

**2024-2027 Strategic Plan**  
**Ringwood Public Library**

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## Acknowledgements

*After the successful conclusion of our previous Strategic Plan 2019-2023, we have embarked on a new journey to further elevate our library's performance and impact. Over the past year, the Ringwood Public Library has engaged in the planning process. The Mission and Vision for the Library was refined, and this specific Strategic Plan developed for serving the community. In order to understand community needs, the Library engaged the public and key stakeholders in the strategic planning process. Strategic Planning meetings and focus groups were held consisting of Trustees, Library Staff and stakeholders in our community with various backgrounds, interests, and community responsibilities; and a Ringwood Public Library Community Survey was developed and distributed in both hard and electronic copies.*

*Through these efforts different community viewpoints were gathered to help shape this Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan provides focus and direction for operations, planning, and resource allocation resulting in clear goals, objectives, activities and expected outcomes. This Strategic Plan will inform all Library decisions.*

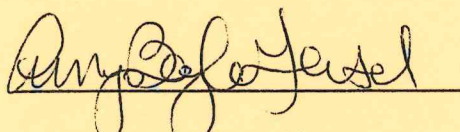
*Our new strategic plan is meticulously crafted to navigate the evolving landscape of our industry and seize emerging opportunities. No longer a five-year plan, the information landscape is constantly changing and our library needs to change with it. This Strategic Plan is developed for a three-year plan. With a clear focus on innovation, sustainability, literacy, and stakeholder engagement, we aim to not only meet but exceed expectations. By leveraging cutting-edge technologies, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and prioritizing inclusivity and diversity, we are poised to achieve sustainable growth and deliver exceptional value to our customers, employees, and communities. This strategic plan serves as our roadmap, guiding us towards achieving our overarching mission while remaining agile and adaptable in the face of change. We are confident in our ability to achieve our goals and create a brighter future for all.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

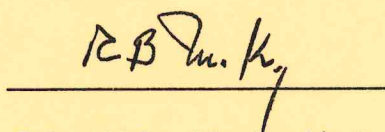
*Wendy Sandford*

Wendy Sandford, Director

The Ringwood Public Library Board of Trustees approve this Strategic Plan as written on 4/15/2024



Amy Boyle Geisel, President



Robert McKay, Vice-President



## Areas of Strategic Focus

Based on feedback, planning, and review, the Ringwood Public Library has identified four areas in which to focus its energy and focus.

1. *Community collaboration and engagement*
2. *Champion for literacy and lifelong learning*
3. *Bolstering the local history collection and its ease of access*
4. *Physical space and accessibility*

# Mission and Vision Statements

## Mission Statement of the Ringwood Public Library

The Ringwood Public Library is a welcoming resource center that serves the diverse needs of our patrons. Our purpose is to build a strong community by bringing people together, advancing literacy, fostering creativity, and encouraging lifelong learning and enrichment. We provide information, programs, and materials of recreational and educational interest to people of all ages and backgrounds.

Mission Statement Adopted 3/19/14; Amended 9/18/23

## Vision Statement of the Ringwood Public Library

We strive to be the essential destination where all generations engage, discover, create, and learn. Through excellence in robust collections, innovative programs, and accessible services, the Ringwood Public Library will connect the community to all forms of literacy of all forms.

Vision Statement Voted Adopted 3/19/14; Amended 9/19/23

## VALUES

Our library focuses on values that guide our mission, vision, and overall direction, including:

***Access:*** Ensuring equitable access to information, resources, and services for all community members, regardless of socioeconomic status, background, or ability.

***Inclusivity and Diversity:*** Embracing diversity and fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels welcome and represented.

***Education and Lifelong Learning:*** Supporting education and promoting lifelong learning by providing access to educational resources, programs, and services.

***Integrity:*** Committing to ethical behavior, honesty, and transparency in all operations and interactions.

**Innovation:** Embracing innovation and technological advancements to enhance services and meet evolving needs.

**Service Excellence:** Striving for excellence in customer service and continuously seeking ways to improve the patron experience.

**Community Engagement:** Engaging with the community to understand its needs and preferences, and actively involving community members in library decision-making processes and programming.

**Stewardship:** Responsible stewardship of resources, including financial, environmental, and cultural resources, to ensure sustainability for future generations.

**Collaboration:** Fostering partnerships and collaboration with other organizations, agencies, and stakeholders to maximize impact and leverage resources.

**Intellectual Freedom:** Upholding the principles of intellectual freedom and supporting the free exchange of ideas and information.

**Empowerment:** Empowering individuals to achieve their goals, make informed decisions, and participate fully in society.

**Adaptability:** Being adaptable and responsive to change, including technological advancements, shifts in demographics, and evolving community needs.

Our library adheres to the American Library Association's:

- **Library Bill of Rights**
- **Freedom to Read Statement**
- **Freedom to View Statement.**



## Strategic Focus Goal 1:

### *Community Collaboration and Engagement*

The Library serves as a hub, connecting people with community-wide information, services, and other community members. Involving the community in library activities and decisions creates a sense of ownership and belonging. Engaging with the community allows the library to better understand the needs and interests of its patrons. By actively seeking input from community members, the library can tailor its services, programs, and collections to meet those needs and contribute to the overall well-being of the community it serves.

Collaboration with community organizations, schools, businesses, and other institutions can extend our reach, access additional resources, and offer more diverse programming. Engaging with a diverse range of community members ensures that the library serves as a welcoming and inclusive space for all. By actively seeking out input from underrepresented groups, the library can work to address barriers to access and ensure that its services are accessible and relevant to everyone.

#### **Objective 1.1: Build and strengthen partnerships with local organizations and municipal departments to extend the reach of the Library and offer new programs and services.**

Activity: Explore and identify ways to work with local cultural, artistic, business and educational groups to implement joint initiatives.

Activity: Collaborate with libraries in surrounding towns to pool resources and extend the reach of the Library.

Activity: Investigate and identify ways to incorporate local community experts in programming.

Activity: Work with schools to organize joint programs and events that promote literacy, learning, and community engagement. This could include more class visits to the library, Librarian visits to schools, book clubs, STEM (Science Technology Engineering Mathematics) workshops, or educational seminars.

Activity: Collaborate with the Home School educated Ringwood population.

Activity: Collaborate with the Borough for partnerships with the new Community Recreation Center.

#### **Objective 1.2: Design and implement a comprehensive public relations outreach and communication plan to engage and inform the community about Library services and programs.**

Activity: Identify ways to increase Library presence throughout the community.

Activity: Explore ways to identify underserved groups, new residents, and non-library users and engage them with Library services and programs.

Activity: Broaden social media and newsletter marketing to reach new audiences.

Activity: Explore new ways to reach our patron base.



**Objective 1.3: Cultivate a culture of innovation by developing and implementing innovative programs that engage patrons and address evolving community needs.**

Activity: Develop innovative programs that engage patrons of all ages—either separately or in combination with each other.

Activity: Ensure that innovative programs are accessible to all members of the community, regardless of age, ability, socioeconomic status, or background.

Activity: Implement inclusive design principles to accommodate diverse needs and promote equity and inclusion in program delivery.

**Strategic Focus Goal 2:**

**Champion for Literacy and Lifelong Learning**

By providing resources and programs that support literacy and lifelong learning, our library plays a vital role in promoting education and intellectual growth within the community. Literacy and lifelong learning empowers individuals to acquire new skills, explore new ideas, and adapt to an ever-changing world. We help bridge the gap by providing free or affordable resources and programs to underserved communities, thus promoting equal access to education and knowledge. And, our library contributes to building a more educated and skilled workforce, which, in turn, can lead to economic growth and prosperity within the community.

**Objective 2.1: Community members of all ages are engaged with new and diverse Library programs and services.**

Activity: Host community events, workshops, and cultural programs to foster connections and dialogue among residents.

Activity: Develop strategies to deliver effective and responsive patron technology training.

Activity: Address patrons' desired language learning needs thorough literacy efforts, ESL program, and non-English language programs and collections.

**Objective 2.2: Foster and promote literacy of all kinds within the community.**

Activity: Invest in resources that support lifelong learning, personal development, and recreational interests, including books, films, and educational materials.

Activity: Provide training sessions and workshops to help community members navigate digital resources and improve digital literacy skills.

Activity: Provide robust Readers' Advisory training for all staff.

Activity: Promote continuous education, personal growth, and skill development for people of all ages.



**Objective 2.3: Increase access to relevant, up-to-date technology for Library patrons and staff and adapt to the evolving needs of its patrons.**

Activity: Explore the cost of implementing RFID technology for improved workflow, which will allow staff more time to interact with patrons

Activity: Investigate options for providing wifi printing capabilities allowing patrons to print from their own devices whether inside the library or from home.

Activity: Ensure that all technology resources and services are accessible to patrons with disabilities. Provide assistive technologies such as screen readers, magnifiers, and adaptive keyboards, and ensure that digital resources are compatible with accessibility standards.

Activity: Modify the library website including adding new content, refreshing existing content, meeting accessibility standards, and implementing design changes,

Activity: Train staff to guide patrons in the use of large Language Models, Generative AI, Web 2.0 and increase media literacy among residents of all ages.

Strategic Focus Goal 3:

### ***Bolstering the Local History Collection and its Accessibility***

Local history reflects the unique culture, traditions, and heritage of our community. Including local history in the library's strategic plan ensures that this cultural heritage is preserved for future generations. Local history materials can serve as valuable educational resources for researchers, genealogists and historians as well as students and lifelong learners alike. Local history archives provide insights into how the community has evolved over time, and helps people understand the history of their area-- likely resulting in feeling invested in its future and taking an active role in shaping it.

**Objective 3.1: Obtain, preserve and make accessible Local History materials.**

Activity: Determine what local history resources are available within the library.

Activity: Allocate a portion of the budget specifically for building and maintaining the local history collection.

Activity: Integrate local history initiatives into the library's long-term strategic plans.

Activity: Ensure that there are designated staff members responsible for overseeing local history efforts and securing ongoing support and funding.

Activity: Make local history materials easily accessible to the community.

**Objective 3.2: Develop educational programs and events that highlight local history.**

Activity: Involve the community in preserving and sharing their own history. Encourage individuals to donate or lend artifacts, documents, and photographs to the library's collection. (IDEA: Host community scanning events where residents can digitize their family photos and documents.)

Activity: Collaborate with local historians, authors, and educators to offer diverse programming for all ages including lectures, workshops, exhibits, tours, and genealogy workshops.

Activity: Collaborate with local organizations and institutions to strengthen our local history initiatives. This could involve joint programming, resource sharing, or co-sponsoring events.

**Strategic Focus Goal 4:**

**Physical Space and Accessibility**

While the digital landscape continues to evolve, physical space allows our library the flexibility to adapt to changing needs and preferences. They can be repurposed or redesigned to accommodate new services, technologies, or community demands. Physical space allows our library to offer a wide range of services beyond just lending books. This include workshops, concerts, programs, events, and access to specialized equipment or technology. By incorporating physical space into our strategic plan, we can ensure that we have the infrastructure and resources necessary to deliver these services effectively.

**Objective 4.1 Provide comfortable and engaging spaces for all ages and abilities.**

Activity: Assess the current layout and functionality of the library space to identify opportunities for improvement. Explore options for renovating or expanding the facility to accommodate growing community needs and programming

Activity: Identify and implement strategies to create quiet spaces within the Library building.

Activity: Explore and create MakerSpace Areas that are age appropriate; has highly visible and organized supply areas; and has staff monitoring capabilities, and appropriate sound barriers.

Activity: Renovate the Circulation Desk area.

Activity: Create a Memory Care Space for Dementia sufferers and their caregivers.



Activity: Enhance accessibility features, including ramps, signage, and technology accommodations, to ensure that the library is welcoming to all individuals.

Activity: Explore options for caregivers to access adult books and magazines while using the Children's Room.

**Objective 4.2 Redistribute Collection Areas.**

Activity: Explore methods to increase awareness of non-traditional Library collections and the Library of Things.

Activity: Reorganize the Young Adult book stacks for increased appeal and discovery.

Activity: Relocate the Audiobook collection.

Activity: Relocate the DVD and CD collections.

Activity: Create an area for the Middle School population.

Activity: Showcase collections, artifacts, and documents that are important to the community's historical heritage.

**Objective 4.3 Implement targeted initiatives that cater to the needs of underserved and diverse communities, thereby expanding the library's reach and impact within the local community.**

Activity: Provide access to computers, internet connectivity, and digital literacy training that can bridge the digital divide.

Activity: Provide service to the homebound.

Activity: Ensure that library facilities, materials, and programs are accessible to individuals with disabilities. This might involve providing assistive technologies, accessible formats, and accommodating physical spaces.

Activity: Library staff can undergo training to better understand and serve the needs of diverse communities sensitively.

## Appendix A: Ringwood Public Library Community Survey

Ringwood Public Library Strategic Plan  
Help us develop our Strategic Plan!

If you are a resident of Ringwood, please fill out the form below. If you aren't please email us at [ringwoodpl@ringwoodlibrary.org](mailto:ringwoodpl@ringwoodlibrary.org) Attn: strategic plan.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

How do you prefer we contact you? \_\_\_\_\_

How would you like to participate in our strategic plan? Check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Completing online survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Small focus group participation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteering on the committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Something else I will share below

Comments:

For the purposes of developing the plan, what areas of the library would you be interested in focusing on? Check all that apply.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Children's Dept. (ages birth-14)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Young Adult and New Adult (ages 14-30)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult (ages 30-60)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seniors (ages 60 and up)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Science, Technology, Engineering, Math (STEM) programs and resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hobbies
<input type="checkbox"/>	Community outreach and relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Library Association and Board of Trustees
<input type="checkbox"/>	Friends of the Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fundraising
<input type="checkbox"/>	Business or Entrepreneurship	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local history projects and archive development
<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Something else I will explain below

Comments:

Is there anything else you would like to tell us at this time?

Your contribution in the planning process will help us to focus our resources and budget in the coming years on areas that the community value. We can't do it without your help so thank you.



## Appendix B: Strategic Plan Committee Meeting Agenda (sample)

### **Strategic Plan Community Meeting**

November 2, 2023 7:00PM

Via Zoom

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Review current status of the strategic planning process
- Mission and Vision Statements

### **Ringwood Public Library Mission Statement**

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### **Ringwood Public Library Vision Statement**

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- Community Needs Discussion
  - What do you want or need from your library?
  - Where do we meet or exceed expectations? Where do we fall short?
  - What ways do you feel are effective for us to communicate about library programs and offerings?
  - If you are a library user, what brings you in?
  - If you are not a library user, what keeps you from using our services?
  - Do you have any feedback of your own or things you have heard from members of the community that we should be aware of?
- Goals and next steps
- Q&A and wrap up

We will limit this meeting to the length of one hour. Please give everyone a chance to speak and be heard. Please keep your microphone muted unless you are actively speaking. Comments can be made by speaking or typing into the chat. If the meeting runs longer we will schedule a second part.

## APPENDIX C: The Library Bill of Rights/American Library Association

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

1. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
2. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
4. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
5. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
6. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

*Adopted June 18, 1948.*

*Amended February 2, 1961, and January 23, 1980.*

*Adopted by Library Executive Board July 22, 1999*



## APPENDIX D: Freedom to Read Statement/American Library Association

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.
2. Publishers, librarians and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.
3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.
4. There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.
5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the books or author as subversive or dangerous.
6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.
7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

*Adopted by Library Executive Board July 22, 1999*

## Appendix E: Freedom to View Statement/American Library Association

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Adopted January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Adopted by Library Executive Board July 17, 2023



