



LIBRARY PLAN 2025-2026

Incorporating Strategic Resource Plan



OUR VISION

Connected,
empowered
and inspired
communities.

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ABOUT GOULBURN VALLEY LIBRARIES

The Goulburn Valley Regional Library Corporation, trading as Goulburn Valley Libraries, provides library services to communities in the municipalities of Greater Shepparton, Moira Shire and Strathbogie Shire. We serve a population of approximately 110,390 people over an area of 9,772 square kilometres.

The Corporation operates 11 libraries by agreement in the townships of Avenel, Cobram, Euroa, Mooroopna, Nagambie, Nathalia, Numurkah, Tatura, Violet Town, Yarrawonga and Shepparton. We also operate a mobile library service that serves smaller towns and communities within the region and a library locker in Murchison.

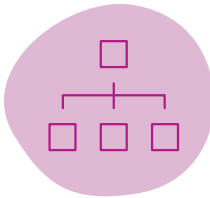
Goulburn Valley Libraries is required under the Local Government Act to develop a Library Plan following the Local Government elections. The Act also requires regional library corporations to transition to new corporate structures by 2030. Goulburn Valley Libraries' three member Councils have agreed on a new governance model with transition to be completed in 2026.

This plan complements the priorities of the previous Library Plan 2022-2026 and will see the Corporation through to new governance arrangements in 2026.

We provide:



Management of a collection of 192,229 items, comprising 147,915 print and audio-visual materials 44,314 digital materials.



Shared Technical Services, CIT, HR, Administration, Operations and service support, from a Regional Administration and Support Centre at Shepparton.



Management of a dedicated staff of 61 people (25 full time equivalents), supported by community volunteers.



MOIRA SHIRE

Population
30,520

Area
4,047 km¹

Density population per km¹
7.54

GREATER SHEPPARTON

Population
68,410

Area
2,422 km¹

Density population per km¹
28.26

STRATHBOGIE SHIRE

Population
11,460

Area
3,303 km¹

Density population per km¹
3.47

¹ ABS-ERP Population statistics March 2022

CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

People are visiting our libraries, both physical and virtual, not just to seek information but to connect with others and collaborate. Today, modern libraries tell a real story about people meeting together, doing things, sharing stories, sharing culture and learning. Our libraries are becoming more about people and engaging in the environment they're living in.

Goulburn Valley Libraries services are well valued by the communities and the patrons that access these facilities, resources and services which has been demonstrated by community surveys.

Over the past four years the Corporation has seen exciting developments including:

- The opening of the Avenel library branch
- New library lockers in Murchison
- Agreement on a new governance model
- Development of a Reconciliation Action Plan
- Commencement of construction of the new Yarrawonga Library
- Modernisation and upgrades at Numurkah, Euroa and Mooropna libraries
- Library membership and visitation numbers have continued to increase
- Funding secured for replacement of Mobile Library and upgrades at Nagambie Library
- Open Library program implemented at nine branches.





In 2025, Goulburn Valley Libraries is characterised by:

- **Relatively low membership rate**
26% of population
(Victorian average 32%)
- **Low active membership rate**
8.2% of population
(Victorian average 13%)
- **An older physical collection**
44.3% of stock purchased in the last 5 years
(Victorian average 66%)
- **Low turnover rates – physical items**
2.3% loans per item
(Victorian average 4.9)
- **Growth in the eBook collection**
0.12 items per capita
- **Low level of spending on collection items**
\$4.39 per capita
(Victorian average \$6.48)
- **Low level of staffing**
0.22 EFT per 1,000 population
- **Low level public access devices**
0.39 per 1,000 population
- **Relatively low level of funding**
\$37 per capita
(Victorian average \$43)
- **High levels of satisfaction among current patrons**

THINGS I LOVE ABOUT MY LIBRARY

Our community survey in early 2022 provided the following feedback
(in order of most popular response):



Staff



Resources



Accessibility and facilities



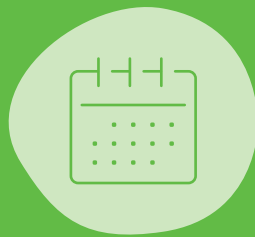
eResources



Broad access outside
local branch



Customer
service



Programs and
events



Location



Online search



Free service



Opening hours



Computers and WIFI
availability



Print and copy



Social inclusions



Bookclubs



Mobile Library

THE FUTURE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Libraries are no longer a place just for borrowing books! They are places where the community can access e-resources, WIFI, computers, meeting rooms, art spaces, and diverse child, youth and adult programs. Public libraries are vibrant community hubs that provide all with universal access to information.

Public libraries are twenty-first century conduits of culture, learning and social connection. Public libraries play an important role in their respective communities, and are fundamentally important informational, educational, cultural, and social institutions.²

“In an increasingly digital world, we see the role of libraries as community and cultural centres at times undervalued, and underestimated”.³

Our libraries need spaces for experiences and activities as well as performance and personal development. Business spaces and cafes, spaces for brain health and learning, spaces to participate and connect, will shape the future focus of libraries. Regional libraries need to help communities to be informed and knowledgeable as well as in step with technological innovations. Regional libraries need to catch up with their metropolitan counterparts by providing downloadable resources and services, as well as being ready to offer and communicate the newest and latest digital devices.

Libraries are in the business of change! Librarians help people to read and learn, and become a more literate and able community. Libraries of the community have an obligation to push the community and rather than working for the community they are members of it.⁴ They bring people together to improve their lives.

As we live in a digital lifestyle where the web is a way of life and touches every aspect of our lives, people are increasingly interacting and participating on the internet and becoming creators and not simply consumers. Library teams need to become familiar and comfortable with these new ways of engaging and helping users find information, gather knowledge and create content.

Libraries need to understand information seeking behaviour has changed dramatically. Users can now discover and select their own information, and we should be able to provide a space for them to be able to create, share and even publish. We need to participate in this new knowledge economy and understand we are operating in an environment that demands flexibility as it changes constantly.

² *Libraries Building Communities*, State Library NSW, Kristen Twomey, 2016

³ Edwards J.B., Rauseo M. S. & Ungear K.R. (2013, April 30). *Community Centered: 23 Reasons Why Your Library Is the Most Important Place in Town* Retrieved February 24, 2017, from Public Libraries

⁴ *Library as a movement: One community at a time* R David Lankes <https://vimeo.com/592998045>

The following observations are from the *Future Public Libraries Report 2021*⁵:

1. Libraries are a people place.

Libraries are used by people from all walks of life – the young, the old, families and single people, people from different cultural backgrounds, school and tertiary students, the employed and the unemployed, people on high and low incomes, people with and without home internet access, people who are library members and people who are not.

2. Books rule, but not all the time and not for everyone.

82% of library users borrow books or magazines from the library – clearly the single most common activity. But among the top 10 things people do at the library are a mix of activities that involve the collection, technology services, programs, places and spaces and highly valued staff assistance.

3. Post-COVID libraries must retain their key characteristics. The speed and agility of public libraries in responding to COVID restrictions on service access have been well-documented. Survey feedback reinforced the high regard library users had for the way libraries shifted to click and collect, online programming and other service models..

4. Libraries are much more than just a service point.

While the number one priority is to be a lending service, libraries are also seen to play an important role in literacy development, supporting mental health and wellbeing, facilitating community connections, digital inclusion and providing somewhere to just be.

5. Libraries mean different things to different people.

There is significant variation in the way that different population cohorts, perceive, use and value the library, demonstrating why public libraries have such broad appeal across the community.

The *Future Public Libraries Priority Report 2021*⁵ also identifies the top 7 future priorities for the community as:

1. Providing access to books, magazines, DVDs and other resources
2. Assisting with children's literacy and education
3. Providing access to educational resources and support
4. Supporting my mental health and wellbeing
5. Connecting with my community
6. Providing somewhere to just be
7. Providing access to computers and WIFI⁵

⁵ Future Public Library Priorities Survey Summary Report December 2021 I & J Management

THINGS TO IMPROVE AT MY LIBRARY

Our community survey in early 2022 provided the following improvement priorities
(in order of most popular response):



More resources



More open hours



Programs and
events



Customer service



More eBooks and
eAudio books



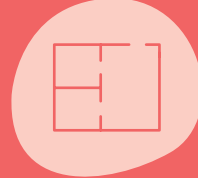
New library
or significant
alterations



IT service related



Catalogue/hold
item related



Internal library
layout



Quiet spaces



No vaccine
mandates



Equipment
change or request



Staff related



More Mobile
Library



Library behaviour



Book Club



Environmental
sustainability

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

“Libraries will have to continue to reinvent themselves and make themselves relevant to the communities they serve. But actually, that’s been the history of the library.”

Professor Andrew Pettegree⁶

Libraries must grow and evolve to meet local community needs, whilst at the same time responding to global trends. Library staff will continue to learn and adapt to those evolving needs and trends.

Challenges

- The new *Local Government Act 2020* has been enacted and Regional Library Corporations have until 30 June 2029 to transition to a new governance model.
- Developing a Single-Interest Employer Agreement that ensures staff conditions and responsibilities align with the new governance model.
- Providing facilities for remote workers.
- Adapting to climate change – ensuring the environmental sustainability policy is adequate.
- Providing refuge for patrons outside standard hours due to extreme weather events and adapting hours to meet these needs.
- Meeting the needs of expanding regions – population growth, refugees and migrants/ tree changers and the ageing population.
- Digital literacy, affordability, and reliability. As many other services move to online-only models, libraries are seen as places where community can get in-person assistance.
- Skilled workforce - attracting, retaining and training staff for the future.

6. *The Library: A Fragile History* by Professor Andrew Pettegree



Opportunities

- Implement a governance model for our library service that will ensure Councils can deliver services effectively and efficiently into the future.
- Libraries are being acknowledged as places that contribute to communities overall Health and Wellbeing. This is being recognised through state government funding and Public Libraries Victoria and State Library Victoria strategic plans.
- Develop partnerships with relevant government agencies, not for profit groups and community groups to deliver programs, services and advocate for funding.
- Attract funding for increased programming and service delivery.
- Increasing access through regular reviews of opening hours, integrating Open Libraries at all branches, trialling mobile library visits to small rural communities and expanding the home libraries program.
- Delivering meaningful outcomes from priorities of the Reconciliation Action Plan.
- Providing welcoming, safe and inclusive spaces for diverse, vulnerable and minority communities.

THE LIBRARY PLAN

This Library Plan details our goals and ambitions for Goulburn Valley Libraries from 2025-2026.

Our Vision

What we want the future to look like

Connected, empowered and inspired communities.

Our Purpose

Why we exist

To deliver services and activities through the library network that are inclusive and respond to the social, economic, and cultural needs of our communities.

Our Values

How we operate



Service

We will respond to community need and provide great services.



Teamwork

We will take pride in shared achievements and outcomes.



Respect

We will actively listen to each other and appreciate our difference.



Innovation

We will be proactive to change and embrace new ideas.

Strategic Objectives

What we want to achieve

We have built our Library plan around the achievement of the following strategic objectives:

1

Libraries that grow with, adapt to and meet community needs.

2

Highly valued, well-used contemporary community spaces.

3

A sustainable, capable and service-focused organisation.

4

Develop a governance model for the future.

1 Libraries that grow with, adapt to and meet community needs

Actions	2025/26	Measures
1.1 Improve collection usage		
Undertake annual review of collection management plan	Review	Turnover rate Age of collection
Ensure staff are well trained to use Collection HQ	Plan and implement	Use of Collection HQ
Review digital/print collection usage to ensure correct spilt between collections	Review	% digital % physical
Expand the reach of the Home Library Service	Review and implement	Home library users
Increase promotion of collection	Review and implement	Total loans
1.2 The library is inclusive		
Partner with indigenous and minority community groups to determine appropriate services and programs for groups. Develop Partnership Plan	Plan and implement	Partnerships developed Membership
Complete initial review of the Reconciliation Action Plan	Review	Actions achieved
1.3 Programs that meet community needs		
Develop a community input process for program development	Ongoing	Process developed
1.4 Strong Community Partnerships		
Partner with local community groups, not for profits and government agencies to deliver relevant library programs. Local Plans to support local groups.i.e. Local History, Car Clubs, Crafts, Games, Social, Cooking, IT etc	Ongoing	Partnerships developed
1.5 Health and wellbeing		
Develop a plan to target socially isolated community members with targeted health and wellbeing services and programs	Implement	Plan completed
Develop health and wellbeing partnerships to deliver services and programs	Implement and review	Health and wellbeing programs delivered
Seek external health and wellbeing funding for programs	Implement	Funding achieved
1.6 Improved customer experience		
Undertake an Opening Hours Service Review	Review	New opening hours implemented
Improved payment options	Implement	EFTPOS and EFT available for all services



2 Highly valued, well-used contemporary community spaces

Actions	2025/26	Measures
2.1 Modernised library spaces		
Shepparton Stage 2	Plan	Plan developed Council support achieved
Monitor Victoria's Infrastructure Strategy 2021-2051, action 86, Living Libraries Infrastructure Program and seek grant/funding opportunities as they become available	Ongoing	Funding achieved
2.2 Accessibility		
Develop policy and plan for the use of library spaces during extreme weather events	Plan	Policy and plan developed
Undertake ASD and Dementia accessibility reviews	Plan	Reviews completed
2.3 Well used community spaces		
Develop policy for use of library spaces as event venues for local organisations and the community	Plan	Policy developed and communicated Visits
2.4 Improve remote community access to library services		
Replacement of Mobile Library	Implement	Mobile library completed
Undertake a 6 month trial to deliver a library service to small communities ie. Ruffy as part of the review	Plan and implement	Trial implemented and reviewed



3 A sustainable, capable and service-focused organisation

Actions	2025/26	Measures
3.1 Meaningful statistics		
Develop value and output focused metrics based on ALIA Guidelines Standards and Outcomes Measures 2016	Plan	New metrics developed and monitored
Support development of improved and consistent Know Your Council (LGRF) measures with PLV and LGV	Implement	New measures monitored and reported
3.2 Programs that meet community needs		
Increase programming resources to meet needs	Review	Increase in budget and FTE Visits
Develop a business case template for programs and services	Plan and implement	Template developed
Review current programs using the template to ensure they meet minimum requirements	Review	Programs reviewed
3.3 Environmental sustainability		
Implement Environmental Sustainability Policy	Implement	Policy developed
Review current suppliers sustainability practices. Implement in Procurement Policy i.e. James Bennet Sustainability Project for management of disposal of unwanted weeded print collection material	Review	Reviews completed
3.4 Upgrade ICT Infrastructure		
Develop a new CIT Strategy Plan	Plan	Plan developed
3.5 Well promoted library service		
Develop a library marketing and promotions plan across all media channels and third party opportunities	Plan and implement	Memberships, loans and visits Budget
3.6 Improved staff capabilities		
Workforce for the future plan – succession and skills	Plan	Complete review
Review 2019 Victorian Staff Skills Audit and determine the skills required for library staff for the future	Review and plan	Staff participation rates Community satisfaction with staff
Develop a training plan for all library staff	Plan and implement	Training budget
3.7 Improved staff conditions and work environment		
Develop an Enterprise Agreement that ensures staff conditions and responsibilities align with potential new governance model	Plan and implement	EBA successfully negotiated
Review the central administration and support model. Including – potential location and decentralisation	Review	Model selected and implemented



4 Develop a governance model for the future

Actions	2025/26	Measures
4.1 Agree on a new governance model		
Seek agreement from Councils	Implement	Agreement reached on future model
4.2 Transition to new governance model		
Develop transition plan	Implement	Transition plan developed
Resource project and commence transition	Implement	Transition commenced



STRATEGIC INDICATORS AND TARGETS

Indicator	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Target
Utilisation <i>Total loans per capita</i>	3.92	4.1
Resource Standard <i>% Collection purchased in last 5 years</i>	55%	55%
Service Cost <i>Direct cost to Council per capita</i>	\$22.57	\$25.00
Participation <i>Library members per capita</i>	26%	26%
Participation <i>Visits per capita</i>	2.18	3.0
Strategic Indicators		
Population	112,449	
Memberships <i>as % of population</i>	25.96%	27%
Attendance <i>at programs per 1000</i>	31.3	32.0
Loans <i>per capita</i>	3.92	4.0
Expenditure <i>materials per capita</i>	\$4.39	\$4.50
Staff EFT	25	26
No of Public PCs	44	44
Collection Size	192,229	190,000
Physical Collection Size	147,915	140,000
eCollection Size	44,314	50,000
eResources <i>as % of total resources</i>	23.05	25
Opening Hours <i>scheduled / fortnight</i>	300	300
Customer Satisfaction	-	9.20%

STRATEGIC RESOURCE PLAN

The Corporation is required by the Act to prepare a Strategic Resource Plan (SRP) covering both financial and non financial resources, and including key financial indicators for the durations of the Library Plan.

The SRP takes the strategic objectives outlined in the Library Plan and expresses them in financial terms.

The key objective, which underlines the development of the SRP is financial sustainability in the planning horizon, whilst still achieving the Corporation’s strategic objectives as specified in the Library Plan.

The key financial objectives, which underpin the SRP, are:

- Maintain existing service levels as a minimum
 - Increase levels of capital spending by CPI
 - Maintain a balanced or cash positive budget
 - Maintain cash reserve to minimise financial risk.
- The Corporation has also been mindful of the need to comply with the following principles of sound financial management as contained in the Act:
- Prudently manage financial risks relating to debt, assets and liabilities
 - Consider the financial effects of the Corporations activities on future generations
 - Provide full, accurate and timely disclosure of financial information.

Financial Resources

The following table summarises the key financial resources for the planning period.

Indicator	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Budget \$
Operating result	105,509	90,716
Current assets	1,991,829	1,715,119
Capital works	595,002	660,770

Non-financial Resources

In addition to financial resources to be consumed over the planning period, the Corporation will also fund staffing levels that maintain and improve its service levels. The following table summarises the non financial resources for the planning period.

Indicator	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Budget \$
Employee benefits (\$)	2,503,091	2,645,772
Employee numbers (FTE)	25.1	25.1

FUNDING STRATEGIES

In developing the SRP, strategies have been developed for revenue, infrastructure and service delivery.

Revenue

The 2025/26 draft budget and revenue projections have been developed based on a 3% increase in contributions from members Councils.

Recurrent grant revenue from the State Government is assumed to remain the same.

User charges and miscellaneous grants are assumed based on previous years trends. Most new miscellaneous grants typically require additional offsetting in program expenses and therefore are not included in budgets.

Capital Expenditure

A key objective will be to maintain and improve the Corporations existing assets at desired condition levels. The 2025/26 results will be influenced by the purchase of a new mobile library van which is funded by a State Government grant.

Financial Risk

To maintain a reasonable cash position whilst facilitating the proposed capital investment program the Corporation has adopted a Cash Target. The target is equivalent to 10% of Recurrent Expenditure (less Depreciation expense) plus an allowance for 100% of our Current Liability Provisions (Annual and Long Service Leave). This provides a sufficient factor of safety.

Indicator	2024/25 Actual \$	2025/26 Budget \$
Operating Expenditure	3,570,478	3,430,049
Provisions (A & LS Leave)	705,805	753,970
Target Min Cash & Investment	1,062,853	1,096,975
Cash & Investment	1,927,140	1,603,871

Service Delivery

The key objectives of the SRP which directly impact the future service delivery are to maintain and increase service levels measured as opening hours, events and programs over the planning period and achieve a positive operating result over the planning period.

An increase in employee costs of 3% has been factored and is dependent on the outcome of Enterprise Bargaining Agreement negotiations.

Superannuation guarantee costs will increase from 11.5% in 24/25 to 12% in 25/26 based on current federal government policy.

It is assumed that the Workcover Premium will increase by approximately 25% over the planning period.

APPENDIX A: PROJECTED STANDARD STATEMENTS

Income Statement

	2024/25 Actual \$	Adopted Budget 2025/26 \$
Revenue		
Council Contributions	2,977,272	3,086,599
Fees and fines	77,871	75,000
Grants – operating	921,557	921,557
Grants – capital	-	104,620
Other Income	125,795	80,000
Net Gain on Sale of Plant	43,339	18,182
Total Revenue	4,145,834	4,285,958
Expenses		
Employee Costs	2,503,091	2,645,464
Materials and Services	877,051	847,649
Depreciation	610,276	624,764
Borrowing Costs	9,127	10,000
Other Expenses	40,780	67,057
Total Expenses	4,040,325	4,195,242
Surplus (Deficit) for the Period	105,509	90,716

Capital Expenditure

	2024/25 Actual \$	Adopted Budget 2025/26 \$
Library stock, plant and equipment		
Plant, machinery and equipment	79,379	144,620
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	14,949	8,000
Computers and telecommunications	59,853	65,700
Library books and multimedia	440,821	442,450
Total Capital Expenditure	595,002	660,770



Balance Sheet

	2024/25 Actual \$	Adopted Budget 2025/26 \$
ASSETS		
Current Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	427,140	603,871
Trade and other Receivables	12,922	21,418
Other Financial Assets	1,500,000	1,000,000
Other Assets	51,767	89,830
Total Current Assets	1,991,829	1,715,119
Non-Current Assets		
Library stock, plant and equipment	2,289,253	2,428,735
Right of Use Assets	157,427	100,478
Total Non-Current Assets	2,446,680	2,529,213
Total Assets	4,438,509	4,244,332
LIABILITIES		
Current Liabilities		
Trade and other payables	200,273	159,846
Unearned Income	187,184	-
Provisions	653,593	690,831
Lease Liabilities	50,694	51,122
Total Current Liabilities	1,091,744	901,799
Non-Current Liabilities		
Provisions	52,212	63,139
Lease Liabilities	113,745	60,742
Total Non-Current Liabilities	165,957	123,881
Total Liabilities	1,257,701	1,025,680
Net Assets	3,180,808	3,218,652
EQUITY		
Accumulated surplus	275,061	312,905
Member Contributions	2,905,747	2,905,747
Total Equity	3,180,808	3,218,652

APPENDIX B: STATUTORY DISCLOSURES

Borrowings

There are no new borrowings projected over the planning period.

Fees and Charges

Fees and charges have been reviewed. The Corporation reserves the right to review the Fees and Charges in light of changing circumstances. Any changes following such review will be limited to CPI.

Item	Per	2024/25 Fee	2025/26 Fee
Lost items	item	at cost	at cost
Book Club membership	item	\$60.00	\$60.00
ILL from non-public libraries	item		33.60
A4 B&W Single sided	page	\$0.20	\$0.20
A4 B&W Double sided	page	\$0.40	\$0.40
A4 Colour Single sided	page	\$0.90	\$0.90
A4 Colour Double sided	page	\$1.80	\$1.80
A3 B&W Single sided	page	\$0.40	\$0.40
A3 B&W Double sided	page	\$0.80	\$0.80
A3 Colour Single sided	page	\$1.80	\$1.80
A3 Colour Double sided	page	\$3.60	\$3.60
Flash Drive 16MB	item	\$8.00	\$8.00
Library Bag	item	\$2.00	\$2.00
A4 Laminating	page	\$4.00	\$4.00
A3 Laminating	page	\$5.00	\$5.00
Meeting Rooms			
Library Associates		no fee	no fee
Community	hour	\$40.00	\$40.00
Commercial	hour		\$40.00



1300 374 765
gvlibraries.com.au

