
PLAN OF SERVICE

2016-2020



APPROVED BY THE PARKLAND COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD
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INTRODUCTION

An exciting path forward

The 2016-2020 Plan of Service for Parkland County Public Libraries lays out an exciting and challenging path forward, as we celebrate our successes to date and look to the future. This document outlines our focus on three strategic goals for the next five years: **Stimulate Imagination**, by serving as a vital source of leisure for Parkland County residents; **Satisfy Curiosity**, by providing tools for all ages to learn and develop life skills; and, **Know Your Community**, by developing a community-led service philosophy and building relationships within the community.

The Parkland County Library Board was established in 1997 and exists to promote and provide, through regional partnerships, effective, affordable, and accessible library services to the residents of Parkland County by actively responding to community needs. Since 2009, the Parkland County Library Board has claimed operation of four county libraries: Duffield, Entwistle, Keepphills and Tomahawk. Parkland County Public Libraries belong to the Yellowhead Regional Library and are part of The Regional Automated Consortium (TRAC), which facilitates cooperation and sharing between libraries in several different library systems.

In the past five years, all four libraries have become comfortable and welcoming spaces to community members. Library collections have increased and libraries have become more accessible through increased hours. However, there are many more exciting ways that Parkland County Public Libraries can grow and this document will serve as the foundation for our activities for the next five years.



LIBRARY PROFILE

Expanding and enhancing library service

Parkland County Public Libraries has four service point libraries that work together to meet the needs of county residents: Duffield, Entwistle, Keephills and Tomahawk. Duffield, Entwistle and Tomahawk libraries are housed in the public school buildings of their communities, while Keephills Library is housed in the community centre, adjacent to the community hall. Each library is used by residents of these communities and by those living in surrounding areas. The population of Parkland County, as reported in the last census in 2011 was more than 30,000 residents. Parkland County Library Board also supports the other libraries in the County – Seba Beach Public Library and Wabamun Public Library. The Board also provides support to libraries in surrounding areas, including: Spruce Grove Public Library, Stony Plain Public Library, Devon Public Library and Drayton Valley Public Library.

As demand for library services has increased over the years, the hours of operation at each service point library have increased, with open hours ranging from 23-43 hours per week. Each library has a Library Assistant on site, with all four locations managed by a Library Manager. A new position was created in June 2015 for a Community Services Librarian who will work at all four libraries and focus on community-led library initiatives.

“Ever since I walked through the doors with my family two years ago, Keephills Library has been nothing but inviting and community-oriented.”

In 2014, the four libraries recorded 947 active cardholders and circulated more than 25,000 items. Together, Parkland County Public Libraries are home to a collection of approximately 38,000 physical items including print and non-print items such as DVDs and audiobooks. Each library is a “net-lender,” meaning that each lends more materials to other libraries than it borrows, which speaks to the strength of their collections. The number of items available online has also increased greatly over the past five years, with the addition of new eResources such as Hoopla and Overdrive that give patrons access to movies, music and eBooks. The staff continue to update the collection to ensure patrons have access to the newest items.

A service priority response in the previous Plan of Service was to provide a comfortable space for patrons. As a result, each library was rearranged to become a more welcoming space for community

“Love the programs at Tomahawk – Gym Night, Yoga, Book Club!”

members with comfortable seating, workspaces and a coffee station. Although the libraries are located in school buildings, they are accessible to the public during and outside of school hours, with book drops available for returning items after hours at each library. In order to increase visibility, highway signage and out-facing signage at each location was added for all four service points.

Programming efforts have also expanded over the past five years, with programs focused on a variety of topics including fitness, crafts, literacy and technology. There has also been an increased focus on outreach and marketing, which has allowed the libraries to better advertise programs and services and has resulted in an increased number of program participants. A Tri-Library Guide was released in December 2015 to advertise programming at Parkland County Public Libraries, Spruce Grove Public Library and Stony Plain Public Library. Parkland County Public Libraries also has a Facebook page, allowing people to be connected to the library online at any time.

Each library has also acquired items to create a makerspace, with items such as LittleBits, puzzles, games and Lego, providing library patrons of all ages the chance to create and explore. Access to technology has also increased at each service point. Several public computers are available at each location, along with internet access, eReaders and iPads for public use. Entwistle also recently purchased an early literacy computer station specifically for young children.

Parkland County Public Libraries continue to fill an important need in the community and are committed to maintaining each library as an important community resource and space. This Plan of Service will serve as the foundation for our activities moving forward to expand on this mission.

"The key for me is that it is welcoming and Duffield is perfect!"



"I really enjoy the comfort of the Entwistle Library. The library in small communities is essential to community wellness."

PLAN OF SERVICE

Determining service priorities

Parkland County Public Libraries adapted Sandra Nelson's *Strategic Planning for Results* process to identify the needs of the community and to develop resulting service responses for the 2016-2020 Plan of Service. As Parkland County Public Libraries has four service points, four Community Planning Committees (CPCs) were formed for the communities of Duffield, Entwistle, Keephills and Tomahawk. The committees consisted of community members, library staff and a facilitator. The meetings were held in September 2015 and the objectives were:

- To describe the ideal future for the community
- To identify the current strengths and weaknesses of the community and the potential opportunities or threats that may have an impact on achieving the ideal future
- To identify the needs that must be addressed to reach the ideal future for the community
- To match community needs to possible library service priorities

A community survey was also offered to the public in October 2015 in both physical and electronic formats. Responses were collected from all four service points.

The Parkland County Libraries Board and the Library Manager met on October 26, 2015, with the objectives of reviewing the survey results and feedback from the CPCs, analyzing the data, and selecting service priority responses that aligned with the needs of the community. In summarizing the results, some of the most common patron responses called for: increased hours, increase in the number and variety of materials, increase in the number and diversity of programming, and, for the library to serve as a community gathering place and resource for community information. Based on these results, the board selected three responses as the main areas of focus for the Plan of Service:

Stimulate Imagination

Satisfy Curiosity

Know Your Community

The library board also wanted to ensure that the following responses would be reflected in the activities within each service priority: Build Successful Enterprises, Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information, and Make Informed Decisions. The library board wanted to provide an honorable mention to three additional service responses: Connect to the Online World, Create Young Readers, and Visit a Comfortable Space.

STIMULATE IMAGINATION

Parkland County Public Libraries will inspire community residents through programs and services that stimulate imagination and provide pleasurable reading, viewing, and listening experiences.

Residents of Parkland County will utilize the library as their “favourite stop” for leisure materials such as books, movies and games.

Objective: Increase the non-print collections (video games, board games, kits, etc.) at each library by 10 per cent by 2020

Objective: Increase the overall circulation of the library’s collection by 10 per cent at each library by 2020

Objective: Staff will use a variety of collection development tools to help select new and popular materials and will display these materials prominently

Library patrons will always find material that stimulates their imaginations, whether they visit the library in person or online.

Objective: A service philosophy will be developed by 2017 that ensures that patrons always leave the library satisfied with their experience

Objective: Each library will set up at least three creative displays each year that showcase materials in a new and exciting way, such as “Blind Date with a Book”

Objective: Each library will host at least one program each year to teach residents how to access free eBooks, audiobooks, movies and music online using their library card

The library will provide fun and intellectually stimulating programs for all ages and serve as an important centre for leisure activity in the community.

Objective: A strategy will be developed and implemented to ensure a variety of programs will be offered for children, teens, adults and seniors by 2017

Objective: The library will host at least three special family events each year such as board game nights, gaming tournaments or movie nights

SATISFY CURIOSITY

Residents will have access to resources that promote lifelong learning and will have a variety of program options available to them on topics of personal interest.

Parkland County Public Libraries will contribute to increased literacies of all types and the growth of life skills.

Objective: Circulation of adult non-fiction will increase by 10 per cent at each library by 2020 through creative purchasing and display of these items

Objective: One educational program for adults, on such topics as career development, technology, entrepreneurship or health, will be hosted yearly at each library

The library will empower teens with an outlet to express their creativity and the opportunity to develop valuable skills.

Objective: A mini makerspace will be developed at each library by 2018

Objective: An ongoing teen program will be developed and implemented at each library by 2020

Objective: In collaboration with educational providers, explore ways to support students in career development and their studies

The library will foster the development of early literacy skills in the youngest members of our communities.

Objective: One early literacy program will be created and implemented at each library by 2017

Objective: Explore partnerships within the community to work towards the implementation of a Welcome Baby program in community health units

KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY

The library will be the central source for information about services, programs and activities for their community and increase its visibility and activities in the community.

Parkland County Public Libraries will build community relationships, with the goal of identifying and meeting the needs of the community.

Objective: Develop a community-led service delivery framework specific to our community, based on Parkland County's Strategic Plan, demographic data and asset mapping

Objective: Review library policy to ensure the library is meeting the needs of all community members and reducing barriers to library access

Objective: Identify opportunities for growth within existing partnerships and create new partnerships with community organizations

The library will serve as a key community space and foster a welcoming environment for all residents.

Objective: The library will offer its space to community organizations for meetings and events

Objective: The library will explore the provision of joint programs with community organizations or guest speakers from community organizations, as needs are identified

The library will increase its services offered outside of the physical building in order to reduce barriers to access.

Objective: The library will utilize social media and the website to connect residents with community agencies, based on the development of a social media strategy

Objective: Little Free Libraries will be expanded to include various locations throughout the County, such as recreational centres and local businesses, adding one little library each year until 2020

Objective: The library will implement homebound service for patrons unable to access library services in person

Objective: Explore alternate library service delivery models for Aboriginal communities within Parkland County.

The library will be a central source of community information for County residents.

Objective: All new patrons will be given a welcome package with promotional materials from various community organizations

Objective: Each library will maintain an up-to-date community events bulletin board and distribute publications from community organizations

Objective: Library staff will make it a priority to respond to community questions and appropriately refer patrons to community organizations

CONCLUSION

Looking to the future

This Plan of Service will guide Parkland County Public Libraries' activities for the next five years, and will help us ensure we meet our goals to **Stimulate Imagination, Satisfy Curiosity** and **Know Your Community**. The library plays a vital role in Parkland County and we are committed to expanding this role by building relationships in the community. Overall, we are committed to improving the quality of life of Parkland County residents by satisfying their need for leisure, learning and connections with their neighbours.

MISSION:

The Parkland County Library Board exists to promote and provide, through regional partnerships, effective, affordable and accessible library services to the residents of Parkland County by actively responding to community needs.

VISION:

The Libraries, under the jurisdiction of the Parkland County Library Board, will provide resources in print, non-print, electronic reference resources that cover a wide array of topics. The libraries will provide staff that is skilled in helping all library customers.