

I ♥ My Library



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



RED DEER  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

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# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

There would be little point in having a public library in Red Deer if the community didn't use it. In 2024, we recorded nearly 600,000 visits across our library thresholds and over a million visits to our websites. Patrons picked up materials, used computers, attended programs, volunteered, and sometimes simply spent time in a safe, welcoming space.

The positive response to our first year at Collicutt has helped secure the future of that library location. Whether it was pushing in chairs, picking up litter, or moving books from floor to table, our community took ownership of the library and made it thrive. While the space is small, it came alive with storytimes and has become a busy holds pickup location.

Although quick in-and-out visits for materials are a big part of our work, we also take great joy in celebrating milestones with the patrons who spend time in the library on a daily basis. Whether they are recovering from an illness, discovering a new favourite author, finding a new home, or landing a better job, it is a privilege to cheer them on.

On the flip side, we also bear witness to personal struggles and tragedies—seeing patrons face health challenges, family difficulties, and economic hardships. We do our best to offer support, find resources, and help those in crisis. I am deeply grateful to our library staff for offering compassion, encouragement, and support to our community and to one another. I also want to thank our Library Board for their deep insight and care for our community, our library, and our staff members.

Some of the remarkable achievements we've celebrated with our patrons this year include:

- Many adorable children graduating from the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program.
- Around 300 incredible volunteers helping adult and youth literacy students.
- Patrons finding temporary housing at the Mustard Seed and others transitioning to stable housing.
- Watching some of our cherished patrons regain mobility with new knees or hips, and seeing others recover from various injuries and illnesses.
- Celebrating sobriety milestones and the pursuit of education and training.
- Helping patrons master new technologies, including phones, tablets, laptops, and learning platforms.

Our library is more than just a place for books—it is a space where lives are enriched, challenges are met with support, and successes are shared, and we are honoured to be part of this vibrant and resilient community.



**Shelley Ross**  
RDPL CEO

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Shelley".

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

From innovative and creative programs to dedicated service, 2024 has been a remarkable year for the Red Deer Public Library. As we continue to evolve to meet the diverse needs of our community, we proudly celebrated three major milestones: 10 years of service at the Timberlands Branch, 30 years of service at the Dawe Branch and 110 years at the Downtown Branch.

At the heart of everything we do is our incredible staff. Their creativity, dedication, and expertise make the library more than just a place to borrow books—it's a space for learning, inspiration, and connection. Whether leading programs, recommending the perfect read, or guiding patrons to a necessary support agency, their passion shines in every interaction.

Among our greatest successes are our literacy programs that empower patrons of all ages. With record-breaking participation, adults have gained the confidence to read their first book in a language different from the one they grew up speaking, teens have found the courage to apply for their first jobs, and kids have discovered new ways to engage with the world around them. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, these programs prove it is never too late to learn.

Our new strategic plan reflects the RDPL's commitment to the future. This carefully researched document continues to prioritize the enrichment of lives through the promotion of literacy and providing access to knowledge and culture. Support from the Friends of the Red Deer Public Library, The City of Red Deer and the Government of Alberta allows the RDPL to remain a welcoming, inclusive, and safe space for ALL. I am forever grateful for the RDPL Board; Trustees whose leadership, vision, and love of community have kept the Library thriving. Their commitment to advocacy, strategic planning, and public involvement ensures continued growth and adaptation to meet the changing needs of Red Deer.

With a clear plan, a talented team, and an engaged community, the Red Deer Public Library is poised for an exciting future. We thank you for your continued support—can't wait to see what's next!



**Shelley Odishaw**  
RDPL Board Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S Odishaw".



# 2024 BOARD MEMBERS

- Shelley Odishaw, Chair
- Councillor Victor Doerksen (Jan.-April)  
Councillor Chad Krahn (May-Sept.)  
Councillor Dianne Wyntjes (Oct.-Dec.)
- Gabriel Beck
- Valdene Callin
- Natalie Day Lazenby
- Maureen McCall
- Jerry Moore
- Brian Quigg
- Sabrina Samuel
- Laura Thevenaz



## VISION

Provide a welcoming environment where everyone will discover, share, develop, and value curiosity.

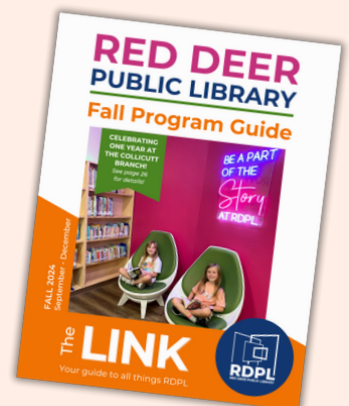
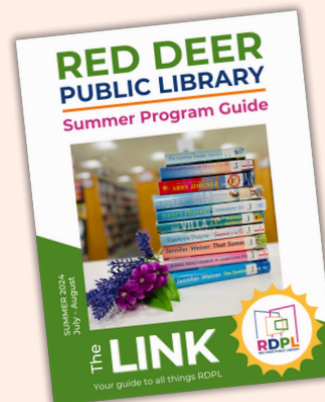
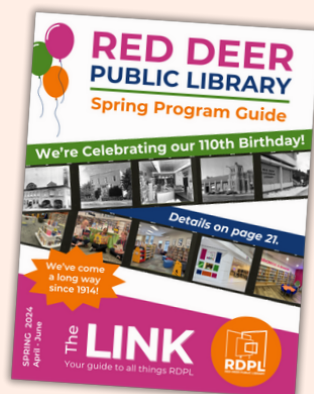
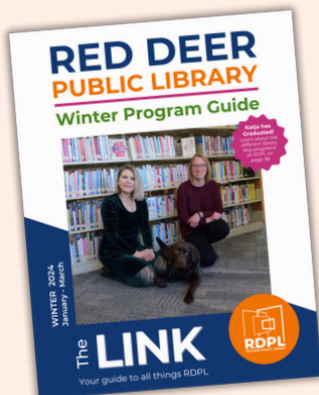
## MISSION

Enrich lives by promoting literacy and providing access to knowledge and culture.

## VALUES

Our core values are:

- Intellectual Freedom
- Connection
- Literacy
- Inclusion





# 2024 | BY THE NUMBERS



In 2024, we had  
**593,283**  
library visitors

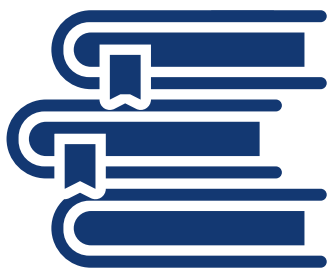
&



**1,040,311**  
website visits

**28,480**

people have a Red Deer  
Public Library card!



**766,284**  
items were checked out!

\*e-content loans = 24% of our total circulation!

including  
**186,138**  
downloads of  
e-Content

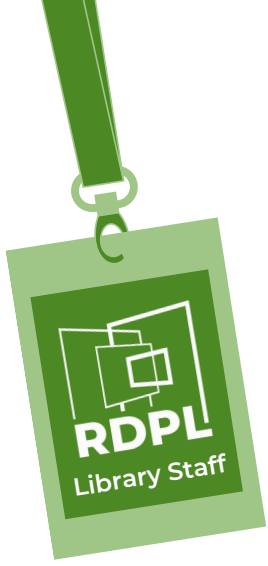


We offered  
**1,805**  
library programs

which were enjoyed by

**29,194**  
people in total!





Our service is delivered by

**72 & 320**

dedicated staff

amazing volunteers!



We answered:

**1,486 & 9,745**

reference questions

technology questions



Our Wi-Fi had **106,737** connections!

The library added

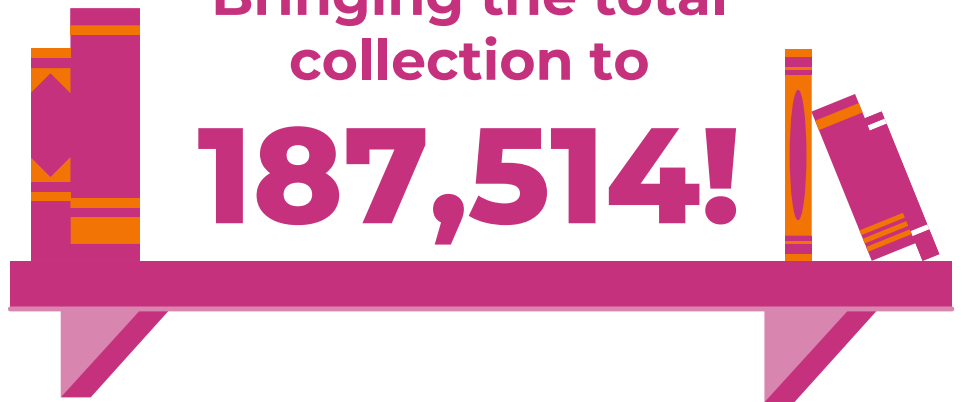
**15,984**

new items last year



Bringing the total collection to

**187,514!**



We brought in **4,956 items** from other libraries!



And lent our items to other libraries **4,512 times**

# 2024 TOP TITLES

These were our most borrowed titles in 2024!

## – Adult Fiction –



## – Adult Non-fiction –





– Young Adult Books –



– Children's Books –



164

children signed up for the  
**1000 Books Before Kindergarten**  
 program in 2024!

Learn more at [rdpl.org/1000-books/](http://rdpl.org/1000-books/)





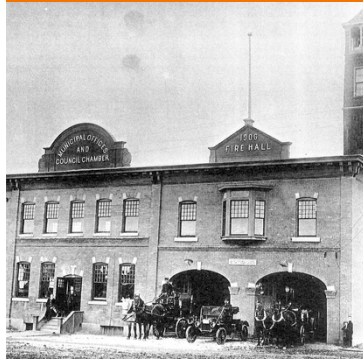
# 2024: A YEAR OF MANY MILESTONES!

## DOWNTOWN BRANCH

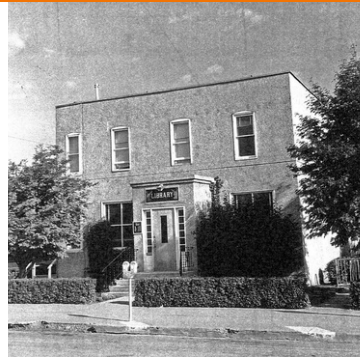
### Celebrating 110 Years!



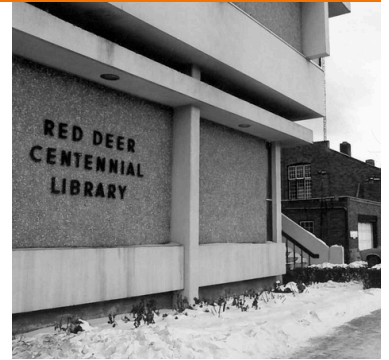
*RDPL's first librarian, Ina Green.*



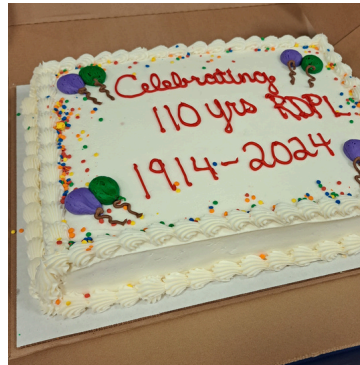
*RDPL's first home, Board of Trade Building, 1914.*



*RDPL in 1953. Future home of Parson's Clinic.*



*RDPL's Centennial Library, built in 1967*



Staff, volunteers, and library customers came out to celebrate RDPL's 110th year as a valued part of our community!



# DAWE BRANCH

## Celebrating 30 Years!



*Long-time Dawe Branch Librarian, Jill Griffith.*



*Cutting edge! The Dawe Branch was home to the innovative Computer Lending program, established in 1999.*



*The first renovation of the Dawe Branch in 2000 marked the end of the iconic orange flooring.*



**Former Dawe Branch staff came together to reminisce over coffee and tea before the Community Playdate celebration!**





# TIMBERLANDS BRANCH

## Celebrating 10 Years!



*RDPL Board Members and Timberlands Branch Manager, Candice Putnam, featured in the Red Deer Advocate in 2014.*



*Ribbon cutting ceremony with Barrie Wilson School during our Grand Opening celebrations in 2014.*



*Celebrating the Timberlands Branch's first birthday in 2015.*



The Timberlands Branch's 10th birthday celebrations included family activities, balloon animals, a photo booth, and, of course, more cake!



# COLLICUTT BRANCH

## Celebrating 1 Year!

Since opening on August 30, 2023, the Collicutt Branch has been a hub of activity and engagement. The feedback we've received about our self-serve "mini branch" has been overwhelmingly positive, and the branch has quickly become a favourite spot for library users to pick up holds, return items, bring children to storytime, and spend time in between other activities in the Centre. Here are some comments we received during our first year:

*"This is a great expansion of library services and good use of Red Deer tax payer funds."*

*"I definitely use my library card so much more because of this new location!"*

*"An incredible addition to the South end of the city! Love it!"*

*"PLEASE keep this location! My kids are reading more!"*

*"We love this location and hope it will continue to be there!"*

*"It is a nice addition to have especially when you have a child in an independent activity and you need to keep another child busy."*

*"I am a senior and this is handy walking distance to pick up and return books."*

*"It is so amazing with young kids. We go there frequently all throughout the year and it makes it so easy to pick up and return books."*

*"I couldn't imagine anything else in that space. It's so convenient. Thank you for putting this front and centre for the health of the community! My wallet and schedule thank you."*

*"It is so convenient for me. I'm at the facility several times a week and having the library branch is so convenient. I also love that there are always people (particularly children and families hanging out!)"*



**Thank you for making our first year a success.  
Your support and enthusiasm have been invaluable!**

# MORE 2024 HIGHLIGHTS

## Standout Stories from the Past Year

Each month, we share a Monthly Highlights report on the Red Deer Public Library blog. For the 2024 Annual Report, we've chosen one standout story from each month to share with you. To explore the full highlights, visit [rdpl.org/blogs/](https://rdpl.org/blogs/)!

### January 2024

Reel Stories, our drop-in film screening program at the Downtown Branch, saw an audience uptick as people sought shelter from the extreme cold in January. One customer said that he came to the library on the coldest night of the year seeking shelter, but never did he imagine that a great movie would be playing for him to watch to pass the time. We are grateful to be able to provide a safe and comfortable space for everyone in our community.



### February 2024

We were thrilled to partner with the African Caribbean Centre of Central Alberta to offer storytimes for all ages to celebrate and honour Black History Month. Families enjoyed snacks, crafts and stories read by special guest readers each Saturday in February. Many of the readers and participants really connected with the books and appreciated these opportunities for conversations and learning.

### March 2024

In response to customer feedback, the Dawe Branch now has its own collection of Adult Large Print books! The collection currently includes a variety of genres and, in the future, will be developed based on collection usage.

### April 2024

During the Friends of RDPL's Spring Book Sale, we presented Lesley Caddy, Friends' President, with a Lifetime Membership in The Society of the Friends of the Red Deer Public Library for her outstanding performance and many, MANY years of volunteer service. The Spring Book Sale was Lesley's 45th Book Sale and 2024 was her 24th year with the Friends!







## May 2024

Sifa Kalonji, an Adult Literacy learner, was selected to share her story at the Literacy and Learning Symposium in Edmonton. Sifa represented the Adult Literacy Program in front of 350 participants from all over Alberta. She shared her journey and the impact the Program and her individual tutor have had on building a better life for her family.

## June 2024

Alongside many other community organizations, RDPL participated in the ParticipACTION Community Challenge, offering 14 programs focused on promoting active living and health literacy. These programs collectively engaged 761 participants. While Red Deer did not earn the top prize of Canada's Most Active Community, we WERE crowned the most Active Community in all of Alberta for the third year in a row!



## July 2024

We launched a new initiative this summer: Book Bundles for Adults. We invited RDPL cardholders to sign up for a bundle of four library books, hand-picked by library staff in the genre of their choice, plus other surprise bookish goodies to keep. This was so popular that we "sold out" within an hour. The Adult Book Bundles have since become a quarterly feature that our customers really look forward to!

## August 2024

This year's Kids' Summer Reading Club was a HIT! We discovered significant advantages in redesigning the Summer Reading challenge sheets into a more linear, goal-oriented format. By offering multiple milestone rewards throughout the summer, participants remained engaged, focusing on incremental progress rather than working toward a single goal over the entire summer. Allowing participants to set their own daily reading goal also made the experience more manageable, reducing the pressure of starting late or missing a few days.





## September 2024

For Alberta Culture Days' *Month of the Artist*, RDPL presented four signature events: a Local Author Fair, Lindy Hop Story Dance Workshop, Writing Workshop with Leslie Greentree, and the Mad Hatter Afternoon Tea Party. These programs were designed to showcase the literary and artistic talents in Alberta, offering the community an opportunity to engage directly with creators. Sixteen Alberta artists had an opportunity to showcase their talents in September by facilitating these programs in partnership with the library. These programs were made possible thanks to the Government of Alberta's Alberta Culture Days Host Celebration Site grant.

## October 2024

Our Adult Literacy Program Manager, Alla Mysko-Henke, was one of the 2024 recipients of the Government of Alberta's Immigrant Impact Awards in the Career and Academics Contribution field. She was honoured with the award on October 3, 2024. Nominated by two of our dedicated volunteers, Alla was recognized for her outstanding work with the Adult Literacy Program, a vital service within the library and our community.

## November 2024

Representatives from the Métis Nation of Alberta set up displays and played traditional music at the Downtown, Dawe, and Timberlands Branches in recognition of Métis Week. Rhonda Eidem and Elder Lloyd also enthusiastically shared their knowledge of Métis culture and history with students at the Timberlands Branch and gifted RDPL with a copy of *Our Voices, Our Wisdom: Metis Stories of Strength and Courage*.



## December 2024

In December, we kicked off our Winter Festivals Around the World program series, celebrating diverse cultural traditions and bringing our community together through stories, music, and activities. We offered three engaging programs: Indigenous Winter Solstice Storytime, where participants learned about the significance of the solstice through Indigenous stories and traditions; A Kwanzaa Celebration that highlighted the seven principles of Kwanzaa with crafts and music; and a lively New Year Party to ring in the coming year with a special guest from the North Pole (Grandfather Frost), games, dancing, and fun for all ages.



# LIBRARY LOVE!



We love hearing from our community members about how the library has positively impacted their lives. Here are some of the heartfelt messages we received in 2024:

*"As a newcomer in Canada, the RDPL has been giving us opportunities to join different kids programs esp. moving to a new country with my toddler. Because of your programs, my little one have learned to embrace love for learning, reading and just being in the library. She's had fun doing the summer reading program, always looking forward to the day she would pick up a prize. Thank you for being an avenue for small readers like her and for supporting and nurturing her love for learning."*

*"I appreciate that the library has rotating bookshelves, lists, and tools that promote inclusivity and diversity. It introduces me to new acknowledgment days and experiences. Having your values present when you walk through the front door is important to me."*

*"I love RDPL. The downtown branch continues to be one of my emotional refuges in the city. And of course I love all the books!!! The staff are also lovely."*

*"I was diagnosed with severe anxiety with panic attacks and severe depression at the end of 2019. I lost all of my hobbies because I simply didn't have the energy to continue them. Then – in the spring of 2024 – I decided that I really wanted to go to the library. It took a season to finally be able to build up the courage to go. July 2024, I finally made it to the library. I was panicking of course, but once I entered the doors and saw the peacefulness of the space around me, I was able to pick out books and get lost in other worlds, something I haven't been able to do in a long, long time. Even when I have had to speak with the librarians, they're sweet, kind, and helpful which eased my anxiousness to ask for help (at least at the library). The library has become my weekly trip out of the house and I am so thankful to the library because of them I am able to read again and get lost in other worlds. I love the library!"*

*"The library has always had a special place in my life. Growing up, my parents would regularly take us to the library and I loved browsing books, discovering new genres, reading a few chapters or doing research for papers I was writing. Every summer that we did swimming lessons, my parents would take us to the library afterwards for a few hours to sit and read or look at books. Now I am able to take my own kids to our local library and share these same memories with them. The library has become a place to learn, have fun, meet new people and to connect as a family."*

*"The library staff are always pleasant and helpful when I am looking for the next good read. I joined the virtual book club and really like it. Also, I have participated in many of the RDPL evening sessions such as gardening skills or how to grow sprouts and I have enjoyed all of them. Thank you RDPL for enriching my life with reading and learning. This year i set a goal to read 100 books and I am close to achieving it!"*

*"I love when you walk into any of the library branches in Red Deer you feel welcomed, it is such a warming atmosphere. The staff is always there to help or even just to chat and sitting in a chair with a good book you feel at home and relaxed. The library is one of my favorite places to be even just to sit and watch the world around you go by, at times when you need to decompress and just get out of your own head."*





*"Thank you so much for the incredible work you do every day. It's amazing how quickly and easily I'm able to access local and interlibrary resources, and it's so very appreciated!"*

*"Red Deer Public Library has enriched the lives of my family and I in more ways than we can count! The library has been instrumental in the support of a love of reading in my home. When I say I'm going to the library, they all run to come with me! Thank you for the joy you've contributed to my household!"*

*"Please keep doing what you do. Keep being inclusive and fighting for the right to learn and educate. I would hate if the library ever removed a book because of a book ban or influence from a third party group or member. Having books for all people is important."*

*"I am deeply grateful for the incredible service that our libraries provide. The fact that anyone, regardless of background or circumstance, can walk through those doors and have access to a world of learning, curiosity, and growth is nothing short of extraordinary. Libraries are sanctuaries of knowledge, creativity, and connection—treasures we are so fortunate to have."*

*"After attending an exercise class one morning at the Collicutt Centre I wandered into the library branch inside the Collicutt Centre. A staff member helped me sign up and my life was instantly enriched. Moving from Australia, I felt a bit isolated. I've since borrowed books on a weekly basis. Borrowing gardening, music and novels. I feel connected in so many ways. Thank you!"*

*"I love how accessible the resources are for everyone. Keep up the great work."*

*"One of the things I love the most about the RDPL is how enthusiastic they are about books and community and building connections. I think it's so inspiring how they embrace books - often seen as a solitary endeavour - as a means to facilitate connections and shared experiences. I love checking out the activity guides that the library puts out and seeing all the new and recurring activities being offered. I haven't tried them all (yet!) but each event or program I've taken part in has been so welcoming and valuable."*

*"When I was struggling in life, homeless and without a purpose in life the library was my safe space. I was able to come here and feel at ease. I was able to use wifi, computers, and it helped me to access the supports and resources I needed to get out of the situation I was in. Thank you RDPL!"*

*"Growing up the library was the best. I would spend most of the summer reading as part of the summer reading program. It was the best part learning what the new theme was for the summer and checking out books that I think I would enjoy that would also fit some of the prompts. I still as an adult can't wait for the summer reading program to be released each year."*

*"I've always been to RDPL since I was a young kid, but recently I wanted to learn a new sewing technique for a cosplay I've been working on. I borrowed books on sashiko embroidery and it really helped I was able to put a hold on the books I wanted, pick them up and start sewing!"*

*"The selection of at the Red Deer Public Library is incredible. It has expanded my world so many times, challenging my preconceived notions, providing guidance when needed, and also of course entertaining me (here's to those DVDs and puzzles!). Shout-out to the staff who facilitate this excellent selection and curate interesting topical highlighted resources, too."*

*"I love our Red Deer public library. We are living in a day where our libraries are more essential than ever. With rising costs and rising stress I can always count on the library."*

*"After being a member for a good number of years it is still my number one place to go. Thank you to the Red Deer Public Library for allowing me to share my time with you."*

# 2024 Plan of Service

## ANNUAL ACTION PLAN

### PLAN OF SERVICE: GOALS & OUTCOMES

The Red Deer Public Library Board's 2023-2027 Plan of Service outlines the goals and strategic priorities that will guide RDPL through this service period. Annual Action Plans are defined by RDPL's Management Team each year to follow these strategic priorities.

Read on to find out what our 2024 Annual Action Plans entailed, and how we evaluated and measured the success of these plans.

### GOAL 1: A PLACE FOR ALL

Red Deer Public Library provides a welcoming, inclusive, and safe space where we champion diverse perspectives.

#### Strategic Priorities:

- Use library space creatively and effectively, while planning for future library needs.
- Provide accessible, current, and relevant information on our website and social media.
- Collaborate with community partners to develop and deliver programming reflecting diverse perspectives.

**Measurable Goal:** Engage in strategic discussions with the City of Red Deer and Red Deer Polytechnic to identify impactful service delivery opportunities for RDPL. By the close of 2024, we aim to conduct two comprehensive exploration meetings with RDP and initiate three new library programs at the Collicutt location.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** One program has been delivered in partnership with the Red Deer Polytechnic in their Makerspace, with ongoing discussions for future partnering opportunities. The Collicutt Branch hosted the following programs in 2024: Stories & More for Littles, Baby Fun Storytime, Collicutt Walk & Talk, Fancy Women Bike Ride, and the Summer Reading Club weekly Family Fun program.

Library representatives also engaged with the City of Red Deer in a variety of ways, from individual meetings (Safe and Healthy Communities, accounting, security, recreation, grants) to larger community events (e.g. Action for Prosperity), so that we are better able to work towards mutual goals in harmony.



**Measurable Goal:** Achieve a satisfaction rate of 85% among surveyed library users who affirm that Red Deer Public Library is a welcoming, inclusive, and safe place. Users will be provided with the opportunity to provide feedback specifically on the utilization of library space across all branches.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\***

- 92% of library users reported that they feel welcome/very welcome at the library.
- 82% of library users reported that they feel safe/very safe at the library.
- 88% of library users reported that they feel the library is inclusive/very inclusive.



**Measurable Goal:** In 2024, RDPL will conduct an audit of interior signage focusing on brand consistency and the integration of universal design principles.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\***

The Accessibility Team conducted a signage audit at the Downtown Branch in September. A detailed list of recommended updates has been compiled, with implementation scheduled for late 2024 and early 2025. Once updates at the Downtown Branch are complete, the team will proceed with similar audits and updates at the remaining three library locations.

**Measurable Goal:** By the end of 2024, all staff will be aware of at least five approaches to improving accessibility when communicating internally and/or externally.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\***

In July, monthly staff newsletters started to feature a dedicated section with information and resources to support staff in learning about and adopting more accessible and inclusive communication practices. Topics covered include the importance of accessibility, creating accessible print documents and audiovisual content, and enhancing accessibility in email communications and social media. These resources have also been added to the new staff training portal, allowing staff to access them anytime for ongoing reference.



**Measurable Goal:** Social Media platforms will have a marked increase of users by 10%.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** As of January 6, 2025, we have seen the following increases on our social media platforms (compared to January 5, 2024):

- Facebook - Increase in followers from 5900 to 6294 (7% increase)
- Instagram - Increase in followers from 2483 to 2726 (10% increase)
- TikTok - Increase in followers from 735 to 1000 (36% increase)
- Total increase (all three platforms) - 9118 to 10020 (10% increase)

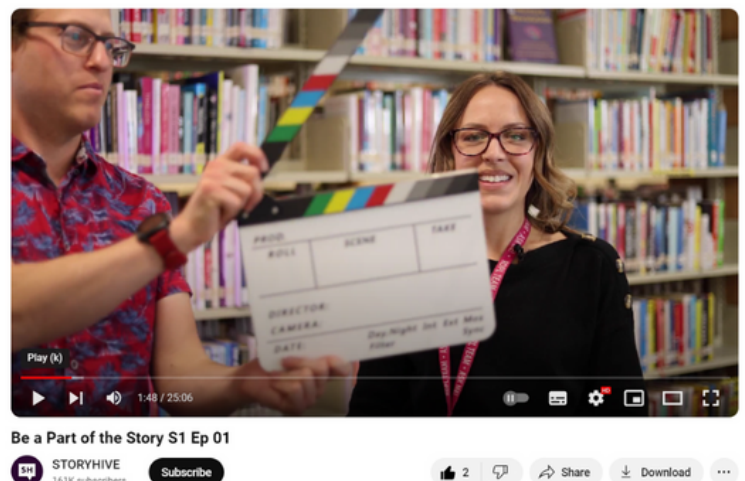
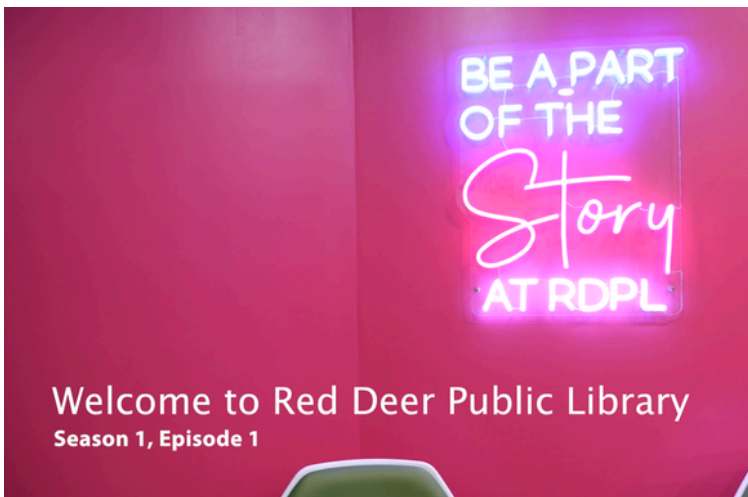
**Measurable Goal:** RDPL aims to share 180 Welcome Baby packages with the community by the end of 2024. This will be achieved by collaborating with current community partners and at least one new community partnership within the year

**Outcome: \*In progress.\*** As of December, 155 Welcome Baby bags have been distributed in the community through our current partners. Since June, we have welcomed Red Deer Native Friendship Society as a new Welcome Baby partner. We are thrilled with the addition of our fourth community partner as we continue to reach families of very young children who may not otherwise be aware of the library or have access to books.

Thanks to collaborative work with RDNFS staff, the packages going to their clients contain the book “Little You” by Richard Van Camp, a well known Indigenous author, and English-Cree song/rhyme sheets. Due to staffing and programming changes with our partner organizations, we did not reach our goal to disperse 180 packages in 2024 but will continue to seek additional outreach opportunities in 2025.

**Measurable Goal:** In 2024, RDPL will film a 6-episode series on Telus Optik TV / Video On Demand / YouTube that will demonstrate how public libraries uplift their communities and champion diversity, acceptance, and equity, and how we strive to meet the needs of our ever-changing, ever-growing city. This series will feature library staff, community partners and customers, and will air in the fall of 2024.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** As of April 18, all six episodes of “Be a Part of the Story” (RDPL’s TELUS STORYHIVE series) were submitted to TELUS. The series became available for viewing in September, and can be found at [rdpl.org/storyhive](http://rdpl.org/storyhive).



**Measurable Goal:** In 2024 we will host at least 6 large-scale community library programs for all ages that will promote the library's services and collections to the Red Deer community.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** We exceeded this goal by offering a huge variety of large-scale programs throughout the year, including:

- January - Family Literacy Day: Let's Party (50 participants)
- February - Pokémon Day (140 participants)
- March - Tolkien Reading Day (32 participants)
- May - Galactic Celebration Extravaganza (a fusion of May the Fourth and Free Comic Book day) (60 participants), Grow Boys sessions (Lego Fun and Human Library) (200 participants)
- June - Summer Reading Club Kick-Off party (400 participants), Fancy Women Bike Ride (35 participants), ParticipACTION Community Better event (90 participants)
- August - Summer Reading Club Wrap-Up party (52 participants), Fancy Women Bike Ride (24 participants)
- September - Alberta Culture Days programs (Lindy Hop Story Dance Workshop, Fancy Women Bike Ride, Local Author Fair, Writing Workshop with Leslie Greentree, Mad Hatter Afternoon Tea Party) (138 participants)
- October - Timberlands Branch 10th Birthday Party (120 participants), Star Wars Reads Day (45 participants)
- November - Dawe Branch 30th Birthday Party (75 attendees), Hindu Heritage Month Celebrations (150 participants)
- December - Winter Holidays Around The World program series (Indigenous Winter Solstice Storytime, Kwanzaa Celebration, New Year's Party) (149 attendees).

**Measurable Goal:** By the end of 2024, Team Katja is committed to presenting a minimum of eight (8) educational outreach presentations or programs on service dog etiquette to various organizations in the Red Deer community.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\***

- January - St. Joseph High School
- April - Aspen Heights School (Family Literacy Carnival)
- May - Maryview School (storytimes for 3 pre-K classes)
- May - Father Henri Voisin School (Touch-a-Truck Career Day event)
- July - Montessori Classics
- August - Between Friends Camp
- September - St. Patrick's School (7 class visits)
- November - Father Henri Voisin School (3 class visits)





## GOAL 2: DISCOVER YOUR WORLD

Red Deer Public Library fosters curiosity and lifelong learning and is committed to improving literacy in Red Deer.

### Strategic Priorities:

- Deliver learning-focused programming for all ages that is responsive to community needs.
- Build a strong team that encourages open communication, cooperation, innovation, and creativity.
- Develop opportunities to champion literacy and learning.

**Measurable Goal:** RDPL will increase the number of library tours & outreach visits by 10% in comparison to 2023.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\*** We surpassed our goal with 90 library tours and outreach visits in 2024, including partnerships with ten new organizations. This marks a 38% increase from the 65 tours and visits conducted in 2023.

**Measurable Goal:** RDPL will offer at least one program per month for each age group that is focused on multiple literacies: health, financial, emotional, S.T.E.A.M. (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics).

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** We have been offering a wide variety of programs on multiple literacies throughout the year, including:

- Mindfulness programs for kids and adults
- Red Hot Science programs with RDP
- Chess Club
- CNIB at the Library: Tech Help
- One-on-One Tech Help Sessions
- Alberta Securities Commission - Cryptocurrency
- Beginner Adult Yoga
- First Thursday in the Snell
- Queer Art Club
- Sip 'n Stitch
- Crochet Club
- LEGO: Ready, Set, Build
- Teen Café
- Writing Workshops/Groups
- Local Author Fair
- Cultural programming (Hindu Heritage month, Winter Festivals Around the World)



**Measurable Goal:** Red Deer Public Library is committed to creating positive employment experiences for staff, building productive and engaged employees whose work will make our community a better place. This will be measured by an annual staff satisfaction survey each fall. In 2024, 80% of staff surveyed will report that Red Deer Public Library is a great place to work.

**Outcome:** **\*In progress.\*** Results from our recent staff survey revealed that 75% of staff feel that the library is a great place to work, just shy of our goal of 80%. However, there are several encouraging highlights that came out of our staff survey:

- 84% of staff report that most working days are a positive experience.
- 81% feel their work contributes to making our city a better place.
- 88% report that they feel engaged in their role at the library.
- 84% report that they are happy at work.

These results reflect a strong foundation to build upon as we strive to enhance staff satisfaction even further.



**Measurable Goal:** All staff members will have completed the GoC Introduction to Gender-based Analysis + course by the end of 2024.

**Outcome:** **\*Achieved\*** 100% of staff have completed this course.

**Measurable Goal:** The Adult Literacy Program will continue to offer tutor and learner centered programming relevant to the participants' needs and goals as measured by the Adult Literacy annual report.

**Outcome:** **\*Achieved\*** Based on feedback from class participants, learners and tutors, this goal has been successfully achieved through a variety of relevant programming.



**Measurable Goal:** The Youth Literacy Program will continue to offer tutor and learner centered programming relevant to the participants' needs.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\*** The 2023-2024 Youth Literacy Program Final Report was presented to the CEO and the Library Board in September 2024.

**Measurable Goal:** By the end of 2024, RDPL will offer an early literacy program in a second language

**Outcome: \*Achieved\*** A weekly Spanish language Early Literacy program was hosted at the Downtown Branch. The Dawe Branch hosted 'Katrusia' and more recently 'Soveniatko: Ukrainian Storytime,' both designed for preschool children with a focus on fostering and developing the Ukrainian language and culture.



**Measurable Goal:** The Library will continue to connect and support Red Deer schools in a variety of formats. This could include presenting a minimum of 12 information packets to schools (including information about library cards, school tours/outreach visits, collections, etc.) at all Red Deer elementary, junior, and high schools.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\*** This goal was successfully achieved. Library staff connected with 14 local schools ranging from elementary to high school.



## GOAL 3: ENGAGED AND CONNECTED

Red Deer Public Library strives to recognize, value, and empower all members of our community by celebrating all identities and incorporating principles of diversity, access, and inclusion in all aspects of our operation.

### Strategic Priorities:

- Strengthen relationships and develop meaningful partnerships with local agencies, multicultural communities, schools and volunteers.
- Commit to listening to, learning from, and building relationships with local Indigenous communities in recognition of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.

**Measurable Goal:** Feature the library's memorial collections and long-term donors in a meaningful way on the library's blog.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\*** An interview with long-term donor Doreen Le Clair, who established the Marion Evelyn Bayne Memorial Book Collection in memory of her mother, was featured in a November RDPL blog post.

**Measurable Goal:** The Adult Literacy Program will continue to match learners from various backgrounds with volunteer tutors. The program will support the number of volunteer tutors as estimated in the Community Adult Learning Program (CALP) grant application.

**Outcome: \*Achieved\*** As a result of advertisements, promotions, and the Program's presence in the community, 91 new volunteers joined the program during the 2023/24 grant term. Many community members stepped in to help with the influx of learners from Ukraine. In order to reduce the wait list, some tutors started working with small groups, and a few volunteers took on multiple learners. The Adult Literacy Program supported 269 volunteer tutors over the 2023-2024 grant term (16% increase from the previous year).



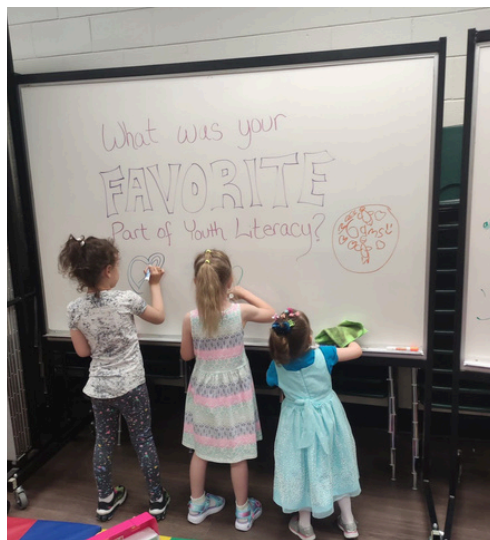
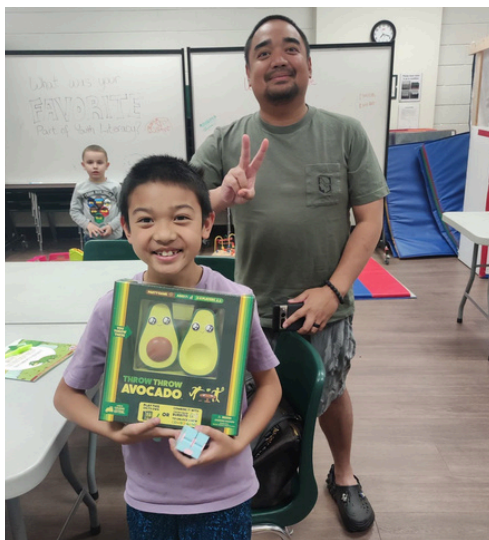


**Measurable Goal:** The Youth Literacy Program will:

- a) Continue to match learners from various backgrounds with volunteer tutors in the 2024-2025 academic year.
- b) Offer at least two training sessions to volunteers in 2024.
- c) Build on the current relationships with the Red Deer Polytechnic and Red Deer high schools to recruit volunteers.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\***

- a) The Youth Literacy Program conducted program resources inventory and updates in preparation for the 2024-2025 school year in July and August.
- b) The Youth Literacy program hosted two training sessions to volunteers in April, nineteen small group volunteer handbook training sessions from September to November, and volunteer training for tutors matched with English language learners.
- c) As of November, 21 tutors were pursuing studies or taking courses:
  - College/University students: 8 (6 enrolled at RDP)
  - High school students: 13



**Measurable Goal:** RDPL will recognize the contribution of their volunteers in a meaningful way during National Volunteer Week April 14 to 20, 2024.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** A National Volunteer Week grant (\$600) is fully accounted for, which included an ad in the Red Deer Advocate thanking volunteers, RDPL branded book bags to give out to volunteers, and social media recognition. The Youth Literacy Program held a Volunteer Appreciation Afternoon tea during National Volunteer Week.

The Adult Literacy Program held its annual Volunteer Appreciation event in June. Shelley Odishaw, Library Board Chair, and Kraymer Barnstable, City of Red Deer Councillor, spoke about the importance of volunteering and the difference that the Adult Literacy Program volunteers make in the lives of their learners. 65 people attended the event where volunteers were recognized for their dedication and commitment to the program.

**Measurable Goal:** By the end of 2024, 85% of Outreach Bin program participants surveyed will report that they are satisfied with this program.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** Participants expressed that they were more than satisfied with the outreach program. Coordinators in the three care centres the Library partners with had positive comments on the way the Library strives to meet the varied preferences of participants. These centres expanded their library use with book and film clubs using materials borrowed on their corporate card.

**Measurable Goal:** Statistics for interlibrary loans through CELA (Centre for Equitable Library Access) will be noted and by the end of 2024, an increase of 5% in loans will be expected to demonstrate that the Library is meeting the needs of members requiring accessible formats.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** A total of 885 items have been lent this year, which represents a 99% increase over 444 interlibrary loans in 2023.

**Measurable Goal:** Circulation of DAISY discs through the CELA deposit collection will increase by 5% as this accessible format becomes simpler for members to browse and borrow.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** A total of 628 items have been lent this year, which represents a 57% increase over 399 items borrowed in 2023.

**Measurable Goal:** In early 2024, the new Diverse Voices section on the library's website will launch to the public. In its initial phase, the website will highlight 4-6 diverse groups, each of which will have a designated portal with an extensive selection of library and community resources. By the end of 2024, at least 3 additional portals will be added to the Diverse Voices website. In addition, as part of the project, the library will partner with at least 5 community groups, agencies, and/or individual community members to develop and evaluate the website.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** The new Diverse Voices section of our library's website, which "aims to amplify underrepresented voices, celebrate diversity in all its forms, and connect all members of our community with resources that will increase our knowledge, empathy, understanding, and compassion for one another," launched in early 2024.

The initial iteration of the site included the main page at [rdpl.org/diverse-voices](https://rdpl.org/diverse-voices) as well as four distinct 'portals' dedicated to Indigenous, African Caribbean, 2SLGBTQIA+, and Asian Canadian communities. Three additional 'portals' were developed over the course of the year, which are dedicated to Newcomers, the Ukrainian community, and individuals with Diverse Abilities. In developing the Diverse Voices pages, contributions in the form of blog posts, website feedback, and resource suggestions were collected from five community members.



**Measurable Goal:** By the end of 2024, a volunteer Teen Advisory Board will be formed to actively engage Red Deer teens in providing input on relevant library programming for their age group. The goal is to enhance and implement at least two new teen-focused library programs based on their feedback by the end of 2024. The success of these programs will be measured through increased teen participation and positive feedback, contributing to an overall improvement in the library's offerings for this demographic.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** After consultation with our regular group of teens coming to programs it was determined that a more casual advisory works for them. Teen Discord will remain open, and ongoing in-person informal conversations and suggestions will continue with youth attending Teen Café. We have designed Teen Café as an umbrella to offer program variety in a regular time slot that is accessible for parents and teens to understand. Each program under the Teen Café banner is different (with only Anime Club recurring) so that teens can get an understanding of what the library offers while also allowing them to make suggestions for what they'd like to see in future programming in Teen Café.

The Teen Café program commenced in September. This program is a mix of some of the interests expressed. DIY opportunities, Anime watching, and after-school snacks.



**Measurable Goal:** Host a series of sharing circles, facilitated by a member of the Indigenous community that would discuss how Red Deer and area could take action on specific Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** Two library staff members participated in the first of the City's Indigenous Truth Learning conversations, exploring with the indigenous community the knowledge staff need to create a welcoming community. The Library hosted the second meeting in the Snell Auditorium in January, with one library staff member participating.

**Measurable Goal:** During each year of the Plan of Service, RDPL will complete diversity and/or language audits in one or more areas of the library's collection, in consultation with local community groups, where applicable. In 2024, the library will focus on the Indigenous collection.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** All outdated Indigenous titles were reviewed as of October, ensuring that this collection is composed of accurate and important works by knowledgeable Indigenous authors and contributors.



**Measurable Goal:** By Fall 2024, RDPL will develop at least 2 new programs or partnerships with Indigenous organizations in the community to help further understanding of the TRC within our community as a whole and/or to promote Indigenous culture and language.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** Fall programming included the 'Books and Bannock' book club in partnership with staff at the Red Deer Native Friendship Society (featuring books by Indigenous authors). A 'Cree Language and Culture Storytime' program commenced (working closely with a local Indigenous Elder who teaches Cree programs to adults through the Urban Aboriginal Voices organization) and received financial support from the Community Foundation of Central Alberta. We have also increased the Cree language materials and resources in our collection.

In partnership with RDNFS, RDPL space was offered for their 'Celebrating Families' program (geared to families who are experiencing addiction-related trauma) for one week in July.

Representatives from Metis Local #492 were on hand with informative cultural displays along with youth activities in celebration of Metis Week in November.





## GOAL 4: SUSTAINABLE AND HEALTHY WORKPLACE

Red Deer Public Library is guided by modern best practices.

### Strategic Priorities:

- Use and promote our resources responsibly.
- Engage the board and staff in annual action planning.
- Ensure that library staff have the skills, support and training required to contribute to the success of the Plan of Service.

**Measurable Goal:** Over the next two years, RDPL will weed out outdated materials in the nonfiction section of all branches, using Collection HQ and other resources.

**Outcome: \*In progress.\*** Review and weeding of the Travel collection was completed in 2024. Staff have moved on to review the computer guides as well as the Medical books and will continue to work on this project in 2025.

**Measurable Goal:** The IT team will complete Implementation of user account security, and increased security with a new WIFI system in 2024.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** Account security policies, MFA for remote access, and a new Wi-Fi system have been successfully implemented.

**Measurable Goal:** The 2024 Annual Action Plan is scheduled for completion in January, shaped by the collaborative input of the library staff (whose contributions were finalized by December 2023), the management team, and the Library Board. This collective effort will steer the library's activities in the year ahead.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** Approved by the Board in January.



**Measurable Goal:** The first iteration of the Staff Training Portal (carried over from the 2023 Action Plan) will be piloted in 2024, offering a way to provide opportunities for learning.

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** The first iteration of the Staff Training Portal is complete. The initial launch of the portal includes essential onboarding tutorials outlining basic information about RDPL, our staffing structure, and our guiding principles. It also includes training from the Homeless Library Academy, Accessible Communication Practices, some branch-specific training, and more.

**Measurable Goal:** Staff Development Day 2024 will offer the staff meaningful training and learning opportunities

**Outcome: \*Achieved.\*** Staff Development Day offered numerous activities for staff to learn and engage with each other, further creating the support system that assists in maintaining a strong work culture. Along with staff long service awards and some fun morale-based activities, we were fortunate to have training which included educational and inspirational presentations from the Red Deer Queer Community Association, Central Alberta Child Advocacy Center. Staff reported it was a great day for all!

Aside from Staff Development Day, six staff members attended a two-day Mental Health First Aid training session in October through the Mental Health Commission of Canada at The Social Impact Center.

The Board continues to support the counselling services contract with Family Services of Central Alberta with sixteen (16) sessions shared by five (5) anonymous employees. This service is an additional alternative to private arrangements made under the Board's Blue Cross and HUB employee benefits.





# Thank you

for being a part of our story!



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