



rainy river public library

strategic plan

2014-2018

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

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What's the context of our library service?

TABLE A.
STATISTICAL OUTCOME OF 2010-2014 STRATEGIC PLAN ACTIVITIES

<i>ITEM</i>	<i>RAINY RIVER 2008 STATS</i>	<i>WHERE DID WE HOPE TO BE IN 2014?</i>	<i>ACTUAL [year as marked]</i>	<i>CHANGE</i>
Cardholders	588	50% of Population (1,031)	Active = 587 [2013]	NO CHANGE --
Service Hours per Week	33.0	30.0	25.0 [2014]	DECREASE -24%
Total Staff (FTE)	1.49	1.0	0.72 [2014]	DECREASE -52%
Local Support per Capita	\$19.35 (all)	\$34.34 @ 2,062 (average)	\$20.06 [2013]	INCREASE +3%
Local Support per Household	\$23.62 (all)	\$52.63 @ 1,689 (average)	\$24.09 [2013]	INCREASE +2%
Salaries as % of Budget	66.29%	60.0% (average)	49.11% [2012]	DECREASE -26%
Materials as % of Budget	8.06%	20.0% (10 th)	12.37% [2012]	INCREASE +53%
Operating Revenues	\$66,444	\$103,250 (10 th)	\$86,016 [2013]	INCREASE +29%
Annual Circulation	6,885	14,500 (10 th)	18,583 [2013]	INCREASE +270%
Circulation per Staff Hour	2.54	8.0 (10 th)	11.91 [2013]	INCREASE +469%

DISCUSSION: The Library is doing substantially more with substantially less. While traffic has grown 270%, the staffing resources available to deal with that traffic have declined 52%. In the long term, this is not sustainable.

2010-14 Strategic Goal	Action Items from 2010-14 Plan	Final Result
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>✓ GOAL MET. Some measureable results: ✓ We made in-person budget presentations to all four municipalities in 2013. ✓ We met with MPP Sarah Campbell in early 2013. The issue of financial support for service to unorganized areas was raised by Campbell in the Ontario Legislature. ✓ We have contacted the Minister of Culture directly on three separate occasions.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>✓ GOAL MET. Some measureable results: ✓ We made a successful application to Ontario's Cultural Strategic Investment Fund (\$3,580 for Playaway View video products) with the Emo Public Library. ✓ CEO Michael Dawber facilitated a workshop on policy auditing at the OLBA meeting in Fort Frances in June 2013. ✓ We negotiated a strategic partnership agreement the Emo Public Library, taking effect January 31, 2013. CEO Michael Dawber also assisted Emo Library with an audit of their policy manual in October 2013. ✓ We negotiated a reciprocal borrowing agreement with the</p>

		<p>Big Grassy River First Nation Public Library, taking effect July 1, 2011.</p> <p>✓ CEO Michael Dawber participated in the “Effective Library Boards, Governing Effectively” event at Dryden Public Library on October 29/11.</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>✘ GOAL NOT MET</p>
<p>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 effectiveness.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>✓ GOAL MET.</p> <p>Some measureable results:</p> <p>✓ We delivered Summer Reading Club and “Computer Time” programs in partnership with the Rainy River Playschool in 2011, 2012 and 2013.</p> <p>✓ Staff from the Health Unit’s Speech and Language program delivered two children’s programs at the library in 2013.</p>
<p>The Library will take its services to the people, no</p>	<p>The CEO will investigate the establishment of outreach book deposits both in Rainy River and</p>	<p>↔ GOAL PARTIALLY MET.</p> <p>Some measureable results:</p>

<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Book deposit stations were established at both the Heritage House complex in Rainy River (October 2011) and at the Best Start Hub in Stratton (June 2012). No viable deposit station site has been found in Dawson or Lake of the Woods. ✓ Reciprocal borrowing was established with the Big Grassy River FN Library. ✓ We have invested in downloadable ebook and audio book services – these are available wherever patrons have an internet connection.
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>↔ GOAL PARTIALLY MET</p> <p>Some measureable results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Community interest has been low. A community art exhibit by Julia Hill and Roland Hill was held during the spring of 2011.
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>✓ GOAL MET.</p> <p>Some measureable results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Adult-focused programs have been delivered each year. ✓ YI@CAS Trainer Sarah Mitchell held a workshop on Ancestry.com in 2013. ✓ One-on-one computer training was offered by Technology Co-ordinator Charlotte Anderson (2012) via

		<p>Skype, but there was no response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ CAP Student Shauna Moen organized adult workshops on on-line cookbooks and basic computer use. ✓ For Ontario Public Library Week 2011, author Gloria Hunter-Alcock held an author reading at the library. She read from her book “Nurse at the Top of the World.” ✓ Technology co-ordinator Raj Sritharan held two workshops in August 2011 – the “E-Reader Petting Zoo” and a workshop on Ancestry.com.
<p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>✓ GOAL MET.</p> <p>Some measureable results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The library successfully applied to the Ontario Trillium Foundation (\$15,000 for new shelving). The shelving was purchased and installed in 2012. ✓ Additional improvements were made to the children’s section through the Canada Post Community Foundation in 2014.
<p>The Library will focus on fundraising for today and for the</p>	<p>The Library will ensure charitable receipts are widely promoted as a donor option, and made readily available to</p>	<p>✓ GOAL MET.</p> <p>Some measureable results:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Availability of charitable receipts is being actively

<p>future. Basic library needs can only be met through staff ingenuity, community partnerships and private financial support.</p>	<p>library patrons. The Board will seek partnerships with service clubs and potential donor agencies.</p>	<p>promoted on our website and in all library information handouts. Over \$12,000 in donations were received in 2013.</p> <p>✓ Donations – either financial or in-kind – have been received from: Branch 52, Royal Canadian Legion (2012, 2013); Sarah Badgley Literacy Fund for Rural Ontario Children (2012/13); RR Valley Agricultural Society (2013, 2014); RR Federation of Agriculture (2013, 2014); Canada Post Community Foundation (2014); New Gold, Inc. (2014).</p> <p>✓ We have secured provincial grants from the Summer Experience Program (2011-14), and the Ontario Sport and Recreation Community Fund (2012, 2013).</p>
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SWOTting Up : Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats...

↑ STRENGTHS

- ↑ professionally-trained staff
- ↑ Friends of the Library
- ↑ Our volunteers
- ↑ Our range of services: “more than books” – we reach people on many different “channels”
- ↑ Securing grants and donations
- ↑ Community credibility
- ↑ Our community partnerships
- ↑ Informed staff have contacts and can give vital context to board decision-making

↓ WEAKNESSES

- ↓ lack of necessary funding: provincial; federal; difference between town and townships
- ↓ lack of permanent facility
- ↓ unresolved facility issues
- ↓ decline in program attendance

→ OPPORTUNITIES

- expanding our cultural role
- new vision of programs – more free-form, less structured
- our new catalogue (Apollo)
- supporting collections
- community input into programming
- cultivating partnerships
- capacity building

← THREATS

- ← decreases in provincial funding
- ← decreases in local funding
- ← labor costs – change in staff / succession planning
- ← relations with southern agencies – OLS-N, SOLS, Ministry

What did our customers tell us?

Results, Customer Service Survey, March 2013 (N=15)

Note: Some responses have been truncated to protect privacy

Question 1. Tell us what your family likes to read. Check as many boxes as you need to. Answers displayed in word cloud (courtesy of wordle.com).



Q2 & 3. “Do you usually find what you want when you come to the library?” Q3. “If ‘No,’ tell us why.”

Yes	93.3%	
No	6.7%	
	Reason: Item not owned by library	(2 responses)
	Reason: Not enough books on subject	(1 response)

Q4. “What times would you be mostly likely to use the library? Check as many boxes as you need to.”

Morning	24.7%	Mondays	10.4%
Lunch Hour	19.5%	Tuesdays	26.0%
Afternoon	61.0%	Wednesdays	27.2%
Supper Hour	24.7%	Thursdays	27.2%
Evening	32.5%	Fridays	27.2%
		Saturdays	27.2%
		Sundays	10.4%

Q5. “How do you find information about the library? Check as many boxes as you need to.” [N=14]

Visiting the library in person	100.0%
Talking to friends who use the library	50.0%
Library website	42.9%
‘Library Corner’ Column in the Rainy River Record	35.7%
Library’s Facebook page	28.6%
Library catalogue	28.6%
Posters around town	28.6%

Q6. “Tell us what you think of these parts of the library.” (NB: “Poor” was offered as an option for all categories, but was not selected by any respondent.)

	<i>Excellent or Good</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Don’t Use/Not Sure</i>
Fiction	78.6%	-	21.4%
Non-Fiction	84.6%	-	15.4%
Children’s	75.0%	-	25.0%
Young Adult	54.5%	9.0%	45.5%
Magazines	45.4%	27.2%	27.2%
DVDs	92.3%	7.7%	-
Talking Books	46.2%	-	53.8%
Downloads	33.3%	-	66.7%
Website	58.3%	8.3%	33.3%
Interlibrary Loan Service	100.0%	-	-

Q7. "Do you attend the library's free programs for children and adults?"

Yes 28.6%
No 71.4%

Q8. "If you answered yes to Question 7, what do you think of the library's special programs?" (NB: "Poor" was offered as an option for all categories, but was not selected by any respondent.)

	Excellent or Good	Fair	Not Sure
Family Storytime (March)	75.0%	-	25.0%
Children's Summer			
Reading Club	75.0%	-	25.0%
Author Readings	60.0%	20.0%	20.0%
Drop-in Crafts	50.0%	-	50.0%
Adult Workshops	40.0%	-	60.0%
Computer Lessons/Internet	33.3%	-	66.7%

2. Where are we going?

Hopes, aspirations, wants, needs

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

- We want to be the cultural hub of the community
- We want and need to consider strategic and permanent alliances with our neighbors
- We need community partnerships that are of mutual benefit
- We need more information from the community about programs
- We want to support our staff but can't address labor costs without better funding
- We need a succession plan
- We need to explain the reality of our finances and costs to the community

3. How do we get there?

Concrete steps for today

Goal 1. The Library will be a cultural hub and will gather more information from the community on how to perform that role.

The Library is our community's hub for culture-seeking and culture-making. We are a natural focus of all community cultural activity. Declining use of some programs means we need to refocus on community needs.

ACTION: The Library Board will adopt a new Mission Statement: "The Rainy River Public Library is a vital meeting place for culture-seeking and culture-making." The CEO will create and complete a community survey specifically on programming. Information gathered will be used to establish a new programming schedule no later than the end of 2015. The Board will allocate financial and staff resources to support this effort. As a vital community resource, the Board will allocate a minimum of 20% of gross revenues to collections by 2018.

Goal 2. 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 explain our financial reality, our costs and our needs.

ACTION: The Board will take its case to local, provincial and national funders. The CEO will identify sources of grants and potential partners. In particular, both the Board and CEO will continue to seek a better balance between town and township financial commitments to the library.

Goal 3. The Library will support its staff and look to a succession plan.

The Library is severely understaffed relative to the current demand on library resources. We need to increase staffing capacity. We also recognize that we cannot take for granted the commitment of (and presence of) current staff. Sooner or later, a succession plan will be needed.

ACTION: The Board will allocate a minimum of 60% of gross revenues to staffing by 2018 and will continue to meet pay equity maintenance. The Board will also draft a succession plan by the end of 2015. The CEO will assist the Board in achieving both goals.

Goal 4. 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. We will explore the creation of a permanent partnership with the Emo Township Public Library.

ACTION: The Board will seek a meeting with the Emo Township Public Library Board in 2015 to consider a formal union or partnership. The CEO will assist the Board in meeting this goal.

Goal 5. The Library needs to look to a permanent facility solution.

The Library's current facility is not affordable in the long term. A cost-effective facility solution must be found.

ACTION: The Board will approach Rainy River Town Council to discuss facility options. The next opportunity for a change in facility is mid-2016. The CEO will assist the Board with this goal. In the short term, the Board will contact the facility owner about outstanding facility issues.

Goal 6. The Library will work closely with the Friends of the Library.

The Library and its Friends will collaborate to meet strategic goals.

ACTION: The Board will designate a Friends of the Library Liaison who will be the lead for all Friends/Board activity. The Liaison will organize meetings, take a lead role in setting up structured activities and look to goal-based fundraising activities. The CEO will be the active link between the Board and the Friends in the Library.

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 Vice-Chair

Gillian Stamler, 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.