WEST NIPISSING PUBLIC LIBRARY

STRATEGIC PLAN

2021-2026

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INTRODUCTION

West Nipissing is a special community with a unique blend of cultures. One of West Nipissing Public Library's great achievements has been its ability to respond effectively to the diverse needs of its service population. Library staff have developed a high level of awareness of both francophone, anglophone and indiginous cultures. Over the years, the library has built up an impressive collection of resources in both official languages.

In this challenging economy, the Library is altering and adding to its list services to assist and provide for all members of the community. The library is serving a new population of users, young people who have grown up in the digital age and for whom a large part of socialization happens in the virtual world of online communications. At the same time, seniors who use the library are steadily learning the digital world knowledgeable staff. Young families are discovering new reasons to use the library once again. These trends are having a major impact on how the library delivers services and how it will do so in the future.

Library users in West Nipissing today have certain expectations of their library. They expect:

• ready access to up-to-date collections in a wide variety of formats, as well as a wide selection of reliable online resources, in both official languages
• in addition to books, to have available a wide variety of works in the latest digital formats;
• up-to-date technology and ready access to computers and wireless internet
• have access to online information resources on a variety of subjects
• to have trained and experienced library staff for guidance in using new technology
• library staff to be available, courteous, knowledgeable, skilled and able to provide service in both French and English
• library facilities that are conveniently located, with convenient hours and parking, accessible to people with disabilities, with surroundings that are pleasant, safe and comfortable
• to see the library as a gathering place where community members can interact informally or in organized groups, attend information sessions led by local experts, and have their children introduced to the magic of books and reading in a safe and stimulating environment

To effectively meet community expectations and deal with future challenges, the Library Board and CEO has developed this five-year strategic plan.The plan identifies three strategic priorities:
   1. Enhanced library services
   2. The library and the community
   3. Library facilities
   4. Archives

REASONS FOR THIS STRATEGIC PLAN

The West Nipissing Public Library Board and staff have undertaken the development of a five-year strategic plan in order to:

- provide direction and focus for the library's future growth and development
- guide the library to meet the changing needs of the communities it serves
- ensure that the library's resources are used efficiently
- demonstrate accountability as a publicly-funded organization
- review and evaluate the library's recent performance
- further develop the library's partnerships with other groups and organizations
- enhance the library's credibility with Municipal Council and the community
- increase the library's visibility as an essential community service
- enhance the library board and staff sense of teamwork
- ensure continuity for the Library's future direction
- communicate the library's vision and direction to the community at large

OUR MISSION

The West Nipissing Public Library is a community resource committed to furthering the acquisition of knowledge, supporting individual enrichment and enjoyment, fostering literacy and promoting life-long learning, by serving the information, cultural and leisure needs of all community members.

The library cooperates, shares and networks with other libraries and information providers in order to provide its community with the widest possible range of resources.

OUR VALUES

The library's values guide its day-to-day actions and express what the board holds to be of prime importance. To our staff, users and community, we are committed to the following:

- inclusiveness and respect for the diverse languages and cultures of the groups and individuals that make up our unique community
- excellence in customer service
- no-cost access to information, including internet
- barrier-free access to library services
- high quality and up-to-date resources
- maximization of benefit to the community through networking and cooperation

- commitment to lifelong learning and literacy for all ages

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

The West Nipissing Public Library faces a number of key opportunities and challenges:

Population

- serving a large population that consists of several smaller communities
- culturally diverse community
- aging population
- multiple spoken languages
- wide range of partnership opportunities in the community

Economy

- welcoming new industries into the community
- lack of funding due to current global economy
- limited employment opportunities for younger population
- diminishing funding from provincial government

Technology

- increase of technology used to deliver Public Library services
- decline in users who have internet connection at home
- growth of online social networking
- many community services have moved to online platforms
- high level of understanding by library staff of new technologies

OUR ASSETS

- high standard of customer service, in both French and English, and excellent relationship between library staff and patrons
- wide range of excellent services and resources offered in both official languages
- five library branches located throughout communities to better serve the residents
- disability friendly spaces and reception desks
- use of up-to-date technology
- variety of programs and special events for all ages
- wide range of partnerships within and beyond community
- fully bilingual library website offering a range of online library services
- wide selection of online information resources

- an integrated library system that includes all branches
- resource sharing: among the branches, with other public and academic libraries in the area, and as part of the provincial interlibrary loan network
- a positive working relationship with the municipal council and administration

OUR SHORTCOMINGS

- space limitations at the Sturgeon Falls branch
- shortage of parking for public and staff at the Sturgeon Falls branch
- low visibility of library in community
- low level of public awareness of some information services due to lack of marketing

OUR VISION

- library branches will continue to bustle with activity
- parents and their children will participate in more programs and events to further their love of readings
- Seniors will attend technology and information sessions that are fully accessible,
- library will host fun programs for teens,
- people will have access to the internet to explore different opportunities, obtain new skills and seek new employment
- people using wheelchairs, others with impaired vision or hearing, and older members of the community will feel welcome and safe using library facilities that have eliminated physical barriers and using services that have been adapted to facilitate their use
- borrowers will be self-checking their books, DVDs, and other items, while library staff focus on assisting the public and developing new, interesting programs and services
- employees will continue helping to train the public to use computer equipment and software, organizing and leading book clubs and storytelling sessions
- people who drive, ride bicycles or electric scooters to any library branch will have access to convenient parking

OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

To work toward the realization of our vision of the library's future, West Nipissing Public Library Board will focus on the following strategic priorities over the next five years:

Strategic Priority No. 1. Enhanced library services

The improvement and enhancement of services, along with the introduction of new services, will be necessary to continue to meet the ever-changing needs of the wide range of groups that make up our community. New technologies offer new possibilities that the board will consider in striving to continually improve the library's services.

Strategy Priority No. 2. The library and the community

Partnerships with other community groups and individuals will be crucial to the success of the board's plans and to achieving maximum benefit for the community. Effective communication to community residents and local decision makers concerning the library's important contribution to the community will help to ensure the library's future viability.

Strategy Priority No. 3. The library facilities

The importance of physical space will grow along with usage, technological change and demands for places for groups and individuals to gather and interact. Any contemplated changes to physical surroundings will have to take into consideration the needs of West Nipissing residents with disabilities.

OUR OBJECTIVES & ACTION PLANS

STRATEGIC PRIORITY No. 1

Enhanced library services

Objective 1.1

A plan to organize the library's collection of archival materials

Action plans:

        a) combine all collections to one convenient location
        b) perform an inventory on the collection
        c) find a new space for archives
        d) develop policies on research regulations

Objective 1.2

Increase Library presence online

Action plans:

        a) create a new, user friendly website
        b) develop eye catching graphics for our social media outlets
        c) purchase advertising space through Facebook
        d) develop a marketing strategy to promote the library

Objective 1.3

Attracting teens into the library

 Action plans:
- a) assess the present collection, and purchase new materials as required
- b) display material to make more visible/attractive
- c) host trendy programs and activities
- d) expand to teen orientated social media outlets

STRATEGIC PRIORITY No. 2
The library and the community

Objective 2.1

 Effective communication about library programs and events

Action plans:
- a) promote library events and programs through the library's website and social media
- b) ensure effective communication through staff on upcoming events
- c) advertise the library's services local radio and social media groups
- d) explore new advertising opportunities

Objective 2.2

 Increased visibility of library in the community

Action plans:
- a) take advantage of community social media pages and groups
- b) host public presentations/workshops
- c) participate in local fairs, community events
- d) work with community partners to promote the library and support local businesses and organisations

STRATEGIC PRIORITY No. 3
The library facilities

Objective 3.1

Finish updating children sections

Action plans:
- a) finish the updates at the Sturgeon Falls branch
- b) re-organize the collections in Cache Bay
- c) perform the inventory of the current collection and purchase new titles as required
- d) ensure all materials are physically accessible for all

Objective 3.2

Additional space required for the Sturgeon Falls branch

Action plans:
      a) change current layout of library space
      b) perform regular weeding and a proper inventory of all library materials
      c) acquire space for archives and local history inventory
      d) re-organize the collections

Objective 3.3

Modernisation of the Library

Action plans:
      a) purchase new furniture for spaces that are easy to clean
      b) paint the walls of Sturgeon Falls and Cache Bay branches
      c) acquire space for archives and local history inventory
      d) create welcoming seating areas to make the Library a true "community hub"

Objective 3.4

Viability of all branches

Action plans:

    a) keep statistics of branch usage
    b) perform surveys
    c) re-evaluate locations
    d) check financial costs

OUR PARTNERS

Organizations that the library currently works/cooperates with for the greater benefit of the community:

Current partners within the community

- La Source (West Nipissing Genealogy Club)
- Community Living West Nipissing
- Day care
- Schools
- Museum
- Health Unit
- Local Historical Society

Current partners outside the community

- Blue Sky Network
- PALS (Public & Academic Libraries Sharing)
- INFO (Interlibrary loan network)
- Our Ontario (digitization)
- Colleges

OUR CORE SERVICES

The group considered the following to be the library's first-line services:

- The provision and lending of print and non-print library materials, in French and English.
- Interlibrary loan of library materials and journal articles.
- Reference and information service (in which trained library staff guide users to the most appropriate information source or provide the information itself).
- Readers' advisory service (i.e. the process of matching users with materials, and materials with users, particularly as relates to leisure needs).
- Local history and genealogy resources.
- Public computer workstations for accessing the Internet, office software, etc.
- Wireless internet.
- Library Web site.

MONITORING AND UPDATING THE PLAN

In order to maintain the plan's effectiveness and to keep it current, the board will:

- Review the plan on an on-going basis
- Update the plan annually
- Revise the plan as necessary

COMMUNICATING THE PLAN

In order to fully realize our vision for the West Nipissing Public Library, it is critical that our users and partners understand and support this plan.

- A summarized copy will be sent to members of Municipal council. This summary will explain the plan's key features and messages and will assist the Library Board during budget presentations to council.
- The plan will be posted on the Library's website for the community to access.

- Over the course of the next five years, regular efforts will be made to update the municipal council and other key partners on the library's progress towards realizing its vision.

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM

West Nipissing Public Library Board members

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