

Present:

Regrets:

1. Approval of the Agenda
2. Board Feedback
3. Consent Agenda
 - a. Approval of Minutes of September 20 2023 meeting
 - b. Items for Information
 - i. Correspondence
 - a. 2023-09-30 Congratulations to Teresa Gratrix
 - b. 2023-09-22 Camrose County RE: 2024 Budget
 - c. Reports
 - i. Director's Report
 - ii. Program Overview to September 30 2023
 - iii. Program Report and Library Stats September 2023
 - iv. Overdue: The Case for Canada's Public Libraries
 - v. City and County of Camrose - 2023 Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation – Infographic
 - vi. Rural and Remote Alberta - 2023 Alberta Provincial Housing and Service Needs Estimation – Infographic
 - vii. RE: 2024 Funding Agreement – CPL to City of Camrose - Rationale and Infographic
4. Items for Discussion
 - a) Treasurer's Report
 - b) 2024 Budget
 - c) Adopting an Appointment and Dismissal of Board Members policy
 - d) Reading with Royalty
 - e) Stronger Together Conference
 - f) Annual Director Evaluation
 - g) Overdue: The Case for Canada's Public Libraries
5. Items for Decision
 - a) Adopting an Appointment and Dismissal of Board Members policy

- b) Letter to elected officials RE: Overdue: The Case for Canada's Public Libraries

Next regular Board meeting: November 15 2023, 5:00pm

Present: Renee Greer (Chair), Lynette Irvine (Vice Chair), Alyssa Martin (CPL), Cheryl Hamel (CPL), Naomi Finseth, Vikki Williams, Elizabeth Bagdan, Jade Hulkovich, Peter Hamm, Margaret Holliston, Peter Hamm, Joy-Anne Murphy (City of Camrose Representative), Don Simpson (Camrose County Representative)

Call to Order: Chair Renee Greer called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm

1. Approval of the Agenda

Motion 32/23 M/S/C – Margaret Holliston/Jade Hulkovich: That the agenda be approved, with Items 5a and 5b moving directly before Items 4a to 4f).

2. Board Feedback – Renee met with interim librarian Jennifer McDevitt near the end of her contract, and thanked Jennifer for a job well done. Alyssa added that Jennifer had great information and feedback from Jennifer that was very helpful in her transition back to work following her mat leave.

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of Minutes of June 21, 2023 meeting

Motion 33/23 M/S/C – Naomi Finseth/Vikki Williams: That the minutes of June 21, 2023, be approved.

b. Items for Information – Board members reported as having read prior to the meeting.

c. Reports – Board members reported as having read prior to the meeting.

4. Items for Decision (previously 5a and 5b on the agenda)

a. 2024 Budget – Alyssa provided a detailed overview of the proposed 2024 budget. Revenue is projected to increase by \$42,115 over the 2023 budget, with some expenses decreasing. CPL will request additional grant funds from both the City and County to cover costs related to continuing Sunday hours (funded by a private donation in 2023). Board members agreed that there are many compelling reasons to keep the library open on Sundays. Board members also agreed that personnel costs should reflect a 3% COLA increase.

Motion 34/23 M/S/C – Margaret Holliston/Peter Hamm: That the 2024 Budget be approved.

b. Library Closure: Alyssa requested permission to close the library on Friday, November 10, 2023, as a professional development day, so all staff could attend the Stronger Together Conference.

Motion 35/23 M/S/C – Joy-Anne Murphy/Jade Hulkovich: That the library be closed on November 10, 2023, so staff can attend the Stronger Together Conference.

5. Items for Discussion (previously 4a to 4f on the agenda)

Motion 36/23 M/S/C – Peter Hamm/Joy-Anne Murphy: That Items 4b to 4f be deferred to the next meeting.

6. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 6:15 pm

Next regular Board meeting: October 18, 2023, 5:00 pm

September 20, 2023

Ms. Teresa Gratrix, County CAO
3755 43 Avenue
Camrose AB T4V 3S8

Dear Ms. Gratrix:

On behalf of the Board and Staff of the Camrose Public Library, please accept our warm congratulations on your new role as the new Chief Administrative Officer of Camrose County. We look forward to building a relationship with you and continuing to work with Camrose County over the coming years to build on our joint accomplishments.

Camrose Public Library shares your goal of fostering safe, welcoming, inclusive, and engaged communities, and we look forward to working with you and the rest of Camrose County to ensure we are offering a wide range of recreational and cultural opportunities. Libraries play a key role in easing economic and social disparities in our community in a variety of ways. We act as a hub where anyone can come to find information or local resources, we support our youth in feeling engaged and connected to local opportunities and community, and we work hard to make sure we can do so in a space that feels safe. The accessibility of our resources, services and events is our top priority, whether that be physically, socially or economically. County support is critical for our ability to do these things effectively, and we are grateful for the years of support we have received thus far.

If you would like a more in-depth discussion or presentation on everything that Camrose Public Library offers, we would be happy to do so at your convenience. We hope we can continue our collaboration with you over the next several years, and again, congratulations!

Sincerely,



Alyssa Martin

Director, Camrose Public Library
cc: Camrose Public Library Board
Renee Greer, Chair of Camrose Public Library Board



September 22, 2023

Camrose Public Library
4710-50 Avenue
Camrose, AB T4V 1X4

RE: 2024 Budget

As the fall season is here, it is once again time for Camrose County Council to start preparing for 2024 Budget deliberations.

As in past years, we are requesting that you send your 2024 Funding Request along with your 2024 Draft Budget and 2023 Expense/Revenue Statement, to date, to our office by Monday, October 23, 2023.

If your organization wishes to make a presentation to Council with regard to your funding request for 2024 please contact Mrs. Jody Yuha at (780) 672-4446 prior to Monday, October 23, 2023, to make arrangements.

Yours truly

Teresa Gratrix, B. Comm.
County Administrator

/jy



Director's Report

October 6, 2023

Alyssa Martin

Community Pantry

CPL has partnered with Camrose Helps and FCSS to be another site of the community pantry. Camrose Helps currently runs the community pantry Monday to Friday 8:30am-4:00pm at FCSS. They rescue food from Second Harvest. As of September 28th 2023 they have rescued \$27,581 worth of food since January (this is an equivalent of 8887 meals and 4049kg). Their shelves are typically empty within hours of receiving a donation, and they typically receive one rescue each weekend - their offices are closed until Monday. As they are not able to serve the community that are our working poor (they are not able to get to the FCSS office in time), and because the food they rescue on the weekend sits until Mondays, CPL has agreed to be the site of a second fridge and pantry.

As the City and County of Camrose 2023 Alberta provincial Housing & Service Needs Estimation community report states, Camrose and area has over 663 confirmed individuals experiencing housing insecurity, 189 of which are dependents. 56% of respondents are employed, and the leading reasons for housing instability are low wages and increasing housing costs. These numbers are not projections, they are confirmed individuals. Of the respondents, 41% are experiencing housing insecurity. If we scale this, Camrose and area has ~11,183 people facing housing insecurity. The accurate answer likely lies somewhere in the middle. The Camrose Food Bank is only open Tues-Thurs, 9:00am-11:30am, making it difficult for those with jobs to visit. Additionally, they have a strict intake process that requires a person to have ID. Many of our most vulnerable individuals have a difficult time retaining ID, and as such have no current support. As CPL is one of the only public spaces open evenings and weekends, we are one of the only organizations in town that can host this pantry to serve this demographic.

Camrose Helps is responsible for organizing the filling of the fridge, the purchase and maintenance of the fridge, and CPL and Camrose Helps will both help to maintain the fridge's cleanliness. A shelf is also forthcoming. CPL will refer all those who wish to donate to the FCSS office. This partnership will cost CPL very little in time, and will be the difference between some of our community being able to eat or not.

CAMROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY



(Community Pantry fridge which was installed and filled October 10)

Canadian Library Month

October is Canadian Library Month, and CPL celebrates this in a number of ways. For the entire month, CPL gives out free library cards to everyone. Parkland is also hosting two big promotions. Anyone who gets a new card or renews their card is entered in a draw to win a Visa gift card. There is also the Golden Ticket contest. Every day that CPL is open, a golden ticket is hidden. The person who finds the ticket is entered to win a West Edmonton Mall waterpark gift card, gas card, hotel card and restaurant gift cards. We are also hosting a Camrose only prize with our local golden ticket finders. These contests and the membership drive were advertised in the Booster and Camrose Morning News.




CAMROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

October is Canadian Library Month!


CAMROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Library cards are FREE for
EVERYONE for the month of October



PLUS
Every new & renewed membership is eligible to win a draw!

Library cards get you more than books!



News Snowshoes Games DVDs Puzzles

www.cpl.prl.ab.ca 780-672-4214

October is Canadian Library Month!

FREE LIBRARY CARDS FOR EVERYONE THIS OCTOBER




Did you know?
Your library card gives you access to our Makerspace! Cricuts, VHS Digitizers, Adobe CC and more!

CAMROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

cpl.prl.ab.ca 780-672-4214

October is Canadian Library Month!

FREE LIBRARY CARDS FOR EVERYONE THIS OCTOBER



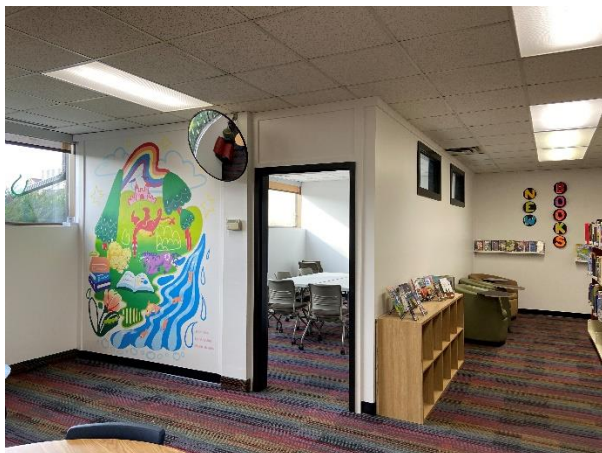
Did you know?
Your library card gives you access to digital resources like Ancestry, Pronunciator and Cypress Resume

CAMROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

cpl.prl.ab.ca 780-672-4214

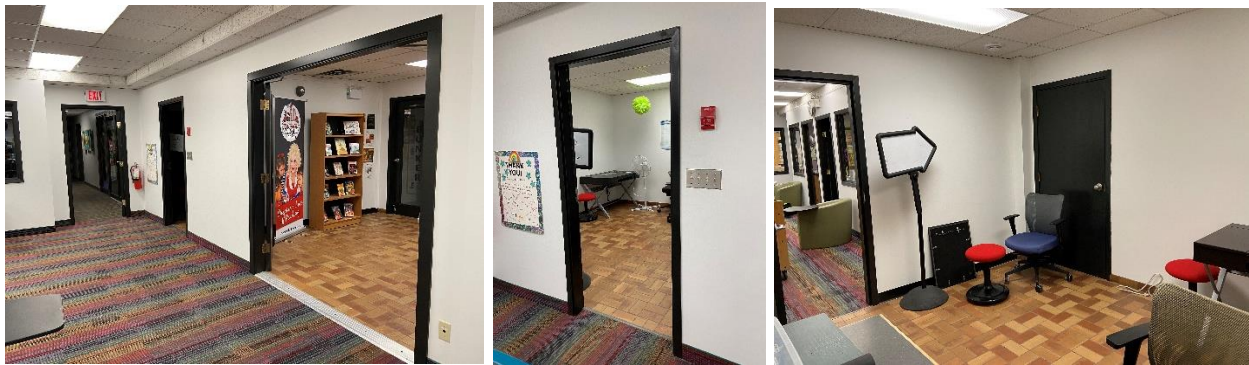
Library Renovations

The renovations to the library are ongoing. The new office in the basement is completed, and is minimally furnished. The programming room has had the needed electrical work done and will have a projector and screen installed this week. The program room is in need of a name, and we would like to find someone who is interested in purchasing naming rights for the space so that we can properly furnish it. Discussions regarding the bathrooms have wrapped, and we are now waiting on the City of Camrose and contractors to contact us about beginning work. The plan is to convert all four restrooms into single stall restrooms that are accessible to those with limited mobility, those who use wheelchairs, as well as those who have strollers.



(Replacement for the Bunker)

CAMROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY



(New Office)

Our community frequently asks reference questions about housing, access to food, legal aid, government documents, help finding work, taxes and other social needs. We are attempting to connect with other organizations who offer these services in the hopes that they will commit to working out of CPL on a regular basis (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly etc.) in order to better connect with our community. Many other libraries operate similar programs very successfully.

Staff Turnover

We have a new Service Desk Coordinator who was hired internally. This meant we needed to fill their Circulation Assistant position, which we also did so internally. Much of September has been spent on the hiring process, but we are pleased that we were able to fulfill all of our roles internally.

Camrose Public Library
 Adult Programs
 January 1 to September 30, 2023

Outreach	Program	Attendance
Deliveries to Care Facilites	76	630
German Circle	30	93
Ukulele Online	19	58
Mind Masters	9	1330
Seniors Hub Website Launch	1	25
Augustana Preview Day	1	50
Visually Impaired Persons Outreach	1	11
Book Bike @ Seniors Week	3	33
Seniors Week Info	1	220
Bethany Pride	1	25
Wellness Fair	1	50
Bones of Crows @ the Bailey	1	55
SOS Café	1	15
	145	2595

In House	Program	Attendance
Spanish	33	183
Ukulele	27	172
Cosy Cards	3	18
Yarn Club	17	112
Adult Dungeons & Dragons	7	33
Vinyl Record Flowers	1	5
Cricut Wine Glasses	1	12
Pride Wreaths	1	2
Cricut Flower Bouquets	1	5
Art Trading Cards	1	3
Cricut Leather Bracelets	1	3
Terrariums	1	11
Cricut Garden Markers	1	8
Paper Quilling	1	11
Felt Flowers	2	13
Print Making	1	5
Wall Hangings	1	3
SRC Loop Knitting	4	28
SRC Walking Book Club	7	31
Orange Shirt Day Beading	1	16
	112	674

Outside Groups	Program	Attendance
Space Provided for Community Groups and Businesses	12	144
	12	144

Total	269	3413
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Camrose Public Library
Family Programs
January 1 to September 30, 2023

Outreach	Program	Attendance
Read for 15	1	3349
Paper Mache with Chuck MacLean	1	7
Print Making with Chuck MacLean	1	15
Collage Art with Chuck MacLean	1	22
Women's Shelter Family Literacy	5	31
Curious Cuties with Camrose Family Resource Centre	1	22
Earth Day with Chuck Maclean	1	13
Red Hot Science: Trouble with Tribbles	1	12
Book Bike @ Market	10	471
Book Bike @ Jaywalkers	2	255
Book Bike @ Purple Martin Festival	1	7
Book Bike @ Pride Picnic	1	40
Book Bike @ Indigenous Peoples Day	1	162
Book Bike @ Canada Day	1	213
Book Bike @ Parks	6	97
SRS/Book Bike Persieds Viewing	1	102
BVJ Parade	1	500
Nature Art with Chuck MacLean	1	16
Registration Night	1	884
Country Fair	1	60
	45	6425

In House	Program	Attendance
Snacks in the Stacks	142	2865
Summer Snacks in the Stacks	45	361
Something Cool After School	123	730
Books & Bounces	42	500
Terrific Tales	33	474
Tech Help	95	194
Geek Days	15	125
Bed Time Stories	27	200
Rainbow Club	6	18
Mini Yogis with CFRC	6	128
3D Print workshop	1	6
Family Literacy Day with CFRC	1	56
Volunteer Appreciation	1	4
String Art with Chuck MacLean	1	9
Summer Kick-off Tea Party	1	579
Reading with Royalty	1	106
SRC Finale	1	14
Game Day	3	18

Anime Club	3	10
International Dot Day	1	16
Welcoming Week	1	7
Crafternoon	1	9
	555	6506

Outside Groups	Program	Attendance
Space Provided for Community Groups and Businesses		
	0	0

Total	600	12931
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Camrose Public Library
 Childrens Programs
 January 1 to September 30, 2023

Outreach	Program	Attendance
Sifton Makerspace	3	37
OLMP Break the Fake	1	307
Red Hot Science Rock Paper Scissors Circuits	1	8
SRC at Schools	4	472
Chester Ronning Class visit (Nicole)	2	44
BB @ OSCAR	7	297
BB @ Action for Healthy Communities	4	64
BB @ Reading University	3	116
Reading University Online (Nicole)	2	34
Reading University Class Visits (Nicole)	4	78
BB @ Art in the Park with CFRC	2	65
	33	1522

In House	Program	Attendance
BRSD PD Days	2	62
Chester Ronning Tours and program	5	93
Reading U Library Visit (Nicole)	1	40
SRC Junior Book Club	6	28
SRC Beginner Book Club	7	50
	22	284

Outside Groups	Program	Attendance
Space Provided for Community Groups and Businesses		
	0	0

Monthly Total	55	1806
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Camrose Public Library
 Teen Programs
 January 1 to September 30, 2023

Outreach	Program	Attendance
Print Making with Chuck MacLean	1	4
Collage Art with Chuck MacLean	1	3
ECKS QSA	6	131
Earth Day with Chuck MacLean	1	8
SRC at schools	2	225
SRC Park Watercolour Painting	6	69
	17	440

In House	Program	Attendance
Teen D & D	26	232
Anime Club	12	72
Red Hot Science Bats	1	7
Book Origami	1	3
Cricut Notebooks	1	2
Terrariums	1	10
SRC Teen D & D	7	82
SRC Webcomic Club	5	13
SRC Poetry Slam	1	5
Resume workshop with CAFCL	1	10
	57	445

Outside Groups	Program	Attendance
Space Provided for Community Groups and Businesses		
	0	0

Total	74	885
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Camrose Public Library
Total Programs
January 1 to September 30, 2023

Outreach Programs	240	10982
In-house Programs	746	7909
Outside Groups	12	144
YTD	998	19035

Submitted by Nicole Bannick
10-Oct-23

September 2023

Program and Library Statistics

Submitted by Nicole Kyle
October 10, 2023

721

people accessed programs that help develop relationships, end social isolation, and make them feel welcome in our library and our community.

71

people attended programs designed to share truths and foster reconciliation in advance of Orange Shirt Day and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

944

People were reached through library advocacy events designed to promote programs and services to residents and organizations.

1 awesome piece of feedback:

A local MD was at the screening of *Bones of Crows* we helped arrange in honour of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation at the Bailey, and after the film was done we were out in the foyer. The MD came out of the theatre with red eyes and sank directly into my arms for a hug. She thanked me for this and for all the things the library does to help our community, and she even said she sometimes feels that the things we do at the library contribute more to the health of our community than she does.

September Program Summary

- Our fall program schedule saw the return of some staple programs like Snacks in the Stacks, Terrific Tales, Books and Bounces, and Ukulele Jam in their regular time slots. We also shifted times for some returning programs like Anime Club and added new programs like Drop-in Crafternoon on Sundays. Please see the October schedule below for more!
- Louis and I hosted a drop-in tea and chat event for Welcoming Week. Attendance wasn't high, but the families that came were excited to hear about upcoming programs and events.
- There were some great advocacy opportunities this month as is usual in September with Culture Days and Community Registration Night. Louis and Ashley connected with well over 900 folks at a couple of events.
- Louis co-hosted a Nature in Art family workshop with the Chuck MacLean Arts Centre; participants went for a short walk and collected pieces of nature to turn into artwork.
- I organized our first annual International Dot Day celebration and much fun/creativity was had by all! We painted dots on canvases to take home and dots on the windows of the library for all to enjoy!
- I hosted two events in honour of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. We invited Indigenous artist Jess Sanderson-Barry to facilitate a Orange Shirt Day lapel pin beading workshop, and we co-presented a screening of Bones of Crows at the Bailey Theatre. Both programs were fairly well attended and greatly appreciated.



Dot Day Artwork



Random Library Shenanigans



Orange Shirt Day Beadwork

Connect. Create. Captivate

Our hours:

Celebrate Canadian Library Month!

Every October, libraries and library partners across Canada raise awareness of the valuable role libraries play in Canadians' lives, and we are celebrating with:

- Free library cards for all!
- Golden Ticket Contest from Parkland Regional Library System for your chance to win 4 World Waterpark tickets, \$100 in gas, \$150 in dining gift cards, and \$200 in Edmonton accommodations!
- Chances to win more fabulous prizes from CPL!

Monday to Friday 10-7

Saturday 11-4

Sunday 12-4

Closed on October 7, 8, & 9

Special Events

For Cricut's Sake (Adults, registered)

October 6 from 5-7 PM

No-sew tote bag. Space limited; get your free ticket with QR below.

Community Craft Swap

October 2-6: Drop off/October 10-17: Swap's on!

Declutter your unwanted craft supplies, find stuff you need, and make your crafting dreams some true!

Filtering Creativity @ Chuck MacLean

October 21, 10 AM to noon

Create autumnal art hangings and wreaths out of coffee filters. Space limited; get your free ticket with QR below.

Yarn Dyeing

October 14 from 9AM-5PM (Adults only)

Learn how to dye yarn using natural materials and will leave with a hank of yarn for your future projects. Get your free ticket with QR below.

Preptober: October 26 from 5-7 PM

Planning to participate in NaNoWriMo? Meet other writers and get tips and tricks at this preparatory session. *NaNoWriMo Write-in sessions will run Thursdays in November at the same time.* All ages!

For Cricut's Sake: Wine Glasses

November 3 at 5 PM (Adults only)

Learn how to design and print decals to create your own personalized wine glass. All materials provided. Get your free ticket with QR below.

Programs

This schedule runs until December 15

Ukulele Jam (adults)

Mondays @ 12:30

Spanish Circle (adults)

Mondays @ 3 in person and on Zoom

Anime Club (all ages)

Mondays @ 5

Books & Bounces (infants)

Tuesdays @ 11:30

German Circle (adults)

Tuesdays @ 4 on Zoom

Terrific Tales (families)

Wednesdays @ 10:30

Golden Flames D&D Club (teens)

Wednesdays @ 4

Bed Time Stories (families)

Wednesdays @ 6

Ukulele Online (adults)

Thursdays @ 1 on Zoom

French Circle (adults)

Wednesdays @ 4:30 & Thursdays @ 1

Drumming Circle (16+)

1st Thursday Monthly @ 5
Register at <https://bit.ly/CMHADrums>

Half-Day Matinee (all ages)

First Thursday monthly from Oct.-Dec. @ 12:30

Snacks in the Stacks (grades 1-12)

School days @ 3:30

Something Cool After School (grades 1-8)

School days @ 3:30

Adult D&D (18+)

Fridays @ 4

Rainbow Club Public GSA (all ages)

1st operational Saturday Monthly @ 11 (Oct 14)

Game Day (all ages)

Saturdays @ 2

Crafternoon (all ages; 11 and under accompanied by an adult)

Sundays from 1-4

Yarn Club (all ages and fibre arts welcome)

Every 2nd & 4th Sunday monthly @ 1

Climate Cafe (all ages)

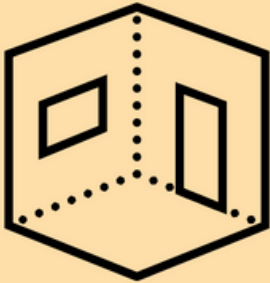
1st Tuesday Monthly @ 5:30



QR is for registered programs. For Zoom links and more program/service information:
Phone: 1 780.672.4214,
Web: cpl.prl.ab.ca,
Email: cpltechhelp@prl.ab.ca

CAMROSE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Our Rooms are BACK!



Thanks to the City of Camrose, CPL has had two new rooms installed in our lower level. These new spaces mean that CPL now has affordable rooms to rent again! The Irving Room can seat ~25 with tables or 50 people with theater seating. It has a projector and screen. Our new room (naming rights available) can seat approximately 12 theater style, and will have a projector and screen in the (hopefully) near future. Email cpltechhelp@prl.ab.ca for more info and to book space.

Resident Superheroes



We want to bring your public service organization in to the library to meet your community where they are at. Other libraries host social workers, settlement workers, free tax advice, resume help, and more; the possibilities are endless! All of these partnerships help to connect people with the support they need most. Organizations would be working out of a large office in our lower level children's section, which offers some degree of privacy for any meetings you have. In the long term, CPL is looking for organizations who can do this on a predictable, ongoing basis so that word of mouth can spread. If your organization offers free, inclusive services and might be interested in this type of outreach partnership, we would love to talk. Thank you for all you do for our community!

Contact Alyssa Martin at amartin@prl.ab.ca

Makerspace

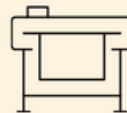
We've got the tools you need to make your dream a reality! Use of tools is free. Vinyl and 3D prints can be purchased.



VHS Digitizer
Turn those family movies digital



Wacom Drawing Tablet
Draw and paint digitally



Cricut cutting machine
Cut paper, vinyl and more! Under 16 requires adult supervision



Midi Keyboard
Create the next big chart topper



3D Printer
Create your designs and we'll print them!



Creative Cloud Suite
Photoshop, Illustrator, etc.



Photo Scanner
High resolution scans for photos

cpltechhelp@prl.ab.ca for more info

September Library Statistics

YTD daily visit averages (and hourly based on operational hours in brackets)

Mondays: 251 (avg of 28/hr) Tuesdays: 331 (avg of 37/hr)
 Wednesdays: 290 (avg of 32/hr) Thursdays: 251 (avg of 28/hr)
 Fridays: 271 (avg of 30/hr) Saturdays: 147 (avg of 29/hr)
 Sundays: 115 (avg of 29/hr)

Circulation	Sept 2023	Sept 2022	2023 YTD	2022 YTD	Under/ Over 2022	% Chg. Over 2022
Adult Material	5496	5692	51318	50748	570	1%
Young Adult Material	568	489	5280	4157	1123	27%
Juvenile Material	5238	5082	44942	43919	1023	2%
TAL Items Borrowed	180	129	1280	1223	57	5%
TAL Items Sent	26	34	274	331	-57	-17%
Total	11508	11426	103094	100378	2716	3%

Econtent	Sept 2023	Sept 2022	2023 YTD	2022 YTD	Under/ Over 2022	% Chg. Over 2022
Cloud Library/RBDigital	537	636	4570	5554	-984	-18%
Overdrive	1032	822	7798	7537	261	3%
Total	1569	1458	12368	13091	-723	-6%

Circulation by Residence	Sept 2023	Sept 2022	2023 YTD	2022 YTD	Under/ Over 2022	% Chg. Over 2022
City of Camrose	9311	9314	84040	81058	2982	4%
County of Camrose	2212	1974	18900	19226	-326	-2%
Outside City/County	35	50	404	582	-178	-31%
ME	53	45	324	286	38	13%
Total	11611	11383	103668	101152	2516	2%

Miscellaneous	Sept 2023	Sept 2022	2023 YTD	2022 YTD	Under/ Over 2022	% Chg. Over 2022
Visitors	6704	6033	61069	47246	13823	29%
WiFi Users	11008	9262	102571	74385	28186	38%
Internet Users	1077	905	8765	6462	2303	36%
Exams	24	24	167	220	-53	-24%
Total	18813	16224	172572	128313	44259	34%

Selection of Service Responses

1. Social Engagement: Developing Relationships and Ending Isolation
2. Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access
3. Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning
4. Visit a Welcoming Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces

Programs/ Service Response	Sept 2023		2023 YTD		Participants	
	Sessions	Participants	Sessions	Participants	2022 YTD	2021 YTD
1	23	133	196	2044	1930	1188
2	0	0	49	451	107	22
3	42	673	402	5583	3732	4968
4	38	588	333	5063	2750	516
Advocacy	2	944	18	5894	6231	3313
Total	105	2338	998	19035	14,750	10007



Canadian
Urban
Institute

Institut
Urbain du
Canada

OVERDUE

The Case for Canada's Public Libraries

Why investment in public libraries is essential to Canada's post-pandemic recovery, competitiveness, and resilience



Canadian Institut
Urban Urbain du
Institute Canada

The Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) is Canada's Urban Institute.

We are a national platform where policy makers, urban professionals, civic and business leaders, community activists and academics learn, share and collaborate with one another from coast to coast to coast. Our mission is to support vibrant, equitable, livable and resilient cities in Canada through research, engagement and storytelling.

This report builds on CUI's work toward the post-pandemic recovery of Canada's main streets and downtowns, and our belief in Canadians' collective ability to transform our cities into more inclusive, just and resilient places.

Canadian Urban Institute © 2023

Acknowledging the History of Canadian Urbanism

The Canadian Urban Institute acknowledges all the Indigenous Peoples of Canada and recognizes the ancestral territory of the Inuit, Métis, and First Nations people from coast to coast to coast. We acknowledge our collective and individual responsibility to recognize historical patterns of exclusion and abuse, to build our understanding of Indigenous peoples and cultures, and to commit to the ongoing process of truth and reconciliation.

More specifically, CUI is continually challenged to look for ways to

- Return land to Indigenous peoples
- Implement the [94 calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#)
- Implement the [46 articles of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples](#)
- Implement the [440 recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples](#)
- Investing in and supporting Indigenous communities and economies

Acknowledgement

The head office of the Canadian Urban Institute is located in Toronto, the traditional territory of many nations, including the Mississauga's of the Credit, the Anishinaabe, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples from across Turtle Island. Toronto is covered by Treaty 13, signed with the Mississauga's of the Credit, and the Williams Treaty, signed with multiple Anishinaabe Nations. This place continues to be home to many Indigenous peoples from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land.

Further, CUI is cognizant that many urban planning practices reinforced racist and exclusionary practices of colonialism. The work of city-building today must include confronting the legacies of the past and search for new approaches that centre around equity and inclusion, making cities for and with everyone.

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THE PROVOCATION



“

The only thing you absolutely
have to know, is the location
of the library.

Albert Einstein
Physicist

Overdue: The Case for Canada's Public Libraries

is part of CUI's ongoing work to highlight the critical components of the urban and community fabric that are essential to Canada's social, economic and environmental resilience and post-pandemic recovery.

This provocation is the product of three years of CUI's engagement with Canada's urban public libraries through one of the most extraordinary periods in human history – the arrival and containment of the COVID-19 virus. The pandemic ravaged communities of all sizes around the world and left an indelible impact on our cities and communities of every political affiliation.

Canadian cities – from the large and rapidly-urbanizing to the small and rural – faced unprecedented challenges.


The tenacious, unpredictable, highly contagious virus threatened the capacity of individuals, families, neighbourhoods, businesses, government, and community service providers to function. Vulnerable populations faced the most pernicious challenges, as housing costs rose and availability declined, and social supports were severely constrained. As governments tried to communicate in real time, they were playing catch-up to the existing, emerging and anticipated challenges revealed by the virus. Over this sustained period, levels of public uncertainty and distrust in public institutions, the media, and governments escalated in every jurisdiction of the country.



We make the case that Canada's public libraries enable governments to meet their obligations and strengthen the common good.



With a vast physical and digital network across Canada, the time has come to recognize libraries as a national asset. Increased investment and strategically leveraging their potential are essential for renewing post-pandemic social cohesion, economic well-being and community resilience. Libraries are the one institution that provide a remarkably broad array of critical supports to our communities, including for knowledge distribution, culture, health, reconciliation, belonging, and our democracy.

A map of Canada is shown in a dark blue color. Overlaid on the map are numerous small, light blue dots representing library branches. The dots are most densely packed in the southern regions, particularly in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley areas, and are more sparsely distributed in the northern and western parts of the country. The text is presented in four horizontal bars of a medium blue color, each containing a portion of the main message.

**Canada's libraries are an untapped
national network of social infrastructure
that includes 652 library systems
and 3350 branches.**



**Canada's libraries are visited
over 100 million times a year.**



Every month, 204,000 Canadians get job-seeking help at their public library.

Are you looking for work?

WITH
NT NEEDS

Are you looking to hire and need support?


Connecting employers and qualified job seekers

Alirena
Public Library

- Job posting services
- Wage incentives and signing bonuses
- Job fairs and recruitment
- Employer resources and

A woman with short blonde hair and glasses, wearing a grey long-sleeved shirt, is leaning over a man seated at a computer workstation. The man is wearing a grey sweater and glasses. They are in a library setting with bookshelves in the background. Other people are visible at computer workstations in the foreground and background. A blue banner with white text is overlaid on the image.

**540 Canadian libraries provide
free Wi-Fi and support.**



Over 300 libraries offer technology training classes, attended by nearly 16,000 people each month.



LIBRARIES FOR KNOWLEDGE

Libraries provide communities with in-person and remote access to print and digital resources, creating more equitable access to knowledge and services.

They continue to evolve, such as by creating different types of learning spaces, from traditional quiet reading rooms to areas for collaboration and the interactive, hands-on acquisition of new skills.

By improving literacy, libraries amplify the spillover effects: closing gaps in education, increasing the likelihood of employment and contributing to workforce development.

LIBRARIES FOR CULTURE

Libraries offer ideal spaces and opportunities to gather in person and online, enabling everyone to share and exchange ideas. They provide opportunities for visitors to access, and even create, culture: to read and listen to diverse authors, enjoy free films, music and dance, and craft new cultural content through interactive activities.

LIBRARIES FOR HEALTH

Libraries have become a key partner in our health care system, working closely with social workers, community organizations and governments. They create and advance better health outcome for everyone, providing programs and services that touch on essential indicators of the social determinants of health: early childhood development, literacy, employability, social inclusion and non-discrimination.

LIBRARIES FOR RECONCILIATION

Libraries have taken a leading role in responding to the federal Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. They provide programming and collections that elevate Indigenous voices on cultures, languages, places, and knowledge, and address settler-centric structural biases in libraries and information retrieval systems.

LIBRARIES FOR NEIGHBOURHOODS

Libraries are catalysts for neighbourhood and downtown revitalization. From Vancouver to Kitchener to Halifax they've anchored plans to create stronger downtowns. In cities around the world, library services are being introduced into unusual locations like transit stations and grocery stores as well as informally, through casual "sharing" clubs among neighbours, and new platforms for exchange and mutual aid.

LIBRARIES FOR BELONGING

Libraries, by their nature and because they are located at the centre of communities, serve multiple needs in a way that no other public institution in Canada can. In a single day, a public library might be

- a place to access culture and information;
- a refuge from domestic violence;
- an election information or polling centre;
- a job search centre;
- a health clinic;
- a place to warm up or cool down;
- a language learning centre for newcomers;
- a place to attend free university classes or concerts; and
- a space for babies, children, caregivers and youth to make friends and form a community.

Libraries are catalysts for connection: the anchors that create stronger downtowns and connected neighbourhoods.

LIBRARIES FOR DEMOCRACY

Libraries embody the democratic principle that citizens can freely inform and educate themselves. They uphold freedom of expression and freedom to read, and provide access to a wide range of ideas and information that empower individuals to make informed decisions and fully participate in society. They combat polarization by being open and free to everyone, providing the most democratic of spaces in our cities. During elections, many libraries distribute voter information, host all-candidate meetings, and operate as polling stations.

By providing critical supports – knowledge, culture, health, reconciliation, belonging, and our democracy – Canada’s public libraries are quietly fulfilling core mandates at every level of government.



**THE
COVID
PIVOT**





During the COVID-19 pandemic, the one civic institution that emerged as a reliable, safe and essential service, was the public library. From coast to coast to coast, local libraries were able to pivot to serve their communities in a multitude of new ways.



In response to the crisis, libraries mobilized swiftly and decisively, demonstrating a deep understanding of community as they adapted their services to meet local needs.

Through their national network, libraries quickly built new standards of practice in response to the pandemic. And through their extensive local partnership networks, they “leaned in” to community in a variety of locally-relevant ways.



Some became foodbank distribution hubs, others distributed rapid test kits. Some made personal protective equipment for frontline healthcare workers with their 3D printers, or worked with community organizations to provide Chromebooks and Wi-Fi hotspots to shelters and group homes. Others helped students and seniors connect with others to support their mental health. They distributed social isolation activity kits to families to support their mental health, engagement and creativity when people hunkered down in the early, pre-vaccine days of the pandemic. Staff distributed snacks and menstrual products through their doorways, even when the library was closed, and supplied portable toilets adjacent to their buildings when public washrooms were in short supply. Chief Librarians across the country joined local emergency management teams and readily shared their community knowledge to inform broader community responses.



Barriers to service, like library fines, were removed; digital programming was ramped up; lending and distribution systems expanded to distribute laptops and COVID tests. With their rich network of partners, they already understood who would need the most help, and which partners to collaborate with as local needs shifted in response to the pandemic.

Over the decades, with the advent of technology, there was speculation about whether bricks-and-mortar public libraries would become obsolete. Instead, they have become indispensable to their communities, while retaining their traditional role as a place to go for information, to do research and study.



Quietly, Canada's public libraries have evolved into highly capable partners for every level of government, supporting the common good by serving critical mandates that fall under municipal, provincial and federal jurisdiction.

- Sustaining workforce development
- Reducing hate, racism, harm and violence
- Fostering cultural and artistic diversity
- Championing entrepreneurship and innovation
- Supporting newcomer settlement
- Advancing Reconciliation
- Talking action on climate change
- Providing a community access point for public services
- Fostering mental health
- Offering spaces for public consultations and disseminations of information
- Supporting access to place-based programming



THE POST-PANDEMIC CHALLENGE



Libraries are an underfunded asset that support governments in delivering on their obligations to individuals and their families, neighbourhoods, communities, and cities.



We are only now beginning to understand how profoundly pandemic-related lockdowns and social distancing protocols affected the health of our communities, and how critical libraries were in meeting community needs.



Pressure mounted, and continues to exist, for libraries to provide local services in the absence of adequate social infrastructure and comprehensive mental health care.

This includes dealing with:

- Disrupted school days and curricula: libraries provide children, youth, and post-secondary students with important opportunities for social interaction, as well as support for their schoolwork.
- Skyrocketing mental health challenges among youth: they provided support for young people.
- Seniors struggling with isolation: they provided a source of connection.
- At-risk and vulnerable individuals: they provided shelter, for companionship, and connections to services and opportunities.



Libraries find themselves as the triage centres on our main streets and downtowns.



They are called on in the absence of adequate social infrastructure and comprehensive mental health care. Increasingly, library workers must take security measures and call first responders to help a person in crisis. For example,

- A rash of violent incidents prompted Winnipeg's Millennium Library to introduce security checks of all patrons.
- The Edmonton Public Library hired staff to work with vulnerable populations and connect them to social services, after it had more than 6,000 interactions with at-risk individuals in just one year. This included almost 100 overdoses where naloxone had to be administered.

In the absence of critical systemic changes to how we deliver and fund mental health care and supportive housing, and address social vulnerability in Canada, libraries are struggling to handle the demands.

Greater demand and unmet social needs require greater support. Central to this problem is how libraries are funded in Canada.



Today Canada spends \$8 per person (approx.), or \$305 million per year on its urban libraries. In contrast, European countries spend between \$11 and \$60 per person.

Upwards of 90% of funding for Canadian urban libraries comes from municipal governments, although variations exist across provinces. The pandemic and its economic repercussions, as well as the increasing costs of climate change, have added new stresses to municipal budgets that were already under immense pressure.

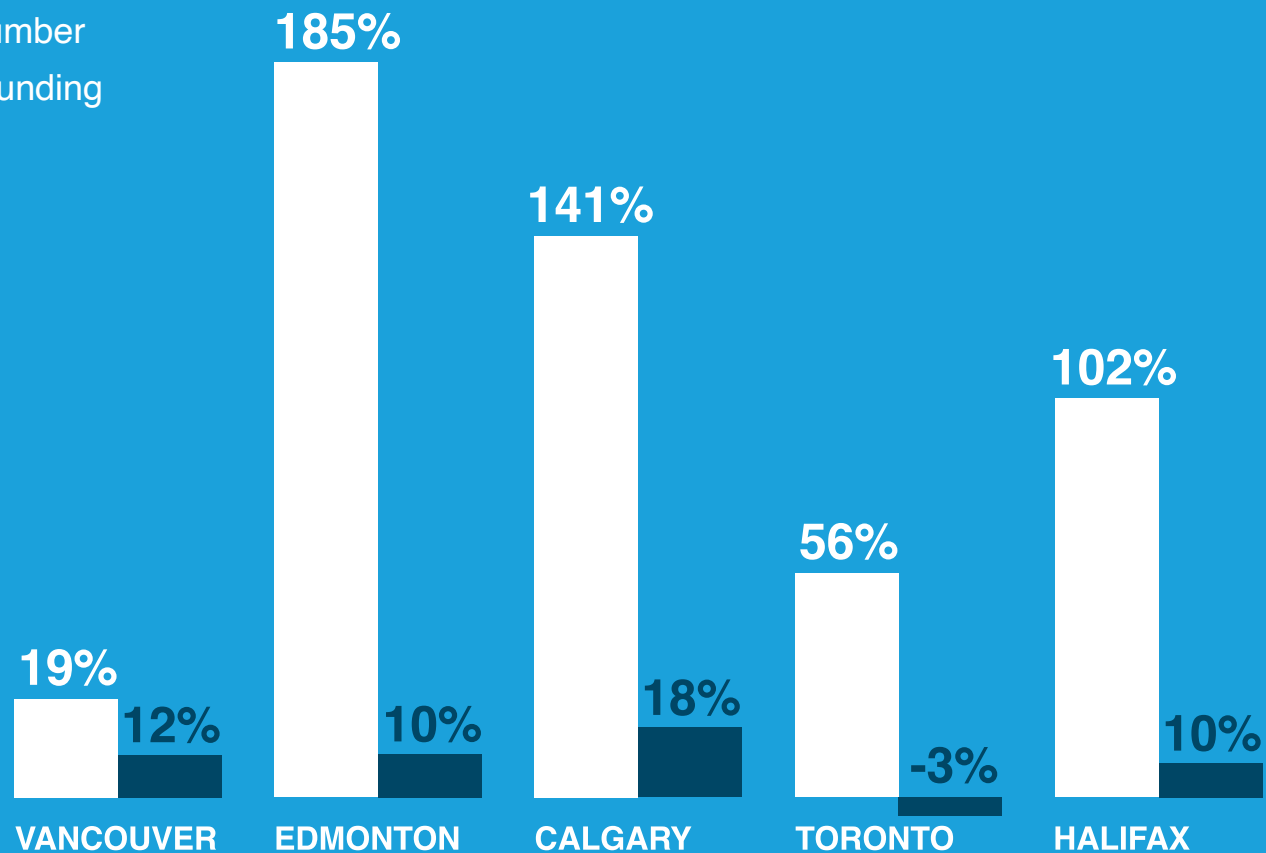
Libraries are funded from a tax base that does not increase proportionally with population or economic growth, and municipal support for libraries remains flat or fallen in real dollars over several years, despite the addition of many essential new programs and services. The more dire financial repercussions of the pandemic – and the growing mismatch between needed services and available revenue tools for Canada’s largest municipalities – has yet to be fully realized, but it puts libraries and the communities they serve at precarious and increasing risk.



The funding gap between the growing number of services being provided and the resources to do so is staggering and growing.

Percentage change in number of library programs and funding 2010-2019

DEMAND SUPPORT



The value proposition for increased investment is clear.



Research undertaken for this report ([Appendix](#)) estimates that an investment in library programming generates over six times more in economic and social benefits. **That is, for every \$1 invested in Canada's urban libraries, \$6 is generated in community economic impact, a return of over 600%.** In real terms, \$300 million in annual capital and operating funding generates \$2.1 billion in direct economic benefits. This number is significantly magnified when we take into account the social value of libraries in addressing literacy, educational outcomes, and workforce development; culture; mental and physical health; reconciliation; belonging; and the health of our democracy.

For example, a related finding by the Canadian Children's Literacy Foundation shows that every \$1 invested in early childhood education yields six times the economic benefit. Currently, 45% of Canadians lack the literacy, numeracy, and digital skills that are increasingly necessary to succeed in jobs in the knowledge economy. Libraries have the potential to significantly impact Canada's literacy, numeracy and digital gap. A 1% increase in adult literacy could create an annual economic benefit of \$67 billion for Canada, the equivalent of approximately \$1,800 more in the pockets of each Canadian every year.

SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE





CUI developed two scenarios in partnership with Canada’s libraries. The first is a plausible “Stretched to the Brink” scenario where library funding continues to decline. The second is an aspirational scenario, where funding matches the enhanced role being played by urban libraries across the country, right now, every day.



A PLAUSIBLE
SCENARIO

Stretched to the Brink

A Dystopic Future of Under-Investment

Libraries are no longer able to provide “a space for everyone” as the visitor demographic shifts away from people of all ages and socio-economic status.

The Scenario

While libraries are busier than ever, due to growing demands for new programs and services (especially from newcomers and equity-seeking populations), municipal funding for all public services is declining proportionately to the rise in demand. Post-pandemic tax revenue is dramatically reduced as main street commercial businesses close and transit ridership diminishes. Provincial support remains static and line-item federal support is practically non-existent. Inflation is at its highest level in decades, putting strain on libraries and their visitors.

IMPACTS ON LIBRARIES

More severe funding cuts to core municipal services force libraries to reduce staffing levels, programs and hours of service. The depth and breadth of both physical and digital collections is also reduced, causing fewer titles to be purchased and longer wait times. Social service programs also face budget cuts, and vulnerable populations experiencing homelessness and unemployment have fewer places to go. People take shelter in libraries, putting additional pressure on remaining staff to manage the increasing social disruption and violence that affects everyone’s sense of safety. Community members with greater financial resources stop visiting the local library as often.

The energy within libraries changes, as they no longer serve everyone. Communities become further polarized between the “haves” and “have-nots” as the divide between wealthy and poor grows. As community members have less exposure and interaction with one another, empathy and community care are less evident.



IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES

During the hours that libraries are now closed, there is a rise in criminal activity. Community members become increasingly hesitant to spend time downtown for fear of being victims of crime. Small businesses near the libraries see a decrease in foot traffic, threatening their viability. The municipality responds with increased policing, further diverting funds for library services.

The crisis continues to spiral. Vulnerable populations become even more present on main streets, in commercial lobbies, and any remaining public space like parks and community centres, fire stations, and faith places.

IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY MEMBERS

With reduced library hours and limited access to language learning, free conversation groups and places to spend time and meet others, a sense of belonging does not develop. Newcomers struggle to connect with the local community, and while some newcomers decide to leave Canada, others stay but experience greater loneliness. They express disappointment at not having made friends with people outside their own cultural community and feel the great opportunities they were promised have not materialized.

Those community members without access to the internet at home, and those with a low level of digital literacy who need support, turn to libraries for help. But now that the library is open for fewer hours and there are fewer

librarians and computers, and limited Wi-Fi, people cannot always get the online access to the services they need. They struggle to sign up for government services, enroll in programs, apply for jobs, and stay connected to friends.

With decreased social and cultural interaction, more Canadians experience a rise in xenophobia and discrimination. There is less trust among community members, which leads to less trust in government. Fewer people turn out to vote because it's more difficult to access polling stations, and they don't think it will make a difference anyway.

Schools observe that children are starting kindergarten with less exposure to early literacy and are less ready for learning.

Parents confide that they feel more isolated and overwhelmed by the new costs of educating and occupying their children through private programs. The gap in school performance between children of families who have financial means and those who do not is growing.

Political support for library investment also erodes, and more councillors question the need for libraries at all. Provincial legislation designed to protect libraries from political interference is questioned.

At the same time, deferred library maintenance costs continue to mount, making achieving a state of good repair seem impossible. Conditions worsen, and library spaces are less comfortable and more difficult to keep clean.



COPING

Facing the immediacy of burgeoning demands for social supports, some branches no longer provide programs for young families or after-school activities. As staff morale declines, recruiting and retention challenges and labour instability rise. The combination of staff shortages and smaller operating budgets has made it necessary for most library branches to reduce their hours of operation.

Some library systems begin to raise revenue by introducing fees for programs, computer use and even borrowing and admission. Local schools no longer rely on libraries to provide after-school access to computers and programs for youth, which has a direct impact on student outcomes.

As library systems reduce and narrow the scope of services they provide, they hold out hope that they can restore a better balance between providing the library services in their mandate and compensating for broken public and social service delivery systems. They want to see a more diverse constituency of visitors return over time – one that will also advocate for the necessary political support for reinvestment in libraries – but they realize this could take decades.



AN ASPIRATIONAL
SCENARIO

Resourced for Resilience
Strengthening the Common Good

Libraries are recognized for their vital role at the heart of their communities. Lessons from the pandemic underscore their importance and ability to pivot to meet diverse local needs.

The Scenario

While libraries are busy due to growing demands for new programs and services, (especially from newcomers and equity-seeking populations), municipal, provincial and federal funding for all public services is increasing with an eye on the long-term benefits. Inflation is at its highest level in decades, but the impact is cushioned by the programs and services available to everyone at local libraries.



IMPACTS ON LIBRARIES

Libraries across the country are thriving community centres. During the pandemic, they demonstrated their ability to go beyond traditional library services, providing essential information, functioning as vaccination clinics and service centres, and offering free 24-7 Wi-Fi, food, and public meeting spaces. As cities start to recover, libraries are now pivoting again to provide appropriate, well-funded and top-quality services and programs.

Libraries are welcoming places that are universally understood as essential to maintaining the health of communities, and promoting respect, tolerance and a sense of belonging for everyone. Also invaluable – and hard won – is the trust that community members overwhelmingly have in their

libraries to provide them with a broad range of information from many perspectives, and the tools to do their own research and explore their interests, with staff support.

Libraries are poised to fulfil crucial and varied needs, continuing to transform as they did in the decades prior to the pandemic. They are incentivized to innovate their sites and programs through a series of provincial and federal investment programs designed to improve outcomes according to Canada's 12 Social Determinants of Health. Governments acknowledge their critical role in ensuring equitable access to the internet by providing specific, core allocations to support broadband access for all Canadians.

Libraries pivot to become the essential community hub of every neighbourhood in Canada, working in partnership with service providers and key institutions. As the heart of their communities, they provide the primary public infrastructure, available seven days a week and free to everyone. Across the country, they reconfigure their services in unique ways that reflect the neighbourhood and populations they serve. Other critical services are drawn toward the library, and soon, supportive housing and health care providers, schools and transit services are located in close proximity.

Library leaders are recognized for their deep understanding of community and invited to participate in integrated regional planning

efforts that are linked to municipal, provincial and federal investment. They broker partnerships with provincial service providers, and connect with childcare centres, schools and post-secondary institutions to maximize the benefits of integrated service delivery and ensure high degrees of coordination for the public.

Library staff work closely and collaboratively with service providers from other public agencies, hosting a range of services on site or adjacent to library facilities, providing everything from newcomer settlement and passport services to tax clinics and employment workshops to cultural programming. Service coordination and cross-referrals become standard.



LIBRARY + EDUCATION



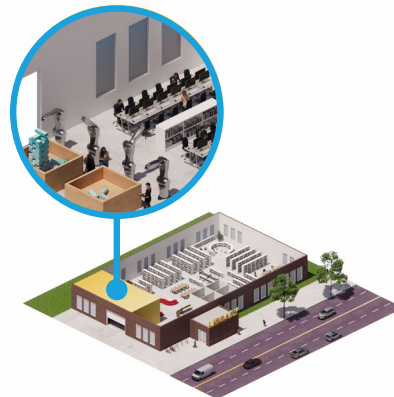
LIBRARY + OFFICE & RETAIL



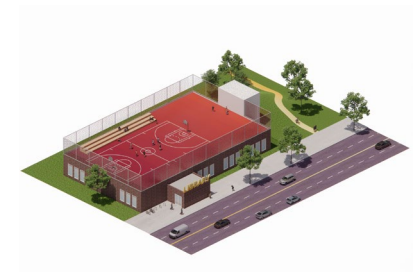
LIBRARY + TRANSIT



LIBRARY + HOUSING



LIBRARY + MARKETPLACE



LIBRARY + RECREATION

IMPACTS ON COMMUNITIES

These thriving partnerships also make possible a sharing of capital assets.

Canada's public libraries sit at the centre of a new service delivery model, one that integrates facilities, programs, services and resources across many different models of delivery.

In some cases, national agencies, including the CBC and Canada Post, relocate to local libraries. Capital costs for new libraries are now part of ongoing plans required by Infrastructure Canada, and they are built specifically to be climate resilient places of refuge, available to all community members during weather-related and other emergencies.

To maintain a state of good repair over the long-term, capital funding for existing libraries is now sourced through the Library Futures Fund, a low-return investment fund created by the federal Social Finance Fund. Government and public pension funds, private philanthropy, and private equity invest in library assets to achieve climate targets – guaranteeing a reasonable rate of return while improving energy performance and sustainability.

Canada's Infrastructure Bank creates a fund for social infrastructure investments, for which libraries are eligible. Library operating costs continue to be primarily covered by municipal budgets, but allocations are tied to inflation and population growth, so are not affected by annual budget reviews.

Auditor Generals from every order of government repeatedly cite libraries as having the highest return on investment of any publicly funded program.



IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY MEMBERS

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown the power of proximity. Consequently, governments invest in the core of every neighbourhood to provide services of all kinds, locally, that are easily accessed by everyone, and with minimal barriers. For community members with limited mobility – due to public health measures, severe weather, energy costs, age or a lack of transportation – there is easy, ready access to nearby services.

Recent investments and partnerships make libraries highly coveted workplaces for a broad range of trained professionals in technology, information management, design and the arts who are interested in collaborative, inter-disciplinary work environments.

Corporations, entrepreneurs and academic communities seek partnerships with libraries to create innovation and “maker” labs that bridge research and product development with on-the-ground community needs and emerging challenges.

Libraries function as testbeds to ensure youth get hands-on experience with different technologies, and career exposure. They are also indispensable in upskilling an aging workforce that is in constant demand to fill vacancies across all sectors.

Now, with sufficient funding and partnerships, many libraries across Canada are open 365 days a year, providing safe, engaging spaces at all times of day, regardless of historic calendar holidays. Known as the only truly inclusive space,

libraries house the broadest range of activities and visitors, with midnight youth events and dawn gatherings for astrology clubs.



With the shuttering of hundreds of faith institutions, libraries have become the sole community anchor along many main streets, able to provide spaces for community and civic activities, ranging from drop-in programs to drone repair workshops.

THRIVING

Libraries have become the widely acknowledged “go to” place for programs and services that support community cohesion and resilience, connecting and equipping residents to survive and thrive as Canada adapts to a fast-changing economy, social conditions and climate change.

“

Bad libraries build collections,
good libraries build services,
great libraries build communities.

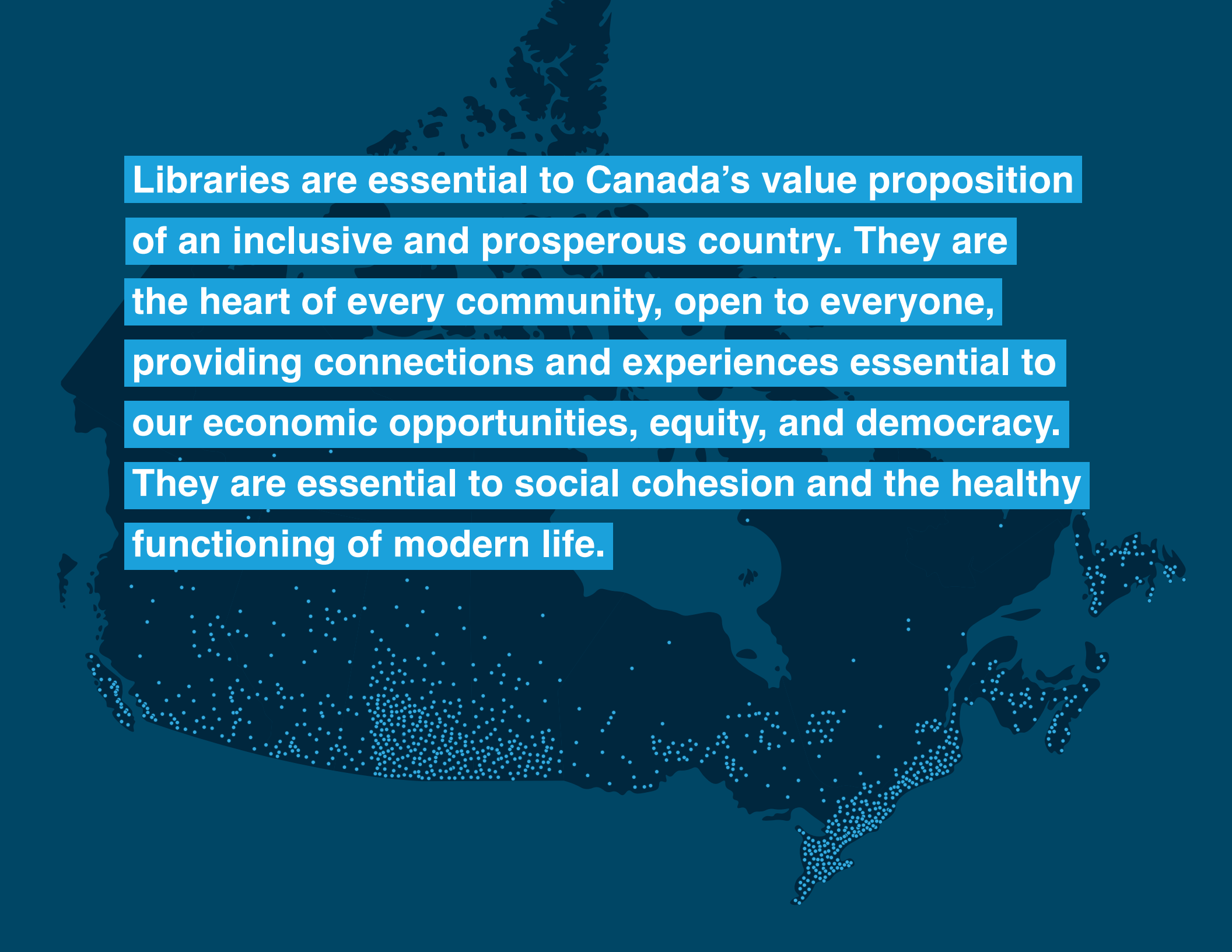
R. David Lankes



**THE
WAY
FORWARD**

MOUNT PLEASANT VILLAGE COMMUNITY CENTRE AND LIBRARY





Libraries are essential to Canada's value proposition of an inclusive and prosperous country. They are the heart of every community, open to everyone, providing connections and experiences essential to our economic opportunities, equity, and democracy. They are essential to social cohesion and the healthy functioning of modern life.

The Way Forward A Call To Action

The following is a Call to Action, outlining the priorities, goals and steps toward building the resilience of Canada's neighbourhoods and communities by strategically leveraging a hidden asset – the public library. This effort requires equipping the country's largest network of knowledge and service providers with the tools and resources they need to meet the economic, social, cultural and environmental challenges of this post-pandemic century. These actions hinge on increased recognition and funding by provincial and federal governments: that urban libraries can – and do – serve critical mandates that are under government jurisdiction.

The Way Forward Priorities

1. **Relieve Current Operational Pressures**

to ensure libraries remain safe, accessible, and welcoming libraries to everyone.



2. **Establish Libraries as Critical Infrastructure**

where community resilience is strengthened through funding of libraries to deliver government priorities.



3. **Formalize Sustainable Investment Streams**

that recognize their expanding role.



Priority 1

Relieve Current Operational Pressures



Today, libraries across the country are stretched beyond capacity, and some have essentially been turned into crisis centres as the last safe haven for vulnerable populations. While Canada's urban libraries are intentionally accessible and welcoming spaces for all residents – including those at risk – they are not the appropriate public space to address the serious mental health and addiction issues being experienced across the country.

GOALS

- Reduce the frequency and severity of social disorder and violence
- Established, appropriate crisis response approaches
- Reinforcement of the role of libraries as accessible community hubs that can refer visitors through referral networks
- Restoration of the perception and reality of libraries as welcoming places for everyone

OUTCOME

Safe, accessible and welcoming libraries for everyone

Priority 1

Relieve Current Operational Pressures



MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL ACTIONS

- Confirm deferred maintenance/costs to maintain state of good repair for library systems
- Review the municipal Strategic Plan and prioritize alignment with library services
- Engage libraries early and often in municipal planning and neighbourhood development
- Hear from library CEOs (or their designates) on the impacts of homelessness and treatment of mental health and addictions, to enhance understanding
- Prioritize libraries and their adjacent neighbourhoods as priority areas for coordinated services and investment in mental health, addiction and public safety

- Work with library systems to improve community emergency preparedness, including as places of refuge in response to climate events

PROVINCIAL & FEDERAL ACTIONS

- Develop a pan-Canadian strategy on mental health and addiction that would include public library leadership
- Develop rapid response strategies including libraries as referral centres
- Increase provincial funding for (1) integrated community-based mental health and addiction services for people with complex needs, to reduce vulnerability, and (2) support libraries in being able to refer individuals in need

Priority 2

Establish Libraries as Critical Infrastructure



Governments must recognize the intrinsic role of libraries as community infrastructure, as critical as transportation, sanitation, emergency responders and hospitals. Further, provincial and federal governments must invest in the vast network of libraries to reach Canadians from coast to coast to coast, in order to achieve their most important mandates: addressing climate change, Indigenous reconciliation, affordability, and digital equity.

GOALS

- Strengthened community resilience and disaster preparedness by equipping libraries
- Reinforcement of democratic principles of access to information, Indigenous reconciliation, inclusion and citizenship through libraries
- Funded services and programs in libraries to support municipal, provincial and federal priorities

OUTCOME

Community resilience is strengthened through funding of libraries to be able to work with community partners to deliver on municipal, provincial and federal priorities

Priority 2

Establish Libraries as Critical Infrastructure



MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL ACTIONS

- Review municipal Strategic Plans and identify priorities for alignment with library services
- Integrate libraries into planning across municipal department divisions, services and workplans, as knowledge hubs and program delivery centres
- Centre redevelopment and new developments around libraries, with proximity to other public services, affordable housing and community facilities

PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL ACTIONS

- Establish a National Task Force on the Future of Public Libraries to:

- Undertake a comprehensive national assessment of the value and impact of public libraries on community well-being and health
- Aggregate data on the state of library buildings to create a long-term investment plan for renovations and construction of new libraries, including in multi-use facilities
- Contribute to the program development of Canada's Long-Term Funding Plan for libraries, acknowledging the library's role in supporting broadband access through the network of libraries
- Identify whole-of-government leveraging opportunities for strategic partnerships among federal agencies and libraries for local service delivery

Priority 3

Formalize Sustainable Investment Streams



Despite the essential role public libraries play in addressing government priorities, they remain chronically underfunded. Today's reliance on municipal funding is not sufficient to meet the growing expectation of libraries to serve their communities in multiple ways. Libraries need to be invested in as Canada's most trusted institution.

GOAL

→ Formalized funding that recognizes libraries' expanding roles and resources them through a sustainable, blended funding pool, with contributions from municipal, provincial and federal governments.

OUTCOME

Stable and diversified revenue for libraries

Priority 3

Formalize Sustainable Investment Streams



MUNICIPAL AND LOCAL ACTIONS

- Create accountability mechanisms, such as benchmarking, to ensure local library funding keeps pace with inflation and is not annually at risk
- Equip municipal leaders with advocacy tools to increase provincial and federal support

PROVINCIAL & FEDERAL ACTIONS

- Look for mechanisms to commit provincial core funding for library operations, acknowledging the role libraries play in delivering on provincial priorities
- Explore the potential for a per capita funding allocation that supports libraries as deliverers of federal priorities, as part of the next iteration of the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program/ Long-Term Infrastructure Plan.

OVERDUE

The test of COVID-19 made crystal clear the importance of community members having reliable, safe and accessible places close to home, to gather information and find support. There's no predicting our next collective challenge, only the knowledge that there will be one. It's incumbent on all of us, as urban stewards building one of the most urbanized countries in the world, to address the challenges and seize every opportunity to strengthen one of our most valuable civic assets: our public libraries.

Canada's workforce will increasingly be challenged by an aging population, requiring better supports for Canadians wishing to work longer and needing to upgrade skills to remain competitive.

Concurrently, higher levels of immigration will welcome 500,000 immigrants annually by 2025. Newcomers rely on public libraries for services such as language training, job search assistance, access to computers, and to establish connections essential to settlement. Early literacy programs and language classes offered in libraries will be key to providing the children of new immigrants with a successful start to their education in Canada.

With an increasing reliance on technology, all Canadians need to have digital access and support in navigating the information they find. Artificial intelligence, detecting disinformation and new technological interfaces can all be better understood with the assistance of a librarian and library programs.

Canada will need to support lifelong learners and entrepreneurs to keep pace with technology and adapt to a fast-changing economy and labour market.

Communities will see increased shocks and stresses stemming from climate change, technological disruptions and global political and social upheaval. Equitable access to free public libraries where all community members are welcome is essential to social cohesion and our democracy.



Business magnate and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie invented the free public library by providing funding for more than 2,500 public libraries in many parts of the world, including 125 in Canadian communities, between 1883 and 1929. What began as private philanthropy has become an essential public service.

Post-pandemic, we have this moment for a once-in-a-generation shift in how we secure the social, economic and environmental future of Canadian communities and cities. We are overdue for this change – one that recognizes that investment in this national asset can renew social cohesion, contribute to economic growth, and support community resilience for the future.

Appendix

Canadian Urban Libraries Council member program and activity surveys and the assessment of their economic impact was conducted by statistician Kevin Stolarick, PhD. Kevin is the Dean of the Curtner Leadership Program at Urban Land Institute and a Consulting Researcher for the Toronto Workforce Innovation Group. His research focuses on the relationship between firm performance and information technology; and the impacts of technology, tolerance, talent, and quality of place on regional growth and prosperity. His work provides informative and accessible insights into the Creative Economy and the role of the Creative Class in increasing regional growth and prosperity.

Survey of CULC Library Systems

Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) membership consists of 49 library systems across Canada's largest urban areas. Due to the number of requests that CULC already makes of its membership and to encourage completions, a survey was prepared to maximize the amount of necessary information obtained while minimizing the amount of time required to complete it. The primary goal of the survey was to collect information on what programs and services each of the library systems is currently offering. Annual reports, websites and other sources were obtained and reviewed to identify offered programs and services. Those were then manually clustered around 10 themes/topics.

The themes/topics identified were:

- Physical Lending/Access
- Digital Lending
- Bookable Space/Facilities
- Kids and Family Programs
- Teen Programs
- Older Adults Programs
- Newcomer Programs
- General Audience Programs
- On Site Social/Support Services
 - Community Outreach
- Retail/Office Co-Location

Five to fifteen specific programs and services were identified for each theme.

Additionally, the survey requested information about when each of the various demographic groups returned to the library, any additional programs/services for each theme, other community partnerships, COVID-19 recovery priorities, and contact information for follow up questions.

In total, the survey identified 88 programs and services. The approach taken was to identify which of the 88 identified programs and services were being offered by each library system, and then to follow up and ask for detailed cost, benefit, and number served (e.g. program participants, books lent), information from 2022. In effect, by knowing who does what and the costs and benefits for a specific library for each of the programs/services, the overall impact could be (roughly) estimated without requiring many hours of data collection and reporting for each system.

The survey was launched on November 14, 2022. Results were accepted through December 18, 2022. Forty of the 49 CULC members submitted responses. This should be interpreted as a 100% response rate from participating library systems, as the remaining members are not library systems or are not community focused (e.g., Library and Archives Canada and Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec).

The 88 programs and services were distributed in twos and threes across the 40 respondents, with each assigned the programs/services that they reported doing. Generally, a library was asked about programs/services within the same theme to keep the data collection and reporting less streamlined. Detailed responses were obtained from 28 of the 40. For 62 of the 88 programs/services.

On average, about half of the library systems reported doing the activities for which additional information was not collected. As a result, the economic impacts estimated here understate the actual total, combined impact. The unreported programs and services are generally specific in nature, so their absence is not expected to result in a major underreporting of total impact, but the “real” number would be higher if these were included.

Advancing Social and Economic Well Being

COVID 19 Priorities

In addition to the questions on two questions on COVID-19 recovery were repeated and a series of questions on when specific groups returned to the library were asked.

Table A1. Pandemic recovery priorities

What are the most important roles of public libraries to help our communities recover? Identify and prioritize your top 3	Total	Share (%)	1	2	3
Helping community members be informed and connected	34	85%	18	8	8
Building cohesion in community	26	65%	10	6	10
Supporting community members suffering from social isolation	23	58%	3	12	8
Connecting people to government support and services	18	45%	3	8	7
Helping low-income families and groups to return to normal	13	33%	6	3	4
Supporting job seekers	8	20%	3	3	2
Supporting small businesses and entrepreneurs to restart the economy	4	10%	3	0	1

The first question asked respondents to select their top most important 3 roles of the library for pandemic recovery” (see Table A1). Each of the options was selected as a top priority by at least 3 library systems. And while almost all the libraries (34 of 40) selected “Helping community members be informed and connected” their top 3, there was not uniform agreement on the most important roles. These results are consistent with the argument that individual library systems have customized their priorities and offerings to best

meet the needs of their specific communities. The second question asked respondents to identify their priority population (Table A2). Every available option was selected by at least two library systems. While over 80% (33 out of 40) selected “children and family” or “vulnerable populations”, evenly split between two. The results also show libraries prioritizing programs/services based on the community’s needs and the library’s capabilities.

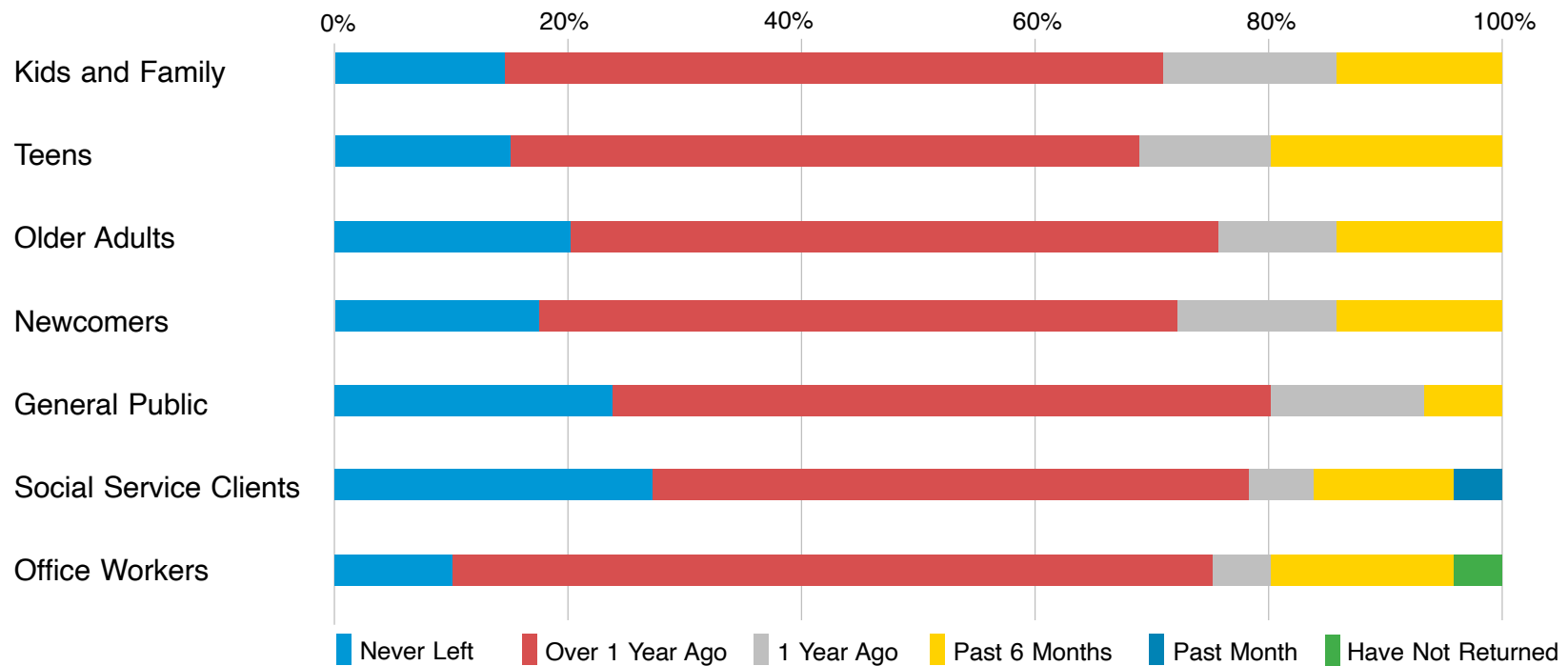
Table A2. Return of specific populations

During recovery, the population that is most important for my library to focus on is: (select one)		
Children and Family	17	42.5%
Vulnerable Populations	16	40.0%
Seniors	3	7.5%
Newcomers	2	5.0%
Youth	2	5.0%

Figure 1A shows the when specific groups of clients returned to the library. For all libraries, for almost every client group, they either never left or have returned within the past 6 months. Generally, most library systems saw most client groups return. Around 15% of libraries had at least one client group that

never left and about 10% had one or more groups return within the past 6 months (second half of 2022). The nonuniformity and range of these results again demonstrate that the Covid-19 experience and response varied from system to system.

Figure A1. When clients returned to the library



Who Is Doing What?

Findings: Programs and Services

Table 3 lists the 88 programs/services and the count and share of respondents who reported undertaking that activity. Several activities are being provided by all libraries, and each unique activity is being provided by at least two library systems.

Table 3. Programs and services by use

Theme/Topic: Program/Service	# of Respondents	Share %
Digital Lending: eBooks	40	100
Digital Lending: Digital audiobooks	40	100
Digital Lending: Digital newspapers	40	100
Physical Lending/Access: Books	39	98
Physical Lending/Access: DVDs	39	98
Digital Lending: Digital magazines	39	98
Kids and Family Programs: Storytime	39	98
Kids and Family Programs: Dedicated kids and family spaces in the library	39	98
Physical Lending/Access: Music	38	95
Physical Lending/Access: Public Wi-Fi	38	95
General Audience Programs: Computer and technology training	38	95
General Audience Programs: Author talks, lectures and panels	38	95

Bookable Space/Facilities: Meeting rooms	37	93
General Audience Programs: Book clubs and reading circles	37	93
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: Partner with local community organizations to develop community resources	37	93
Digital Lending: Streaming video	36	90
Kids and Family Programs: Reading and/or writing support programs	36	90
Kids and Family Programs: Kids book clubs / reading buddies	36	90
Older Adults Programs: Digital life skills for seniors	36	90
Digital Lending: Streaming music	35	88
Bookable Space/Facilities: Study rooms	34	85
Teen Programs: Multi-media production, robotics, or other tech-related workshops	34	85
Physical Lending/Access: Computers (includes Chromebooks)	33	83
General Audience Programs: Programs on Truth and Reconciliation	33	83
Digital Lending: Digital comics	32	80
Bookable Space/Facilities: Community multipurpose rooms	32	80
General Audience Programs: Business and employment (e.g. interview skills, work culture training, job search)	32	80
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: Areas for warming or cooling during extreme weather	32	80
Newcomer Programs: Language learning programs	31	78
General Audience Programs: Posting of civic information (e.g. election information, city hall services, etc.)	30	75
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: Partner with health agency to provide information and services	30	75
General Audience Programs: Tour of the library	29	73
Bookable Space/Facilities: Multi-media lab	28	70

Teen Programs: Arts classes or workshops	28	70
Older Adults Programs: Lectures and panels on positive mental health and brain health	28	70
Retail/Office Co-Location: Community centres	28	70
Bookable Space/Facilities: Conference rooms	26	65
Bookable Space/Facilities: Larger Event Space for more than 50 people	26	65
Teen Programs: Reading and/or writing workshops	26	65
Older Adults Programs: Personal financial planning	26	65
Newcomer Programs: Library Services in multiple languages	26	65
Newcomer Programs: Job search support and skills program	26	65
Newcomer Programs: Online resources for newcomer services	26	65
General Audience Programs: Digital creation (e.g. animation, self-publishing, etc.)	26	65
Teen Programs: Teens Book Club	25	63
Older Adults Programs: Senior social events	25	63
General Audience Programs: Performance art events	24	60
Teen Programs: Game Nights for teens	23	58
Newcomer Programs: Access to settlement workers	23	58
General Audience Programs: Film Screening	23	58
Physical Lending/Access: Tablets (iPad)	22	55
Physical Lending/Access: Passes to cultural organizations (such as museums)	21	53
Bookable Space/Facilities: Exhibition Space	21	53
General Audience Programs: Oral history and stories	21	53
Physical Lending/Access: Passes to national parks	19	48
Newcomer Programs: Citizenship practice test or preparation courses	19	48
Physical Lending/Access: Musical Instruments	18	45

Teen Programs: Support for college application, financial aid or other career readiness programs	18	45
Older Adults Programs: Support to access options to age in place	18	45
Older Adults Programs: Creative aging programs	18	45
General Audience Programs: Literacy Van, Bookmobile or Books to Go	18	45
Bookable Space/Facilities: Theatre	17	43
Older Adults Programs: Telephone seniors who might be socially isolated	16	40
Newcomer Programs: Personal financial planning	15	38
Retail/Office Co-Location: Café	15	38
Bookable Space/Facilities: Outdoor space	14	35
Kids and Family Programs: Nature walks	14	35
Newcomer Programs: Newsletter or centralized information for newcomers	14	35
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: On-staff “community services navigator” to help people understand and navigate the system to access need social, justice and/or health services	14	35
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: Partner with local partners and organizations to provide food for those in need	14	35
Retail/Office Co-Location: Municipal government office	14	35
Older Adults Programs: Support to navigate change with aging	13	33
Teen Programs: Mindfulness workshops	12	30
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: On-staff social workers	11	28
Retail/Office Co-Location: Gallery	11	28
Retail/Office Co-Location: Gym	11	28
Physical Lending/Access: Tools	8	20
Retail/Office Co-Location: Library store / Boutique	7	18
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: Community fridge	6	15

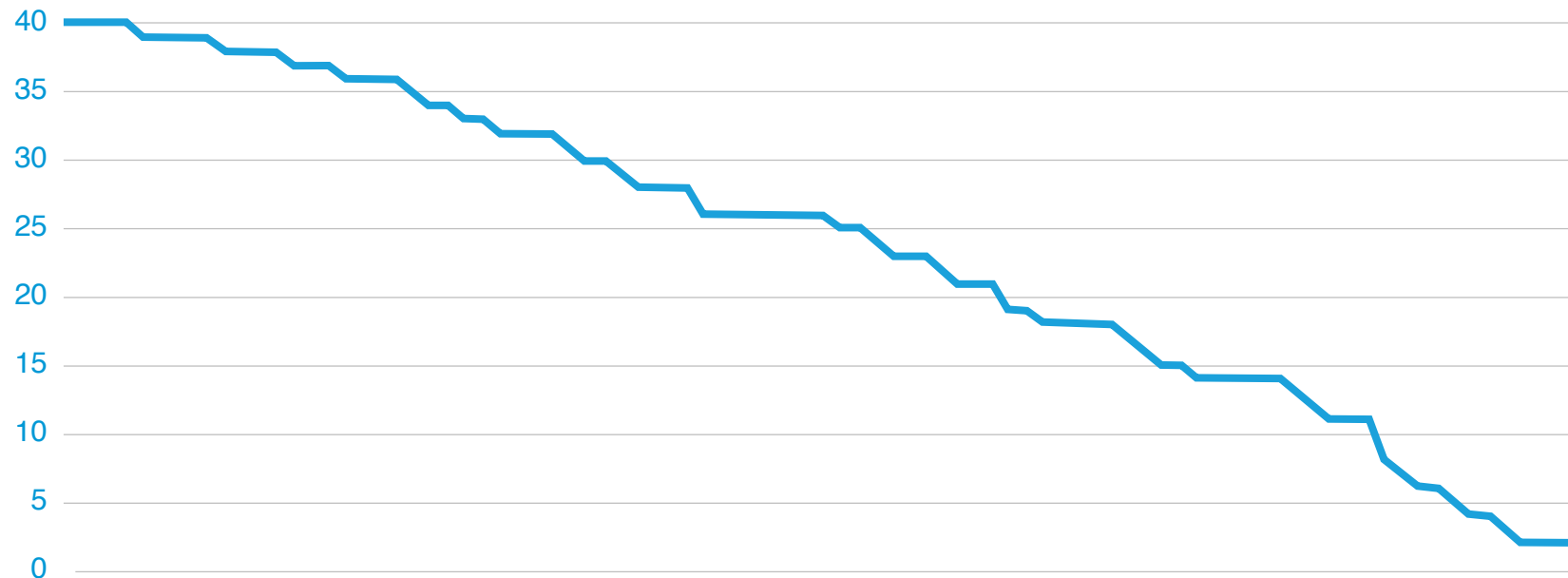
Retail/Office Co-Location: Housing	6	15
Teen Programs: Counselling	5	13
Retail/Office Co-Location: Museum	4	10
Retail/Office Co-Location: Provincial government office	4	10
Retail/Office Co-Location: College/University office	3	8
On Site Social/Support Services – Community Outreach: Shower facilities	2	5
Retail/Office Co-Location: Movie Theatre	2	5
Retail/Office Co-Location: CBC	2	5
Retail/Office Co-Location: Federal government office	2	5

How Many Are Doing What?

Figure A2 shows the number of library systems offering each of the 88 programs/services. While there are a few offerings provided by some libraries and every offering by at least two library systems, some offerings are available at most libraries and some are only available at a few libraries. The results span the full range. Canadian urban libraries

are not monolithic in their offerings. The mix of programs and services offered by each varies. While some consistencies are seen, and expected, inconsistencies are also present. This result reflects that individual library systems are uniquely responding to their specific communities' needs and the library system's own resources and capabilities.

Figure A2. How many are doing what



Estimated Economic Impact of Canadian Urban Libraries

Methodology and Findings

The following process was used to estimate the overall economic impact of Canada's urban library systems. The impact is measured as the excess benefits created relative to the cost of providing and administering a program or service. It is based on the number of people attending the program or using the service (borrowing a book) and their individual benefit.

Step 1

Ten physical and digital lending services are separated out for special processing so that separate estimates could be developed based on the 2021 Census population for the Census Area served by each library system.

- Physical Lending/Access: Books
- Physical Lending/Access: DVDs
- Physical Lending/Access: Music
- Physical Lending/Access: Public Wi-Fi
- Digital Lending: Digital comics
- Digital Lending: Digital magazines
- Digital Lending: Digital newspapers
- Digital Lending: eBooks
- Digital Lending: Streaming music
- Digital Lending: Streaming video

Step 2

Of the remaining 78 programs and services, detailed cost/benefit information was received for 52:

- Population served (and number)
- Cost
- Number of participants
- Tangible (\$) benefit per participant
- Intangible (non-monetary) benefits

Step 3

For the 52 programs/services with detailed cost/benefit information, the number of library services offering program/service was counted.

Step 4

An estimate of the total Canada-wide costs, participants, and benefits is calculated. This assumes that the reported numbers would be equally applicable to all other libraries that are

offering a similar program/service.

By spreading the request for detailed information across all libraries and removing those items that are clearly influenced by underlying population (#1), the estimate is not biased in any way, and the tremendous nationwide effort that would be required to estimate every program/service for every library system is avoided. It creates a very rough estimate but the actual variation should be “white noise” with some total impacts over-estimated and an equal number under-estimated. This is the best that could be done within the timeframe and resources available.

As an example, a library system reported that for “Teen Programs: Game Nights for Teens” in 2022:

- It cost them \$3,000 to provision for and administer the program, which includes board and electronic games
- 341 individuals participated during the year in sessions

- It provided this for free, purchased and providing games, and prizes
 - The average benefit was \$25 per person based on the usual average cost to participate in something similar organized through MeetUp or other for-profit venues would have a minimum purchase requirement.
 - In 2022, the total benefit to the community for hosting teen games nights was \$8,525.
 - The net benefit was \$5,525.
 - 23 library systems reported that they provide “Games Nights for Teens”
 - Therefore, the total economic benefit provided across Canada by the librarians that provide “Game Nights for Teens” is \$127,075.
 - If all 49 CULC members provided this program (discussed more in the next section), the total benefit would be \$270,725.
- The thoughtful response from the library also included this response to the prompt about intangible benefits also arise from providing this program: Engaging in games helps teens in problem solving skills, better social skills when gaming in a group. Games can improve manual dexterity and stimulate imaginative play and creativity. Gaming is also a great way to improve literacy skills as games tell stories in new and exciting ways. The library provides opportunities for teens to engage with games in a safe and welcoming environment.”

Step 5

Returning to #1 (physical and digital lending) and separately developing estimates that take into account regional population,

- Ten different libraries were asked to provide cost, number served and benefits for each of the ten lending options. The 2021 Census population numbers (for the CMA or CA that includes the library system) were then used to normalize the costs, service provided and benefits per person.

- The per person estimates then combined with Census 2021 population estimates for each of the 40 library systems included in this study.
- Accumulating each library for each of the ten physical and digital lending opportunities result in an estimated Canada-wide economic impact from lending activities.

Table A4 is the result of combining all of this information.

Table A4. Total economic impact of Canada’s urban libraries

Total Economic Impact from Canada’s Urban Libraries	Cost (\$m)	Served #	Total Benefit (\$m)	Net Benefit (\$m)
Programs/Services (52)	205,398,323	55,289,329	627,525,391	422,127,068
Physical/Digital Lending (10)	101,004,045	260,296,271	1,502,546,053	1,401,542,008
Total	306,402,368	315,585,600	2,130,071,444	1,823,669,076

Overall, Canada's urban libraries are creating \$2.1 billion in community economic impact on just over \$300 million in cost. The overall return is nearly \$6 for every \$1 spent. Much of this is driven by providing free access to physically or digitally published goods, but the other programs and services return on average more than \$2 for every \$1 spent. Based on the 2021 Canada wide Census population of 36,991,981, every man, women and child in Canada is partaking in a library offering 8.5 times per year on average.

The impact of Canada's urban libraries is not limited to the \$1.8 billion in economic effects, but that is the tractable and measurable scope of this study.

What If...?

As explained in the prior section, the estimated economic effect of Canada’s urban libraries is based solely on the activities that each of the 40 library systems reported they were providing at the time of the survey. What if all 40 libraries were doing all 62 things?

Table A5 below shows the estimates if all 40 libraries were each providing all 52 of the programs/services (52 of the 88 for which detailed numbers were reported). It shows the increase in cost and the resulting increase in benefits. The physical/digital lending numbers are unchanged as all 40 library systems are

already providing those programs/services. The overall changes are not tremendous mostly as a result of the smaller number of individuals reached by many of the specific programs/services. The new mix of programs drops the overall return to \$4.50 for each \$1 spent, which is a reflection of library systems not offering programs for which they have determined that the benefits do not outweigh the costs. In effect, this analysis forces every library to offer every program, resulting in slightly less effective overall returns, but shows at least some of the untapped potential in Canada’s urban libraries.

Table A5. Potential economic impact of Canada’s urban libraries

	Cost	Number Served	Total Benefit	Net Benefit
Programs/Services (52)	368,613,326	97,859,174	1,117,590,285	748,976,959
Physical/Digital Lending (10)	101,004,045	260,296,271	1,502,546,053	1,401,542,008
Total	469,617,371	358,155,445	2,620,136,338	2,150,518,967

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September 2023

City and County of Camrose

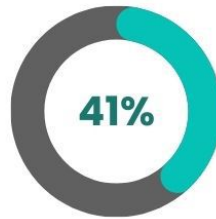
2023 Alberta Provincial Housing And Service Needs Estimation



663

Total Community Members Experiencing Housing Insecurity

Out of the 572 survey submissions, there were 339 respondents who were found to be housing secure, and 233 were found to be housing insecure.



There were 189 dependents and 241 adults who shared housing insecure conditions with the 233 housing insecure respondents.



9%

of respondents stayed in foster care, a youth group home, or under a youth agreement in the past.

97%

of those are housing insecure.

76%

of Indigenous respondents are housing insecure.



34%

Overall Community Service Availability Satisfaction Score



12%

accessed an emergency shelter in the last 12 months.

significant barriers to shelter access:

- no shelter in area
- isolation from transportation
- lack of social support



Top Missing Amenities

sufficient and affordable heating



safe drinking water

Employment Status and Type



56% of housing insecure respondents are employed.

56% of those are full-time, and 31% are part-time, with 7% working casual.

Top Reasons For Housing Instability



low wages

can't afford rent/mortgage payments



increasing rent costs

RURAL AND REMOTE ALBERTA

2023 Alberta Provincial Housing And Service Needs Estimation



8,320

Community Members Experiencing Housing Insecurity

Out of the 3,211 survey submissions, there were 782 respondents who were found to be housing secure, and 2,429 were found to be housing insecure.



There were 2,354 dependents and 2,537 adults who shared housing insecure conditions with the 2,429 housing insecure respondents.



13%

 or **326** unique respondents accessed an emergency shelter in the past 12 months.

Top Missing Amenities



sufficient & affordable heating



safe drinking water



fire protection

Employment Status and Type



69% of housing insecure respondents are employed.

68% of those are full-time, and 21% are part-time, with 7% working casual.



Gender Identity

Women are 1.4 times more likely than men to be housing insecure.

93%

of **2SLGBTQIA+** respondents are housing insecure

91%

of **Indigenous** respondents are housing insecure

88%

of respondents **born outside of Canada** are housing insecure

97%

of respondents **who spent time in care** are housing insecure

Top Reasons For Housing Instability



low wages



can't afford rent/mortgage payments



increasing rent costs

October 5 2023

City Council
City of Camrose City Hall
5204 50 Avenue
Camrose AB
T4V 0S8

RE: 2024 Funding Agreement

Esteemed Council,

Request

The Camrose Public Library (CPL) is requesting a 0.79% (\$4471.4) increase to its 2024 funding from the City of Camrose in pursuit of its goal to retain Sunday operating hours. The initial 2023-2024 budgets had set CPL's 2024 funding at \$565,700; CPL is now requesting \$570,171.40

What has changed in the last year

- CPL's demand for Sunday operating hours has increased. 2023 Sunday attendance is up by 47% over the year prior.
- The private donation that currently funds Sunday service will end by January 31 2024, and CPL cannot match it with the expected revenue.
- The *2023 Alberta Provincial Housing & Service Needs Estimation Community Report for the City and County of Camrose* was released. It identified that there are at least 663 community members experiencing housing insecurity in our community, 189 of which were dependents. These numbers are underreported. Additionally, 50% of these individuals are employed and as such have limitations on their time.
- We have recently partnered with Camrose Helps to expand their community pantry and provide evening and weekend access; closing on Sundays would limit the returns on this partnership.

- The new rooms in the library renovation have opened, and closing on Sundays reduces the likelihood that members of the public can utilize them.

What we have done to retain Sunday hours

2023 was the first year to approach normal operations since the pandemic began. After reviewing CPL's spending in this has played out in our first year, CPL made the decision to trim from some of our budget lines such as HR consultation, janitor supplies, board training expenses, and phone lines. The library also saw a significant increase in attendance, which resulted in a higher-than-expected increase in revenue. Our unexpected revenue and reduced expenses allowed us to cover 60% (\$13,763) of the cost of keeping Sunday opening hours. We are requesting that the City of Camrose and Camrose County help us to bridge the gap so that we can continue to serve some of the most vulnerable in our community.

Please see the attached infographic for more information.

Thank you for your time and consideration,



Alyssa Martin
Director
Camrose Public Library

Cc: City of Camrose Library Board

Presentation to Camrose City Council

CAMROSE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

October 16 2023

In 2020, CPL funding started to drop, and the expenses started to increase. Things were hard for everyone, and CPL could not keep up



In 2023, CPL made the difficult decision to cut opening hours, which included closing on Sundays

Closing Sundays hurt the vulnerable. Sundays at the library meant:

A place outside a church to find community

Few places are open on Sundays



Being able to catch a ride with someone who usually works

Limited funds and transit options make travel difficult for some of our community.



A warm place to be with clean water



Many struggle to pay for heat, housing and water*

Access to food when other services are closed

CPL is working with Camrose Helps to host a community pantry. The Camrose Food Bank is only open Tues-Thurs



Computers and internet to do their homework



Not everyone can afford a computer or internet

Access to clean air

2023 set a record for smoke days, and people were urged to take a smoke break by visiting their local library**



A private donor stepped forward and gave CPL 1 year of funding



This funding ends soon

* 2023 Alberta Provincial Housing & Service Needs Estimation Report

** Environment and Climate Change Canada Special Air Quality Statement

Good news: 2023 exceeded expectations


Library attendance increased by

+26%

Sunday attendance increased by

+47%

This means increased revenue



Exam Proctoring




Room Rentals



Memberships



Printing



Book Sale and Donations

This revenue, coupled with reduced spending meant
CPL found \$13,763.10

Sundays cost **\$22,793** a year



\$4471.40 (+0.79%)

CPL Needs



\$4558.50 (+6.2%)



Please help us to save Sundays

CAMROSE
PUBLIC LIBRARY