

Athol Public Library

Strategic Plan



January 31, 2023
Chelsea Jordan-Makely
Renewed Libraries





Athol Public Library

Strategic Plan 2023-2028

Mission

The Athol Public Library is a welcoming and vital community center where people of all ages and abilities can satisfy their curiosity, become informed, increase their knowledge and skills, connect to the online world, stimulate their imagination, and enrich their lives.

Vision

Responding to the needs of an evolving population, the Athol Public Library will be the first and best choice of the community for information and inspiration in an environment that is accessible to all.

Values

- Access
- Community
- Kindness
- Diversity and inclusivity
- Freedom

Strategic Priorities

- 1. Maintain core services and commitment to service excellence.**
 - We adopt a philosophy of “good to great,” focusing on what we do best, and pursuing new ideas when there is evidence to show it is the right thing to do.
 - We ensure and expand access to the library by design, and by meeting people where they are at, in-person and online.
- 2. Safeguard intellectual freedom and promote the love of reading.**
 - The library is a comfortable and safe incubator for creativity and discussions, for people of all ages and abilities.
 - We create and share content including programs, personalized reading recommendations, and news that pertains to our community.
- 3. Create the right circumstances for our staff and our patrons to be successful.**
 - We champion library workers and values by investing in our staff and growing a culture of lifelong learning and professional development.
 - Our team shares their skills forward through value-added library services and programs relating to information literacy, digital literacy, cultural literacy, and STEAM education.
- 4. Grow support and awareness across the community.**
 - We gain new patrons when they hear about us from other “raving fans,” even more than our visible presence online and in Athol.
 - We will partner or collaborate with other organizations at the local level, and leverage state resources and grants to amplify our impact even more.

Summary

Further to gathering community input via a questionnaire and two focus groups, the Athol Public Library hosted an open house to get feedback on a draft of the library's 2023-2028 strategic plan. Displays were posted in the library on a Saturday afternoon, and besides being open to the public, the library also sent invitations and advertised the event, and also offered snacks to entice participation. Staff attended the poster prompts to interact with participants and answer questions.

In addition to their contributions via the data points named above, library staff were also asked to answer a short, three question survey. These responses are summarized in the following brief, and were useful in shaping the library's strategic plan further to the feedback that was gathered by other means.

These various methods of gathering input from multiple perspectives culminate in a strategic plan that is flexible, balanced, realistic, thoughtful, and proactive, and builds on the library's existing foundations while also reaching for new heights. This final draft is respectfully presented as follows for the review and consideration of the Athol Public Library team, with gratitude for the opportunity to explore the ways your library uplifts and upholds your community's values, and may continue doing so even in an uncertain future.

Keep up the good work!