	\$24,998	\$17.50	\$1.46
Hancock Township	\$50,891	\$35.62	\$2.97
Quincy Township	\$37,969	\$26.58	\$2.21

How long would the millage last? Is it permanent or does it need renewal?

The millage, as written, would be levied for five (5) years — 2026 through 2030. It is not permanent. To continue beyond 2030, voters would need to reauthorize it in a future election.

How Will the Hancock Area District Library Operate?

A district library is a library established under Michigan's District Library Establishment Act, governed by its own board and authorized to levy voter-approved millages to fund operations directly—similar to how a school district or municipality can seek voter-approved funding. An appointed board representing the City of Hancock, Hancock Township, Franklin Township, and Quincy Township would govern HADL.

How would the millage funds be overseen?

The HADL board will adopt an annual public budget, and financial records will be subject to independent audit and available for public inspection.

Can the millage funds be used only for the library, or can they be redirected?

Per the ballot language, the millage is levied **"for the purpose of providing funds for all district library purposes authorized by law."** By law, revenue from the millage may be subject to **capture by the Houghton County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority** (a standard disclosure required on Michigan millage ballot language, applicable to certain properties within brownfield redevelopment zones). Funds from the millage for the library cannot be redirected for any other purpose.

Will Portage Lake District Library continue to be involved in HADL?

PLDL will continue to manage HADL until at least March 31, 2026. HADL is open to a continued management contract with PLDL, but this has not yet been negotiated. If voters choose to pass the millage in November, HADL will be prepared to operate independently by April 1, 2027. With or without PLDL, the future of the Hancock library, with current service levels and staffing, would be secure.

Voting and Ballot Information

When and where do I vote?

Election day is Tuesday, November 3, 2026. You can find your polling place and other voting information by visiting the [Houghton County Clerk website](#) or [Michigan.gov/Vote](#).

What is the exact ballot language I'll see in November?

Voters in the City of Hancock, Hancock Township, Franklin Township, and Quincy Township will see this language on their November ballot:

"Shall the Hancock Area District Library, County of Houghton, Michigan, be authorized to levy annually a new additional millage in an amount not to exceed 0.70 mill (\$0.70 per each \$1,000 of taxable value) against all taxable property within the Hancock Area District Library district for a period of five (5) years, 2026 through 2030, inclusive, for the purpose of providing funds for all district library purposes authorized by law? The estimate of the revenue the Hancock Area

District Library will collect if the millage is approved and levied by the Hancock Area District Library in the first year (2026) is approximately \$200,000. By law, a portion of the revenue from the millage may be subject to capture by the Houghton County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.”
