



St. Marys Public Library

Strategic Plan 2014-2017



Executive Summary

In 2013, the St. Marys Public Library Board began a project to create a strategic plan for optimal public library service to the Town of St. Marys, Perth South, and our surrounding area.

The Board, wanting to ensure a community driven library invited the community and other stakeholders to share what was needed for the library to best serve the needs of our community.

Several forums were held for members of the library's service community, the Board, and staff. Information was also gathered through online and paper surveys distributed in and out of the library throughout the service community.

Careful analysis of all the information gathered from stakeholders, review of current strategic directions and plans of the Town and community, and expanding possibilities of potential library services resulted in the creation of the St. Marys Public Library Strategic Plan 2014-2017 with four key areas of focus identified.

In focusing on Community Connections, we build on a "together we are stronger" attitude and will seek out and develop collaborative relationships with organizations and groups within our wider community.

In focusing on Library Collections, we seek to provide our community with the diverse, interesting and well used collection they need. We will keep up to date on emerging trends in publishing and formats of providing entertainment, literacy, and knowledge to our community.

In focusing on the Library as a Comfortable Place to Visit, we will work to provide a welcoming and accessible gathering place that is built upon the values of maintaining our heritage building and institution now and for the future.

In focusing on the Sustainable Future of the Library, we will use careful planning and advocacy to relay the continuing value and relevancy of the library as both community place and community service.

This is a plan of action that will be regularly reviewed and revised as appropriate with all of our progress being reported openly and widely to our whole community.



Mission, Vision, and Values Statement

1. Definitions

“Library” shall mean The St. Marys Public Library

“Board” shall mean the Library Board of the St. Marys Public Library

“CEO” shall mean the Chief Executive Officer of the St. Marys Public Library

2. Mission

St. Marys Public Library provides free and equitable access to library services.

St. Marys Public Library preserves and promotes universal access to a broad range of knowledge, experience, information and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment. New technologies extend access to global information beyond the Library walls.

3. Vision

The St. Marys Public Library encourages the spirit of exploration, the joy of reading and the pursuit of knowledge for people of all ages and backgrounds, beginning with the very young.

As the cornerstone of our community, our Library is a gathering place that connects people to each other, to their community, and to their hopes and dreams.

The Library treasures the past and works to build a sustainable future that is full of possibilities.

The Library promotes and enriches the democratic, cultural, educational and economic life of our diverse and evolving municipalities.

4. Values

Stewardship and accountability: Managing our resources effectively and responsibly toward a sustainable future

Creativity: Encouraging innovation

Accessibility: Ensuring equitable and fair access to services, information and facilities

Respect and integrity: Valuing individual needs, experiences and differences, and conducting ourselves in an ethical and professional manner

Community relations: Providing quality services that meet the needs of the greater community

Intellectual Freedom: Encouraging the free exchange of information and ideas

Literacy and lifelong learning: Enriching lives through the joys of reading and continuous learning

Teamwork: Fostering a work culture that advocates cooperation, communication, respect, and training.

St. Marys Public Library Strategic Plan 2014-2017

Based on extensive community, staff, Board, and other stakeholder input, the St. Marys Public Library Strategic Plan outlines the key objectives and priorities of the library from 2014-2017. The library uses this plan to help ensure that library services are meeting the evolving needs of our community.

1. Community Connections

The Library actively seeks to collaborate with Municipal partners and other local agencies and organizations to provide the best possible programming and services to the community.

1.1. Target Audiences Include

- Our community
- Cultural Groups
- Educational Institutions
- Municipal Staff
- Service Groups

1.2. Potential Partners Include

- Adult Learning Programs of Perth
- Canadian Baseball Hall of Fame
- Friends of the Library
- Municipalities of St. Marys and Perth County
- Perth County Information Network
- Pyramid Recreation Centre
- Service Groups
- Non-profit agencies

1.3. Goals

1. The library is known as an active partner and collaborator in providing exceptional service and programs in all corners of the community.

2. The library is acknowledged as a responsible service provider that compliments rather than competes with the many other community groups offering recreational, educational and cultural services to the St. Marys community.
3. The library is sought out as a reliable partner who will bring relevant library resources to community events and groups.
4. Library staffing levels are sufficient to deliver the services required to our community.

1.4. Strategies

1. Staffing levels and training needs are evaluated and adjusted annually prior to budget preparation to ensure an efficient staff to service ratio is maintained.
2. Library staff are trained and empowered to seek out partnerships in the community to develop and present new and exciting programs and events in and out of the library.
3. Library staff are trained and empowered to plan and make presentations to community agencies and organizations regarding relevant collections and services offered by the library.
4. Library staff are trained and empowered to plan special events, create displays and exhibits, and create digital resources.

1.5. Measures of success

Community perceptions

- Number of people who indicate on a survey that they are aware of the library's partnerships and outreach in the community.
- Number of people attending joint or partnership events and programs who provide a positive evaluation.
- Percent of people surveyed who respond that the library's community outreach is very good or excellent.
- Program specific evaluation metrics.

Units of service delivered.

- Number of programs and events presented.
- Number of presentations given at local partner sites.
- Number of exhibits and displays presented in partnership with local partners.
- Social network analysis to determine the Library's integration and relationships with local partners.

2. Library Collections

The library provides a diverse, interesting and well used collection of library materials in a variety of formats for use in and out of the library that serves the needs of its community.

2.1. Target Audiences Include

- Children
- Teens
- Adults
- Seniors

2.2. Goals

1. As a general purpose public library our collection encourages the spirit of exploration, the joy of reading, and the pursuit of knowledge for people of all ages and backgrounds.
2. The community is aware of the expanded availability of materials outside of the local physical collection such as through the library's membership in the Perth County Information Network, reciprocal systems, as well as through Interlibrary Loan.
3. The community is empowered to make comments and recommendations regarding the library's physical and electronic collections.
4. The library's physical and electronic collections are recognized as exceptional within the limitations of the available space within the library building.
5. The collections budget is regularly analyzed to ensure that physical and virtual collections are being funded and maintained in accordance with the evolving needs of our users.

2.3. Strategies

1. Staff are trained and empowered to develop the collections based on patron feedback and library policy.
2. Prior to each year's budget discussions, the CEO reviews how well the collection is meeting the needs of the community and passes on any relevant recommendations to the Board regarding changes to collections budget.
3. Easy to use digital and paper suggestion forms are readily available for community use to comment and make recommendations.
4. Benefits of the library's membership in the Perth County Information Network are clearly defined and marketed to the community.
 - a. Users have access to clear training and guides to make full use of the local, regional, and interlibrary loan services.

5. Staff are trained and empowered to market the library's collection to the community through in-library displays and paper and digital lists, programs, reviews and other promotions.

2.4. Measures of success

Community perceptions

- Number of people who use available suggestion and recommendation forms.
- Percent of people surveyed who respond that the library's collection is very good or excellent.

Units of service delivered.

- Number of visits to the library website
- Number of patrons using online databases
- Number of "in-library" material uses during a "typical week survey"
- Use of special collections.
- Number of collection based displays and promotions.
- Number of active patrons.
- Circulation statistics.

3. Space / Facility – The library is a comfortable place to visit.

The community will have a safe and welcoming physical space to meet and interact with others, or to sit quietly and read. Visitors will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.

3.1. Target Audiences Include

- All guests in the library

3.2. Potential Partners

- Friends of the Library
- Local Businesses
- Service Clubs
- Town of St. Marys Facilities
- Town of St. Marys Heritage Committee
- Town of St. Marys Tourism

3.3. Goals

- 1) The beauty, history and heritage of our historical Carnegie Library is appreciated and always a major factor in any plans or decisions regarding the Library building.
- 2) The library meets or exceeds accessibility legislation so as to be a welcoming and useable space for all members of its community.
- 3) The library building is able to serve its community into the future through sustainable planning and accountability.
- 4) The library's virtual services, and the technology required to support them are kept up to date. Funding is continually sought and made available to maintain, and upgrade as required, the library's online presence and services to our users.

3.4. Strategies

- 1) Evaluate current uses of the library space and determine strategies of maximizing space for collections, programming, and community needs.
- 2) Explore funding options including grants, donations, and Municipal sources to meet accessibility and other upgrade needs.
- 3) Sustainable and environmentally friendly procedures and materials are employed wherever possible (recycling, materials, etc.)

3.5. Measures of Success

Number and perception of users

- Number of users surveyed who rate the accessibility and usability of the library building as very good or excellent.

Units of service delivered.

- Number of relevant grants applied for.
- Number of relevant grants awarded.
- Library is compliant with all relevant accessibility legislation.
- Library maintains its status as an Accredited Ontario Public Library.
- Library maintains its status as a heritage building.

4. Sustainable Future of the Library

Through careful planning and advocacy, the relevancy of the library is maintained, developed, and marketed to stakeholders in such ways as to ensure a long and sustainable future of the library.

4.1. Targeted Audiences Include

- Funding stakeholders
- Community members

4.2. Potential Partners

- Friends of the Library
- Fund-granting organizations
- Local Businesses
- Town of St. Marys Council
- Town of St. Marys Heritage Committee
- Town of St. Marys Staff
- Service groups

4.3. Goals

- 1) The library is acknowledged by community members and stakeholders as a valuable community resource with a viable future.
- 2) The library is acknowledged as an up to date, important, and relevant institution providing a much needed service to the community.
- 3) The library is a key partner in realizing community goals and strategic plans.

4.4. Strategies

- 1) Library staff are trained and empowered to create and disseminate creative and effective marketing materials outlining the up to date and sustainable services provided by the library.
- 2) Library staff and Board are trained and empowered to actively advocate for the library in a variety of ways both in and out of the library.
- 3) Library CEO and Board work together to create long term financial and service plans for the library.
- 4) Continue to work with the Town of St. Marys and other Municipal partners to ensure sufficient operating and capital budgets to support core services.
- 5) Meet with service clubs and other local funders to share information about community needs and potential projects requiring funding.

- 6) Work with the Friends of the Library to encourage fundraising for specific projects.
- 7) Enhance our reporting to the community on our progress in implementing our strategic objectives that support our community's goals and strategic plans.

4.5. Measures of success

Community perceptions

- Number of people who indicate on a survey that the library is a valuable resource to the community.
- Number of people who indicate on a survey that the library is an up to date and relevant institution.

Units of service delivery

- Number of successfully completed projects for the betterment of the library and library services.
- Number of active cardholders.
- Number of guests in the library.
- Monitoring progress toward achieving the strategies of the plan through regular reporting by the CEO to the Board and Council.