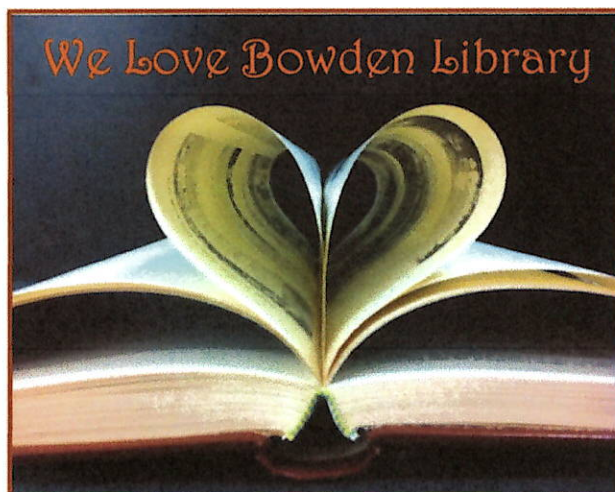


# **BOWDEN PUBLIC LIBRARY**

## **PLAN OF SERVICE 2020 – 2024**



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WEBSITE: [bowdenlibrary.prl.ab.ca](http://bowdenlibrary.prl.ab.ca)  
EMAIL: [bowdenlibrary@prl.ab.ca](mailto:bowdenlibrary@prl.ab.ca)  
FACEBOOK: Bowden Public Library**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Bowden Public Library would like to acknowledge those that provided assistance and support in the planning and implementation of our strategic planning and community consultation processes:

- The citizens of Bowden and Red Deer County who participated in the Bowden Library Survey and helped to set the future direction of the library.
- The County of Red Deer staff and administration for the Community Well-Being Survey which provided additional public consultation.
- Parkland Region Library staff for their ongoing support.
- Julie Hamblin, Bowden Library Manager, for researching and supplying library data.
- The Town of Bowden Councillors and staff who provide funding and support to the library.

## STATEMENT OF APPROVAL AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The strategic plan for the five years commencing January 1, 2020 was prepared under the direction of the Bowden Public Library Board, and in accordance with Alberta Libraries Regulation (AR 141 / 98s13). The Board and Staff of the library are committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this plan. For public libraries in Alberta, planning is mandated. Libraries Regulation, Section 13 states the following:

- (1) In managing and controlling a municipal library, a municipal board shall
  - (a) Within 3 years of being established, develop and file with the Minister a plan of service with a mission statement and goals and objectives based on a needs assessment of the municipality, and
  - (b) Annually review its plan of service.
- (2) A municipal board shall file with the Minister a copy of its current plan of service with goals and objectives not less frequently than every 5 years following the date on which the plan was previously filed with the Minister.

Libraries Regulation AR 141/98 s13

The Plan of Service for January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024 has been prepared by the Bowden Public Library Board in accordance with Alberta Libraries Regulation AR 141/98.

The Board and staff of the library are committed to implementing this plan of service, reviewing it regularly to monitor progress in achieving goals, and updating the plan as needed.


### MOTION:

*"To approve the attached Plan of Service for the Bowden Public Library for the period of January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024."*

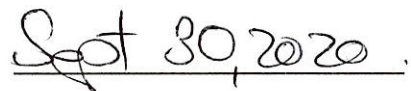
Motion made by: Leanne Pillon. Motion seconded by: Justine Klassen-Fehr. Carried.

Date of Board Meeting: September 30, 2020

Original signed by

  
Linda Toews, Chair

Date

  
Date

## **MISSION**

The Bowden Public Library will serve the community as an information and popular materials library for people of all ages, promoting learning, literacy, connection and communication through programs and services that are convenient, affordable, accessible and of high quality.

## **VALUES**

We respect:

- Individual differences
- Cultural diversity
- Differing economic backgrounds
- Privacy for patrons

We believe in:

- Accountability for management of public funds
- Accessibility of public records
- The statement of Intellectual Freedom
- Collaboration of partnerships with other organizations and volunteer groups

## LIBRARY PROFILE

### History:

The Bowden Public Library was officially opened on October 29, 1955 in a room at the local hotel. The room was rented for \$15 monthly. Many books were donated, and more were bought with fundraising and grant money. At the end of 1955 the library boasted 1500 volumes, and had to move to the larger space in the Walter Sick Building in 1957. In 1967, centennial, federal and provincial grants allowed Bowden to build a combined library/museum at 1700 -23 Street which opened on June 28, 1967. In 1980, the Historical Society built a wing onto the library through grant funding which was taken over by the Library when the Historical Society moved to a new location.

The library was moved in 2011 to a larger, more central site next to the Town Office, where it is still located today. The move to the present location at 2101 20 Avenue, Bowden, resulted in tripling in membership and circulation.

Bowden Public Library Bylaw No. 668 was repealed in 2002, and became a Bylaw of the Town of Bowden for the Purpose of Establishing a Municipal Library Board, Bylaw 11/2002.

For many years, volunteers were the backbone of this library, performing fundraising, collecting books, typing catalogue cards, shelving, circulating books, running children's programs, cleaning and delivering books to shut-ins. Bowden was the only library in the Parkland Regional Library system in 1987 that still operated entirely on volunteer help; not until 1981 were any wages paid.

Today, programs have become an integral part of the library. Programs include youth, senior and adult programming. Volunteers continue to provide valued support for the library and assisting in offering programs.

### Hours:

The Library is open 4 days a week for a total of 30 hours. Information about the library is accessible through the website: [bowdenlibrary.prl.ab.ca](http://bowdenlibrary.prl.ab.ca)

### Governance:

The Bowden Public Library is governed by a volunteer board consisting of:

- One Member from Bowden Town Council
- Four Community Members at Large

### Human Resources:

Bowden Public Library has staff year round with a full-time equivalency of a Library Manager and one assistant. The Library Manager is Julie Hamblin. Volunteers enhance the delivery of programs and the operations of the library.

### Community:

The Town of Bowden is located on the busy corridor of QEII between Red Deer and Calgary. The Library currently services the population of Bowden, at last census over 1200 residents as well as the surrounding rural area in Red Deer County. The two closest larger trading centres are Olds and Innisfail.

**Partnerships:**

The Bowden Public Library has maintained partnerships at the local level such as Bowden Grandview School, Bowden FCSS, Henday Association for Life Long Learning, Bowden Historical Society, Bowden Friendship Club (Seniors) and the Town of Bowden. At the regional level, Bowden Public Library is partnered with Parkland Library System and at the provincial level, partnerships include the Alberta Library Trustees Association and the Multilingual Consortium.

**Usage:**

The Bowden Public Library had 5200 patron visits (November 2019). Based on 4 operating days a week, that is equivalent to an average of 25 patron visits per day.

**Collection:**

There are 7464 items in the current collection. In addition, members can request books through interlibrary loan from any library in Alberta.

**Circulation:**

7154 loans occurred from the Bowden Public Library, including interlibrary loans.

**Technology:**

The Bowden Library currently has 5 public access computers for use, with 10,000 hours of computer use and 20,197 connections to the Bowden Public Library wifi as of November 2019.

## NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Evidence-based needs assessment is a crucial part of determining community priorities on which to base library Plan of Service areas. There were several steps over a period of one year that were taken in the planning and completion of the Plan of Service. Initial steps included an opportunity to review existing information, including but not limited to Statistics Canada information and municipal information. Bowden Public Library Board members reviewed Red Deer County's Community Services Strategic Plan and Community Well-Being Survey results which focused on development of recreation, culture and individual and family support systems. Part of the survey addressed library services within Red Deer County. The Bowden Public Library Board conducted an in-library and online Library-Use Survey of Town of Bowden and Red Deer County residents focussing directly on Library services and programs. The information from these surveys was included in the process for planning. Data from these surveys are contained in the report in Appendix A.

### REVIEW OF NEEDS ASSESSMENT DATA AND SELECTION OF SERVICE RESPONSES

Bowden Public Library Board members and senior staff reviewed the results from the community needs assessments. The data, as well as an assessment of the library's resources and organizational capacity, was used to determine priority library responses for inclusion in the current plan of service.

It should be noted that a prime finding from both surveys was that community members wanted library hours extended. Indeed, 70% of respondents to the Bowden Library Use Survey named this as a priority. However, this has not been included as a priority need in the Plan of Service. As the ability to extend hours depends on funding, this is outside of the Bowden Public Library's control and, although the Bowden Public Library Board would welcome additional funding to enable the Library to be open an additional day, the Board believed this could not be addressed through the Plan of Service.

Based on the priority needs relevant to the library's mandate as determined by the community surveys and the resources available to the library to help meet these needs, the following Library Service Responses have been selected as the priority service areas for this Plan of Service.

**1. Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services**

*--Create an Accessible, Inviting Environment for the Whole Community – Library as Community Hub*

**2. Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information: Information Fluency**

*--Helping the Community Understand the Benefits of the Library and its Services*

**3. Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access**

*--Allow the Community to Access the Digital World and Support Digital Literacy for All Ages*

## 2020 – 2024 PLAN OF SERVICE

The Plan of Service is reviewed annually and may be modified to adapt to emergent situational changes or to take advantage of innovation or new opportunities and strategic alliances. Detailed action plans and short-term emergent strategies at the operational level are part of library operations and are, therefore, not included in this document.

### **1: Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services**

*Create an Accessible, Inviting Environment for the Whole Community – the Library as a Community Hub*

---

#### **Goal:**

- Maintain and improve the Library as a civic space, open and welcoming to all, with free access to materials, services and programs.
- The Library grows as a community connection Centre, providing increased opportunities for people of all ages, cultures, and abilities to connect and engage with others.

#### **Objective 1:**

- Each year, starting in 2021, the number of people of all ages using the Library will increase.

#### **Objective 2:**

- Each year, starting in 2021, the number of opportunities available for people to connect and engage will increase.

#### **Objective 3:**

- By 2024, 80% of Library users surveyed will report that they feel welcome and comfortable in the Library, and view it as a place to connect and engage with others.



## **2: Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information: Information Fluency**

*Helping the Community Understand the Benefits of the Library and its Services*

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### **Goal:**

- Residents of Bowden and surrounding area will have a better awareness of Library services and opportunities.
- Residents of Bowden and surrounding area will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.

### **Objective 1:**

- By making creative use of posters, Facebook, window space, street presence displays, and high visibility areas, the Library will increase community awareness of Library services and opportunities.

### **Objective 2:**

- The Library will maintain an up-to-date community events bulletin board and distribute publications from community organizations.

### **Objective 3:**

- The Library will hold an annual open house geared toward people who do not usually patronize the Library.

### **Objective 4:**

- The Library will offer its space to community organizations for meetings and events, where appropriate.

### **Objective 5:**

- By 2024, 80% of people surveyed will say they were able to access the information they needed through the Library.

### **3: Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access**

*Allow the Community to Access the Digital World and Support Digital Literacy for All Ages*

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#### **Goal:**

- More patrons will have access to up-to-date technology.
- Patrons have free access to the internet in order to meet daily needs..

#### **Objective 1:**

- Increase the ability of community members to use the Library's digital services by partnering with community members or organizations to provide training for seniors and other groups who would benefit from instruction.

#### **Objective 2:**

- By 2024, 80% of library users surveyed will respond that they found the library's digital services helpful in connecting them to community resources.

# APPENDIX A

## Community Needs Assessment Report

### Process Plan

#### **Executive Summary**

As part of the process to complete a Plan of Service, The Alberta Libraries Regulation AR 141/98s13 requires Library Boards to conduct assessments to determine the needs for public library service generally, and the services required by the community and member libraries. To that end, the Bowden Municipal Library has conducted a comprehensive process to meet this needs assessment requirement.

#### **Community Needs Assessment Data Analysis**

The Bowden Public Library Board reviewed the data gathered through the *Red Deer County Community Well-Being Survey* and the *Bowden Public Library Library-Use Survey* to analyse needs in the community of Bowden and surrounding area to help inform the library's next plan of service.

#### Red Deer County Community Well- Being Survey

The findings from the Red Deer County Community Well-Being Survey provided the following information regarding libraries:

- A third of survey respondents indicated that members of their household hold library memberships in Parkland Regional Library through libraries in local towns, including Bowden Public Library.
- Respondents provided the following suggestions for what might attract members of their household to use libraries more often:
  - Better proximity
  - Better selection
  - Extended hours
  - Free membership
  - More programs

#### Bowden Public Library Library-Use Survey

Bowden Public Library Library-Use Survey respondents (64% from the Town of Bowden; 36% from Red Deer County) provided the following information on library usage and needs:

- Usage reported by respondents, in order of greatest utilisation, showed:
  - 85% checked out books
  - 73% checked out videos
  - 70% used computers
  - 45% needed to print something
  - 39% looked for information
  - 36% participated in Library programs
  - 24% checked out e-books
  - 21% visiting
  - 15% checked out magazines
  - 15% looked for jobs
  - 12% played games
  - 12% participated in Library events

- Library needs to improve on:
  - 70% hours too short (52% of respondents indicated they would like the Library to be open 5 days a week, preferably adding Friday)
  - 12% requested more programs
  - 12% requested greater book selections
  - 12% requested more comfortable chairs
  - 9% requested greater magazine selection
  - 3% found computers were busy when they came
  
- Would like to access at the Library:
  - 24% more events
  - 12% minecraft / lego events
  - 12% knitting group
  - 9% pre or early readers' program
  - 9% garden care / flower planting
  - 3% more workshops
  
- Other thoughts:
  - 9% more computers
  - 9% large computer screen

Board members used the needs decision tree to determine which of these needs might be priority areas for the library, given the number of other people/organizations working to meet those needs and keeping in mind the limited resources (staff, collections, facilities, technology) of the library. Agreement was reached that the following needs should be priorities for the Bowden Public Library in the 2020 – 2024 Plan of Service:

- Patrons need opportunities and places for social activity / interactivity.
- Patrons of all ages need a variety of programs and events in which they can participate in the community.
- Patrons need information on available programs and services available at the Library, and through community agencies and organizations.
- Patrons of all ages need availability to digital information and connectivity.

The Board then reviewed the eighteen library service responses to select those that best match the identified priority needs. The library service responses selected to respond to the needs are:

**1. Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services**

*--Create an Accessible, Inviting Environment for the Whole Community – Library as Community Hub*

Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services and activities provide by community agencies and organizations.

**2. Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information: Information Fluency**

*--Helping the Community Understand the Benefits of the Library and its Services*

Residents will know when they need information to resolve an issue or answer a question and will have the skills to search for, locate, evaluate and effectively use information to meet their needs.

**3. Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access**

*--Allow the Community to Access the Digital World and Support Digital Literacy for All Ages*

Residents will have high speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the internet.