

the Perth & District  
UNION PUBLIC  
**LIBRARY**

*a place for all*



**AGILITY PLAN**  
**2026-27**



# Perth & District Union Public Library

## Agility Plan 2026-2027

### **Introduction**

The Perth & District Union Public Library has served the Town of Perth and the Townships of Drummond/North Elmsley and Tay Valley for more than 150 years. The library's role in the community has evolved over time and continues to do so. This agility plan sets out the Library's mission, vision, desired outcomes and priority action items for the next two years, from 2026-2027. It will be renewed every two years based on our community survey and other metrics (see Appendix A). The purpose of the plan is to ensure the library continues to adapt in response to changing community needs, while delivering exceptional programs and services, and offering the best possible value for contributing municipalities and library users alike.

### **Review**

Progress on these strategic priorities will be reviewed twice a year by the Library Board (June/November). This will help ensure the Library continues to filter its decision making through the mission, vision and the monitoring and evaluation tools laid out in Appendix A.

### **Our Mission**

The mission of the Perth & District Union Public Library is to share knowledge, foster community, and enrich lives.

### ***Tagline:***

Sharing knowledge. Fostering community. Enriching lives.

### **Our Vision for the Library**

We envision the Library continuing to evolve as a vibrant community hub for lifelong learning. The Library brings together information, technology and people both at the library and in our community; builds literacy skills; is supported by the community through advocacy, fund-raising and volunteerism; and has a loyal membership. Everyone has a library card!

Outcome: Everyone in our community feels welcome when they visit the library.

Strategic Direction: Foster a vibrant, people-centred library experience by building staff capacity and inclusive library programs and collections.

Action	Year	Outcomes & Indicators		
		Progress on action item:	What impacts will we measure?	How will we measure it?
<p>Ensure "everyone can find themselves in a book" when they visit the library, either online or in-person:</p> <p><i>Update the library's collections plan and statements to ensure making diverse books accessible to our community is prioritized (e.g. works of fiction or non-fiction that centers on characters or stories from marginalized, underrepresented, or minority groups, works in other languages spoken by community members)</i></p>	2026		<i>As per <a href="#">We Need Diverse Books</a>, when we have diverse books, children read more, it spurs literacy and deepens language development.</i>	<i># of diverse books purchased, # of checkouts</i>
<p><i>create and incorporate a diversity audit 'checklist' when making purchases, weeding, and creating displays to ensure the library is purchasing and/or replacing diverse books and including them in library displays</i></p>	2027		<i>community members feel welcome and included when they visit the library</i>	<i># of checkouts, community survey results</i>
<p><i>research and create a list of "significant dates" for marginalized, underrepresented, or minority groups. Educate staff on these dates and incorporate them into ongoing book displays or social media posts, as appropriate.</i></p>	2026		<i>community members feel welcome and included when they visit the library</i>	<i>community survey results</i>
<p><i>The Library's Indigenous Advisory Circle was established in 2022. The Library consults with this Circle for guidance and direction in the development of library services and programs relating to Indigenous cultures and histories.</i></p>				
<p>In collaboration with the library's Indigenous Advisory Circle:</p> <p><i>establish separate physical and digital Indigenous collections in accordance with the collection statements created in 2025</i></p>	2026		<i>Indigenous people feel welcome and included when they visit the library</i>	<i>collections established and searchable in the catalogue, # of checkouts by this collection</i>
<p><i>create a new physical area within the Library to house the Indigenous collections, including culturally appropriate and welcoming space planning and signage</i></p>	2027		<i>Indigenous people feel welcome and included when they visit the library</i>	<i>area for collections established, informal feedback from IAC, community survey</i>
<p><i>offer programming relating to Indigenous cultures and histories, run and presented in collaboration with Indigenous community members.</i></p>	ongoing		<i>Past examples include a program centered around environmental stewardship from an Indigenous point of view</i>	
<p><i>educate our community about Canada's relationship with Indigenous peoples and help non-Indigenous peoples to actively engage in reconciliation</i></p>	ongoing		<i>Past examples include offering Indigenous Classroom Kits with Land-Based Learning and Truth and Reconciliation Resources, Red Dress Day beading workshops, and Orange Shirt Day programming.</i>	

Support our friendly, skilled and knowledgeable staff by:

*Pilot refreshed and focused customer service model (e.g. staff working at the circulation desk focus on customer service, staff working behind-the-scenes to do tasks like inter-library loan).*

2026

*decreased staff strain, increased completion of behind the scenes task, greater customer satisfaction*

*monthly review of pilot, # of users of drop-in tech tutoring, informal staff feedback, community survey results*

*Create an annual training calendar/plan so that training is delivered regularly and consistently. Plan to include ongoing evaluation / staff input and connections with other local libraries into training options.*

2027

*staff feel supported and comfortable in their roles*

*annual plan created and implemented, staff comments via evaluation following training*

*Consider future staffing models and need for increased operating hours as our community grows*

2027

*the Library is able to meet community demand for services as the population grows*

*report created for the Board with potential options outlined, # of visits, updated community needs*

## Outcome: The Library is a safe and well-maintained place for everyone in our community.

Strategic Direction: Invest in the Library's physical infrastructure to ensure our spaces are accessible and ready to meet the evolving needs of our growing community.

Action	Year	Outcomes & Indicators		
		Progress on action item:	What impacts will we measure?	How will we measure it?
Update library spaces to meet the changing needs of our population by:				
<i>make all of our meeting spaces fully accessible as hybrid meeting spaces.</i>	2026		<i>provide connection in an inclusive space to everyone in our community at the library and at home.</i>	<i>hybrid meeting technology installed, increase in # of room bookings, increase in # of hybrid library programs offered</i>
<i>reconfigure the main floor of the library to allow for quiet and noisy zones and increase the number of seats. Ensure accessibility and community input accounted for.</i>	2027		<i>more community members can use the library, and have a quiet space if desired</i>	<i>main floor reconfigured, areas for different noise levels created, increase in # of seats, community survey results</i>
<i>As outlined in the library's 10-year capital budget, undertake a feasibility study to complete a concept design for a library expansion or renovation, including opinion of probable cost for construction. Ensure accessibility accounted for.</i>	2027		<i>the library of the future will be able to provide services to meet the demands of a larger population</i>	<i>feasibility study completed</i>
Complete needed maintenance as laid out in the library's 10-year capital budget as follows:				
<i>complete second floor kitchen renovation</i>	2026		<i>staff will have subsidiary space to support programming needs</i>	<i>kitchen renovation completed</i>
<i>replace library flat roof</i>	2026		<i>existing library building is maintained for the future</i>	<i>flat roof replaced</i>
<i>refresh bathrooms</i>	2026		<i>patrons are comfortable using the library's facilities</i>	<i>bathrooms refreshed</i>
Update the library's 10-year capital budget, including plan to rebuild capital reserves	2026		<i>the Library has a plan to meet our future capital obligations</i>	<i>10-year capital budget updated</i>
Depending on the results of the feasibility study, plan for a future capital campaign for a library expansion or renovation	2027		<i>dependent on feasibility study</i>	

**Outcome:** Everyone in our community is aware of the services of the library. It's exciting to have a library card!

**Strategic Direction:** Raise our profile and change perceptions of the library by informing residents, elected officials, and community organizations about who we are and what we do.

Action	Year	Outcomes & Indicators		
		Progress on action item:	What impacts will we measure?	How will we measure it?
Build on the library's existing monthly marketing strategy to increase awareness of library services by:				
<i>Host monthly open houses at the library to introduce newcomers to the community to the library's space, community, programs</i>	2027		<i>newcomers to the community are aware of the library's services</i>	<i># of attendees, # of new cardholders</i>
<i>Offer presentations to community organizations to showcase the library's services and encourage connections and cross-referrals</i>	2027		<i>community organizations are aware of the library and refer their clients</i>	<i>Library use statistics: add categories of use for room bookings (e.g. # of community organizations), # of community service referrals as part of quarterly question tracking</i>
<i>increasing engagement on the library's social media pages by sharing posts about library services and 'behind-the-scenes' on a regular basis</i>	ongoing		<i>our community engages with our social media and is aware of the library</i>	<i>increase in followers, engagement on posts (annual evaluation of social media use statistics)</i>
Ensure our funders support the value of library staff and services:				
<i>Start a library champions program; provide training and advocacy package to supporters. Empower library champions to deliver informal presentations to community groups and to promote library services at community events/locations.</i>	2026		<i>increased awareness of library and services offered</i>	<i># of champions recruited and trained, # of presentations given, number of people reached by champions</i>
<i>Using the Ontario Library Service Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit, determine the library's social return on investment and incorporate data into presentations to stakeholders and champions toolkit</i>	2026		<i>community sees the value of the library</i>	<i># of presentations given, response to presentation</i>
<i>create and implement fundraising and donor stewardship strategy (e.g. map out needs, ongoing ask / impact in monthly library newsletter, improve donor communications by demonstrating ongoing impact, etc)</i>	2027		<i>our donors see the value of supporting the library and continue to do so over time</i>	<i># of donors, # of funds raised</i>

# Outcome: People feel connected to the library and have an improved quality of life.

Strategic Direction: The library is a hub for social connections and offers programs that meet our community's needs.

Action	Year	Outcomes & Indicators		
		Progress on action item:	What impacts will we measure?	How will we measure it?
Build on the library's existing program plan to prioritize programs that reflect and meet the needs of our community:				implementing ongoing program evaluation, evaluation results used in annual program planning
<i>support literacy by continuing to deliver our core library programs (e.g. Storytime) and flagship literacy programs (e.g. Summer Literacy Program)</i>	ongoing		increased early learning and literacy among attendees	pre- and post- measurement of literacy markers for Reading Buddies and Summer Literacy Program, feedback
<i>support lifelong learning by offering or encouraging programming that supports literacy of all kinds, particularly digital literacy for all generations and skill levels</i>	ongoing		increased community literacy	# of attendees, feedback
<i>continuing to offer free space for community-led programs that are free and open to all</i>	ongoing		our community is connected to the services they need	# of partner programs, # of attendees
<i>Offering or encouraging adult programming during evening and weekend times for working adults</i>	ongoing		library is a hub for social connections	# of attendees, feedback
Take the library to the people:				
<i>continue to build Maberly Hall satellite location</i>	ongoing		rural residents have access to library programs where they are	# of rural programs or events run by library; # of people participating in these events, # of borrowers, # of checkouts
<i>Consider other satellite locations for off-site programs and/or book pick-up (in the Townships, Town, or with community partners such as The Table)</i>	2027		residents have access to library programs where they are	# of programs or events run by library; # of people participating in these events, # of borrowers and # of checkouts via satellite locations
Ensure library programs and services meet the needs of older adults or folks with mobility issues:				
<i>review the Library's home delivery program, considering expansion to local care homes or other methods of delivery</i>	2027		older adults continue to have access to library services	# of people participating in home delivery program
<i>continue to offer virtual options for existing programs</i>	ongoing		rural residents or those with mobility issues have access to library programs where they are	# of virtual sessions offered; # of people participating in virtual sessions
<i>continue to partner with initiatives like the Perth Family Health Team, Perth Seniors Circles, etc</i>	ongoing		residents have access to library programs where they are	# of programs, # of participants

# Outcome: Visiting the library online is as accessible and welcoming as visiting the library in-person

## Strategic Direction: Transform the library's digital presence to meet the needs of 21st century digital citizens

Action	Year	Outcomes & Indicators		
		Progress on action item:	What impacts will we measure?	How will we measure it?
Improve the library's digital services by:				
<i>streamline or simplify the library's website to make the library's services and programs easily discoverable. Ensure accessibility and low-bandwidth access to the Internet is accounted for.</i>	2026		<i>our community connects with the library digitally</i>	<i># of visitors to the website, community survey</i>
<i>showcase non-traditional collections such as the Library of Things and Toy Lending Library</i>	2027		<i>residents are aware of our non-traditional collections</i>	<i># of checkouts of these collections</i>
<i>integrate services where possible (e.g. event registration includes links to add to personal calendars, etc)</i>	2026		<i>our community connects with the library digitally</i>	<i>iCal links included in booking confirmations, etc</i>
<i>advertising our services, particularly digital services, online via Google and social media</i>	2027		<i>our community connects with the library digitally</i>	<i># of clicks on ads, # of unique website visitors</i>
Invest in collections:				
<i>increase budget for eBooks and other digital resources by 5%</i>	2027		<i>our community has increased access to digital books and resources</i>	<i># of people borrowing, # of checkouts</i>
<i>encourage donations to the library's collections endowment at the Perth &amp; District Community Foundation to diversify potential revenue for collections.</i>	2027		<i>diversified revenue stream for collections</i>	<i># of funds raised, amount of endowment disbursement</i>
<i>In partnership with local libraries, councils, and Ontario Library Association, advocate to the provincial government for an increase to the Public Library Operating Grant and support for Ontario's Digital Library by meeting with our local MPP and Minister of Tourism, Culture and Gaming</i>	2026		<i>funders see the value of the library</i>	<i># of advocacy initiatives in which library participates (signing position papers etc), provincial response to advocacy</i>
Prepare for future updates to the library's catalogue system (e.g. investigating what might be needed from a physical and technological standpoint)	2027		<i>the library is able to make technological changes so residents can more easily connect with the library digitally</i>	<i>research completed on what might be needed</i>

# Appendix A: Agility Plan Development & Evaluation Plan

## Development Process

This is a summary of the process undertaken to develop the Library's 2026-27 agility plan:

- community survey (May-July 2025)
- focus session held with working group made up of Friends of the Library, Library Board and Staff  
*session reviewed results of community survey, current community demographics, and library use statistics to identify the Library's priority outcomes over the next two years (e.g. Who do we hope to reach? What changes do we hope to make in people's lives?)*
- first draft of plan
- draft presented to working group to workshop
- second draft of plan
- second draft of plan circulated to library staff for input
- third draft of plan
- third draft presented to Policy Committee (wordsmithing, editorial)
- final draft
- final draft presented to Library Board

## Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Plan

This section contains the evaluation tools we will use to monitor, evaluate and report on our work over the coming years. This qualitative and quantitative data enables the Library to identify community needs, track who we are serving, measure how much we're doing and how well we're doing it, and monitor progress toward our desired outcomes. This data will provide a benchmark against which to measure progress in future years and will be used as the basis for developing our next strategic/agility plan (for the years 2028-2029). We anticipate that these evaluation tools will be refined over time as we gain experience working with them.

**The table below describes the evaluation tools we plan to use:**

Evaluation Tool	What the Data Will Tell Us	Frequency
<b>Tool #1: Community Survey</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Who is, and who is not, using the library (based on community demographics).</li> <li>● What people appreciate most about the library and what they would like to see changed.</li> <li>● Suggestions for drawing people who are not library cardholders, and who may not be readers, into the library.</li> </ul>	Completed once every two years over a three-month period (May-July). Available online, on library-owned tablets and in hard copy.

<b>Tool #2: Workshop/Program Evaluation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who is, and who is not, participating in library programs (based on demographics).</li> <li>• What people appreciate most about library programs, and how these programs might be improved.</li> <li>• Suggestions for new programs.</li> </ul>	<p>Completed after each one-off workshop, and at least once a year for ongoing programs.</p>
<b>Tool #3: Library Use Statistics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many people are using the library?</li> <li>• What are they using the library for?</li> </ul>	<p>Collected and reported to the Library Board triannually (Jan/May/Sept).</p>
<b>Tool #4 Demographic Data</b> <i>Census / Lanark County Data Portal Analyse Library membership by geographic data</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are our community demographics?</li> <li>• What part of the community is using the library, and what part are we missing?</li> </ul>	<p>Summary completed once every two years as part of community survey/ development of new agility plan</p>

# Appendix B

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## **Community Overview**

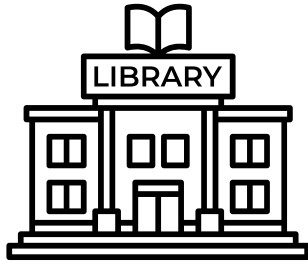
**background for Agility Plan 2026-2027**

**February 2026**

# Who is our community?

	Perth & District	Drummond/ North Elmsley	Perth	Tay Valley																																				
 households	8,975	3,285	3,270	2,420																																				
 population	20,577	8,183	6,469	5,925																																				
 ages	 <table border="1"> <tr> <td>13%</td> <td>56%</td> <td>31%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(2,545)</td> <td>(11,570)</td> <td>(6,460)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-14</td> <td>15-64</td> <td>65+</td> </tr> </table>	13%	56%	31%	(2,545)	(11,570)	(6,460)	0-14	15-64	65+	 <table border="1"> <tr> <td>14%</td> <td>61%</td> <td>25%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(1,175)</td> <td>(4,970)</td> <td>(2,040)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-14</td> <td>15-64</td> <td>65+</td> </tr> </table>	14%	61%	25%	(1,175)	(4,970)	(2,040)	0-14	15-64	65+	 <table border="1"> <tr> <td>11%</td> <td>50%</td> <td>39%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(690)</td> <td>(3,255)</td> <td>(2,520)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-14</td> <td>15-64</td> <td>65+</td> </tr> </table>	11%	50%	39%	(690)	(3,255)	(2,520)	0-14	15-64	65+	 <table border="1"> <tr> <td>12%</td> <td>56%</td> <td>32%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(680)</td> <td>(3,345)</td> <td>(1,900)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0-14</td> <td>15-64</td> <td>65+</td> </tr> </table>	12%	56%	32%	(680)	(3,345)	(1,900)	0-14	15-64	65+
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 Prevalence of low income	9.2%	6.2%	14%	9.1%																																				
 Language spoken most often at home (%)	98% English	98.3% English 0.9% French 0.3% Non-Official Languages	98.4% English 0.3% French 0.7% Non-Official Languages	98.4% English 0.6% French 0.5% Non-Official Languages																																				
 Educational attainment (%)	9% no certificate 29% high school 62% postsecondary	7% no certificate 27% high school 66% postsecondary	12% no certificate 31% high school 58% postsecondary	9% no certificate 32% high school 59% postsecondary																																				

# How does our community use the library?



# 2025

81,775 visits

7,920 computer logins

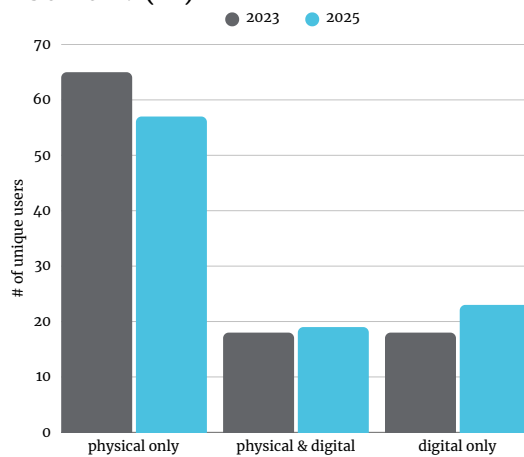
2,950 printing transactions

2,685 meeting room bookings

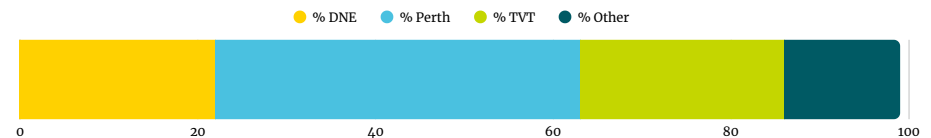
559 programs offered

5,493 program attendance

What kinds of materials do people borrow? (%)



## 6,644 Library Cardholders



141,868 books, eBooks, and more borrowed

# Community Needs Assessment

Key Findings from a Community Survey (April–July 2025) / 202 Respondents



## WHO RESPONDED

86.6% are year-round residents of the union library area

52% adults (18–64) | 46.5% seniors (65+)

32.7% visit weekly | 30.7% visit monthly

70.9% drive to the library | 26.1% walk

## WHAT PEOPLE LOVE MOST

Staff — friendly, helpful, knowledgeable

Physical collection — books & DVDs

Library as a welcoming public space

## TOP REQUESTS:

### What Would Make It Better?

More books — 39.7%

More/different programs — 29.7%

Greater variety of materials — 21.8%

More seating & quiet study spaces — 16.8%

Longer/more convenient hours (incl. Sundays) — 16.3%

## KEY FINDINGS: 4 PRIORITY THEMES



## COLLECTIONS

Library holds 37,415 print titles; below the provincial average of 41,892 for similar-sized libraries. Residents want more books.



## SPACE

At 9,500 sq ft, the library is below the ARUPLO guideline of 20,577 sq ft for its population. Residents want more places to sit, quiet zones, a larger children's area, and after-hours meeting room access.



## STAFF

At 6.81 FTE, Perth has the lowest staff spending (\$413,330) of 21 comparable Ontario libraries (average: \$684,772). More staff needed for programming.



## PROGRAMS

446 programs offered annually and well-loved, but demand is strong for more. Favourite Program Ideas: Authors & speakers (54%) | Movie nights (36%) | Games nights (34%) | Book clubs (32%)

## Notes on data:

Population, income and language data retrieved from the 2021 Census Profiles available from Statistics Canada:  
<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/index-eng.cfm>

There was a 6% overall population growth between 2016 and 2021, with more growth in the Town of Perth. This is expected to have continued over the last 5 years, and the population is expected to grow in the near future.

Prevalence of low income refers to the "Prevalence of low income based on the Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT) (%)". The Low-income measure, after tax (LIM-AT), refers to a fixed percentage (50%) of median adjusted after-tax income of private households. The household after-tax income is adjusted to take economies of scale into account. This adjustment for different household sizes reflects that a household's needs increase, but at a decreasing rate, as the number of members increases.

Educational attainment refers to the census measure "Highest certificate, diploma or degree for the population aged 15 years and over in private households". Educational attainment percentages for ages 25-64 years retrieved from LGL Health Unit / Statistics Canada: <https://healthunit.org/about/health-statistics-reports/demographic-dashboards/educational-attainment/>

Library use statistics retrieved from initial 2025 data. Full report part of 2025 Annual Report.

Circulation data combines physical (92,333), OverDrive eBook and eAudiobook (49,535) circulation. Does not include other digital checkouts.

Kinds of materials people borrow is an analysis of unique cardholders borrowing physical vs digital material from Jan-Dec 2025 compared against Jan-Oct 2023, by percent.