Mackenzie County Libraries

Plan of Service

2020-2025

Table of Contents

This is a living document that will assist our Societies, Staff and the Mackenzie County Library Board on an ongoing basis. It will inform our Communities and funding partners with a vision of library services going forward.
Our actions will be tied to the Plan of Service and its included goals in some form or another.
Yearly updates and check-ins with the local Societies, staff and Board to determine our progress and if a change of course is required.

INTRODUCTION

MISSION STATEMENT

To enrich lives and communities through universal access to knowledge, lifelong learning and literacy.

VISION STATEMENT

To develop strong libraries that are dynamic community destinations for knowledge, inspiration, innovation and cultural awareness.

The Alberta Libraries Act charges library boards with providing 'comprehensive and efficient service' to their communities, while allowing the ability to adapt and be responsive to community needs. The Plan of Service is both a legal requirement and a path forward for our library team to grow, adapt and meet the needs of the patrons, residents and communities we serve.

Within the term of our last Plan of Service we were successful in exceeding many of the goals that were identified. We would like to celebrate a few large-scale successes we have had within the last five-year period. The three biggest ones are a new stand-alone library in the La Crete, the opening of an additional service point in Blue Hills and a substantial increase in library patronage! Over the past 10 years we have seen a steady growth in library patronage, awareness and support throughout the region. In 2019 our combined patron cardholders rose to 5,052, which represents 40% of our total County population, with the above average under 18 population that we have and a high rural population this number is truly extraordinary. This is so much more than a number… it means that 40% of our population walks through our doors, accesses library services from home, finds value in the services that we provide and is engaged in our regional library services. We are so proud of this and it has taken a lot of dedication and work to get to this point, and we aren't done yet! We will continue to strive to steadily increase patronage, support and awareness of the importance of libraries.

We are not part of a larger library system, we are continuing to build our own process of delivery including in-house as well as a suite of electronic library services, using a team approach and within a budget that is sustainable. We are doing something right! Our patronage numbers and support that we have show that. The future wish to apply for node status, is still on our minds, but is not an immediate action that we are looking at.

Our libraries are all uniquely positioned to be strong community hubs, that foster a sense of community and enable lifelong learning and barrier free access. Our library team works together to foster local and regional partnerships and build relationships to enhance all that libraries have to offer.

A Regional Needs Assessment survey was completed throughout 2019. This process was slightly delayed with the horrific fire season that we had in 2019, so an extension was granted to ensure that

enough time to complete our public input phase and create a solid plan that will guide us. Our member libraries were given the chance to review the draft plan and submit action items suggestions to address the data gathered from the patrons and community. Conversations were held across the region with regarding the future of Library services and how it relates to each community. The Board then reviewed submitted data and finalized this strategic plan that will guide Mackenzie County Library services throughout the next five years. We will review yearly and see where we are, celebrate the successes we see and if modifications need to be made.

Mackenzie County is located in the far north-west corner and is the largest municipality in the Province of Alberta. It covers approximately 80,000 square kilometers, which is bigger than the province of New Brunswick. We have three hamlets, La Crete, Fort Vermilion and Zama City. Our total population is 12,512 (2018 Census) with 66% making up a rural population, with 35.7% of our population being under 18. Within the boundaries of Mackenzie County we have the towns of High Level and Rainbow Lake, as well as four First Nations with multiple communities, including North and South Tall Cree, Fox Lake, John D'or, Garden River, Boyer, Child Lake, Bushe River, Meander River and Chateh.

The Mackenzie County Library Board (MCLB) was jointly created by the Province and Mackenzie County on November 12, 1998. The MCLB has three member libraries located in the Hamlets of Fort Vermilion, La Crete and Zama City, with a new minor service point in Blue Hills. The MCLB has a reciprocal partnership agreement with the Town of High Level Library to offer services across jurisdictional lines.

• OUR LIBRARIES

Zama City Public Library (ZCL):

Zama City is about as far north-west as you can get and still be in Alberta. The hamlet population is small, but hardy and has a high working transient population. ***We are Alberta's most Northern Library!*** We have moved around a bit over the years! The Library was first housed upstairs in the Community Hall, then moved to a room in the School, when the school needed more space, we ended up homeless for a while. Then the original Alberta Treasury Branch building from Fort Vermilion was given to Mackenzie County for $1 and it was moved to Zama and set up as a County office and Library, which we made do with for quite a few years. A partnership between the Province, the Federal Government, Mackenzie County and the Library made possible a beautiful permanent space within the Zama Cornerstone Building!

The Zama Library loves to think outside the box, from our Real Men Read section targeting our high amount of Industry workers in the area to our special collections of Specialty Cake pans to our massage chair in our Wellness Room… this keeps library services energized and in touch with the patrons and the community!

They may live a little on the wild side… but with local wildlife like this… who wouldn't!

Fort Vermilion Public Library (FVL):

The hamlet of Fort Vermilion is located on the banks of the Peace River, along Highway 88, roughly in the center of the Municipality. The hamlet is one of the oldest communities, we have to say 'one of' as Fort Chipewyan was also founded in 1788. There is a friendly rivalry over the title, so depending on where you are standing in the Province, you are in 'the oldest'! There is a large surrounding Metis, First Nation and rural farming population, that give this library the potential to bridge the cultures and become a unique dynamic community Hub.

Fort Vermilion Library was started in the 1930's by Jessie Slade McGrew, as a traveling library. The goal was to bring reading material to the people of the north. The library moved around a bit using local resident basements, to the Centennial Building and then to a dedicated community-built library building that was built in 1994 along River Road. The building is shared with Fort Vermilion Community Support Services FVCL. This long-standing partnership has helped the service delivery of these two organizations.

With the strong roots to aboriginal and metis heritage the library hosts a large collection of relevant titles and celebrates the local and long history of the area.
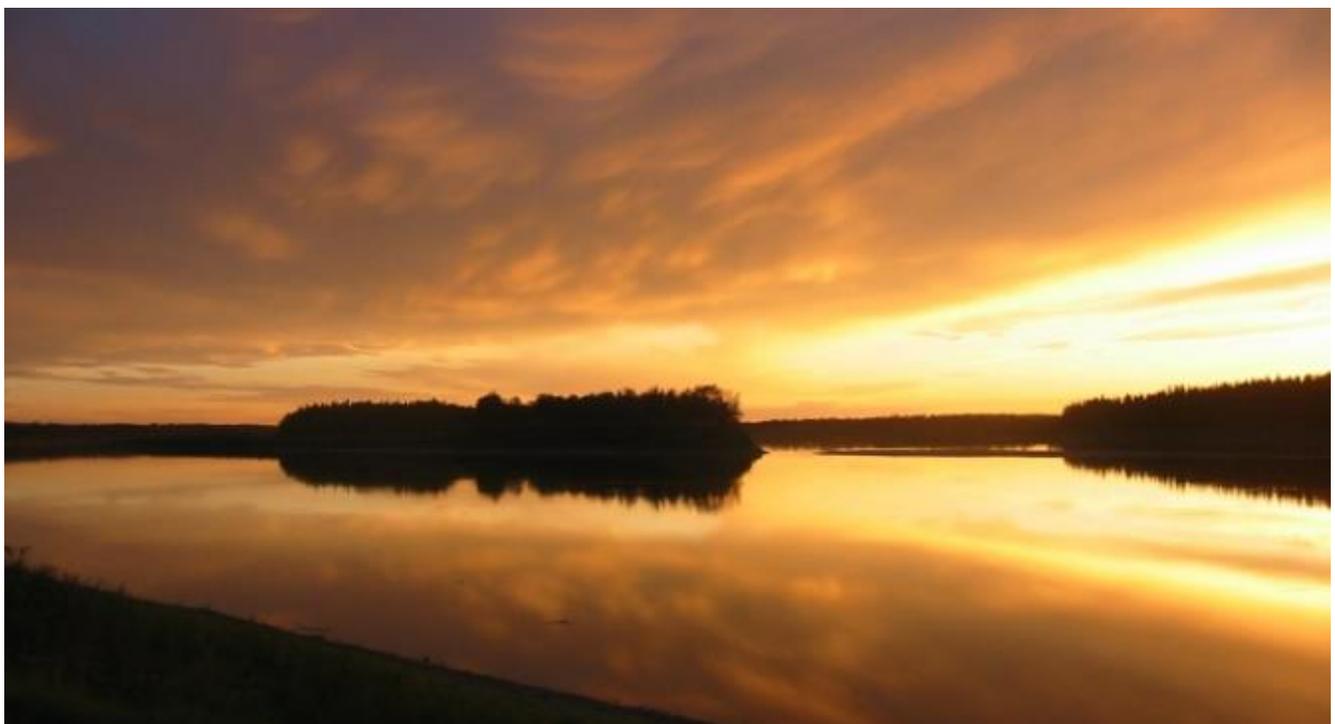
La Crete Public Library (LCL):

La Crete is in the south-west end of the Municipality along Highway 697. The community is fast growing, with a large under 18 population. The Mennonite culture is strong in the area and has a large surrounding rural population.

The Library is located in a stand-alone building that was originally the Alberta Treasury Branch building and in 2016 was opened after extensive renovations were completed by an incredible library team! The library is now located in a prominent location within the center of the community. It has a strong patron base, and support network which is shown yearly during their major fundraiser… the Annual Salmon Grill! Which always sells out quickly and is supplements a large portion of their fundraising budget. The senior's programs and outreach that the La Crete Library offers are truly an asset to the community!

LCCL has provided services to the La Crete community since before 1962. The first library was operated in a small building across from the School by Mrs. Martha Nafziger. This proximity to the school started a long-standing partnership which found the library housed within the school from 1967 to 2016. A new service point in Blue Hills was opened in late 2019, this site will offer additional services to the rural area in partnership with the La Crete Library and the Blue Hill Motel.

• OUR GOVERNANCE & STRUCTURE

The Mackenzie County Library Board, in conjunction with our local Library Societies, staff and volunteers strive to foster and develop strong libraries that are dynamic, community destinations for knowledge, inspiration, innovation and cultural awareness. Our funding and governance partners, the Province of Alberta and Mackenzie County are integral parts of our success in Library services. In order to keep and foster local autonomy, meet the needs of the individual communities and successfully operate three libraries with the distance between communities and the geographical challenge that occurs in Mackenzie County, the MCLB has Operating Service Agreements with the three local library societies. These Societies, in good standing, operate the Libraries on a day to day basis and meet the needs of the individual communities they serve, while implementing the direction set by the MCLB.

. *The Mackenzie County Library Board is made up of appointed members:*

- *2 from the La Crete Area*
- *2 from the Fort Vermilion Area*
- *1 from Rural High Level Area*
- *1 from the Zama Area*
- *1 from County Rural*
- *2 Mackenzie County Representatives*

Our Board is a 'working' board, all members are required to put in the time to ensure that Library services are successful throughout the region. Much of the regional administration such as our electronic services, communication, promotion, reporting, regional programing like author tours and events, initiatives like the Plan of Service, Policies and reviews are done by our Board members. The Board itself has a budget, much of it being used to cover expenses incurred as we are an extremely large landmass and meetings are held centrally in Fort Vermilion. Our Board budget is extremely reasonable, and it is supplemented with many hours of volunteer time by the members. We have three, two and one year terms for Board Members. Our Board structure is set for regional representation as well as staggered terms to ensure that all communities and interests are addressed, and that the Board has the continuity to be effective and efficient. All board members are appointed by Mackenzie County Council.

In order to offer a higher level of services to our patrons and link our libraries together the Mackenzie County Library Consortium was formed in the fall of 2013. It eliminates jurisdictional issues of resident or non-resident, links our libraries together, adds availability of our electronic service suite to patrons, interlibrary loans between our libraries as well as additional regional events, programs and partnerships.

Message from Board Chair

The Mackenzie County Library Board is a dedicated group of people working to foster excellent library services within the region, and it has been an honor & a privilege to serve as Chair for the past number of years.

Working closely with our Societies, we oversee three full-service libraries, one satellite location, and a partnership with the Town of High Level Library, providing services in all areas of Mackenzie County.

Our libraries are as unique and diverse as the communities they serve, from the "Real Men Read" programs in Zama, to the cultural programs in Fort Vermilion & the extensive children's and senior's programs in La Crete. Our electronic and sharing services through the Mackenzie County Library Consortium provide all residents and patrons with access to the entire collection and so much more. Strong, vibrant libraries reflect strong, vibrant communities and our libraries stand as centerpieces in our communities that we can be very proud of!

Beth Kappelar

Chairperson, Mackenzie County Library Board

Message from Mackenzie County Reeve

There really is nothing like sitting down with a physical book in your hand, a cozy blanket and a coffee. The Mackenzie County Library Board offers a large range of books from children's fantasy to informational books about most anything. You have the opportunity to research what interests you to attaining the knowledge needed for a job, new ideas or simply get lost in a wonderful story escaping the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

The hard work that the Mackenzie County Library Board, local Societies, volunteers and patrons do is outstanding! It takes a strong, dedicated group of people to keep library's going in a world full of technology. They would without a doubt NOT be possible if it wasn't for the individual passion that is transformed into strong group full of determination and effort to make these wonderful facilities a reality that we all enjoy today.

Josh Knelsen

Reeve, Mackenzie County

• 1. COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Collection health in our libraries is a critical part of successful library services. Patrons wish to have a varied, up to date collection across multiple genres and our libraries will deliver that experience. In-house collections are critical in order to provide options and ensure walk-in traffic finds something that interests them. Space restrictions, local culture sensitivities and budgetary concerns are all important factors. The continued use and increased promotion of regional inter-library loaning to maximize patron experience.

OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS:

Ongoing patron Input on Collection Development and materials and services they wish to see in the Library.	Material Wish lists will be available at library – foster patron input on collection development
Enhance our Vision impaired collection – large print, audio, electronic etc.	Create system for increased communication between Librarians to share wish lists, patron requests
Continued in-house collection development across all media forms and genres. Including non-traditional collections i.e.: cakepans, video games, puzzles, games, etc.	Create policy for special collections, such as vision impaired.
Continue to designate budget allocation parameters for collection development – audio/visual and print	Work together with Librarians on collection development for reduction of duplication and maximum benefit to patrons
Support our Local authors collection development – add this to local readings and signing events	Due to space and community sensitivity, special collections may be hosted in one library and available through ILL to all patrons.
Share travelling feature collections between libraries	Promotion and increased supporting for our ILL Regional system – increase patron experience and reduce duplication, maximize collection budget
Foster shared specialty collections in our libraries (outside the traditional box) depending upon community need and wishes: such as cake pans, video games, board games, seeds, tools	Investigate opportunities how our libraries can better support home school students and families
Keep our website fresh and usable with links to all virtual spaces	Partner with all schools for the development of school yearbook collections
Research options that are easy to use, fit within our budget and add to our Online collection of services, such as magazines and audiobooks	Keep our Library Social Media fresh and continue with collection features
Promotion of the virtual library options to all patrons	Continued virtual collection development across all media forms and genres.

Feedback/Input areas: These comments are taken directly from the surveys, input and conversations. Offers context of objectives and actions. Provides additional information to our Librarian and Societies in order to meet the objectives and strive for growth in our Libraries.

- Strive to keep collection fresh
- Regional travelling collections
- Promote, educate and assist patrons on regional ILL's
- Video game collections
- Online magazine collections
- Online audio collections
- Online instruction
- Teen, magna, graphic novels
- Non-book collections – such as puzzles, games
- Vision impaired collections – audio, large print
- Display literary events

- Celebrate local / Canadian / Alberta authors
- Diverse collections
- Local school year books and history books
- Shelving layout in order to find materials and support movement within libraries
- Magazine selections
- Special collections – cake pans, local history, aboriginal, culture
- Genealogy
- Homeschool supports

- Information and entertainment
- Importance of New and bestsellers
- Full series available
- More history and culture in collection and spaces
- Promote ILL to all
- Size of collection – need to find on shelf, hold in hands
- Local history
- Local authors
- All ages, all demographics
- Think outside the norm

SUCCESS MEASURES:

✓ Increase regional circulation numbers by 5% year over year

✓ Patron satisfaction on collection with the next patron survey 4 stars or over (out of 5)

✓ Material & Collection 'Wish Lists' will be available at each library to engage patron involvement in collection development

✓ Wish list purchase rate minimum of 80% of the time

✓ Populate digital magazine collection

✓ Populate online audio collection

✓ Increased patron knowledge on ILL System, wish list availability on next survey

✓ System implemented for Librarians to greater communicate and share between libraries

• 2. STAFF / VOLUNTEER TRAINING

Our staff and volunteers are critical in providing exceptional local and regional library services. We want to see every patron contact with library staff be a positive experience, full of knowledge and one of the reasons our patrons come back again and again. Offering training and networking opportunities is critical in building confidence, team atmosphere and success within our regional team.

OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS:

Annual board / society / staff development workshop	MCLB continue to support, by grant, attendance at the Grande Prairie Library conference by society members and staff
Provide yearly training or update course on online services	Support volunteerism at the annual salmon grill and other events held by the libraries
Communication between libraries – to share ideas, patron satisfaction	Investigate available webinars, podcasts or other for customer service improvements
Have our societies / librarians develop different training and promotion initiatives and share with the team. MCLB provide financial compensation for actions	Knowledge of services offered and how to use. All team members must be knowledgeable - librarians, volunteers, society members and board members
Incorporate learning center (speed learning) at the workshop and/or event at library for patrons	Research Library Card use flexibility such scannable photo on phone, keychain cards
Research patron renewal options to increase ease of renewal	Research payment options for renewals, fines, donations – email or point of sale options
Celebrate and acknowledge Volunteer support	Investigate programs, apps for ease of library promotion such as CanVa, LibraryAware
Additional training and system education with High level and Blue Hills staff	MCLB to Review fines and loan period policies
Create a virtual space where our Library team can network, ask questions, share experience	MCLB continue to support regional programing initiatives, by grant or operation – expanding the experience of our Societies and Librarians in event partnership, coordination and planning.
MCLB to continue to offer regional print materials for staff and patron use within the libraries and at library events	Volunteer recruitment within the community – volunteer program within the library

Feedback/Input areas: These comments are taken directly from the surveys, input and conversations. Offers context of objectives and actions. Provides additional information to our Librarian and Societies in order to meet the objectives and strive for growth in our Libraries.

- Interlibrary loaning
- Approachability
- Online services knowledge
- Discretion & privacy
- Efficiency issuing library cards
- Better promotion
- Customer service
- Knowledge of library
- Knowledge of MCLC
- Promotion of website and social media
- Blue Hills sub-location, additional training
- Outreach training
- Welcoming spaces
- Welcoming atmosphere

- Commitment by all libraries to the MCLC System
- Book and resource sharing
- Information sharing between librarians
- Card use flexibility – phone, look up
- Sensitive to community needs
- Helpful staff
- Positive Interaction with staff
- Welcoming staff
- Better (more) payment options
- Training on social media and web
- Want to leave library with a smile!
- Positive experience
- signage for services
- knowledge of services

SUCCESS MEASURES:

✓ Positive results on Patron satisfaction survey around staff experiences

✓ All Societies, Staff and Board attendance at the yearly workshop

✓ All Societies and Staff are represented and attend the Annual Grande Prairie Conference

✓ Increase patron membership by 5% by end of Plan of Service term

✓ Increased staff knowledge of digital collections resulting in greater patron usage

✓ Increased patron knowledge on ILL System, wish list availability on next survey

✓ System implemented for Librarians to greater communicate and share between libraries

✓ On next survey 4+ stars on how important the library is to you and the community

✓ Enhanced volunteer tracking system within the libraries

• 3. PARTNERSHIPS, SERVICES & OUTREACH

Our libraries are dynamic places and are so much more than books! Our library team strive to continue to grow our importance to our communities and much of this is with the partnerships we foster, the programs and events that are offered, the outreach initiatives that we are successful in providing. To raise the awareness and recognition that successful libraries are part of a larger community. We will continue to partner and foster new connections with various local organizations, surrounding communities and cultural groups to broaden the exposure and success of library services.

OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS:

Signed and enhanced Partnership agreement with High Level Municipal Library Board	Expand partnerships with surrounding communities
Expanded use of Travelling special collections between our Libraries	Continue to enhance the Senior / Shut-in outreach program and partnership in La Crete
Continue to foster the Upper Hay School (Meander River) partnership with Zama and Library	Develop and initiate a Senior / Shut-in Outreach program Fort Vermilion
MCLB continue to support regional programing initiatives, by grant or operation – expanding the experience of our Societies and Librarians in event partnership, coordination and planning.	Continue to partner with community groups and individuals on the Children's Story events
Enhanced promotion of local and regional events across all medias, using the most cost-effective methods	Create a program for generational story telling and capture the footage.
Successful community Little Free Library Program	Partner with local museums on local history and culture displays
Partnerships to provide services – staffing, technology and programming	Research Library Card use flexibility such scannable photo on phone, keychain cards
Increased volunteerism and fundraising initiatives	Research payment options for renewals, fines, donations – email or point of sale options
Create one new partnership a year that enhances library services	Continue to promote Libraries at local events such as GTKYN's / job fairs / trade shows
Build partnerships to put on events – reading programs, FVSD, other non-profits, traveling exhibits, ag fair, author tours	Review the relationship and expectations from and with the Fort Vermilion Library Society, regarding Library Operation, building and spaces
Investigate opportunities how our libraries can better support home school students and families	Have our libraries work together in a greater capacity to enhance our library services.
Partner with all schools for the development of school yearbook collections	Listing of all regional non-profits / organizations and brainstorming on what type of partnerships could be developed with each

Feedback/Input areas: These comments are taken directly from the surveys, input and conversations. Offers context of objectives and actions. Provides additional information to our Librarian and Societies in order to meet the objectives and strive for growth in our Libraries.

- An area to present programming
- Addition to the La Crete Library
- Blue Hills sub-location
- Improve accessibility, hours of service, building access
- Interac, email transfer – options other than cash
- Two-way partnership with High Level Library
- More partnership for events
- Search for partnership for staffing or volunteers – programs (parent link, FCSS, readers, etc.)
- Promotion of MCLC services
- Celebrate local / Canadian / Alberta authors
- Photocopying, faxing, scanning,
- Review policy on lending times and fees
- Local history capture – recording of stories from elders / seniors
- Inhouse tech like computers, printers, photocopy, fax, scanner
- Photo transfers – scanning from photos, slides, video transfer

- Art/ Craft nights – additional partnering with locals at cost or for fundraising
- Programs for younger children
- Family – all ages programming
- History nights
- Free little libraries
- Outreach programs – ideas?
- Interlibrary loans
- Craft programs
- Days with childcare so moms can browse – or partner with groups to assist
- Promote our Zama Button making for other events and fundraising
- Ability to try new things
- BBQ's & events
- Trade shows, GTKYN's and Ratepayer mtgs.
- Provincial access to loans - NODE
- Salmon grill and other events
- Additional Online services
- Promote the free music
- Online magazines
- Music, eBooks, audio

- Food for fines / or other programs to eliminate fines
- Senior / Elder story telling
- Goodreads promotion and use for local reviews
- Local area research
- Partnerships with the 1st Nations
- Partnerships with Metis Region
- Partnerships with the schools
- Partnerships with the senior's centers
- Shut in services
- Book mobile
- Exam proctoring
- Local History partnership with museums for adding culture to libraries
- Book and resource sharing
- Regional programming
- Travelling programing and events
- Activities to get people in the door
- Reading groups
- Learning workshops
- New programs
- Regional programs

SUCCESS MEASURES:

✓ One new partnership developed per year per library

✓ Operating Fundraising increased by 5% overall by end of Plan of Service term

✓ Enhanced system for capturing attendance at all events, reported yearly

✓ Readiness for NODE discussion and application at end of Plan of Service term

✓ Increase patron membership by 5% by end of Plan of Service term

✓ On next survey 4+ stars on how important the library is to you and the community

✓ Enhanced volunteer tracking system within the libraries

4. PHYSICAL & VIRTUAL SPACES

Our bones of our physical spaces are incredible! We strive to provide a welcoming environment physically and virtually for all our patrons to interact with and enjoy. We have three centrally located brick and mortar buildings in all our communities and a new lease space in Blue Hills. Two of the three building are owned by the Municipality with the third being owned by a non-profit Society. With these strong Community Hubs, we will continue to strive to enhance the interior, exterior, the atmosphere and the spaces themselves.

Our physical spaces, which includes them in their entirety, included off-site spaces such as book mobiles, events and programming… must be pleasing to our patrons and the public in the realms of sight, sound, smell and the 'feel' of our spaces.

We will continue to enhance our Virtual spaces, being social media, website and service suites, keeping in mind budgetary concerns and our challenges with connectivity across the region.

OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS:

Physical Spaces	
Clean and well maintained, ensure scents used are pleasant and hypo-allergenic or scentless	Inviting spaces and comfy with functional well-maintained furniture
Where appropriate use sunlight lamps and/or lighting – counters SADD	History, Culture and Art promoted in the spaces
Spaces include all spaces within the library…. Entrances, grounds, washrooms, storage, main spaces, staff areas. All must be clean, organized, pleasing and well maintained	Engage with a review with Society and Community regarding the ownership status of the Fort Vermilion Library Building to ensure the long-term community benefit and building use as it was intended.
Trade show, GTKYN and other display spaces are pleasing, easy to navigate, understand and are professional	Off-site spaces such as book mobiles, outreach, programming and events are also professional and pleasing in nature
Changing up of displays – keep fresh. Signage and internal promotion to enhance patron experience	Shelving layout in order to support movement within libraries and best use of space
Spaces for shared / travelling collections to enhance experiences	Cozy, quiet spaces to enjoy by patrons wishing that type of experience
Areas where families and children can enjoy	Programming space inhouse or by partnerships
Gathering space for locals and to foster communication	Areas to promote work – not just schoolwork, but workable for business as well.
If individual demographics cannot always be accommodated, set times and events that target – i.e.: families, adults only, quiet times, engagement and communicating	Operating Agreements updated to include all spaces – i.e.: Blue Hills
Virtual	

Ease of use (navigation)	Website maintenance – fresh and easy to navigate
Wi-Fi and computers in library to access	Social Media – current, fresh and engaging
Facebook advertising – as that was the #1-way patrons stated that they engage	Virtual services – ease of use, training and/or information provided, keeping in mind internet restrictions
Investigate the ability to 'lend' electronic devices with access to virtual collections, possibly preloaded – tablets, e-readers, mp3/iPod.	Connection between our librarians, societies and board – virtual communication

Feedback/Input areas: These comments are taken directly from the surveys, input and conversations. Offers context of objectives and actions. Provides additional information to our Librarian and Societies in order to meet the objectives and strive for growth in our Libraries.

- An area to present programming
- Addition to the La Crete Library
- Ownership of our library facilities
- Operating agreements updated with space enhancements
- Blue Hills sub-location included
- Coffee/Tea/Refreshment area
- Good lighting for reading
- Shelving and library layout that provide best use of space,
- Furniture - ease of patron movement and pleasing to the eye
- Wi-Fi in all areas

- Safe space
- Ease of ILL
- Cozy spaces
- Wonderful place to visit
- Quiet spaces
- More history and culture
- Welcoming space and atmosphere
- Research spaces
- Community hub
- Engaging website – info, easy to use
- Social media interaction – quality & quantity of engaging posts
- Facebook advertising – post boosts
- Library signage – engaging

- Bright and clean
- Cleanliness of spaces
- Welcoming staff
- Gathering space for events
- Gathering space for locals to visit
- Smell – either no smell or at least not like an institution
- Clean and welcoming spaces
- Lighting – welcoming, comfort and good to read by, sunlight lamps
- Professional and engaging
- Comfy furniture
- Best use of space
- Bathrooms – décor and clean

SUCCESS MEASURES:

✓ Increase patron membership by 5% by end of Plan of Service term

✓ On next survey 4+ stars on how important the library is to you and the community

✓ Patron satisfaction of 90% or higher on space questions on next survey

✓ Society / Staff - full review of spaces on all libraries completed by end of 2022

✓ Increased metrics on all social media platforms – 5% year over year

✓ Increased patron usage of all virtual programs and services – 5% year over year

• 5. DEMOGRAPHICS TARGETING

Libraries are not just books! Libraries have continued to enhance the traditional book lending model and are tuned into what the community requires or wishes for. The management style that the MCLB uses with the local Societies being involved in the day to day operation continues to assist with the success on being true Community Hubs. The demographic target groups as are the libraries themselves across the region are similar but at the same time vary between libraries as the communities are very different in certain ways.

We have high-use groups and we have groups that haven't been in the library in years. With our engagement this year we really tried to gain insight from our communities' non-patrons, to see why they aren't a library user. What we found interesting is that they support the libraries with events and fundraising, agree that the community would be at a loss without the library, but do not actually use the library regularly. Below you will find some of the areas that we see the need to address whether that be a specific target group or promotional initiative. This entire goal area needs more unpacking at and within all our levels of library service to identify barriers that may exist, create targeted initiatives and ensure future success and increased patronage and community and regional support.

OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS:

Some of the potential target demographics for creation and development of innovative promotions and initiatives are as follows: (may vary between communities)	
Home Bodies (definition: a person who prefers pleasures and activities that center around the home; stay-at-home).	Busy People – many of the responses were 'too busy' to go to the library
19-25 Age Group – specifically males	Single Parents
New Parents	People new to the Communities
Seniors and Shut-ins	Non-Readers
Non-Patrons	Patrons that have not renewed membership
Ideas to start the creative thoughts around development of initiatives and promotions:	
Not Just Books promotion	Real Men Read promotion – expansion from Zama to other libraries
To Busy… We Got You! promotion	From the Comfort of Your Home promotion
Seniors and outreach program – expansion from La Crete to other libraries	Childcare in the library during programs, times for new or single parents to enjoy the library.
Seniors time in the library – quieter, less hectic, story telling, interaction, tea, partner with seniors bussing service. (Fort Vermilion / La Crete)	Partnership with children's programs in the community – offer targeted library time to parents
Increase and enhance non-traditional collections	No Time No Problem… Order books – all bagged up and ready for pick up
Crafter Promotion – all ages and demographics	New parents – expand shut in program
Promotion local history, authors and culture	Payments – accept email money or point of sale, to pay fines and fees, access to cash an issue

Programming – partnerships	Electronic services promotion – too busy, not just books
Promote electronic services – create a promotion to access services – too busy, homebody, not just books	Expand Electronic Services – magazines and audio – possibly graphic
Wi-Fi / gaming / electronics – not just books, and that target 19-25 age group	Supporting local non-profits and non-traditional lending – museum, ski trail, gym passes
Fines repayment programs – Food for Fines, Paws for Penalties and/or similar	

Feedback/Input areas: These comments are taken directly from the surveys, input and conversations. Offers context of objectives and actions. Provides additional information to our Librarian and Societies in order to meet the objectives and strive for growth in our Libraries.

- Increase volunteerism
- What can the library do for you if you are too busy – target survey question
- Target 19-25 age group
- Target singles and parents
- Target Non-patrons
- Target Homebody's
- Every couple of month users
- Look at borrowing policies – length of lending, fees and fines

- Patrons who owe fines
- Patrons that have not renewed membership
- Virtual only patrons
- Target singles and adults without children
- Continue to promote, engage and enhance senior programming
- Seniors only time at the library!

- Ongoing targeting of hard to reach or absent demographics
- Kid spaces as well as adult spaces
- Overcome – libraries are for kids' stigma
- Childcare opportunities while browsing – target program
- Target fines – get people back in the library – food for fines

SUCCESS MEASURES:

- ✓ Report on 1st time memberships per year – increase 5% year over year

- ✓ Increase patron membership by 5% by end of Plan of Service term

- ✓ On next survey 4+ stars on how important the library is to you and the community

- ✓ Patron satisfaction of 90% or higher on physical / virtual space questions on next survey

- ✓ Increased metrics on all social media platforms – 5% year over year

- ✓ Increased patron usage of all virtual programs and services – 5% year over year

- ✓ One new regional or community promotion or initiative launched per year.

6. FINANCIAL WELL-BEING & REVENUE

Our libraries need to be financially resilient. Financial challenges are all around us, especially when depending upon multiple levels of public funding. We need to address self-generating our own sources of revenue for greater sustainability and security in continued operations and growth with Library Services. Continued requirement to have a strong transparent financial system, as the trust of our funding partners, patrons, sponsors and ratepayers is paramount.

OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS:

Target operational fundraising budget parameters	Continue with targeting budget parameters in staffing, collection development
Strengthen budgeting and financial reporting requirements of Libraries	Investigate new self-generated revenue avenues and options for all libraries
Enhance and promote ILL and traveling collections to reduce duplication and increase patron experience	Include self-generated and fundraised revenue more within MCLB reporting to Province and Municipality to highlight community support levels
Regional fundraising initiatives	Local Library fundraising and sponsorship initiatives – for operating and capital initiatives
Ensure hours of service at Libraries are adequate and meet the needs of the patrons while being within a sustainable budget	Implement a fine in lieu program i.e.: Food for Fines, Paws for Penalties
Review building budget with Fort Vermilion Library Society, to ensure that operational funding is not being transferred to building.	Review insurance policies and costs, and discuss options with insurer
Review membership fees for all libraries	Review fees and fines policies for all libraries
Review staff compensation for all libraries	Increase fine collections by 25% overall
Investigate partnerships for program staff for Fort Vermilion Library	Investigate partnerships for outreach staff /programs at Fort Vermilion & La Crete Libraries
Membership drives within the community	Develop and implement an annual timeline for Societies fiscal reporting requirements
Investigate regional approach to year end accounting for all libraries – contract services.	Continue to support and recognize our volunteers within our libraries.
Develop a volunteer program within each library to make the best possible use of the hours donated	Every program offered should be paired with a membership drive / opportunity to become a member
Expanded payment options such as email or Point of Sale	Fundraising partnerships with other community organizations

Feedback/Input areas: These comments are taken directly from the surveys, input and conversations. Offers context of objectives and actions. Provides additional information to our Librarian and Societies in order to meet the objectives and strive for growth in our Libraries.

- Sustainable budgets
- Able to survive and thrive without provincial or municipal funding increases
- Transparency
- An area to present programming
- Fee schedule – fines and repairs, lost items
- Increased fine collection
- Exam proctoring
- Photocopying, faxing, scanning, emailing
- Maximizing grant programs
- Maximizing partnerships

- Membership fees
- Fees for service
- Fundraising ideas
- Sponsorship program development
- Regional fundraising campaign – large scale raffle or initiative
- Regional programming and sharing
- Partnership regarding staff costs
- Contracts – photocopying etc.
- Addition to the La Crete Library for space rentals
- Rental space in Fort Library promoted
- Self generated funding

- Event and programming charges
- More history and culture
- Button Program sales – Zama Library
- Craft nights – additional partnering with locals with fee attached
- History nights
- MCLB partner program for fine collection
- Art nights – partnership with fees attached

SUCCESS MEASURES:

✓ Increase patron membership by 5% by end of Plan of Service term

✓ On next survey 4+ stars on how important the library is to you and the community

✓ Society / Staff - full review of spaces on all libraries completed by end of 2022

✓ Operating Fundraising increased by 5% overall by end of Plan of Service term

✓ Overall self-generated revenue increased by 10% by end of Plan of Service term

✓ Additional payment options available at the libraries

✓ Regional review of library staff pay grids and compensation

✓ Enhanced system for capturing attendance at all events, reported yearly

✓ Enhanced volunteer tracking system within the libraries

✓ Ensure our libraries have budgeted for a carry-forward at year end to operate until end of March of the following year.

✓ MCLB discuss and possibly set budget parameter for a small emergency component within annual budgets for unforeseen and emergency expenditures that may arise

• 7. COMMUNICATION & PROMOTION

To ensure and enhance public and patron awareness of our amazing libraries, whether that be in the physical or virtual space, as well as the services and programs that we offer across the Region! This goal also surrounds the internal communications within and between our library team members.

OBJECTIVES / ACTIONS:

All Social media platforms either MCLB or individual libraries (Facebook, Instagram) – keep current, fresh and engaging	Websites either MCLB or individual libraries – keep current, fresh and engaging. If not current, considering removing the individual presence and utilize other media such as Facebook or MCLB website.
Use of pre-scheduled posts on Facebook to keep content current	Target promotions – for specific demographic groups or initiatives
Develop and Create regional promotional initiatives such as 'Why buy when you can borrow'; 'Don't read, no problem'; 'Real Men Read'	Value of library services to patrons – calculator online – LC prints out total on receipts – possible implementation in all libraries
Engage local photographers to volunteer / trade promotion, event attendance or services to gain updated photos of spaces and events.	MCLB increase grant initiatives to Libraries to develop, create and operate regional promotional programs, initiatives and campaigns.
Have all libraries utilize Canva.com – free service – poster making online program	Research LibraryAware program
Increase communication between librarians	Increase communication between societies
Increase community and regional signage and promotion to increase awareness of library services and locations	Increase Inhouse signage to enhance the patron experience
Create a virtual space where our Library team can network, ask questions, share experience	MCLB to continue to offer regional print materials for staff and patron use within the libraries and at library events
Review the opportunity to have a standing advertisement in the Mackenzie County section of the Echo/Pioneer	Look at setting up MCLB Goodreads account and promoting patron book reviews and engagement
MCLB continue to support libraries with Mackenzie Frontier Tourist Association Memberships	Partner with the Zama Library to create a regional 'Button Campaign'
Review option for Facebook paid advertising for events, programs and awareness	Continue to promote Libraries at local events such as GTKYN's / job fairs / trade shows

Feedback/Input areas: These comments are taken directly from the surveys, input and conversations. Offers context of objectives and actions. Provides additional information to our Librarian and Societies in order to meet the objectives and strive for growth in our Libraries.

- Celebrate local / Canadian / Alberta authors
- More promotional posters and signage inside and outside of the libraries
- Signage within the communities supporting our libraries
- Continue to attend events promoting library services
- Put together a 'booth' package that our libraries and the MCLB can use for promotion
- Social media promotion
- Electronic services promotion
- Mackenzie Frontier Tourism memberships

- Free Little Libraries in the communities
- Geo-caching sites outside our libraries
- Card flexibility – phone, look up etc.
- Email blast out
- Newsletters
- Bulletin boards around community
- Posters in other public spaces around communities
- Why buy when you can borrow!
- Value of library use
- Library wish lists, input into ordering

- Don't read, no problem, we got you.
- Societies strategy sessions on goals - yearly
- Ongoing opportunities to get everyone together – societies, board, staff, volunteers
- Increase patron memberships
- Successful fundraising
- MCLB enhanced grant / contract funding to libraries who develop and facilitate campaigns or regional promotions
- Positive engagement

SUCCESS MEASURES:

✓ Increase patron membership by 5% by end of Plan of Service term

✓ On next survey 4+ stars on how important the library is to you and the community

✓ System implemented for Librarians to greater communicate and share between libraries

✓ Successful rollout of Free Little Libraries Program partnership

✓ Continued Library membership in Mackenzie Frontier Tourist Association

✓ MCLB created policy on funding program for advocacy, promotional campaigns

✓ Enhanced signage at all our libraries and within the communities

✓ Increased metrics on all social media platforms – 5% year over year

✓ Increased patron usage of all virtual programs and services – 5% year over year

✓ One new regional or community promotion or initiative launched per year.

✓ Updated photos available and in use within our virtual spaces of our libraries and events

8. REGIONAL LIBRARIAN

The MCLB has been urged in the past by Municipal Affairs Library Division that once the County Population reaches 10,000 a Regional Librarian Position must be considered.

The MCLB has struggled with this Regional Librarian scenario for many reasons and has again decided that within this 5-year strategic plan that the MCLB will continue to operate as we are without a Regional Librarian Position.
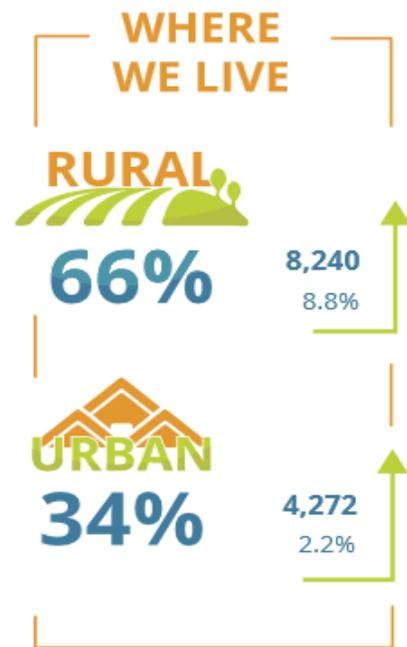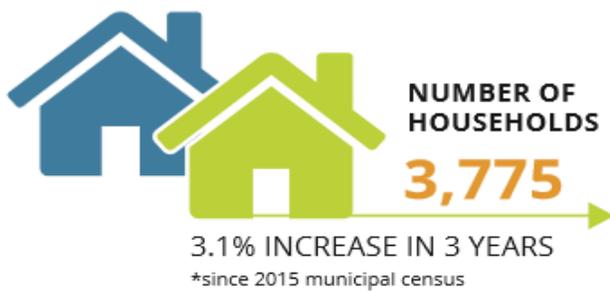
Rational:

- While our County population exceeds the 10,000; our individual communities are far from that population threshold
- Our library patrons have grown to approximately 40% of total county population, which shows the program we have now is working and supported by the residents and patrons.
- Our total budget is around $300,000 which includes non-cash County paid utility and building overhead costs at 2 out of 3 of our libraries. The MCLB has a limited budget to operate three libraries, our new add-on service point, fund the neighboring partnership as well as our electronic and regional services as well as the Board. Without a large increase in funding or a serious decrease in services our ability to hire and retain a Regional Librarian is virtually impossible.
- Our partnership with the three local Societies and their long-standing history of providing service to the communities is not without challenges; overall is viable and working well to allow the diversity and individuality of our libraries while being responsive to their communities.
- The Mackenzie County Library Board is a group of working appointed Board members who do much of what a Regional Librarian would do. Examples of this is the management of the regional electronic suite of services and our social media and virtual space presence, financial oversight, regional programming initiatives, and the development of our required Plans, budgets, reporting requirements and policy development and reviews.
- Our patron satisfaction survey showed that our libraries received a 4.4 Star rating and that 88% of respondents would miss the library if it was gone, this also shows that what we are doing is working and as long as we continue to adapt and grow, cultivate a strong team and foster partnerships, the model we have is working in our Region.
- We have dedicated staff in all libraries, and a strong volunteer base that is working well for the local delivery of library services.
- Our three libraries are very different demographically and the grass roots hands on approach of the local Societies works extremely well to keep in tune with the different community needs.
- The distance between communities leads to extreme difficulty in providing one regional staff the opportunity to adequately operate the libraries effectively. Our Region covers 80,000 square kilometers and with 258 kms between Zama City and La Crete, and some of that being gravel road, it would be a challenge to do what we do as a team with one person.
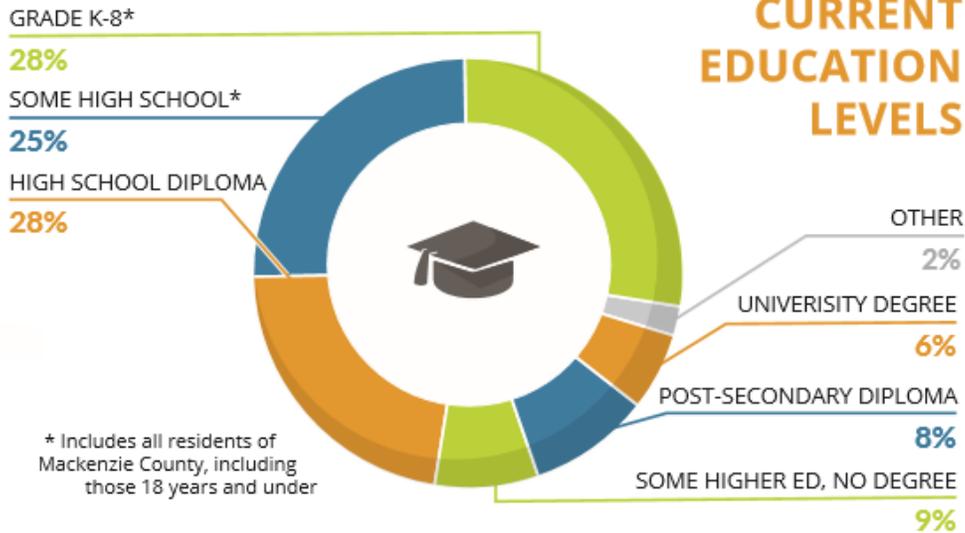
• ADDTIONAL INFORMATION ON REGION

HOMES & HOUSEHOLDS

NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS
3,775
3.1% INCREASE IN 3 YEARS
*since 2015 municipal census

86%
OF HOUSEHOLDS OWN THEIR HOMES

14%
OF HOUSEHOLDS RENT THEIR HOMES

AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
3.3 PEOPLE
UP FROM 3.2 PEOPLE PER HOUSEHOLD IN 2015 MUNICIPAL CENSUS

WHERE WE LIVE

RURAL
66%
8,240
8.8%

URBAN
34%
4,272
2.2%

THIS DATA REPRESENTS A SUMMARY OF THE MACKENZIE COUNTY MUNICIPAL CENSUS THAT WAS CONDUCTED IN 2018

CURRENT EDUCATION LEVELS

GRADE K-8*
28%

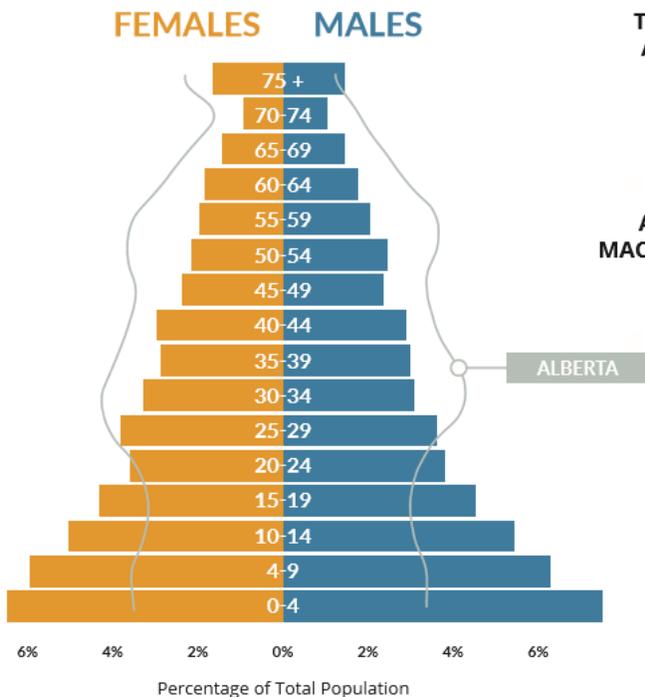SOME HIGH SCHOOL*
25%

HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
28%

OTHER
2%

UNIVERISITY DEGREE
6%

POST-SECONDARY DIPLOMA
8%

SOME HIGHER ED, NO DEGREE
9%

* Includes all residents of Mackenzie County, including those 18 years and under

2.1% ANNUAL GROWTH RATE

6,131 FEMALES
49%

6,381 MALES
51%

THE POPULATION OF MACKENZIE COUNTY IS YOUNG AND GROWING

FEMALES   MALES

| 75 + |
| 70-74 |
| 65-69 |
| 60-64 |
| 55-59 |
| 50-54 |
| 45-49 |
| 40-44 |
| 35-39 |
| 30-34 |
| 25-29 |
| 20-24 |
| 15-19 |
| 10-14 |
| 4-9 |
| 0-4 |

ALBERTA

6% 4% 2% 0% 2% 4% 6%

Percentage of Total Population

THE NATIONAL AVERAGE AGE

41

AVERAGE AGE IN MACKENZIE COUNTY

28.1

DOWN 0.5 YEARS FROM 2016 FEDERAL CENSUS IN MACKENZIE COUNTY

CANADA'S **HIGHEST** SHARE OF **CHILDREN**

MACKENZIE COUNTY, ALBERTA

35.7 %

* in relation to the 2018 Mackenzie County Municipal census and the 2016 Federal Census

HIGHLIGHTED SURVEY QUESTIONS

Our 20-question survey ran through 2019… we started just before the spring wildfires took over the region. We were able to get back in the groove in September. We received this survey feedback from just over 5% of the County's adult population. A few of the questions yielded some interesting findings

This question was a surprise and we named a success as our target to gain non-patron survey completions was shown to work. We will be going through these responses to try and understand obstacles and challenges that we must face to gain this demographic as patrons.

Are you a member at one or more of our member or partner Libraries? If so, please check all that apply.
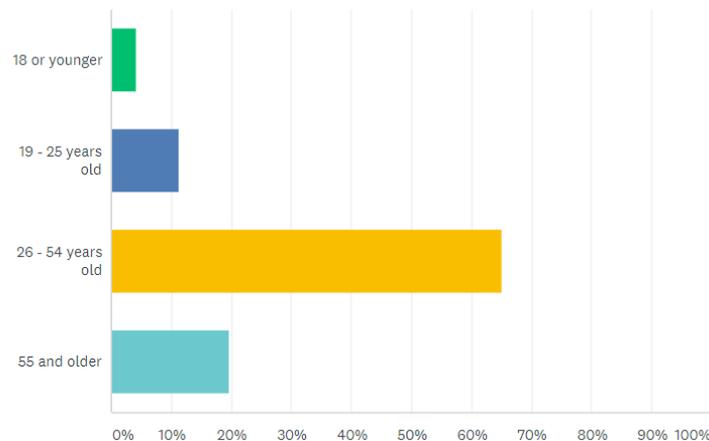
Answered: 519   Skipped: 0
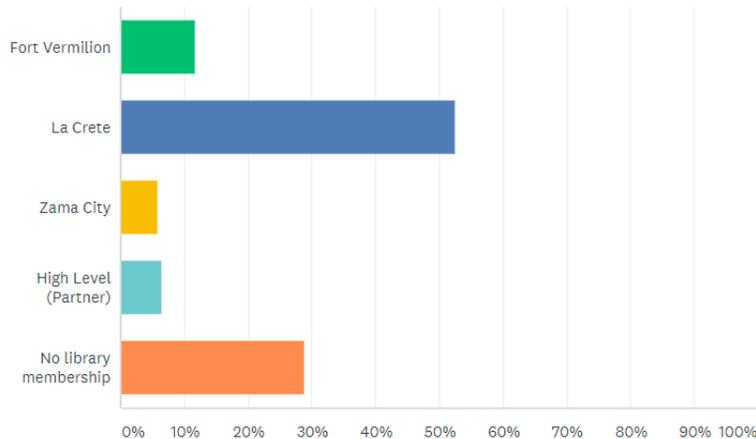
This question highlighted that some demographics that may be lacking in our patron base are the 19-25 and the 55 and over. 18 or younger is a high use group, but not survey completion.
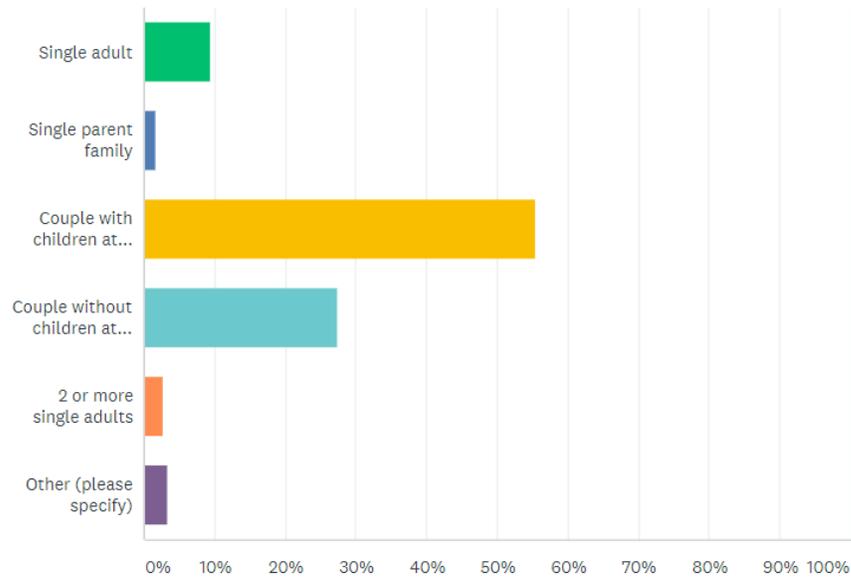
Tell us a little about yourself?

Answered: 511   Skipped: 8

This question highlighted that again some demographics that may be lacking in our patron base are the single adults and single parent families.

Which of the following best describes your household?

Answered: 516   Skipped: 3

This question highlighted that we were able to attain input from non-patrons and could be a target group for the near future the benefits of library membership. And that a large majority of our patron base are long standing patron supporters of our libraries.

How long have you been a member at one or more of the Mackenzie County Libraries?
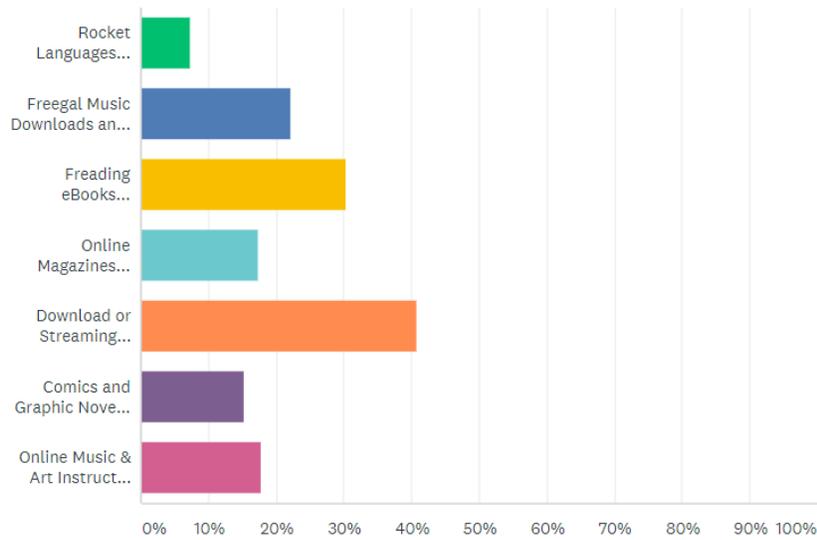
Answered: 512   Skipped: 7
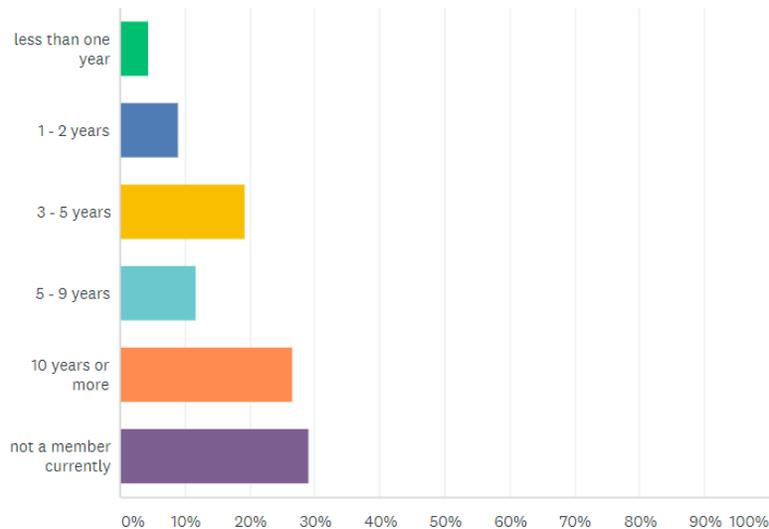
This question will help us guide the continuation of our electronic services and make decisions of what other services to add to the service suite based on budgetary availability.

Which Electronic Library services do you or would you use? (check all that apply)

Answered: 230   Skipped: 289

How important is the Library to you as a community service and / or a community hub? 5 Stars being very Important.

Answered: 455   Skipped: 64

4.4 ★
average rating

		1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
☆		2.86% 13	2.20% 10	9.01% 41	24.18% 110	61.76% 281	455	4.40

Mackenzie County Libraries
La Crete ~ Fort Vermilion ~ Zama City

Annual Report 2019

The library had 4,680 open hours in 2019!

5052 library cardholders - 40% of our population

39,019 people walked through our doors

In addition to social media and website visits

The library added 5,217 new items last year

Bringing the total in-house collections to 75,242 items

There were 2,619 music downloads + 316 eBooks

Contributing to a total of over 132,085 checkouts!

We lent our items to libraries within our Consortium 549 times

Our service is delivered by 12 dedicated staff and 98 volunteers

The library has 11 public computers

There were also 100's of connections to our WiFi

Our Funding comes from 71% Municipal 17% Provincial 11% Self-Generated

The library participated in 92 promotional events

Where 1330+ people heard our message

And 1487+ amazing volunteers hours

2017 Actuals	2018 Actuals	2019 Actuals	2020 Budget	%	
76,042.00	68,398.07	76,472.44	**77,642.70**		*Previous Operating Carry Forward*
228,000.00	228,000.00	228,000.00	**228,000.00**	**74%**	**Mackenzie County Operating Funding**
0.00	4,200.00	15,000.00	**15,000.00**	**5%**	*Blue Hills Library Funding
65,213.00	65,213.00	65213.00	**65,213.00**	**21%**	Province of Alberta, Libraries Branch
2,565.35	132.32	41.56	**25.00**		Other Grants & Misc. Revenue
295,778.35	**297,545.32**	**308,254.56**	**308,238.00**		*Total Operating Revenue*
250.00	250.00	250.00	**250.00**	0%	Audit & Accounting
24,621.48	19,950.11	18,886.38	**22,000.00**	7%	Board Expenses (Honoria & Travel)
189.00	189.00		**200.00**	0%	Access Copyright Agreement (license)
520.35	0.00	842.88	**600.00**	0%	Website
150.00	150.00	457.50	**150.00**	0%	Association Memberships
6.58	306.08	208.42	**400.00**	0%	Misc. Expenses & Office Expenses
12,746.20	3,453.34	1,682.45	**1,500.00**	0%	Regional Promo, Programming & Services
2,000.00	6,711.31	3,764.14	**8,000.00**	3%	Conference Travel Expenses (Library Grant)
13,230.00	3,703.00	5,061.00	**11,000.00**	4%	Electronic Regional Services
3,913.00	4,410.00	4,500.00	**4,500.00**	1%	Insignia Electronic System - Regional
0.00	0.00	0.00	**1,000.00**	0%	Development Workshop / Program
0.00	0.00	82.26	**800.00**	0%	Postage / Inter-library loan freight
0.00	11,408.11	0.00	**2,500.00**	1%	Regional Outreach Program
2,500.00	2,500.00	2,381.34	**1,500.00**	0%	Library Signage & Promotion
6,855.67	0.00	0.00	**1,000.00**	0%	Author Local Promotion Program
66,982.28	**53,030.95**	**307,084.30**	**57,400.00**		*Total Operating Expenses*
70,210.00	70,210.00	75,977.93	**72,000.00**	23%	Fort Vermilion Library
115,000.00	115,000.00	124,100.00	**125,000.00**	41%	La Crete Library
51,230.00	51,230.00	52,000.00	**52,000.00**	17%	Zama City Library
⬛	⬛	16,890.00	**15,000.00**	5%	Blue Hills Sub-Library *Op to LCLS
0.00	0.00	0.00	**15,000.00**	5%	High Level Library (partnership agreement, some as MCLC funds for rural)
0.00	0.00	0.00	**8,000.00**	2%	Community Library Conditional Grants & Bursary
236,440.00	**236,440.00**	**268,967.93**	**285,000.00**		*Total Transfer Payments*
303,422.28	289,470.95	307,084.30	**342,400.00**		Total Expenditures
295,778.35	297,545.32	308,254.56	**308,238.00**		Revenue
-7,643.93	8,074.37	1,170.26	**-34,162.00**		Budget Difference (+/-)
68,398.07	76,472.44	77,642.70	**43,480.70**		Net Surplus (deficit)

In Additional to 2019 dollars our libraries have added to their yearly operation budgets by fundraising and self generated Revenue in the amount of $110,645.00 for the 2019 year. 2020 is budgeted for similar local and self-generating revenue within Library operating budgets.
this amount is only operational funding and does not include additional fundraised capital monies that are being saved for targeted projects.

Approval of 2020-2025 Plan of Service

Date of Approval: February 24, 2020 by Motion of the Board.

	Beth Kappelar	Chairperson
	Kayla Wardley	Vice-Chairperson
	Wally Schroeder	Secretary
	Lorraine Peters	Treasurer
	LaDawn Dachuk	Board Trustee
	Lisa Wardley	Board Trustee / County Representative
	Cameron Cardinal	Board Trustee / County Representative
	Tamie Mclean	Board Trustee
	Sandra Neufeld	Board Trustee