

Norman Williams Public Library

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2027

Adopted by the Board of Trustees: July 24, 2023

The role of the library in the community is constantly evolving. Library leaders across the country write about the change in library service from transactional, where staff assist patrons in borrowing books, to relational, where patrons are looking at the library as a source for social engagement and learning. On a daily basis, our patrons tell us what they need by the questions they ask and the comments they make. It is the responsibility of the library to continue to evaluate its mission to ensure that its vision of the future remains relevant and accountable and matches the needs of the community.

We sincerely thank our community for their participation in our strategic planning process. Understanding the needs of our patrons and partners, as well as our financial supporters, is imperative to prioritizing our work over the course of the next several years. These voices help guide our decisions and our goals.

MISSION

The Norman Williams Public Library enriches the intellectual, cultural, and civic life of greater Woodstock by promoting a lifelong love of reading and learning; fostering the free exchange of ideas; providing a welcoming space for people of all ages and backgrounds; and offering resources for building a more just and humane community.

VISION

The Norman Williams Public Library is continually evolving to meet the communities' need for enrichment and growth through learning, innovation, and opportunity in a safe and inclusive environment.

VALUES

- We commit to kindness, respect, equity, and trust.
- We believe in engagement, connection, partnerships, and understanding.
- We encourage reading, intellectual freedom, learning, and growth.
- We undertake our work with responsibility, innovation, effectiveness, and sustainability.

PLAN SUMMARY

This Strategic Plan is intended to set a clear direction for the library over the course of the next several years. Defining priorities and identifying specific actions enables the Library Board and staff to align their resources in a way that maximizes the benefits to the community in line with the library's stated mission, vision, and values.

Priority: SUSTAINABILITY

- Create and maintain a healthy work environment by encouraging a space that is welcoming, affirming, and supportive.
- Complete the Sustainable Libraries Certification Program which provides a tested, structured path to increase the library's commitment to environmental stewardship, economic feasibility, and social equity.
- Evaluate current practices and consumption of resources and develop improvement plans for each of the following key areas:
 - Organizational Commitment
 - Energy
 - Waste and Recycling
 - Purchasing
 - Transportation
 - Land Use
 - Water
 - Collective Impact
 - Social Cohesion
 - Community Resilience
 - Financial Sustainability
 - Collections

Priority: ACCESSIBILITY

- Spread the word that the library's collections, services and programs are open to everyone
- Ensure the building and website align with ADA standards
- Expand the promotion and implementation of the Homebound Delivery Service
- Improve ease of use and instruction for digital services such as Aspen and Libby to help all patrons access digital platforms more easily

Priority: HISTORIC PRESERVATION

- Maintain the library as a central part of our historic Woodstock community
- Make essential improvements to maintain our building for years to come
- Collaborate with local groups such as the History Center to implement programs that engage the public in our local history

Priority: COLLECTIONS

- Curate a diverse, current, and engaging collection of material that meets the wide-ranging needs of our patrons
- Complete regular diversity audits to ensure the collection provides an accurate and equitable reflection of the community's expanding interests and needs
- Expand the “Library of Things” to include a wider variety of non-traditional materials
- Weed collections regularly to provide space for new materials

Priority: PROGRAMS

- Offer a vast array of dynamic programs that appeal to an increasingly diverse audience
- Provide family programs that educate and socialize both young and old, such as story times, music and movement, and citizen science events
- Host a robust annual Summer Reading Program. Include a variety of programs, events, and incentives to encourage children to read throughout the summer months
- Procure additional funding through grants, donations and other sources to support expanding resources and programs

Priority: TECHNOLOGY SERVICES

- Provide a range of essential services beyond book circulation to aid the public in navigating life in the 21st century
- Offer free, reliable, and secure Wi-Fi that is available throughout the library property 24/7
- Provide access to computers and printers along with technological assistance when requested
- Provide technology education within the library as well as at community locations such as the Thompson Senior Center

Priority: COMMUNITY OUTREACH

- Facilitate experiences that enrich lives through interpersonal connection and community engagement
- Create yearly events which foster community engagement by inviting and encouraging the public to help in planning and execution
- Welcome collaborations and suggestions from community groups and individuals about events or activities with which the library could help or participate
- Bring the library to the community by expanding programs such as Childcare Outreach, Market on the Green, Books for the Homebound
- Grow the library's presence on social media to increase awareness of library programs and services
- Encourage all potential volunteers, at any age, by utilizing the gifts they have to offer and ensuring they feel appreciated and welcome