

A photograph of three children sitting at a blue table in a library. The child in the center is a girl with long brown hair in a braid, wearing a yellow sweater, resting her chin on her hands. To her left is a younger girl with brown hair in a maroon sweater, also resting her chin on her hands. To her right is a young boy with short dark hair in a red sweater, smiling broadly. The background shows wooden bookshelves filled with colorful books.

West Lincoln Public Library

2024-2027

STRATEGIC

PLAN

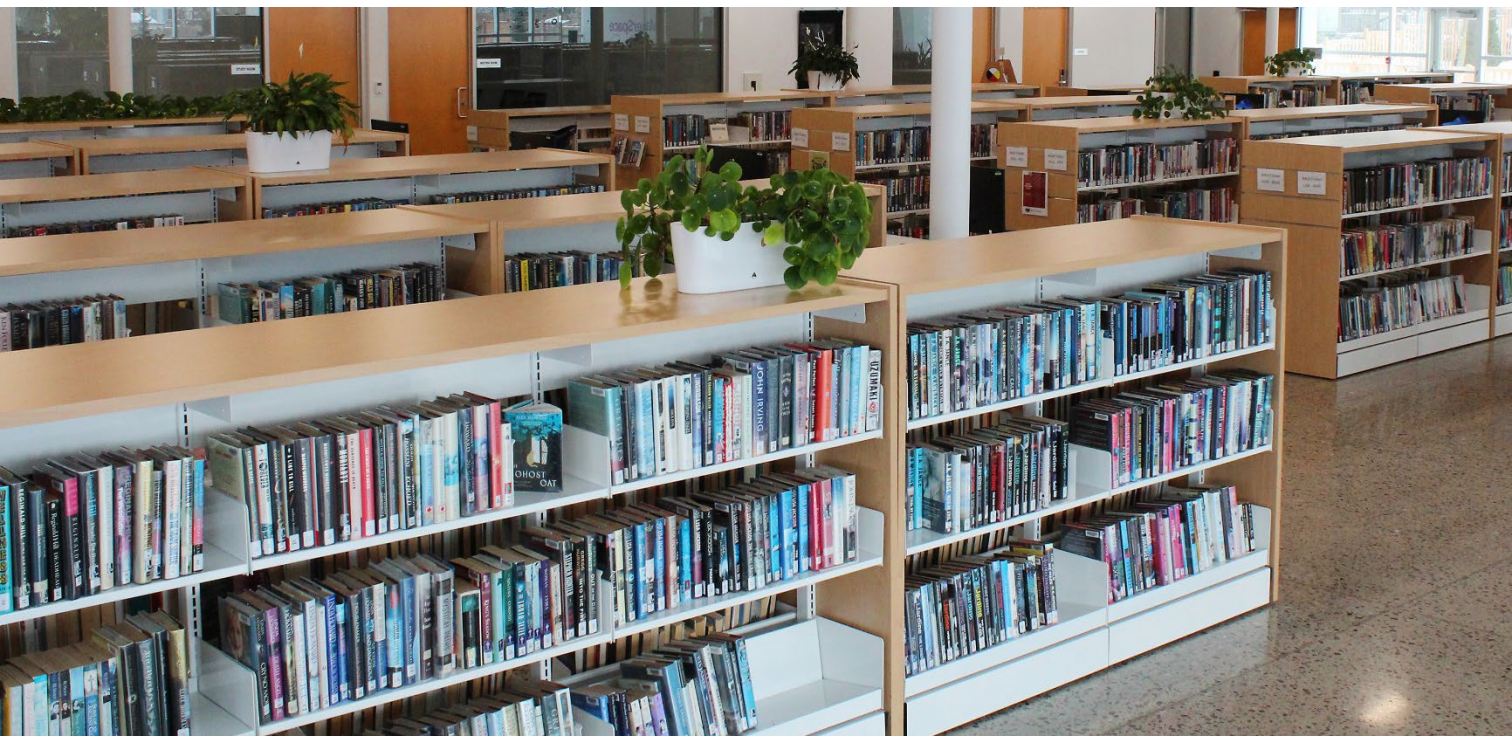


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WEST LINCOLN LIBRARY

The West Lincoln Library serves our communities in the Township of West Lincoln with three locations for your convenience. Those branches in Smithville, Caistorville and Wellandport are open 78 hours per week with at least one location open per day except Sunday. Smithville has a lovely outdoor patio for the summer, Wellandport an Indigenous Healing Garden and Caistorville a lovely garden at our front entrance.

Your first library card is free. It gives you access to our traditional library collections of books, magazines and DVDs; our facilities; and our wide range of programs for all ages. In addition, you can access approximately 60,000 e-books, e-magazines and e-audiobooks from our Provincial consortium collection. Thanks to our membership in LiNC (Libraries in Niagara Cooperative) you also have access to the collections of 9 of the 11 libraries in Niagara Region. VR (Virtual Reality) headsets and computers are also available for use in the library.

The Library has MakerSpaces in each location with the largest being housed in Smithville. You will have access to a 3D printer, Cricuit Maker™ machines, green screen, vinyl to digital convertor, sewing machine and embroidery machine.

A large collection of jigsaw puzzles, board games, walking sticks, ukuleles, outdoor games, e-games and hot spots are all available to borrow. The library has free day passes to Provincial Parks and passes to the Hamilton Art Gallery – just ask at our circulation desks.

The West Lincoln Library recognizes that being part of Niagara Region we are situated on treaty land. This land is rich in the history of the First Nations such as the Hatiwendaronk, the Haudenosaunee, and the Anishinaabe, including the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. We also recognize the contributions First Nations, Métis, Inuit and other Indigenous peoples have made, both in shaping and strengthening this community, our province and our country.

Everyone is welcome in our spaces, so please come for a visit, stay for a while and check out all that we have to offer.

Library Board

Julie Adams, Chair

Wendy Wilson, Vice-Chair

Puneet Bajaj, Member

Tina Jol, Member

David Kurth, Member

Christa McBlain, Member

Leanne Reilly, Member

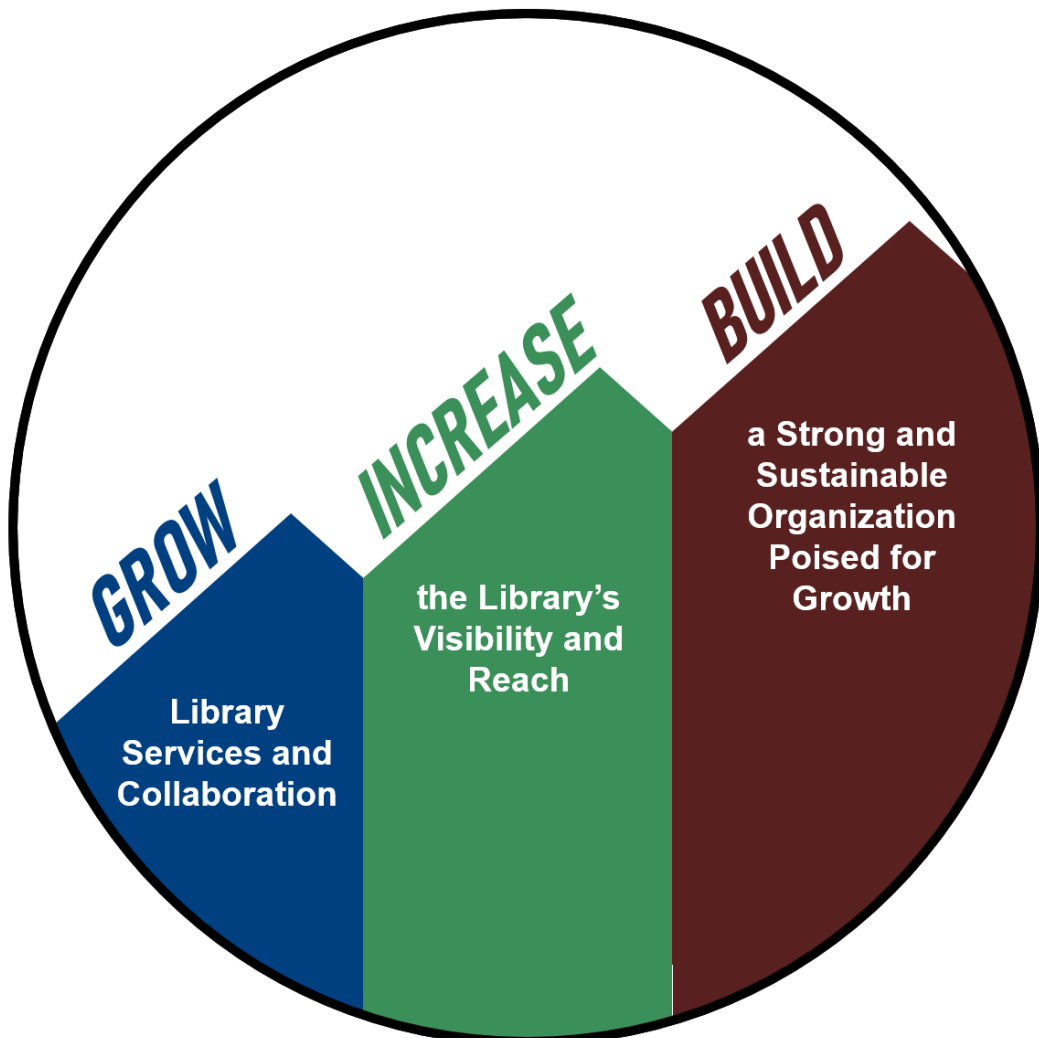
Councillor Shelley Bradaric, Council Representative

Vanessa Holm, Chief Executive Officer\Director of Library Services

2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

West Lincoln Public Library has developed a Strategic Plan with three pillars and nine key strategies to advance the organization over the next four years.

- 1 **GROW** Library Services and Collaboration
- 2 **INCREASE** the Library's Visibility and Reach
- 3 **BUILD** a Strong and Sustainable Organization Poised for Growth



VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

Vision Statement

To provide equal access to information, resources, and opportunities that spark curiosity, create community connections and foster a culture of belonging.

Mission Statement

We empower growth and learning in a welcoming environment that connects our community to a world of knowledge, discovery, and opportunities.

Values

Accessibility: We strive to provide universal access to spaces, resources and ideas.

Intellectual Freedom: We believe in the right to access information and ideas from all points of view without restriction.

Collaborative: We foster alliances and partnerships to strengthen community programs and services, further our reach and increase our impact.

Supportive: We nurture a thriving, creative library culture through the encouragement, development and empowerment of our staff, volunteers, community members and partners.

Forward Looking: We commit to being progressive and innovative in our response to community needs.

GROW LIBRARY SERVICES AND COLLABORATION

Over the coming four years, West Lincoln Public Library will continue to provide an accessible and engaging collection of materials across its three branches in Smithville, Caistorville, and Wellandport. This includes books, magazines, DVDs, audio books, video games, and specialized collections, e.g. nature passes, tools, puzzles and games.

We commit to maintaining diverse materials that represent the broad interests and preferences of West Lincoln across all age groups. In service of this goal, we will strengthen our partnership with Niagara's wider library network to increase our mutual access to materials and enhance services.

As a community hub, we will cultivate opportunities for members of the public to participate in creative workspaces and shared learning opportunities. Our current MakerSpaces will be expanded to encourage library users to make, learn, explore, and share through the use of hands-on tools. This includes free access to computers and technology to enable connectivity and support virtual learning.

In the coming four years, we will bring new services and supports into our spaces as well as embed our programming into the community. In the first year of our plan, this work will be supported by an analysis to identify gaps in programs while sourcing allies who can join us to better serve the community.

We will broaden our range of creative and dedicated programs and services, particularly in partnership with others to reach diverse groups. These initiatives will address emerging community needs and interests. Some of the areas for exploration include life skills supports, mental health services, environmental awareness, and other areas of interest for all ages and for marginalized groups.

Additional programming will be developed with the Recreation Department of the Township of West Lincoln, resulting in joint initiatives that meet the community's recreational and learning needs.

West Lincoln Public Library will maintain its welcoming and bright facilities in Smithville, Caistorville and Wellandport and promote more visits to our modern library locations. Our community rooms will continue to be available to external groups for convening and social purposes.

We will collaborate with the Township of West Lincoln to enhance and promote the interactive use of our outdoor spaces, including the Indigenous Garden at Wellandport and exterior improvements at Smithville and Caistorville. In year two of our plan, the interior of our Caistorville library branch will be enhanced.

We will investigate expanding our operating hours and increasing our reach into the community, especially towards isolated segments of the population. This will be accomplished through alliances with others and targeted community outreach. We will also examine the viability of establishing a visiting library service.

GROW LIBRARY SERVICES AND COLLABORATION

With a focus on customer service excellence, electronic payment options and work to develop online registration for programming will be undertaken.

At the end of the four years, more people will value and access West Lincoln Public Library's services. The Library will be a catalyst for community connections. Programming will achieve greater engagement and all three libraries will be busy hubs of activity.

The key strategies we will undertake to achieve this are:

- Expand and diversify our collections, materials, and creative workspaces
- Develop responsive community services and programs
- Enhance our attractive and inviting facilities and outdoor spaces
- Increase community access to our services

INCREASE THE LIBRARY'S VISIBILITY AND REACH

Library users love West Lincoln Public Library. Patrons describe it as a vital community resource that offers a welcoming and friendly learning environment. It is described by many as a valued community asset with high-quality services and programs.

However, the Library is not reaching as many community members, networks and groups as it might. Some of the factors impacting this include the vast size of the Township, a lack of public transportation, and a growing population. This is further complicated by limited funding, resources, and capacity.

In order to reach more people across West Lincoln, the library needs to refresh its image to better reflect its position as a valued modern and engaging learning environment. This requires the development of a new logo and a clear articulation of the Library's unique value to the community. A new branding strategy will offer community members an updated vision of what libraries provide.

In the first year of our plan, we will enlist expertise to develop a marketing strategy that defines our personality and unique offerings. We will develop a visual identity and logo, an up-to-date description of the Library's value and impact, and a strategy for outreach to target more community members. This work will be foundational to increasing the Library's presence, visibility and reach.

Ultimately, we will act to engage more community members in our services. This will include:

- hosting of creative launches and gatherings around learning themes and programming
- partnerships with local groups and businesses to share knowledge and resources, e.g. financial literacy with a bank, health talks with a local dietitian, etc.
- exploring the viability of a bookmobile and/or visiting library services
- participation in community events
- advertising and targeted outreach
- directional signage, where possible
- social media and traditional media
- re-establishing the Friends of the Library to build a cadre of community ambassadors who promote the Library to the community
- other grassroots and community-based promotional strategies

The strategies we will undertake in the coming four years to build our presence in the community are:

- Refresh our brand, identity and logo
- Undertake outreach and promotions to engage more community members in our services

BUILD A STRONG AND SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION POISED FOR GROWTH

West Lincoln Public Library's success is due to the passion, professionalism and commitment of its staff and dedicated volunteers. Going forward, the Library will continue to invest in its people by supporting effective recruitment, onboarding, remuneration, professional development, retention and succession planning. We will recognize and celebrate our individual and shared accomplishments.

The Library will continue to build its systems and infrastructure for greater efficiencies. This includes investing in and implementing structural changes that support more consistent services and growth. Online registration will be explored and electronic payment platforms will be developed. We will work with the Township to establish greater technological efficiencies including the development of a long-term plan to purchase radio frequency identification technology.

The Library will continue to focus on building its financial sustainability by exploring alternative sources of revenue including room rentals, fundraising through Friends of the Library, and access to grants, in partnership with others. We will continue to utilize our resources effectively and ensure we are efficient and financially responsible, while bringing value to the community.

Lastly, the Library will continue to foster a positive work culture that is committed to learning, professional growth, and adaptability. It will also promote innovation, teamwork and service excellence in all that it does.

In the coming four years, we will do the following to strengthen the organization:

- Invest in our people through effective development, recognition, retention and successful planning
- Strengthen the Library's systems and infrastructure
- Improve our financial capacity to better meet the growing population of West Lincoln

SUMMARY OF KEY PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

1. Grow Library Services and Collaboration

- Expand and diversify our collections, materials and creative workspaces
- Develop responsive community services and programs
- Enhance our attractive and inviting facilities and outdoor spaces
- Increase community access to our services

2. Increase the Library's Visibility and Reach

- Refresh our brand, identity and logo
- Undertake outreach and promotions to engage more community members in our services

3. Build a Strong and Sustainable Organization Poised for Growth

- Invest in our people through effective development, recognition, retention and successful planning
- Strengthen the Library's systems and infrastructure
- Improve our financial capacity to better meet the growing population of West Lincoln

THANK YOU

The Library Board and Staff would like to thank all involved in the creation of this Strategic Plan.

CEO/Director of Library Services, Vanessa Holm was a leading force in the planning and preparation for this project and worked very closely with consultant Suzanne Gibson. We underwent a wide consultative process.

There were board and staff workshops, leadership meetings and community and stakeholder focus groups and interviews with our consultant. We also provided a detailed online and print survey through which so many of you contributed your input.

All of this together resulted in our mission, our vision and our pillars that will move the library forward to continue to meet the needs of our communities and the anticipated growth.

We are also grateful for the continued support of Township of West Lincoln.

Our heartfelt thanks to you all.

Sincerely,

The Library Board and Staff



CONNECT WITH THE LIBRARY

Social Media

Like / follow West Lincoln Public Library on Facebook, Instagram, X, Pinterest, TikTok, YouTube and WordPress for important events, news, updates and alerts.



Subscribe to Monthly Newsletter

Sign up to receive the Library monthly newsletter directly in your e-mail inbox and stay up-to-date on programs, events, updates and new book lists.

www.westlincolnlibrary.ca/newsletter.html



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