

CAMROUSE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Plan of Service

2025 - 2029

The Camrose Public Library (CPL) is an organization located on Treaty 6 territory, the traditional lands of the Indigenous and the Métis People. For as long as the sun shines, the rivers flow, and the grass grows, this land will be recognized as Treaty 6 Territory.

Looking Forward

MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR:

Welcome to CPL's new Plan of Service! This document was created following a year of conversations with stakeholders, funding partners, consultants, and most importantly our community. We heard the feedback: things are tough right now for people and organizations, and the library is needed now more than ever.

This plan outlines our hopes to step up and meet the community's new needs, even as we are affected by many of the same hardships seen throughout our community. As we strive to do more with less, some changes will occur, but one thing that will remain constant is our love for and commitment to those we serve. We've heard how much you love the library, and we want you to know that we love you too. ~**Alyssa Martin**

The library is needed
now, more than ever.

We heard you
and we are
here for you.

MESSAGE FROM BOARD CHAIR:

It is with a renewed sense of purpose and commitment to the community we serve, that CPL presents our new Plan of Service. We heard from our stakeholders, funding partners and most importantly our patrons. Accordingly, this Plan of Service was created based on the valuable feedback received from all interested parties. Our new Plan of Service clearly states our mission, vision and values. As well, we have set 5 clear strategic goals to guide our future plans for development and service. The CPL Board is very excited to continue improving the ways we meet the needs of all in

our valued community. We heard you and we are here for you! ~**Renee Greer**

Engagement Process and Stakeholder Input

CPL undertook extensive public and stakeholder engagement from February to September 2024.

We conducted a series of workshops during the spring and summer, engaging our municipal funders—the City of Camrose and Camrose County—as well as key partner organizations, staff, and volunteers. These workshops provided valuable insights into defining success for CPL and exploring how our partnerships could continue to align with the region's priorities and goals.

To further engage the community, CPL hosted booths at public events, creating opportunities for meaningful conversations outside the library. Additionally, library patrons and community members were invited to participate in surveys, which were available during their library visits as well as online.

When talking with people out in the community, in the library, and online, we explored ideas on how CPL can enhance the library experience and what areas of library service we can concentrate on over the next 5 years. We asked for your perspective on public libraries, and you shared what you liked (and even LOVED) about public libraries and CPL, in particular. You also shared your expertise and perspective on what we can do to improve our services and resources for our community.

Your responses have now informed our direction and allowed us to better understand your needs and aspirations. We are excited to partner together to make these goals for individuals and the region a reality.

Your ideas
shape our
library.

*For more information and details on our alignment with City of Camrose and Camrose County strategic priorities and our stakeholder engagement events, please see the Appendix.

What We Heard

During our engagement process, we asked the same two questions in all our surveys:

1. What is your opinion of public libraries?
2. What would you like to see CPL focus on over the next 5 years?

Throughout the 455 responses, our community let us know that they continue to see our library as a critical community resource, with many responding that they considered the library to be an essential service in the community. The library is one of the few spaces in our community that gave them free access to resources, especially our digital resources and internet access. We also heard that many in our community cherish the other aspect of access that our library provides, mainly being a place that welcomes all. In our region, our library is still identified as a steward of literacy, providing collections, programs, and services that allow our community members to access the information and skills they need to enrich their lives.

In terms of focus over the next 5 years, our communities responded with gusto, giving us both affirmations of a job well done, as well as directions to pursue in the future. The majority of responses requested maintaining the programming that we offer while introducing additional diverse programming that allows us to reach more demographics in our communities, such as seniors and working families. Increasing our collections (especially our e-resources and audiobooks), outreach programs, expanding our space and increasing our operating hours were all top of mind, as well. We heard you loud and clear—a resounding desire for MORE of the library.



Our Library In Numbers

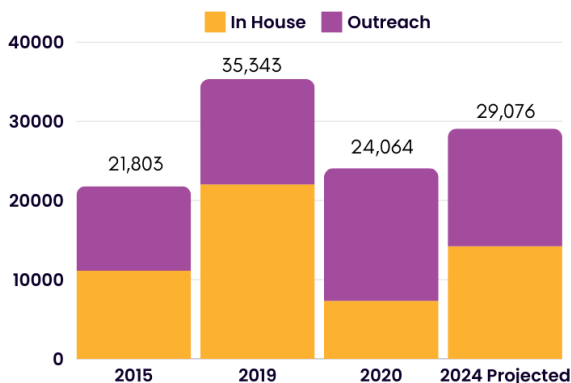
FACTS & FIGURES

NUMBERS AND CHARTS AND QUOTES, OH MY!

“Libraries are a vital asset to our communities. They have wonderful programs for young children, and having no cost barriers is hugely beneficial.”

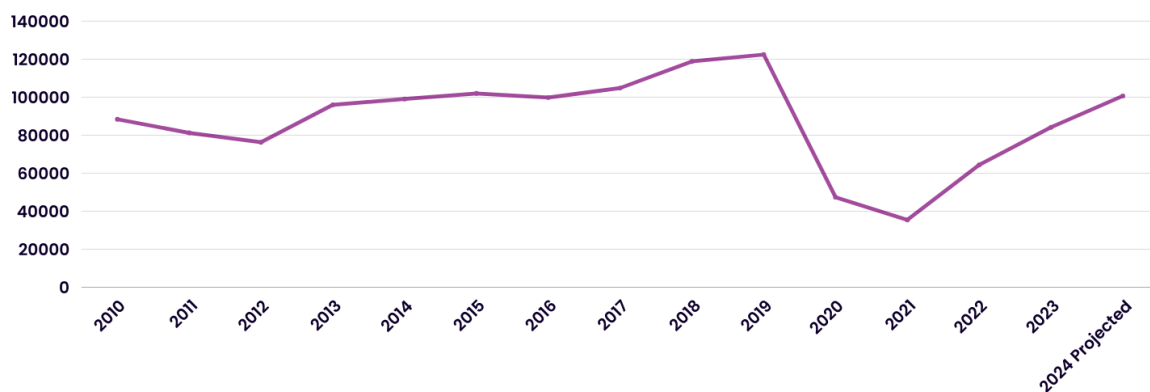
Camrose Public Library continues to recover from the pandemic and economic hardships. Year over year we see more visits despite being open less, we see more of the collection circulating despite the collection shrinking, and we see more program attendees per program, despite having fewer programmers. Our community values AND uses CPL, and we will continue to do our best to meet their needs.

Annual Program Attendance



“Libraries are a major center of any community. A great place to meet new friends and learn new things. Our library is a welcoming inclusive space for all.”

Annual In House Visits



FACTS & FIGURES

NUMBERS AND CHARTS AND QUOTES, OH MY!



In 2024, WIFI usage will reach an all time high with an estimated 113,540 uses.



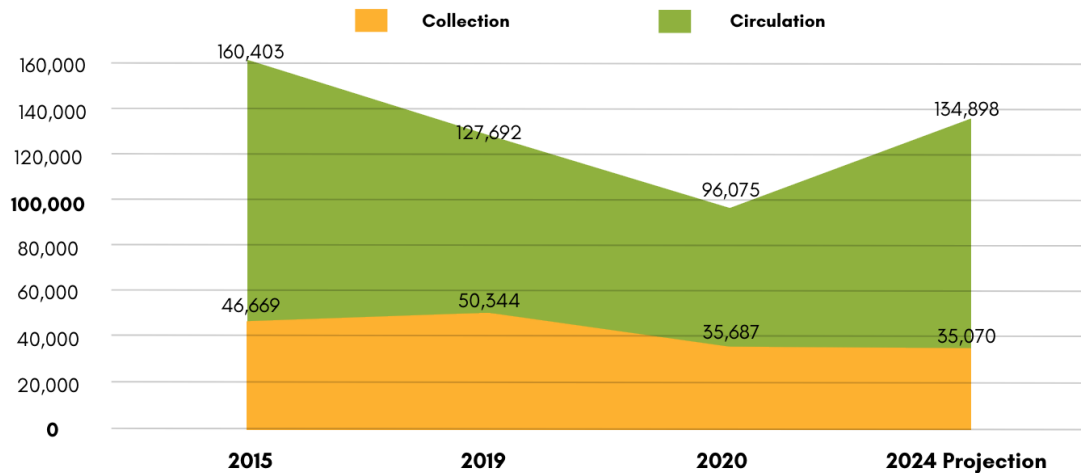
In 2024, 11.2 FTE staff members answered 27 reference questions every hour - that's about 66,393 questions in 2024.



The library is key to our community as the last free space to hang out. It provides resources and programming that are otherwise unattainable to a growing population of Camrosians. An essential meeting place, learning centre, activities provider, and community hub. As the economic future for many seems more uncertain every day, providing support and funding is more critical to the community than ever.



Circulation and Collection Size



By the end of this plan, CPL will set new records!

2019 was a record breaking year for CPL, where we served 42 people for every open hour. In 2024, we serve 41 people every open hour AND we'll circulate more items than in 2019!

Our Vision, Mission, and Values

Our Vision

Our library is a community hub of curiosity, connections, and endless possibilities.

Our Mission

We strengthen our region by providing the place, tools, and opportunities for everyone to learn, share, and create.

Our Values

WE ARE ADAPTABLE

We embrace new ideas in response to our community's needs today while making decisions that prepare us for tomorrow.

WE FOSTER CONNECTIONS

We use empathy to help people and organizations form relationships and a supportive community.

WE PROTECT INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

We believe everyone has the right to unrestricted access to knowledge without fear of censorship or discrimination.

WE ARE THE HIGHLIGHT OF YOUR DAY

Whether you find joy in a book, a program, or our team makes you smile, CPL strives to be a place of hope and fun.

WE ARE INCLUSIVE

We reflect the diversity of our community and endeavour to be a safe space for all.

Strategic Goals

In determining our strategic goals for our 5-year Plan of Service, we took the input from our community, stakeholder, and staff engagement as well as strategic guidance from City and County priorities and plans. Please see the appendix for a more detailed alignment of our strategic goals with those of the City and County.

We also considered “What the Community is Saying: Towards a Social Master Plan-draft” from Camrose Helps, as well as the “2023 Alberta Provincial Housing & Service Needs Estimation for City and County of Camrose” prepared by the Rural Development Network. These resources proved to be important reminders on why universal access to resources and safe spaces are critical to our region.

The following five strategic goals are essential areas of focus for our library’s continued success over the next 5 years:



SUSTAINABLE STEWARDSHIP

Our library aims to secure a resilient future by enhancing flexibility and adaptability in our operations, ensuring we can respond swiftly to changes without compromising our excellent service to our community. Through thoughtful assessment of our operations, advocacy with government bodies, and efforts to diversify revenue, we are committed to sustainable growth and lasting impact.

Goal One: Sustainable Stewardship

Objectives

1. **Strengthen relationships and advocacy with funders to show our value and critical contribution to a thriving region.**

Initiatives

- a. Ensure consistent communication and annual updates to funders (statistics, reports, successes, and challenges).
- b. Create and implement an advocacy plan (including municipal and provincial elections).

2. **Assess and implement sound organizational and financial processes.**

Initiatives

- a. Implement Organizational Review.
- b. Create 5-Year Capital and Equipment Plan.

3. **Diversify revenue opportunities to provide stability and resiliency for library services.**

Initiatives

- a. Connect with potential donors and promote the Library's Endowment Fund.
- b. Proactively explore additional grant opportunities.
- c. Support the Fellowship of the Camrose Public Library in their fundraising and advocacy efforts.

Goal Two: Future Facility Planning

Objectives

1. **Advocate and plan for a new library facility that is safe, welcoming, efficient, and meets the future needs of the community.**

Initiatives

- a. Engage with decision-makers to explore funding, community needs, and design options for a new facility.

2. **Address immediate concerns in current building for accessibility, safety, and comfort.**

Initiatives

- a. Review and address safety and accessibility measures for patrons and staff.
- b. Explore patrons' requests for functional space and furniture.

3. **Maintain or expand access to technology and internet.**

Initiatives

- a. Update current technology equipment for staff and public.

FUTURE FACILITY PLANNING

Our current library facility faces significant challenges attributed to aging infrastructure. We are committed to pursuing planning for a vibrant new space that meets the diverse needs of our community, supports inclusive access, and allows for flexible, future-focused library services. By working with partners and funders, we aim to lay the groundwork for a facility that enhances our services and reflects our commitment to future community growth and well-being for our region.

STAFF SUPPORTS & DEVELOPMENT

Our library's exceptional service begins with its exceptional people. We are committed to fostering a supportive and engaging work environment where staff feel valued, energized, and empowered to prioritize their own well-being. By ensuring our team has the resources and encouragement they need, we enable them to extend the same grace, empathy, and care to themselves that they offer to our patrons every day.

Goal Three: Staff Supports & Development

Objectives

1. Attract and retain skilled staff.

Initiatives

- a. Offer competitive wages and benefits.
- b. Offer exciting professional development opportunities.

2. Ensure a safe and supported work environment.

Initiatives

- a. Explore additional supports and training to bolster staff wellness and safety (such as de-escalation training, counselling options, and mental health first aid).
- b. Upgrade security systems and procedures.
- c. Partner with community agencies to maximize safety within an empathetic public space.

3. Meet service needs with adequate staff levels and competencies.

Initiatives

- a. Cross-train staff to ensure organizational continuity.

Goal Four: Service & Resource Delivery

Objectives

1. **Restore or expand operational hours, programming, and collection size to 2019 levels.**

Initiatives

- a. Advocate to government funders and explore additional funding opportunities.

2. **Diversify program offerings.**

Initiatives

- a. Create a system for community program suggestions.
- b. Offer programs that satisfy curiosity and promote lifelong learning.
- c. Offer programs that stimulate imagination and promote reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure.
- d. Offer programs either about or in partnership with community groups.

3. **Uphold and champion the tenets of access, intellectual freedom, free services, and accessible spaces.**

Initiatives

- a. Protect the community's right to access information.

4. **Maintain our friendly and welcoming vibe.**

Initiatives

- a. Commit to empathy-first decision-making: meeting everyone where they are at and assuming the best of them
- b. Create and maintain a welcoming and comfortable space.

SERVICE & RESOURCE DELIVERY

Our library is dedicated to restoring and expanding access to the resources our community values most. We are committed to returning to pre-2019 levels for operating hours, programming, and collection size while diversifying our offerings to meet evolving needs. By upholding principles of intellectual freedom, accessibility, and a welcoming atmosphere, we strive to create a space where everyone in our community feels they have a space to explore, learn, and connect.

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS & OUTREACH

Our library is a vibrant community hub, but our commitment to the prosperity of the Camrose region extends far beyond our physical building. We are dedicated to connecting people with one another, fostering the exchange of ideas, and providing access to opportunities from local organizations and businesses that enhance community life. Through these connections, we aim to strengthen the social and economic fabric of the community we serve.

Goal Five: Community Partnerships & Outreach

Objectives

1. **Maintain and expand valued partnerships and collaborations that address and meet community needs within the Camrose region.**

Initiatives

- a. Continue to actively participate in Interagency meetings.
- b. Actively participate in and promote community events.
- c. Engage with post-secondary institutions.

2. **Foster mutual relationships with the Camrose area business community.**

Initiatives

- a. Reach out to businesses for joint initiatives, such as speaker series, promotions, and programs.

3. **Explore and increase marketing and advertising opportunities.**

Initiatives

- a. Explore physical advertising to spread awareness regarding library services and programs.

4. **Bring library services into the community to meet people where they are.**

Initiatives

- a. Facilitate monthly pop-up library events and booths in unexpected, non-library locations.
- b. Expand Book Bike reach and capabilities with capital assets.

Appendix

City of Camrose Strategic Priorities¹

CPL directly contributes to and supports the following City of Camrose priorities:

Focus Area 2: Increase Engagement with Citizens and Staff

- The City proactively communicates with citizens and staff and engages them in municipal decision-making.
- Council, citizens, and staff are equipped with information about City programs and are able to be enthusiastic ambassadors for our region.
- The City uses multiple communication platforms to ensure broadest reach to the public.

Focus Area 4: Build A Strong Economy

- Camrose has a bold vision for a strong and diverse economy.
- Camrose will be known as a great city to do business. Its regional economy provides opportunities for all people, families, businesses, and the community to flourish.
- Camrose is proud to share and promote the incredible features of our community including our exceptional recreation, arts, and cultural amenities and activities.
- The City develops strong relationships with the local business community to encourage their growth.
- Camrose further builds our economic base by attracting sustainable, innovative industries and entrepreneurs.
- Our region will prosper by working collaboratively with our neighbours and partners.

Municipal Sustainability Pillar 2: Social Wellness

Camrose is a safe and secure community where all residents can thrive with a place to live, a living wage, and opportunities to build a high quality of life.

- All residents of Camrose have a place to live and can earn a living wage.
- Camrose has social programs that respond to current community needs.
- Camrose has affordable public transportation.
- Camrose provides essential services for at-risk populations and educates residents about related social issues.
- Camrose integrates newcomers through inclusive social events and other appropriate opportunities

¹ City of Camrose. (2022). *Strategic Plan 2022-2026*. <https://www.camrose.ca/en/your-government/strategic-plan.aspx>

Municipal Sustainability Pillar 3: Culture & Recreation

Camrose is a vibrant community with an expansive network of festivals, music, sport, cultural, and community events. Residents and business owners care about their community and are known for their strong sense of belonging, connection, and friendliness.

- Camrose supports and invests in venues and opportunities for arts and culture as well as sports and recreation.
- Camrose has strong partnerships with community organizations and educational institutions to enhance social connections, lifelong learning, as well as local traditions, heritage, and diversity.
- Camrose values parks, trails, and open spaces as part of our community's natural beauty and social culture.

Camrose County Strategic Priorities²

CPL directly contributes to and supports the following Camrose County priorities:

Strategic Goal 4: Social and Community

Camrose County is known to support and foster safe, welcoming, inclusive and engaged communities with a wide range of recreational and cultural opportunities.

- Community well-being is prioritized, by partnering with governments and community agencies to ease economic and social disparities, support community groups within Camrose County
- Provide adequate resources so residents feel safe in their communities,
- Encourage rural youth to be engaged and support opportunities for youth within local communities,
- Prioritize accessibility to recreation and cultural opportunities for all.

Strategic Goal 6: Governance

We have a relationship with our community, and other governance partners, grounded on transparency, responsiveness, and maximizing the value we provide.

- Engage the community and provide an opportunity for input.

² Camrose County. (2021). *Strategic Plan 2022-25*. <https://county.camrose.ab.ca/county-administration/mission-values/>

Engagement Events and Surveys

Engagement Events

April 13 & 14, 2024	CRE 2024 Acreage and Garden Show Booth	47 respondents
May 2, 2024	City of Camrose Council & Administration: Library Tour & Workshop	13 participants
June 7, 2024	Jaywalkers Jamboree Booth	71 respondents
June 12, 2024	Community Partners' Workshop	17 participants
June 25, 2024	Camrose County Council & Administration: Library Tour & Workshop	10 participants
August 27, 2024	Camrose Farmers Market Booth	11 respondents
September 5, 2024	Community Registration Night Booth	35 respondents

Surveys

Community Feedback Survey (hardcopy)	119 respondents
Community Feedback Survey (online)	124 respondents
Volunteer and Staff Feedback Survey	25 respondents
Summer End Survey	23 respondents

Acknowledgements

Thanks to

Plan of Service Planning Committee members

Camrose Public Library Board members

City of Camrose and Camrose County Councillors

University of Alberta Augustana Campus

Family Resource Network

Camrose and District FCSS

Bailey Theatre

Bethany Group

Battle River Community Foundation

Camrose Helps

Special thanks to

Our amazing staff and volunteers – without you, there would be no library.