

Strathcona County Library

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



Learning to garden at the
ARAS Community Growing Patch

Message from the Chair

In 2024, Denise Charbonneau, Library Board Chair was happy to see:

- More visitors to the library, library website and Bookmobile.
- Well-attended and ongoing Indigenous programming through the library, led by Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

Message from the CEO

In 2024, Sharon Siga, CEO was proud of:

- The many ways in which our library worked with community partners to bring unique and meaningful services and programs to all corners of the County this year.
- Hosting "Connecting The Digital Dots," a two-day digital literacy and cybersecurity symposium for library staff from across the province, sponsored by the Public Library Service Branch of Alberta Municipal Affairs.



We were both so pleased to see such enthusiastic response to the library's 2024 public engagement campaign, "Shaping our Library Together." So many residents took the time to provide us with their comments and perspectives on the future of our library. We're excited to have this rich set of ideas on which to build our new Plan of Service for 2025-2028!



Land Acknowledgment

We recognize that Strathcona County Library is located on Treaty 6 territory and within the Métis Nation homeland, the traditional home of the Nehiyawewak, Papaschase, Nakota Sioux, Tsuut'ina, Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee and Métis peoples. We are grateful for their stewardship of this land over many centuries and for the opportunity for all of us to live, work, and play here in a spirit of cooperation and commitment to our treaty obligations. Acknowledging the wrongs done to Indigenous peoples that are part of our shared national history, we dedicate ourselves to moving forward in the spirit of partnership, reconciliation and collaboration.

TRENDING UPWARDS

In 2024 (as compared to 2023)



24% active cardholders

23% program attendance

17% digital* borrowing

9% library in-person visits

7% bookmobile in-person visits

5% digital visits

5% print + digital* borrowing

*digital = eBooks, eAudio, eMagazines, eNewspapers
streaming movies, training videos, genealogy records, etc.



COMMUNITY

In 2024, SCL was a key partner in projects designed to grow skills, food awareness and community along with some fabulous garden produce in rural Strathcona.

We continued to collaborate with the **Ardrossan Recreation & Agricultural Society (ARAS)** throughout the growing season on the ARAS **Community Growing Patch**. Community members are encouraged to get hands-on in this cooperative garden, to share learning and share in the bounty. This garden also grows leaders! It welcomes volunteers of all ages, has a system in place to particularly encourage local youngsters to get involved.

Last year, the library hosted presenters on topics from beekeeping to worm composting to Knowledge Keeper Chantelle Gray of M̓askwa Medicine, who introduced traditional Indigenous ways for working with the land. Produce from the ARAS Garden Patch was harvested and available for sale at the weekly Ardrossan Farmers' Market, with leftovers going to the Strathcona Food Bank.

We also partnered with the **Colchester & District Agricultural Society** and **Colchester Community League** on the **Grow Your Own** program series. This project brought together gardeners from beginner to expert levels to help people learn how to create a sustainable food supply for their families. Community members connected over a joint meal to learn and share ideas.



Learning all about worm composting at the ARAS Community Growing Patch

PARTNERSHIPS

Our library works with many partners to present programs for residents at all ages and stages of their lives. These partnerships allow us to keep our programming mix diverse and relevant, and give our partners a channel to share their unique and valuable skills with County residents. These were some of our partners in 2024.

SCL + Strathcona County Emergency Services

"Home Alone" program for pre-teens: helped them prepare for emergencies, spot hazards and provide basic first aid.

SCL + Conseil scolaire Centre-Nord, Gallery@501

Offered French immersion young author and artist camp.

SCL + Heart and Stroke Foundation, Strathcona County Emergency Services

Offered the "Cardiac Crash" program for seniors in rural Strathcona.

SCL + Mattamy Homes

Celebrated the opening of Helen Lavender Park & Helen Lavender Lane in the Cambrian Crossing neighbourhood. Helen was our first Bookmobile operator, just one of many community roles she played.

SCL + Indigenous Knowledge Keepers in Residence

We are deeply grateful to all of the Elders and Knowledge Keepers who have been willing to share their traditions and wisdom with library program attendees of all ages.

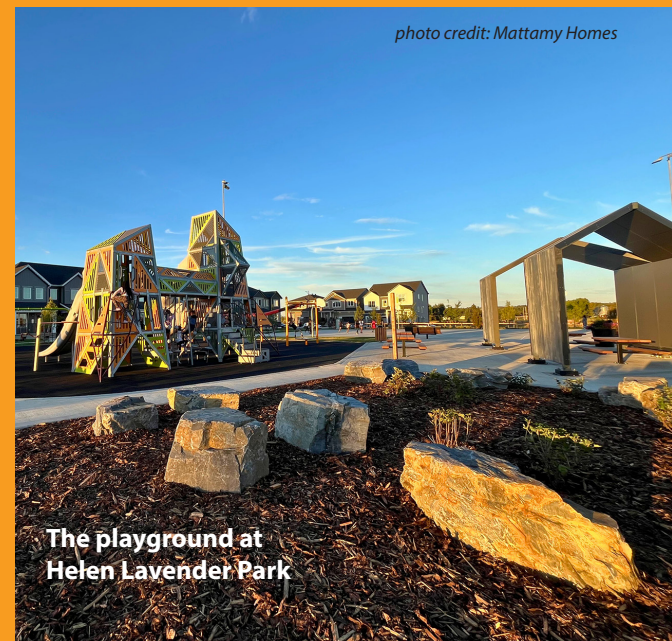


photo credit: Mattamy Homes

The playground at Helen Lavender Park

Wonder Books

Thanks to the donation of funds from the Friends of Strathcona County Library Society, we added preschool level Wonder Books to our collection in 2024. These are read-along picture books with integrated audio features that encourage early reading skills.



Seniors' Programs

We offer a variety of tech programs for seniors with topics like cybersecurity, travelling with technology, and working with AI features. In 2024, we took these programs on the road to seniors throughout rural Strathcona County.



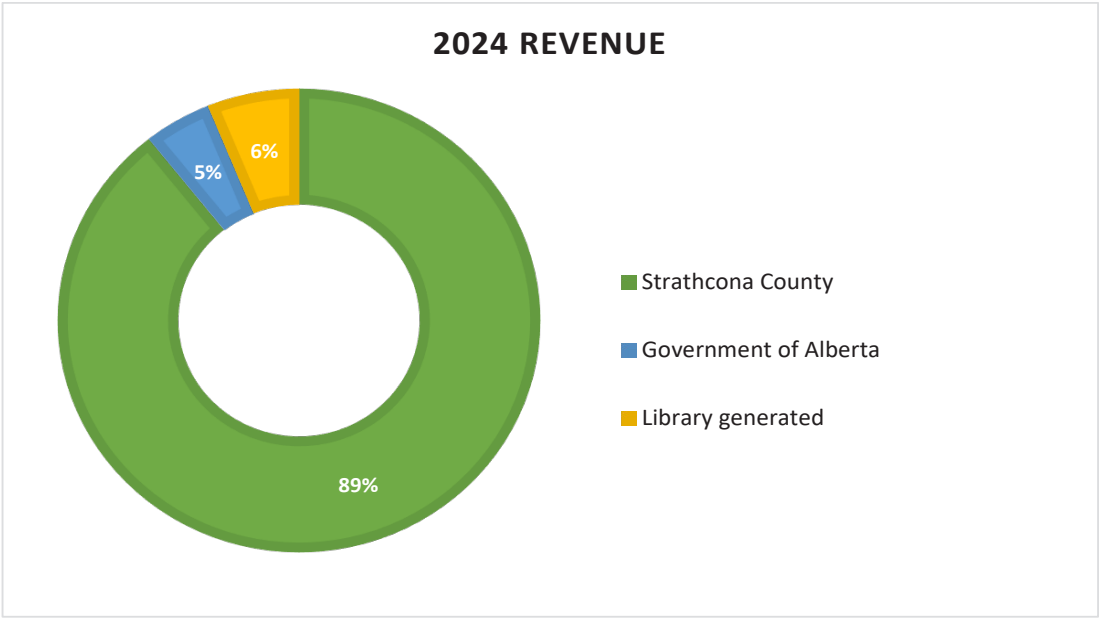
Learning hand sewing and mending skills



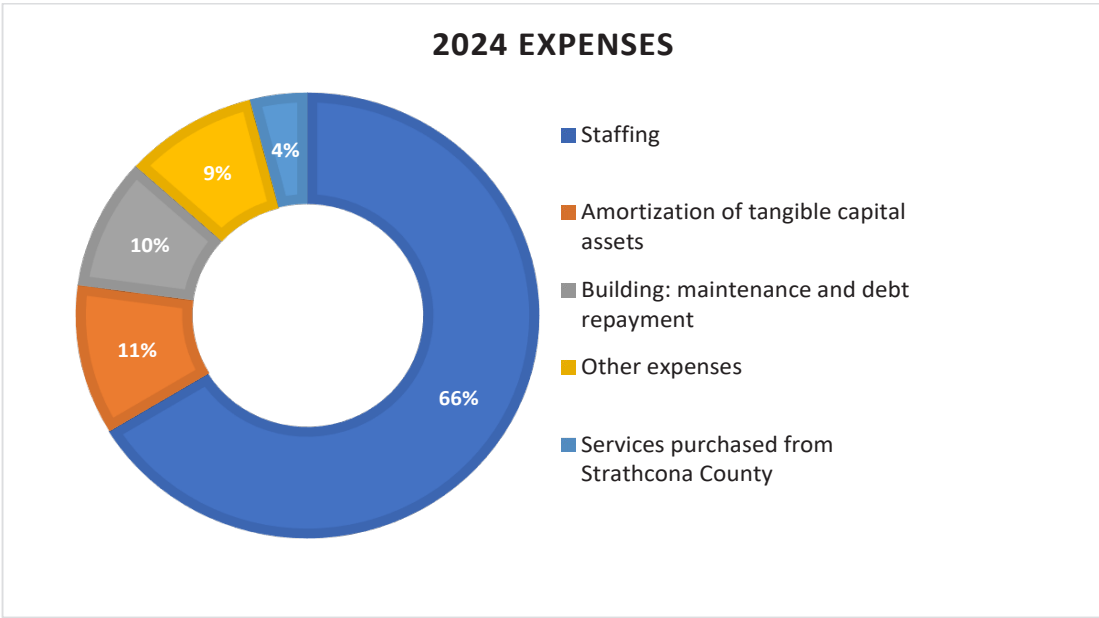
The finished creations from a Story Sticks program in early June

Financial Graphics

2024 REVENUE



2024 EXPENSES



Meet Jeffrey, a White's Tree Frog who made a special guest appearance at last summer's Reptiles and Amphibians program for kids in Grades 2 - 6



Strathcona County Library

401 Festival Lane | Sherwood Park, AB | T8A 5P7
780.410.8600 | sclibrary.ca | info@sclibrary.ca

