

The image shows the front facade of the Woodstock Public Library. It features a classical portico with four tall, fluted columns supporting a pediment. The words "PUBLIC LIBRARY" are inscribed in stone above the columns. A large arched window is visible between the columns, and a hanging lantern is positioned above it. The building is constructed of light-colored stone and brick. The sky above is a clear, bright blue with some light clouds.

WOODSTOCK PUBLIC LIBRARY

Strategic Plan

2018–2023

The role of public libraries is changing in response to customer expectations, demographic shifts, the library's role in a knowledge economy, an emphasis on partnerships, and increased participation in community initiatives. Although not a common perception, libraries are agile and shift according to the needs of their community.

Libraries are providing computer training, new technology introductions, and are on the front line of navigation through the information age. The importance of the Librarian in navigating this continuing information explosion has never been more important and relevant.

Libraries are now being thought of as a centre or focal point of a community; the third space. It is not your home or where you work, but another place where you feel comfortable and want to spend time. They are welcoming, accessible places where people come together to exchange ideas and explore their creativity. The notion of a third space where an individual or group creates the space they need in that moment is the future and a compelling notion in public space. From small business owners using the library as their workspace to older adults learning to master their online banking skills to a displaced worker updating their resume, the library is everyone's third space.

The future of libraries has never been more relevant and bright. Libraries will continue to evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of the communities they serve. Comprised of a single branch located in the heart of Woodstock, the Woodstock Public Library is in a perfect position to be the third space for the members of our community. With this Plan, the Woodstock Public Library will examine our spaces and capabilities to ensure that we continue to be the focal point that strengthens our community and is a destination for all.

Mission

A welcoming place to create, connect and explore.

Vision

Your Destination for Discovery

Guiding Principles

Our guiding principles express our core beliefs; they keep us grounded and guide our ongoing planning and decision-making.

Accountability

We are accountable in all that we do. The Library belongs to everyone in the community.

Creativity and Innovation

We encourage and support creative approaches and innovative solutions in all aspects of library service.

Dignity and Respect

We treat all people with dignity and respect, everyone is welcome.

Excellence

We value excellence in our services and collections, and strive for continuous improvement in our delivery. We empower staff to embrace opportunities and to thrive.

Intellectual Freedom

We subscribe to the fundamental principles of intellectual freedom and the open exchange of information and ideas.

Lifelong Learning

We provide services and resources that contribute to continuous learning.

Love of Reading

We nurture the joy of reading in people of all ages.





Strategic Priorities

Contribute Vibrant Spaces

The concept of “place” is broadly defined, but it is vital to how and where we live our lives. The third space exists as a community gathering point. We want to be the “living room of the city,” and focus on providing space for performances, meetings, children’s activities, art installations, and general public gatherings.

Over the next five years, we will

- Be more relevant to our residents
- Be responsive to our community and their need for flexible spaces
- Balance traditional and virtual spaces

What this will look like

- The Library as a destination for community activities
- Residents fulfilled in their library experiences
- More residents using our physical spaces
- Better alignment with teens in a changing and complex world
- Virtual spaces that provide depth of experience

This is how we'll get there

Provide welcoming creative and flexible spaces

- Recreate dynamic and innovative space for flexible programming and activities
- Explore alternate service models (i.e. kiosks) and offsite programming
- Provide relevant mixed use spaces to co-share, co-mingle and co-create
- Optimize community creativity by actively supporting nontraditional uses

Create welcoming virtual spaces

- Enhance the Library’s catalogue
- Implement a meaningful mobile application
- Integrate community content into the Library catalogue
- Utilize social media to engage new segments of community
- Optimize website and digital use

Undertake expansion feasibility study

- Engage community in a public conversation
- Commence a community support campaign
- Develop a fundraising strategy

Strengthen our Community



Libraries are the new social capital of communities around the world, a new gathering place, a new place for exploration and discovery, yet many still have an outdated perception of what modern libraries do and how they serve their communities.

We will change this perception by highlighting the depth of our offerings and extent of our outreach.

Over the next five years, we will

- Build capacity in marketing and communications to support promotion of increased programs, awareness and marketing campaigns
- Expand our reach and footprint into the community by increasing our programs and service offerings
- Enhance partnerships and develop new alliances
- Review our service delivery model
- Continue to be technology leaders in the community

What this will look like

- Increased community awareness and engagement
- Greater connections with new Canadians
- Relevant and timely programming and services aligned with community needs
- Improved customer access to the Library
- Enhanced collections to align with community
- A forward looking customer learning strategy

This is how we'll get there

Develop a marketing strategy

- Increase capacity to deliver effective, timely, and targeted information
- Promote and advocate for the Library
- Create and implement the strategic marketing plan

Advance our community presence

- Create and implement a community engagement strategy
- Position ourselves as a destination for teens
- Develop partnership strategy
- Further connect with business community
- Build connections with City Council, agencies, and associations to tell our stories
- Build capacity to deliver services, programs, and outreach to the community

Provide easier customer access

- Establish a balanced collection of traditional and emerging materials
- Review Library hours
- Increase capacity for weekend programming
- Digitize relevant collections

Engage community as we develop programs and services

- Initiate regular surveys and other feedback mechanisms
- Leverage partners to co-create
- Provide leading technologies to grow with our community

Reinforce our Capabilities



Libraries are continuously adapting to best serve and reflect our community. We will develop a sustainable and financially viable staffing model and invest in staff development. We will continue to build on our library systems by adopting new, innovative technology and business tools committing to continuous system improvement. We will ensure that we are able to respond to ever changing needs through committed investments and library leaders who govern with passion.

Over the next five years, we will

- Create a culture where ideas and innovation are always heard
- Use evidence based practice for planning and evaluating Library services and programs
- Review the Library's organizational structure to best support our strategic priorities
- Advocate for the Library through best practice governance

What this will look like

- Establish a framework to encourage staff ideas, creative solutions and innovation
- Establish a feedback mechanism to gauge satisfaction with programs, events and training opportunities
- Review staff roles to support a more dynamic, agile and modern service delivery
- Regular Board engagement with community and stakeholders

This is how we'll get there

Integrate a Community-led Service Model

- Incorporate community feedback into our service and program strategy
- Build local relationships

Enhance staff skills and training

- Develop ongoing staff training, skills update and mentorship for continuous learning
- Expand strategies for hiring staff with diversified skills and experiences
- Provide relevant technology training
- Implement performance management framework

Review and update Library policies

- Conduct Board policy review
- Implement an Operational Policy Audit
- Develop an Operational Manual and a revision schedule

Demonstrate excellence in stewardship

- Implement new outcome based performance measures reporting system
- Seek out new funding sources and cost saving measures
- Implement analytics for timely decision making

Advocate for the Library

- Library Board to engage stakeholders to increase capacity for an evolving community
- Foster ties with the City of Woodstock by participating in the cultural plan



445 Hunter Street, Woodstock
519-539-4801 • mywpl.ca

