

2021 -  
2024

# Strategic Plan



*North Hastings*  
**Public Library**

**Bancroft • Faraday • Limerick**

Bancroft Public Library Board operating as  
North Hastings Public Library  
2021 - 2024

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## Extended Community Profile

### Dedicaton

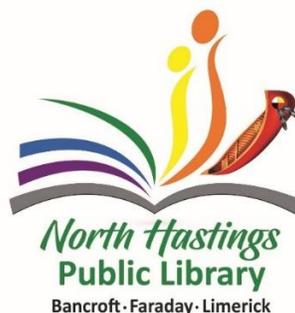
This report is Dedicated to Mary Ann Yewer, who joined the Board of Trustees in the fall of 2016. Mary Ann served as Chair of the Board from January 2019 –March 2021, until she and her family relocated to a new community.

### Our History

Bancroft Public Library was formed in 1901. The Library has occupied several locations in Bancroft. It was located in the former jail, and in the former Municipal Office, and currently resides in a former Bell Telephone building, but the Library has never occupied a space that was created as a library first. Alice Mullett was the first librarian. The current librarian, Kimberly McMunn, served from 2001 – 2011 and then returned in 2018. As of February 2021, Infrastructure Funding was confirmed, with a plan to break ground in the fall. The new library will be located in the heart of downtown Bancroft. This structure will accomodate the library/community-hub on the main floor, and two stories of affordable housing units above.

Over the years, library services have grown and diversified. For the majority of its existence, the Library offered just print material. Eventually, a vertical file was developed full of pictures and articles and local materials. Then multi-media were added in the form of books on tape and VHS movies. Those items were replaced soon after with the CD format. More recently, Blu-ray discs also share the shelves with this collection. Approximately 20 years ago, libraries had to reconfigure their layout to make space for the Internet and computer workstations. This change made the vertical file obsolete in most libraries. Around the same time, automated inventory programs, now called ILS – Integrated Library System, were added and the card catalogue also disappeared. Currently, library services also facilitate a tactile learning collection based on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) resources.

Faraday Township contracted with the Bancroft Public Library for service in 1978. The Township of Limerick signed their contract in July of 2018. To encourage more people to embrace their library and in consideration of the library's expanded community, the Board decided it was time to re-brand. Bancroft Public Library now operates as North Hastings Public Library.



## Our Library



Photo by Lesley Juarez on Unsplash

**MISSION:** To inspire life-long learning, connecting creative communities, in safe places, for ALL.

**VISION:** Potentials realized, through relationships with North Hastings Public Library.

### **VALUES:**

- Ethical Mindfulness and Compassionate Integrity
- Intellectual Freedom, Equity, Inclusivity and Diversity
- Commitment and Dedication
- Transparency, Sustainability and Accountability
- Imagination, Curiosity and Innovation
- Collaborative Relationships
- Embracing Joy of Language.

### Land Acknowledgement

*We acknowledge that we are gathered on the traditional territory of Indigenous peoples, who have been stewards of the land since time immemorial and as such we treat the land, its plants, animals, stories and people with honour and respect.*

## What Community Wants...

The board of North Hastings Public Library was very pleased with the excellent number of responses of the library survey and quality of information received through random conversations. In addition, library staff shared beneficial facts obtained from their front-line service roles. Listed below are some of the most frequently mentioned topics:



Anita Jankovic – unsplash

### Spaces and Places

More bathrooms with baby changing station, study space, a place to play games or puzzles, more room for books, quiet place for skype / facetime / zoom, better exam invigilation space, group meeting space, private computer use space

### Collections:

MORE Books, updated computers, hand-held learning resources, digital opportunities, eBooks without waiting, more audio books, more DVD



## Plan Development

The Bancroft Public Library Board of Trustees mandated that the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan would be developed in a grass-roots fashion, with information coming up from the regional community and library staff, as opposed to being directed down from the Board.



Photo by Lianne Sauter

“What the Community Wants...” evolved out of community participation regarding trends of the North Hastings area. This included an online and in-house survey, as well as public meetings held to discuss the survey, and what the relocation would mean for the Library. In addition, Staff provided valuable information through their participation in a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) exercise.



## 2021-2024 Strategic Plan Goals

When asked for direction in compiling the Strategic Plan, the 2019-2022 Board of Trustees requested that the information would be received from the ground up. They wanted the community and staff to provide direction for the Library's future. To that end, we will share what was learned through community and staff participation, and offer the course of action that meets those needs and wants. This plan allows for some flexibility given a transitional period, an upcoming move to a new facility, and an ongoing pandemic.

### **Goal # 1: *Promote Lifelong Learning***

Vision: Enrich opportunities to learn, explore, create, and connect with others, while they develop careers, grow businesses, engage with new technologies, and pursue healthy lifestyles

Action Plan:

- Provide diverse collections and programs both in the library and online
- Offer resources, opportunities, and coaching to engage in 21st Century literacies
- Develop virtual library branch

### **Goal # 2: *Develop Vibrant & Welcoming Public Spaces***

Vision: Create versatile spaces that meet the ever-changing interests and needs of our diverse and growing population

Action Plan:

- Provide spaces to gather, learn, explore, work, and connect
- Provide technology connected spaces
- Implement a successful capital campaign

### **Goal # 3: *Enhance Communications***

Vision: Establish communications and market NHPL as a valued community resource

Action Plan:

- Complete a Communication and Marketing Plan establishing and including consistent branding
- Provide accessible and inclusive communications to raise awareness of our many offerings

### **Goal # 4: *Enhance Digital Services & Inclusion***

Vision: Provide access and share learnings, as we embrace new technologies, while keeping our extended community competitive

Action Plan:

- Advance digital literacy within operations and service
- Engage staff by expanding technology skillset
- Increase digital asset awareness and engage community marketing and promotion

### **Goal # 5: *Advance Organizational Capacity***

Vision: Build Board and Staff capacity to lead a 21st Century library and community gathering space

Action Plan:

- Become an employer of choice to retain and recruit staff
- Develop staff competencies to excel in their job responsibilities
- Advance Board's and supporting Councils' awareness to excel in library advocacy
- Ensure transparency and accountability to all stakeholders

## Moving ahead towards 2024

### Governance

In keeping with the Ontario Public Libraries Act, which requires that the Municipal Council appoint a minimum of five library board members, the library board is currently composed of six Trustees:

- one municipal representative and two community members who sit on behalf of the Town of Bancroft
- two community members who sit on behalf of the Township of Faraday
- one municipal representative who sit on behalf of the Township of Limerick

The Library CEO serves as both Secretary and Treasurer to the Board of Trustees.



Photo by Anshu A on Unsplash

As with everything else, the COVID-19 outbreak threw a twist into the planning process. Looking for the benefits, the library created a Pandemic Preparedness and Business Continuity Plan which gives direction for library operation during a business interruption event. Another benefit was the timing of the Pandemic. The Library Board of Trustees and the Town of Bancroft have confirmed relocation and build of a new library as our community-hub. Floorplan design is in final stage of development.

### Key Characteristics of a Successful Board

- Commitment to the Vision of the Library
- Advocacy for the needs of the public library within the community and with Council
- Awareness of the Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA) Federation of Ontario Public Library (FOPL) and Ontario Library Service (the amalgamation of Southern Ontario Library Service and Ontario Library Service – North)
- Knowledge of the roles of the Board and the CEO, and supportive of the services of the Library
- Commitment to meeting the standards of libraries
- Visibility within the community, at community events, and at Library events

## Appendix A - Commitment to Bancroft, Faraday and Limerick

The 2018-2020 Strategic Plan set the targeted goals bar high, and each goal had several action items to set the path. Although some action items have not been completed, all of the them have been actively addressed. Many items are ongoing and will be part of the 2021-2024 Strategic Plan under a different heading – e.g., Bancroft Public Library Re-Imagined action items will be partially captured under Public Spaces, Digital Services and Communication.

### Goal # 1 *Bancroft Public Library Re-imagined*

- New Library Space – As of 2020, the Board was waiting on funding confirmation. Town of Bancroft assisted the Library with building a case and completing an application for funding.
- Library Service Outreach – Programs and events were offered in 3 Municipal community centres allowing for accessibility.
- Branding/Marketing – A barn quilt was hung on the Library and NHPL was located on the Hastings County GIS Quilt Trail. New logo and promotional materials were developed with Libraries Rock. (Our library resides in the Mineral Capital of Canada) theme.

### Goal # 2 *Sustainable Staffing and Administration*

- Professional Development – After many years without following the Pay Equity Plan, the Town of Bancroft assisted the Library with writing a new plan. In 2018, a new CEO was re-hired. Staff meetings and training became a priority. Alzheimer training, technology/social media updates are ongoing, and staff have been given many opportunities to impact relocation of the Library.
- Sustainable Funding – Increases have been received from each of the municipalities. COVID-19 caused increased expenses for our virtual collection and protective equipment. All municipalities have inquired about the Library's welfare.
- Bridging Municipal and Library Divides – information is flowing through various departments and board representatives. The CEO attends Council meetings when she is able to keep a connection to each individual community.

### Goal # 3 *Operational Plan for Board and Staff*

- Board Orientation and Training – Members of the Board regularly attend Trustee meetings and have participated in mandatory training.
- Community Engagement – plans for community engagement were postponed due to the Pandemic. Staff have been engaging the community online and in the newspaper with Readers' Advisory.
- Desk Manual Development – All staff have been developing procedures for the Library. The latest document was titled Pandemic Preparedness and Business Continuity Plan.
- Success Panning for Administration and Staff – New job descriptions have been developed and an updated Pay Equity Plan ensures that wages are competitive in our field. With an experienced staff, we have a broad skillset. Collections continue to thrive with new technologies and HR being our most difficult topics to cover.

## Appendix B - Community Trends

### ARTS & CULTURE

Bancroft was awarded TVO's, *The Most Talented Town in Ontario*, in 2004. The North Hastings region is populated with artisans and cultural entrepreneurs. Long-standing social networks such as the quilt club, horticulture society, music groups, etc. have thrived in the area for decades. Partnerships with the schools/daycare, and other local venues have increased the awareness of our Indigenous heritage.

### ECONOMY AND WORK

Bancroft remains the hub of North Hastings with the largest retail sector, and essential services. However, there is a hidden culture of home-based businesses that are coming to light as the area's homesteading culture grows. It is not uncommon to see people with more than one place of employment due to seasonal, part-time, and temporary positions.

The Pandemic has changed the area's economic picture again, with the addition of professionals that are moving to the area and continuing to work online in their urban locations. The demand for sustainable Internet surpasses the availability of the product.

Changes in the labour markets, including the rise in technology has contributed to long-term unemployment. More seniors are remaining in the workplace, but people over the age of 55 are struggling to find new employment.

### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Technology and digital literacy are increasingly emphasized in education. A greater focus is placed on shared learning experiences, problem solving and interactive skills. Multimedia and information technologies are used extensively to facilitate learning.

Due to the Pandemic, the Board of Education is challenged to provide online learning as well as school-based instruction. Again, sustainable Internet is a challenging factor.

Trades are facing shortages, while post-secondary graduates face student debt and uncertain employment opportunities. The need for more mental health resources are being experienced at all levels.

### ENVIRONMENT

Increases in extreme weather such as heat waves, flooding/drought and higher than average temperatures are all effects of climate change. This has led to a major impact on the costs of food and insurance, as well as negative health effects and decreasing species diversity. Many people in the North Hastings region are shifting to homesteading practices, becoming more self-sufficient with less reliance on out-sourced products.

Again, due to the Pandemic, the area's permanent population is on the rise with an increase in residents from people moving away from the close spaces of city living. The increase in population also impacts the environment with more waste, and gas emissions.

## Community Trends continued...

### HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY

Mental health challenges are on the rise, while area organizations struggle to cope with the lack of resources. The opioid crisis is slowly being overshadowed by the very visible concern of Methamphetamine addiction. Crime and suicide statistics are on the rise. Climate-related illness is also increasing. The decrease in immunization rates also factors into our health concerns. Two significant viral outbreaks in the last decade suggest a need for ongoing attention and preparation for flexible service delivery by the Library.

### HOUSING

Housing poses two challenges in North Hastings – lack of options and lack of affordability. This is a prime driver to homelessness. Real estate is a booming market with high demand and increased sales leading to higher-than-normal pricing. Seasonal residents are winterizing and staying in their secondary homes, looking for safer accommodations during the Pandemic.

### POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT

Although on the rise over the last decade, over the past year interest in politics and governance has soared. Childcare, housing, health care, education, public safety, and the environment are leading political issues. Social media has made information, and misinformation, easier to disseminate. Through technology, governance is now more transparent and accessible which has led to more civic engagement.

### SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Equity-seeking groups and vulnerable populations continue to face added challenges such as social isolation, increasing mental health issues, difficulty accessing government services, affordable housing, food access, livable incomes and barriers to employment. Currently, we can also add social distancing due to the Pandemic, to the list of social barriers. North Hastings hosts opportunity through several community organizations and places of worship

### TECHNOLOGY

Although technology allows us to participate in the world's events, it comes with its share of concerns, such as digital ethics, privacy, and security. Sustainable and affordable Internet creates a digital divide between those that can access the service and those that cannot. Low digital/data literacy also poses a barrier.

### TRANSPORTATION

Lack of affordable public transit is yet another challenge in rural areas. Due to geographic and density of population challenges, funding dollars do not cover public transit needs. In North Hastings, by-laws are being amended to accommodate ATV style vehicles, opening doors to alternate forms of transportation.

## Appendix C - Current Resources

### BOOKS

- \*Board Books
- \*Picture Books
- \*Early Chapter Books
- \*Graphic Novels
- \*Young Adults
- \*Adult Fiction
- \*Large Print
- \*Classics
- \*Non-Fiction
- \*Juvenile Non-Fiction

### COMMUNICATIONS

- \*Copy
- \*Email
- \*Print
- \*Scan

### DIGITAL COLLECTION

- \*Downloadable Audio Books
- \*e-Books
- \*e-Resources (Periodicals & Reference)

### EXPERIENTIAL COLLECTION

- \*Toys, games, puzzles, etc. supporting tactile/kinesthetic learning

### MULTI-MEDIA

- \*Audio Books
- \*Blu-ray
- \*DVDs

### INTERLIBRARY LOAN

- \*Provides access for our library to borrow resources from libraries all over Ontario

### INTERNET

- \*Computer workstations
- \*Social Media
- \*Website
- \*Wi-Fi (24/7 Access)

### PERIODICALS

- \*Newspapers
- \*Magazines (12 Topics)

### POOLS (collections rotate 3 times per year, providing new titles displayed in the same space)

- \*Audio Books
- \*DVDs
- \*Large Print Books

### VISION-CHALLENGED SUPPORT MATERIALS

- \*Audio Books
- \*CELA Partnership
- \*Large Print Books

## Appendix D - Library Services

Considerations	Service Examples
Arts & Culture Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our collections and services reflect and support local creators</li> <li>• Our collections and services reflect and support local culture</li> <li>• We provide opportunities to experience art and culture</li> </ul>
Lifelong Literacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A financial plan is developed to ensure balance within collections and services</li> <li>• The Library promotes experiential, digital and traditional methods of literacy</li> <li>• The "Library" exists far beyond its physical walls, incorporating a virtual branch and shared spaces in its extended region</li> </ul>
Public Gathering Space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regardless of the size of our physical collection, there will always be a space in the Library for social gathering</li> <li>• Gathering spaces may be created online through virtual book clubs, social media and communication apps such as ZOOM</li> <li>• Where possible outdoor spaces may be included, such as the Eagles Nest and Walking Trails</li> </ul>
Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are familiar with the North Hastings region and can provide basic instructions/directions to Tourists searching for a particular destination</li> <li>• Our collections and services enhance the North Hastings region as a destination</li> <li>• The Library supports and participates in local events, as staffing and financial ability permit.</li> </ul>
Competitive Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 hr Wi-Fi services ensures accessibility to the Internet, even when the Library is closed</li> <li>• When financially viable, specialized early-learning technology resources will be available</li> <li>• Computer workstations provide social, economic and educational equalizers to the extended community and tourist population</li> <li>• Proposed Maker/Tech space in new build will allow enhanced technology/digital literacy</li> </ul>
Quiet Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mentor/Tutor/Invigilation Spaces allow for ongoing literacy support</li> <li>• Interview rooms provide safe spaces for social and business development</li> <li>• Quiet reading/contemplative/studying spaces nurture a healthy community</li> </ul>
Volunteerism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteerism supports educational mandates</li> <li>• Volunteerism supports social growth</li> <li>• Volunteerism will not replace paid library duties, but will enhance library services</li> </ul>
Partnerships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expand our budgets</li> <li>• Promote our services</li> <li>• Fill gaps in the community without creating silos</li> </ul>

## Appendix E – Extended Community Profile

### *Housing Shortage Acknowledgement*

The latest Census does not actually show Bancroft on the core housing needs list of urban areas. However, our closest urban centres, Belleville and Peterborough, rank numbers 3 and 4 respectively, just under Toronto (# 1) and Vancouver (# 2). Kingston follows in the 6<sup>th</sup> position. Currently, lack of housing is arguably the extended area's biggest challenge.

The following table summarizes some other characteristics of our extended-community profile.

Taken from Census 2016	<b>Bancroft</b>	<b>Faraday</b>	<b>Limerick</b>	<b>Hastings Country</b>
<i>Population</i>	3881	1401	346	
<i>Average Age</i>	48.8	49.2	48.9	43.8
<i>Income before taxes</i>				
10,000-19,999	795	280	75	
20,000-29,999	630	220	50	
30,000-39,999	370	160	40	
40,000-49,999	295	115	25	
50,000-59,999	205	70	20	
60,000-69,999	130	55	15	
70,000-79,999	80	40	5	
80,000-89,999	70	20	5	
90,000-99,999	50	15	0	
100,000 & over	85	45	5	
<i>Average Income</i>	32,509	35,831	30,595	38,773
<i>Average Household Income</i>	77,447	79,606	60,552	86,607
<i>Education</i>				
No High School	380	155	30	
High School	510	220	55	
Apprenticeship	185	95	0	
Post Secondary/ Certificate/Diploma	880	400	85	
College	475	220	55	
University	200	10	10	