

# **Barrhead Library Board Strategic Plan 2015-2017**

**for Barrhead Public Library  
and Neerlandia Public Library**



**Approved April 21, 2015**

## **Strategic Plan 2015 to 2017 for Barrhead Library Board**

### Introduction

The Strategic Plan for the Barrhead Library Board covering years 2015 through 2017 is approved by the Barrhead Library Board for implementation by Barrhead Public Library and Neerlandia Public Library.

Barrhead Public Library is a school-housed public library serving the population of the Town of Barrhead (4432) and the County of Barrhead (6096) and Barrhead Elementary School (732 in grades K to 6). It is opening to the public 7 days a week, for 53 hours in winter months, 44 hours in summer. The library has been in its current location in the school since 1986.

Neerlandia Public Library is a school-housed public library serving its surrounding County of Barrhead population of 1298 and Neerlandia Public Christian School, (170 in grades K to 9). The library has been in its current location in the school since 1996. A new school building is under construction. The school and library are expected to move into the new building in 2016.

### **The Planning Process**

In February 2014, the Library Board and Friends of the Library Society met in a strategic planning session to identify:

- What our community needs and interests are
- What and where each Library is currently in relation to their community
- What and where the each Library is to be in five years time in order to meet community needs

The eighteen Library Service Responses (S. Nelson) <sup>1</sup> were reviewed.

In June, 2014, this planning process was conducted with representatives from 11 community organizations.

In July 2014, Barrhead Public Library staff met to review the outcomes of the two previous planning sessions and give their response which was chosen to support plans on how to create a Makerspace and how to promote its use.

In September 2014 a Board adhoc Strategic Planning Committee was established.

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson, Sandra Strategic Planning for Results Chicago:American Library Association, 2008 p. 143-217

In September 2014 Neerlandia Library staff met to review the outcomes and give their response which was chosen to focus on their move to a new space in the near future..

In November, the Board gave their response, it being an opportunity for further promoting opportunities available at the Library,

And in January, 2015, customer service surveys<sup>2</sup> were conducted in each library .

**The 2015-2017 Strategic Plan library service responses are:**

1. Express Creativity – Create and Share Content (recommended by the Library Board)
2. Satisfy Curiosity – Life Long Learning (recommended by Barrhead Library staff)
3. Every Visitor Experiences a Comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces (recommended by Neerlandia Library staff)

**Preparations**

In February 2105, senior library staff wrote up a draft document of strategic goals and objectives for the three service responses.

In March 2015 the adhoc committee met to review the draft document.

In April 2015 the Board approved the Strategic Plan of Service, these responses seeming to be a logical extension of the Plan of Service conducted in 2010-2014 and in 2004 through 2009.

What was: Plan of Service 2010-2014 (a review)

In the Plan of Service 2010-2014 the Library Board worked on 3 strategic library service responses:

1. Stimulate imaginations and engaging readers of all ages
2. Visiting a comfortable place: physical and virtual spaces
3. Assisting everyone in getting to know our community

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<sup>2</sup> Surveys conducted in conjunction with 2014 Annual Survey and 2015 Annual Report of Public Libraries in Alberta

What was: Plan of Service 2004-2009 (a review)

In the Plan of Service 2004-2009, the Library Board established, and achieved five goals (given below

Plan of Service 2004-2009 Goals:

1. In Public Services, the Library provides efficient, effective and courteous library services that anticipate and satisfy identified community needs
2. In Public Relations and Marketing, the Library continues to strengthen the profile of the Library within the community through effective public relations and marketing
3. In Collections and Programs, the Library's collections and programs meet the needs and interests of people of all ages.
4. In Staff Development, the Library's trustees, staff and volunteers as an integral part of the Library's resources and opportunities are well-trained and conduct themselves in a professional manner.
5. In the area of Facilities, the Library is a safe, accessible and appealing showcase for the Library's resources, services and programs.

## 1. Express Creativity – Create and Share Content

Definition: Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original art, print, video, audio or visual content in a real-world or online environment.

Target Audiences:

- Children
- Teens
- Adults
- Seniors
- Disabled
- English-as-a-second language

How this to be achieved:

- Provide space for creating and for display  
Library may have a designated space, such as Barrhead Library's Makerspace, but will also utilize other areas of the Library to provide adequate work and display space for public use.

Measurement: User evaluations to be completed on each visit.  
A positive user response will be: This is a good space to work in.

- Provide hands-on classes to teach how to use a variety of tools and resources

Staff to provide orientations on how to use tools and resources, and assist users when a need arises.

Measurement: User evaluations to be completed on each visit.  
A positive user response will be: I got the help I needed to succeed with my project.

- Provide or sponsor workshops for existing groups.

The Library will work with existing groups such as the photo club, art club, Lego robot enthusiasts and others to co-sponsor a workshop by an established presenter. These would be programs also open to the general public. The Library to provide space and to promote the event in its ordinary channels for promoting library activities. The Library will also display the work created by the club members at the end of the workshop.

Groups to reach out to:

Barrhead Art Club  
Barrhead Photo Club  
Blue Heron Support Services – art program  
Homeschool associations  
Hill Crest Lodge – art program  
Women Word Weavers

Measurement: The number of registrations will meet the expectations of the group, the presenter and the library. Registrants will turn in positive user evaluations. Groups and clubs will begin to approach the Library to discuss more co-sponsorship opportunities.

- The Library will offer day-camp experiences for youth in the arts, game design and story writing.

The Library will hire art instructors to teach in a variety of mediums. At the end of the camp, the works will be displayed in a gallery-style showing.

Measurement: User evaluations to be completed by each camper.  
A positive user response will be: I enjoyed coming to camp.

- The Library will participate in organizing cultural concerts in the community.

Working with other organizations and individual artists, the Library will showcase local talent, as in the annual Alberta Culture Days events.

Organizations:

Barrhead Arts Council  
Barrhead Art Club  
Barrhead Photo Club  
Country Quilters  
Barrhead Museum and Historical Society  
Barrhead Composite High School, music and arts programs  
Women Word Weavers

Measurement: User evaluations to be completed by attendees and a second version for performers.  
A positive user response will be: Good opportunity to showcase local talent

The Library will make available online blogging or facebook sites for sharing library-related issues, recommending reading or sharing insights or short stories about personal or local events.

Measurement: The number of users hits on the site and conversely, the number of posts removed for being inappropriate.  
A positive user response will be: "likes"

## 2. Satisfy Curiosity – Lifelong Learning

- Provide programs on a variety of topics of interest to various age groups in the community

The Library will provide programs for young children, school age children, youth, adults and seniors.

Measurement: Attendance numbers and a positive response on user satisfaction surveys.  
A positive user response will be: I enjoyed this program.

Work with local organizations to cosponsor events, demonstrations or displays on topics of interest to various age groups

- The Library will cosponsor with the Barrhead Leader Newspaper and the Chamber of Commerce, All Candidate Debates for all municipal, provincial and federal elections as they arise. The Library will be a partner in local celebrations such as Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and Awards, Barrhead Street Festival, Alberta Culture Days and Festival of Trees. The Library will look for opportunities to demonstrate and display events such as the Alberta C.O.W. Bus, and TREX art exhibits.

Measurement: Attendance numbers and a positive response on user satisfaction surveys if appropriate.  
A positive user response will be: I enjoyed this program.

- The Library will promote the opportunity for local residents to display personal collections.

Measurement: Visitors to the Library pause to look at the exhibits.

The Library will assist with adult education courses through distance learning.

The Library will be an invigilator for exams for distance learning students. The Library will also endeavour to locate necessary books and periodical articles for students and provide assistance in using library computers to compose essays and complete assignments.

Measurement: Number of students and how well staff were able to assist them.

Develop electronic pathfinders and promote Novelist and similar databases to help users find items on topics of interest

Measurement: A count of the number of users of the pathfinders.

## **2. Every Visitor Experiences a Comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces**

Definition: Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.

Target Audiences:

- Persons with disabilities
- Parents with very young children
- Children

- Youth
- Adults
- Seniors
- Local organizations and clubs

How this is to be achieved:

1. Ensure adequate physical access into the library space

Identify and remove barriers to access and movement for all persons including those with disabilities or using infant strollers regarding:

- Parking
- Sidewalks
- Entrances
- Night time lighting
- Snow and ice removal

Measured by: positive user satisfaction comments (Users will say: "I like the improvements")

2. Ensure adequate physical access within the library space

Identify and remove barriers in furnishings and facilities for all persons including those with disabilities or using infant strollers

- washrooms
- seating throughout the library
- work, study and visiting areas
- counter heights

Measured by: positive user satisfaction comments (Users will say: "I like the improvements")

## 2. Every Visitor Experiences a Comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces, cont.

3. Aesthetically pleasing, culturally aware and engaging decor

- gallery and exhibit space
- public meeting spaces
- gaming areas
- interactive display in children's area

Measured by: increased user count, positive user satisfaction responses

#### 4. Warm and Welcoming

- clear and effective signs
- bright, cheerful decor
- inviting spaces
- reader-friendly library brochures

Measured by: positive user satisfaction responses

#### 5. Sense of Belonging, visitors will feel they are valued

- library events web page
- opportunities for social networking
- identifiable logo used in all promotions and advocacy publications
- email advisories of upcoming events

Measured by: increased user counts

## 2.. Every Visitor Experiences a Comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces, cont.

**Barrhead Public Library monthly action reports appear in green.**

**Neerlandia Public Library monthly action reports appear in blue.**

**2010.03 BPL Apply for CIP grant of \$10,000 to match \$10,000 casino funding to order new furnishings, computers and games. Note: CIP application completed and approved by Library Board March 16, 2010, submitted March 26, 2010. [..\Grant Applications\CIP 2010\Proposed Upgrading of Children.doc](#)**

2010.04 BPL Board approves retirement of existing logo, and search for new one.

2010 .06 BPL will revise web page, using new web creation tools to make it more intuitive for users, and easier to maintain by staff.

Completion: September 2010.

2010.03 BPL Apply for CIP grant of \$10,000 to match \$10,000 casino funding to order new furnishings, computers and games. Note: CIP application completed and approved by Library Board March 16, 2010, submitted March 26, 2010. [..\Grant Applications\CIP 2010\Proposed Upgrading of Children.doc](#)

2010.11 BPL has received and assembled new furnishings

2011.04 BPL refurbishes "internet use policy" signs at public computer stations.

2012.06 BPL the make juvenile reading area more conducive to learning through discovery using "neighbourhoods".

2012.02 BPL to adopt a more frequent disinfecting of table and keyboard surfaces during cold and flu seasons

2010.05 NPL Form a committee to develop plans for the children's corner, plans to be ready for presentation Sept. 2010.

2010.06 NPL will discuss with PHRD carpenter the design and construction of seating and shelving for the children's corner. Completion: July 2010

2010.10 NPL will continue work on children's story corner, replacing damaged curtain and refurbish benches.

2012.03 NPL to cost out building a book shelf to house graphic novels, hockey and dinosaur books

2011.01 NPL installs word wall art

**The Beginning:** As the Library Board moves forward with the 2015 -2017 Strategic Plan, the Board will be kept aware of progress through monthly reports by senior staff. Each year at the June meeting, the Board will review the progress made over the past year and make recommendations to senior staff as needed. A summary of the Strategic Plan will be available with the Annual Report for each library. If/as professional development seminars about these service responses become available, Board and staff will attend.

## **Appendices**

### **Community Overview**

The Town of Barrhead, population 4209 located 1 hour and 40 minutes northwest of Edmonton. It has an acute care hospital, five seniors housing facilities, recreational facilities, parks, 11 churches, an elementary school, a junior and senior high school. It is the commercial centre for residents in the area and surrounding counties. The County of Barrhead No. 11 is primarily a farming district with a population of 5845. The County office is in the Town of Barrhead.

The hamlet of Neerlandia has an estimated population of 1286 in the hamlet and neighbouring district. It lies 20 minutes north of the Town of Barrhead. The hamlet has a public Christian school of kindergarten to Grade 9, 3 churches and a Coop grocery and home centre complex.

#### **Library Overview**

Barrhead Public Library was established in 1950 as a school-housed public library.. Located in Barrhead Elementary School in the Town of Barrhead, it serves both town and county residents. Typically, community users borrow books and other library materials, use public and assistive computers, attend programs for all ages and obtain information, or visit the Library to view art exhibits and other displays. The library also services students and staff of the elementary school in which it is housed in. At one time the Library also operated a book mobile service to outlying communities within the county. This service became too costly and operations ceased in the early 1990's. In 2014 the Library dedicated a room in the Library to being a Makerspace.

Neerlandia Public Library was established in 1974. It is located in Neerlandia Public Christian School and serves County of Barrhead residents living within the school's catchment area as well as well as students and staff of its school. The local community uses the Library primarily to borrow books and attend a book club and/or story time program for preschoolers. This is also a school-housed public library that serves as the school's library. The school division is now working on a new facility which will replace both the school and library. It will open in 2016.

### **Library Board Overview**

Mission Statement (revised in January 2015) : Connect. Discover. Explore.

The mission of the Barrhead Library Board is to connect the community library resources, to encourage discovery of information and inspire exploration of knowledge and the world we live in.

### **Library Board Overview, cont.**

#### **Policy Statement**

The Library Board upholds the public's right to know by providing people access and guidance to information and collections that reflect different points of view.

#### **Belief Statement**

The Library Board believes in:

- Equal access to library services for all members of the community
- Professionalism and Board respect for the worth and ability of each employee
- Respect for the public served by the Library regardless of age, economic level, beliefs, and race, personal or physical characteristics.
- Effective and efficient service
- Library resources that anticipate and respond to community interests and needs
- Maintenance of friendly, inviting and safe facilities

#### **Board Members**

Charline Fuhr, Chair

Ruth Bohn, Vice Chair

Ruth Hewitt

Charles Sutherland

Robin Kapler

Gillian Lee

Darrell Troock

Leslie Penny

Sandra Olthius

## **Senior Library Staff**

Barrhead Public Library – Elaine Dickie, Library Director, Grace Huisman, Assistant Director  
Neerlandia Public Library - Dagmar Visser, and Brenda Gelderman Library Managers