



Plan of Service  
2015 – 2020  
Revised

Adopted by the Village of Alix Library Board on May 19, 2015

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement		p. 3
Roles of the Library		p. 3
Planning Process		p. 4
Needs Assessment		p. 4
Visit a Comfortable Space		
Goal 1:	We will create a welcoming library environment where everyone wants to be.	p. 4
Goal 2:	We will create safe and accessible virtual spaces.	P. 4
Goal 3:	Residents and visitors will enjoy a safe, attractive outdoor space on library grounds.	p. 5
Know Your Community		
Goal 1:	The library will host a wealth of information for residents, visitors and newcomers to connect with community agencies, services and activities.	p. 5
Satisfy Curiosity		
Goal 1:	Everyone will have the opportunities they need to explore topics of personal interest to continue as lifelong learners.	p. 5
Long Term Goals		p. 6
Appendix A		p. i
Appendix B		p. vii

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Alix Public Library is committed to providing a variety of quality services and materials to meet the identified needs of library patrons of every age.

## **ROLES OF THE LIBRARY**

The roles of the Alix Public Library are as follows:

1. To enhance and raise the literacy awareness of the community and offer lifelong learning opportunities.
2. To provide access to current fiction and non-fiction, in a variety of formats, for all ages in the community.
3. To create public awareness of library services through special programs, advertising and community outreach.
4. To provide a range of Library services during the hours that will accommodate the needs of individuals in the community (some morning, some afternoon, and some evening).
5. To provide free computer and Internet access to members of the public.
6. To provide a friendly, welcoming and safe environment for all.

## **PLANNING PROCESS**

Our Library Manager and Board compiled a Needs & Wants Survey in the fall/winter of 2013/2014. The Board and Library Manager, with assistance from Parkland Regional Library consultants, conducted a Community Needs Assessment Meeting February 23, 2015. Various concerns and issues raised by the Survey and Community Needs Assessment were discussed and incorporated in this Plan of Service.

## **NEEDS ASSESSEMENT**

Our Needs Assessment highlighted the following service responses upon which we would particularly like to concentrate:

1. Visit a Comfortable Place
2. Know Your Community.
3. Satisfy Curiosity

## **VISIT A COMFORTABLE PLACE**

**Goal 1** We will create a welcoming library environment where everyone wants to be.

### Objectives

- We will increase the number of visitors to the library by an average of 10% each year.
- The existing library will be refreshed and redecorated in order to create “zones” to better manage user needs.
- A feasibility study into expansion options will be undertaken and completed.

**Goal 2** We will create safe and accessible virtual spaces.

### Objectives

- A revamped website with specific areas dedicated to particular user groups will be launched.
- The website will get an average increase of 10% per year.

**Goal 3** Residents and visitors will enjoy a safe, attractive outdoor space on library grounds.

#### Objectives

- Increase usage of library outdoor areas for programming and individual use by 10%.

## **KNOW YOUR COMMUNITY**

**Goal 1** The library will host a wealth of information for residents, visitors and newcomers to connect with community agencies, services and activities.

#### Objectives

- We will host a community information page on the library website and links to groups and resources in Alix.
- We will host or participate in 4 community expo events each year.
- By the end of 2016, 80% of patrons surveyed on their use of the library's community information web pages will indicate their information needs were met.
- By the end of 2017, the library will partner with two local organizations to deliver joint programming to the local community.

## **SATISFY CURIOSITY**

**Goal 1** Adults, teens and children will have the opportunities they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue as lifelong learners.

#### Objectives

- We will host an average of 5 programming events per year to satisfy curiosity.
- We will increase library memberships by 15%.
- We will increase juvenile circulation by 25%.
- Each year 80% of users surveyed who respond that the library's collection of materials for pursuing personal interests is very good or excellent.

## **LONG TERM GOALS**

It is an ongoing goal of the Village of Alix Library Board to have a new facility, possibly shared with other organizations in the community. This new facility would preferably be all on one level so that we may provide barrier free access more effectively serve our patrons, as well as provide sufficient room to offer more programming and technological opportunities.

It is also a goal of the Village of Alix Library Board to continue to be a vital presence in the community.

# **Alix Community Needs Assessment Focus Group February 23, 2015**

Facilitated by Rhonda O'Neill and Colleen Schalm, Parkland Regional Library

As part of the process of managing and controlling a municipal library, *The Alberta Libraries Regulation* requires Library Boards to file a new Plan of Service with the Minister at least every five years. The Plan of Service must contain a mission statement and goals and objectives based on a needs assessment of the municipality or municipalities served by the board. To that end, a meeting was organized by the Village of Alix Library Board to inform the development of a new five-year Plan of Service. The Library Board selected a group of individuals to represent a broad cross-section of the Village of Alix and surrounding areas. Individuals were invited to the meeting based on their knowledge of community issues and their ability to represent the interests of one or more stakeholder groups. A number of community members were invited to attend, 11 were present at the meeting.

## **MEETING OBJECTIVES:**

- Participants will understand their role in the library's strategic planning process
- Participants will describe the ideal future for the Village of Alix and surrounding district
- Participants will identify the current strengths and weaknesses of the Village of Alix that might affect achieving the ideal future
- Participants will identify the needs that must be addressed to reach the ideal future of the community
- Participants will identify those needs that could be service priorities for the library

## **The Ideal Future for Alix (Community Vision):**

*Picture your community ten years from now. Imagine that your community and its people have been successful beyond belief. Your community is a place everyone is proud to call home. Now describe what makes it so wonderful. What benefits do people receive from living here? Consider different educational levels, incomes, ethnicities, religious groups, lengths of residence, professions, etc. List the benefits and results that different groups receive in this ideal future version of your community.*

## **VISION STATEMENTS:**

This activity was accomplished in three stages: individuals brainstormed ideas; individuals shared their ideas in small groups and recorded group vision statements; small group vision statements were read aloud and recorded on flipcharts by the facilitators. Responses, both group and individual, follow over the next two pages.

### **Seniors:**

- Seniors will have knowledge about and use of community facilities
- Seniors will have meal services (meals on wheels)
- Seniors will have accessible facilities
- Seniors will have local and regional transportation (community based – volunteer?)
- Seniors will have an enhanced sense of community
- Seniors will have a gathering place or centre
- Seniors will have opportunities for continuous learning of subjects of interest
- Seniors will have intergenerational gathering places and opportunities
- Seniors will have affordable assisted living services
- Seniors will have programs and services to help them age in place and stay in their community (cleaning, visitations, buddy systems, senior aides for home care)
- Seniors will have access to health care in the community, including convenient prescription refills.
- Seniors will have access to suitable exercise and recreational activities

### **Adults:**

- Adults will have activities for Leisure Time
- Adults will have access to financial institutions and professional services in order to do business locally.
- Adults will be encouraged to start/organize events for the community
- All adults will have places to meet as groups with others who share common interests (clubs, quilting, photography, etc.)
- Adults will have access to continuing education

### **Teens:**

- Teens will have structured programs and activities
- Teens will have opportunities to volunteer and be involved in the community
- Teens will have opportunities to be a part of the planning processes in the community
- Teens will have opportunities to discover latent or hidden talents and explore their creativity
- Teens will have safe places to hang out and be teens (away from school) with Wi-Fi
- Teens will have access to diverse educational opportunities to prepare for post-secondary studies/careers and develop as people.
- Teens will have access to high speed internet to keep up with their urban counterparts

### **Families:**

- Families will have access to community activities (i.e. church, social clubs, recreation, library)
- Families will have opportunities to engage with the community as families
- Families will have access to health care in the community
- Families will have access to services in town (groceries, clothing, household, etc.)

### **Children:**

- Children will have safe recreation opportunities both in and outdoors (skateboard park, dances, arena)
- Children will have access to programs (educational, tutoring)
- Children will have opportunities to develop creativity
- Children will have opportunities for personal growth
- Children will have opportunities to develop a spirit of volunteerism
- Children will have safe places to play and be children
- Children will have programs to help them prepare for teen years



**Preschoolers:**

- Preschoolers will have opportunities for programs to socialize, learn and unplug
- Preschoolers will have opportunities to develop skills and school readiness
- Preschoolers and their parents will have opportunities to network
- Preschoolers will have access to outdoor activities

**Parents of Preschoolers:**

- Parents of preschoolers will have support networks (e.g. group activities, coffee time)
- Parents of preschoolers will have access to parenting skills development

**Dog Owners:**

- Dog owners will have access to safe off-leash areas with space to explore (nature trail)
- Dog owners will have access to garbage cans and waste disposal bags on the nature trail as well as downtown
- Dog owners will have access to a small dog park (fenced empty lot)
- Dog owners will have access to services for their pets in town (vet, pet store, dog walkers club)

**All Residents:**

- All residents will have expanded first response service (speedy transport, ambulance)
- All residents will experience an enhanced sense of community
- All residents will feel empowered to create opportunities to engage with the community
- All residents will have access to places where people gather to pursue mutual interests
- All residents will have access to continuous learning
- All residents will have access to services locally (shopping, fuel, medical & professional)
- All residents will have access to diverse places of worship
- All residents will have access to opportunities for community health promotion including community gardens
- All residents will live in a safe community (i.e. increased police presence, community patrol, etc.)
- All residents will live in a clean community (more garbage receptacles)
- All residents including new residents will have access to information on Alix (Alix information package including information on important numbers, businesses, services, hours, etc.)
- All residents will receive assistance to live better, healthier lives (homeless people will be cared for and encouraged to become self-sufficient)
- All residents will be able to use the library and attend programs of interest there.

**CURRENT COMMUNITY ANALYSIS:**

*The factors that will affect your community's ability to achieve your identified vision statements*

Meeting participants conducted a community analysis to determine the strengths and weaknesses within the Village of Alix as well as the opportunities and challenges beyond the town. This activity was accomplished in three stages: small groups brainstormed ideas; facilitators wrote all the ideas on flipcharts; facilitators read aloud and clarified ideas. All responses from the flipcharts are recorded below.

**Current factors that help Alix achieve its vision:**

- Residents: caring citizens and great dedicated volunteers.
- Revitalized Main Street with a nicely developing downtown
- Located between Lacombe and Stettler
- Alix Community hall
- K-12 school within the community
- Alix Arena
- Alix Agricultural Grounds (AG PLEX)

- Alix has a great campground
- Hotel/motel in the community
- Restaurants
- Alix Public Library is connected with all Alberta libraries
- Alix is a small town – best place to raise families
- Alix has a good core of starter businesses and recreational buildings
- There are adequate businesses to serve the population
- Alix has a beautiful lake and nature trail as attractions
- There is a local fire department
- Garbage and road plowing services
- Recycling
- Alix has a fuel outlet
- Alix has a Village Shoppe
- Alix is located close to highways and rail lines, close to major centres
- Local events – Alix Days – more than one group is involved in making activities happen (i.e. fire department does the breakfast)
- Diverse population and demographics (multi-cultural)
- Large drawing area outside the Village – boundaries – there is a larger community
- The Village and the County have a good relationship
- Alix has a museum

**Current factors that hinder Alix in reaching its vision:**

- A small population means a small tax base
- Aging infrastructure
- Aging volunteer base
- Alix not self-sufficient (need outside services and assistance)
- Social and professional services come from outside the community (not located in Alix)
- Lack of competition in businesses can reduce options and raise prices for consumers
- High cost of utilities
- Lack of medical facilities
- Local first response cannot transport people to facilities in nearby communities

**Current factors that hinder Alix in reaching its vision (continued):**

- Residents are not engaged and don't volunteer
- Negativity
- Fear of change culture
- Fear of lawsuits – nobody moves, takes risks – insurance issue shuts things down
- Perceived as too far from Red Deer
- Power struggles
- Isolation, groups work in silos
- Limited volunteer base (20% do 80% of the work)
- Lack of participation in events
- Small town mentality dampens/inhibits people from doing things

## COMMUNITY NEEDS

*What community needs have to be addressed to make progress toward the vision? What are our community needs?*

Comparing the vision statements with the community analysis, the Community Planning Committee identified 7 needs for moving the Village of Alix forward. Committee members first worked in small groups to identify and record community needs in short, specific phrases. Needs from each group were shared with the whole group and sorted into similar categories. Then, as a whole, the Committee created a need statement for each category. These need statements were recorded by the facilitators.

## IDENTIFYING NEEDS FOR LIBRARY SERVICE PRIORITIES

*Preliminary selection and prioritization of community needs that the Alix Public Library could contribute to meeting through its Plan of Service. What role can the library play in the next three to five years in moving the community towards its vision?*

The purpose of this activity was to identify those community needs that the library could make a contribution to fulfilling and then to select the community needs on which the library might focus. The “Needs Decision Tree” model was used to determine whether or not the library could be involved in meeting each of the need statements. Those deemed not relevant to the library were removed. Each of the Committee members then received three dots with which to vote for the one, two, or three needs they felt should be the highest priority for the library in the next five-year Plan of Service.

The chart that follows lists each of the needs identified through small group work, and shows those needs that were grouped together as well as the resulting need statement. The final column indicates whether the need statement was identified as being relevant to library service planning and the number of votes the need statement received as a library service priority.

A number of the group’s initial vision statements were dropped along the way to identifying needs the library could play a role in meeting. It may be beneficial for the Village of Alix Library Board and Alix Public Library Manager to revisit these vision statements in selecting service responses for the library that meet the needs of the community. A copy of this report may be shared with those individuals who participated in the process by attending the needs assessment. Additionally, a copy of this report may be shared with other individuals and organizations in the community, particularly those who might play a role in meeting community needs for which the library has no role.

Need statements in GREEN were identified as needs in which the Library could play a role in meeting.

Need statements in BLUE were identified as having no relevance to the Library's strategic planning and service delivery.

Needs identified on the yellow cards			Need statement	Relevance to library/ Priority level
Alix needs a larger tax base	Alix needs cash		Alix needs access to increased funding/more money	No role for library
Alix needs Police/Security	Alix needs Essential Services		Alix needs more comprehensive essential services (including police, medical, ambulance, transportation, senior supports)	No role for library
Alix needs more business development	Alix needs more businesses (owners) and services		Alix needs more business development for diversity and competition	No role for library
Alix needs population growth	Alix needs more people (kids)	Alix needs a bigger population	Alix needs more families to grow our population	***
Alix needs more promotion externally			Alix needs to promote itself to attract businesses, residents and tourists	*****
Alix needs more effective ongoing communication to residents			Alix needs more effective ongoing communication to residents	*****
Alix needs pride in the community	Alix needs to have a shared vision	Alix needs to have community group cooperation	Alix needs a cohesive caring community with a shared vision	*****
	Alix needs more volunteers	Alix needs enthusiastic people		
	People of Alix need to care for the greater good (selflessness)	Alix needs a cohesive sense of community & a desire to make Alix the best village/town in Alberta		

# LIBRARY USER'S SURVEY – FALL 2013

Please check the applicable boxes:

Male		Female		Resident of Alix		Resident of County	
------	--	--------	--	------------------	--	--------------------	--

Age:	Child (up to 12 yrs.)	Youth (13-18 yrs.)	18-30 yrs.	30-40 yrs.	
	40-50 yrs.	50-60 yrs.	60-70 yrs.	Over 70 yrs.	

Preferred Days and Hours of Library Operations: (Check only 3 days and 2 continuous blocks of time for each day)

Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	
10 a.m.-1 p.m.	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	10 a.m.-1 p.m.	
1 p.m.- 4 p.m.	1 p.m.- 4 p.m.	1 p.m.- 4 p.m.	1 p.m.- 4 p.m.	1 p.m.- 4 p.m.	
4 p.m.- 8 p.m.	4 p.m.- 8 p.m.	4 p.m.- 8 p.m.	4 p.m.- 8 p.m.	4 p.m.- 8 p.m.	

Please indicate the types of Library materials/service you mostly use of would like to have available to you:

Newspapers	Local	Red Deer	Edmonton	Other	Name:	
Magazines	People	Hello	Women's	Reader's Digest		
Fiction	Mystery	Romance	Western	Fantasy	Science Fiction	
	Crime	Spy	War	Horror	Historical Fiction	
Non-Fiction	Biography	Arts/Crafts	Literature	Psychology	Health/Wellness	
	History	Philosophy	Religion	Travel	"How To" Books	
Computers	E-mail	Research	Games	News Items	Word Processing	
Programmes	Children's Reading	Arts & Crafts	Writing Workshops	Basic Computer	Adult Book Club – read & discuss	

Would you like books in large print?    Yes     More audio books?    Yes

Please share any other comments/suggestions on the back of the page.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION. ALIX PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

## Results: Alix Public Library User's Survey-Fall 2013

Total # of surveys received: 26

Gender:	Male	3	Place of Residence:	Village of Alix	8
	Female	21		County of Lacombe	10
	Unknown	3		County of Stettler	1
				Unknown	6
Age Range: (of users)	Child (up to 12 yrs)		40-50 yrs	3	Unknown 1
	Youth (13-18)	1	50-60 yrs	8	
	18-30 yrs	2	60-70 yrs	7	
	30-40 yrs	1	Over 70 yrs	4	
Preferred Hours/Days: of operation	Tuesday		10 a.m.-1 p.m.	15	
			1 p.m.-4 p.m.	20	
			4 p.m.-8 p.m.	2	
	Wednesday		10 a.m.-1 p.m.	3	
			1 p.m.-4 p.m.	6	
			4 p.m.-8 p.m.	3	
	Thursday		10 a.m.-1 p.m.	12	
			1 p.m.-4 p.m.	18	
			4 p.m.-8 p.m.	4	
	Friday		10 a.m.-1 p.m.	5	
			1 p.m.-4 p.m.	8	
			4 p.m.-8 p.m.	2	
	Saturday		10 a.m.-1 p.m.	15	
			1 p.m.-4 p.m.	16	
			4 p.m.-8 p.m.	1	
Types of Materials:	Newspapers		Local	2	
			Red Deer	5	
			Edmonton	3	
	Magazines		People	5	
			Hello	2	
			Womans	5	
			Reader's Digest	4	
			Others	6	
	Fiction		Mystery	13	Crime 7
			Romance	8	Spy 2
			Western	5	War 3
			Fantasy	4	Horror 3
			Science Fiction	5	Historical Fiction 5

	Non-Fiction	Biography	12	History	5
		Arts/Crafts	9	Philosophy	3
		Literature	4	Religion	8
		Psychology	5	Travel	4
		Health/Wellness	11	“How to” Books	7
Types of Services:	Computer	E-mail	4	News Items	3
		Research	5	Word Processing	3
		Games	0		
	Programmes	Children’s Reading	8	Basic Computer	5
		Arts & Crafts	7	Adult Book Club	3
		Writing Workshop	4		
Would You Like Books in Large Print?		Yes	12		
More Audio Books?		Yes	11		

*\*not all questions were answered or even answered correctly. The results were compiled to the best of our knowledge.*