



## Kingston Frontenac Public Library Vision 2020

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## Introduction

In 2013 the Library Board and staff initiated a strategic planning process to identify the future of our Library and to describe our priorities for service improvement and expansion. In today's increasingly digital and complex environment it is more imperative than ever for the Public Library to pause, examine the changes occurring in the community, technology and publishing, and plan how we will successfully navigate those changes to make a positive difference in the lives of the people of Kingston Frontenac. This is what the Library in Kingston Frontenac has been doing for more than one-hundred years: positively changing lives by transforming information into inspiration for people's imaginations.

We talked to community stakeholders and residents, both users and non-users of the Library. We compiled information to understand changes in our community and researched factors affecting public libraries in North America. Using this information to inform and challenge our thinking, we developed a strategy for the future. It is a future that embraces change predicated on new technologies, evolving communities and shifting values and lifestyles – all with significant implications for public libraries as we endeavour to educate, inform and engage residents.

Our discussions concerning the future of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library (KFPL) were guided by three main considerations. First, public libraries exist to enrich lives: our primary objective is to be a significant positive influence in this community. Second, the Library does not act alone: we bring our special skills, resources and expertise to collaborative community projects. Finally, we are a library system that incorporates a diverse range of individuals and interests from a large urban and rural community base, and our responsibility is to serve all residents in a balanced and appropriate manner.

Our Library, created in 1998 when the Kingston Public Library and Frontenac County Library were merged, has successfully navigated changes since the early 1800s. The present document lays out Kingston Frontenac Public Library's plan to forge new paths, building on the past and looking to the future. Our Library believes that the people of Kingston Frontenac deserve nothing but the best: the best services and resources unique to their public library. An indispensable institution of democracy, the public library supports access to information, literacy and lifelong learning for all citizens. In today's society, reading and writing are not enough: the people of Kingston Frontenac must have digital and technological literacies as well.

The Library's strategic Goals for the coming years focus on the following four goals:

- Unique, Impactful Services that enable the people of our community to manage the digital environment effectively.

- Difference-Making Spaces in which we use technologies and innovative approaches to push our walls ever further out, extending our resources and personalized problem-solving services to where residents are.
- Community-Focused Relationships with which we collaboratively deliver specialized programs to provide the information and knowledge that people in all phases of their lives need in order to pursue their aspirations.
- Growing 21st Century Capabilities throughout the Library, enabling our staff to thrive in the 21st century information world.

We invite you to join us on this journey to 2020, to explore the Library's vast wealth of resources, to engage with our staff, who can take you deep into the unknowns of the Web and the printed page, to venture into community-specific discussions, and to read, to view, and to listen to your heart's and mind's content. We welcome you to Kingston Frontenac Public Library's vision 2020.

Sincerely,

Claudette Richardson, Board Chair

Patricia Enright, Library CEO

## **Our Library Today and the Communities We Serve**

KFPL is the product of local municipal amalgamations, the marriage of a former city and a county library system. This is a unique and defining characteristic of our Library. Providing facilities and services consistent with the needs of new generations of library users and with changes in our communities has been a major challenge in the past, particularly in our rural service area. Our future success depends on adopting a new service model that creatively incorporates physical and virtual space, provides enhanced access to staff with appropriate skills, and takes advantage of new technologies to serve all Kingston Frontenac residents.

In recent years the Library has made significant improvements, adding enhanced services and new facilities whose impact is reflected in our use. We must build on this success to become an even more meaningful and valued resource for our residents.

Kingston Frontenac will experience significant growth in the next 20 years, and this growth will place added pressure on the Library and our municipal partners to meet future needs. Furthermore, we must plan for new users as our population grows, becomes more diverse, and embraces new lifestyles that will influence the services we provide. The challenge will be to embrace the opportunity presented by growth, so that we improve our services and make changes that reflect the needs of the next generation of library users.

Our municipalities are exploring new economic opportunities rooted in history, cultural resources, innovation, entrepreneurship and tourism. The Library has the resources and expertise to support these economic initiatives. We also understand that quality library services attract and retain entrepreneurs, employees and investors. The Library will play a much larger role in our future economic sustainability.

Below are eight statistics about our library and the community we serve:

- KFPL consists of 16 branches, ranging in size from about 600 to 65,000 square feet. The system includes major city facilities and many branches serving small, rural communities.
- Most recent statistics indicate KFPL had over 800,000 visits, 2.8 million uses and a circulation of 1.5 million annually.
- In 2012 KFPL lent 56,618 e-books.
- Between 2006 and 2011, the City of Kingston's population grew by 5.3%, while the rural Townships experienced stable to marginally declining population. However, by 2036 the population of the City and the County is predicted to increase from 152,000 to 193,000, while the Townships adjacent to the City experience suburban expansion.
- Currently, as much as two-thirds of the County labour force commutes to the City.

- The proportion of home-based businesses in the County is higher than the provincial average.
- As with most urban areas, a more diverse and older population is anticipated.
- While the local economy will continue to be heavily dependent on government services, the strategic plans, sustainability plans and cultural plans of local authorities place an increasing emphasis on tourism, proactive development, innovation and research. In the City of Kingston, cultural programming, cultural hubs, heritage, the downtown and cultural tourism are prominent themes for the future.

## **Our Residents - Their Perspective on the Public Library**

We are pleased that the overwhelming majority of our residents recognize the importance and value of public library services. Our challenge is to translate these positive feelings into meaningful experiences with KFPL. Our core users are satisfied with the library but have a limited understanding of the ways in which we could be of greater service, particularly in a world where technology and information will increasingly govern our social, cultural and economic universe.

The urban-rural character of our Library continues to be an overriding consideration in our service delivery. However, we have discovered that the perceptions, behaviours and expectations of rural and urban residents are very similar. While our response will be tailored to the realities of our urban and rural communities, their needs are similar.

Engaging the infrequent user and the non-user remains our greatest challenge. Despite the fact that many of our non-users are somewhat familiar with our services, and may have been users in the past, they no longer see a role for the public library in their lives. This perception must change.

Community stakeholders have a very traditional view of the public library. KFPL is not always identified as a potential partner in their plans and projects, and, when we are, our role is limited. We must encourage our residents and our community partners to ask for more from their public library. To do so, we must demonstrate that the Library can make a significant contribution to the social and economic success of our community. We must strengthen those aspects of our services that address community and creativity. We strive to be top-of-mind in Kingston Frontenac – recognized and respected as a significant player in the future of this community.

Below are six perspectives on the Public Library:

- The overwhelming majority (90% plus) of Kingston Frontenac residents, both urban and rural, users and non-users, believe that the Library serves all interests and age groups, is required in a world where information is available from so many sources, and deserves tax support.
- 25% of residents are not familiar with library services; 4% of users and 52% of non-users. However, similar proportions of users and nonusers (42-43%) are somewhat familiar with the Library, the remainder being very familiar.
- 56% of all residents use the Library; 60% of whom use it at least monthly. The remaining 40% of users are only accessing services once or twice a year.

- 20% are using the Library less today than five years ago, with greater use of the Internet the major reason for the change.
- Only 29% of users could suggest things KFPL could do to increase their use; and 18% of nonusers could suggest things that would encourage them to start using the library.
- About one-half of all residents reported the library was “not top-of-mind – they just don’t think to go there”; that all of the information in the Library is just as easy to get on the Internet; and that the library won’t change much in the future. Non-users were much more likely than users to hold these opinions.



## **Our Changing World**

Public libraries must find their place in a world of unprecedented social, cultural and political change, much of which is rooted in new technologies. We believe this new world is full of opportunities for KFPL to engage a wider range of residents and to make a much greater contribution to our community.

We can support these residents by providing the life skills and competencies they need to participate fully in a changing world and a knowledge-based economy. We can link our residents to the information, experiences and networks that are defining their world in the 21st century. In conjunction with our partners, we can support Kingston Frontenac organizations, facilitate learning, and encourage all residents to play an active and constructive role in the affairs of their community.

The Library can assemble the expertise, resources and networks to play this role. It is a role for which we are uniquely suited. However, to succeed, it is apparent that we must re-position ourselves in the community. As discussed earlier, we acknowledge that our brand is outdated and our connections to the community limited. We know that most residents see the Internet as an alternative to the Library, instead of the Library as an enhancement to Internet users. We must change these perceptions and position ourselves as the community's trusted and valued partner for mastering the demands of our changing world.

Below are seven statistics about our changing world:

- Canadians spend more time on-line than watching TV, and most people regard access to the Internet as a fundamental right.
- Mobile technologies will become ubiquitous, and social networking and social media will dominate the ways in which we communicate.
- Consumer behaviour will increasingly be characterized by experience consumption rather than material consumption.
- Despite these trends, there will be continuing constraints – both financial and skill-related – to full participation in technology and the services it can offer.
- The economic base will shift with growing emphasis on the service sector and small and entrepreneurial businesses.
- Home schooling is expected to increase in popularity; technical literacy will be essential for social and economic success; and the workplace will increasingly emphasize technology for efficiency, collaboration, and global communication.
- Distinct generational lifestyles rooted in differing values and characterized by different expectations, needs and behaviours will be the norm.

## **Our Mission, Vision and Values**

Our mission declares our unique, ongoing role in our community. Our vision describes the Kingston Frontenac Public Library in 2020. It retains the values and strengths of today and envisions the ways in which we will be different tomorrow, so that we can serve the changing needs of our community. Our values are the constants in both library service delivery and our relationship with the community. We will protect and promote these values even as we embrace change and adopt new approaches to serving the community.

### **Our Mission**

Our primary purpose is to make a positive difference in the lives of everyone in Kingston Frontenac. We aim to achieve this purpose by helping residents transform today's vast information resources into the solutions, facts, know-how, inspiration, and entertainment they need to learn, solve problems, read, engage with their community and reach their personal aspirations.

### **Our Vision**

Below are seven items that make up our vision:

- We will offer programs and services to inspire a love of reading, thereby opening up literature, the deep Web and the authors of yesterday, today and tomorrow for everyone in our community.
- We will innovate and experiment with services and approaches that are uniquely aligned with community needs and not necessarily with how a library is perceived.
- We will focus more on services than buildings.
- We will activate imagination, intellectual freedom and free access to information with high-quality targeted services.
- We will connect the communities within our community with discussions specific to Kingston Frontenac.
- We will be a part of most people's lives, recognized as a problem-solver, a source for reading, and a key supporter of learning.
- We will welcome all to an inviting, barrier-free, non-judgmental community with virtual spaces, services and programs that meet all citizens where they are on their road of life-long learning.

## **Our Values**

### **Collections**

We strive to provide a dynamic collection of materials that is regularly evaluated and available in a variety of formats to serve the needs and support the interests of all members of our community.

### **Quality of Services**

We seek to provide exceptional service by providing reliable, responsive, courteous service, from a competent, informed, understanding and responsive staff.

### **Respect and Dignity**

We treat all people with respect. Each individual in our community will receive the best, free library service possible.

### **Creativity and Innovation**

We encourage and support creative approaches and innovative solutions in all aspects of library service. The most appropriate technical innovations will be implemented while maintaining a strong commitment to traditional library services.

### **Stewardship**

We value the ethical, fiscally responsible, sustainable use of public resources. Each employee of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library is a steward of the public trust. All staff exercise prudence when using and/or allocating any library funds or resources. We work with other community partners when possible to best utilize all resources.

### **Work Environment**

We provide a positive work environment that respects each staff member's unique contributions. Our talented, well trained, knowledgeable staff are a vital part of the cultural, social, business/entrepreneurial and educational life of the community. We offer opportunities for professional growth.

### **Intellectual Freedom**

We support freedom of speech and the right of residents to select the information appropriate for their needs. Open and unrestricted access to information from all library resources will be available in multiple formats to meet the individual needs of all residents of Kingston Frontenac.

## **Our Strategies for 2013 – 2020**

As we designed the Library for Kingston Frontenac's future, we discovered several themes: community connections; specialized services tailored for specific communities; unique programs created through the Library and partners; an acute awareness of the Library's virtual and physical services where, when and how people need them throughout Kingston Frontenac. These themes were initially broad and somewhat vague. But we were – and are – sure of one thing: Kingston Frontenac will continue to change, and the Library must not only be aligned with those changes, it must lead initiatives that will help its citizens participate actively in the 21st-century digital-intensive world. This focus will help us navigate our way through the challenges of balancing the many demands on the Library, allocating our resources appropriately and transforming the themes we identified into strategic goals with action-oriented initiatives.

### **Unique, Impactful Services**

Our services are our hallmark. While the library provides a vast array of electronic data, e-books, books, movies, music and local history, it is our services that transform these resources into facts, solutions, ideas and reading enjoyment for the people of Kingston Frontenac. We will design and deliver unique services to enable the people of our community to manage the digital environment effectively.

To realize this goal we will:

- 1) Review and adjust our portfolio of services and programs; the emphasis will be on:
  - a) Identifying offerings which are unique to the Library, and with which we harness the incredible contribution of our vast resources.
  - b) Eliminating duplication and unnecessary competition with other organizations.
  - c) Letting go of services that are no longer relevant.
  - d) Ensuring the services in which we are investing our resources (staff, funding, content, etc.) are the ones that are needed and are used.
  - e) Piloting experimental programs and services on the productive use of new technologies.
- 2) Segment the market for our services, determining:
  - a) Information behaviours, needs and preferences of users and non-users
  - b) Those community segments which will benefit most from specific services
- 3) Review how and when services are offered, exploring and, most importantly, piloting different hours, alternative delivery modes and non-traditional spaces.
- 4) Complete a Collections Audit, specifically examining the collections in terms of balance of format, content relevance, overuse/underuse, and budget allocation.
- 5) Investigate and implement a new service delivery model in cooperation with our funding partners and communities.

### **Difference-Making Spaces**

The age of the hushed, book-bound library is long past. It has been replaced with one in which library spaces bring information alive to spark ideas, deepen understandings, and engage people in community-specific discussions. Our spaces must make a difference for the people of Kingston Frontenac at all ages and stages. Our spaces must blend the paper and digital worlds with service options ranging from self-serve to staff-intensive consultations. Using technologies and innovative approaches we will push our walls ever further outwards, extending our resources and personalized services to where residents are. We will configure virtual and physical spaces that are accessible, inviting and purposeful for residents to explore, discover, create, learn, study and read.

To realize this goal we will:

- 1) Explore a new facility model for both physical and virtual spaces that most effectively complements our service delivery model. This new facility model will: revisit the role and purpose of our branches; evaluate the merits of more specialized functions for some of the spaces within our system; and identify alternative approaches to providing access to our resources, such as fully automated material kiosks/vending machines for pick up and delivery in various community places and expanded use of shared space with other organizations.
- 2) Redefine the role of the Central Library to better reflect its unique position in downtown Kingston and its potential for stronger partnerships with other organizations and for a greater contribution to municipal objectives in the downtown, with its cultural and heritage resources, tourism and economic development.
- 3) Consistent with the identified facility model, improve and strengthen branches/buildings by:
  - a) Participating in the City, County and Township asset management plans.
  - b) Creating flexible, welcoming, accessible branches.

### **Community-Focused Relationships**

In today's world no organization is an island, nor should it be. We have always partnered with community organizations and suppliers to extend our service possibilities and maintain operational efficiencies. During this planning period we will intensify our collaboration with other organizations, focusing always on how – together – we will best enable the people of Kingston Frontenac to participate in the digital, information-intensive world. We'll collaboratively deliver specialized programs that will provide the information and knowledge which people in all phases of their lives need to pursue their aspirations.

To realize this goal we will:

- 1) Intensify our partnerships and collaborative relationships with a few organizations to design and deliver unique, highly needed services that no one organization can do alone.
- 2) Develop mechanisms to share information and expertise with community leaders and organizations, specifically the Mayors, CAOs, Councils, and City, Township and County Staff.

### **21st-Century Capabilities**

Though our services are our hallmark, it is our staff, technologies and approaches that are our heart, our mind and our engine. We will grow our organizational capabilities, including our training, technologies, processes and practices to provide staff with the experiences, approaches and knowledge to thrive, with the community, in the 21st-century information world. We will monitor new developments and research on the effects of technology on information access and use. We will develop creative new mechanisms to improve communication between residents and library users to understand better their library service needs and to monitor our effectiveness in repositioning the library at top-of-mind.

To realize this goal we will:

- 1) Review our Organizational Design ensuring we are aligned with this strategic plan.
- 2) Identify roles and competencies required to deliver and manage our service portfolio.
- 3) Develop and implement a learning development plan, specifically focusing on technologies and our service portfolio.
- 4) Audit our technologies, identifying gaps that must be addressed.
- 5) Review and adjust our policies, practices and procedures that are no longer in keeping with our strategies and service portfolio.
- 6) Develop performance measures and improved approaches to planning and evaluating our services to ensure that we are all well positioned to identify and respond to community needs, either alone or collaborating with other organizations; to make the best use of available resources; and to communicate effectively our contribution to the community.

## **Updating and Implementing the Strategic Plan**

### **Updating and Monitoring the Strategic Plan**

We will regularly update the Strategic Plan. The Board will revisit the Vision and Strategic Goals on a regular basis to ensure they continue to reflect KFPL's preferred future. Key Initiatives will be reviewed annually. Initiatives that have been completed will be eliminated, and revisions and additions will be made as applicable.

### **The Strategic Plan and Service Delivery**

In addition to regularly updating the Strategic Plan, we will adopt formal procedures to ensure that the plan is used in the ongoing management of the Library. Staff reports and recommendations will be tied to the Strategic Plan. The annual budget process will also be connected to the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan provides overall direction for the Library's future. However, other plans and studies will be required to successfully implement these strategies. We will review our service model, organizational structure, staffing and other aspects of the Library to keep pace with growth and to anticipate and respond to a changing future consistent with our Strategic Plan.

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