

Deep River Public Library Strategic Plan 2023-2026



The Deep River Public Library has served its residents for 75 years. We are proud of our library, with its comprehensive collection, beautiful building, and the support of more than 100 volunteers.

Around the world, library services are changing as the way we access information evolves. Library collections are growing so that residents may borrow digital resources and “things,” whether seeds or snowshoes. Library spaces are shifting to simultaneously provide room for technology use, quiet study, hands-on learning, and community meeting needs. Library staff are learning new ways to offer dynamic, relevant services outside library walls. Libraries are striving to be responsive, vibrant community centres where all ages and interests are welcome to learn, to explore, to enjoy, and to connect with neighbours, ideas, and the world at large.

As we emerge from a global pandemic in 2022, the Deep River Public Library aims to ensure that we are meeting our community’s unique and evolving informational, educational, and entertainment needs. Our first strategic plan sets our direction to that end.

Between 2020 and 2022 the library completed community consultation that shaped our strategic plan. This included research, analysis, and outreach online and in-person. 283 or 7% of Deep River residents completed our community survey. The full report and its appendices are available on our website.

Staff and Board met in June of 2022 with Peggy Malcolm, Consultant with the Ontario Library Service, to review community input and set our course. The resulting plan is a living document and we invite feedback and participation as we move forward with dynamic, responsive, and comprehensive library services that best serve our residents.

Naomi Balla-Boudreau
CEO

Our Vision

The Deep River Public Library will be a destination for discovery; a community hub of creativity, curiosity, and connection for every resident.

Our Mission

To be the community's living room: a welcoming and safe gathering place for all residents, with resources that ignite a sense of wonder and spark new possibilities for enjoyment, lifelong learning, and meaningful connection.

Our Values

Inclusion: We provide safe, accessible, and welcoming spaces where everyone is respected.

Community: We are an active part of our community, reaching out to build relationships that enrich the Deep River area. Our services grow out of community needs.

Collaboration: We work in partnership to share expertise, stretch limited resources, and ensure that our services make sense for our community.

Excellence: We strive for excellence in the services that we deliver. We are forward thinking, strategic, and responsive.

Learning: We support learning for all ages. We endorse the UNESCO definition of literacy that includes essential digital, media, citizenship, and job skills. Professional development is a priority for staff so that we provide our community with qualified expertise in evolving times.

Our 2023 - 2026 Goals

1

Build Community

- **Expand communication channels and promote the library's programs, services, and resources.** Develop a marketing strategy to guide staff practice. Consider alternative communications.
- **Engage community partners.** Strengthen existing partnerships. Develop new ones to address gaps in services using a community-led libraries model. Invite partnerships that grow learning opportunities.
- **Expand program offerings.** Maintain core programs. Consider community needs as we emerge from COVID and develop new programs in response. Seek partnerships to expand offerings limited by staff resources.
- **Ensure accessible library services.** Seek input from non-traditional users. Evaluate fines free services for 2023 and beyond. Provide accessible formats and technologies.

2

Support Learning and Development

- **Support our traditional collections.** Maintain a comprehensive collection. Develop a collection plan that audits for format, content, usage, and budget. Maintain and grow accessible formats.
- **Make the most of digital resources.** Explore ways to meet patron demands for digital content. Market current suite of databases. Ensure staff training to support patrons with eResource suite.
- **Build our technology.** Assess our hardware, software, and networking capabilities. Improve internet to minimum of 50Mbps download. Invest in accessible technologies. Ensure staff training to support patrons with tech questions.
- **Expand access to our local history collection.** Determine best content management system to organize and make our local history material discoverable. Develop a digitization plan for our unique records.

- **Support Truth and Reconciliation in Deep River area.** Support research and build awareness of our Indigenous history. Evaluate library collections and subject headings. Provide learning opportunities for staff, Board, and the community that respond to TRC Calls to Action.

3 Create Vibrant, Functional, and Accessible Spaces

- **Assess indoor spaces at the library.** Complete an accessibility audit of library spaces. Conduct a user-study to evaluate and ensure safe, inviting, and multi-use community space. Consider ease of use; develop resources for wayfinding. Inventory library assets and furnishings. Focus re-design on the program room, multi-use space on the main floor (teen and quiet space), and storage.
- **Assess exterior spaces.** Audit for public seating, WIFI reach, and safety.
- **Evaluate open hours.** Align resources with community needs for services and spaces.

4 Strengthen Organizational Capacity

- **Build staff capacity.** Build on staff competencies to excel in job responsibilities. Review procedures for workplace safety.
- **Build governance capacity.** Develop training on relevant topics. Review policies to ensure they support excellent library services.
- **Build volunteer capacity.** Formalize our volunteer program, ensuring that we support volunteers with opportunities that align with their skills and interests.

