

# PLAN OF SERVICE



COUNTY OF  
GRANDE PRAIRIE  
COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

2021 - 2023

County of Grande Prairie No. 1 Library Board

## MISSION STATEMENT:

Providing inclusive, innovative connection opportunities to spark lifelong learning, community engagement, and creativity.

# Plan of Service

## COUNTY OF GRANDE PRAIRIE NO. 1 LIBRARY BOARD

### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

As Chair of the County of Grande Prairie Library Board, I am pleased to share our 2021-2023 Plan of Service. We have worked hard to develop a plan that meets the needs of County residents.

Developing this plan in 2020, during a global pandemic, presented several new challenges! Through an online survey, we were still able to gather valuable feedback from people across the County. We met virtually to discuss and synthesize the results. The physical closure of libraries and the safety measures in place across the province likely had some impact on how survey respondents viewed library service.

In the end, our 2021-2023 Plan of Service is a document reflective of its unique circumstances. It strives to rise to the current moment, in which libraries have faced lengthy closures and a reduced ability to provide in-person programs and services. It lays out how we will serve our communities during a viral pandemic. The Plan also looks to the post-COVID future, uncertain but hopeful, and describes how we will serve our communities during the recovery.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the many helpers involved in the process: the staff of the County of Grande Prairie Libraries in Elmworth, La Glace, and Valhalla for engaging their communities; the County's communications department for their advice and promotional services; the partner libraries in Beaverlodge, Grande Prairie, Hythe, Sexsmith, and Wembley for sharing information; and the County of Grande Prairie Council for their continued support.

Sincerely

Karen Rosvold

Library Board Chair

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

The County of Grande Prairie No. 1 is a large, rural municipality in northwestern Alberta, located on Treaty 8 Territory. Statistics Canada data from the 2016 census shows that residents in the County are younger and wealthier than the provincial average.

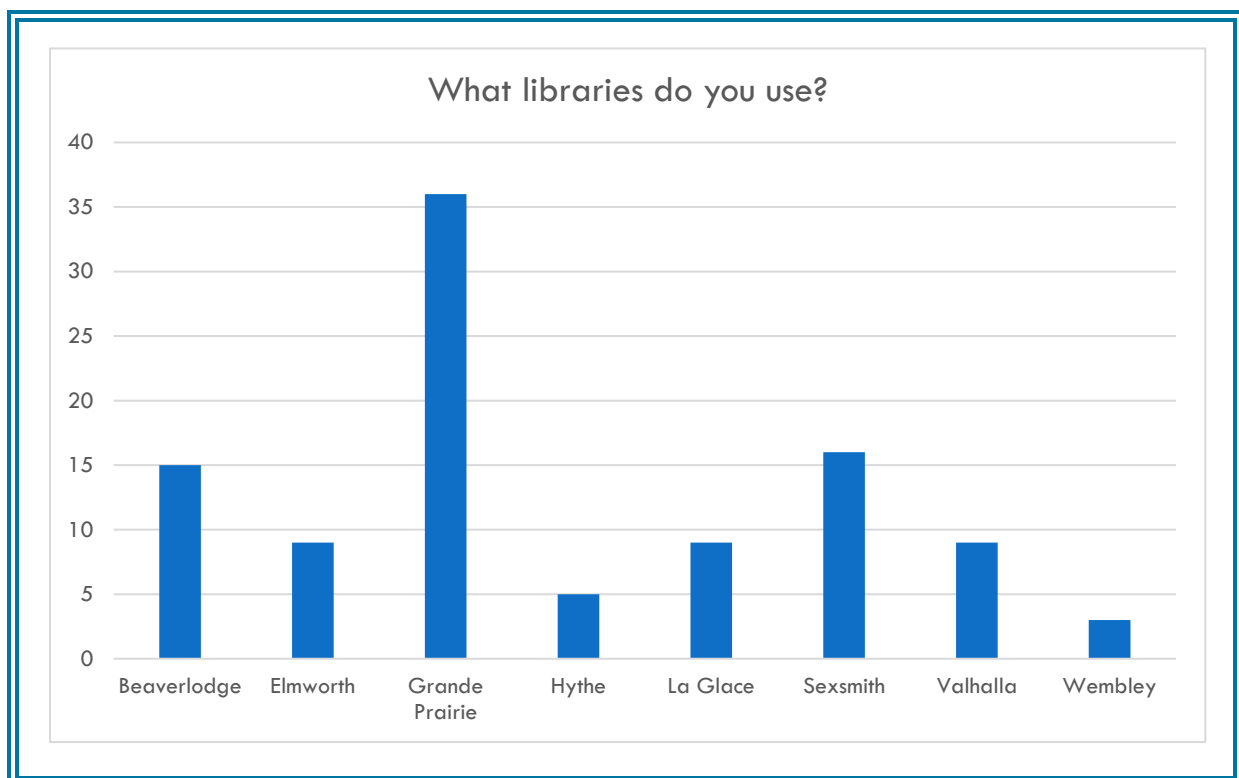
The primary industries in the County are energy, forestry, and agriculture, but there are also strong tourism, construction, and retail sectors.

There are eight libraries within the borders of the County, offering consistent library service through partnership agreements and the support of Peace Library System (PLS). Roughly 25% of County residents are members of a library.

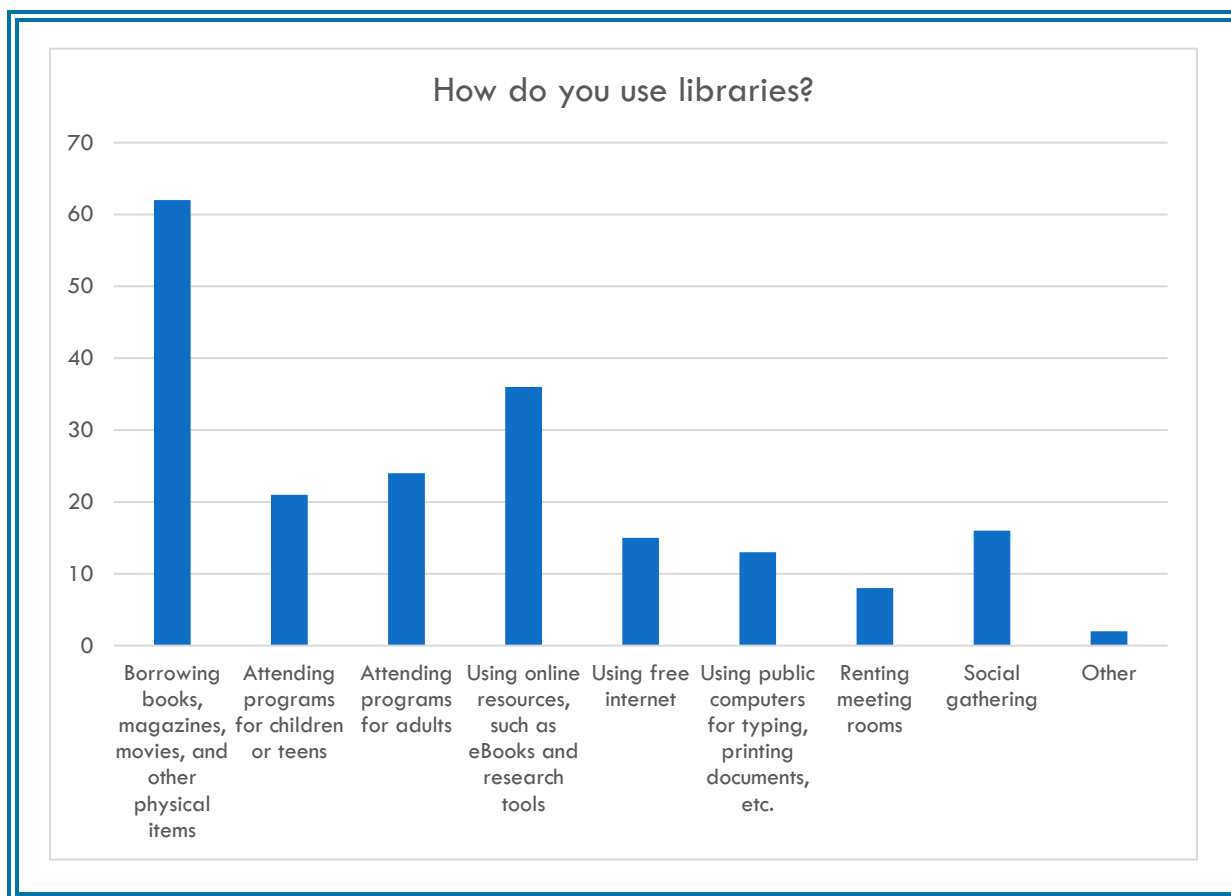
### Needs Assessment

In September 2020, the Library Board administered a survey targeting all County residents in order to gather community feedback for this plan. Eighty-three responses were collected from both library users and non-users in various areas.

Results showed that most individuals use the library closest to their home, and 30% of library users visit two or more libraries on a regular basis.



Survey responses also showed that the borrowing of reading material is still the primary factor driving people to use libraries, but other services offered are also well-utilized.



Respondents also indicated, through open-ended survey questions, a desire for:

- More open hours at libraries, especially evenings
- Libraries and/or library service in Bezanson and Clairmont
- Expansion of collections: adult books, children’s books, movies, French books, video games and consoles, eBooks, and eAudiobooks
- Increased programming for all ages: book clubs, community meetings, outdoor programs, after school programs, documentary films, lectures

Overall, respondents indicated a high degree of satisfaction with all eight libraries. Many expressed their appreciation of the staff and a desire for libraries, in general, to remain well-funded and viable.

## **County libraries and beyond**

The County of Grande Prairie Library Board was formed by municipal by-law in 1983, and has been managing library services in the County ever since. Providing equitable library service in a large, rural/suburban municipality comes with unique challenges. To meet the library needs of all residents, the Board operates three hamlet libraries, partners with neighbouring municipality libraries, and provides additional services as needed in parts of the County that do not have libraries.

### **La Glace Community Library**

The La Glace Community Library was the first library site operated by the County Library Board, starting in 1984. As of 2021, LCL has 254 active members, 20,250 items available for loan, 4 public access computers, 2 part-time staff members, and 15 volunteers.

### **Valhalla Community Library**

The Valhalla Community Library joined the County Library Board as the second service point in 1985. As of 2021, VCL has 351 active members, 11,785 items available for loan, 2 public access computers, 2 part-time staff members, and 3 volunteers.

### **Elmworth Community Library**

The Elmworth Community Library was created through community initiative and joined the County Library Board as the third service point in 2002. Currently, ECL has 183 active members, 9,416 items available for loan, 1 public access computer, 2 part-time staff, and 4 volunteers.

### **Partner Libraries**

The County Library Board also recognizes that many County residents are served by libraries in neighbouring communities. As such, the Board provides financial support to the libraries in Beaverlodge, Grande Prairie, Hythe, Sexsmith, and Wembley. Through these partnerships, County residents have access to eight libraries within the County's borders.

### **Outreach**

The Board continues to explore future projects that will bring library service to underserved areas of the County.

## SERVICE PRIORITIES

Using information from the community engagement survey, environmental scan, and through internal discussions, the Library Board determined that **Connect to the Online World** and **Succeed in School** will form the core of our priorities for the next three years. Human and financial resources will be strategically deployed to ensure that these goals and objectives are met.

The Board would also like to emphasize the ongoing importance of the service responses **Stimulate Imagination, Make Career Choices,** and **Know Your Community.** Our libraries will continue to provide excellent and innovative service in these areas.

In order to assess the overall success of the plan, a broad survey of County residents and library users will be conducted in 2023, with a focus on the goals and objectives identified below.

### Service Priority 1: Connect to the Online World

**Goal:**

Rural residents in the County of Grande Prairie will have free and reliable access to the internet.

**Objectives:**

1. Community members will make use of the libraries' Wi-Fi.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: Wi-Fi connections at each library will increase each year of the plan.

2. Libraries will invest in software, subscriptions, and equipment to increase and enhance members' online experiences.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: Libraries will purchase needed tools and have them available to the public in 2022.

## Service Priority 2: Succeed in School

### Goal:

Students of all ages will have support in meeting their learning goals.

### Objectives:

1. Libraries will maintain and improve relationships with community schools and homeschool organizations.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: Library staff will report excellent lines of communication between themselves and school staff/homeschool administrators.

2. Libraries will offer STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programs and services.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: By September 2022, kits are available for loan and are in use at least once per quarter.

3. Libraries will endeavour to reduce summer learning loss by hosting reading and learning programs throughout the summer.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: In summer 2022 and 2023, weekly library programs for children are held at each library.  
SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: 20% of students in Elsworth, La Glace, and Valhalla participate in summer library programs.

## Service Priority 3: Stimulate Imagination

### Goal:

All County residents will have access to a wide variety of reading materials, in print and online.

### Objectives:

1. The Board endeavours to increase equitability of library access for all areas of the County.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: By the end of 2022, a report will be completed that identifies County communities in need of library service and possible solutions to increase access.  
SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: Smart Lockers located in Clairmont will operate at near capacity each week.

## Service Priority 4: Make Career Choices

### Goal:

County residents will visit the library, in person or virtually, to seek help with searching and applying for jobs and retraining opportunities.

### Objectives:

1. Libraries will support adults and teens to reach their educational and career goals.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: Library staff report regular engagement with patrons about career help.  
SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: LinkedIn Learning use increases by 10% at each library.



## Service Priority 5: Know Your Community

**Goal:**

Rural residents in the County of Grande Prairie will connect with the library when in need of information about resources and services in their communities.

**Objectives:**

1. Libraries will continue to collect and share information with the public about local events, services, and organizations.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: Library staff report a high level of awareness of community information and engagement with the public.

2. Library websites will have relevant, thorough, and up-to-date information.

SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE: Pageview counts for each library's website will increase each year of the plan.