



rainy river public library

strategic plan

2010-2014

*where are we now,
where are we going,
and how do we get there*

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Concrete steps for today

What's the context of our library service?

**TABLE A.
COMPARING ONTARIO PUBLIC LIBRARIES -
UNDER 2,500 POPULATION SERVED CATEGORY.
2008 STATISTICS. TOTAL LIBRARIES (EXCLUDING FIRST NATIONS) = 59.**

<i>ITEM</i>	<i>RAINY RIVER</i>	<i>RANK (OUT OF 59)</i>	<i>AVERAGE</i>	<i>WHERE WOULD WE LIKE TO BE?</i>
Population	2,062, but... Resident = 741	7 th Resident only = 47 th	1,323	-
Cardholders	588	27 th	666	50% of Population (1,031)
Households	1,689	6 th	1,090	-
Service Hours per Week	33	14 th	26.7	30.0
Total Staff (FTE)	1.49	15 th	1.19	1.0
Local Support per Capita	\$42.61 (<i>town only</i>) \$19.35 (<i>all</i>)	Town only = 19 th All = 42 nd	\$34.34	\$34.34 @ 2,062 (average)
Local Support per Household	\$68.18 (<i>town only</i>) \$23.62 (<i>all</i>)	Town only = 20 th All = 38 th	\$52.63	\$52.63 @ 1,698 (average)
Salaries as % of Budget	66.29%	19 th	60.0%	60.0% (average)
Materials as % of Budget	8.06%	41 st	13.31%	20.0% (10 th)
Operating Revenues	\$66,444	20 th	\$62,180	\$103,250 (10 th)
Staffing Support per Staff Hour	\$16.24	36 th	\$17.07	\$22.57 (10 th)
Annual Circulation	6,885	34 th	11,961	14,500 (10 th)
Circulation per Staff Hour	2.54	45 th	6.68	8.0 (10 th)

Selected Source: Ontario Public Libraries Annual Statistics, 2008.

DISCUSSION: We are the only small library in Ontario with a larger contracting population (1,321) than resident population (741). This results in a much lower level of funding per capita and per household, because the contracting townships pay a much lower rate of support than the Town of Rainy River. Lack of adequate financial support from the province is the key factor in this. Only 10 of 59 small libraries have any contracting population. If all four municipalities were financed adequately by the province and funded us at the town's current rate – \$42.61 per capita – our annual local support alone would be \$87,862.

SWOTting Up : Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats

↑ STRENGTHS

- ↑ new library facility
- ↑ professionally-trained staff
- ↑ “more than just books” –
new technology / services
- ↑ collaboration, networking
- ↑ new training opportunities
for board and staff

↓ WEAKNESSES

- ↓ difference between town
and township funding
- ↓ long-term decline in circulation
- ↓ long-term decline in
community profile
- ↓ facilities issues, equipment

→ OPPORTUNITIES

- better promotion
- use of volunteers
- Trillium funding
- flyer inserts in tax bills
- unorganized township services
- growing the circulation
- more programming
- better profile
- donations of materials
- program scheduling
- Sunday service?
- charitable receipts
- wifi

← THREATS

- ← access to formal training
for staff and board
- ← complexity – of service delivery,
regulations, technology
- ← long-term population loss
- ← decrease in provincial funding
- ← decrease in local funding

2. Where are we going?

Hopes, aspirations, wants, needs

Our hopes, aspirations, wants, and needs would include...

- A single service hub building for the community – the library would be a key partner in this
- A greater profile for the library – we need to be visible
- Stable funding – we need to fund the library in the long term, not just today
- Ownership of the library building – we can reduce our costs in the long term
- Currency and relevancy – the library needs to be a vital part of the community
- We need special events as a core part of the library's work – these could include arts events, children's programs, and workshops for adults
- We need to cultivate partnerships – we can only deliver top-quality services in collaboration with others
- We need to become the cultural centre of the area
- We need to reach out to First Nations
- We need to invest in the library's physical plant and fixtures – our shelving is in urgent need of replacement

3. How do we get there?

Concrete steps for today

Goal 1. The Library will advocate for itself.

We will be our own best spokesperson. We will ask for support. We will contact decision makers and community partners to put forward our case for library services.

ACTION: The CEO will compile a list of granting programs and agencies. The Board will identify funding priorities and contact appropriate granting programs and agencies. In the short term, the library is concerned about the future of the Community Access Program (CAP) and will lobby Industry Canada for the program's continuation.

Goal 2. The Library will build and participate in local networks.

We will reach out to our library neighbors across the Rainy River District. We will share, collaborate and co-create.

ACTION: The CEO will approach neighboring libraries and work to find common ground with library staff. The Board will network with other boards (perhaps through such agencies as the Ontario Library Boards Association). We will share ideas and (where possible and appropriate) resources.

Goal 3. The Library needs to look to a permanent facility solution.

Our new library building has been a great boon to the service. However, a permanent solution requires a permanent, owned facility.

ACTION: The Library Board will approach Rainy River Town Council to discuss facility options for the end of the library's current lease (2013). A long-term plan is required.

Goal 4. The Library can deliver children’s programs in partnership.

Community resources are scarce. The Library has an opportunity to collaborate with other community agencies to improve efficiency and

ACTION: The CEO will approach community partners, such as local children’s agencies, to seek common ground. The Board will plan to allocate programming resources in the most efficient manner possible.

Goal 5. The Library will take its services to the people, no matter where they live.

Our service population of 2,400 people is dispersed over 1,450 square kilometres. The geography is vast – distance is a fundamental barrier to our work. We need to reach out and bring services to residents in the communities where they live.

ACTION: The CEO will investigate the establishment of outreach book deposits both in Rainy River and in other communities. Facilities such as seniors’ homes, community centres and local businesses are potential community partners. The Board will devote time and resources to cultivating these book deposit locations. The Board will also support electronic services accessible from patrons’ homes.

Goal 6. The Library must be a cultural centre.

The Library is a natural home for artists in the community. We can work together to support the arts.

ACTION: The CEO will actively solicit artists for periodic “Cultural Nights” in the library. Space will be made available for art displays. The Board will allocate financial resources to support these Cultural Nights.

Goal 7. The Library shall offer programs for people of all ages.

The Library is our community’s hub for life-long learning. Our suite of programming must reflect this.

ACTION: The CEO will schedule up to four workshops for adults per year. Suggested topics include genealogy and photography. The Board will allocate financial and staff resources to support these workshops.

Goal 8. The Library needs a major investment in new shelving.

The Library collection must be accessible to all users, must be organized efficiently and must be presented professionally. Much of the library's shelving is past the end of its lifespan.

ACTION: The CEO will investigate funding opportunities (such as the Trillium Foundation and the Sarah Badgley Rural Literacy Fund) for equipment. The Board will approach community partners, such as local businesses and schools, for in-kind support.

Goal 9. The Library will focus on fundraising for today and for the future.

Basic library needs can only be met through staff ingenuity, community partnerships and private financial support.

ACTION: The Library will ensure charitable receipts are widely promoted as a donor option, and made readily available to library patrons. The Board will seek partnerships with service clubs and potential donor agencies.

For the Rainy River Public Library Board

Linda Armstrong, Board Chair

Michael Dawber, CEO/Librarian

Debbie Ewald, Board Trustee [Town of Rainy River]

Terri Anne Lundgren, Board Trustee

Veronica Nordberg, Board Trustee

Gordon Prost, Board Trustee

Gillian Stamler, Board Vice-Chair

Geraldine White, Board Trustee

The Board thanks the community for its participation in our customer service survey, and for supporting our library service for more than 50 years.