



Belleville
Public Library &
John M. Parrott Art Gallery

Belleville Public Library and John M. Parrott Art Gallery

Strategic Plan

2022-2027



Photo by David and Beth Lumbers Photography

Background: Development of the Strategic Plan

Our last strategic plan covered the period from 2015 to 2020. While the COVID-19 pandemic slowed the process, the Belleville Public Library Board (the Board) and staff worked in 2020 and 2021 to create this new strategic plan to carry the Belleville Public Library (the Library) and John M. Parrott Art Gallery (the Gallery) from 2022 to 2027.

In the development period for the plan, the Board met to review the previous plan and to consider new options for the community. The Board and staff reviewed comparative statistics for the Library against other public libraries serving communities of similar sizes.

These general directions emerged for the new plan:

- Advancement of Knowledge (including creation of a technology hub)
- Inspire Lifelong Learning (including provision of resources and teaching skills)
- Build Community (including outreach and community partnerships)
- Support Creativity (including activating imagination, technological explorations, cultural activities)
- Promote Citizenship (including providing resources, historical perspective and diversity)

In the development period, we also used a survey to gather feedback from the community. By May 2021, we had 287 unique responses, providing us with information on usage and visions for future priorities. A copy of the results is available by request.

From the public survey:

- We learned that 44.4% of the survey respondents came to the Library on a weekly basis.
- More than 200 respondents used the Library to borrow books, DVDs, and other physical items from the Library, with print books being a key element of use, followed by DVDs.
- More than 100 survey respondents used the Library to borrow eBooks, digital audiobooks, movies or online courses, with 16.4% using these online resources on a weekly basis.
- Survey respondents also like the Library's online programs, with 20% of respondents stating that they had participated in, attended, or viewed an online event in the last 12 months.

Public survey results continued:

- The top four priorities for the Library, as identified in the survey, are physical collection; programming and events; working with local schools to help students; and digital collection (eBooks, digital audiobooks).
- The top four priorities for the Gallery, identified in the survey, are outreach and working with local schools to teach students about art and local artists; in-person programs and events; working more with local Indigenous artists and exhibitions; and developing our permanent collection of original artwork.

Staff also provided helpful feedback, with 25 responses to a staff survey.

When asked about priorities, the staff listed these three areas as being equal in need:

- Developing and improving the digital collection (eBooks, digital audiobooks, movies, online courses)
- Programming and events (in person programming once it is safe to do so)
- Community and educational outreach: working with local schools to help students improve information literacy skills

These priorities were followed closely by these two areas:

- Developing and improving the physical collection (DVDs, CD audiobooks, print books)
- Improving and expanding public computer and technology services (Makerspace, 3D printing)

In this document, we present our higher-level strategic directions and our goals for each direction. Each year, the Library will present an **Action Plan** for the year, which will be reviewed with the Board and on a regular basis to track work completed and chart future goals and activities.

Strategic Plan: 2022-2027

Mission

The Belleville Public Library and John M. Parrott Art Gallery is a community meeting place that supports and inspires lifelong learning, creativity, growth, and success by providing equitable access to information, print and digital resources, technology, and the arts in a welcoming environment.

Vision

The Library and Gallery will strive to meet the educational, recreational and information needs of all Belleville citizens through the provision of free and equitable access to physical and digital collections and services, delivered by skilled, knowledgeable, and capable staff.

The Library and Gallery will serve as a central hub and meeting place that fosters community building and enriches the lives of people of all ages. We aim to be an efficient and financially sustainable organization with a diverse revenue stream and a creative approach to public service.

Strategic Directions and Goals

Strategic Direction 1: Support Learning and Development

Goal 1: Support our traditional formats and make the most of digital resources

- To achieve this goal, we will increase our materials budget related to both physical materials and electronic resources. We will also undertake an audit of the print/physical collection to examine the entire collection in terms of balance of format, content relevance, overuse/underuse and budget allocation by type of materials.

Goal 2: Build our technology and innovation

- To achieve this goal, we will invest in technology to support community-based learning and to improve accessibility. We will also work to bridge the digital divide in our community by providing innovative technology programs and services at the Library.



Strategic Direction 2: Create Vibrant and Accessible Spaces

Goal 1: Assess the interior and exterior at the existing Library

- To achieve this goal, we will complete a study of the role and purpose of every indoor space within the existing Library and galleries, including but not limited to navigation through the eyes of the user, and safety features throughout the building. We will also complete an audit of the outdoor space at the existing Library including determining the range and strength of the public wireless internet service.

Goal 2: Explore the possibilities of expanding the physical Library at strategic city locations

- This goal is exploratory in nature, and through it we will creatively consider ways to expand the physical presence of the Library throughout the city, e.g., to develop Library satellite locations in community centres or retail spaces.



Strategic Direction 3: Focus on Culture and Destination

Goal 1: Focus on the Library and Gallery as a destination

- To achieve this goal, we will focus our attention on ensuring that residents and visitors to the community know that the Library and the Gallery are important destinations, and well worth exploring. We will focus on promotions using specific communication strategies using mailings, posters, radio and tourism pieces.

Goal 2: Focus on the Library and Gallery as a cultural hub for the community

- To achieve this goal, we will focus our attention on ensuring that our Library and Gallery are cultural hubs in the community with plenty of cultural activities both in person and online.



Strategic Direction 4: Build Community

Goal 1: Expand communication channels and promote the Library and Gallery as a valued community resource

- To achieve this goal, we will review all communication channels to determine uptake within our community, ensuring that we reach beyond our traditional Library and Gallery users.

Goal 2: Engage our community partners

- To achieve this goal, we will reach out to community partners including government supported agencies and community sponsored groups.

Goal 3: Expand program offerings

- While our program offerings have been well-received over these past number of years, to achieve this goal, we will focus resources on creating programs that are experiential learning, interest-driven activities, and community-led programming for all ages.



Strategic Direction 5: Strengthen Organizational Capacity

Goal 1: Build staff capacity to lead a 21st century Library

- To achieve this goal, we will build on staff competencies to excel in job responsibilities and address future system needs, with a focus on developing a sustainable training plan for present and for future staff needs. We will also review all processes and procedures to ensure that there are no barriers related to Library and Gallery use.

Goal 2: Build the governance capacity

- To achieve this goal, the Board members will have a plan of progress in governance and support of the operations plan (how to govern, enhance administration, determination of community needs, additional revenue streams) and how they will be best able to advocate for the Library. We will also review all policies to ensure that there are no barriers related to Library and Gallery use.

