



LONG RANGE PLAN

2024-2027

ABSTRACT

Advancing Access: A Long-Range Plan for Library Excellence

Mark & Emily Turner Memorial Library

Facilitated by: City staffers, Library Board of Trustees, and patrons in our community of practice.

Strategic Framework:

The Mark & Emily Turner Memorial Library presents this planning document as a guide to enhancing library and information services for our community members, constituents, and visitors to Presque Isle. In keeping with our 116-year history, we remain on a path of continuous improvement, listening to our community needs, and responding and adapting to change. Within this document are five areas identified for strategic improvement: facilities, engagement and relationships, neighborhood development, The Library House at 228 State, and Collections.

The 2021 City of Presque Isle Comprehensive Plan states, “Continue efforts to expand recreational opportunities and offerings for all City residents.” Libraries support recreational opportunities in many ways: access to recreational materials; programs, events, and workshops; digital resources; community spaces, information and resources; and collaboration with other organizations. Each area of focus will be reviewed by City staff and Trustees quarterly for relevance and completion of goals.

Mission:

The mission of the Mark and Emily Turner Memorial Library is to provide quality materials and services in a comfortable, open environment. We strive to enhance lifelong learning and personal growth while fostering a community connection.

Vision Statement:

The Mark & Emily Turner Memorial Library is a thriving community hub where knowledge flourishes, curiosity is ignited, and connections are cultivated, inspiring lifelong learning and enriching lives for generations to come.

Core Values:

Our core values include: cultural preservation, diversity and inclusion, equitable access, community engagement, and service excellence. To ensure that our Values remain in memory, we will create signage for our patrons and publish the list on all online social media platforms regularly.



An Overview of Services:

The Library serves an estimated population of 8,678 persons in Presque Isle and additional persons from surrounding towns, is open 56 hours weekly plus regular special after-hours events. Our total public service hours in 2023 totals 2,912. The total physical collection is 61,087 with an additional 20,411 in e-content. Also in 2023, we counted 29,446 visits to the Library, 40,744 check-outs, and 3,393 registered users. Our total operating budget, including benefits to our 10 staffers, totals \$602,686.

Traditional/Progressive Services:

With a blend of traditional and progressive library services, the Library seeks opportunities to be relevant to every community member, not just those who read for enjoyment. To that end, we partner with agencies that provide fingerprinting services, host the Internal Revenue Service kiosk, and in collaboration with the Department of State, we offer passport facilitation. These services expand the relevancy of the library by broadening the scope of our services.

Within the Library:

The Library has eleven primary areas where the public receives services: Children's Section, Mary's Little Lamb's Storytime/Family Room, the Akeley Galleries, Adult Section, the Howard & Espa Michaud Reading Room, the Café, the Teen Lounge, the Idemia office (for identification services), the Heritage Room, the IRS video conference room, and the non-fiction/reference/genealogical sections. Additionally, there are six gallery walls that house rotating collections of art. There are over 200 pieces of art owned by the library including sculptures and masks.

Activity and Outreach:

Library-sponsored events, workshops, author book signings, art events, community presentations, and tours happen weekly with our signature or regularly scheduled events such as the Fairy Festival, Tea Party, Dr. Suess, Apple Day Party, monthly Library Book Club, seasonal Storywalk® at Mantle Lake Park, and First Friday Art Walks comprise the majority of our events schedule. Meeting room space for non-library sponsored gatherings for social, recreational, or professional purposes is a highly sought service with 1,421 different meetings happening in 2023.

The Library House:

The Library House at 228 State was acquisitioned in 2022 by the Library Board of Trustees and greatly expands the Library's ability to recruit Maine authors to offer programs and to encourage local writers to meet to support one another. In addition to meeting space, we provide a carefully curated a special collection of books by Maine authors and illustrators.

Evaluation:

To remain relevant and continuously strive for improvement, the library values reflective review, analysis, and planning. The five focal points are derived from patron observations, feedback from staff and the community, and from Trustee meetings where monthly meetings take place to discuss ways grow and improve. What follows are the areas of focus we intend to explore.

The Five Focal Points:

- **Facilities:** To upkeep both interior and exterior building infrastructure, prioritize safety and security measures, and expand facilities to better serve the community, working closely with the Facilities Department.
- **Relationships:** To cultivate community bonds and interdepartmental connections, aiming to boost engagement, encourage active participation, and enhance communication channels.
- **Neighborhood Development:** To establish a neighborhood park adjacent to Main Street, fostering collaboration among local entities while enhancing the aesthetic appeal of both the library's frontage and the Northeastland Hotel parking lot.
- **The Library House at 228 State:** Collaborate with the Library Board of Trustees to transform 228 State into a cultural center and Library House. This venue will host a variety of events and workshops, serving as a gathering place for Maine authors and readers alike.
- **Collections:** Evaluate purchases and align allocations budget with current patron needs and preferences.



Focal Point #1: Facilities

Overview:

In 2024, The Library commemorates its 116th year of dedicated service. Initially established as a Carnegie-funded institution, it underwent a transformative phase in 1968 when architects crafted a new edifice, blending contemporary functionality with an updated facade. Over the years, The Library has undergone two subsequent renovations, shaping it into the modern hub it is today. The Library is a department of the City of Presque Isle with a Library Board of Trustees that oversees a Charitable Trust.

Inspired by the vibrant hues of Aroostook County's agricultural landscape, the interior design embodies the region's natural splendor, fostering an ambiance that resonates with our community's preferences. Situated conveniently near Main Street, The Library has become a beloved spot, serving not only as a popular destination but also as a vital cultural nexus. Additionally, it proudly hosts "The Library House at 228 State," providing a welcoming space for gatherings, particularly celebrating the rich literary tradition of Maine authors.

Care of Building and Grounds:

Maintenance of the Library is a high priority. A newly created department within the City includes a Facilities Department that assists with safety requirements, maintenance of the building, repairs, and managing inspections keeps our building systems, inspections, and safety concerns at the forefront of maintenance efforts. A grounds maintenance plan is a three-part effort. First, the Trustees contract with a lawn maintenance company for clean-up, mulching, and care of the grounds during the summer months. Second, the Public Works Department and Library custodial staff maintain walkways, plow, snow-blow, and shovel snow on both the library and 228 State Street properties. Third, Library staff hires technicians to repair HVAC, electrical, or plumbing systems as needed.

Looking to the Future:

There are three objectives that involve our focus for facilities: improve the Teen Lounge space, connect the three different parcels on and around the library property, and build a relationship with the new facilities department to clarify roles and enhance security and maintenance efforts.

The Trustees received a donation from the Janet Allen Memorial Fund and determined that the best use of those funds is to re-design, re-dedicate, and re-promote the Teen Lounge. Since building the space, use is primarily incidental. With the renovation, the plan is to focus attention on the teen population to engage their participation in teen-centered events and services.

While the recent renovation resulted in a modern and comfortable space, the acquisition of The Library House and accompanying gardens expands the Library's entertainment, gallery, shelving for printed collections, and green spaces. A set of stairs will be constructed to connect the two properties for pedestrians .

Goal #1:

To create a modern and inclusive interior and exterior library space that meets the diverse needs of our community, enhances access to information and cultural resources, promotes lifelong learning and recreation, and fosters a welcoming and engaging intergenerational environment for all patrons.

Objective 1: Redesign Teen Lounge Space

Outcomes:

1. Identify teen focus group to assist leadership in decision-making.
2. Develop new design with Trustees and dedicate as Janet Allen Memorial Teen Lounge.
3. Market and promote space to encourage use of new furnishings, materials, and events.

Objective 2: Connect parcels: Library, 228 State, and Trustee parcel

Outcomes:

1. Identify with Trustees best way to connect all three areas.
2. Create walkable spaces between the newly shaped property.
3. Use new spaces for flower gardens and create a participatory community garden.

Objective 3: Build relationship with new Facilities Department and clarify roles

Outcomes:

1. Identify with City Manager, staff, director, and Facilities Director facility needs.
2. Create a maintenance schedule and plan for inspections, tasks, and replacement timelines.
3. Enhance safety by installing additional cameras and identifying other security measures.





Youth Services Librarian, Melissa



Poetry Slam



First library card

Focal Point #2: Engagement and Relationships

Overview:

Libraries focus on community engagement for several reasons. To understand community need, to promote diversity and inclusivity, to build relationships, to enhance civic participation, to support lifelong learning, to encourage advocacy, and to strengthen social capital are all critical as part of the process of engagement. In order to positively impact the lives of citizens and contribute to the well-being of the communities they serve, libraries must look to maintaining current relationships, foster new ones, and be strategic about how and why we engage organizations, businesses, and non-profits established within our communities. In addition to in-person meetings and outreach efforts, the Library uses several different online social media platforms to engage, inform, and communicate with our patrons and constituents.

Purpose:

Relationships that include interdepartmental cooperation within the City of Presque Isle, area agencies for social justice, the development of downtown and Main Street, organizations focused on art and culture, wellness and recreation, other Aroostook County libraries, and small businesses, in particular on Main Street, will all enhance our ability to serve and understand our community. We increase our engagement with sponsored intergenerational events, programs, workshops, guest speakers, author presentations, and community meetings along with providing space for non-sponsored library meetings for various organizations and clubs. Additionally, by offering fingerprinting services, passport facilitation, and our interlibrary loan services, we further increase our patron base.

During the Covid crisis, our library experienced a significant decrease in circulation and visitors. Prior to the pandemic, our annual statistics for 2019 showed that 55,080 items were typically checked out from our collection, and we had approximately 42,227 visitors. In 2020, due to Covid-related closures, our circulation plummeted to 22,369 items, and we saw a decline in visitors to 18,379. However, there has been a notable recovery since then. As of 2023, our circulation has increased to 40,744 items, and we have welcomed 29,446 visitors. This indicates a recovery of 82.16% in circulation statistics and 60.24% in visitor numbers compared to our pre-Covid annual statistics.

Looking Ahead:

Our relationships within the community, between City departments, and other agencies are strong. It would not be possible to function well without fostering ongoing efforts to connect. However, there are three specific areas in which we would like to improve: interdepartmental cooperation, downtown development as indicated in the Comprehensive Plan, and outreach. We believe that a strategic focus on these three areas will improve the patron experience, assist in further recovery efforts of our circulation counts and visitors, and increase the visibility of services available through our library.

Goal #2

Enhance community participation by 20% over the next year through targeted outreach programs, collaborative partnerships with local organizations, and innovative events that foster meaningful interactions and feedback from patrons.

Objective 1: Improve Interdepartmental and City Leadership Cooperation

Outcomes:

1. Increase safety for visitors and staffers during library hours and special events by collaborative problem-solving with Presque Isle Police Department through improved communication, collaboration, and a better understanding of safety protocols.
2. Sustain assistance from City leadership and departments enhances our service delivery and optimizes resources.
3. Leverage the expertise within other departments allows the Library to benefit from specialized knowledge and skills, thereby improving the quality and effectiveness of initiatives and improving cross-departmental learning and development.

Objective 2: Create Targeted Online Relationships and Engagement

Outcomes:

1. Library users learn more about planned events at the Library and within other departments and attendance improves.
2. Citizens and patrons are given a more accessible opportunity to offer responses to programs and events, points of service, and offer feedback for what services are desired, providing a more community-driven planning and implementation process.
3. Statewide visibility increases partnership opportunities, enhance our reputation, and leverage marketing and promotion that reaches a wider online audience.

Objective 3: Increase Community Outreach

Outcomes:

1. Develop a better understanding of community needs, interests, and challenges faced by community members so that we can tailor our services and collections accordingly and meet needs effectively.
2. Promote cultural enrichment by showcasing traditions, heritage, and local history to foster a sense of belonging and appreciation for diversity.
3. Build stronger relationships with local organizations, schools, businesses, and other libraries for collaborative opportunities, to foster trust, and support for library initiatives.

Focal Point #3: Neighborhood Development/Park

Overview:

Develop a multifunctional space through collaboration with Ignite PI, the Northeastland Hotel, and the Library that beautifies the space between us and creates an artesian park to beautify the area, expand outdoor activities, relax, and incorporate art and culture. The 2020 City of Presque Isle Comprehensive Plan identifies Second Street as part of “Downtown Redevelopment” and states, “...downtown as the heart and soul of community life.”

The Vision:

The Library is situated one block off Main and isn't easily seen from Downtown Presque Isle. Creating a space between Downtown and the Library is a better use of space and beautifies the parking areas of the adjacent properties. Creating signage, walking paths (crosswalk), and a nature experience enhances the quality of life for our patrons and the visitors at the Northeastland Hotel.

Looking Ahead:

This project also includes repaving both the Library parking lot and the Northeastland parking lot to collaborate to make our community more beautiful, to welcome visitors in a meaningful way, to encourage art, and to enhance wellness efforts by encouraging walking and stress-reducing creative spaces.

Goal #1:

To develop a vibrant cultural oasis and creative hub nestled in the heart of the neighborhood of Second Street, between the library and the Northeastland parking lot with a variety of activities and experiences.

Objective #1: Redesign the space between

Outcomes:

1. Create a plan for a park off Main that beautifies the neighborhood and encourages use of public green and art spaces with a crosswalk, flowers, and outdoor installations.
2. Encourage gatherings, cultural celebrations, and public art projects.
3. Provide a space to sit with benches and encourage pedestrians to spend time in green spaces.

Objective #2: Increase Green Spaces in our Community

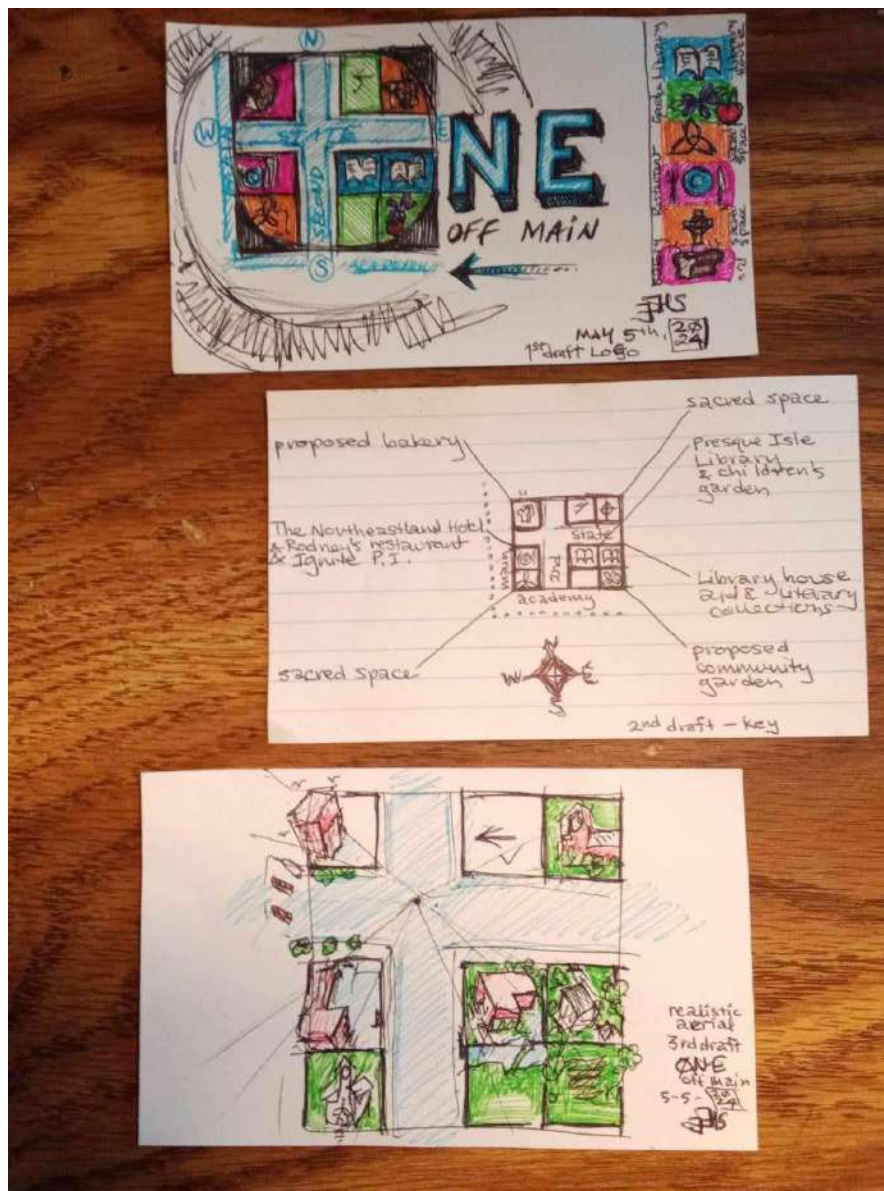
Outcomes:

1. Install gardens and container pots, trees, and other flora for citizens and tourists to enjoy.
2. Repave both parking lots to improve parking experience.
3. Increase foot traffic to library and expand outdoor space for guests at the Northeastland.

Objective #3: Foster Community Engagement and Enhance Downtown Experience

Outcomes:

1. Create a peaceful space to relax or work with access to library Wi-Fi, and peaceful places
2. Enhance the cultural landscape fosters a sense of community pride
3. Attract tourists and visitors interested in arts and culture can lead to an increase in foot traffic and economic growth.



Concept drawing for One Off Maine: Library Neighborhood complements of Jasmyn Shaw

Focal Point #4: The Library House at 228 State

Overview:

The Library House stands as a beacon of opportunity, poised to emerge as a coveted hub for both local and statewide authors. Under the guidance of the Library Board of Trustees in tandem with the Library staff, we host an impressive average of 25 literary gatherings annually. Adorned with charming Victorian architecture, adorned with antique furnishings, and boasting inviting spaces, our establishment beckons writers to convene, create, and contribute. Here, they are encouraged to utilize the space for their craft, to lead programs, or engage in fireside chats. Furthermore, they may even find themselves welcomed to stay overnight in exchange for sharing their literary works and insights with our library audience. Through book discussions, workshops, and dialogues with our patrons, our aim is to foster a vibrant exchange of ideas and inspiration.

Description and Purpose:

The House has five rooms on the first floor with Maine art on every wall and shelving that houses the Maine Collection, a specialty collection that includes the works from Maine authors that community members may borrow. The second floor has four bedrooms, each dedicated to a writer, local illustrator, or artist to highlight their contributions and legacy while acknowledging the significance of their work to the local community. We dedicated the rooms to: Dr. Nan Amodeo, Professor Emerita, University of Maine at Presque Isle; Glenna Johnson Smith, local teacher and author; Evelyn Kok, musician, artist, and book illustrator; and Janet Allen, beloved teacher from Presque Isle High School. In addition to a place for inside events, 228 State has beautiful gardens, a porch, and a garage.

The Trustees hired a docent in 2024 to assist with enhancing visitor experiences, supervise décor and art installations, plan events and programs, and oversee the growth and development of The Library House with Library staffers aiding. In addition to this, the House has an online social media presence intended to announce events and engage users.

Looking to the Future:

The Trustees and staff are interested in defining the parameters for use, putting the House on the literary and arts “map,” and organizing events that meet the needs of Maine writers and our community of writers and readers. Additionally, developing house rules, usage agreements, an expense and revenue process, and guiding documents are important for the sustainability and growth of the Library House. Currently, funding comes primarily from the Library Board of Trustees. Expanding funding streams and donors will be required to reach full potential. The House is a haven for all the creative arts including music, literature, and art.

Focus: The Library House at 228 State

Goal #1:

To preserve the legacy and literary contributions of Maine authors by creating a vibrant and interactive space that engages visitors in exploring their lives, works, and influence, fostering a deeper appreciation for literature, creativity, and storytelling while encouraging new authors.

Objective 1: Develop Guidelines for Use

Outcomes:

1. Recruit authors and define expectations for guests and visitors.
2. Increase security and safety for contents such as art, manuscripts, and furnishings.
3. Clarify House rules to ensure consistent utilization, encourage respect for the space, and follow regulatory or legal compliance.

Objective 2: Create a Replacement or Maintenance Schedule and Budget

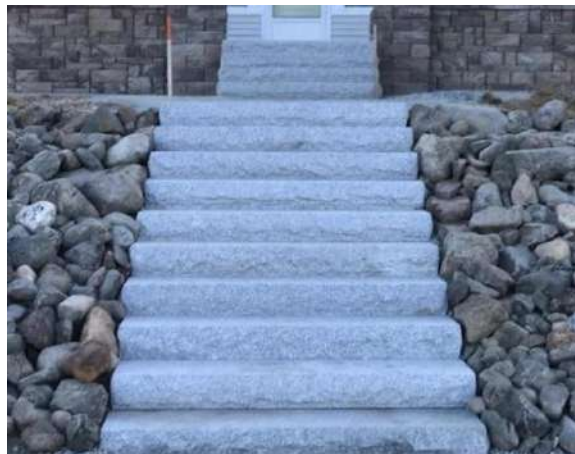
Outcomes:

1. Protect facility from breaking down before issues escalate.
2. Expand the lifespan and maintain optimal enjoyment for our guests.
3. Identify potential safety hazards and accessibility.

Outcomes:

Objective 3: Connect Library Property with 228

1. Encourage access with walking paths and view of the gardens by creating a staircase between the two properties and expand gardens with existing Trustee-owned land
2. Install Internet services to create a workspace and improve communication between the two buildings.
3. Consider collaborative grants between the Library and 228 to sustain, grow, and develop interior and exterior spaces.



Focal Point #5: Collection Development

Overview:

The objective analysis is to ascertain the allocation percentage of the collections budget dedicated to print materials, thereby delineating the remaining funds available for other expenditures. Through this assessment, we aim to enhance our ability to ensure that our financial allocations effectively align with the literary and informational preferences of our patrons and visitors.

Allocations:

The Library receives an annual allocation of \$26,500 designated for collections. It's important to note that this fund isn't solely earmarked for books. While one might assume that the entirety of this budget is utilized for materials stocked on our shelves, in reality, during 2023, \$16,523.36 (approximately 64%) was allocated specifically for print materials. The remaining portion of the budget is allocated to support these collections or procure materials in alternative formats.

Through our data collection, it was determined that of the \$16,031.77 spent on printed materials, \$9,680.90 (60.38%) is spent on adult materials and \$6,350.77 (39.62%) is allocated for youth and children's collection development.

Although each of these categories plays a significant role in the maintenance, growth, and accessibility of informational and reading materials, the chart illustrates the proportional breakdown of each category. Over the past few years, the Library Board of Trustees graciously donated all journal and magazine subscriptions for the collection. In 2023, the Trustees generously contributed \$2,500 towards these subscriptions. Consequently, as these subscriptions are not financed through municipal funds, they have been excluded from the chart.

Looking to the Future:

In the following ways and for these reasons, we evaluate our Collection: usage, space management, quality, relevance, budget optimization, and diversity and inclusivity. Evaluation makes us more effective, responsive, and relevant in our evolution. We want every purchase to serve our community.

Goal #1:

To curate a diverse and inclusive collection that meets the informational, educational, recreational, and cultural needs of our community, providing access to high-quality resources that inspire learning, critical thinking, creativity, and lifelong enjoyment of literature.

Objective 1: Evaluate Each Category of Expenses for Collections

Outcomes:

1. Determine if the collections budget is allocated consistent with community need [MRS Title 27, Chapter 3]
2. Develop a plan for allocation of e-content versus print content

3. Explore the difference between children’s and adult expenses

Objective 2: Review Collection Development Policy

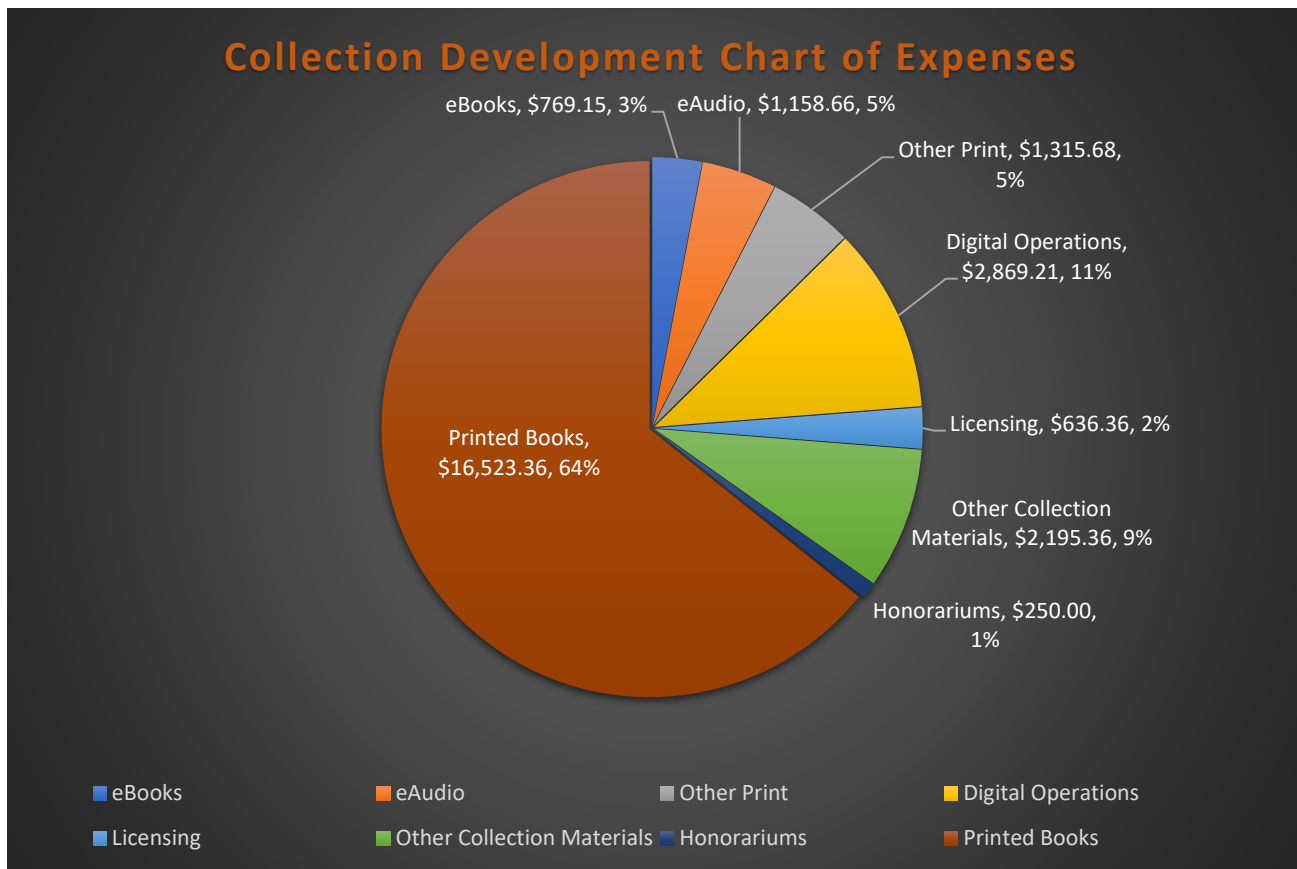
Outcomes:

1. Update the Policy to align with current collection development best practices
2. Review policy for barriers to services
3. Advance revised policy for peer-review

Objective 3: Evaluation and Comparative Analysis

Outcomes:

1. Evaluate size and diversity of collection
2. Determine whether usage and demand are consistent with the collection we offer
3. Benchmark our collection expenditures against industry standards for insight into whether budget allocation is adequate or needs adjustment



Conclusion:

In closing, our Mission, Vision, and Core Values are important guiding principles that form a foundation for strategic growth, strong community engagement, and sustainability and outline our commitment to fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and resource-rich library environment. The five targeted areas of focus: facilities, engagement and relationships, neighborhood development, the Library House at 228 State, and Collections Management are aimed at creating the library as a cornerstone of the community.

Our goals and objectives are ambitious yet achievable and they reflect our dedication to serving the public with excellence. By working collaboratively, we will build a library that not only responds to current demands but also anticipates future challenges and opportunities. Together, we will ensure that our library remains a dynamic and essential hub for learning, growth, and connection.

Resources and References:

Thanks is owed to the following persons and documents for assistance.

City of Presque Isle Comprehensive Plan (pgs. 2,18)

Docent for 228 State Street, Lois Brewer

Finance Director for the City of Presque Isle, Brad Turner

Library Board of Trustees

Library Staff for the Mark & Emily Turner Memorial Library

Maine State Library Consultant, Lisa Shaw

Pursuant to MRS Title 27, Chapter 3. PUBLIC LIBRARIES §101. “Free public libraries established in towns Any town may establish a free public library therein for the use of its inhabitants and provide suitable rooms therefor under such regulation for its government as the inhabitants from time to time prescribe, and may levy and assess a tax and make appropriation therefrom for the foundation and commencement of such library and for its maintenance and increase annually. Any town in which there is a public library may establish and maintain under the same general management and control such branches of the same as the convenience and wants of its citizens seem to demand.”

Presque Isle City Manager, Tyler Brown

Topsham Public Library Long Range Plan

