Penhold

& District Library

Strategic Planning 2026 - 2030

Table of contents

message from the board

Since 1981 Library Boards of Penhold & District Library have been challenging the future.

As our community has grown the library has grown alongside it, providing a space to connect. The vision of the library is for family to connect, community be engaged and lifelong learning opportunities experienced. Through this relationship we are able to open doors for literacy and access to resources throughout Alberta, enriching learning opportunities.

In 2021 we were very fortunate to be awarded the TD Summer Reading Club first prize, which allowed us to purchase a baby grand piano and open our doors to community beyond our borders. Innovation has opened doors for others to experience what our library offers.

It has been the steadfast support of the Town of Penhold Council and increased funding from the Province and County that assist in the library having flexibility and opportunity. Parkland Regional Library are the wheels to great resource sharing and educating library staff. Valuable staff keep the library connected to community and an organized and pleasant place to be. We appreciate dedicated Board Members who believe in the vision of our library.

Moving forward with our 2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan we continue on a path that listens to community and provides experiences and opportunities that enrich community.

On behalf of the Town of Penhold and District Library Board,

Joan Schmelke, Library Chair

acknowledgements

BOARD MEMBERS

Penhold and District Library is governed by trustees appointed from the Town of Penhold.

- Joan Schmelke (Chair)
- Crystal Schening (Vice-Chair)
- Brandi Filipchuk (Treasurer)
- Teresa Cunningham (Town of Penhold)
- Geralis Enns
- Gail Maki

Thank you to this team of committed volunteers for sharing their knowledge, expertise and energy. They are leaders in the community and are committed to making the Library a fun place to be for the whole community.

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDERS

- Friends of the Library, Chair
  - Alison Marshall
- Friends of the Library / Book Club
  - Angela George
  - Liz Simpson
  - Lenore Hammers
- Home School Family
  - Amanda Holt
- Innisfail Dayhome Society
  - Ella Brekke
- Kid's Kingdom Preschool
  - Paula Kelly
- Optimist Club
  - Carole Ramage
- Organic Oasis
  - Raeleen McCutcheon
  - Jason McCutcheon
- Penhold Church of Hope
  - Greg Waddy

- Penhold Seniors Drop- In Centre
  - Linda Briggs
- Town of Penhold, PYC
  - Amanda Lindgren
- Town of Penhold Councilors
  - Tyrone Muller
  - Teresa Cunningham
- Town of Penhold, Community Services
  - Jamie Seiyama
- Town of Penhold, FCSS
  - Jennifer Blaylock
- Library staff
  - Jennifer Ball
  - Michelle Hayden
  - Krista Hemstreet
  - Aimee Molinski
  - Myra Binnendyk

Input from community stakeholders was important to understanding:
- Public perception of use of public funds
- Demographics of the community
- Insight into the needs of the community

Thank you to members of these organizations. Your feedback is important to the future of the Library and to helping to achieve the goals and objectives laid out in this plan. Your input will ensure that the Library remains relevant to the community, providing services that are useful and beneficial to the patrons.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

A community survey was designed to give community members the opportunity to provide input to the planning process. In 2020 there were 77 respondents to a community survey leading to the development of the Service Plan. In the spring of 2025 we were so pleased that there were 318 respondents to the community survey.

We appreciate all of the responses and comments. The Library Board and stakeholders incorporated the results into the Strategic Plan so that services would remain relevant and useful to community members and library users.

Survey results are included in the appendix.

the planning process

The overall purpose of this Plan of Service or Strategic Plan is to provide direction for the library for the next 5 years. The Plan is based on an assessment of needs and of fulfilling the expectations of the Penhold Library Board and the communities served.

The scope of the project included engaging the community, its stakeholders and staff for development of the Plan. The Penhold Library considered the planning process laid out in "Strategic Planning Process for Results" - *Sandra Nelson* as a resource to guide the process.

Over the course of 6 months, activities included:

- A survey of the general public, users and stakeholders of the Penhold Library
- A community round table with key stakeholders
- Meetings with the staff and with the Board of Directors

Input from these activities became the foundation for drafting the content of the Plan. The Plan includes a list of recommended goals and objectives for the years 2026 to 2030.

Methodology:

- Review of 2021 – 2025 Service Plan, annual report, and other related documents
- Survey of community interests and analysis of results
- In person meetings with the Board of Directions, staff and community stakeholders to review results of a survey, the Library Mission, Values and Goals of Plan of Service 2021-2025 and achievements
- Documentation of findings from engagement with each group
- Presentation of findings to the Penhold Library Board
- Development of goals (service responses) for 2026-2030
- Preparation of the Final Report

Board Members reviewed each step including drafting of the community survey and plans for the community stakeholders meeting. The Library Board and Staff held meetings to review and respond to input from each activity and then finally to incorporate the results into Goals and Objectives for the next five years.

The Goals and Objectives are intended to be broad in nature to allow for creativity in actions and opportunities for change. The Plan will support the Library to focus energy and resources as they are available over the next five years.

Input from the community

A survey was shared with organizations in the community, patrons of the Library and with others in the community through social media. The survey was instrumental in determining community priorities for the next one to five years in order to make smart decisions about resource allocation.

Input from community stakeholders was important to understanding:

- Perception of public of use of public $
- Demographics (is it representative and futuristic)
- Insight into the needs of the community

Community Stakeholders met to review the results of the community survey and some basic data on the community and the library in order to begin thinking about the current state and how that might change over the next 5 years.

This work informed the final step of working with the Library Manager, Board and staff to develop the Strategic Plan 2026-2030.

vision and mission

The vision and mission statements for the Penhold Library provide guidance to where the organization aspires to go and define the organization's business, its objectives and how it will reach these objectives.

Our Vision

> Penhold and District Library is passionate about community, literacy and life long learning.

Our Mission

> To provide effective library service to all citizens of Penhold and region by connecting people of the community through programming, partnerships and the efficient use of resources.

"Fun for the Whole Family"

values

The Library Board and staff are committed to:

Accessibility:
Endeavoring to create a library environment of barrier-free access and community inclusiveness to our facility, resources, programming and lifelong learning.

Connectivity:
Create an environment that encourages connectivity between family, community and literacy.

Hospitality:
We will provide an inviting space that enables visiting communities to connect with family, community and resources.

Diversity:
We treat all people with respect and dignity.

Accountability:
We will be accountable for services we provide.

Quality:
In all we do, we desire to serve with excellence and a perceptiveness to the needs of our community.

Partnerships:
We believe in pursuing collaborative, innovative relationships to better serve the interests and needs of our community.

Creativity:
We will highlight and encourage creative expression.

Lifelong Learning:
We believe in creating an environment that supports and stimulates the love of learning at all stages in life.

Intellectual Freedom:
We support the intellectual development and growth of individuals as well as community and the exchange of information.

community profile

Penhold is described as a vibrant, family-oriented community with a country living feeling, centrally located on Highway 2A between Red Deer and Innisfail.

In Penhold, Alberta, the population was 3,484 in 2021, and the town has seen a population increase, with 3,854 residents reported in a recent census, reflecting a growth from 3,287 in 2016.

2021 Census:

The 2021 Census of Population conducted by Statistics Canada showed a population of 3,484 in Penhold, a 6% increase from the 2016 population of 3,287.
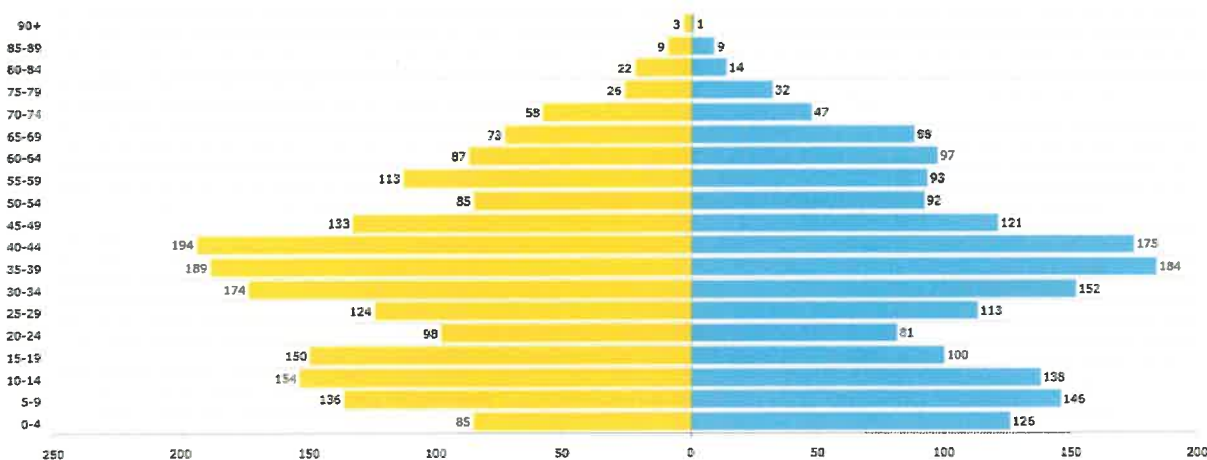
Historical Population:

In 2016, there were 3,277 people recorded; in 2011, the number was 2,375; and in 2006, the town had just 1,971 people.

Population Density:

In 2021, Penhold had a population density of 311.1/km2 (805.7/sq mi) over its 11.2 km2 (4.3 sq mi) land area.

Penhold had a population of 3,725 in 2024. The population of Penhold increased 0.65% year-over-year, and increased 2.84% in the last five years. While the town is expecting further growth, a specific 2025 population number is not available. However, the town is undergoing a municipal census, and the mayor anticipates the population to be in the 4,000 range.

Age Pyramid

Age	Female	Male
90+	3	1
85-89	9	9
80-84	22	14
75-79	26	32
70-74	58	47
65-69	73	99
60-64	87	97
55-59	113	93
50-54	85	92
45-49	133	121
40-44	194	175
35-39	189	184
30-34	174	152
25-29	124	113
20-24	98	81
15-19	150	100
10-14	154	138
5-9	136	145
0-4	85	125

- Alberta Regional Dashboard

goals and objectives

Comfortable physical library spaces

1. **Goal:** The Library will be a safe, welcoming, inclusive space for everyone in our community.

   ### Objectives:
   i. Maintain awareness of the changing population
   ii. Know the needs of the patrons, engage with visitors
   iii. Invite the community to the library's welcoming space
   iv. Maintain the physical components of the library
   v. Be flexible in use of the library's spaces including creating opportunities for quiet spaces and times,
   vi. Provide library hours appropriate to the needs of patrons
   vii. Diversify and increase funding sources

   ### Measures:
   i. Increase traffic into the library using the door counter and program statistics
   ii. Increase the number of Library Cards/Memberships

Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning

2. Goal: The Library will increase visibility and strengthen connections by actively inviting the community to engage with the library's services, programs and events.

   ### Objectives:
   i. Continue to reach out to Springbrook and the Red Deer County
   ii. Maintain an active presence on social media with more posts and photos showing current activities and include a hyperlink to the main website
   iii. Provide event notifications in multiple formats
   iv. Communicate regularly with schools in Penhold
   v. Tailor communication methods to age groups
   vi. Maintain direct, in-library event, program, and service information and invitations
   vii. Ensure services and programming information is up-to-date

Measures:

i.   Maintain the collection and increase circulation on an annual basis
ii.   Maintain a high overall satisfaction rating for services, resources and the facility using periodic surveys

Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing and Listening for Pleasure

3. **Goal:** The Library will understand and respond to the interests of the community and partner with other organizations to expand the range of offerings and reach.

Objectives:

i.   Provide the opportunity for social and speaker events
ii.   Include Library services for all ages
iii.   Source and cultivate local talents and experts to host programs
iv.   Create and encourage young readers
v.   Hire youth
vi.   More engagement and interaction about potential events and scheduling
vii.   Look for ways to reach out into the community, connect with other local groups including the Seniors Centre and schools
viii.   Host programs and events outside of the library space
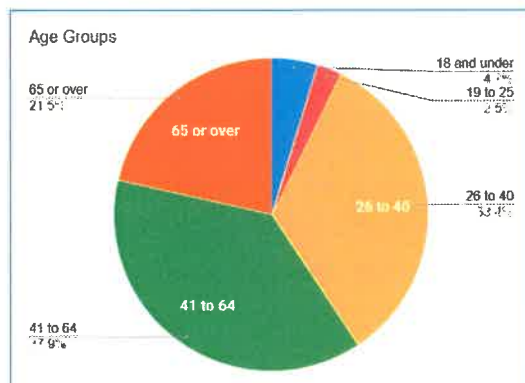ix.   Collaborate with community groups in hosting and developing programs and fundraising activities

Measures:

i.   Maintain a 95% satisfaction rating for programs
ii.   Increase program attendance year over year using the year-end review as a measurement
iii.   Match range of programming to the demographics of community by offering at least two new programs each year
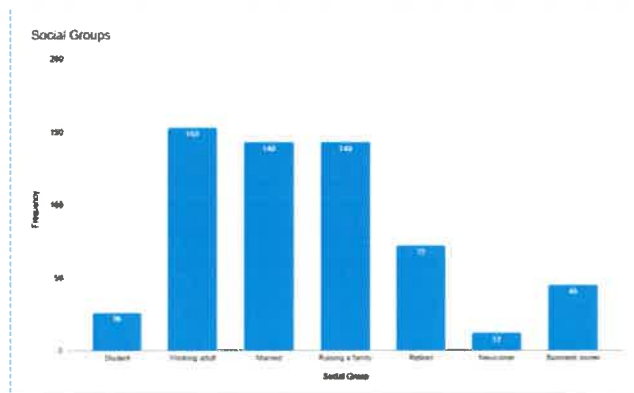
appendix

What did we learn from the community and users of the library?
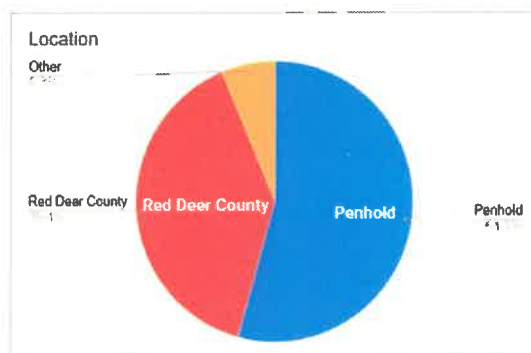
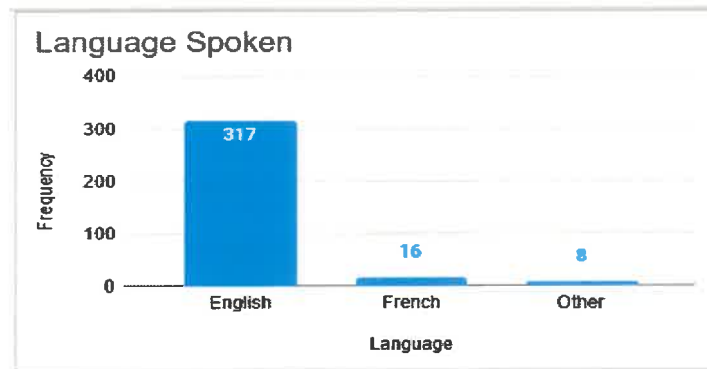1. What age group do you belong to?

2. Which of the following apply to you?

3. Where do you live?
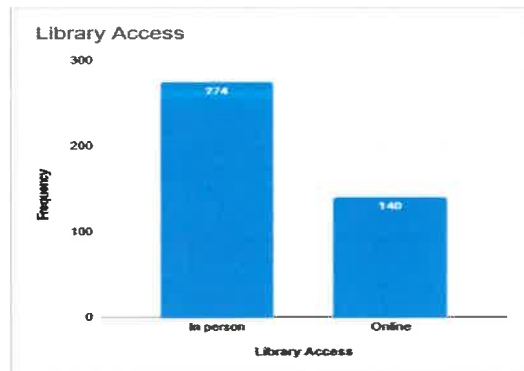
4. What language do you speak?

5. Do you have an active Library Card/Membership?

6. On average, how often do you access the library?

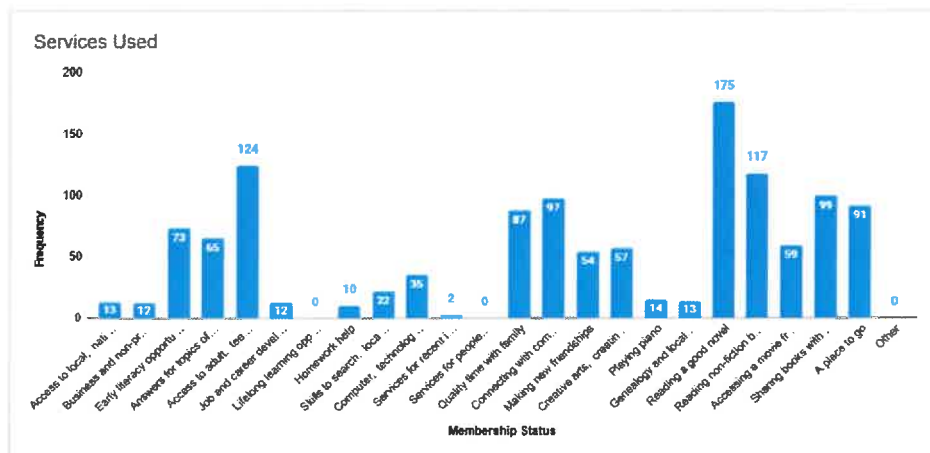| Library Visits	Frequency	Percentage
Daily	18	5.68%
Weekly	103	32.49%
Monthly	79	24.92%
Casually/Periodically	110	34.70%
Never (if selected, move to question 10)	7	2.21%
Totals	317	100.00%

7. How do you access the library?

8. Tell us why you use the library? (Check all that apply.)

Top 7	Frequency	Percentage
Reading a good novel	175	55.21%
Access to adult, teen and family literacy	124	39.12%
Reading non-fiction books	117	36.91%
Sharing books with my children	99	31.23%
Connecting with community	97	30.60%
A place to go	91	28.71%
Quality time with family	87	27.44%

9. What services do you use

10. Service Ratings

Services Rated	★★★★	Perce	★★★	%	★★	%	★	%	Totals
Adult programs	76	78.35%	18	18.56%	1	1.03%	2	2.06%	97
Teen programs	28	65.12%	9	20.93%	3	6.98%	3	6.98%	43
Baby programs (0 – 12 months)	35	76.09%	8	17.39%	2	4.35%	1	2.17%	46
Preschool programs (1 – 5 years)	69	88.46%	9	11.54%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	78
Children's programs (6 – 12 years)	64	82.05%	12	15.38%	2	2.56%	0	0.00%	78
Family programs	78	82.11%	14	14.74%	3	3.16%	0	0.00%	95
Adult books/resources	148	74.00%	43	21.50%	9	4.50%	0	0.00%	200
Teen books/resources	45	68.18%	15	22.73%	5	7.58%	1	1.52%	66
Children's books/resources	90	84.91%	13	12.26%	3	2.83%	0	0.00%	106
E-content (e-books, e-Audio, e-Magazines, etc)	65	62.50%	30	28.85%	8	7.69%	1	0.96%	104
DVD – Blu-ray collection	51	62.20%	26	31.71%	5	6.10%	0	0.00%	82
Public Computers	58	82.86%	7	10.00%	3	4.29%	2	2.86%	70
Internet access	62	84.93%	5	6.85%	4	5.48%	2	2.74%	73
Exam Proctoring	15	60.00%	6	24.00%	3	12.00%	1	4.00%	25
Printing, scanning, faxing services	5	50.00%	4	40.00%	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	10
Drop-in craft	71	81.61%	11	12.64%	3	3.45%	2	2.30%	87
Piano	26	63.41%	8	19.51%	5	12.20%	2	4.88%	41

11. How would you rate your library?

Library Rating

12. If you could change or add something to the library, its services and programs, what would that be?

- **Library Hours & Accessibility** – Many users requested extended hours, including opening on Mondays, earlier morning hours, more evening and weekend availability, and another late-night opening to better accommodate working adults, families, and students.
- **Expanded Programs for All Ages** – There is strong demand for:
  1. More **homeschool programs**, especially in STEAM subjects (art, science, cooking, coding, 3D printing).
  2. More **adult-only programming**, including a writer's club, community living room, general interest classes, and a monthly art program.
  3. More **teen activities**, such as Warhammer and other engaging events.
  4. More **after-work and weekend activities** for adults and families.
- **Better Book & Digital Resource Availability** – Users want:

1. A larger selection of **e-books, audiobooks, and physical books** in various genres (romance, LGBTQ+, Indigenous, self-help, and non-fiction).
2. **More copies of popular e-books** to reduce long wait times.
3. Improved **organization of books** (e.g., better genre placement, new book displays, seasonal themes).
4. Greater access to **book loan networks** (e.g., joining TRAC or Red Deer Library).

- **Membership & Fees** – Several users suggested making **library memberships free**, as many libraries in other regions do. Some recommended charging for specific programs instead of access to books.
- **Library Environment & Facilities** – Key concerns included:
    1. **Excessive noise**, especially from the piano, making it hard to read or study. Some requested designated quiet study areas with doors.
    2. Improved **safety protocols for computers**.
    3. More **event space**, such as a 100-person hall.
    4. **Home delivery of books** for seniors or rural residents.