



Plan of Service 2021-2025



Mission

High River Library embraces paths to community access, learning, and discovery

Vision

Empowering inquisitive minds.



Introduction

We're so grateful to all of the community members who contributed comments, opinions, and ideas over the past year through surveys, interviews, and in-library and online discussions. Your energy and enthusiasm for library services makes us better every day.

What we heard:

The library is a significant gathering space. When the facility was closed, patrons said they missed speaking to staff and the meaningful human connections they found inside the building. They missed browsing for new materials as well as free learning and inclusion opportunities. Conversely, patrons also found that sometimes the library is too lively and that quieter spaces would be appreciated.

The library provides technological solutions. As public spaces were intermittently open over the past year and half the need for equipment and internet connectivity became greater. The digital divide in Canada is real; rural areas have a lack of reliable broadband and many residents do not own computers and other equipment or cannot afford high rates for internet access. Working and attending school from home exacerbated these problems.

Two significant barriers to library use that emerged were membership fees and lack of knowledge about library services. While people derive a lot of value from the library they felt that others were underinformed about the breadth of service available.

We're enthusiastically committing to responding to the feedback we heard during our consultations and we will continue to listen as you steer the library into the future.

Town of High River Library Board

Pat Shorrock, Chair

Cahina Yontz Alves

Monique Durette

Charles Hepler

Jenny Jones

Ruthanne Koyama

Laurette LaPlante

Karen Orser

Mai-Ann Sprung

Anita van Rootselaar





My child has been reading more of a variety of books at home, loves visiting the library and [the summer reading program] has helped her confidence. She gets nervous in these types of situations, but this has been so good for her and she looks forward to going.

Relationship-building



The High River Library has been an amazing partner in helping us achieve our mission... It is one of the many resources we connect our families to as a service they will continue to use.

Residents will meet their social connection needs through library programs and services.

Businesses, agencies, and other groups in High River will partner with the library for the benefit of the community.

- Be flexible with program delivery. Bring programs into the community a minimum of 20 times/year.
- Embrace diversity. Develop program streams for senior citizens and young adults, as well as reaching out to new residents.
- Apply lessons learned during the pandemic. Offer extended services to library patrons and reduce social isolation.
- Develop mutually beneficial partnerships. Solicit feedback to identify underserved communities in partnership with local businesses, agencies, and groups in High River. Design co-sponsored programs and services for these communities.



Our library is a pretty awesome place but, I think, underutilized. We need people to be talking about it as a place to go to not only to get books.

Access & Awareness

Covid-19 has made me appreciate the library more and it has also forced me to learn to be a lot more proficient with online resources and books. It truly has made me appreciate being a library member.

Residents will be aware of library programs and services of benefit to them.

Community members will have affordable and equitable access to the resources and information they need to thrive.

- Tell our story. Help people understand what the library does. Develop a formal strategy to increase awareness of library programs, spaces, and services. Improve exterior signage at the library.
- Reduce financial barriers. Explore ways to provide broader library use, such as elimination of overdue fines and reducing or eliminating membership fees.
- Be aware of diverse needs. Focus on awareness of alternative collections such as those for print-disabled patrons and Gadgets-to-Go.
- Reduce technological barriers. Conduct e-Resource education classes twice each year.
- Give staff adequate training and support resources. Empower them to pivot in times of crisis as well as meeting regular patron needs.
- Support personal and public health. Plan for library services and policies that assist patrons with physical and mental wellness.





I really enjoy our library! I think the staff is great and I love the fact that you always showcase artists of all types in and around High River. When my sons were younger they loved going to the library to get books and also enjoyed the Nerf Gun fights. I wish that maybe the library was open on Sundays too, but I understand that is hard to do.

Community Learning & Discovery

I think one of the things that we have seen through Covid is that when schools have been shut down the need for technology has been huge for families.

Patrons will be able to take advantage of a variety of spaces in the library

Patrons will have access to technology learning opportunities to bridge the digital divide.

Families will experience programs that increase school-readiness for their children including programs focusing on early literacy and numeracy.

- Provide excellent places to read, study, or work. Provide semi-private spaces in the library facility. Publicize noise levels, usable spaces, and booking options.
- Respond to the digital world. Evaluate technology trends and provide public access to current and emerging technologies. Provide technology training opportunities multiple times per year.
- Support the needs of learners in-library and remotely. Provide in-library computers and one-on-one technical help. For remote learners, loan Chromebooks, smart hubs, and tablets.
- Act on patron feedback. Solicit program suggestions from community on an annual basis.
- Champion reading in all forms. Individually, in groups, silently, out loud, books, comics, or magazines, online or via audio—all reading counts. The library will develop reading challenges each year to encourage year-round reading for all ages.
- Pre-school literacy and numeracy programs. Present in-house or community-partnered programs for early learners each year.





[I value] the community spirit of staff and having access to all forms of information, computers, books, and materials for research, magazines, etc. The library is also a social setting for many people whether they are in the book club, knitting circle, coffee time, and other activities.

More about us



In 2023 HRL offered **246** programs for kids



186 for adults and seniors



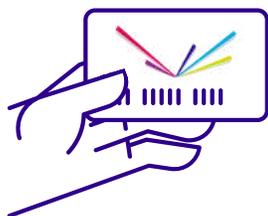
42 for young adults



And **84** for families



9,668 people attended in total!



5,796 High Riverites had a library card.



There were **26,123** downloads of e-Content



Contributing to a total of **116,534** checkouts in 2023



You can keep up with the library on TikTok, Facebook, or Instagram