



**COUNTY OF  
GRANDE PRAIRIE**  
COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

2024-2028

# PLAN OF SERVICE

**MISSION STATEMENT:  
PROVIDING INCLUSIVE, INNOVATIVE CONNECTION  
OPPORTUNITIES TO SPARK LIFELONG LEARNING,  
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, AND CREATIVITY.**

Approved: June 12, 2024

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chair of the County of Grande Prairie Library Board, I am pleased to share our 2024-2028 Plan of Service. We are excited to launch a plan that lays out innovative ways to meet the needs of all County residents.

In the past few years, our organization has grown and changed. The new Plan of Service takes the feedback we received from our communities and uses it to navigate a strategic direction for our continued growth. We envision communities:

- where libraries play a significant role in bringing people together,
- where the lifelong learning and creative endeavours of residents are supported and celebrated, and
- where all community members feel welcome.

To achieve this vision, our efforts over the next five years will be focused on improving Accessibility, Programming, and Collections.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many helpers involved in the process: Holly Sorgen from Empower Up for facilitating our community engagement and compiling the results; the staff of the County Libraries in Elmworth, Hythe, La Glace, and Valhalla for their local engagement efforts ; the partner libraries in Beaverlodge, Grande Prairie, Sexsmith, and Wembley for sharing information; and the County of Grande Prairie Council for their continued support.

Sincerely,

Leanne Germann, Chair  
County of Grande Prairie No. 1 Library Board

## LIBRARY SERVICE IN THE COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE

The County of Grande Prairie Library Board was formed by municipal by-law in 1983, and has been managing library services in the County ever since. Providing equitable library service in a municipality with a large rural geographic area, a large suburban population, and a number of separate municipalities within its borders comes with unique challenges. To meet the library needs of all residents, the Board operates four hamlet libraries, partners with four neighbouring municipal libraries, and provides additional services as needed in remote or underserved parts of the County.

---

### LA GLACE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The La Glace Community Library was the first library site operated by the County Library Board, starting in 1984. LCL has 292 active members, 18,837 items available for loan, 4 public access computers, 3 part-time staff members, and many volunteers.



---

### VALHALLA COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The Valhalla Community Library joined the County Library Board as the second service point in 1985. VCL has 312 active members, 12,262 items available for loan, 2 public access computers, and 2 part-time staff members.

---

### ELMWORTH COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The Elmworth Community Library was created through community initiative in 2002. Currently, ECL has 165 active members, 7,094 items available for loan, 1 public access computer, and 2 part-time staff. The library is located inside Elmworth School.





---

### HYPHE COMMUNITY LIBRARY

The Hythe Community Library joined the County Library Board in June of 2021, when the Village of Hythe dissolved as a municipality and became a County hamlet. HCL has 186 active members, 12,887 items available for loan, 2 public access computers, and 4 part-time staff.

---

### PARTNER LIBRARIES

The County Library Board recognizes that many County residents are served by libraries in neighbouring communities. As such, the Board provides financial support to the libraries in Beaverlodge, Grande Prairie, Sexsmith, and Wembley. Through these partnerships, County residents have access to eight libraries within the County's borders.



---

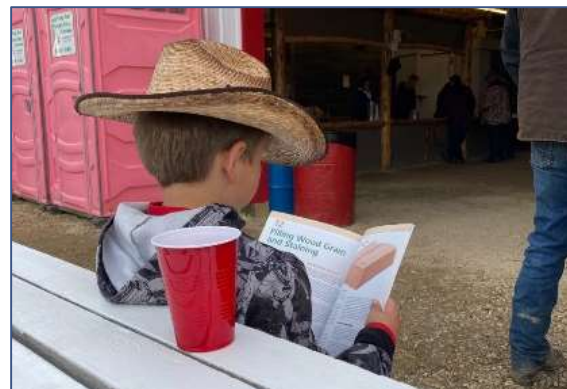
### THE LENDERY

Through a partnership with Grande Prairie Public Library and Peace Library System, a smart locker system for delivering library holds is available at the Wellington Resource Centre in Clairmont.

---

### OUTREACH

The County Library Board continues to explore projects that will enhance library service to more areas of the County. Library team members also participate in community events throughout the region.



## COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

In order to understand the needs of County residents, including library patrons and non-users, the Library Board engaged a facilitator to host meetings in various County communities.

In all, 6 in person consultations were hosted. These included:

- La Glace on November 21, 2023
- Valhalla Centre on November 22, 2023
- Elmworth on November 23, 2023
- Hythe on November 29, 2023
- Bezanson on January 23, 2024
- Clairmont on February 1, 2024

All sessions started at 6pm and were hosted at each home library or, in the case of Bezanson and Clairmont, in a community space. The sessions were marketed via social media, email, posters at libraries, and the local newspaper.

The consultations started in La Glace with 12 people in attendance, including County councillors, library trustees, library users, seniors, and parents. The Valhalla Library consultation saw 7 present including members of the Heritage Society, library users and seniors. Elmworth Library hosted 6 people who were young parents, local childcare providers, and library users. Hythe rounded out the fall consultations with 5 people attending, including the local Councillor, user group representatives, and Friends of the Hythe Library members. On January 23, 2024, 5 community members attended the Bezanson consultation, showing strong interest in expanded library services in that community. Conversely, the Clairmont consultation scheduled for February 1, 2024, was not attended by anyone from the community, despite numerous reach outs and info sharing. Fifteen individuals from various communities who were unable to attend the meetings also submitted written responses.

Throughout this time period, a short survey was available for residents to share their views on library services. This survey was completed by 109 individuals – 31 from La Glace, 15 from Hythe, 9 from Bezanson, 7 from Elmworth, 5 from Valhalla, and the remainder from other County communities. Respondents indicated strong support for growing library programs, expanding library service to the east County, and increasing information and awareness about library services for the benefit of the community.

With meeting and survey data in hand, the library board and staff worked to identify areas in which County Libraries should focus their growth over the next five years, resulting in the following priorities, goals, and objectives.

## SERVICE PRIORITIES

### 1. ACCESSIBILITY

#### **GOAL: COUNTY RESIDENTS WILL INCREASE THEIR AWARENESS OF THE LIBRARY SERVICES THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO THEM.**

**Objective:** 300 newsletters will be distributed per issue, via email and in print.

A regular newsletter will be established in 2025. The newsletter will be created by library staff, with input from all locations, for the purpose of promoting upcoming programs and highlighting existing library services.

**Objective:** The new website will have 10,000 annual visits by 2028.

The four library websites will be consolidated into one website in 2025. This will reduce redundancy and improve the quality and consistency of our website content, making it easier for patrons to find the information they are looking for.

**Objective:** Libraries will participate in 4 or more outreach events around the County each year.

Library staff will attend outreach events in our communities and around the County every year. The goal will be to communicate the value of libraries with non-library users, including those who don't see themselves as readers.

#### **GOAL: UNDERSERVED COUNTY RESIDENTS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO LIBRARY SERVICES IN THEIR AREA.**

**Objective:** 400 patrons per year will access outreach library services in Bezanson by 2028.

Introductory library service will be launched in the hamlet of Bezanson in 2026 to meet the needs of residents of the east County. Patrons will be able to sign up for memberships, check out new items, return items, and access help with online services. Depending on utilization, this program may grow incrementally to include smart lockers, a permanent mini-collection, self-check out machines, or a fully staffed complete library branch.

**Objective:** By the end of 2025, the Elmworth Library will examine space needs by hosting at least two community meetings.

To ensure that the Elmworth Library can meet needs for programming and social gathering space, opportunities for a new facility will be explored. Library staff will gather information and engage the community to look at the feasibility of a variety of options, including costs, design, and potential partnerships.

**Objective:** At least 20 patrons will utilize home delivery service across the County by 2028.

Home delivery service for County residents who are unable to travel to the library will be consistently promoted and managed, beginning in 2024. Patrons using this service will have a phone or email consultation with a librarian to determine what materials they would like to receive.

---

## 2. PROGRAMMING

### **GOAL: ALL COUNTY RESIDENTS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEND LIBRARY PROGRAMS THAT ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT LIFELONG LEARNING.**

**Objective:** 2000 youth, ages 6-12, will attend library programs each year by 2028.

More youth programs will be offered during the school year, in addition to continuing summer programs. Programs will focus on learning and fun – LEGO, technology, science, art, music, homework help, and life skills.

**Objective:** 500 teens, ages 13-18, will attend library programs each year by 2028.

Libraries will offer more programming specifically for teens, as well as including teens in adult programming opportunities when appropriate.

**Objective:** 1000 adults will attend library programs each year by 2028.

Learning programs for adults will be expanded. Libraries will continue to offer guitar, painting, and craft programs, but will branch out to include guest speakers, homesteading skills, local history and genealogy, book clubs, and technology training.

### **GOAL: COMMUNITIES AROUND LIBRARIES WILL BE CONNECTED, CELEBRATED, AND THRIVING.**

**Objective:** 1000 people will attend drop-in sessions at County Libraries per year by 2028.

Specific drop-in times will be established for groups who are underutilizing the library. By offering targeted social gatherings/program offerings for various groups (teens, new parents, seniors, intergenerational, etc.) we hope to encourage connections and community engagement through the library.

**Objective:** 20 welcome packages will be handed out by County Libraries per year by 2028.

Welcome packages will be offered to new residents to our communities. This will entice more new residents to start a connection with the library and also make them feel welcome in their new community.

---

### 3. COLLECTIONS – GIVING PEOPLE MORE

#### **GOAL: COUNTY RESIDENTS WILL HAVE ACCESS TO LOCAL LIBRARY COLLECTIONS THAT MEET THEIR NEEDS.**

**Objective:** Check outs per year per item will increase to .6 by 2028.

Thorough community assessment is needed to determine collection development priorities in each community. This can be done through surveys, formalizing item requests, reports, and circulation data.

**Objective** “Things” in the Library of Things will circulate at least twice per year, on average.

A collection of “things” will be built and shared between the four library locations, available starting in 2025. This collection could include items such as a poultry plucker, technological devices, crafting equipment, board games, and more.