

PORT COLBORNE PUBLIC LIBRARY

# 2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN







## Chair's Message

The Port Colborne Public Library Board is pleased to share our new 2023-2027 Strategic Plan. This bold and innovative plan will lead us into the future by building on our past successes, embracing the challenges we face, and taking advantage of all opportunities. This is an exciting time for the Port Colborne Public Library. We have a newly renovated and refreshed facility with inviting and accessible spaces, excellent services, vibrant programming, and a plan in place to implement leading-edge technology. With a focus on delivering an exceptional user experience, our professional library team is well-equipped to achieve its goals. We will ensure that all users can navigate and access library services. We will deepen our connections with community partners and service providers, and work diligently to deliver better, safer, and more patron-centered programming and services. We are honoured to serve our community. We invite you to join us on this exciting journey as we strive to meet the needs of our user communities and fulfill our vision to empower, enrich, and educate by providing the best library services possible.

— Michael Cooper, Board Chair



## Our Vision

“Empower. Enrich. Educate.” guides what the Board aspires the Library to be for all of our user communities. Each of these active verbs requires doing — at the staff level — so that they may ring true in the future. Support for this vision must be ingrained in our culture and strived for in everything we do.

*“Libraries represent the diversity and immensity of human thought, our collective knowledge laid out in rows of revealing inspiration.”*

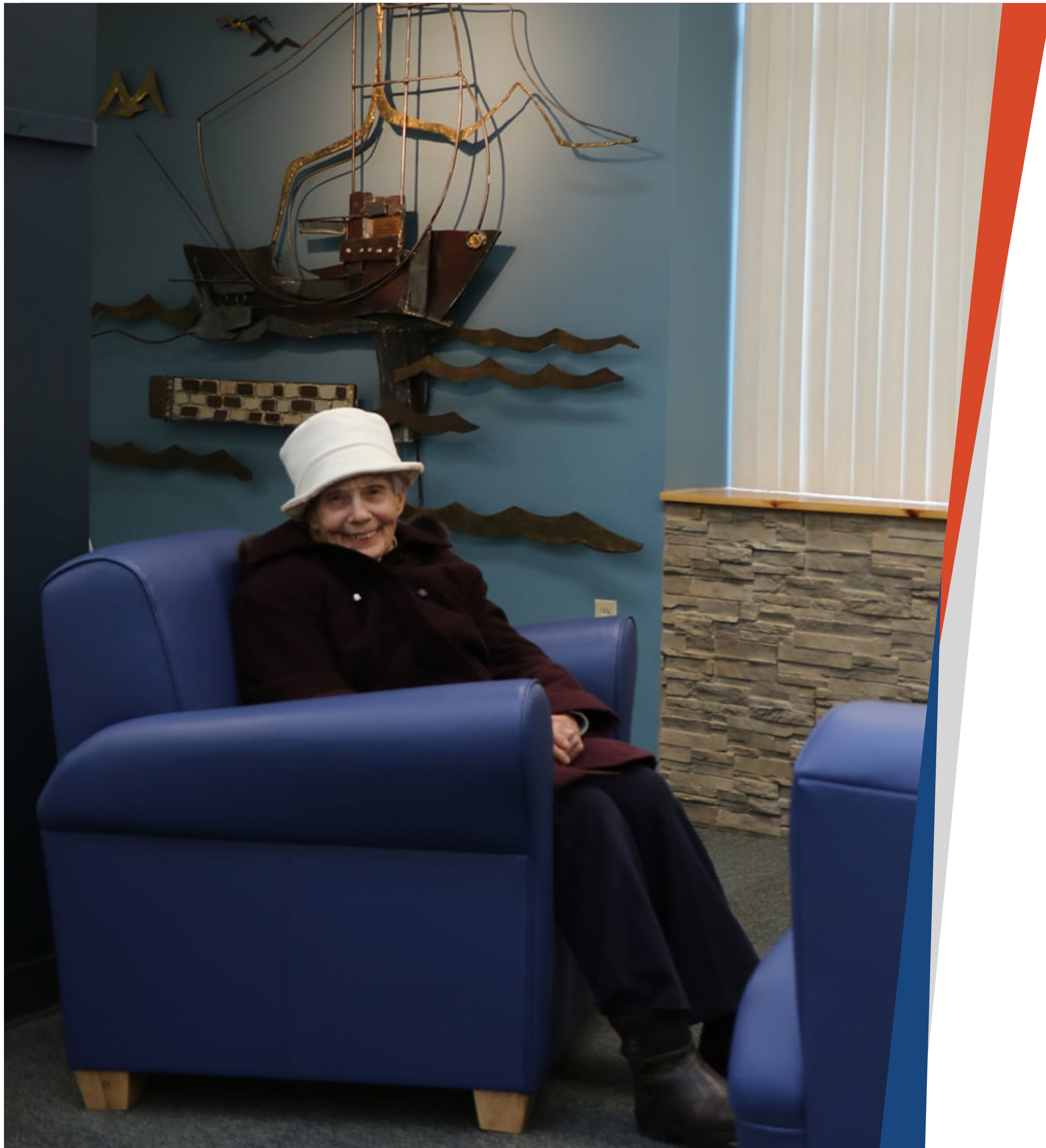
— Manuel Lima

EMPOWER

ENRICH

EDUCATE





## **Our Mission**

The Library “is committed to providing the services necessary to meet the needs of our user communities.” The continued use of this mission statement speaks to the way it perfectly captures our raison d’etre or reason for existing. The Library’s ability to be proactive in meeting user needs, despite however much they differ and change, will influence its success over time.

*“The public library really is kind of a temple, and it ministers to the needs of the spirit as much as it does to the requirements of our minds.”*

— The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson,  
former Governor General of Canada



# Our Values

These eight values share equal importance and, above all else, convey how the Library should be seen in the eyes of the user communities it serves.



We value **professional, courteous service**



We value **community responsiveness**



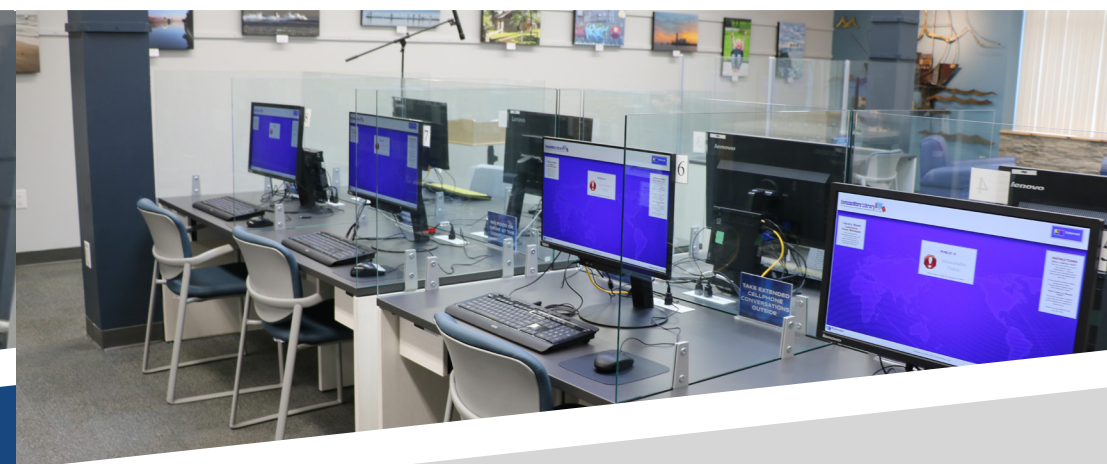
We value **life-long learning and literacy**



We value **intellectual freedom**



We value **operational efficiency and accountability**



We value **innovation and tradition**



We value **cooperation, respect and integrity**



We value **barrier-free, fair and equitable access**



## Comments from our Patrons

“I love the library because the books take you to places unknown. You can be someone else for just a little while. Everyone has something special. The library is my something special.”

“The public library is a place that provides me knowledge, escapism, mysteries and plenty of laughter. The books, movies, TV series, documentaries and music CDs, without my public library I would feel displaced. Thank you.”

“I love my library because everyone here is courteous, pleasant and helpful. It is a joy to come into the library. We here in Port Colborne are very fortunate to have our library. Thank you.”

“I love to read and have been an avid reader since I was a child. Reading has taken me around the world and expanded my imagination. I’m a senior now and still read daily. Love our library! Thank you!”

“Love, love, love my books as you know, as I read about two books a week and have been doing so all my life. But, sometimes in the afternoon, I love to sit back for a bit and transport myself....I so miss seeing all your smiling faces.”

“In this discombobulating time of COVID and crazy politics, the library is a soothing refuge. The first time I entered after shutdown, it was like reuniting with a long absent friend. I love the peace, comfort, stability of it; browsing among the stalls, discovering new authors & titles. A good “real” book and comfortable chair – bliss! The staff are unfailingly kind and helpful. They always ensure pleasant visits. To top it all off – it’s FREE for everyone to enjoy!!!”

“What I want to share is how amazing the library team has been during this pandemic. Every phone call, curbside “visit” and interaction that I’ve had with staff has been easy, pleasant, and helpful. For a family of book lovers, not being able to visit the library in person has been difficult. For all of these months that we have been stuck at home, our library books have truly been our escape. Thank you for all that the Port Colborne Library has done to continue to provide such wonderful service, and that includes the fantastic “window shopping” [browsing shelves]. I noticed and was able to check out a fantastic title from the window on a recent visit! You guys are awesome! Stay healthy, and thank you so much.”





**Goal 1** To maintain and develop high-quality, inclusive programming and services for our user communities

**Goal 2** Retaining, recruiting and innovating in human capital/people

**Goal 3** Strengthening accessibility and sustainability of library spaces/Developing the Cultural Block

**Goal 4** To exercise financial stewardship by leveraging all funding sources and partnership opportunities

**Goal 5** Trailblazing library trends while maintaining core library services/Developing methods to deliver and strengthen innovative user experiences

**Goal 6** Engaging our external stakeholders and user communities to ensure good decision-making for the benefit of all



**Objective 1.1.** Support staff with opportunities to assist in developing and delivering programs more effectively

**Action:** Develop a program to build staff competencies that focus on programming, outreach strategies, technology, and digital innovation

**Action:** Conduct a community profile in collaboration with the City of Port Colborne

**Action:** Survey library users and non-users to identify satisfaction with current programs and determine needs for future programs

**Action:** Develop and implement an annual programming plan that includes timelines for accountability and efficiencies

**Objective 1.2.** Leverage strategic relationships to provide diverse programming

**Action:** Expand resource-sharing and collaborative programming with LiNC partner libraries

**Action:** Engage existing and new community partners to fund, sponsor, and deliver programs

**Action:** Expand the “Let’s Talk About...” series with local agencies

**Action:** Increase programming opportunities with the Museum and participation in City events

## Goal 1

To maintain and develop high-quality, inclusive programming and services for our user communities



**Objective 1.3.** Upgrade and increase access to leading-edge technology to expand digital literacy and community connectedness

**Action:** Expand Makerspace activities and resources to empower and educate library users

**Action:** Complete the digital lab for public and staff use

**Action:** Increase the availability of accessible technology and software for public use, including lendable technology items

**Action:** Develop and implement programming to increase digital literacy and provide tech help for users

**Objective 1.4.** Develop the library collections to support and reflect a growing and diverse community

**Action:** Conduct a diversity audit of the collections to ensure we are addressing the needs of our user communities and reflect changing demographics

**Objective 1.5.** Attract new users through effective promotion and marketing of library programming and services

**Action:** Increase the frequency of outreach services and pop-up visits with a focus on new destinations

**Action:** Revise marketing and promotion strategies to target new users

## Goal 1

To maintain and develop high-quality, inclusive programming and services for our user communities



**Objective 2.1.** Invest in ongoing professional development to enable staff to improve user experience and innovate library services

**Action:** Develop a training map for each job description to ensure that staff are prepared and can apply professional best practices to embrace evolving library services

**Objective 2.2.** Ensure job descriptions accurately reflect workflows and support operational procedures

**Action:** Assess duties and tasks with a focus on identifying changes due to evolving practices

**Action:** Update competencies and expectations for staff to successfully perform duties and provide services

**Action:** Review job descriptions and the organizational chart to identify needs and gaps to best provide services

**Action:** Create a succession plan for the Director of Library Services

## Goal 2

Retaining, recruiting, and innovating in human capital/people



**Objective 3.1.** Increase accessibility in public and staff spaces to ensure barrier-free, fair, and equitable access

**Action:** Collaborate with the City to plan and complete capital projects that increase accessibility and ensure compliance in all interior and exterior library spaces

**Action:** Identify and optimize grant opportunities for funding

**Objective 3.2.** Innovate for efficient infrastructure improvements and sustainability

**Action:** Implement suggested actions from the Building Condition Assessment as recommended by the City

**Action:** Conduct a risk assessment to identify critical issues

**Objective 3.3.** Continued exploration of the Cultural Block

**Action:** Take a leading role with the Museum in developing a Public Art Policy

**Action:** Install outdoor art exhibits

**Action:** Conduct a feasibility study on adding a shared programming space for use by the Library, Museum, and Archives on the Cultural Block

## Goal 3

Strengthening accessibility and sustainability of library spaces/  
Developing the Cultural Block



**Objective 4.1.** Identify additional revenue sources to strengthen the financial resources of the Library

**Action:** Identify and optimize grant opportunities

**Action:** Develop, implement, and promote new fundraising opportunities, including activities, events, and promotional items for sale

**Objective 4.2.** Implement best practices to strengthen the Library's capital and financial assets to enable the Library to flourish and increase sustainability

**Action:** Integrate the City's financial control mechanisms to ensure consistency and accuracy in reporting and to support the City's Finance Department

**Action:** Create a Memorandum of Understanding between the Board and the City

**Action:** Develop key performance indicators to improve operations and decision-making

**Action:** Identify opportunities for cost-savings and deepen collaboration with LiNC partner libraries

## Goal 4

To exercise financial stewardship by leveraging all funding sources and partnership opportunities



**Objective 5.1.** Create and support a programming team to explore new and innovative delivery systems for programs

**Action:** Position staff on external working groups including library support service agencies and think-tanks to keep abreast of new ideas, trends, strategies, and practices

**Action:** Support staff development opportunities to create a tech-savvy customer service team

**Objective 5.2.** Enhance the user experience through improved communication and availability of services

**Action:** Complete the connectivity and phone systems capital project to provide stable and efficient service

**Action:** Ensure two-way communication that is timely, accessible, and ensures accountability

**Action:** Explore new methods to request and analyze input from users

**Action:** Enhance and adopt new delivery methods to promote, advertise, and assess user needs

**Action:** Develop innovative policies and practices to ensure excellent customer service

**Action:** Explore and procure leading-edge resources and technology for staff and public use

**Action:** Install a NovelBranch book lending machine at Vale Health and Wellness Centre for expanded outreach service

## Goal 5

Trailblazing library trends while maintaining core library services/  
Developing methods to deliver and strengthen innovative user experiences



**Objective 6.1.** Increase awareness of the Library and the services available

**Action:** Develop and implement a communications and marketing plan

**Action:** Increase effective outreach through social media and branding

**Action:** Identify new opportunities for outreach services

**Objective 6.2.** Convey and measure the impacts of library services and programs

**Action:** Solicit feedback from library users and non-users, and respond to the community in a timely manner

**Action:** Target reach-out to members of vulnerable populations (seniors, newcomers, low-income families and youth) to ensure that they are aware of and are invited to participate in library services

**Action:** Develop and implement key performance indicators

**Objective 6.3.** Deepen strategic partnership with City Council, City staff, and other critical stakeholders

**Action:** Complete and implement a Memorandum of Understanding between the Board and the City

**Action:** Implement the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action as they relate to public libraries

## Goal 6

Engaging our external stakeholders and user communities to ensure good decision-making for the benefit of all





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• PUBLIC LIBRARY •

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Cheryl MacMillan

**Port Colborne Public Library Management Team**

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Susan Therrien, Director of Library Services  
Bryan Boles, Treasurer

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