



STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2028

CARIBOU PUBLIC LIBRARY

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“Where Heritage Meets

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MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to welcome, promote, and encourage our community to grow through learning and be empowered through knowledge. We strive to provide the necessary resources to strengthen and support education and lifelong learning opportunities. We believe it is important to uphold the public's right to know by providing equal access to information which reflects all points of view. Lastly, we will work hard to provide a safe and welcoming atmosphere to individuals and families.



Letter from

The Director

We are pleased to present you with the Caribou Public Library's Strategic Plan for FY2024 through FY 2028. This plan is ambitious, exciting, and will act as a framework to guide the library through its next five years of progress. During this period, the library hopes to use the Strategic Plan to better meet the needs of all citizens of Caribou by offering specific areas of focus. This plan was created based on the current needs of Caribou, with plans to assess the ever-changing needs of the community we serve.

In assessing the needs of Caribou, we thought it prudent to address the issues of ageing within our fine city. A large portion of our current patronage and community is of an older demographic, which in turn expects a different degree of care from its community service representatives. For this reason, we have heavily considered the needs of older adults within our plan and have decided on several avenues to explore in the coming years that we feel will help to better meet the needs of our ageing population.

Alternatively, we also plan to encourage more involvement by the youth of our community. The library has always had exceptional programming for children but has seen difficulty in engaging with the young adult population. To reconcile this divide, we are determined to offer more dedicated programming and educational offerings that are garnered towards educational and social education of our youth.

This Strategic Plan is intended to be a living document; one that is flexible enough to change with the growing needs of the community, but with enough rigidity to purposefully direct the actions of the library in the coming years.

The library exists to serve the community. If you have any thoughts or ideas for the library, you can email me at librarydirector@cariboumaine.org.

Peter J. Baldwin Jr.

Library Director

PURPOSE

This strategic plan was developed by the Library Director and the Caribou Public Library Board of Trustees to guide the programs, goals, and direction of the Caribou Public Library over the next few years.

Vision

The Caribou Public Library

- Is a community driven library that develops programs for the betterment of the City of Caribou.
- Is a welcoming community environment that strives to meet the needs of the citizens of Caribou through the development of innovative and creative programs and services.
- Utilizes its staff to their greatest potential to ensure a workplace of energetic and dedicated employees.
- Uses community input to develop new programs and services that prove beneficial to the citizens of Caribou.
- Fosters a cooperative environment between the Library Director, Library Staff, and Library Board of Trustees to make service decisions to match patron needs.

Values

Collaboration

- We willingly work with outside organizations to bring together a variety of services that impact the education, learning, and care of our patrons. We recognize that the staff are vital to the library's function and are responsible for the library's success.

Efficiency

- We use all available resources to their fullest potential and inspire creativity in our programming. We use data from programming to create the best services for the community, while examining activities as the needs of the community change.

Community

- We embrace the wide cultures of the community we serve and seek every opportunity to expand our presence to those outside the library.

Equity

- We work towards an environment of inclusivity, seeking out an assortment of programs and materials that reflect the nature of our diverse community.

CODE OF ETHICS

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed, and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
2. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
3. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
4. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
5. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
6. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
8. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.
9. We affirm the inherent dignity and rights of every person. We work to recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice in our libraries, communities, profession, and associations through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces.

Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council; amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; January 22, 2008; and June 29, 2021.



LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.

II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.

III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.

IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.

V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.

VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

TWO YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

To better develop goals for the Caribou Public Library, the strategic plan has been divided into a two-year and a five-year plan. The goals completed in the two-year plan will be reflected and built upon in the five-year plan.

Directions	Goals
<p>Grow as a Community Organization</p> <p>The needs of the community are ever evolving, and the library must transform itself and its services to better align with current needs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop an annual survey to be given to the public to determine interests and be used as a needs assessment. ➤ Create a monthly newsletter to be emailed to patrons and be on display at several areas throughout the City of Caribou. ➤ Enhance staff resources by getting another full-time employee and encouraging program development.
<p>Encourage Community Involvement</p> <p>The library functions better when the community is directly involved with the library, its services, and its programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Prioritize recruitment to the Friends of the Library; growing the foundation into a full-fledged, community led organization. ➤ Increase library utilization throughout the community by offering a more diverse assortment of outreach programs across different organizations to reach all age demographics.
<p>Expand our Presence</p> <p>As a long-standing institution, the library should be a well-known aspect of the City of Caribou.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop a library bookmobile that can be used for outreach programming, taken to events for book sales, and used in other communities and events in the area. ➤ Increase library presence in local media outlets (e.g., WAGM, Aroostook Republican, Channel X Radio) to inform the public of the services of the library.
<p>Seek Alternative Funding</p> <p>Large projects often lie outside of the budget of the library, and special funding must be found for larger projects.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Consistently seek grant funding opportunities for library projects and programs. ➤ Work with the Friends of the Caribou Public Library for fundraising opportunities within local communities. ➤ Encourage donations to the libraries memorial fund to be used for vital library programming.
<p>Engaging Young Minds</p> <p>The library serves youth who engage with educational offerings such as STEAM, print, and technology materials.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Fully develop a Makerspace for guided creative exploration and independent study. ➤ Create educational programs centered on computer design, 3D printing, and other STEAM topics. ➤ Increase volunteer presence in the library utilizing local students.

TWO YEAR STRATEGIES

Grow as a Community Organization

The Caribou Public Library is funded by the City of Caribou, and continuously strives to develop innovative programming targeted towards the attitudes and expectations of the public. To better understand these needs, the library will create an annual survey to be handed out to the public, outside of the library, to gauge the library's perceived role in the community and to act as a needs assessment for program development.

These programs will be publicized through the distribution of a monthly newsletter to be available to the public, either in person or via email and on display in other areas of the city. As the staff is the library's most valuable resource, the Library Director and Trustees understand the vital role they play in the development and continuation of programming, and daily service to the public. As such, staff resources should be expanded to include another full-time employee and provide more opportunities for the continuing education and training of staff.

Encourage Community Involvement

The community the library serves is considered to be an ageing population with 25% of citizens being 65 years of age or older. The library intends to focus more of its energy on expanding outreach services to those who are unable to use their library due to difficulties that come with age, physical impairment, or ability. Additionally, the library seeks to partner with local nursing homes, hospitals, rehabilitation centers, and others to offer services that are needed and within the library's role and ability to offer.

The library is community driven and relies on the support of the public to accomplish its mission. The Friends of the Caribou Public Library is a foundational organization that gives the community a more direct connection with their library, as well as a way to support it. The Friends support the library through volunteer and outreach efforts, and through fundraising. Funds raised by this group are used to support library programming and projects. Membership of this organization helps to improve community impact and better connect with the public.

Expand our Presence

As discovered throughout COVID-19, the library needs a way to provide services and materials to the community regardless of the ability to enter the building. Mobile libraries are an integral part of public library service, and a cost-effective means of serving disadvantaged populations within the community. Likewise, a mobile library can be used in conjunction with other outreach programs at daycare centers, community events, and schools.

TWO YEAR STRATEGIES (CONT.)

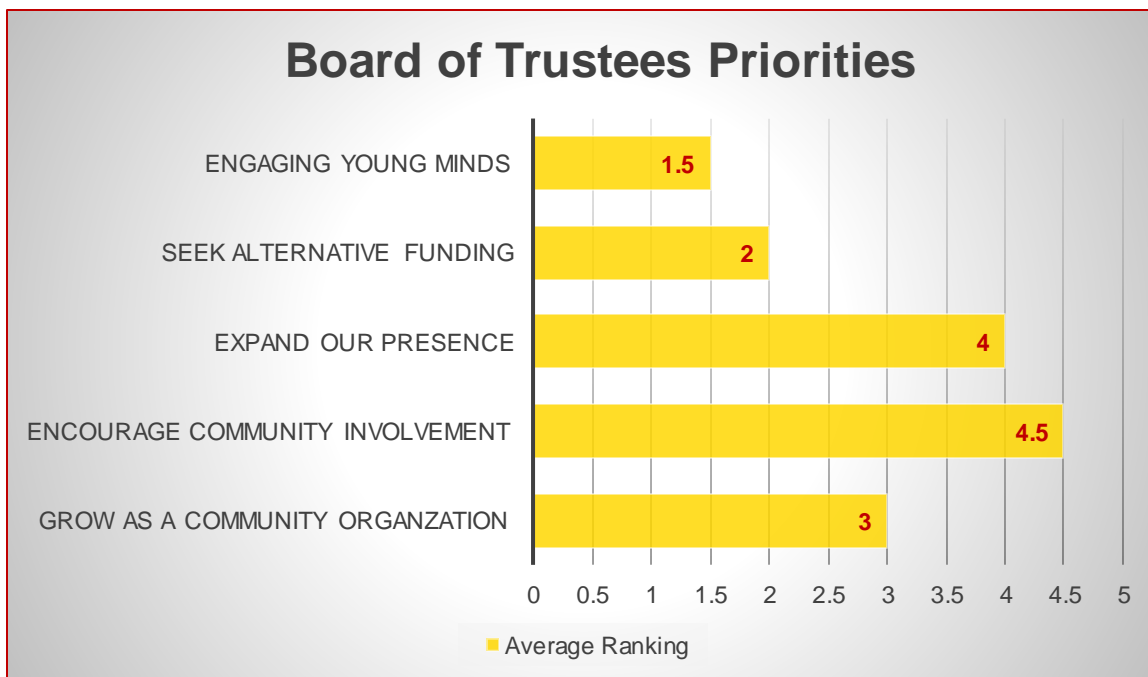
Seek Alternative Funding

Certain programs and larger projects require funding that exists outside of the city budget. Grant funding will be continuously sought to alleviate strain on the library's budget. The library will partner with the Friends of the Caribou Library to increase fundraising efforts for library program support.

Engaging Young Minds

The library recognizes that youth involvement in the library makes for a continuing userbase. The library should focus efforts on the continued development and completion of a Makerspace. Additionally, specialized programs shall be created to educate young adults on 3-D design, computer coding, and other STEAM topics.

The library is also reliant on the support of its volunteers to accomplish tasks throughout the building while educating young adults on library service as a career. Students should be offered volunteer service directly through communication with the local schools and homeschooling organizations. An additional program must be established as a partnership with the local schools and homeschooling groups to offer library cards to any student who requests them.



FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

To better develop goals for the Caribou Public Library, the strategic plan has been divided into a two-year and a five-year plan. The goals completed in the two-year plan will be reflected and built upon in the five-year plan.

Directions	Goals
<p>Merge the Library with Current Technology</p> <p>Access to current technology is vital for the library to meet its role in the community, and to offer up-to-date services that meet the needs of our users.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assess the status of all library computers and printers and replace what is necessary by FY28. ➤ Assess and/or replace the Integrated Library System (ATRIUUM) as the library needs grow. ➤ Obtain grant funding for a Book Vending Machine (BVM) to be placed in the community.
<p>Preserve and Grow</p> <p>The library building is one of historical import as a Carnegie building and must be maintained and preserved. However, a building expansion is needed to meet the growing needs of the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Building assessment must be done through the MMA and the Caribou Building Committee and repairs must take place as necessary to ensure a safe environment. ➤ Expand Library Building on the north side, creating a new children’s room, multipurpose room, second floor, and an additional ADA compliant entrance. ➤ Dismantle or relocate the gazebo on the north grounds to elsewhere on library property.
<p>Assess Program Development</p> <p>Programming is one of the library’s main roles within the community. Assessment of these allow the staff to develop programs that are useful to the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assess the Caribou Library bookmobile’s attendance at current city events, placement at schools, and adjust programming as needed with staffing. ➤ Assess use of the Makerspace and develop further outreach programs at schools in conjunction with professionals to engage young minds. ➤ Develop further ongoing partnerships with community groups, growing our current connections and expanding into other areas of the community.
<p>Advance Library Special Collections</p> <p>The library maintains an archive and museum that contain important historical records and provides services to other facilities and community members.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Encourage the expansion of the library’s archives to broaden the scope of local history materials and continue digital preservation efforts on an annual basis. ➤ Develop a connection with the Nylander Museum of Natural History to create a partnership that will expand educational program offerings. ➤ Further develop relations with the local genealogical and historical societies to establish a better network of archive materials and expertise available to the library.

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIES

Merge the Library with Current Technology

The Caribou Public Library offers computer access to the public free of charge while utilizing specialized software to ensure patron confidentiality. The library also offers printing and lamination services as revenue generators for the City of Caribou. The equipment will be assessed as necessary and replaced to ensure the library offers up-to-date services to the community. When library technology falls into disrepair, it limits access for the community.

The library uses an Integrated Library System (ATRIUUM) for all collections. The library system is to be reassessed to ensure that the software continues to meet the needs of the staff and the collection size and should be replaced as necessary, converting to another software that would prove more beneficial to the patrons of the library.

The library will apply for grant funding to institute a BVM to be placed within the community to reach patrons during hours when the library is closed. The Book Vending Machine allows patrons to receive newer books without the need for a library card.

Preserve and Grow

The library building is one of the original Carnegie library buildings constructed in 1910 and had an addition put on in the 1960s. The building's repair and maintenance needs are a priority for ensuring a safe environment for the patrons, employees, and the preservation of library materials. The Library Director will meet with the Caribou Building Committee to create a capital improvement plan that will ensure the continued maintenance of the library building.

As the needs of the community grow and change, the library will require further expansion to create a larger dedicated children's room and multipurpose room, while expanding our second floor and allowing ADA compliant access to all areas of the library. For this purpose, the gazebo located on the north grounds will be dismantled or relocated to eliminate vandalism and ensure dedicated space for library expansion.

Assess Program Development

Program assessment is a necessary library procedure for determining the usefulness of library activities, and whether they are considered a need within the community at present. Assessment of these programs allows the staff to alter current programs and services to meet the changing needs of the community. The Caribou Library bookmobile programs will be assessed to understand the use of the bookmobile service and begin expansion into further areas of our and other communities.

The library Makerspace will be reviewed for use statistics and considered for expansion into other programs, both on-site and at schools. Professionals will be sought for the creation of dedicated maker-based programs to teach skills like 3-D design, sewing, fiber arts, and other Makerspace topics. The partnerships with local schools and homeschooling groups will be utilized for the advancement of the makerspace, while also being examined for other outlets for increased partnership within the community.

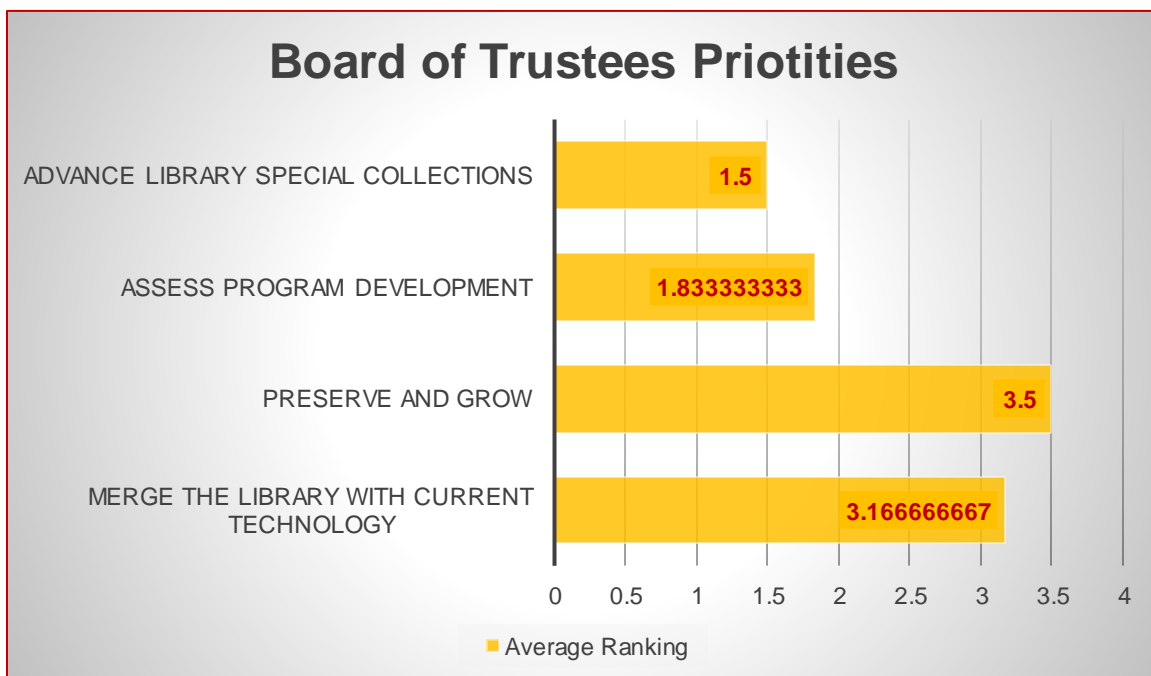
FIVE YEAR STRATEGIES (CONT.)

Advance Library Special Collections

There are two special collections associated with the library that are currently being maintained for use by community members and organizations. The library archives are considered a joint effort between the Caribou Public Library and the Aroostook County Genealogical Society. These archives serve to preserve local history and records necessary for research and genealogical purposes. The library will strive to work with archivists to ensure the preservation of records and materials. These records will continue to be digitized on an annual basis to better preserve print records and allow for ease-of access to researchers within and outside the community.

The Nylander Museum of Natural History is the second special collection of the library that contains natural history records and artifacts linked to Caribou history. A partnership with the museum will be created to offer more educational programs centered on STEAM topics and environmental studies.

This and other societal partnerships of the library will be built upon to ensure a collaborative network of materials, professionals, and programming available for research to be offered as a service to the community.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Caribou Public Library Strategic Plan was created as a joint effort with input from the Library Director, Library Staff, and Library Board of Trustees. Each of the following individuals were instrumental in this plan's creation and the implementation of this plan going forward.

2023 Library Board of Trustees:

Gail Hagelstein, President	Kristine Bondeson
Kathryn Olmstead, Vice President	Wanda Theriault
Heather Hale, Secretary	Brianna Carlson
Louella Willey, City Council Representative	Lisa Wilcox

2023 Library Staff:

Peter Baldwin, Library Director	Cassie Germain
Catharine Catranis	Wes Herbert
Alice Doody, Library Volunteer	Alyssa Singer
Kim Ezzy	Kirsten Young

Approved by the Caribou Public Library Board of Trustees on October 3, 2023.

