

NORTH GRENVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

2026 - 2030





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Land Acknowledgement

The North Grenville Public Library acknowledges that the Library operates on the territory of the Anishinabek. We recognize all First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples who now call North Grenville their home. We respect and support the need for cultivating a strong relationship, and we commit to Indigenous-informed decision making to foster the path towards reconciliation.

Message from Board Chair, Stephen Elliott

“If you don’t know where you are going, you may end up someplace else.” - Yogi Berra

Heeding the advice above, it is with optimistic pride that we unveil North Grenville Public Library’s new Strategic Plan. It is a strategic road map which will not only help guide our journey forward but is also reflective of our deep commitment to the community, as well as articulating our bold vision for the future.

The Library has always been an integral community hub offering connection to information, ideas, and to each other. As North Grenville continues to experience rapid and unparalleled growth we recognize that the Library needs to evolve in response to the expanding community needs, including the challenge and opportunities inherent in this dynamic community. This Strategic Plan was developed by a Strategic Planning Committee which went through an extensive collaborative process of consulting with patrons, partners, staff, and residents, so that it reflects the hope and values of the community we are privileged to serve.

As Chair of the Library Board, I would like to extend my appreciative thanks to the Planning Committee for their thoughtful stewardship of this process, and to all who contributed to the effort. The result is an inspirational document which outlines our developed shared mission and shared vision, as well establishing the Library’s strategic priorities - Serve our entire community; Redefine our spaces; Build a sustainable future.

This foundational plan will help us navigate our way forward by guiding decision making, and providing direction, to improve our services, including programs while ensuring we remain an integral community hub for all. Collectively through this plan we are not only building for the future of the Library but of the community.

On behalf of the North Grenville Public Library Board, thank you for your vital support of your library and we invite you to review the Strategic Plan as together we implement the direction forward to where we are going.

Stephen
Board Chair

Elliott

Message from Library CEO, Emily Farrell

The Library’s Strategic Plan serves as a roadmap for the next five years, guiding how we will continue to support learning, creativity, and community connection in an evolving world. Our mission remains rooted in providing quality service, upholding intellectual freedom, and cultivating community among all who walk through our doors or visit us online.

This plan focuses on three key priorities: serving our entire community, redefining our spaces, and building a sustainable future. Enhanced digital collections, non-traditional item lending, and inclusive programming will ensure that everyone, regardless of age, background, or ability, can explore new opportunities for growth. We are committed to creating welcoming and adaptable spaces that reflect community needs, while embracing new technologies that expand how people learn and connect.

This plan is a living document and it is a shared vision for the future of our Library and North Grenville. We look forward to doing our part towards building a stronger, more informed, and more connected community.

Emily Farrell
Library CEO

Format of Strategic Plan

Methods

This strategic plan focused on three main steps and three main pillars.

Three-step process:

1. Where we are
 - a. External Assessment
 - b. Internal Assessment (SWOT analysis)
 - c. Community surveys
 - d. Partner interviews
2. Where we want to be
 - a. Mission
 - b. Vision
 - c. Values
 - d. Motto
3. How we get there
 - a. Strategic priorities



- b. Action items
- c. Evaluation

Three pillars:

1. Community input
2. Partner input
3. Library Staff & Board input

Committee

The strategic planning committee was composed of Library staff and Board members. Committee terms of reference were established (see [Appendix A](#)) at early meetings; the role of the strategic planning committee was to provide guidance on survey questions and to give a first review of the completed plan before it was presented to the Library Board for approval.

Strategic Planning Committee Members

- Erica Bruce, Library Board Vice Chair
- Alex Buys, Library staff
- Justine Chapman, Library Board
- Stephen Elliott, Library Board Chair
- Emily Farrell, CEO
- Dominique Guerin-Garnett, Library Board
- Beverly Johnston Mulkins, Library Board
- Sierra Jones-Martel, Library staff
- Linda Purvis-Carriveau, Library staff

Timeline



The new strategic planning process occurred from early spring into the fall of 2025. Surveying of community members and stakeholders occurred over the summer. In September, Library Board and staff members met to complete a review of the Library’s foundation statements and establish updated strategic priorities. The action plan and evaluation criteria was developed by staff later in September and October. The draft of the final plan was shared with the Strategic Planning



Committee in late October and the final draft was presented to the Library Board at the beginning of November.

Where You Are

Summary of External Assessment: Industry, Competitor & Customer Trends

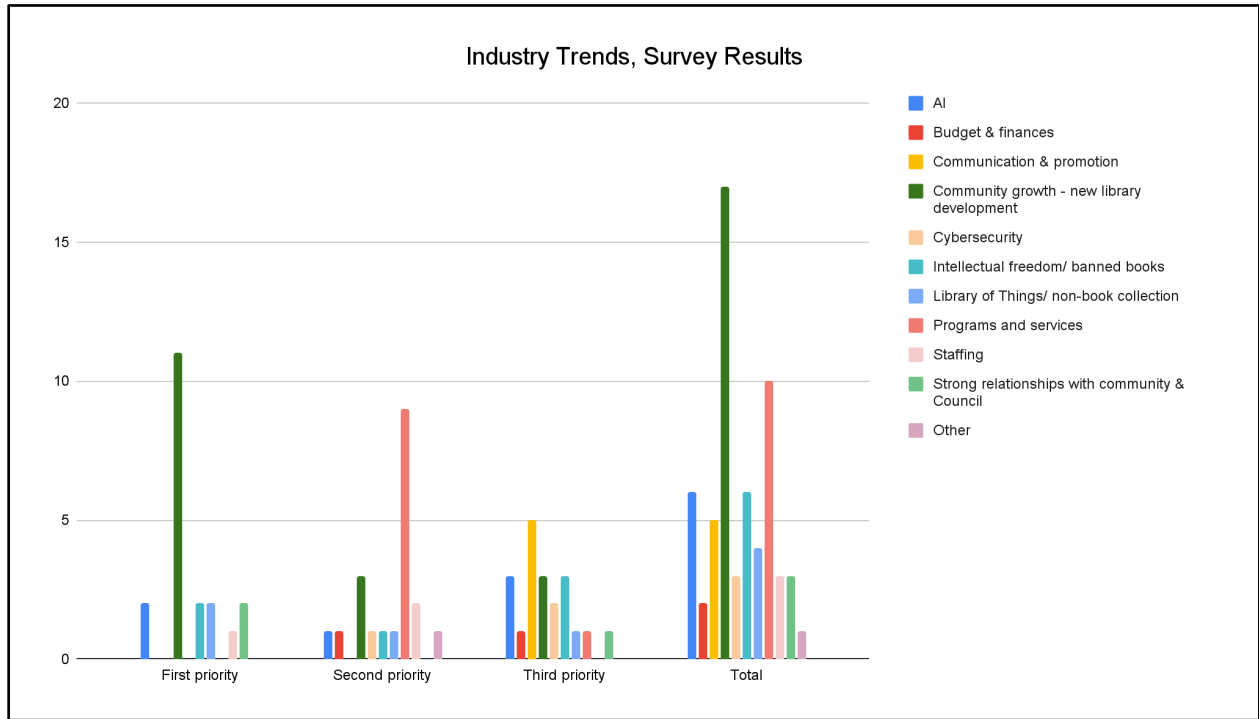
Public libraries across Canada are facing rising challenges, including increased book bans, cybersecurity threats, staffing turnover, and adapting to rapid technological and community changes. Intellectual freedom remains a major issue, with most recent challenges targeting book collections and library programs. Cybersecurity attacks, such as the successful attack on Toronto Public Library in 2023, highlight the financial and reputational risks for libraries. Operational instability threatens smaller public libraries due to funding restrictions and board vacancies. While AI presents opportunities, many libraries are cautious about ethical concerns and misinformation. Rapid community growth in areas like North Grenville increases demand for expanded library facilities and services. Libraries continue to diversify programs, collections, and communication methods to engage residents, but more work will be needed to keep up with community changes.

The Library's Board and staff were provided with background reading documents (included in [Appendix B](#) and summarized above) and were asked to select their top three concerns for the following areas:

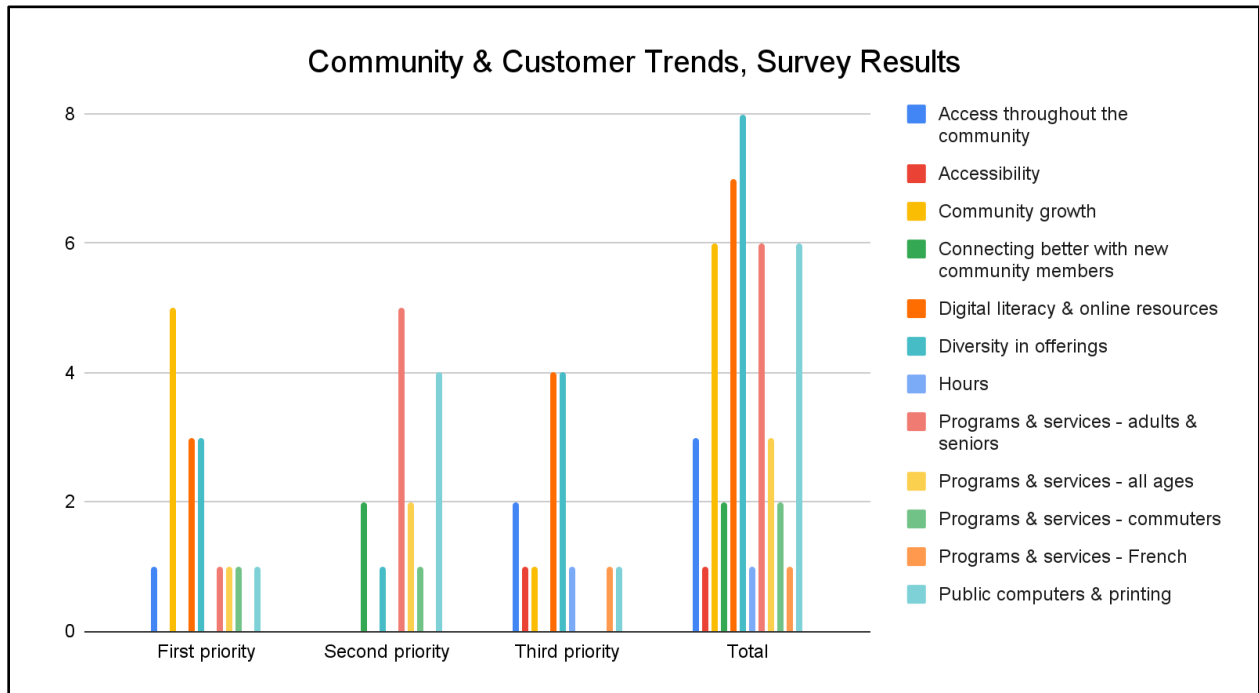
- Industry Trends
- Customer and Community Trends
- Competitors and Service Overlap

Board and staff responses were compiled and are presented in graph format below.

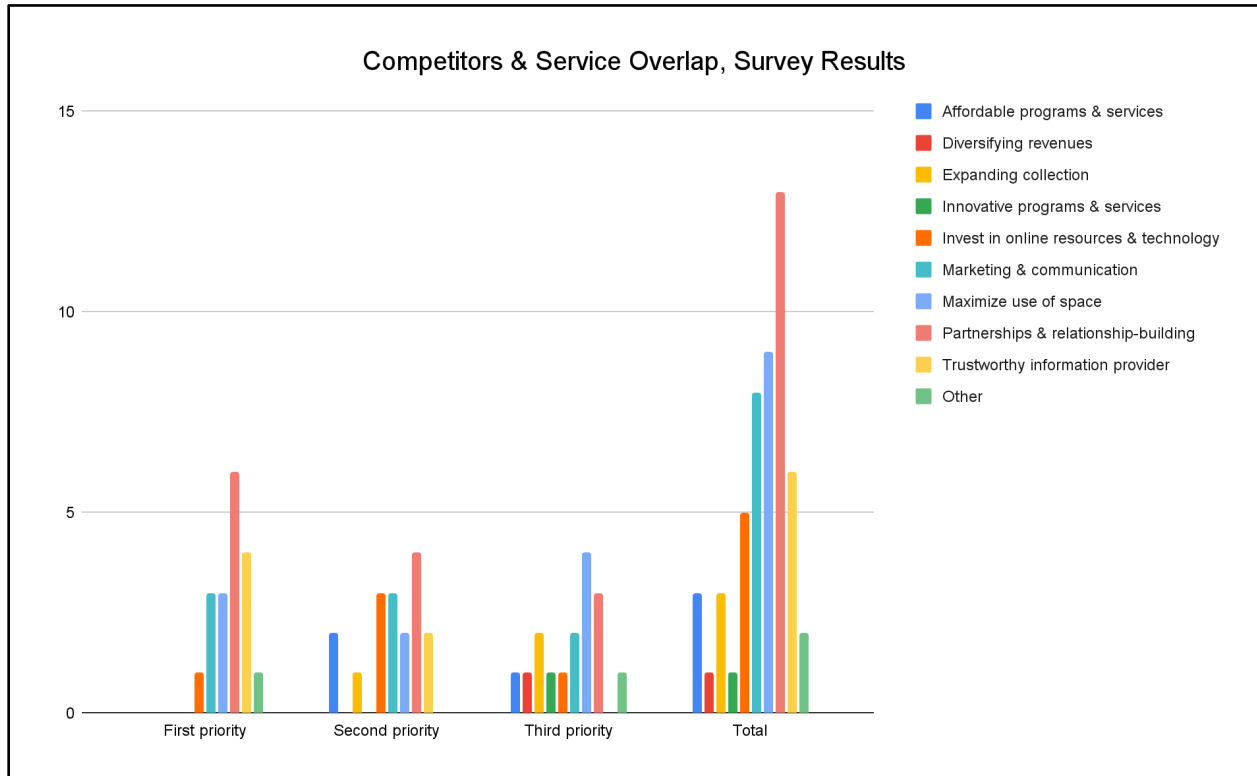
Industry Trends, Board & Staff Responses



Customer & Community Trends, Board & Staff Responses



Competitor & Service Overlap, Board & Staff Responses



Internal Assessment: SWOT Analysis

During the meeting with Library Board and staff, the external assessment information was discussed and an analysis of the Library’s strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats was completed.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<p>The following is a non-comprehensive list of the Library’s strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Collections, including non-traditional and access to community resources ● Staff & customer service, including InterLibrary Loan ● Programs, including children’s programs ● Space - beautiful, inclusive, well-loved, and well-used ● Partnerships ● Free parking (if limited) 	<p>Some of the Library’s weaknesses are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Partnerships (need more) ● eResources ● Space limitations, including parking ● Adult programs (limited offerings) ● Geographic centralization of services ● Limited staffing to do all the things ● Communication & marketing, including reaching non-library users ● IT

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Administration & policies ● Communication ● Strong budget 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fees that we do charge
Opportunities	Threats
<p>Some of the possible opportunities for the Library in the future are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expand collection based on current & future needs, including the digital collection ● Increase service across Municipality & for more demographic groups (working families, commuters, seniors, etc.) ● More collaboration to increase program offerings ● AI ● Better marketing ● New spaces & services ● Diversifying revenue sources ● Being a trustworthy source of information ● Becoming an equalizer in difficult times ● Encouraging a love of reading in the next generation 	<p>Difficulties the Library may encounter in the future are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Growing community & increased Library demand ● Reduction in revenue sources, including grants ● Cultural climate shifting towards restricting access to information/ intellectual freedom ● Changing user behaviour/ demographic changes ● Political changes and any level of government ● Cybersecurity & AI ● Limited space (currently) ● Potential decrease in reading

Summary of Community Surveys

Community input is one of the three pillars that make up this strategic plan. The Library is invested in listening to its community and providing services that meet the needs of the community. For this strategic plan, community input occurred via a community survey. The survey included both online and paper (in-library) formats and was conducted from July 22 - August 25, 2025 (approximately one month). The community survey received 118 responses. Valuable insights were gathered to inform strategic planning and operational improvements for the North Grenville Public Library. Some useful information and themes from the survey include:

- Most respondents visit the Library in person once or more a month
- Most respondents use the Library primarily for borrowing books and other resources
- Print books remain more popular than eBooks
- People love the Library space, the collection, the programs, and the staff

- Products and services that are low cost remain a top priority

These findings will guide the Library's efforts to better serve its community in the coming years. See [Appendix C](#) for detailed information about the community survey, including methodology.

Summary of Partner Interviews

Partner input is the final of the three pillars of input that make up the strategic plan. The Library works closely with other community members and organizations to leverage expertise, reduce duplication, and provide the best possible service to community members. To better understand the library's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, community members were asked five questions:

1. How is the Library best serving or contributing to the community?
2. What can the Library do better?
3. What do you think would make your organization, North Grenville residents, and circle of connections use the Library more?
4. What do you see as the major issues and challenges for the community in the upcoming years?
5. Is there anything else that you would like to say about the North Grenville Public Library?

See [Appendix C](#) for detailed information about partner surveys, including methodology.

The top responses from the partners interviewed are as follows.

How is the Library best serving or contributing to the community?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Community space ● Collection and services, including our Library of Things (non-traditional items) ● Programs
What can the Library do better?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Marketing and communication ● Increased partnerships ● Increased programming
What do you think would make your organization, North Grenville residents, and circle of connections use the Library more?

- Better marketing and communication
- More programs and community outreach
- Increasing collection offerings
- Increase space, including spaces outside of the downtown location

What do you see as the major issues and challenges for the community in the upcoming years?

- Community growth
- Changing demographics in the community
- Financial pressures, whether that's for individuals or for organizations

Where You Want To Be

Foundation Statements

See [Appendix D](#) for the Library's previous mission, vision, and strategic priorities.

2026 - 2030

Vision

Building an informed, enriched, and connected community

Mission

We provide welcoming spaces for everyone to access information and services that enhance life

Values

We care about...

Respecting each other and our spaces

Accessibility and inclusivity

Intellectual freedom

Literacy and creativity

Quality service

Cultivating community



Motto

Making the most of every mind

Strategic Priorities

2026 - 2030
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serving our entire community <p>Home Delivery Programs for all ages New & diverse programs Pop-up libraries & community outreach Effective communication & marketing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redefining our spaces <p>Expand & diversify our collections Grow our online offerings Maintain computers & internet Get outside our walls Review existing spaces</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a sustainable future <p>Revenue diversification Cybersecurity Partnerships Education (critical thinking & misinformation) Staff development & growth Library infrastructure</p>

How You Get There

The new strategic plan is set to span over five years and will be implemented at the start of 2026. Some action items will cover more than one strategic priority and more than one year. In fact, it is a good idea to create both yearly and multi-year action items.

The best strategic plans are living documents; they are flexible and are reviewed and updated often. See [Appendix E](#) for more details on the Library’s 2026 Action Plan, including specific measurements of success.

2025 & 2026 Actions

2025
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve and share new strategic plan • Review Library plans and realign with the new strategic plan, specifically action items identified for 2026

2026

- Begin implementing action items as identified in [Appendix E](#).
- Track the progress of action items and evaluate success using the evaluation tools outlined below. Update or change action items if needed.
- In the fall or before establishing next year’s budget, review the plan and develop next year’s action items that support the strategic priorities and align with the Library’s foundation statements. Action items will be developed by the CEO and Library staff.

Evaluation

Annual Review

To be completed by the CEO and reviewed by the Library Board as part of the annual budget development.

- What progress has the Library made toward achieving its mission and vision?
- What progress has the Library made towards achieving its strategic priorities?
- What resources are needed to continue to move towards achieving the mission, vision, and strategic priorities? Are these needs reflected in the Library’s annual work plans and budget for the year?
- How have Library representatives (staff, board, volunteers) incorporated the Library’s values into their actions?
- What resources are needed for the Library to continue to reflect the Library’s values? Are these needs reflected in the Library’s action plans and budget for the year?

Mid-plan

Mid-way through the strategic plan (2028), a larger review of the strategic plan should be undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the plan and make any changes needed. This review should be undertaken by the Library Board and should include, through the CEO, feedback from Library staff.

Questions to ask during the mid-plan review:

(A non-exhaustive list)

- What progress has the Library made toward achieving its mission and vision?
- Does the mission remain relevant to the Library and the needs of the community?

- Does the vision remain relevant to the Library and the needs of the community?
- What progress has the Library made towards achieving its strategic priorities?
- Do the strategic priorities remain relevant to the Library and help the Library move towards achieving its mission and vision?
- How have Library representatives (staff, board, volunteers) incorporated the Library's values into their actions?
- Do the values remain relevant to the Library and the community?

The Library Board may wish to make minor or major changes to the strategic plan at this time and consideration should be given towards beginning the process (research and surveying) for a new strategic plan.

Action Item Evaluation Criteria

See [Appendix F](#) for a sample evaluation form.

Each action item must include evaluation criteria to measure success. Evaluation criteria will be unique to each action item, but may include the following:

- How was the action item achieved? Were timelines met?
- How does the completed action item support the Library's mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities?
- How could completing a similar project in the future be improved?
- What impact has this action item made on the Library and the community? How has the action item been received by the community?
- What will be the long-term impact of this action item on the Library and the community?
- What, if any, resources are needed to ensure the continued success of this action item?
- When should this action item be reviewed again or occur again?

End of Plan Review & Preparing for the Next Strategic Plan

Strategic planning is a cyclical process. Just as periodic evaluation is important, completing an end-of-plan review is essential for ensuring the success of the current strategic plan and to help provide support for the new strategic plan.

End-of-plan reviews should include all evaluation questions from the annual review and consider the following:

(A non-exhaustive list)

- Who do we need to be consulting to make sure we are still representing the needs of the community? Who have we forgotten in our consultations?
- What time and resources do we need to develop our next strategic plan? Has the Library budgeted for these needs?



- Does our strategic planning committee include representatives from:
 - Board?
 - Staff?
 - Volunteers?
 - Community members?
 - Other stakeholders and partners?
 - Do the current strategic planning committee members wish to continue on the committee?
 - Completing a review of the Terms of Reference for the Strategic Planning Committee