



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025



medicine hat public library



# mission, vision, and values

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Medicine Hat Public Library serves as a community hub, providing equitable and convenient access to books, media, information, and programs that help to educate, enrich, entertain and inform.

## VALUES

- Equitable Access & Inclusion
- Freedom of Information
- Lifelong Learning
- Intellectual Freedom
- Connecting Community



## VISION STATEMENT

The Medicine Hat Public Library is a valued resource, fostering lifelong learning and enhancing the vitality of the community now and into the future.



# message from the chief

2025 was a successful year for the library. It was the first full year of service at the Big Marble Go Centre. Our little unstaffed library there runs on the honour system, which saves money on technology and staff time. We lose some statistical measures this way, but we can see the collection is well used. We also hear the community is happy with it through our surveys, social media, and other feedback.

We grew our always popular programming during 2025. Our Reconnecting to Play programs are usually filled to capacity. Our first Big Truck Day at the Big Marble Go Centre was a huge success, with 700 people attending despite the rain.

Demand for electronic resources grows every year, and eBooks and eAudiobooks in particular are hugely popular in the community. These materials are often expensive but we want to give people what

they want so we made a major extra purchase in 2025. It made a significant difference and reduced waiting times significantly. This purchase was made possible by generous community donations.

2025 was also a year of planning for us as the Board prepared a new Plan of Service. This strategic plan tells staff what to prioritize over the next few years. Board members did all the public consultation - and there was a lot. They talked to hundreds of Hatters and were at many public events and meetings.

There are storm clouds on the horizon in 2026. The Province is planning to impose restrictions on public library collections. All library materials, including adult collections, will have to meet government regulations. This will include items like art books, graphic novels, and more. It is a

violation of intellectual freedom unlike anything else in Canada. How will we review our collection of over a quarter million items? Will we wall off sections of our library and check ID to ensure that only adults can enter? Or will we take forbidden books off public shelves and require adults to ask for them? Will entire collections like DVDs have to disappear to maintain open

access to spaces? We don't know. The government does not seem to be considering operational realities as it goes down the problematic road of censorship and control.

On a happier note: I would like to thank our hard working Board, our volunteers like the Friends who run book sales, our staff who put their hearts into their work, and our community for supporting us and making it all possible. Thank you all for all that you do.

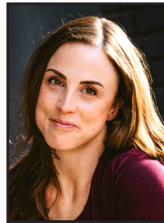


**Ken Feser**  
Chief Librarian

# 2025 board members

The City of Medicine Hat Public Library Board governs the Medicine Hat Public Library and the delivery of library services to the community. It is responsible for communicating with funders and the community, aligning library services with community needs and managing library operations on a governance level.

Board members are appointed by City Council as required. The board has monthly public meetings (except in summer) and board committees typically meet monthly as well. Board vacancies are normally advertised in the fall on the City's website. Community members are encouraged to apply.



Board members from top left: Shandra Beaulieu, Inez Brady-Halaska, Simone Harty, Megan Hilgendorf, M.B. Kaethler, Peter Mueller, Tanya Ridgedale, Ramona Robins, Nathan Vanderham, Juanita Whalen.

# our patrons



There were **167,360** visits to the library (169,852 in 2024).



**13,069** people have a library card.

**23,543** questions were answered at our desks (25,171 in 2024).

# our collection

There are **120,932** items in our physical collection.

We added **7,648** items to the collection last year.

All counted, there were **491,783** total checkouts (509,138 in 2024).



A total of **144,161** e-content downloads were made (133,966 in 2024).



# PLAN OF SERVICE

## 2021-2025

A Plan of Service is a strategic plan which defines what services the library will focus on. Libraries can do a lot of different things and we need to pick priorities.

Here are our goals from 2021-2025 and some of the actions we took to meet those goals:

**HEALTH AND SAFETY:**  
"The Library will keep staff and patron

safety top-of-mind and will adjust for public health realities."

- Brought guards into the library
- Built a dedicated washroom for the Children's Library

### **COMMUNITY:**

"The Library will build community by bringing people together."  
• Delivered new programs including Reconnecting to Play

- Developed Social Worker role and Casual Cash Employment initiative

### **ACCESS:**

"The Library will remove barriers that prevent or discourage citizens from accessing services."  
• Implemented a new self-serve library service at the Big Marble Go Centre  
• Expanded ebook and audiobook collections



# PLAN OF SERVICE 2026-2030

In 2025 the Library developed a new Plan of Service for 2026-2030. We heard from the community that affordability and social connection are big issues. We learned that we should try and serve more Hatters, and expand out of our downtown location to make service convenient.

The Library Board talked to hundreds of Hatters about what the Library should do to meet their needs. Based on community input, the Board selected three strategic goals for 2026-2030:

## **EXPANSION:**

The Library will address barriers by expanding geographically.

## **SUPPORT:**

The Library will maintain a welcoming space for everyone.

## **CONNECTION:**

The Library will enhance its role as a community hub by creating connections and liaising between generations and people.

The full Plan of Service is available at the Library or on our website at [www.mhpl.shortgrass.ca](http://www.mhpl.shortgrass.ca).

We've begun implementing the new plan. Watch our social media and check out our program guide to see new developments as they happen!



# staff & volunteers



We have **42** dedicated staff who deliver services and programs.



**61** volunteers, board members and Friends of the Library donated many hours of their time to MHPL.

# our programs



We ran **1,462** programs for children, teens and adults (1,599 in 2024).

A total of **44,480** people attended our programs (45,151 in 2024).

# other services

## **SOCIAL WORK**

- our social work team continues to be an asset to the library, providing dignified, low-barrier access to the system of care, supporting library staff and members of the community.

## **HONEYCOMB HOUSE**

- a drop-in space for teens ages 13-19 to connect, create, study, relax, game, and/or hang out.

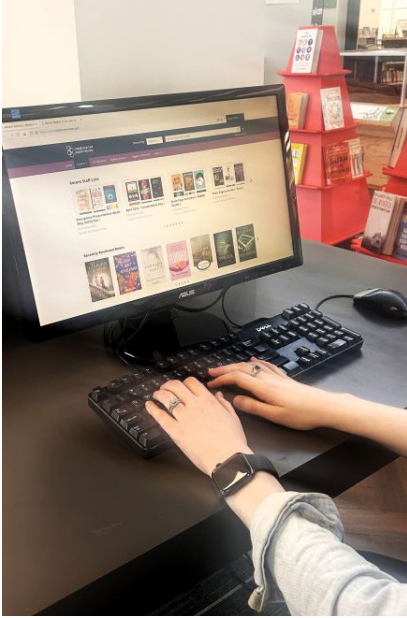
## **HOMEBOUND SERVICES**

- bring library materials and resources to people unable to come to the library.

## **ROOM BOOKINGS**

- two meeting rooms and a theatre are available for rental at reasonable rates. All are fully accessible, adaptable for a variety of needs and equipped with internet connectivity and projection screens.

# online presence



**410,438** website visits (487,130 in 2024).

**29,100** wifi connections (27,434 in 2024).

## Social Media

@MHPublicLibrary

**7,751** Facebook followers (7,157 in 2024).

**4,198** Instagram followers (3,854 in 2024).

**2,363** TikTok followers (1,244 in 2024).



@MHPLTeens

**1,238** Instagram followers (1,127 in 2024).

**3,033** TikTok followers (2,880 in 2024).

# online resources

eAudiobooks: **53,653 borrowed** (42,382 in 2024).

eBooks: **65,415 borrowed** (70,012 in 2024).

Ancestry: **1,660 searches** (2,084 in 2024).

Consumer Reports: **6,260 page views** (7,721 in 2024).

Kanopy: **1,657 plays** (2025 was the first full year of this service)

PressReader: **1,926,978 articles read** (1,833,173 in 2024), and **71,459**

**issues opened.**

Pronunciator: **271 logins** (389 in 2024). (replaced by  
Transparent Languages Online in July)

Solaro: **8,189 lessons/quizzes/tests** (3,116 in 2024).

Tumblebooks: **1,061 book views** (1,009 in 2024).

Udemy: **755 hours and 15 minutes spent watching and 486 active users,**  
(822 hours and 35 minutes and 202 in 2024), and **7,122 lectures completed.**



# revenues & expenses

## Revenue

<i>City of Medicine Hat</i>	\$2,666,106
<i>Province of Alberta</i>	\$367,237
<i>Reserves</i>	\$69,948
<i>Sales, Service, and Other</i>	\$107,488
<i>Employment Grants</i>	\$111,725
<i>Other Grants/Donations*</i>	\$54,407

*\*See the back cover for a list of donors*

## Expenses

<i>Friendly, Helpful, Well-loved Staff</i> (wages, benefits, WCB, etc.)	\$2,283,442
<i>Materials and Programs</i>	\$576,223
<i>Building, Utilities, Computers and Maintenance</i>	\$318,922
<i>Everything Else</i>	\$197,324

# thank you, donors

We can't do what we do here without the support of our incredible donors.

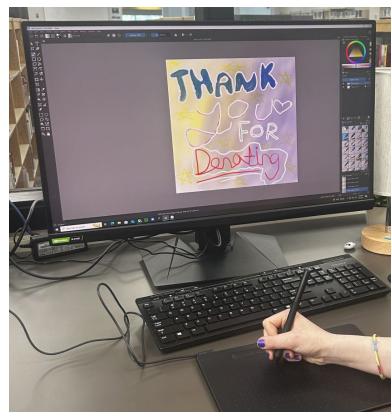
Sometimes they are large donations such as Cancarb's annual support of the Banff Mountain Film Festival World Tour; sometimes they have a heartwarming story like the donation of three book club kits from The Best Book Club Ever; sometimes it's those loose coins and bills you put in the donation box at the Info Desk; sometimes it's the community groups and businesses that sponsor library card, a program which is entering its fifth year.

Your continued generosity helps make our programs and services as successful as they are, and helps make the library an integral part of the community.

For more information call 403-502-8527 or click 'Donate' in the footer of our website.

Armour, Joan  
Batchelder, Bob  
Banff Mountain Film Festival  
World Tour  
Bileski, Allyne  
Bullshead Ranch  
Cancarb  
City of Medicine Hat  
Community Foundation of  
Southeastern Alberta - Donna  
MacLean Library Fund  
Crane, Carol  
Croissant, Janice  
Curtain, Marilyn  
Cypress County Library Board  
Dr. Who Society of Canada  
Elizabeth McNally Real Estate  
Collective  
Fodoruk, Olha  
Frey, Terry Lynn and Anonymous  
Friedt, Kent

Friends of the Medicine Hat  
Public Library Society  
Garrecht, Caroline  
Hancock, Katelyn  
Hansen, Jennifer  
Hoefler, Lindsay  
Hok, Caitlin  
Holyland, Audrey  
Jadden, Leigh  
Jensen, Frances  
Klein, Kristin  
Lee, Judy S.  
Lewis, Bee  
McIvor, Dennis  
McKay, Cristina  
McKay, Kirk  
Medicine Hat Coin & Stamp  
Club  
Medicine Hat Sunrise Rotary  
Club  
Munro, Hilary



Neubauer, Janet  
Porter, Cindy  
Prokosch, Christine and Jason  
Repp, Gord and Vivian  
Robinson, Donna  
Sanchez, Rose and Josh  
Southeast Alberta Sundogs  
Cornhole League  
Stadnyk, Laurie  
Shortgrass Library System  
The Best Book Club Ever  
Townsend, Bob  
Townsend, Raymond and Lori  
Travois Ale Works LTD  
Walton, Garry and Bonnie  
Whidden, John  
Women of the Moose  
Yeast, Shannon



*Please let us know if you'd like to make  
a contribution to our future.*



414 First Street SE, Medicine Hat, AB | 403-502-8525 | [mhpl.shortgrass.ca](http://mhpl.shortgrass.ca)