

# HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY MASTERPLAN REPORT

## CORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Huntsville Public Library offers public library service to the 27,347 residents of the Town of Huntsville, both permanent and seasonal. Its single location at 7 Minerva Street East is a 12,225 square foot single storey facility. The physical deficiencies of the facility have been recognized and documented, including in the 2019 Space Assessment & Recommendations Study completed by Mitchell Jensen Architects.

The purpose of Phase One of the Master Plan exercise was to undertake a comprehensive Service Delivery Review and to identify current and future facility needs, guided and informed by the HPL Board's Strategic Plan 2023-2027. This Phase One Master Plan considers current system strengths and deficiencies (the latter being largely tied to the limitations of the physical facility) and future facility needs from an operational perspective.

The work comprising Phase One of the Master Plan was undertaken between July and November of 2025. Activities included a documentation review, staff and stakeholder interviews, two on-site visits, staff interviews, a confidential online survey of the community, a confidential survey of staff, passive engagement activities in-branch and at community events, and a half-day Board workshop.

Phase One work included the development of a comprehensive service delivery plan and facility model, prioritizing functional spaces and determining square footage requirements for each functional area. Phase One provides the foundation for Phase Two work. Phase Two will finalize the Preliminary Design Concept.

The body of the Report details the Service Delivery findings, analysis, and conclusions that form the basis of recommendations in the areas of: open hours; collections; user seating; programs and services; multi-purpose spaces and public work/study space; technology; outreach and community engagement; and staffing allocation and deployment.

Functional space allocation recommendations, furnishing complement estimates, and a Graphic Space diagram of a proposed new facility of 27,563 square feet were developed and included in this Report for the Board's consideration.

Consistent throughout the service delivery plan and preliminary space planning process was the critical need for flexibility and adaptability in order to meet short term needs as well as to allow for changes to spaces and services as community needs and library services change in the mid- to long term.



# PART A: BACKGROUND

## 1. PURPOSE OF PHASE ONE OF THE HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY MASTER PLAN

The Board of the Huntsville Public Library has engaged Lisa Miettinen and CGS/Curran Gacesa Slote Architects Inc. to undertake a Library Master Plan. Phase One of the Plan is the development of a Service Delivery Model to guide the provision of quality public library services into the future.

The need for a larger new or renovated public library facility has been documented in studies contracted through the Town and the Library Board over the past 15 years. In order to move ahead with consideration of a new or renovated facility, it is imperative to gain an understanding of what would be required in terms of services, staffing, resources, and physical spaces to address the needs and aspirations of the community as well as meet the strategic priorities of the Library and the Town of Huntsville.

A Service Delivery Model guides service delivery, resource allocations, and staffing deployment, and commits the library to a culture of continuous improvement and employee engagement. It provides strategic recommendations for each functional service component, to help prioritize and guide future decision making with the provision of effective, efficient, and responsive library services as its goal.

## 2. OVERVIEW OF STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Huntsville Public Library service delivery is guided by:

- a) the Vision Statement: *A vital centre to collaborate, connect and explore the world in which we live;*
- b) the Mission Statement: *To provide accessible services, programs, collections, and spaces designed to inspire and enrich the community;*
- c) and the Values: *Intellectual Freedom; Equitable Access; Sustainability; Respect; Innovation; Accountability; Leadership; Community; Lifelong Learning; and Creativity.*

In the Library Board's Strategic Plan for 2023 through 2027, three key strategic objectives were established:

- under the *Spaces* pillar, "Refresh and renovate spaces to current and future needs."
- Under the *Community Access, Outreach, and Engagement* pillar, "Increase the Library's presence and profile in the community."
- Under the *Services and Programs* pillar, "Connect and guide users to community opportunities."

The Service Delivery Model should be guided by the strategic priorities established by the Library Board and should align, where possible, with Town strategic priorities.

## 3. KEY ASSUMPTIONS

This Study was undertaken recognizing as a given that the current library facility has many significant shortfalls, primarily its limited square footage. The purpose of this exercise is not to meticulously document these shortfalls, but instead, recommend the qualities, functional properties, and space requirements that would be needed to meet the optimal service goals of the library and the aspirations of the community.

A Master Plan is intended to be a high-level document setting out a broad range of goals and recommended actions. While this Model has looked at functional components in depth and makes recommendations for further action, it cannot address specific initiatives on a granular level. Further study and work will be required to be done in future based on priorities established by the Board.

Best practices and emerging technologies evolve and specific products, services, and practices mentioned in this Model may be superseded by the time the library is ready to undertake the work of a new build or renovation. However, a Service Delivery Model that is grounded in principles that are community-led and customer-focused will remain relevant in the long term.



# PART A: BACKGROUND

## 4. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS AND OBSERVATIONS

For every single functional component of the Huntsville Public Library, lack of space serves as an impediment to fully realizing the library's potential as an inspiring community space and resource. Lack of space also negatively impacts staff functions, with staff work areas extremely cramped. However, in spite of the shortfalls of the facility, a wide range of well-received and well-attended programs is offered, attendance and usage rates are strong, and most worthy of note, the warm and helpful staff create a welcoming atmosphere, as consistently attested to by extremely favourable public survey ratings and general feedback.

While the current facility is considered within the downtown core area and only one street removed from the main street, the building's location is not particularly prominent, and parking is very limited. Lack of outdoor green space, few and small windows, and the imposing front steps and ramp limit the building's visual appeal, and does not make it welcoming.

During the library consultant's three separate site visits between mid-July and mid-October, moderate to high occupancy levels in the library were observed. The service desk staff dealt with frequent transactions, including check-outs and check-ins, telephone calls, and in-person requests for information or patron account services. Several people were directed to the senior staff member positioned that day on the Info Desk for more complex or technical questions. Numerous children and parents, grandparents or caregivers enjoyed the children's area, people used study tables in the main area of the library as well as in the Solarium, and one or two individuals stepped into the Multipurpose Room to take cellphone calls. The easy chairs located throughout the main area and stacks were frequently in use, although it was noted that there is insufficient seating and a lack of variety of seating.

Overall, the library appeared to be well-used, customer interactions were positive, and staff members were fully occupied.



# PART B: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

## 5. TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE

### SOCIETAL TRENDS

Communities within the District of Muskoka, like many high tourist areas of the province, have seen a surge of residents converting their seasonal homes into permanent or semi-permanent homes. The growth in work-from-home arrangements is one reason for this trend. Many of these new residents previously lived and worked in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Many are accustomed to “big city” levels of service and may expect more from local services than those services are realistically able to provide without a substantial increase in operating funding. This is definitely a point of stress.

Many rural communities are experiencing a sharp increase in population as people leave the GTA in search of both more affordable housing and a more agreeable lifestyle for themselves and their family. Many communities are becoming increasingly multicultural and diverse. Whereas most rural libraries have until recently had limited demand for multilingual collections or multicultural, multi-generational programming, that may be changing.

Societal rates of homelessness, precarious housing, food insecurity, addiction and mental health issues are increasing. While the Huntsville Public Library has to date been spared the frequency and severity of challenging behaviours that many public libraries and other public facilities are experiencing, the rate of such incidents is undeniably on the rise at HPL. Public library staff must be properly trained to de-escalate situations and have strong policies, protocols and procedures in place to deal with situations as they happen. Most urban libraries and a growing number of rural libraries are now employing security staff, but an alternative or complementary proactive approach is the utilization of social service/social workers, either as paid library staff or in a partnership arrangement with a community mental health agency.

Social isolation and loneliness are on the rise, and a “loneliness epidemic” is commonly referred to. In Ontario, 13.7% of persons report always or often feeling lonely (Statistics Canada’s “Loneliness in Canada” 2024 report), and 43% of Canadians aged 50 years and older are at risk of social isolation, with up to 59% having experienced loneliness (The National Institute on Ageing (NIA) 2024 Survey). Given that the Canadian population has more people over the age of 65 than those under the age of 15, this is a troubling trend. The public library’s role as social infrastructure has perhaps never been so vital.

### PROGRAMMING TRENDS

People are increasingly wanting drop-in, no-registration-required programming. Hectic schedules, due to children’s activities, work schedules or the need to work two or more part-time jobs make it difficult for individuals and families to commit to registration-based events and programs, particularly if those registrations involve a fee.

Families and individuals experiencing low income face many barriers to accessing structured programs and activities. Free programs and services or access to subsidies are critical to ensuring that everyone is able to participate in their community. There is often a shortage of free or low-cost recreational opportunities for children and teens. The Town of Huntsville is proactively working to address this need, and has engaged the library in promoting access to subsidized recreation services.

Outreach programming – bringing the public library to places in the community where target audiences already are – is a growing trend. Huntsville Public Library has already established some excellent outreach programming including children’s programs in the parks, Story Walks, and story times at the EarlyON Centre. “Meeting people where they are” rather than waiting for people to enter the library helps to overcome the numerous barriers that people face in accessing services, including lack of awareness of those services, or intimidation of the traditional perception of a “knowledge-based” facility like a library.



# PART B: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

## 5. TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE (CONT'D)

### TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS

Low income can exacerbate the “digital divide”, with many people no longer able to afford to pay for high speed Internet access at home. This has a profound impact on job seekers, self-employed and entrepreneurial workers, and students. Individuals working from home may need to rely on the library for high speed access in order to participate in online meetings, depending on where they live, as high-speed access is not consistently available throughout the District, and for printing and scanning services and access to professional grade softwares that they may not be able to afford. The public library continues to serve a vital economic development role in the provision of technology, technology instruction, and internet access.

Libraries, traditionally a bastion of print literacy, are now promoting multiple literacies to recognize the critical need to engage with a variety of media needed to thrive in today’s economies and educational systems. Included in multiple literacies are: information literacy; digital literacy; visual literacy; and media literacy. Library services and programming routinely include ebooks, iPads and other mobile devices, databases, Maker Spaces and activities, gaming, coding clubs, and digital workshops for all ages. Resources, workshops, and staff expertise help customers to better discern and thus avoid misinformation and to find vetted sources of reliable information.

An active social media presence is critical as a communication and engagement tool. Increasingly, people are getting their information about library programs and events through social media channels. However, the segment of the population that is not connected through social media channels still require that more traditional means are maintained, such as newsletters, flyers, posters, and printed event calendars, in order not to be excluded. This places significant additional demands on staff to meticulously maintain multiple communication platforms.

### FACILITY USAGE TRENDS

Many recent new library builds are co-locations in large facilities with other services such as arenas, aquatic centres, municipal offices, and daycares, to name a few. Depending on the community, this can be an excellent opportunity to realize cost efficiencies and greater exposure and traffic through shared common spaces and multi-purpose rooms and to enjoy increased traffic in a facility that is a true destination for a number of services. However, it is not always the ideal location for the public library if it is removed from the commercial centre of the community and is not pedestrian-friendly.

Public libraries are increasingly being looked to for collaborative space, whether for group study, small business support, training opportunities, or programming. The library as “community hub” reflects the need to engage in meaningful ways with other local services and agencies, as well as local government, to bring needed services to community members where and when they need them.

Nationally and internationally, library builds and renovations are increasingly utilizing flexible/mobile fixtures and furnishings (including shelving) to allow library spaces to be reconfigured as needed. For example, a children’s area can be set up for baby and toddler programs in the morning and then reconfigured to accommodate after-school programs, group study space, or larger-scale special programs.

### PLACEMAKING

Public libraries have come to be called a “third space”, a “community hub”, and “the community’s living room”. All three terms describe the public library as social infrastructure – a vital centre of meaningful social interaction and community, bringing people together to discover, share, learn, and connect. People are put in touch with community resources, social connections are made, and the various pleasing physical spaces of the library, both outside and inside, available for all members of the community to access, can inspire and enrich.



# PART B: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

## 5. TRENDS AND BEST PRACTICES IN PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE (CONT'D)

### AFTERMATH OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic forced public libraries to develop and implement new service delivery methods to ensure the continuance of basic library services. Some of those new methods proved highly successful, such as curbside service and virtual programming, and after pandemic restrictions ceased, some new practices are being retained to varying degrees.

Some COVID-era behaviours persist:

- a desire for increased “personal space” and an aversion to layouts of seating and study areas that place people in close proximity
- removal of plush toys and other difficult-to-clean items from children’s areas
- public intolerance toward the presence in the library of someone who exhibits symptoms of a respiratory illness.

## 6. SWOT ASSESSMENT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS)

A SWOT Assessment was completed by the consultant and submitted to library staff for discussion and comment. It was presented for discussion to Board members at the October Board Workshop.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• strong, creative staff</li> <li>• perception of the library as a cornerstone/hub of the community</li> <li>• responsive to community needs</li> <li>• strong one-on-one customer service</li> <li>• stable customer base generally satisfied with services provided</li> <li>• growing range of services and programs</li> <li>• quality programming with good uptake</li> <li>• positive alliance with Town</li> <li>• recent successes building strong relationships with downtown businesses, the Chamber and BIA</li> <li>• downtown location</li> <li>• fine-free</li> <li>• long-standing, committed employees with deep knowledge of community</li> <li>• supportive Friends of the Library group</li> <li>• Library of Things</li> <li>• quality services at no cost – an appealing model and responsive to need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of adequate facility space impedes operations and growth</li> <li>• aging HVAC infrastructure leads to uncomfortable temperatures</li> <li>• extremely poor acoustics</li> <li>• some accessibility issues exist, including shelving heights, aisle widths, lack of automatic washroom doors</li> <li>• inadequate quiet study spaces</li> <li>• low per-household budget support through levy</li> <li>• few if any alternative sources of funding available</li> <li>• gap in services for teens, lack of Teen space, lack of Teen-focused staff resources</li> <li>• low acquisitions budget results in limited supply of in-demand materials</li> <li>• reliance on ILLO – convenient for users but costly in staff time</li> <li>• low staff training and development budget</li> <li>• transaction-driven (repetitive) service desk functions</li> <li>• lack of uptake by public for self check technology</li> <li>• lack of creative spaces and resources</li> </ul>



# PART B: SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

## 6. SWOT ASSESSMENT (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS) (CONT'D)

OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• population growth will result in growing market for library services</li> <li>• increasing ethnic diversity in the community may represent new markets</li> <li>• partnership opportunities to engage with new potential customer groups to increase user uptake of both physical and online resources</li> <li>• opportunities (several underway) to partner with education sector, business community, Town departments, and other agencies and service providers</li> <li>• well-positioned to participate in addressing the challenges facing the community</li> <li>• growth in tourism and cultural tourism</li> <li>• growth in entrepreneurialism</li> <li>• a potential building project as opportunity to pursue fund development</li> <li>• diverse needs of the growing seniors community, many who may be financially secure, may represent a growing market and an opportunity to benefit from endowment funds and other fundraising programs</li> <li>• improved services by increasing hours of operation</li> <li>• positioned to meet residents’ digital literacy needs and as facilitator of discussions around topical subjects such as AI and mis- and disinformation</li> <li>• growing demand for lifelong learning opportunities</li> <li>• opportunity to animate and re-envision outdoor space</li> <li>• need for additional meeting spaces for rental use in the Town is an opportunity for revenue generation and will attract more people to the library and its services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rising operating costs, potentially fewer resources in future</li> <li>• Provincial funding levels stagnant and future unknown</li> <li>• competition for resources</li> <li>• escalating incidents of antisocial behaviours undermine the perception of the library as a “safe space”</li> <li>• stress and “customer fatigue” experienced by public library staff as incidents of antisocial behaviours increase and intensify</li> <li>• rapid pace of change demanding ongoing investments in technology and staff skills development</li> <li>• cost of digital content can be prohibitive</li> <li>• streaming services lower the demand for traditional A/V collections, but they are still needed by many in the community – costs of maintaining collections in multiple formats</li> <li>• persistent narrow view of libraries as places for books/physical items</li> <li>• proliferation of social media and its instant gratification requires that libraries remain active/ interactive on multiple social media platforms or risk negative reviews and irrelevancy</li> <li>• libraries as targets for intellectual freedom challenges</li> </ul>



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7. OPEN HOURS

Huntsville Public Library is open to the public during 46 hours each week. Its open hours are as follows:

DAY	HOURS
Monday	10:00 to 6:00
Tuesday	10:00 to 6:00
Wednesday	10:00 to 6:00
Thursday	10:00 to 6:00
Friday	10:00 to 6:00
Saturday	10:00 to 4:00
Sunday	CLOSED

Section 7.4 of the Ontario Public Library Guidelines (OPLG) states:

*...open hours of the library reflect the needs of the community and include evenings and/or weekends. During the last four years the library has assessed how well its open hours match community need.*

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, Huntsville Public Library was open for four hours on Sunday afternoons. During the pandemic, library hours were reduced by six hours per week due to stretched resources (few public libraries were able to maintain their pre-pandemic hours), and the library was closed on Sundays and Mondays.

Post-pandemic, for budgetary reasons, the library did not reinstate its Sunday hours. (It is worth noting that many Ontario public libraries have still not reinstated Sunday hours post-COVID.) HPL has not restored the open hours that were offered pre-COVID.

An eight-hour shift is essentially all that the current staffing complement can comfortably manage without having to institute a second shift each day. The library experimented with opening later some days in order to remain open later those evenings, but this was met with pushback from customers who wanted the predictability of a consistent, uniform opening time. Staff report that they receive complaints about both the later morning opening (10:00 a.m. rather than 9:00 a.m.) and the early closing time.

The public survey comments reflected a significant level of dissatisfaction with the hours of operation. Both the library's limited hours, and available parking, were tied as the #1 top weakness. Increased open hours to access programs, and an outdoor area, were similarly tied as the things that respondents wished they could do at Huntsville Public Library that are currently unavailable. Many respondents indicated that they are unable to attend programming that is offered during working hours. Evening and weekend children's and teen programming was a frequent request.

At 46 hours per week, HPL falls at the low end of ARUPLO Guidelines.<sup>1</sup> Minimum hours of operation for Large libraries (generally serving a population of 10,000 to 35,000) are 45 to 65 over 6 to 7 days per week.

<sup>1</sup> Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario. Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems. 4th edition. (June 2023).



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 7. OPEN HOURS (CONT'D)

### BENCHMARKING DATA REGARDING HOURS OF OPERATION:

LIBRARY	BASELINE HOURS PER WEEK (AVG: 52.75)	NOTES
Huntsville	46	
Bracebridge	58 / 62	Additional Sunday hours (4) after Labour Day until mid-May
Gravenhurst	50	
Orillia	56 / 59	Additional Sunday hours (3) after Labour Day until end of April
Collingwood	60 / 63	Additional Sunday hours (3) during school year
Parry Sound	38	
Midland	52	
Wasaga Beach	62	Open 7 days per week year round

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Advocate for additional funding to increase hours of operation to a minimum of 52 hours per week.
- Consult the community – library users and non-users – to determine what open hours would best serve their needs and preferences.
- Offer evening hours two or three evenings per week to provide access to library resources and programs for community members who cannot attend during daytime (working) hours.

## 8. COLLECTIONS

The ARUPLO Guidelines provide recommendations for the appropriate size of a library’s physical collections; however, there are several caveats to keep in mind when applying ARUPLO standards for physical collections to the Huntsville Public Library.

Huntsville Public Library is a stand-alone library system with one branch. ARUPLO libraries are multi-branch systems. Key differences include:

- County/larger multi-branch systems move collection items from branch to branch on a regular (often daily) basis to fill online Holds and to refresh branch collections through regular collection exchanges.
- County/larger multi-branch systems generally have a central (Headquarters) collection that can store seldom-used collection items – older fiction and non-fiction titles that are not in demand but are worth retaining for a variety of reasons – part of a series, local content, historical significance, Canadiana, seasonal, multi-lingual, scholarly value, older works by still-popular authors. The availability of a central storage collection alleviates to varying degrees the pressure on a library to aggressively cull items (the limits of space dictate that for each new item coming in, one item must be removed).
- County/larger multi-branch systems generally have a delivery system (dedicated library delivery vehicle/bookmobile) to facilitate the movement of items from branch to branch to satisfy holds and refresh branch collections. These delivery systems can also be utilized to serve alternate service delivery venues as well, such as book kiosks, holds lockers, and deposit stations.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 8. COLLECTIONS (CONT'D)

ARUPLO Guidelines recommend a print and A/V collection size of 24,000 – 50,000 for Large (serving a catchment area of 10,000 to 35,000) branches and 50,000 plus for Urban (serving a catchment area of 35,000 or more) branches. While Huntsville does not fall into the Urban category based on its population served, being a single branch with no capacity to store items off-site or at other branches would support it as being at least at the highest end of the large range. Arguably, HPL should strive for a collection size larger than 50,000, due to it being a single site.

HPL has essentially no non-public collection storage space available. Other than seasonal books kept in a section of its rolling stack storage, there is no shelving storage space available for “dormant” collections (material infrequently called upon yet worthy of retention). Therefore, this material remains on the main shelves in the library, exacerbating the density issue, and preventing the library from being able to better display and merchandise its collections.

The Interlibrary Loan Service facilitated through Ontario Library Service is a truly vital service. Generally speaking, considering the staff hourly wage costs of ordering a book through the ILLO system, it can often be cheaper to order a copy of the book through Amazon or the library’s regular vendor, if it remains in print. ILLO is labour-intensive. However, in a single-branch system, shelf space is a critical consideration and therefore using ILLO for requested titles published one or more years ago is often and understandably the preferred option.

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS RE COLLECTIONS:

HPL’s physical collections are well-maintained. Shelves are kept tidy and items are in good condition. Print materials are shelved on standard library shelving with essentially no display space (end panel displays, face-out displays) available. Most shelves are at least 80 percent filled. Shelving does not meet enhanced accessibility standards, as utilized shelves exceed the universally accessible maximum and minimum reach heights; however, most shelving does meet the accessibility requirements required by section 28(4) of the Ontario Public Library Guidelines. Where possible, bottom shelves are not used, which is a good practice.

Clear space between shelving ranges can be as little as 39 inches, with most ranges spaced 40 inches apart. This falls short of the code minimum width of 43 3/8 inches and the widely adopted City of London Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) minimum standard aisle width of 43 1/2 inches.

The collection is older than guidelines recommend, with only 38% of the collection published or purchased within the past 5 years (ARUPLO Guidelines recommend a minimum of 50%). This can be attributed in part to the sudden 2023 shuttering of the previous external vendor, Library Services Centre (LSC), resulting in many months’ worth of acquisitions not being received. That said, the HPL book budget is generally inadequate to meet the anticipated demand for multiple copies of anticipated best sellers. There is a very limited browsing selection of best seller/high demand titles at any given time at the Huntsville Public Library.

The absence of a popular Express Collection/Quick Picks collection further limits the possibility of users finding high-demand items at the library. Materials budget constraints fully explain this service omission. Seldom does the budget allow for more than one additional copy of a high-demand item in print format to be purchased. Long Hold waits on print copies may force users to select an electronic version even if that is not their preferred format, utilize a neighbouring library, or either give up on the item or purchase it, depending on their circumstances. 19% of the respondents to the Master Plan Public Survey mentioned the collection as one of the top weaknesses of the Huntsville Public Library. Since more respondents rated Collections as “Very Important” than for any other service, this level of dissatisfaction should be noted.

From a customer service point of view, it is important that the customer find at least one of the items that they are looking for during a visit, or an attractive alternative. If the originally sought-after item is not available, it is critical from a retail perspective that the customer be presented with suitable, attractive alternative titles to select. This is aided by prominent collection displays. The current lack of retail-style shelving displays and merchandising and extremely small selection of new or featured materials discourages such discoveries. It is reasonable to assume that if the library could increase its collections budget, institute a retail-inspired shelving approach, and offer an Express collection, circulation rates would increase.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 8. COLLECTIONS (CONT'D)

Circulation statistics for print materials are relatively strong, in spite of collection weaknesses, particularly in comparison with peer libraries. As expected, comparator libraries with larger facilities housing larger collections using more effective, retail-style collection display methods (e.g. Orillia, Collingwood) enjoy higher circulation rates. My takeaway from in-person observation at HPL is that branch staff are effective at reader's advisory services and provide excellent personalized service to individual customers. However, this is labour-intensive and less effective from an overall collection usage point of view than a strong online Holds process, dynamic online catalogue, and captivating collection displays.

Non-fiction books are shelved traditionally in accordance with the Dewey Decimal system. Signage on end panels indicate the Dewey range of each side of the shelving range.

Many libraries are choosing to diverge from the Dewey system by grouping popular subject materials together (e.g. gardening, parenting, cooking, DIY, hobbies) with prominent subject-based signage. Effective marketing and display shelving/furniture can allow for subject-based collection items to be displayed on a rotating basis to support local strategic priorities (e.g. health and wellness resources) and further the library's role as a vital information source.

Due to space limitations and the subsequent overcrowding of the collection in the Children's Area, juvenile non-fiction is located in the adult section, adjacent to adult non-fiction materials. This is counter-intuitive for families, and may discourage the use of the collection, as expressed in a public survey comment.

The HPL collection size sits at the high end of ARUPLO Guidelines which is warranted given that Huntsville is a single branch library system and must house its entire collection within the one building.

HPL undertakes a regular, annual culling process, applying deselection criteria to items that have not circulated within the previous four years. Prior to any shelving design process for a new facility, a rigorous weeding process would ensure that potential shelving space is considering only those collection items worthy of retention plus planned new acquisitions based on collection development plans. Rigorous weeding is a necessary first step for any library contemplating an RFID conversion project, as well.

### LOCAL HISTORY:

HPL provides a separate room for Local History and genealogy collections and study space. The "Muskoka Room" takes up approximately 440 square feet. There is a large study table in the Muskoka Room which is used from time to time by anyone needing study space.

The Muskoka Room is a reading room, not an archive. Materials in the Muskoka Room have been indexed to a large extent so self-serve research is encouraged. Library staff are not stationed in the Muskoka Room – researchers must approach service desk staff for queries. Members of the Huntsville and Area Historical Society and the Muskoka Parry Sound Genealogy Group will make themselves available on request when possible to assist genealogical researchers in the Muskoka Room. Library staff cannot undertake anything beyond basic reference help, and will limit the amount of research that can be done on the client's behalf.

In comparison with other types of reference questions, Muskoka Room-related queries are relatively infrequent, with only 162 received in 2024.

With the exception of the Huntsville Forester newspapers, Muskoka Room local history collections have not been digitized. Many of the items housed on the shelves of the Muskoka Room are published monographs, as opposed to primary source documents. Many of the items in the Muskoka Room are reference use only – they cannot be checked out. Security of out-of-print and therefore rare local history monographs is always a concern. Some institutions keep these items in staff-only areas and researchers must request the retrieval of these items. Many institutions keep duplicate copies in the event that the shelved copy is lost or stolen. Depending on copyright restrictions, last copies of monographs can be digitized.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 8. COLLECTIONS (CONT'D)

Retaining the physical copies of digitized materials is prudent, as the data is not necessarily safe once digitized. Access to the Huntsville Forester newspapers that were available online was threatened when the owner of the paper closed out the online resource a few years ago. In the absence of the print newspapers and the digitized versions by a Huntsville Public Library (HPL) contractor, this valuable source of local history would have been lost.

The need for genealogical reference help has decreased now that online research tools such as Ancestry.com are readily available and researchers are more comfortable with computers and online research tools. By making local history and genealogy information available online, access is greatly enhanced and researchers need no longer make the long journeys formerly required to access physical collections.

### BENCHMARKING DATA REGARDING COLLECTIONS:

LIBRARY (2023 OPL STATS)	COLLECTION SIZE (VOLUMES) (AVG: 44,181)	CIRCULATION OF PHYSICAL ITEMS (AVG: 121,976)	CIRCULATIONS PER CAPITA (AVG: 4.44)	TURNOVER RATE (# OF ITEMS / # OF ANNUAL CIRCS) (AVG: 2.56)
Huntsville	44,332	120,585	5.7	2.72
Bracebridge	25,904	61,136	3.53	2.36
Gravenhurst	49,011	59,870	4.55	1.22
Orillia	78,579	317,718	5.63	4.04
Collingwood	53,105	181,907	7.33	3.43
Parry Sound	25,020	42,810	3.66	1.71
Midland	36,966	119,975	2.23	3.25
Wasaga Beach	40,531	71,810	2.89	1.77

### FINDINGS FROM THE BENCHMARKING:

- Huntsville’s annual circulation of physical materials is close to the average rate of the group.
- Huntsville’s circulation per capita is strong at 5.7 compared with 4.44 for the group as a whole.
- Huntsville’s turnover rate of 2.72 indicates a good use of the collection by the community. A turnover rate of 2 – 3 items per capita is considered a good metric.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Ensure that a Collection Development Plan is in place prior to a building project.** Determine a collection size that is reasonable for the community and responsive to needs. Track circulation percentages and budget percentages of each popular collection category to ensure adequate and appropriate resource allocation.
- **Consider an On-Demand Leasing arrangement with external vendor for the development of an Express Collection and to supply additional copies of titles once the established Holds threshold has been reached** (for example, ordering a leased copy once the number of holds on a title exceeds 6). Lease arrangements vs. purchases are similar in cost but are more responsive to actual need, and the items, once no longer needed, are returned to the vendor and a credit issued. Responsibility for the disposal of the items is transferred from the library to the vendor.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 8. COLLECTIONS (CONT'D)

- **Increase materials budget to allow for an annual per capita materials expenditure rate of no less than \$6.00.**<sup>2</sup> (Current rate is \$4.52. As a comparison, the 2025 per capita materials expenditure of Bracebridge Public Library is \$9.34; for Gravenhurst, \$6.90.)
- **Consider the development of an “Adopt a Book” or similar program, to encourage the public to donate toward the purchase of library materials.**
- **In the selection of new shelving, consider moveable shelving units (on casters) in areas where flexibility is desirable to allow for programming space and larger events held within the library’s open areas.**

Consider shelving systems that create an open and inviting layout rather than tight corridors, to entice customers to explore, and offer maximum display and merchandising of collections.<sup>3</sup>

- **Square footage dedicated to local history collections should be reduced in a new facility, as the current Muskoka Room is oversized in relation to its use.**
- **Consider undertaking an inventory of Muskoka Room materials to determine which materials should be retained and which materials could be digitized in future.**
- **Consult with the Town’s Records Manager to determine which physical files need to be retained.**
- **Given that the Huntsville and Area Historical Society undertook a digitization project this year to digitize LACAC files, work with the Historical Society to determine whether the contents of the filing cabinet of LACAC materials stored in the Muskoka Room were among those records that are now available online.** Perhaps the Historical Society could consider digitizing these records if they were not digitized as part of their 2025 project.
- **Discuss with Muskoka Heritage Place staff the feasibility of removing select Muskoka Room contents to the off-site storage MHP is using for its archival materials, if the materials are not wanted in the library’s collection and cannot be repatriated.**

## 9. USER SEATING

Space for user seating encompasses seating for reading, independent work, collaborative and creative spaces, and computer/device use. A wide range of options should be provided to serve different seating preferences. When asked by the Master Plan Public Survey to rate “seating options”, responses were as follows: 18 poor; 65 fair; 112 good; and 73 excellent. Not surprisingly, 44% of respondents mentioned seating in response to the question “how might the HPL improve its interior surroundings and furnishings to encourage you to spend more time?”

Ideally, flexible, interchangeable furniture should be chosen whenever possible to ensure that a wide variety of seating options are available and can be reconfigured easily to adapt to a variety of community needs. Interconnecting tables for study areas and activity spaces can be reconfigured for a variety of uses – kept separate for individual work or joined together for group activities. Where possible, seating should be wired to allow for plug-ins, or placed adjacent to power and network sources.

A configuration of multi-seat tables is poor at maximizing use of space. In general, people will avoid sitting at a table that is already occupied, even with only one user. They will instead choose another table, resulting in a study table configuration taking up 120 to 150 square feet serving only one person at a time. A member of HPL’s Teen Advisory Group (TAG) expressed this in their request for “more 1-2 person tables, so that when an individual is studying, they don’t feel bad about taking up a 4-6 person table”.

<sup>2</sup> Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries, 2021

<sup>3</sup> as an example, Opening the Book’s Discovery Layout



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 9. USER SEATING (CONT'D)

A wide range of seating and study options should be made available to satisfy the various needs and preferences of the community. Collaborative activity tables may suit group study and are reconfigurable, providing flexibility, but individual carrels offering privacy and a more traditional study environment may still be preferred by some. A variety of soft seating should be provided, including some firmer chairs which will accommodate those who find it difficult getting in and out of a softer, low easy chair.

Couches or “chair and a half” seats would be effective in the children’s area allowing for the cozy sharing of stories, but individual soft seats are also required.

The square footage per seat requirement can range from as little as 15 sf to 45 sf, depending on the style and type of seating. Given the recommended wide range of user seating options, and the tendency for newer trending furniture to be more efficient space-wise, ARUPLO Guidelines recommend an average space allocation of 35 square feet per seat.

HPL currently offers 101 user seats, including soft seating, study tables, study carrels, children’s activity tables, and computer task chairs.

### EXISTING USER SEATING ALLOCATION:

FUNCTIONAL SPACE	SOFT SEATING	ACTIVITY SEATING (STUDY, CRAFTS, ETC.)	COMPUTER / TECH TASK SEATING	NOTES
Adult (main)	12	22	17	4 study tables, 19 seats 3 study carrels 10 soft seats 2 upholstered wood frame seats 15 PACs 2 OPACs
Children’s Area	6	6	3	2 activity tables, 6 seats 2 two-seater couches 2 soft seats
Local History/ Muskoka Room	0	8	3	1 study table, 6 seats 5 computer /technology seats
The Solarium	0	18	0	4 study tables, 16 seats 2 study carrels
The Hub	0	0	6	6 task chairs
TOTALS	18	54	29	101

### GUIDELINES RE USER SEATING:

Standards for seating vary, depending on whether the branch encourages users to spend longer periods of time in the library for such activities as collections browsing and leisure reading, private or group study, or collaborative/creative activities.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 9. USER SEATING (CONT'D)

The ARUPLO Guideline for User Seating recommends a range of 60 to 200 user seats for Large branches. At least 2 seats should be barrier-free. HPL's inventory of 101 seats falls within the low end of the range.

Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries dictate a sliding scale for calculating the number of user seats based on population. For a projected population of 30,300, a library should offer a minimum of 171 seats. This falls comfortably within the ARUPLO Guidelines range.

The following is a proposed allocation of seating per functional area. It is meant to be a starting point for overall space calculation purposes, but would of course be revisited by staff during a design process. The purpose is to ensure that adequate square footage is allocated for lounge and study areas.

Note: Seating for separate multi-purpose and meeting rooms is not included in user seating calculations. This type of seating usually consists of comfortable stacking chairs, which are kept in adjacent storage rooms. Staff seating is also excluded from the user seating calculations.

### PROPOSED DISTRIBUTION OF USER SEATING:

FUNCTIONAL AREA	SOFT SEATING	ACTIVITY SEATING (STUDY, CRAFT)	COMPUTER / TECH TASK SEATING	NOTES
Adult (main)	28	28	14 (incl. PACs, OPACs, Conversion station)	User seating should be flexible and interchangeable. Variety of seating – lounge seating, chairs for individual study and leisure reading as well as collaborative and creative spaces, and computer-device seating. Include seats that are wired, and/or seats positioned near work surfaces that are wired.  2 soft seats and 2 café seats are included, in expectation that a café area may be incorporated.
Children's area	12	12	8	Combination of sofas and single soft seats for lounging and reading.  Modest number of activity tables and chairs in the children's area as most crafts and programming will occur in the Activity/Craft Room. Activities in children's area would tend to be passive programming.  Computers in children's area could include 1 or 2 Early Literacy Stations or equivalent, and 2 iPads loaded with educational software.  (At least) 4 PACs for school-age study and gaming should be located adjacent to the older children's collection area, not near the preschool and primary area.
Youth Area	7	6	0	PACs in teen areas are uncommon. Personal devices are more likely, and/or library iPads etc. for programming.
Local History / Muskoka Room	2	6	3	Similar distribution of seating as found in current Muskoka Room.
Quiet Study 1		4		1 table and 4 chairs



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 9. USER SEATING (CONT'D)

FUNCTIONAL AREA	SOFT SEATING	ACTIVITY SEATING (STUDY, CRAFT)	COMPUTER / TECH TASK SEATING	NOTES
Quiet Study 2		4		1 table and 4 chairs
Quiet Study 3		4		1 table and 4 chairs
Board / Friends / Meeting Room		14		Possibly three reconfigurable tables to allow for Board meetings or breakout sessions.
Maker Space		16	6	Collaborative work tables as well as computer stations. Additional seating as needed could be brought in from multipurpose room.
TOTALS	49	94	31	174

## 10. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Under the broad category “Programs and Services”, the following will be considered in this report: programs for all ages, Visiting Library Service, and the Library of Things.

### a) PROGRAMS

The program offerings at HPL are well-received and well-attended. Children and youth programming is designed and delivered by the Youth Services Librarian, and adult programming by the Community Engagement Coordinator. A high school student works as the “Teen Tech” twice a week running after-school Minecraft or other tech programs for children ages 4 to 18.

The Friends of the Library fund special programs, which are usually held at the Legion Hall in order to accommodate larger crowds. During the summer of 2025, the Friends funded five entertaining larger-scale special events, four for children and one geared for adults, featuring outside entertainers. These are offered free-of-charge or at a low-ticket cost to the public thanks to the Friends’ financial assistance. An ongoing partnership with the local Horticultural Society made two craft programs possible this summer. Hands-on activities such as crafts, Lego Builders Club, Robotics and drop-in Technology programs are regularly scheduled. A writing program and chess club were also offered.

In order to bring the library to areas of the Town where people are already gathering, the Youth Services Librarian offered Storytime programming at several beaches and parks this summer, including Port Sydney Beach, River Mill Park, Hutcheson Beach, as well as at the Farmers Market and the Fire Station.

The Community Engagement Coordinator has built strong relationships with local agencies and services to provide engaging and informative adult programming. The Lake Country Community Legal Clinic ran a 5-part Wills and Powers of Attorney series, as well as two drop-in information sessions. The local SPCA and a local psychotherapist presented a session on Animal Companionship and your Mental Health. As well, a twist on the traditional book club has been introduced – Page -2- Screen Book(ish) Club.

Library programming takes place in several areas of the library: the Children’s Area; the Friends Multipurpose Room; the Solarium; and The Hub. Prior to its long-term rental by the Health Unit, The Annex was used as an alternate program location, providing ample space and a kitchenette area for clean-up.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 10. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (CONT'D)

### b) VISITING LIBRARY SERVICE

To ensure that homebound individuals and others who experience barriers to accessing library collections are served, the library offers a Visiting Library Service which delivers print materials to individuals in their homes and to seniors living in retirement homes. At the present time, the Community Engagement Coordinator delivers this service. Six individuals get reading materials delivered to their home monthly, and book deposits are in place at several retirement homes. At the present time, there is not the staffing capacity to expand this service in any significant way.

### c) LIBRARY OF THINGS

The “Library of Things” is a term used to describe non-traditional, alternative collections. It is a growing trend in public libraries and popular with the public as it allows users to borrow items that might otherwise be out of reach financially or difficult to access in order to try out the item/activity without having to commit to a purchase. Library of Things can be experiential, recreational, and invariably practical and educational. People are often surprised to learn that their public library can offer such a wide range of practical, fun, and inspiring items for them to use free of charge. It helps to demonstrate the library’s relevance and responsiveness, particularly to non-users.

HPL has a number of Library of Things items available to circulate. There is not the space in the library to display the items themselves, unfortunately, which limits the library’s ability to promote and market them. Empty, labelled cases sit on the shelves. The customer exchanges the empty case for the item itself, which is stored in staff storage areas. Library of Things items can be bulky and do require dedicated storage space. Examples of Library of Things items offered by HPL are: Park Passes; Birding backpack; cognitive care kit; disc golf starter set; thermal imaging camera; Kill-A-Watt reader; light therapy lamp; snowshoes; tennis racket sets; and Maker Kits. Further developing the Library of Things offers an excellent opportunity for partnerships with the Town and other local agencies and providers. For example, the Library is given a free pass for usage at Town recreation facilities to “circulate”, which is part of the Town’s grant-supported subsidization program to remove barriers for low-income families.

Library of Things can also have exciting programming tie-ins. For example, the Birding Backpack could be promoted at a library Birdwatching program, such as the “Introduction to Urban Birdwatching” event held on August 19. Public library food literacy programs can benefit from the development of a kitchen lending library, so that kitchen tools and equipment, such as cake pans, dehydrators, crock pots, and canning equipment, can be available for individuals to borrow – and for use in library food programming events.

Library of Things items can be placed on hold like any other library collection item. Popularity and demand may indicate the need to create multiple “copies” of a Library of Things item.

### ADDITIONAL PROGRAMMING IDEAS

As part of the Library Board’s 2023 – 2027 Strategic Planning exercise, HPL held a staff workshop in 2023 to brainstorm ideas for objectives under the three Strategic Pillars: Spaces; Community Access, Outreach and Engagement; and Services and Programs. Regarding programs and services, the following suggestions garnered support using the “dot-mocracy” rating system:

- Inter-generational Life Skills programs, e.g. sewing
- Technology workshops to meet demand
- Outdoor programs
- Repair Café
- Tool Lending
- Using volunteers to offer general interest workshops



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 10. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (CONT'D)

- Indigenous programming
- More adult activities, e.g. Quiz Nights
- Social services/mental health supports, e.g. social worker for on-site counselling
- Instructional programming such as tax clinics
- Music in the Library
- Movies with discussion afterward
- Mobile delivery service/bookmobile
- More virtual programming and better advertising of virtual programs.

It is interesting that the HPL Master Plan public survey responses supported these ideas and more. The most oft-repeated program requests in the survey responses were:

- adult book clubs in the evening
- crafts
- interactive activities for children beyond computers (passive programming)
- the ability to borrow tools and attend DIY programs
- more infant and toddler activities
- a Makerspace
- expanded Library of Things (including drones, speed guns, bikes)
- tech classes
- memoir/writing classes
- local author visits
- teen activities
- current event talks/information sessions
- cooking classes
- Dungeons & Dragons Club
- climate change programs
- art lessons and exhibits.

### BEST PRACTICES – PROGRAMMING

A library's slate of program offerings should respond to demonstrated community need. Regular community consultation can identify needs and preferences. A solid understanding of what is already offered by other groups and agencies, and by the Town itself, can identify gaps in service, potential partnership opportunities, and prevent unnecessary duplication of service.

A library's slate of program offerings should support its strategic goals and objectives. The majority of a library's programming should be literacy-based, understanding the important role the public library plays in supporting multiple literacies: print; information; digital; visual; media; and social and emotional literacy. Library programs should promote the library's products and services to encourage access and usage. Programs that are literacy-based should remain free of charge in order to be inclusive and prevent barriers to access. Some Ontario libraries distinguish between their literacy-based programming and other programs and charge fees for some or all of those other programs.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 10. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (CONT'D)

Program evaluation using outcome-based measures is critical to ensure that the resources expended (staff time and program budget dollars) are justified and that successful programs are continually being enhanced and improved. The growing popularity of a Library of Things collection illustrates the many ways that people learn and the rich variety of ways that a Library of Things collection can inspire and enhance library programming.

Virtual programming was adopted during COVID by most public libraries in order to connect with and provide programming to customers during a time when in-person programming was not possible. While virtual programming could not replicate the social benefits of the in-person experience, it was well-received during COVID and demand persisted even after pandemic restrictions were lifted. Virtual programming brings library programs to individuals and families who might otherwise not access them due to schedule conflicts, transportation, health and mobility issues. Virtual programming can be accessed on-demand after the fact, which is a convenience for anyone whose work or school schedule, or transportation issues, precludes participation in in-person library activities.

Hectic work and family schedules contribute to a growing preference among individuals and families for drop-in programming with no pre-registration necessary. Discussion with the Director of Community Services revealed that the Town is also experiencing this trend. HPL offers drop-in Storytimes but otherwise requires registration for most other programs. Limited space (resulting in lower occupancy levels) and high demand make it necessary from the library's perspective to require registration. In addition, cost-effective program planning requires control over the number of attendees so as not to waste supplies or risk not having enough. Ideally, a library offers a range of pre-registered programs as well as drop-in and passive programming. The availability of passive programming, whether it take the form of activity/colouring sheets, jigsaw puzzles, board games, play structures, toys, puppet theatres, brain teasers, Lego Wall, or Early Literacy Stations, to name a few, ensures that a trip to the library results in entertainment, inspiration, education and participation.

Individuals and families attending library programming in the library during open hours are encouraged to remain in the library longer to enjoy the library's services and borrow library materials. Programming that is held offsite or outside of library open hours does not result in any quantifiable additional benefit to the library. Although HPL is growing its adult programming offerings, and some of these are being offered later in the day, extending beyond the 6:00 p.m. closing time, the library itself is not open when the program wraps up, resulting in lost opportunities for access to library services.

### BENCHMARKING DATA REGARDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES:

LIBRARY (2023 OPL STATS)	PROGRAMS HELD ANNUALLY	ANNUAL PROGRAM ATTENDANCE	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE PER PROGRAM (AVG: 14.7)	ATTENDANCE PER CAPITA (AVG: 0.53)	SERVICE VISITS TO RESIDENCE-BOUND AND PEOPLE AT RISK (AVG: 71.38)
Huntsville	399	9,325	23.4	0.44	128
Bracebridge	644	6,242	9.7	0.36	35
Gravenhurst	510	9,030	17.7	0.68	51
Orillia	2,235	28,777	12.9	0.86	182
Collingwood	886	11,623	13.1	0.47	12
Parry Sound	304	4,023	13.2	0.58	20
Midland	521	7,410	14.2	0.42	25
Wasaga Beach	866	11,284	13.0	0.45	118



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 10. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES (CONT'D)

### FINDINGS FROM THE BENCHMARKING:

- The number of programs offered in 2023 was low in relation to peer libraries. This could be partly explained by it being early in the post-COVID recovery period and HPL had not been able to reinstate the open hours lost during COVID. More likely, the lack of evening open hours significantly limits the opportunities for providing programs.
- Attendance at HPL programs is robust, and, in fact, enjoys a significant lead over all other peer systems in terms of average attendance per program. This is a strong commendation of the quality of the programs offered and Huntsville residents' appetite for library programming. HPL programming can justifiably be considered very cost-effective.
- Standards for program deliverables are rare, with the Standards and Guidelines for Australian Public Libraries (2021) being one of the few that provide quantifiable targets. The Australian standards set 0.30 as the target goal for average attendance per program, and 0.35 as an enhanced target goal. Against those targets, all of the peer libraries used in these benchmarking exercises are performing well.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **In a new or renovated facility with expanded hours including evening hours, develop new programs to meet demonstrated community need.**
- **Base program planning decisions on outcome measures where appropriate.**
- **Continue to work with the Town's Recreation Department to avoid duplication and to complement and support each other's mandates.**
- **Expand the library's use of community members and subject "experts" in the delivery of library programming.**
- **When ready to begin planning an expanded range of programs, consider undertaking a public survey to determine program needs.**

While the practice of surveying the public is good due diligence, it should be noted that sometimes the public will indicate a desire for a wide range of programming but when those programs are attempted, there may not be the pick-up that the survey results would have suggested. HPL is currently building strong links with community groups, businesses, and individuals and those relationships will yield valuable insight and information into what might work and what might not. Each new program attempted is a learning opportunity and staff should be encouraged to experiment without fear of failure.

- **Consider utilizing volunteers in order to increase the capacity of the Visiting Library Service.**

## 11. MULTI-PURPOSE SPACES AND PUBLIC WORK/STUDY SPACE

As a public institution, the public library's physical spaces are community assets. While the library's program and meeting rooms are primarily used for library-related services and programs, they are made available to community organizations and groups.

### PROGRAM ROOMS

HPL currently has one large (approximately 900 square feet) program room, the "Friends Multipurpose Room", located at the front of the building. It is accessible after-hours through a separate building entrance at the north-west corner of the building. Public washrooms are located outside of the Friends Room, in the main vestibule area which is separated from the library space proper by a set of locked doors. The Friends Room is well-used for library programs and as a rentable meeting space for outside use.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.1. MULTI-PURPOSE SPACES AND PUBLIC WORK/STUDY SPACE (CONT'D)

Drawbacks to the Friends Multi-Purpose Room are:

- lack of an attached storage room. All folding tables and stacking chairs are stored within the room itself. While the room is quite spacious and the tables and stacks of chairs are not generally in the way, their presence is unsightly. For larger events, such as the recent Clue Murder Mystery event, unneeded tables and chairs must be removed from the room and stored in the library proper, which is a nuisance for library staff who must then return all the tables and chairs to the Friends Room in advance of the next day's opening.
- The after-hours entrance is not fully accessible.

### MEETING ROOMS

Understandably, the public looks to their public library for quiet places to read, study and work. For some people, the library is their only, or their most reliable, source of internet access.

Options for bookable "private" space for individual or group work or study are currently limited to the Solarium, The Hub, and to a lesser extent, the Friends Multi-Purpose Room.

At approximately 600 square feet, The Solarium offers 2 wooden study carrels and 4 study tables with 4 seats each. While it is not necessary to reserve the Solarium for quiet study use, there can be no guarantee of quiet if multiple people are in the room at the same time.

The Hub offers approximately 300 square feet with 6 task chairs at 3 separate work tables. The Hub is primarily used for technology training purposes and tween/teen tech-related programs, as well as library staff meetings.

Both the Solarium and The Hub have doors that can be closed for noise reduction and privacy. However, zoning issues with the HVAC system and poor air circulation can make temperatures uncomfortable in both of these rooms when the doors are closed. When the doors are left open to prevent the rooms from becoming stuffy, sound from other areas of the library preclude the quiet work or study that the customers were seeking.

Based on staff interviews and public survey responses, it is clear that there is a strong need for more options for bookable space for individual or group work and study. In addition to those responses, Town staff reported that there is a severe shortage of available meeting space for Town purposes in the Town's physical locations, the Huntsville Civic Centre and the Summit Centre. Providing meeting space for Town purposes would further the library's role as a strategic partner of the Town.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **In the design of a new space, the following Meeting/Activity Rooms be included:**
  - o large multi-purpose room with kitchenette and attached storage room, available for outside use and after-hours use
  - o activity/craft room with demonstration kitchen and attached storage room available for outside use
  - o Board/Friends/meeting room available for outside use
  - o 3 small private Study Rooms.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 11. MULTI-PURPOSE SPACES AND PUBLIC WORK/STUDY SPACE (CONT'D)

- **Develop an enhanced Library Room Use Policy clearly establishing the purposes of the program and meeting rooms, the priority uses and the excluded uses of those spaces, and limits of use.**

A sample prioritization of use could be as follows:

1. Library and co-sponsored programs, meetings, and events
2. Library-related groups and community partners
3. Town of Huntsville/District of Muskoka departments and agencies
4. Non-profit community groups and organizations
5. Charitable organizations
6. Others, including commercial organizations.

- **Develop a Study Room Policy clearly establishing the purposes of the study rooms, the priority uses and the excluded uses, and limits of use.**

A sample prioritization of use could be as follows:

1. quiet research/study/reading by library cardholders
2. team or group study or projects
3. literacy or other learning activities (such as exam invigilation)
4. non-profit small groups
5. remote work or virtual meetings.

Sample excluded uses could include:

1. ongoing or permanent location for any activity
2. commercial sales or activities (could include for-profit tutoring).



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 12. TECHNOLOGY

### a) TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

HPL's technology infrastructure, supported by the Town's IT Department, appears to be reasonably strong, providing the standard applications that are expected from a public library. The Town's IT Department manages all network components, staff computers and software, MS Office suite, and all Public Access Computers (PACs). Workstations (both staff and public) are replaced on a regular schedule. Library staff report receiving very good service from the Town IT Department. While library-specific elements are to be handled by library staff, the IT Department readily assists when asked. High speed Internet service is provided through the Town. There is no fibre right to the door of the library, but the satellite connection to the Town Hall is good.

Commendably, the Town recently installed Deep Freeze on all computers.

In the selection of library-based technology applications, it is important that the library have some degree of autonomy in order to ensure that the application selected not result in barriers or a poor user experience. Library-specific needs should be prioritized in determining the suitability of a particular hardware or software application.

### b) INTEGRATED LIBRARY SYSTEM (ILS)

HPL uses Koha, an open source Library system made for community and not-for-profit groups. Staff are happy with the level of support they receive. HPL's eLibrarian performs all administrative tasks related to the ILS.

The online public access catalogue (OPAC) provides access to HPL's physical and electronic collections. When using the HPL OPAC, the search results page was found to be awkward and unattractive, with many erroneous keyword hits displayed. Once the user clicks on the desired search result, the item's catalogue record displays the standard Syndetics Unbound features one would expect from a library catalogue entry, such as additional titles by the author and Top Picks. If the user types in the title of an item owned by the library, this initial search page is avoided. If the user is performing a keyword search, the search results page is shown.

Mobile circulation – that is, off-site transactions and patron registration and renewal – is enabled as Koha is web-based, by using a laptop, barcode scanner and staff hotspot.

HPL has used Koha as its ILS for many years. While a migration to a new ILS is a major, disruptive decision and demands a significant amount of staff time and attention, it is generally considered good practice to go out to the marketplace periodically to review available options.

### c) PUBLIC ACCESS COMPUTERS

Currently, there are 15 public access computers (PACs) located in the central area of the library, including 1 accessible workstation. There are no PACs dedicated to children and teens. Although there are times of the day when the computer area is busy, such as school lunch hours when students come over to play online games, seldom are the computers fully in use.

Ideally, the youth computers would be separated from the adult computers, mainly for privacy and to ensure that the noise from the children's computer activities doesn't irritate the adults using computers AND to ensure that the children aren't being made to feel uncomfortable and unwelcome.

As more and more people are bringing their personal devices into the library, fewer PACs are needed. Prior to people routinely owning personal devices, library guidelines recommended numbers of PACs based on population. These days, a library will determine its own numbers based on community need and availability of technology and Internet service.

It is critical that in a new or renovated facility there be a wide variety of seating options and fully wired areas throughout the library for customers to plug in their devices.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 12. TECHNOLOGY (CONT'D)

The library has one self-check station located near the service desk. While staff encourage customers to use the self-check, and offer instruction, uptake is very low, with customers preferring to take their items to the service desk for staff to check out. If HPL is able to realize an RFID project in the future, there can be higher quality self-check kiosks in place. RFID provides a faster, simpler check-out experience, saves staff time, and reduces repetitive motion.

Additional technologies can be considered if the square footage allows it – things like digital conversion stations, Adobe Suite stations for photo and video editing, charging stations, listening stations, interactive local history kiosks, and an “Information Huntsville” community information service.

### d) DIGITAL RESOURCES

Public libraries provide equitable access to online resources in response to community need for virtual reference and information, lifelong learning opportunities, local and government information, and recreation. Just as public libraries budget for print and electronic collections, they budget for subscription costs of online databases.

HPL’s current slate of digital resources is small, due to budget limitations. Most of the online resources listed on the website are free resources, such as CBC Corner, TVO Kids, Code.org, Khan Academy, and DigitalLearn. It is a good practice to link customers to such free resources through the library website, to increase awareness and access. However, there are many gaps in HPL’s online offerings.

The subscription-based online resources offered by HPL are currently:

- Overdrive/Libby
- Ancestry Library Edition (family history and genealogy)
- Novelist Plus (a reader’s advisory tool for fiction and non-fiction)
- Press Reader (access to e-magazines and e-newspapers)
- Tumblebooks (online talking children’s picture books)
- Kanopy (arthouse films, classics, Criterion Collection, documentaries)
- Consumer Reports (unbiased product ratings and reviews)
- Toronto Star Historical Newspapers (every historical issue up until 3 years prior current year).

Missing from this roster are resources addressing lifelong learning (e.g. Lynda.com or Universal Class), educational supports (e.g. World Book Online, Ontario Exam Bank, Canadian Reference Centre, Brainfuse), creativity (e.g. CreativeBug), language learning (e.g. Mango or Transparent Language), and practical how-to information (e.g. Small Engine Repair Reference Centre, Canadian Red Book).

Most public libraries cannot offer all of the online resources they would like to offer because subscriptions to online databases are generally expensive, even with consortia pricing through Ontario Library Service. Particularly for smaller libraries, the usage of each product needs to be good to justify the expense. Most libraries annually evaluate each online product based on usage and per-transaction cost to the library. If usage proves to be low and the cost cannot be justified, the library will likely choose not to renew.

Oftentimes, underperformance of online resources is due to a lack of effective marketing and promotion of those resources. It is challenging to adequately market and promote products and services in the absence of a supported marketing/promotions-related staff role.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 12. TECHNOLOGY (CONT'D)

In choosing which online resources to invest in each year, library staff make decisions based on which resources best address the perceived or demonstrated needs of the community, and whether other resources exist to satisfy those needs, eliminating duplication. For example, there are free or low-cost language-learning apps now available. While they may not be as good a product as the paid subscription products, libraries may have to make the difficult choice not to subscribe in order to put the money towards a product or service that does not have a free counterpart. Other community agencies and organizations may provide online resources that address specific needs, in which case, the library should provide links on its website to those resources.

### e) TECHNOLOGY LENDING

Many libraries lend out technologies for customers to use at home. HPL currently lends the following technologies as part of its Library of Things:

- thermal imaging camera
- Victor Reader Stratus (for low vision)
- wireless indoor air quality meter
- Kill-a-Watt Reader
- Maker Kits
- gaming systems
- Air Quality Meter
- Light Therapy Lamp
- Sewing machine and serger
- Silhouette Cutting Machine.

Public survey respondents mentioned several technologies specifically as items that they would like to have access to, including:

- small tools
- 3D printer
- microscope
- speed gun
- drones
- thermal camera for iPhone
- Go Pro camera
- telescope.

### f) TECHNOLOGY TRAINING

Members of the public can receive tech help and one-on-one training in the use of library equipment and online resources. Help is available from the eLibrarian at scheduled times each week, or by appointment.

Such a public resource is invaluable given the ubiquity of technology in today's society and economy. The strong customer service skills of staff and their patience and commitment are highly valued as evidenced by survey comments and day-to-day feedback.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 12. TECHNOLOGY (CONT'D)

During all open hours, there is a third staff member available at the Service Desk to field more complicated queries, some of which are technological in nature. These "Info Desk" staff are members of the library's Lead Team who each cover the Info Desk one day per week. Unfortunately, this takes them away from their primary duties. Circulation Clerks are generally able to refer all technology-related questions to the Info Desk staff or to the eLibrarian if available. The reliance on Lead Team staff to cover the Info Desk is an important staffing issue as it results in decreased capacity for their primary roles and inefficiency for key functions. It is worth noting that Lead Team members find value in their time on the desk, as that one-on-one contact with the library's clientele builds relationships and offers insights into the needs of the community. Realistically, Lead Team members may need to be available at times on the desk, to cover Clerks' breaks as well as times when the desk is short-staffed due to illnesses or vacations. However, a scheduled full day on the Info Desk should be avoided.

While the busy daily pace of the Service Desk for circulation transactions and other customer interactions can make it difficult for Circulation Clerks to address technological questions, ideally, all public-facing library staff members should be able to address most basic technology questions. This requires adequate technology training of staff both as part of onboarding and as part of ongoing regular staff training. Currently, the staff training budget is very small at \$4,000 for 2025. There are free or low-cost webinars and resources available, including those through Ontario Library Service, the Ontario Library Association, and organizations like TechSoup. However, there are cost implications to the training of part-time staff (additional hours beyond their shifts on the Service Desk), and limited private space in the library for staff to attend a virtual session or webinar. Part-time staffing budgets should include off-desk time to pursue training opportunities and other required administrative tasks.

Given technology's rapid pace of change, senior staff should be provided with training opportunities to learn about and explore emerging technologies and trends in order to plan for ways to grow and support the library's strategic objectives as they relate to technology.

Section 17.4 of the Ontario Public Library Guidelines recommends that a library's annual training budget should be no less than 1% of its total wages and benefits budget. For HPL in 2025, the recommended training budget amount (as per OPLG) would have been a minimum of \$8,475, compared to the \$4,000 that was budgeted.

### g) MAKER TECHNOLOGIES

Providing access to emerging and Maker technologies has become a well-established role for public libraries, providing all members of the community with access to resources and technologies that help them explore new skills using tools that might otherwise be inaccessible. A Makerspace and available Maker technologies encourage hands-on learning, digital literacy and confidence – increasingly imperative in a digital world.

In a new or renovated facility, space should be dedicated for a Makerspace/creative space. Both high- and low-tech equipment can be available, opening up opportunities for inter-generational programming.

Local small businesses and entrepreneurs are examples of community members who could benefit from audio and video production equipment to produce podcasts, videos, and build their social media presence.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 12. TECHNOLOGY (CONT'D)

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Incorporate a Makerspace in the design of a new or renovated facility.**
- **Develop a Technology Plan to align technology with the library's service goals and help move HPL towards the goal of exceeding the basic technology expectations of library customers.** Section 11.1 of the Ontario Public Library Guidelines (2023) describes a Technology Plan as “defined goals, objectives and/or action plans for the acquisition, service, maintenance, upgrade and replacement of electronic networks, equipment, and software applications for both staff and patron use...”. These factors may already be adequately addressed in a Town Technology Plan (e.g. capital budgeting and replacement schedule), which could therefore be formally adopted by the Library Board. However, the OPLG Guideline 11.1 goes on to include as part of a Technology Plan “... the plan considers the library's existing technology, technology potential, and the impact of future trends on library services. It includes strategies for funding, staffing needs, training, and technology support as required”.

Once strategic technology service goals are established, determine what equipment and software would be needed that is not already owned by the library. Determine options and a timeline for acquiring that equipment, the staff resources required, the training required for staff and the public, and develop training guides and performance measures for the evaluation of the program as well as marketing and promotion plans.

- **Undertake a Technology Needs Survey of Huntsville residents** to determine and understand:
  - the technological needs of the community
  - the role of technology in people's lives
  - people's comfort and experience using technology
  - the reliability and availability of high speed internet in the various areas of the Town where respondents live
  - level of satisfaction with library technology
  - softwares and services that would be useful for the library to offer
  - needs related to technology training/assistance.
- **Based on the findings of the Technology Needs Survey, develop a public technology training program.**
- **Determine the Technology Core Competencies that should be required of public-facing staff and increase the training budget and part-time staff hours to ensure that staff can take advantage of ongoing technical training opportunities. Resources for this purpose are available through Ontario Library Service and others. Develop a staff Technology Training program or use available resources such as Ontario Library Service's LearnHQ.**
- **Consider going out to the marketplace to review available options for ILS services.** The possibility of enhanced analytics, additional softwares and modules through consortial pricing and resource sharing should also be investigated. It is recognized that no ILS system is perfect and there would likely be trade-offs. While one ILS might provide a better user experience, it may have shortcomings from the staff end perspective. All such factors would need to be considered and weighed.

## 13. OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Outreach events are coordinated programs, services, or activities that do not occur in the library building or on the grounds of the library building. The purposes of outreach efforts are to increase access through removing barriers, to meet people where they are already congregating and therefore connect with potentially new audiences, and to promote library programs and services to people who might be unfamiliar with the library either through lack of awareness or perceived barriers to access.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 13. OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONT'D)

The Youth Services Librarian has established several very successful outreach activities over the years, including:

- storytimes at EarlyON in Port Sydney
- storytimes in parks, community centres, and the Fire Hall during the summer
- school visits to promote Summer Reading
- Story Walks, for example at Arrowhead Provincial Park and Town Trails
- Halloween Haunt at Muskoka Heritage Place.

The library enjoys a presence at community fairs, sidewalk days, Farmers Market days, community organization and Town-led events.

The public library is and needs to be a key partner in building community engagement. According to the Tamarack Institute, “authentic community engagement ensures that the people who are closest to an issue, place, or opportunity, are involved in creating bold visions for their future. This includes learning together, building capacity, building relationships, and making decisions. Community engagement increases community cohesion and allows community members to have ownership over the outcomes that will ultimately impact them”.

Between the outreach efforts that were already underway plus the achievements realized since re-establishing the Community Engagement Coordinator position earlier this year, HPL should be proud of the range and depth of the productive relationships with local agencies, groups, and businesses that exist.

Tremendous progress has been made in increasing the library’s presence in the community. An excellent example of this is “Library Barry”, the puppet who has become a bit of a local “rock star” on social media and in public venues. As an unofficial ambassador for the library, Barry travels around the town, visiting local businesses, attending events, and clearly having fun – while inadvertently marketing library services through building curiosity, connection, and buzz.

### PROPOSED STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH THE TOWN OF HUNTSVILLE RE NEWCOMER/WELCOME SERVICES

The Town of Huntsville is a primary Library partner, providing facility, HR, payroll, and IT management and support services. The library and town are mutually supportive with regard to cross-promotions and information sharing, and live the “One Town, One Team” principle, with the goal of providing effective and efficient services to the ratepayers.

In conversation with senior Town staff, the concept of an “Information Huntsville” feature in a new HPL facility was raised. There is currently no comprehensive source of community information available to existing or new residents of Huntsville. The Town no longer publishes a print program calendar, yet many people still want print information. All program information is accessible from the website. Tourism-related information is available at the kiosk in the Algonquin Theatre lobby. Town staff attempt to answer questions but are constrained by limited at-hand information and competing demands. Any requests outside of business hours cannot be addressed.

Orillia Public Library and Barrie Public Library are two examples of libraries that incorporate a Community Information service in their facility. The two services have very different governance models, as “Information Orillia” is a volunteer-run non-profit organization that operates out of a dedicated room in the Orillia Public Library. It advertises itself as a one-stop shop for discovering community resources. Information Barrie, on the other hand, is part of the Information Service Department of the library, and is staffed by library employees.

Given that HPL, as a public library, already fills a community information role as part of its mandate, purposefully incorporating a discovery centre for community information as part of a new library facility would be worth exploring. The customer service and information skills that library staff possess are a natural fit.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 13. OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONT'D)

### OUTREACH TRENDS FOR POTENTIAL FUTURE CONSIDERATION

#### RFID-enabled Book Lockers and/or Book Kiosks

Increasingly, Ontario public libraries that serve largely rural outlying areas without a physical branch within a reasonable driving distance are establishing book kiosks (dispensers) or Locker systems for Holds pick-up. Many of these units are housed in municipally-run community centres and arenas, fire halls, or other public facilities that are accessible outside of normal business hours. Sheltered outdoor locker systems that can withstand weather and temperature extremes are also now available.

The technology is slick and the access it provides is exciting. Not surprisingly, the technology is expensive. In addition, the time commitment for staff is significant, as the units must be visited regularly to restock materials and/or on-hold items.

The one physical branch of the Huntsville Public Library serves all of the rural communities within the municipality of the Town of Huntsville, including but not limited to Port Sydney, Utterson, and Aspdin. Reciprocal borrowing arrangements are in place among all of the library systems in the District of Muskoka, meaning that any resident in the District can get a library card from any and all of the District's libraries without having to pay non-resident fees. Because some of the smaller communities in Huntsville are almost equidistant between Huntsville and Bracebridge, Bracebridge is likely a Community of Interest for many Huntsville residents (alternatively, Lake of Bays as well). The number of public survey respondents who referenced the new Bracebridge Library facility suggests that potentially many Huntsville residents also have Bracebridge Library cards. All of this is to say that before an expensive technology is considered, a compelling need must be established and other lower cost options explored.

For residents who do not have access to a vehicle, a kiosk or book locker in their community could be the surest way to provide them with access to library collections. However, utilizing Canada Post is another option and would likely be significantly less expensive. Whether the population that might need non-traditional access to materials borrowing is significant enough to warrant consideration of RFID-enabled remote access remains to be determined.

#### Mobile Library vehicle or modernized "bookmobile"

Another outreach option is an outfitted vehicle which can travel around the municipality with library staff to deliver library services, mostly the delivery of books and other library materials. The return of the bookmobile is growing, with a number of examples here in Ontario, including Lambton County Library and Wasaga Beach Public Library.

Bookmobiles which go beyond the delivery of books remain rare. Oxford County Library's "Ox on the Run" mobile library service offers a range of services including the delivery of holds, a small browsing collection, orientation to the access and use of library resources, storytimes, crafts and activities for all ages, wifi access, hands-on learning with tech toys, gadgets, and devices, and even technology training. Ox on the Run was inspired by the success of Fraser Valley Regional Library's LiLi, Library Live and on Tour.

A mobile presence can also be an excellent opportunity for joint efforts with community agencies like EarlyON, Public Health, CMHA, and others. Most if not all mobile library vehicles are library-specific vehicles, but the opportunity to explore partnerships with other community agencies, or seeking out corporate sponsorship opportunities, could make the venture more affordable.

#### "Pop-up" library presence

HPL has already experimented with this concept by hosting a booth at various community fairs and events. The Youth Services Librarian's remote storytimes held at parks are a type of pop-up library experience. With the proper branding and advertising (e.g. pop-up banners and a calendar of pop-up appearances and the use of social media), and a product to offer that piques curiosity and connects in meaningful ways, pop-ups could prove to be something that people would seek out, raising the library's profile and reaching people who might otherwise not engage with the library.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 13. OUTREACH AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CONT'D)

While staffed pop-up locations are more effective for relationship-building, the library can still get its messaging out with reasonably priced pop-up banners customized with library messaging and strategically placed to reach the target audiences. For example:

- a pop-up banner advertising the products the library lends for free relating to The Great Outdoors could be positioned at an Outdoor/Boat Show
- a pop-up banner advertising baby storytimes, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten, and other services and products geared to young families could be positioned at Well Baby Fairs, pre-natal class locations, and other Public Health events
- a pop-up “Hello, Neighbour” banner advertising “Information Huntsville”, Welcome Wednesdays, programs, and a “free gift” when new residents come in to get a library card could be positioned at Town Hall, the post office, grocery stores, and other locations around town.

General comment:

While these ventures offer exciting possibilities, the consultant’s recommendation would be to back-burner most such considerations. Some add significant additional cost so a compelling case for need would have to be made. Resources will be fully committed if a building project is able to be undertaken.

### RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is worth reiterating that the outreach and engagement efforts that are already underway are impressive for any library of this size but particularly for such a modest staff complement. From observations and discussions with staff, there are likely few recommendations to make that will result in actions not already contemplated or planned.

- **Continue to develop strong community engagement efforts**, both for input and advocacy reasons, but also to develop awareness of resources and build potential program partner relationships and volunteer resources.
- in partnership with the Town, BIA, and Chamber of Commerce, and potential other partners, **include as part of a design for a new or renovated library, an “Information Huntsville” functional component**, providing a one-stop-shopping experience for new residents of Huntsville to access community information and connect with town services, local businesses and agencies.
- given the capacity that exists on staff, **consider the possibility of undertaking, in partnership with community organizations such as United Way Simcoe Muskoka, the Muskoka Community Foundation, and the Town of Huntsville, a series of Community Conversations either at the library or at outreach locations**, based on the practices developed by the Harwood Institute and the Tamarack Institute.
- **When next reviewing the Programming and Outreach Policy, consider:**
  - reflecting and supporting the Town’s commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion
  - explicitly stating the library’s commitment to equitable access and its prioritization of inclusive programming and outreach that responds to the needs and interests of diverse, marginalized, and underserved communities
  - explicitly state that the library will proactively collaborate with Town departments and community partners to identify those underserved groups and individuals in order to develop alone or in partnership a variety of programs to meet their multiple literacy needs
  - prioritize relationship-building and the use of external presenters to grow the program offerings of HPL.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.4. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT

HPL is fortunate to have retained a number of long-standing, dedicated employees over many years. Employee retention, in general, has not been a concern. HPL staff members' pride in their work and the impact it makes on their community is evident.

However, as employees move on, either through retirements or resignations, attracting and retaining quality staff may be made more difficult in future if there is not an attempt made to increase the number of full-time permanent opportunities on staff. Currently, only five positions are permanent full-time. Out of recognition that it is increasingly difficult if not impossible to manage in today's economy on part-time work, part-time employees are often forced to take on a second or even a third job in order to make ends meet. That is not a good situation and the part-time employee may always be looking for other opportunities. In its Strategic Plan, the Town establishes as one of its goals to "support opportunities to be an Employer of Choice in the region". Providing full-time salary and benefits is often necessary to recruit and retain the best candidates. As a side note, the Bracebridge Public Library has been transitioning several part-time positions to full-time in recognition of that fact.

Some library positions lend themselves to part-time status, such as Shelves and Circulation Clerks, either because there is not adequate work for full-time hours or part-time work is more suited to the individual needs and preferences of the employee. Vulnerable positions, that is, the roles where, should a vacancy occur, the impact on the organization would be serious and finding a new incumbent could be challenging, are the primary positions to focus on for full-time status.

Of course, the budgetary impact of a full-time benefits package is significant, and it may prove difficult to convert some part-time positions to full-time even though doing so might be advantageous to the library's operations

### TRENDS WITH REGARD TO HUMAN RESOURCES IN LIBRARIES:

A customer service attitude is the "gold standard" for recruiting and developing frontline staff. The traditional library experience has become less important than the overall customer service experience. If the customer's experience at the library is not helpful and pleasant, they may choose not to return, and, these days, may use their social media platforms to advertise their bad experience.

A rapidly growing number and range of technology skills are required for the development and delivery of library services, as well as for excellent customer service. Technology assistance has become a core interaction with library customers, both in person and over the phone. The public expects that library staff will have the ability to assist them with their technology needs. Libraries, information and technology are in constant flux and a culture of continuous learning is imperative.

In the past, the library was a source of ready reference help using straightforward sources such as encyclopedias, directories, and other reference materials. Today's questions tend to be related more to the use of technology and how to access services, particularly online. The amount of information is so vast, it is impossible to have ready answers. What is required are skills in navigating various information sources and the ability to identify reliable sources.

Today's public libraries are in the business of community engagement and community development, and there needs to be a recognition of the need to provide staff training opportunities for the development of "soft skills", the human side of the business, including collaboration, creativity, problem solving, agility, experimentation, and communication. Library staff are increasingly moving outside of the building and going to where their target audiences are. The importance of building and maintaining relationships and collaborations has resulted in allocating staff time to community outreach and engagement.

A younger workforce expects more regular feedback, so effective performance management is moving away from an annual exercise towards ongoing, informal, two-way conversations.

A younger workforce is less tolerant of the traditional hierarchical top-down organizational structure with rigidly prescribed roles. Staff want more opportunity to work on project groups or teams in order to cultivate and use their skills and to feel a more integral part of the organization and its services. Employee engagement is critical in gaining staff buy-in, so involve them in planning for change.

A healthy staff requires resilience to handle change as a constant. In addition, the growing incidents of anti-social



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.4. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT (CONT'D)

behaviours in public libraries adds to the urgency of the need for organizational investment in ongoing training and support to build and maintain that resilience.

The experienced public library workforce, in particular its CEOs and managers, is aging and the retirement tsunami is upon us. Succession planning across the organization is often overlooked and as a result, libraries can be left with weak bench strength when leaders leave or retire. Organizations need to encourage and support their CEOs to spend time developing the leaders of the future. Younger professional staff often want chances to move and grow within the organization, and want exposure to relevant learning experiences to develop their leadership skills.

### BENCHMARKING DATA REGARDING STAFFING:

LIBRARY (2023 OPL STATS)	CIRCULATION OF PHYSICAL ITEMS (AVG: 121,976)	PROGRAMS HELD ANNUALLY (2023 OPL STATS) (AVG: 795.6)	TOTAL PAID STAFF (FTE) (AVG: 13.7)	2025 UPDATE
Huntsville	120,585	399	10.14	
Bracebridge	61,136	644	11.26	17.37; GOING UP TO 18.37 IN 2026
Gravenhurst	59,870	510	7.54	
Orillia	317,718	2,235	29.9	
Collingwood	181,907	886	19.14	
Parry Sound	42,810	304	4.94	
Midland	119,975	521	13.86	
Wasaga Beach	71,810	866	12.6	

### FINDINGS FROM THE BENCHMARKING:

As previously noted, HPL circulation rates are strong. That is particularly notable and a testament to the level of staff service, given the low uptake of the (somewhat user-unfriendly) self-check station. The high circulation rate suggests that the two HPL service desk staff on-duty at any time are handling a high number of circulation transactions, in the absence of RFID technology, and providing reader’s advisory service. This makes it difficult for them to be able to address other requests, which then places a strain on the Lead Team who are called in to address Info Desk questions.

The physical limitations of the current HPL facility make it extremely difficult to add to the staffing numbers, as there would not be the room to house additional staff members. However, it is clear that the current staff is stretched thin.

### STAFF COMMITTEES AND WORKING GROUPS

The existing committees and working groups, as articulated in HPL position descriptions, are in large part a hold-over from a previous top-down working culture, and are no longer reflective of current practices. Of the existing (on the record) committees and working groups, only the Lead Team and the Collection Development Committee are, in fact, active. Recommendations in this Report address the previous committee/ working group structure as a comparative exercise.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.4. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT (CONT'D)

**Lead Team:** CEO; eLibrarian; Youth Services Librarian; Community Engagement Coordinator; and Central Service Delivery Coordinator

**Collection Development Committee:** eLibrarian; Youth Services Librarian; and Community Engagement Coordinator.

Inactive Committees and Working Groups include:

**IT Committee:** eLibrarian

**Professional Development Committee:** eLibrarian; Central Service Delivery Coordinator

**Procedures Working Group:** Central Service Delivery Coordinator; Library Operations Assistant

**Interlibrary Loan Working Group:** Public Services Assistant.

### COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

The Lead Team, or management team, at HPL, appears to be strong and mutually supportive. Many issues are easily dealt with within the Lead Team environment, negating the need for further sub-specialties. The following are suggestions based on current committee structure:

A working group for **Interlibrary Loan** is probably not called for, particularly since it appears to consist of only one staff person. Although there have been one or two times over the past several years when the ILL system was in crisis due to SOLS (now OLS) funding cuts, and responses and workarounds had to be devised, it can be an ad hoc administrative function.

**Procedures Working Group:** The position of Central Service Delivery Coordinator (CSDC) was created several years ago, apparently to relieve the CEO position from the need to address day-to-day operational issues regarding customer service delivered through the service desk. It is the consultant's understanding that the purpose of this position, as it is described in the job description, could be made more effective. The incumbent is able to address many day-to-day issues and service needs and participate effectively as part of the lead team. It would be more productive and more end-user focused to re-brand this function as a Customer Experience or Client Services-related role. While the intent of freeing up the CEO's time from operational issues was no doubt laudable, the CEO, having a leadership role, is ultimately responsible for ensuring that appropriate procedures and resources are in place, and can delegate accordingly. The CSDC job description includes as one of its roles "...provides leadership initiatives in best practices towards the research and development of services and projects that advance the service goals and strategic direction of the library". More appropriate to this support role would be phrasing such as "recommends enhancements to current services and suggestions for new services, to meet the needs of diverse customers". A re-named Client Services Coordinator could have an enhanced role as front-facing staff providing supervision, support, and guidance to the staff at the Service Desk.

More timely and dynamic than an **IT Committee** would be an **Innovation and New Technologies Team**. Staff members on this committee would keep up to date on new trends and technologies and make recommendations to the CEO. They could perhaps oversee Makerspace programming and the information products and programs that contribute to the library's role in digital literacy.

The role of the CEO vis-a-vis these committees has not been established in writing. While the CEO should not be required to attend all team meetings, it is important that the CEO maintain a role as advisor and attend meetings as needed to provide input and support.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.4. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT (CONT'D)

### WHAT IS CURRENTLY UNDERREPRESENTED IN CURRENT POSITION TITLES AND DESCRIPTIONS:

#### Information:

The library is a source of curated information across all areas of knowledge and an information navigator for the public – ensuring that a broad range of authoritative sources are made available, and assisting the public in learning to locate, assess, and utilize the information they need. Library staff must devote time to sourcing and assessing tools – both print and online, and develop the instructional resources and training required to make those tools accessible and well-used by staff and the public.

The library as resource, or clearinghouse, of community information also needs to be recognized. The potential of housing an “Information Huntsville”-type service recognizes the natural role the library plays in putting people in touch with community services and information. Library staff are skilled in customer service and reference and information provision.

#### Innovation:

The creation of a MakerSpace and development of hands-on creative programming will necessitate the creation of a staff role. This position could encompass other roles as well.

#### Teen services:

A dedicated Teen space and teen programming are not currently offered. In a new facility with a dedicated Teen space and offering teen programming, it is not realistic to assume that the Youth Services Librarian would be able to add this portfolio to their already busy role. In addition, teen services are quite distinct from children’s services. Consideration may need to be given to creating a new position that can encompass teen services in addition to other roles. The lack of services for teens has been recognized as a strategic priority for the Town. It would be recommended that the library work with the Town and other community partners to explore how best to address youth needs and how that can be accomplished most effectively and efficiently.

#### Marketing and Communications:

Another function that has proven to be problematic is that of Marketing. The role of marketing, promotions, and communications is fundamental to public library service. It need not be a dedicated “Marketing” position, but the functionality needs to be there – possibly across multiple job descriptions. A recent attempt to establish a marketing position was unsuccessful, presumably due largely to two factors: funding pressures; and the reluctance on the Town’s part to see replicated a function that is already well established at the Town level. Although it is acknowledged that duplicating staff roles should be avoided, there is the need for the library to have in-house resources available to handle the increasingly critical role of marketing and communications across multiple channels – print, radio, website, and social media. Increasingly, a public library needs to maintain frequent, dynamic, high-quality communications with the community at large and with its customer base. Library content can often be time sensitive, and the Town’s Marketing and Communications staff cannot be expected to prioritize library communications above all others, but marketing messages must be timely.

To ensure that library communications adhere to the Town’s Media Relations Policy and Social Media Policy, a good practice would be to create a defined relationship with the Town’s Marketing staff, whereby those library staff authorized to act as media content creators and communicators are identified and form a Communications/Social Media Team, and be fully familiarized with the Town’s communications and media policies, protocols and procedures.

#### Values-based Core Competencies:

The speed of technological change demands that staff be able to adapt and change quickly. Particularly where staff resources are very limited, rather than relying on established practices, staff have to discover new ways of doing things. Where change is a factor, job descriptions need to be dynamic. A good practice is to develop job descriptions that reflect values-based core competencies rather than job descriptions which are largely process-driven and task-oriented and thus vulnerable to obsolescence. HPL’s job descriptions, including that of the CEO, are predominantly process- and task-driven.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.4. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT (CONT'D)

The library's values statement and its strategic goals should drive the process of determining the staff skills required across the organization.

Values-based core competencies include, but are not limited to:

- continuous learner
- flexibility and adaptability
- leadership (even in non-management positions, leadership traits such as being self-motivated and demonstrating the ability to build consensus among colleagues are important)
- oral and written communication
- problem solving
- service orientation
- teamwork/interpersonal skills
- technical knowledge and expertise, and the ability to easily and enthusiastically learn new technologies.

Competency tools are available for assessing and developing library staff. One example of such a tool is the Ontario Library Service Competencies Index.

All changes to an organizational structure should be grounded in the improvement of service to the public. This reiterates the need to align the organizational structure with the strategic goals of the organization.

Job descriptions that are less prescriptive allow for flexibility and thus growth in the individual staff person's career with the library. Library staff need to develop and grow competencies in order to be nimble enough to respond to changing roles and community needs. One of the leadership (and succession planning) roles of the CEO is determining which employees have skills and competencies that demonstrate growth potential that would benefit the organization, and then providing them with those growth opportunities. All positions at the library should be afforded this consideration, although some positions lend themselves better to this than others. For example, the Clerks have excellent readers advisory skills, have developed a strong rapport with their customer base, and may have talents and hobbies that, if tapped into, could translate into excellent programming suggestions and collections marketing approaches.

### STAFFING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR A NEW/LARGER FACILITY:

- If HPL was able to increase its number of open hours each week, there would need to be additional staff hired to cover the needs of the service desk during all open hours. If the library was open into the evening several days of the week, there would need to be two staff shifts, with a late afternoon/evening shift working until closing.
- An increase in programming, including teen programming and evening adult and family programming, is indicated as a high priority based on public feedback. Creating a "Program Assistant" position is highly recommended to support Lead Team members in the provision of an enhanced calendar of programming. It will be necessary to spread the responsibility for programming duties across several positions in order to both ensure that programming is offered even during the absence of the primary programming staff and in recognition of the fact that sharing programming responsibilities among multiple staff draws upon varying talents and strengths and therefore enhances the offerings.
- A Makerspace is recommended for a new or renovated facility, as was strongly supported in the public survey and in other consultative exercises. A Makerspace will be successful only if there is dedicated staff available to make the resources accessible and to offer hands-on interactive programming and assistance. Determining how the core competencies relating to innovation – such as technical knowledge and expertise, and continuous learner – can be met through a combination of existing staff and new staff – for example, a Makerspace Coordinator who could also be tasked with developing and delivering technology-related classes and programs, as well as being available to provide technology-related help in the library – will be critical.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 1.4. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT (CONT'D)

- While the hours allotted for Shelves are currently adequate, it is likely that in a new facility with a larger collection and better collection displays and marketing, circulation rates will increase, thus creating need for additional Shelver hours. The current two staff Shelves are adults, but the Shelver position (otherwise known as "Page" in most libraries) is often filled by high school students. At HPL, one of the Shelves also works some hours on the Service Desk, which is something that a high school Page would be unlikely to do. In other systems, Pages also assist with program prep, set-up and clean-up. With an enhanced program roster, this programming assistance could be valuable.
- That the position "Circulation Clerk" be renamed "Public Service Clerk" (or Public Service Associate) to more accurately reflect the change in job function from transactional, repetitive activities toward more customer-focused, value-added interactions.
- That values-based core competencies for the Circulation Clerk/Public Service Clerk position be developed, including a focus on technology competencies to ensure that all service desk staff can respond to basic technology-related questions, thus helping to reduce reliance on Lead Team staff for shifts on the Info Desk. This is predicated on the need to increase the use of self-check technologies and implement RFID to reduce the volume of repetitive circulation transactions.
- That Lead Team members no longer be stationed at the Info Desk for prolonged periods to answer technology-related or in-depth information requests. Having to spend one day each week on the Info Desk detracts from the Lead Team members' primary duties and inhibits productivity and creativity. Instead, invest in the ongoing training needed to increase desk staff's comfort level and knowledge base regarding technology. Recognizing, however, that it can be difficult to attend to the daily demands of the service desk and requests for technology help that might require more time and attention than would be reasonable for desk staff, depending on the volume of traffic at the desk at any given time, there needs to be qualified staff in addition to service desk Clerks who can be called upon to provide that help. This is already provided by the eLibrarian, who offers drop-in help at set days and times of the week, as well as by appointment. However, the eLibrarian's portfolio is large. It is hoped that in a new facility, a range of technology-related programming such as Tech Talks, as well as hands-on, participatory learning in a MakerSpace can be offered as an option to one-on-one assistance.
- That in the design of a new service desk, the Information or Tech Help station be separated in order to more clearly identify Information Services and to reduce congestion and noise around the service desk.
- That part-time Casual Pages be hired (to supplement the current two Shelves) to address increased shelving and shelf reading needs as well as to assist with programming duties. High school-aged Pages commonly work between 6 to 12 hours per week. Depending on the number of additional hours the existing Shelves could take on, two Pages in addition to the Shelves would likely be adequate to start. High school students are able to work during evening and weekend hours.

### RECOMMENDED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE TO BETTER REFLECT SERVICE PRIORITIES AND CORE COMPETENCIES:

The following proposed new organizational chart includes the new positions of: Innovation and Digital Literacy Librarian; Makerspace and Teen Services Coordinator; Pages (to handle increased shelving needs and to assist during evenings and weekends with program prep, set-up, and clean-up); and Program Assistants. It is recommended that the Public Service Delivery Coordinator's job title be changed to Client Services Coordinator, and it is recommended that the position of Library Operations Assistant be changed to Administrative Assistant, and that that position be made full-time. The Administrative Assistant could serve as Secretary to the Board, thus allowing the CEO to more fully participate in Board meetings. The Administrative Assistant could also assist with Annual Public Survey data collection and submission in addition to maintaining their role in facilities, finance, and records management.

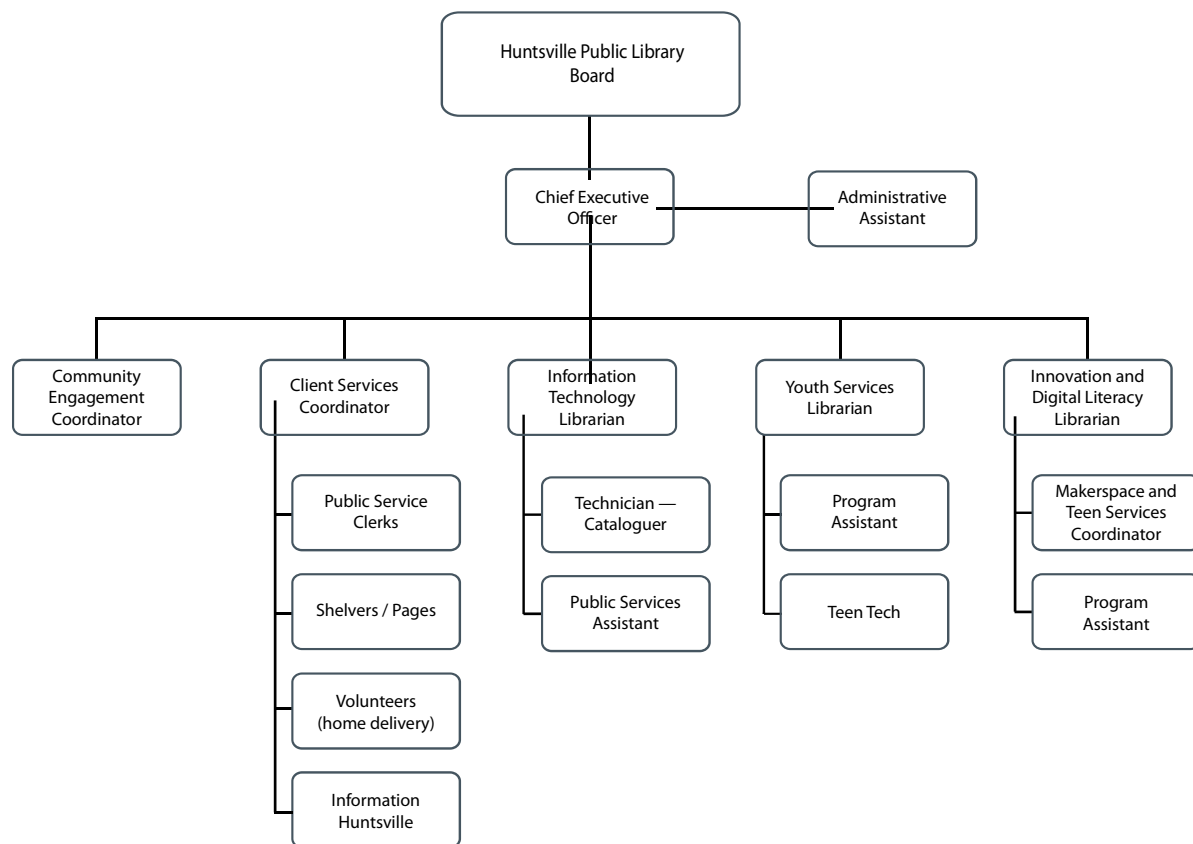
An Information Huntsville function is included in the organizational structure as a placeholder, but is not included in the FTE staffing complement at this time.

With this structure, key strategic functions are adequately managed (e.g. community engagement, programming, technology, innovation, and customer experience).



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 14. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT (CONT'D)



### POTENTIAL FTE STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

The current FTE count is 10.14. This proposed organizational structure, with new positions and increased open hours, would represent an FTE count of approximately 15.8.

### RECOMMENDED STAFF TEAMS:

The following staff teams based on strategic priorities are proposed as only one possibility – the HPL Lead Team will be in the best position to determine what would work best.

Several of these positions do not currently exist, so this exercise is aspirational based on the service recommendations put forward in this report. It reflects best practices in comparable library systems which have realized successes in the areas of emerging technology and innovation, as well as systems which have achieved a new facility and increased levels of service.

These recommendations are not intended to dictate the staffing direction HPL should follow, but instead are intended to present one possible staff team option to address functional needs, in a manner that respects the need to limit and rationalize new staff positions as much as possible.



# PART C: SERVICE COMPONENT ASSESSMENT & STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

## 14. STAFFING ALLOCATION AND DEPLOYMENT (CONT'D)

**Lead Team:** CEO; Information Technology Librarian; Youth Services Librarian; Innovation and Digital Literacy Librarian; Community Engagement Coordinator; Client Services Coordinator

**Collection Development Team\*:** CEO; Information Technology Librarian; Youth Services Librarian; Innovation and Digital Literacy Librarian

**Communications/Social Media Team:** CEO; Community Engagement Coordinator; Youth Services Librarian; Information Technology Librarian; Innovation and Digital Literacy Librarian; Makerspace and Teen Services Coordinator

**Innovation and New Technologies Team:** CEO; Innovation and Digital Literacy Librarian; Information Technology Librarian; Youth Services Librarian; Makerspace and Teen Services Coordinator

**Program Team\*:** CEO; Youth Services Librarian; Community Engagement Coordinator; Innovation and Digital Literacy Librarian; Makerspace and Teen Services Coordinator.

\*As appropriate, invite other staff to attend meetings to gain their ideas and input, including Public Service Clerks, Program Assistants.



# PART D: FUNCTIONAL SPACE ALLOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The 4th edition of the ARUPLO Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems was used in the determination of space needs for the various components of a new or renovated library facility. A draft space allocation recommendation was presented to the HPL CEO for consideration and comment.

Local needs must be considered in the determination of space requirements and recommendations based on guidelines can be adjusted to reflect those unique needs and considerations.

Given that the component approach to space planning was used, a square footage of 27,563 was determined to be the recommended size of a new facility to ensure that HPL will be in a position to meet the library needs of the Town of Huntsville moving into the future.

This proposed facility size falls somewhat below the widely accepted standard of 1 square foot per capita. The per capita approach to space planning, given the projected 2031 population of 30,300, would have recommended a facility of approximately 30,000 square feet. In an attempt to be frugal, the consultants' recommendation lies at the lower end of an acceptable space range.

COMPONENT	MINIMUM RANGE (SQ. FT.) (BASED ON ARUPLO GUIDELINES)	OPTIMUM RANGE (SQ. FT.) (BASED ON ARUPLO GUIDELINES)	NOTES	REVISED WITH LIBRARY FEEDBACK	NOTES
Collections*	7,000	8,400	Optimum range based on enhanced collection size of 60,000 vol – this includes adult, J, YA and AV.	13,162	
User Seating	n/a	6,090	Based on 174 seats @ 35 sf avg.		
Local History (Muskoka Room)	200	400		300	Current room is considered too large at approximately 500 sf.
Public computer area	350	490	Up to 14 PACs @ 35 sf – currently they have 15 –Adult PAC area should be separate from the J PAC area. Place greater focus on wired private study/work spaces as many are bringing their own devices.	393	Primarily for adult PACs. Children's PACs to be absorbed in user areas.
Service Desk	350	525	Current service desk area approx. 360 sq.ft. Holds kept behind desk. Recommend self-serve Holds.	310	Convenient adjacency to workroom. Emerging trend for smaller service desks, self-check stations, and roaming staff. Info desk functionality could be relocated from service desk.



# PART D: FUNCTIONAL SPACE ALLOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPONENT	MINIMUM RANGE (SQ. FT.) (BASED ON ARUPLO GUIDELINES)	OPTIMUM RANGE (SQ. FT.) (BASED ON ARUPLO GUIDELINES)	NOTES	REVISED WITH LIBRARY FEEDBACK	NOTES
<b>PROGRAM ROOMS</b>					
Multipurpose Room	750	1,500	To serve the purpose of current "Friends Room". Kitchenette.	1,300	Includes 200 sf storage room for furniture, A/V and program supplies.
Activity/Craft room	n/a	n/a	Demonstration kitchen furnishings rather than basic kitchenette to enable food literacy programs	600	Includes a 150 sf storage room for furniture, equipment and supplies.
<b>MEETING ROOMS</b>					
Board/Friends Room	200	400	Multi-purpose, for Library Board meetings, Friends work space, staff meetings and training, outside use. Lockable storage.	375	
Small study room	100	100	Bookable, ideal for 1 to 4 people	100	
Small study room	100	100	Bookable, ideal for 1 to 4 people	100	
Small study room	100	100	Bookable, ideal for 1 to 4 people	100	
Makerspace	300	500	If music studio included, would need a soundproofed component	600	Larger size to include recording studio and to facilitate digital literacy classes.
Friends Shop	n/a	n/a	Current Friends Shop is approx. 150 sf	300	Larger size will reduce need to locate book sale tables elsewhere in library.



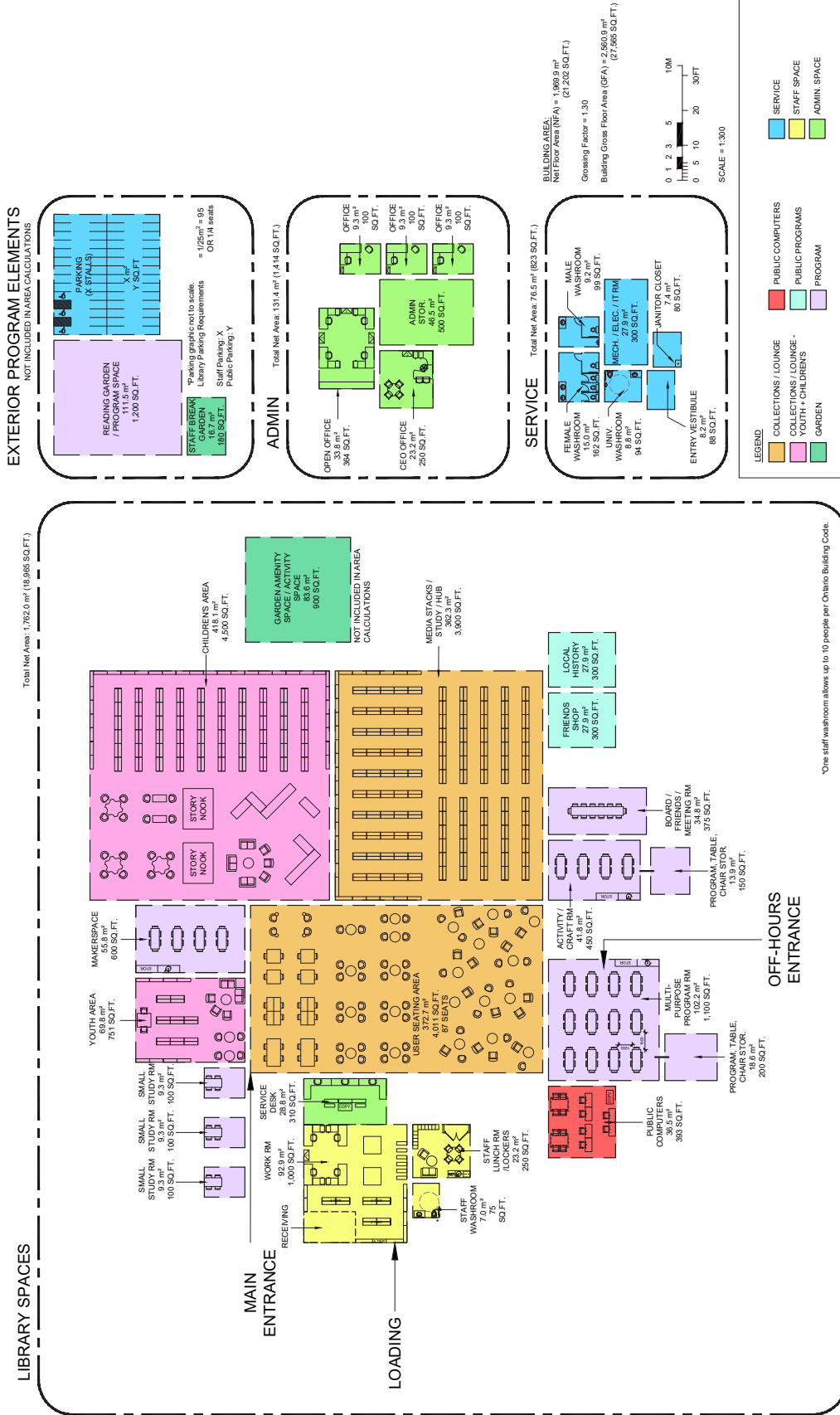
# PART D: FUNCTIONAL SPACE ALLOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPONENT	MINIMUM RANGE (SQ. FT.) (BASED ON ARUPLO GUIDELINES)	OPTIMUM RANGE (SQ. FT.) (BASED ON ARUPLO GUIDELINES)	NOTES	REVISED WITH LIBRARY FEEDBACK	NOTES
<b>STAFF SPACES</b>					
CEO's office	n/a	n/a		250	
Open office	n/a	n/a		364	Space for up to 4 staff, open plan.
Private staff offices	300	300	Offices for 3 Team members.	300	
Workroom	800	800	Tech services and receiving. Open workstations for up to 4 staff.	1,000	Space for eLibrarian (supervises workroom staff) could be private.
Admin storage	n/a	n/a	ARUPLO guideline of 200 – 300 sf inappropriate for HPL as no off-site HQ storage available.	500	Particularly important as "Library of Things" expands.
Staff lounge/ washroom	250	350		325	To include lockers, couch, table and chairs.
Service (washrooms, vestibule, mech/elec, janitor closet)	n/a	n/a		823	
Net floor area				21,202	
Grossing factor				6,361	30% estimate
Gross floor area				27,563	
<b>TOTAL SPACE REQUIRED</b>				<b>27,563</b>	

\*Square footage for collections and user seating combined encompasses shelving and displays for all collection types, the Children's Area, the Youth Area, and adult lounge seating area and study/work areas.



# PART D: FUNCTIONAL SPACE ALLOCATION RECOMMENDATIONS



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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The Huntsville Public Library has an exciting project Master Plan underway. This presents an important opportunity to improve this high quality public institution and valued community asset. The project outcomes offer opportunities for a significant, transformational positive catalyst in downtown Huntsville as an important community focus, critical amenity and much needed 'people place' for the entire community. In addition to providing for a dramatic increase in capacity for patrons' traditional library needs, we see a tremendous opportunity to create a new Commons or City Living Room, attracting new users and re-energizing the civic role of the library. New program space will add richness to the Library and make it a more important part of the community, creating an important community activity hub working as a more powerful 'third place' community magnet. We recognize the critical role a modern library plays, simultaneously functioning as social spaces, technology centres, and places of quiet study and research.

We have examined emerging models and evolving changes in library environments including how changes in service and information technology influence library facility design in the digital age. We have reviewed innovative systems and emerging library trends and we have undertaken case study and tours of classic libraries and new exemplars in Europe and across North America. We understand the unique challenges of a cottage country library.

The Huntsville Public Library is developing a vision for physical spaces that is consistent with the library's changing role, trends, and the service priorities and directions identified in the Strategic Plan. Part 1 of the study has created a desired functional building program that directly relates to your service model. Part 2 will include a building and site assessment, exploring options to accommodate this ideal program. The end result will provide sufficient detail to allow the Library Board and Council to determine if carrying out the project is feasible.



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 15. DESCRIPTION OF DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS

There are four basic options to implement the new Masterplan and create a new or revitalized Library:

a) Expand the existing library:

Expanding the existing library can add more floor area and amenities, but does not address the significant and fundamental flaws with the existing building: poor accessibility, poor street access, a poor layout, an aged facility in need of extensive refurbishment and an unwelcoming facility that does not draw in users and the public. This will not deliver an appropriate public facility for the future. The Annex site does not allow for all the floor area that the Library needs for the future, and would necessitate a second floor over the addition. This small addition would require two new exit stairwells and an elevator, and would most likely house administration, work and staff spaces, and would have an inefficient functionality cut off from the ground floor and a small and not cost effective footprint.

A vertical expansion to the existing building is not feasible, since the entire roof would have to be removed and two new exit stairwells and an elevator added, this would essentially require the demolition and rebuilding of the entire library, and a closing for about 2-3 years or establishing a temporary library facility should such space be available. This is cost prohibitive.

b) Securing a new site and building a new Library building:

i) Fairvern: The District owns only one suitable parcel of land at the existing Fairvern Long-term Care home, which is being replaced elsewhere. The Fairvern Home is being redeveloped since the building is 70 years old and in need of extensive refurbishment, a significant cost. As a residential care facility it is largely divided up into small, low ceilinged bedrooms that do not lend themselves to a contemporary public library, but there are some larger rooms. Its optimum reuse is as a residential housing facility. Given the cost and location, we consider this option to have low desirability. We could construct a new Library building on the Fairvern property, demolishing the existing building. This is likely cost prohibitive. However, further investigation would be needed.

Additionally, the location of the Fairvern site is a step away from downtown so less accessible and visible, although it does have excellent river front access. Transit access in close proximity would be ideal. We are unsure of potential flood concerns with that site, for future proofing.

ii) Canada Summit Centre: The Canada Summit Centre site is built-out, unless we considered a structured or underground parking solution. We consider this option not to be feasible.

iii) Does the Town own any other land or have any impending Parkland Dedication sites?

Purchasing a new site for the Library in an appropriate location close to downtown would likely have very limited choices and be costly due to the desirability of central land in the town. If the Library needs to provide its own parking lot the site size needs and site cost rises dramatically.

c) Partnering with a Property Developer on a Future Project:

A common approach to reduce capital costs is by partnering with a developer who builds an apartment building, hotel or commercial building, with a public library as a 'condominium' owned space, or a rental space on the ground floor. See Section 16 for further details.

d) Partnering with Complimentary Facility Partnerships to share a facility and site.

Are there any potential Agencies/Orgs that could be partners?

It is far less likely that local Agencies or Orgs will be in a position to contribute equally financially.



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 16. SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS AND RELATIVE COST

OPTION	PROPERTY COST	CONSTRUCTION COST	TOTAL COST	REMARKS
Expand the existing library: Vertical Addition	None	High	High	
Expand the existing library: Horizontal Addition	None	Moderate	Lowest	Inadequate site area for program
Securing a new site and building a new Library building	Highest	Highest	Highest	Cost depends on land cost, parking provided, site size to landscape and servicing extent required
Partnering with a Property Developer on a Future Project	Least	Lowest	Lowest	
Partnering with a Complimentary Facility Partnerships to share a facility and site	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Do suitable, funded partners exist?

### PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: PUBLIC OR NON-PROFIT AGENCIES OR ORGANIZATIONS

Libraries enter into facility-based partnerships when they share service/program space with another public or private entity and both parties contribute to capital and operating expenditures. These are not uncommon. Municipal recreation departments and educational authorities have shared facilities with libraries for decades. More recently, partners include economic development agencies; arts facilities, visitor information centres; medical and health services; community kitchens; social housing; restaurants and cafes; and complementary businesses. These partnerships offer significant advantages including much lower capital and operating costs; capacity use of available space; joint programming; and frequently access to specialized areas not justified based on the use of a single partner.

In most library building studies, partnership assessments focus on opportunities for other service providers to share space in the library. While this may be a possibility in Huntsville, given the constraints imposed by the building and site, we anticipate that partnerships that allow HPL to offer services outside of the library will be a more relevant consideration. If the total size of the library must be constrained, this may be an acceptable, alternative strategy for achieving essential outcomes.

### PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES: PROPERTY DEVELOPERS

Private real estate developers are more frequently partnering with organizations like Libraries, Art Galleries and other public institutions. The developer gains a significant marketing cachet and amenity for tenants or purchasers from having the Library as a co-owner or tenant on the ground floor. Under Section 37 of The Planning Act municipalities may grant developers increased building height and/or density in exchange for public facilities or services for financial contributions for community benefits. This is a well-established tool, although most common in larger cities with development cost pressures. There are many variables about what the Library must or could contribute, but ideally they would get an exterior shell space and parking access, and only have to contribute finishing the Library interior and paying their share of operating costs. The new building can be easily designed around the Library's space needs.

The level of financial knowledge required of the developer is situational, but a partnership with a more experienced developer or a suitable development consultant may be able to bridge that gap.



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 16. SUMMARY OF DEVELOPMENT OPTIONS AND RELATIVE COST (CONT'D)

### BUILDING AND SITE ASSESSMENT

We will analyze and synthesize all Functional Program information to develop a site specific concept complete with site plan, key exterior elevations and preliminary estimate of capital costs

A clear vision for the new Huntsville Public Library has been articulated. We see the following design Goals and Objectives as being critical for the project's success:

- Create a physical setting to enhance your mission to provide a range of services to enhance the lives of Huntsville citizens.
- Create a physical setting to create a closer sense of community with your residents to strengthen the underpinnings of your mission.
- Reflect the Town's values and mission.
- Provide a safe, supportive, stimulating workplace for staff.
- Inspire and connect residents, especially the many newer residents to understand the importance of Huntsville's history, and to increase their awareness of Huntsville's unique culture and sense of place.
- Accommodate a wide range of amenities, creating a people place and a community hub.
- Celebrate reading and learning as a still vital part of our society and culture.
- Embrace technology as an integral and important part of modern life.

At the same time, a building audit or structural assessment could be prepared, although we believe that your Space Assessment & Recommendations (2019) and Building Condition Assessments adequately describe existing conditions. We believe that we understand how any potential expansion would integrate and interface with the existing building structure and services.

We know the building must uphold and complement the current building's stature as a landmark in the community, serving as a significant downtown anchor and that can draw in and engage the community to spend much time in the library.



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 17. PRECEDENTS



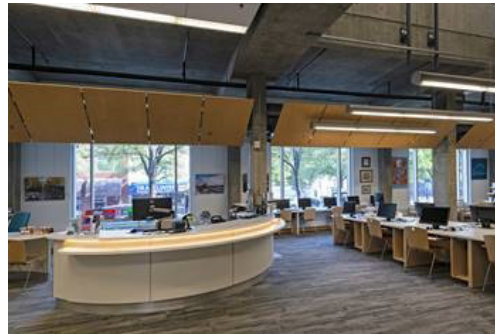
Stony Plain Public Library, AB



Northtown Branch, Chicago



Indianapolis Library Square



North Kamloops Mixed-Use Developments — Library Square



West End Branch, Boston



Toronto Railway Lands



King Library, WI



Aldershot & Appleby, Burlington



Independence Library, Chicago



## *Buildings with Libraries: A Soft-Spoken Amenity*



**BOOK CLUB** Residents gather in the library of Toren condominium in downtown Brooklyn, one of a growing number of buildings with an in-house library. Credit...Uli Seit for The New York Times

By **JOANNE KAUFMAN**

- April 5, 2012

WHEN Martin Semjen first looked at the Stanton, a co-op at Broadway and 94th Street, he was delighted by the sauna and fitness room. His wife, Lynn Schnurnberger, on the other hand, fell hard for an unpretentious basement library that doubles as a meeting room and is lined on three sides with floor-to-ceiling wood bookcases. Residents can choose volumes on law and art, popular novels like “The Da Vinci Code” and “Atonement” and, fittingly enough, a biography of the building’s namesake, Elizabeth Cady Stanton.

“I really don’t use the fabulous gym equipment, but I do go and look at the old books,” said Ms. Schnurnberger, the co-author of, among other novels, the bestseller “Botox Diaries.” “The existence of the library spoke to the fact that this was more than a building. It was a community of people who still read.”



## PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### 18. THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE (CONT'D)

Group. “No client has ever told me ‘I *must* have a library.’ But when we go somewhere and do a tour of the amenities, their eyes do light up if they actually see one,” she added. “It makes them feel good about the building because they imagine themselves having that quiet space.”

In the highly competitive New York marketplace, where developers of residential buildings seem to be engaged in an amenities arms race — cold storage, wine cellar, gym, pool, hot tub, children’s playroom, ’tween playroom, party room — the library is a low-cost frill. “You don’t need a lot of space to create a small reading room. It can be carved out of the lobby,” said Kathy Braddock, an owner of Rutenberg Realty.

And even though in this age of eBooks a library can seem like an anachronism, some of New York’s glossiest and highest profile new developments boast of having one.

The library “may be a marker of luxury. It’s like having that fourth kid,” said Roy Kim, a senior vice president of design at Extell, whose condo project One57 on West 57th Street, scheduled to open in late 2013, will have a library. So will the Touraine, an Upper East Side condo by Toll Brothers opening earlier that year.

“It’s an experiment on our end,” said David von Spreckelsen, a division president of Toll Brothers. “The demographic at the Touraine is a little older — some empty nesters or couples with a pied-à-terre. They’re not people who are working 9 to 9. Weekends and nights, they’ll come home and may have time to go to the library to read and have a glass of wine by the fire. We’ll see how it goes.”

On the most practical level, a library in a New York building is the equivalent of a bonus room in a sprawling suburban house. At the Battery Park City condominium 1 Rector Park “the residences are not large,” said James Lansill, a senior managing director of Corcoran Sunshine, the sales and marketing agents for the building. Consequently, its library, known as Bar and Books, can be a retreat “while the housekeeper is vacuuming, or to get away from the nanny and the children,” he said. The lounge chairs and mohair sofas have helped turn the space into a second living room for some owners.

As Ms. Braddock puts it, “a library increases the square footage of your own apartment because it gives an extra quiet place in the building you can get away to. That’s a big deal in New York. Whether residents read the books on the shelves is irrelevant.”

About those books. The developer generally seeds the collection, but often it grows in an organic fashion as residents cull their own shelves. Such was the case at Manhattan House on East 66th Street, where coffee table tomes on design got the ball rolling. Similarly themed titles have made their way from personal collections to the rooftop library, a building spokesman said.

At 1 Rector Park, volumes on art, architecture, travel and fashion were the first arrivals, Mr. Lansill said. “Now that people have moved in and regularly used the library,” he said, “the collection has slowly grown. Residents are especially comfortable borrowing



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 18. THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE (CONT'D)

children’s books and adding their own. Our most shared titles, without a doubt, come from the Harry Potter series.”

At the Caledonia, a condo on West 17th Street, the library is called the Assouline Culture Lounge, a nod to its cache of design, fashion and photography books from [Assouline](#), the high-end publishing company. The library, which has club chairs and a fireplace, “is an invitation to culture,” said Daria Salusbury, a senior vice president of Related Companies, the building’s developer.

There, culture seems to be narrowly defined; Assouline’s are the only books on the shelves. In any case, beach-book castoffs are not encouraged. “I don’t want to have 17 versions of Agatha Christie paperbacks,” Ms. Salusbury said firmly. “That’s not the purpose of this. The purpose is to give a very sophisticated perspective on culture.” And, she added, “It’s been received very nicely.”

[View Slide Show](#)



Robert Caplin for The New York Times

So nicely that the idea has been extended to another Related property, Tribeca Tower, a rental building on Duane Street. A slice of the lobby has been carved into a “gathering space” with selections from the Assouline list. According to Joanna Rose, a spokeswoman for Related, the developer picked up the tab for the books, viewing the relationship with the publisher as “a branding opportunity.”

Assouline also supplied the books for the library at New York by Gehry, the highly publicized rental in the financial district. The seventh-floor room with leather sofas and



## PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### 18. THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE (CONT'D)

accent chairs is a hit, according to Clifford Finn, the president of new development marketing for Citi Habitats, leasing agents for the building.

“I’ve never been in the library when I haven’t seen people sitting in chairs reading,” said Mr. Finn, who like Ms. Salusbury does not welcome unsolicited additions to the shelves: “It’s not really in keeping with the feel of the room.

“A lot of the books in our collection are very expensive,” he continued. “It’s nice that residents have access to them. Sometimes they borrow them, but they return them. I can’t say we never have a book that doesn’t come back, but it’s an uncommon occurrence.”

No librarians or other authority figures patrol the bookshelves in any of these buildings. There is no mechanism for checking out books — they are borrowed at will with no penalties for those who take their sweet time reading them. Guilt and good manners keep the collections intact.

As part of a two-year sponsorship, Lincoln Center provided an extensive list of performing arts-themed books for the Avery condominium, its neighbor on Riverside Boulevard. Titles like “101 Stories of the Great Ballets,” The Columbia Encyclopedia of Modern Drama, “Celluloid Power” and three dozen others were duly purchased, said a spokeswoman for Extell, the condominium’s developer. A spokeswoman for Lincoln Center declined to discuss its arrangement with Extell.

The library shelves at Toren, a new condo in Brooklyn, were populated with the help of [the Strand](#) bookstore in Greenwich Village, according to the building’s sales manager, Marco Auteri. “We requested a variety of books based on quality and content,” he said. “We wanted to create a real library and to have a wide variety of genres.”

Thus, browsers can find among the 500-plus volumes everything from “Ulysses” to test prep guides. “Since residents began contributing to the library,” Mr. Auteri added, “they’ve increased the contents by 50 percent. And now, in addition to books, we also have DVDs and games.”

In older buildings, things are considerably more casual; the collections are crowd-sourced from the start. At the Ardsley on Central Park West, a few shelves in the combination community room/playroom constitute the library — a mix of fiction (“The Fountainhead”), poetry (“The Iliad”) and nonfiction donated and alphabetized by residents.

Meanwhile, the collection at 924 West End Avenue — housed, as in many buildings, on several open shelves in the laundry room, includes “The World According to Garp” and “Ragtime.”

“Some people will come down and do their wash and while they’re waiting read one of the books,” said Raymond Hoey, the president of the building’s co-op board.



## PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

### 18. THE NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE (CONT'D)

In a few buildings, like the Knickerbocker on East 72nd Street and 170 East End Avenue, the in-house libraries serve up more than biographies and bestsellers; they serve breakfast. “People will come down and read while they have bagels and pastries,” said Burt Wallack, the managing agent for the Knickerbocker which hires an outside service to do the catering. “A lot of residents know their neighbors because of the library.”

Orin Wilf, the president of Skyline, the developer of 170 East End Avenue, compared the building’s library to a town square. Residents have cocktail parties and birthday parties there, said Mr. Wilf, who lives in the building. He and his neighbors donate the books that make up the library’s collection; the concierge monitors the offerings to make sure they are suitable.

“We leave it to her discretion,” Mr. Wilf said. The collection is heavy on finance, history and parental advice because, he said, “we’re a family-friendly building.

“I’m a big James Patterson fan and I usually leave his books in the library when I finish them,” he continued. “And sometimes someone will beat me to the punch. I’ll go down there and actually find a Patterson I haven’t already read.”



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 19. SITE SELECTION CRITERIA

The goal is to identify all potential site options, and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of each.

CRITERIA	CONCERNS	MEASURES REQUIRED
<b>LOCATION</b>		
Community presence, access and visibility.	Is the site accessible to widest range of users and staff?	
Community vitality contributions.	Is the site accessible by public transit?	
Can the site serve as a community hub?	Is the site visible to passersby on foot and/or in vehicles?	
Potential for community transformation if aggregated with other development.	Are adjacent occupancies/land uses appropriate and complementary?	
Community expectations or preferences?	Is the area safe or does it have a history of crime or vandalism?	
	Is the area safe and suitable for evening and weekend events?	
<b>PROPERTY AVAILABILITY AND REGULATORY CRITERIA</b>		
Is the property or site vacant or available to the project timelines?		
Is the seller/donor/partner motivated to make the deal within the project timelines?		
Are the existing Regulatory criteria like the Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw criteria conducive to the project, or what variances and approvals are required?		
Are there any easement, restrictive covenants or other impacts?		
Are there any political issues that could block approval of the site?		
Are neighbours likely to be supportive?		
<b>RISKS</b>		
Flood, fire or other natural disaster risks?		
Site stability and future development impact potential?		
<b>COST IMPACT</b>		
Site purchase, servicing, size and construction cost impacts	Does the site require expensive service lengths or systems?	
	Does the site require parking and driveway development?	
	Does the site have any other cost premiums or advantages?	



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 19. SITE SELECTION CRITERIA (CONT'D)

CRITERIA	CONCERNS	MEASURES REQUIRED
<b>SITE CHARACTERISTICS</b>		
<p>1. Present and Future Environmental Conditions</p> <p>2. Accessibility Factors</p> <p>3. Safety for staff and patrons: visibility, access, eyes on street.</p> <p>4. Site Size</p> <p>5. Future Expansion Potential</p> <p>6. Are the site dimensions and shape generous and allowing design flexibility?</p> <p>7. Are there any design impacts from adjacent building or properties or their site design?</p> <p>8. Site Preparation Aspects</p> <p>9. Site Services Availability</p> <p>10. Construction Techniques</p> <p>11. Will the site require extensive or costly long-term maintenance?</p> <p>12. Are there any unique site features that offer an opportunity or a challenge?</p>	<p>Freedom from noise, odors, dust, traffic and environment hazards?</p> <p>Are nearby traffic levels acceptable?</p> <p>Consideration of prevailing winds</p> <p>Orientation for maximum solar benefit</p> <p>Retention of existing landscape features</p> <p>Ease and safety of approaches including pedestrians, strollers, wheelchairs and mobility impaired users, bicycles, cars, bus, taxi/rideshare drop off.</p> <p>Is the size adequate?</p> <p>Can the site allow future expansion and adaptability?</p> <p>Sufficient elevation for natural drainage. Minimal adjustment of land contours and impact on off-site areas.</p> <p>Are the soil conditions conducive to the project's structural needs?</p> <p>Appropriateness and cost of infrastructure elements including water supply and sanitary services, stormwater management, electricity, data, waste disposal, fire protection, roadways, parking.</p> <p>Is there capacity for economical future expansion?</p> <p>Does the site have sufficient workspace for construction processes, equipment and materials storage to avoid any construction premiums?.</p> <p>Topography, drainage, retaining walls or geotechnical issues?</p> <p>Existing trees and vegetation, water features, steep slopes can be influences.</p>	<p>Set back building an appropriate distance from major roads, invasive neighbouring uses.</p> <p>Incorporate use of natural buffers and consider location of major entrances</p> <p>Utilize appropriate siting and locate major spaces accordingly.</p> <p>Design with existing landform in mind to reduce cutting and filling.</p> <p>Separate circulation routes to be integral to design and clearly marked.</p> <p>Ensure that future additions pose no threat to the environment and infrastructure.</p> <p>Locate building in conjunction with existing contours. Existing drainage patterns to be considered/enhanced/streamlined to blend into adjacent land parcels and control soil erosion.</p> <p>Infrastructure options minimizing cost and environmental impact with preference given to long lasting solutions that may be serviced locally and rely on known technologies.</p> <p>Consideration will be given to the orderly and safe storage of construction equipment and supplies and safety requirements.</p>
<b>CULTURAL FACTORS</b>		
Historic preservation impacts?		
Site history or former uses ?		



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

A structural engineer was engaged to review the feasibility of existing building additions, building on past research, and has given us a high-level assessment that a second-storey addition is not economically feasible.

## 20. STRUCTURAL REVIEW LETTER



moses structural  
engineers

November 20, 2025 (revised)

**Attn: Bill Curran, OAA, FRAIC**

Curran Gacesa Slote Architects  
118 James Street North, Suite 301  
Hamilton, ON L8R 2K7  
(905)297-0863 x 222 [bill.curran@CGSarch.ca](mailto:bill.curran@CGSarch.ca)

**Re: Huntsville Library Retrofit, Huntsville, Ontario**

**Preliminary opinion and implications of the addition of a second storey**

Moses Structural Engineers Inc. has been retained to provide an opinion on proposed retrofits and addition to the Huntsville Library at 7 Minerva Street East in Huntsville, Ontario.

We base our comments on our review of the following reports:

- Huntsville Public Library Space Assessment and Recommendations, prepared by Mitchell Jensen Architects, and dated January 2019.
- Huntsville Public Library – Structural Investigation, prepared by Tulloch Engineering, dated October 23, 2018.

On November 20, we received two additional reports:

- Huntsville Public Library – Preliminary Structural review, prepared by Kontek Engineering Ltd, undated (site visit conducted on January 17, 2011).
- Huntsville Public Library – Crawlspace leakage evaluation, prepared by RJ Burnside & Associates Limited, dated May 4, 2017.

We have not received existing drawings for the structure, but the reports contain low-resolution excerpts from the architectural drawings.

Based on the reports, the structure appears to consist of a combination of prefabricated wood roof trusses and open web steel joists, supported on exterior light-gauge steel studs and wood stud walls. From the drawings it is unclear from the available information if the interior glulam post and beam system is supporting the roof trusses, but it is likely. The main floor is a combination of wood I-joists and concrete slab on grade.



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 20. STRUCTURAL REVIEW LETTER (CONT'D)



moses structural  
engineers

No information is available for the existing foundations, but the foundations are assumed to have been designed for the current configuration of the building, without provisions for future expansion.

The reports reviewed and noted above identify building science and structural issues requiring additional investigation and retrofit. Refer to the original reports for more detailed information.

One of the options being considered is the addition of a second storey. We concur with Tulloch Engineering's findings that the existing structure likely does not have excess capacity that would allow for the addition of a second floor.

We offer the following comments on the implications of adding a second storey:

- The roof trusses would need to be removed and re-installed over the new second floor. It is not clear if the re-use of the truss system would be cost-effective, as a de-construction process would be significantly more labour intensive than a conventional demolition.
- It is not clear that the existing glulam post and beam system could be re-used:
  - The glulam post and beam structure would likely need retrofit to upgrade its load bearing capacity and its fire rating, as it currently only supports a roof. With the addition of a second floor, the glulam wood structure would be required to support floor loading in addition to the current roof loading.
  - Based on the available excerpts of architectural cross sections, it seems that the beams are at different heights. Some columns may be too short to support a proposed new second storey and others may need to be cut down, requiring new connections to be fabricated.
- No information is available for the foundation, and it is very likely that the foundations require retrofit. Given the existence of a crawl space, it could be possible to abandon the existing footings in place and pour new footings over the existing ones. This would require a significant amount of demolition to access the footing locations. Additional investigation would be required for the foundations to confirm their capacity.



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 20. STRUCTURAL REVIEW LETTER (CONT'D)



moses structural  
engineers

Given the level of retrofit noted above, it may not be economically feasible to add a second story on the existing structure. When evaluating this decision, the additional costs noted in the reports referenced above should be added to the costs of the retrofits noted in this letter.

Yours truly,  
Moses Structural Engineers Inc.



Antonio Franco, MSCE, PEng  
Principal



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 21. COST ESTIMATE

A cost consultant was engaged to give a high-level estimate of the construction cost for construction of a new library in 2026 dollars. We note that the site dictates much of the construction cost, ie a downtown Brownfield site without a large new parking lot is far less expensive than a more remote site that needs new site services brought in and a new parking and driveway system constructed. Site costs can therefore vary widely; a smaller, serviced site is far less expensive.



construction consulting  
estimating  
project management

December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Curran Gacesa Slote Architects  
118 James Street North, Suite 301  
Hamilton, ON  
L8R 2K7

Re: The Corporation of the Town of Huntsville  
Huntsville Library Master Planning  
Hi-Level Cost Per Square Foot

Attn: Bill Curran

Bill;

Based on the schematic diagrams you provided me last week, I was able work out some hi-level costs per square foot for this project. Based on today's rates, I am recommending you carry \$650 to \$700/sft to construct the new library. My recommended cost is based on the following criteria:

1. Site Size = +/- 6970m<sup>2</sup> (75,000 sft), fully serviced
2. Building Size = +/- 2323m<sup>2</sup> (25,000 sft), square or rectangle (no curves)
3. Building Height 1 Storey = 5m high (16'-4"), walls are straight up, no overhangs or reveals
4. Building Grid = 9m x 9m bays
5. Foundations = typical 1.2m deep CIP
6. Slab on Grade = 125mm CIP
7. Roofing = typical membrane flat roof
8. Soffits – none.
9. Cladding = 70% metal cladding (aluminum composite)
10. Glazing = 30% curtain wall
11. Interior Partitions = drywall
12. Flooring = 75% carpet, 10% vct & 15% ceramic
13. Ceilings = 80% act & 20% drywall flat (nothing fancy)
14. Doors = Hollow Metal and Wood
15. Millwork – allowance carried
16. Site Cut / Fill – assumed relatively flat site, so minimal cut/fill required
17. Asphalt = for 100 cars
18. Curbs, Sidewalks, Landscaping – allowance carried
19. M&E site services – allowance carried
20. Design contingency – carried 20%

Items **not included** are escalation costs, building permits, development fees, inspection & testing, borehole inspections, contingencies other than noted above, significant site issues (i.e. large cut / fill requirements, bedrock removal, etc.), special foundations (i.e. helical piles, caissons, etc.), bringing site services to the site and/or major improvements to the existing site services, significant clear n grub / tree removals, library equipment, library shelving and library furnishings.

371 Lake Drive North    [www.ingersollassociates.com](http://www.ingersollassociates.com)    T 905 989 2655  
Keswick    Ontario    F 905 989 0762  
Canada    L4P 3C8    [tom@ingersollassociates.com](mailto:tom@ingersollassociates.com)    M 905 955 3478



# PART E: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

## 21. COST ESTIMATE (CONT'D)

We look forward to working with you on this project. If you have any questions, please feel free to give us a call.

Ingersoll & Associates Inc.



Mike Slivinski  
c.c. Tom Ingersoll



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371 Lake Drive North	<a href="http://www.ingersollassociates.com">www.ingersollassociates.com</a>	T 905 989 2655
Keswick Ontario		F 905 989 0762
Canada L4P 3C8	<a href="mailto:tom@ingersollassociates.com">tom@ingersollassociates.com</a>	M 905 955 3478



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS

An on-line community survey asking library users and others for their feedback on aspects of Huntsville Public Library facility and services was conducted during the time period of August 5, 2025 through September 5, 2025.

\$100 in Downtown Dollars were used as an incentive to increase response. In total, 286 individuals completed the Master Plan Survey. This was a 1.35% response rate, which is large enough to provide useful results. The primary sample bias was the age of respondents, with the 35-44 range representing 21.7% and the 65-74 range representing 21.3%.



# Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey

## SURVEY RESPONSE REPORT

04 March 2019 23 November 2025

PROJECT NAME:  
Huntsville Public Library Master Plan



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025



CGS

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ARCHITECTS

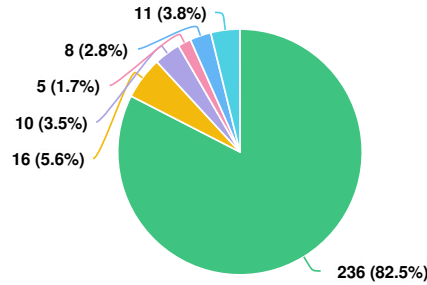


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Q1 Which of the following best describes you?



#### Question options

- I am a full-time resident of Huntsville.
- I am a seasonal resident of Huntsville.
- I own property in Huntsville but do not live here.
- I work in Huntsville but do not live here.
- I am not a resident or property owner.
- Other (please specify)

*Mandatory Question (286 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question*

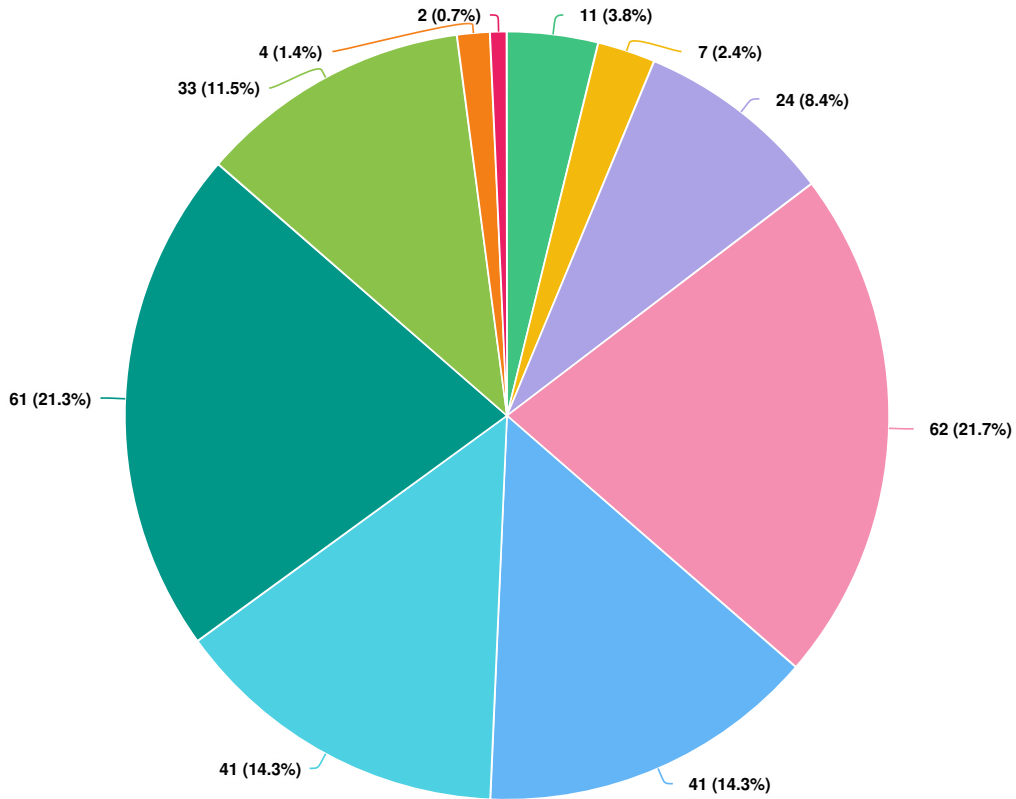


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

**Q2 Please select your age range.**



**Question options**

- Under 18
- 18 – 24
- 25 – 34
- 35 – 44
- 45 – 54
- 55 – 64
- 65 – 74
- 75 – 84
- 85 +
- I prefer not to answer

Mandatory Question (286 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question

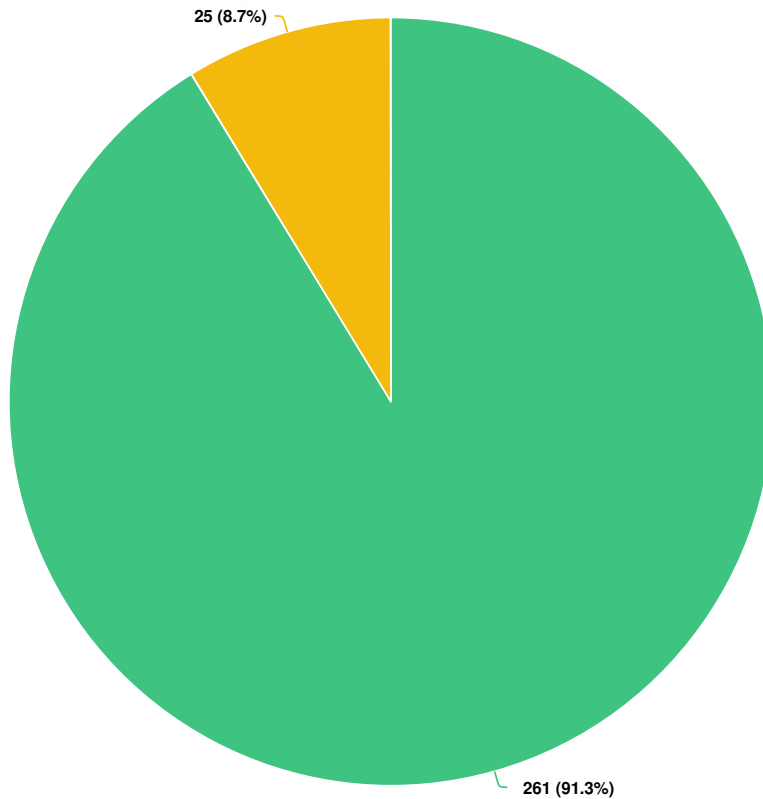


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Q3 Do you have an active Huntsville Public Library card?



#### Question options

● Yes ● No

Mandatory Question (286 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question

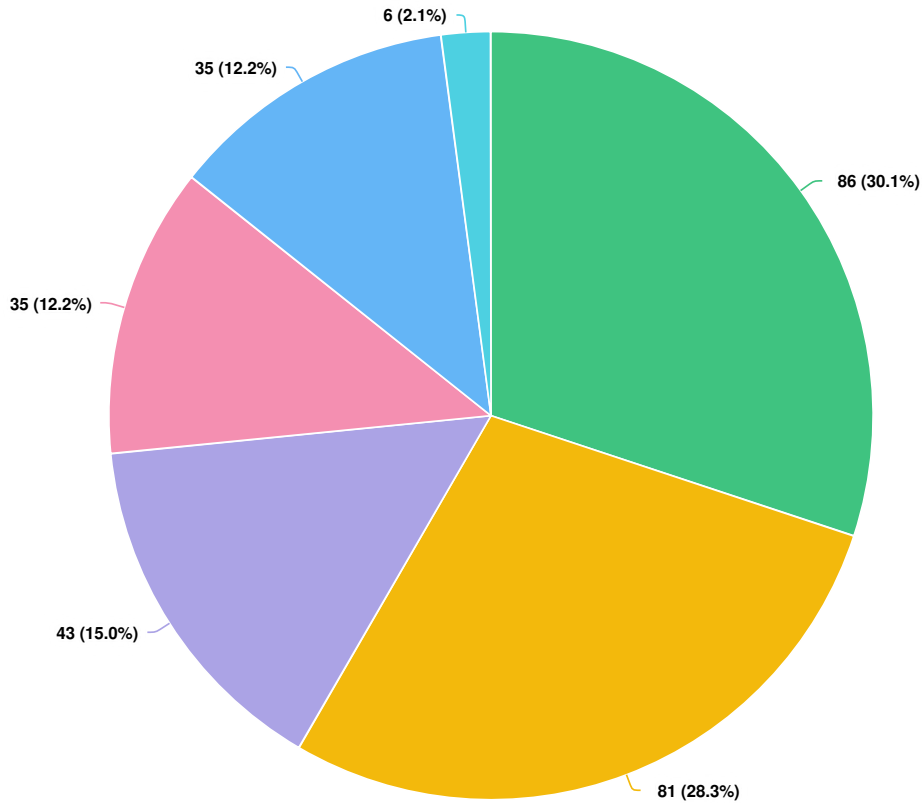


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Q4 On average, how often do you use the services at the Huntsville Public Library facility?



#### Question options

- Once a week or more
- Every couple of weeks
- Once a month
- Once every few months
- Once or twice a year
- I have never visited the Huntsville Public Library facility

Mandatory Question (286 response(s))  
Question type: Radio Button Question

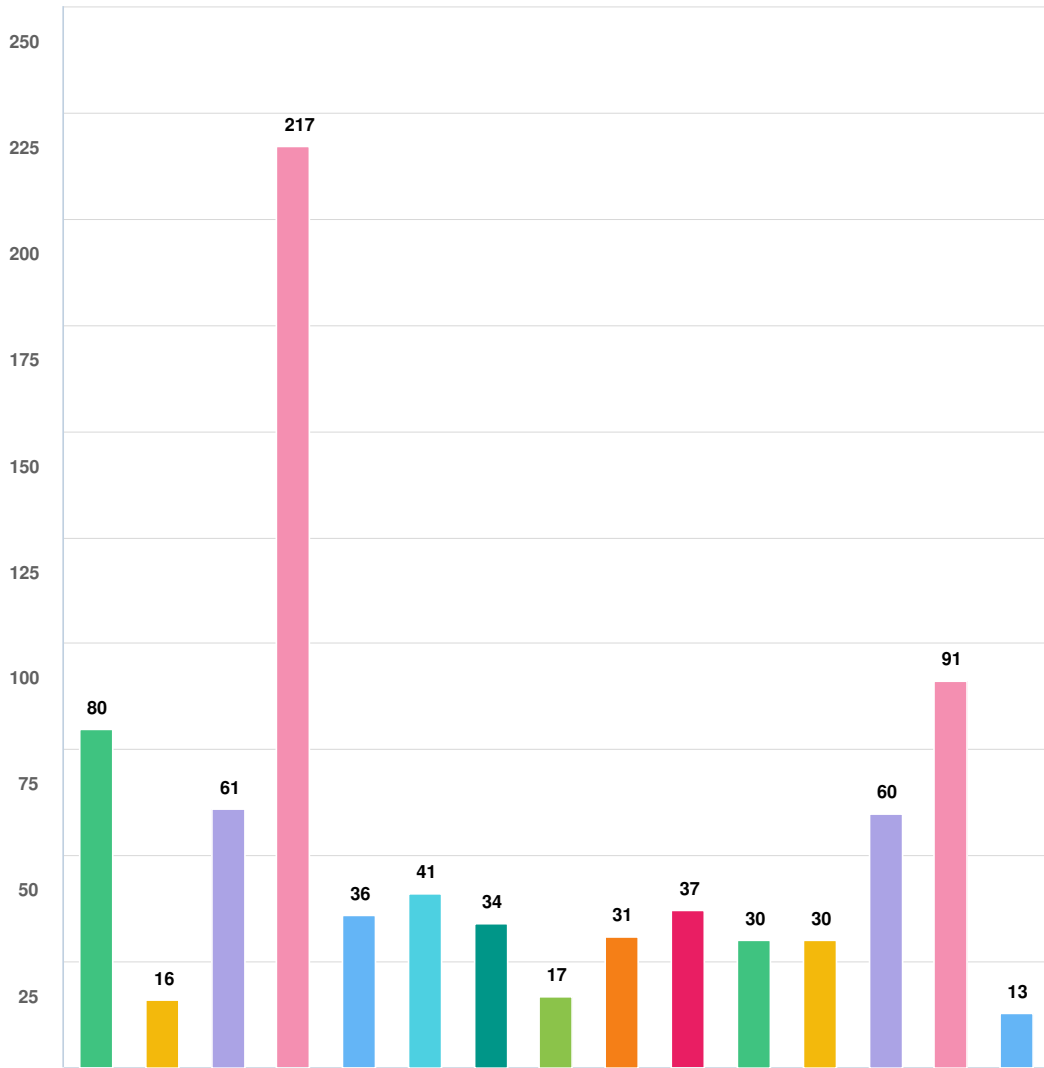


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

**Q5 What is your most common reason for using the Huntsville Public Library? (Please check all that apply)**



**Question options**

- Children's programming    ● Teen programming    ● Adult programming
- Accessing/borrowing the physical collections (books, dvds, Library of Things, etc.)    ● Using the public computers
- Using the library's wifi    ● Printing services    ● Local history/genealogical research    ● Meeting room/facility rentals
- Community information    ● Online resources    ● A place to meet up with friends/neighbours
- A community space to work/read/relax    ● Used book sales    ● Other (please specify)

*Optional question (281 response(s), 5 skipped)  
Question type: Checkbox Question*

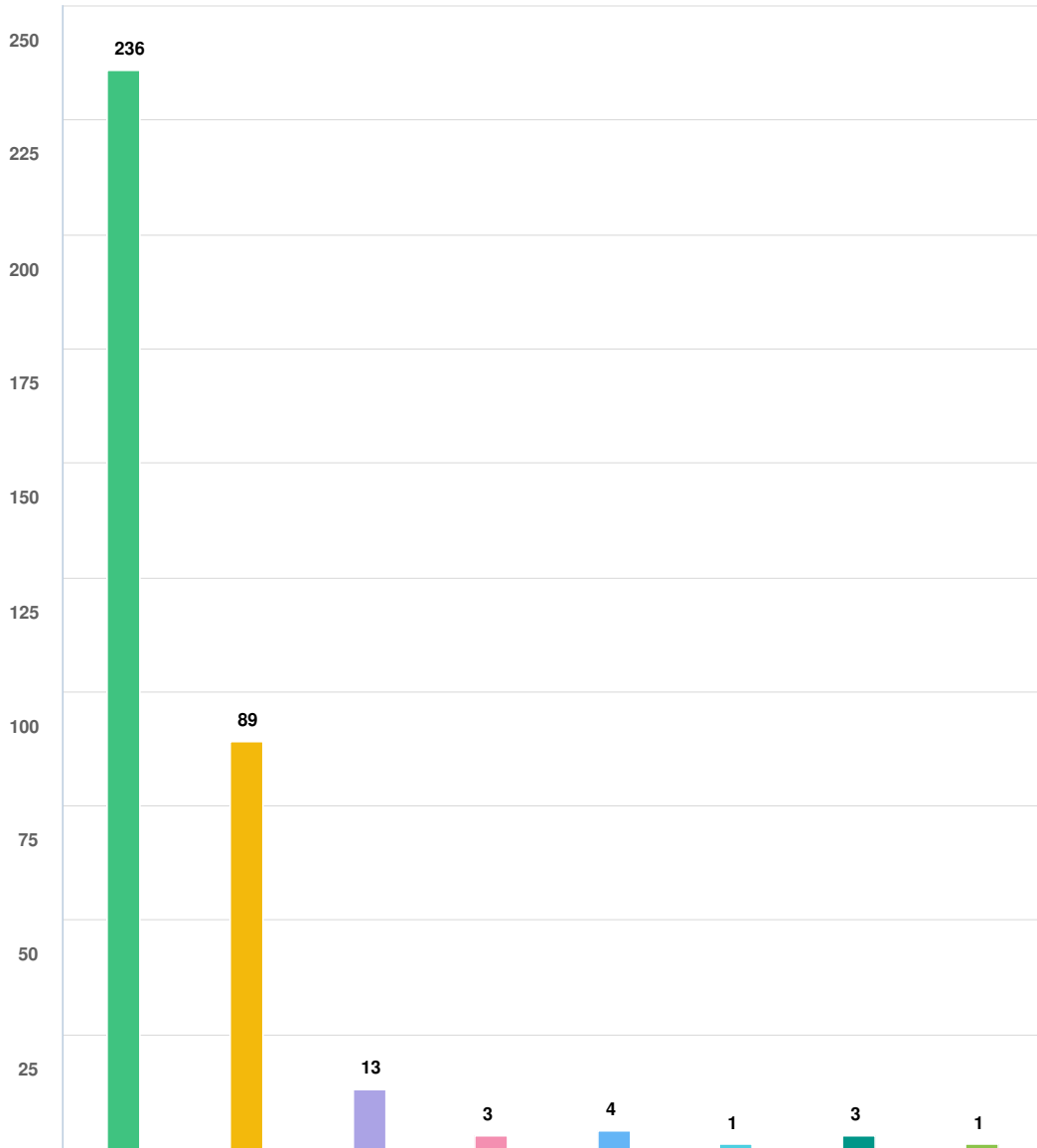


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Q6 How do you travel to the Huntsville Public Library?



#### Question options

- Personal vehicle
- Walk
- Bicycle/scooter
- Bus
- Taxi
- I only use online resources
- I do not visit the library
- Other (please specify)

Optional question (282 response(s), 4 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question

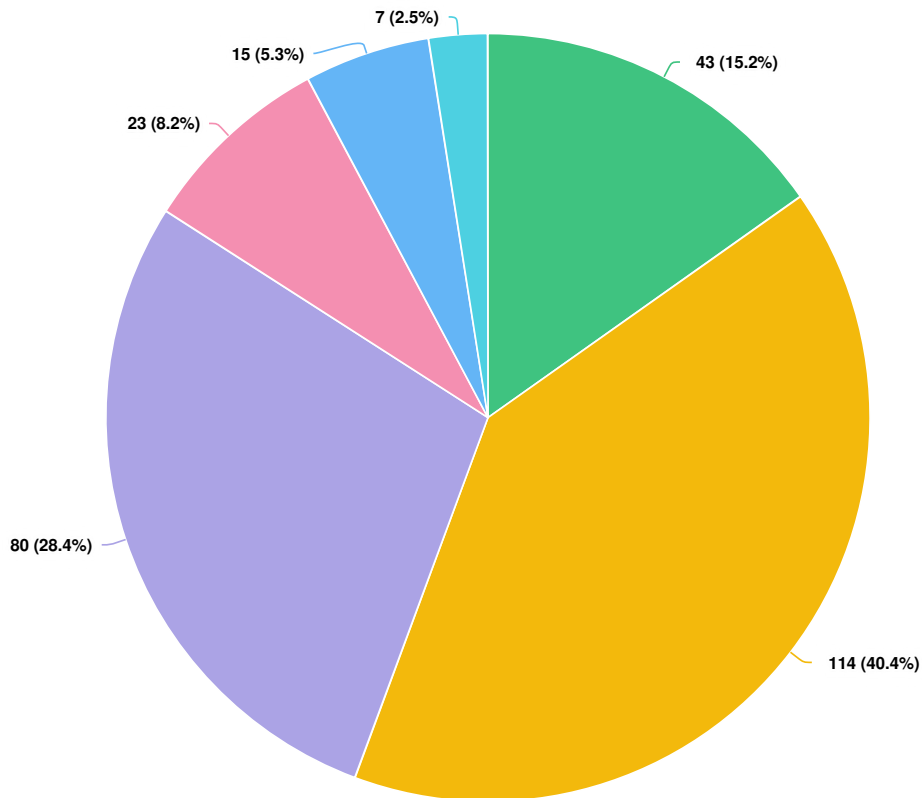


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

**Q7 When you visit the Huntsville Public Library, how long do you stay on average?**



### Question options

● Just a few minutes ● 30 minutes ● 1 hour ● 90 minutes ● 2 hours or more ● Other (please specify)

*Optional question (282 response(s), 4 skipped)*

*Question type: Radio Button Question*

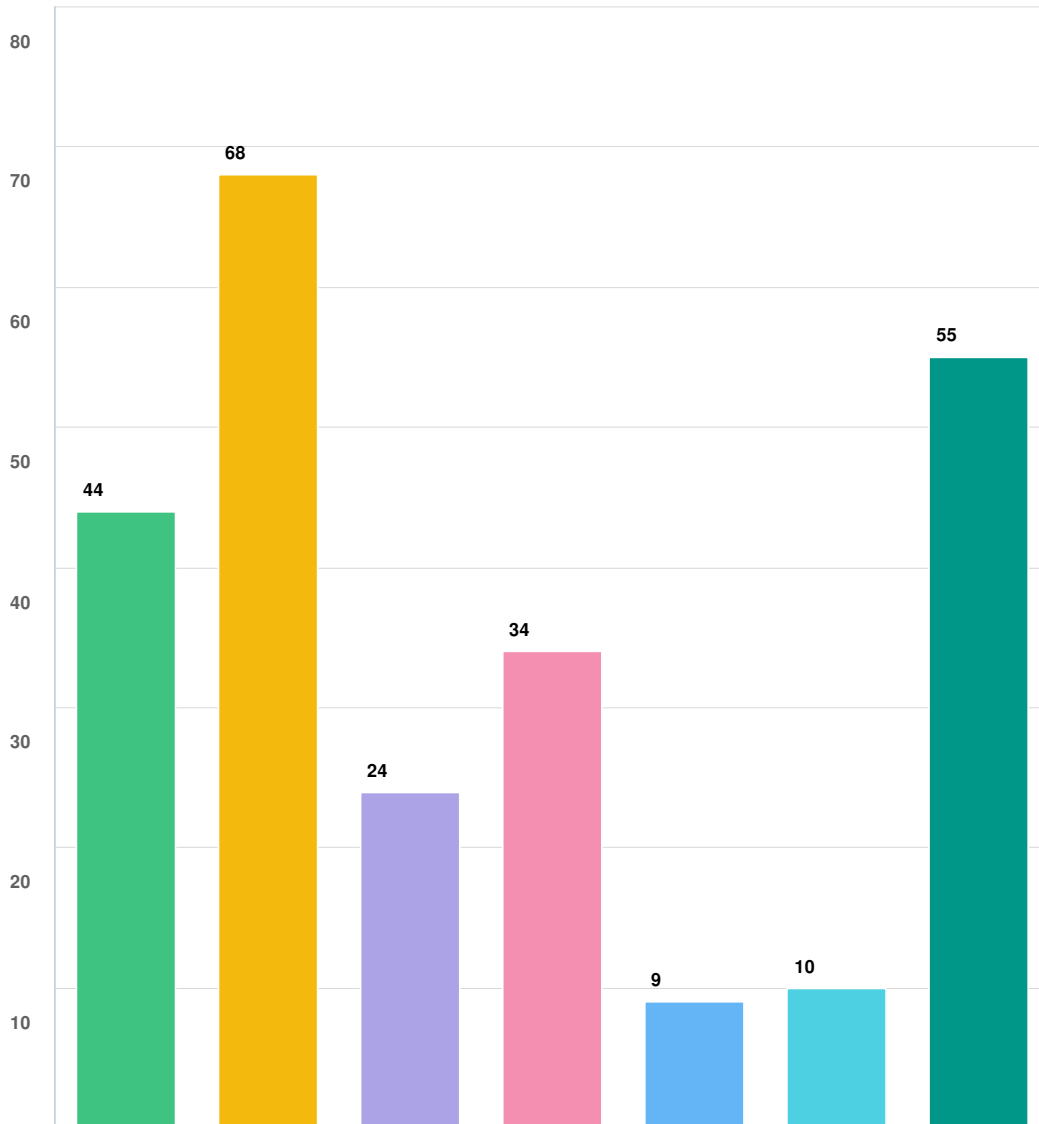


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

**Q8** Please check any barriers that make it difficult for you to use the Huntsville Public Library (check all that apply):



**Question options**

- Lack of desired programs or activities
- Open hours don't align with my life schedule
- I'm too busy/no time
- Unaware of services offered
- Lack of transportation/too far away
- Mobility issues/health problems
- No barrier preventing use

Optional question (197 response(s), 89 skipped)

Question type: Checkbox Question



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Q9 How would you rate the overall level of service provided by the Huntsville Public Library in the following areas?



Mandatory Question (286 response(s))  
Question type: Likert Question

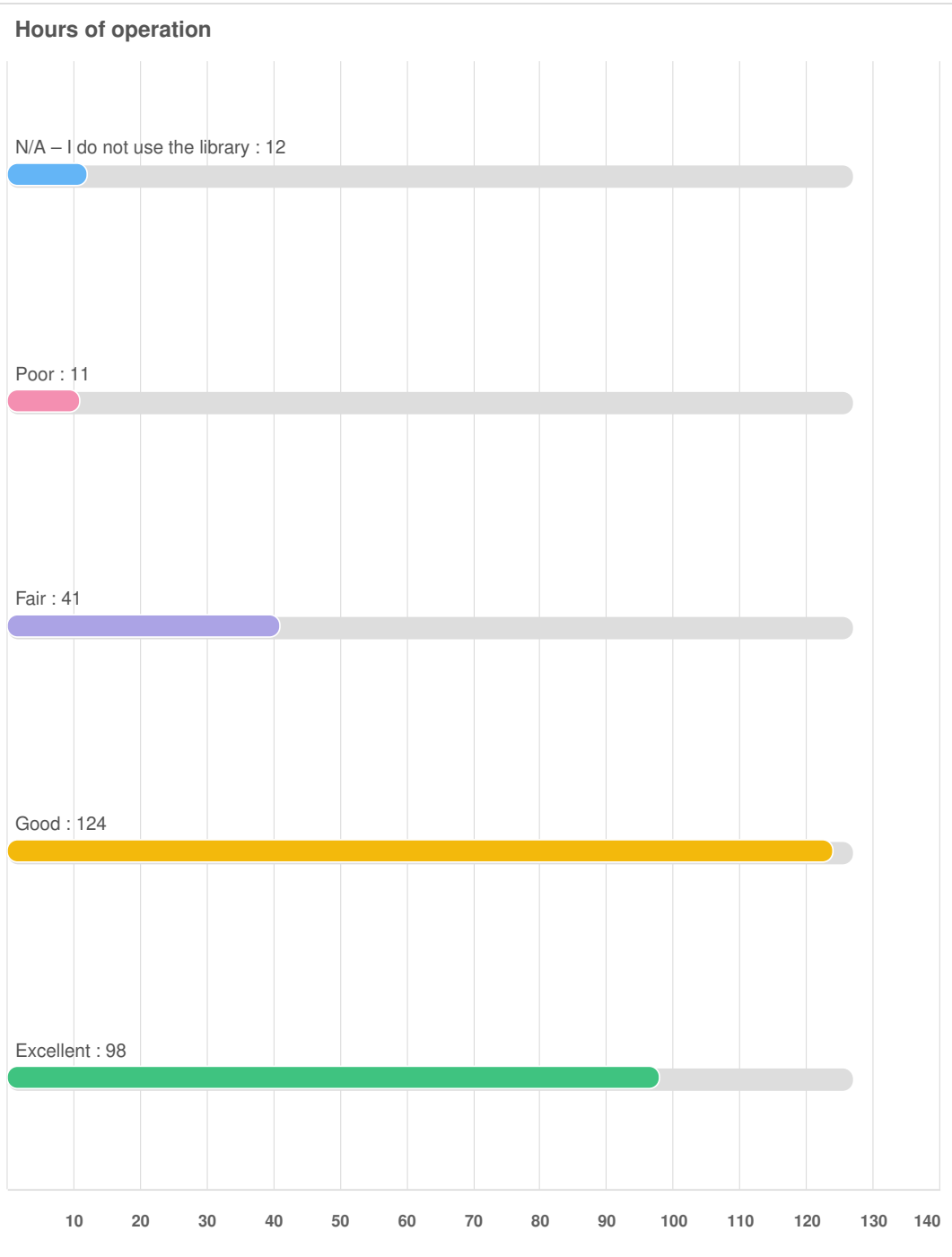


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

**Q9 How would you rate the overall level of service provided by the Huntsville Public Library in the following areas?**



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

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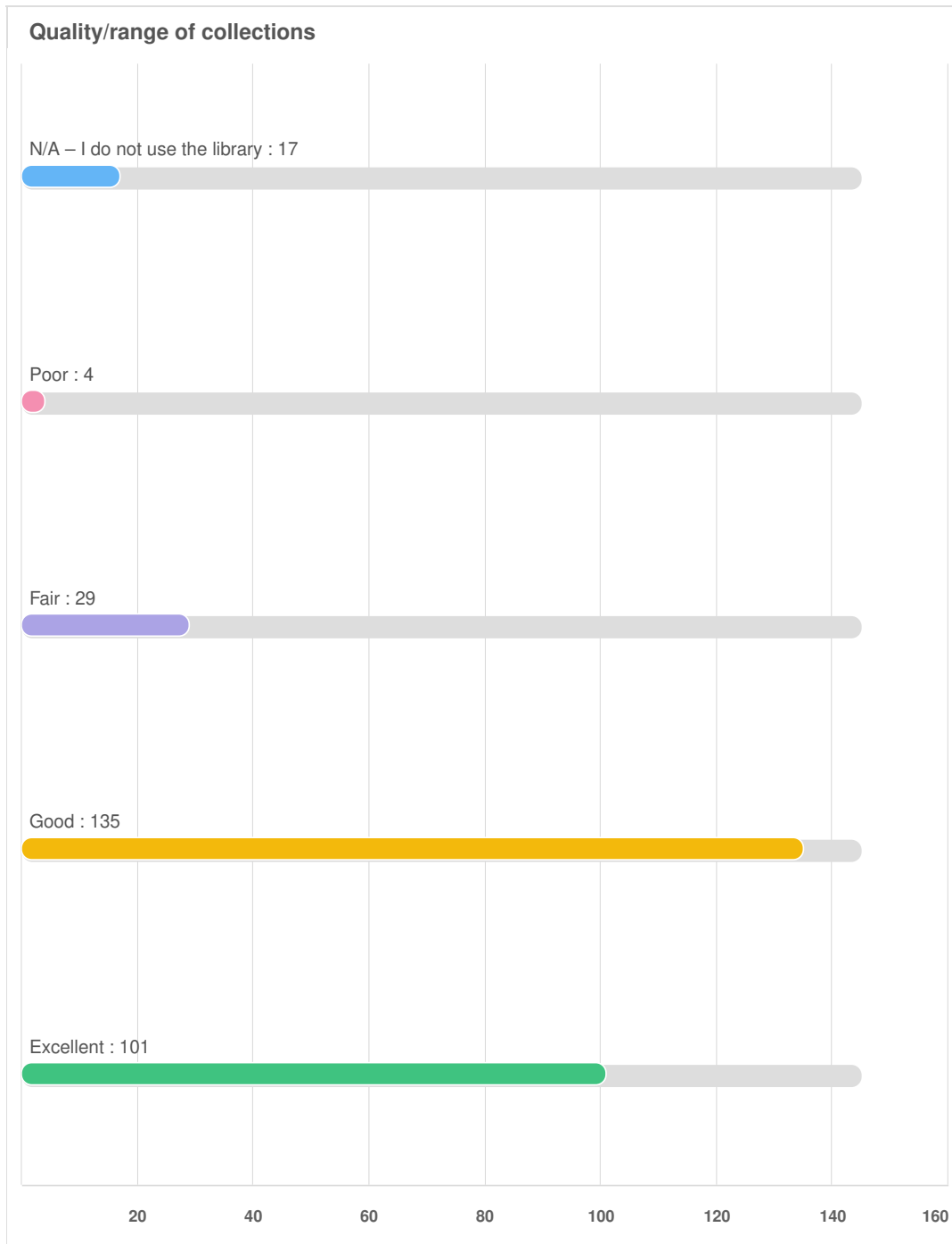
LISA MIETTINEN  
LIBRARY CONSULTING



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

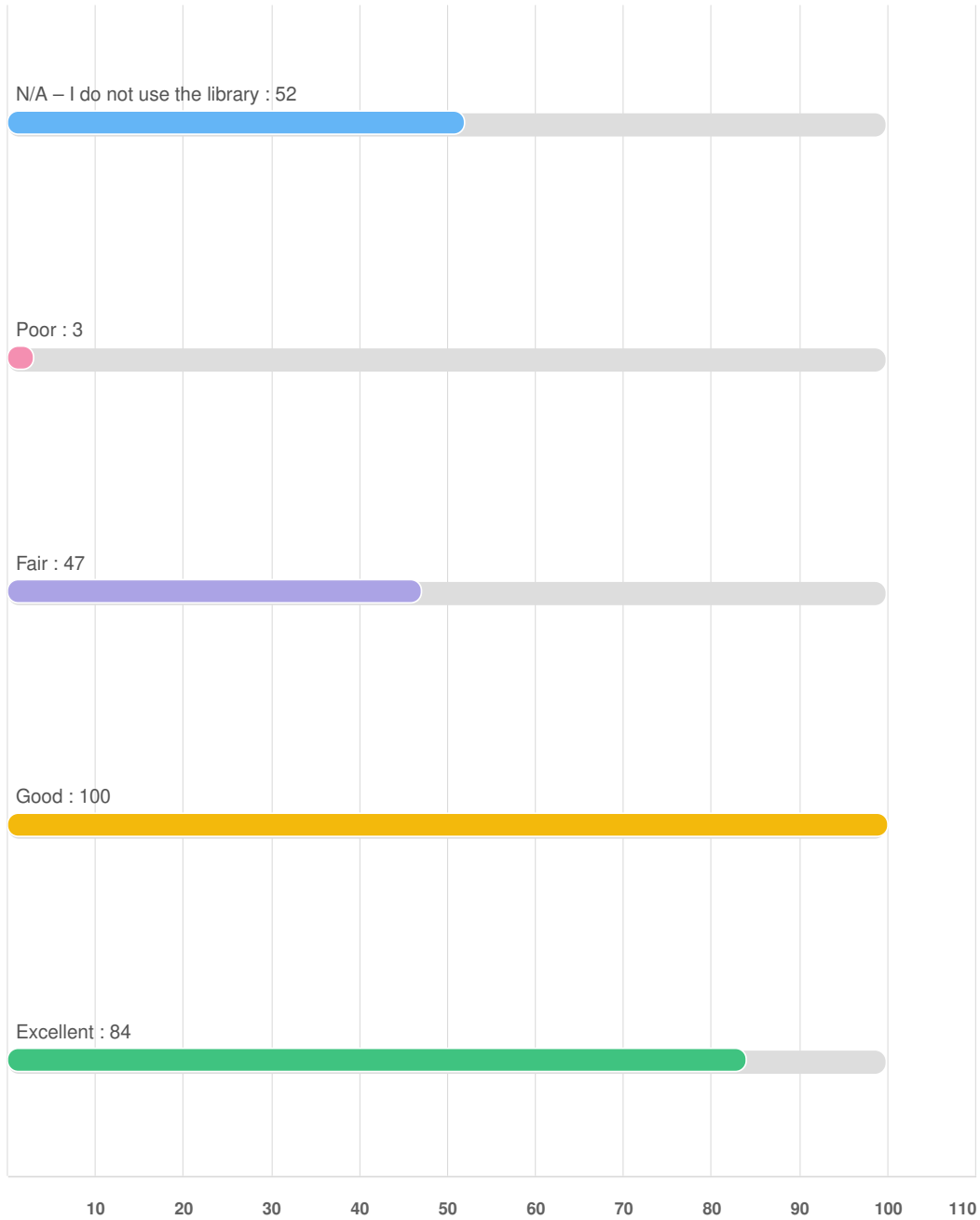


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Programming & events

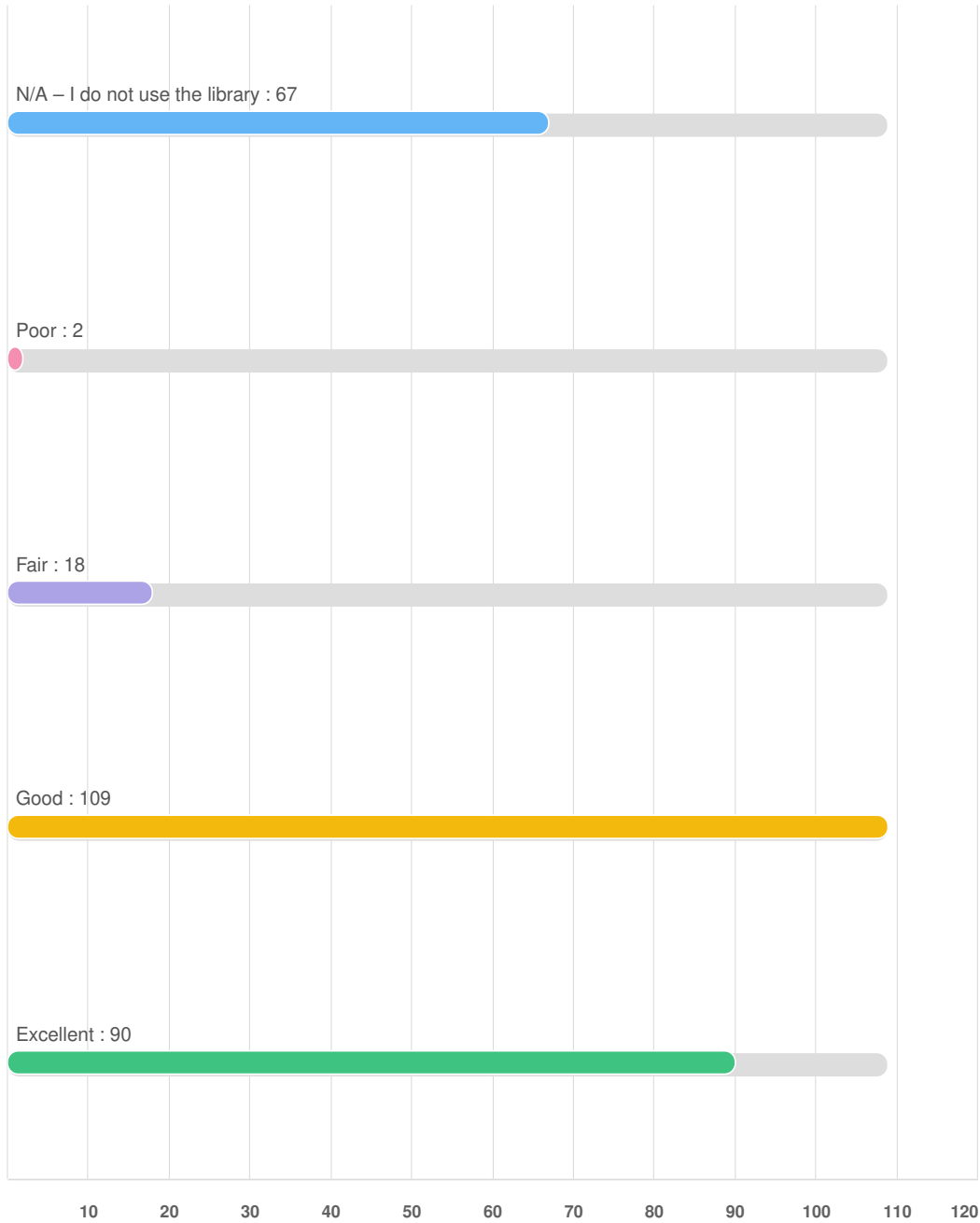


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

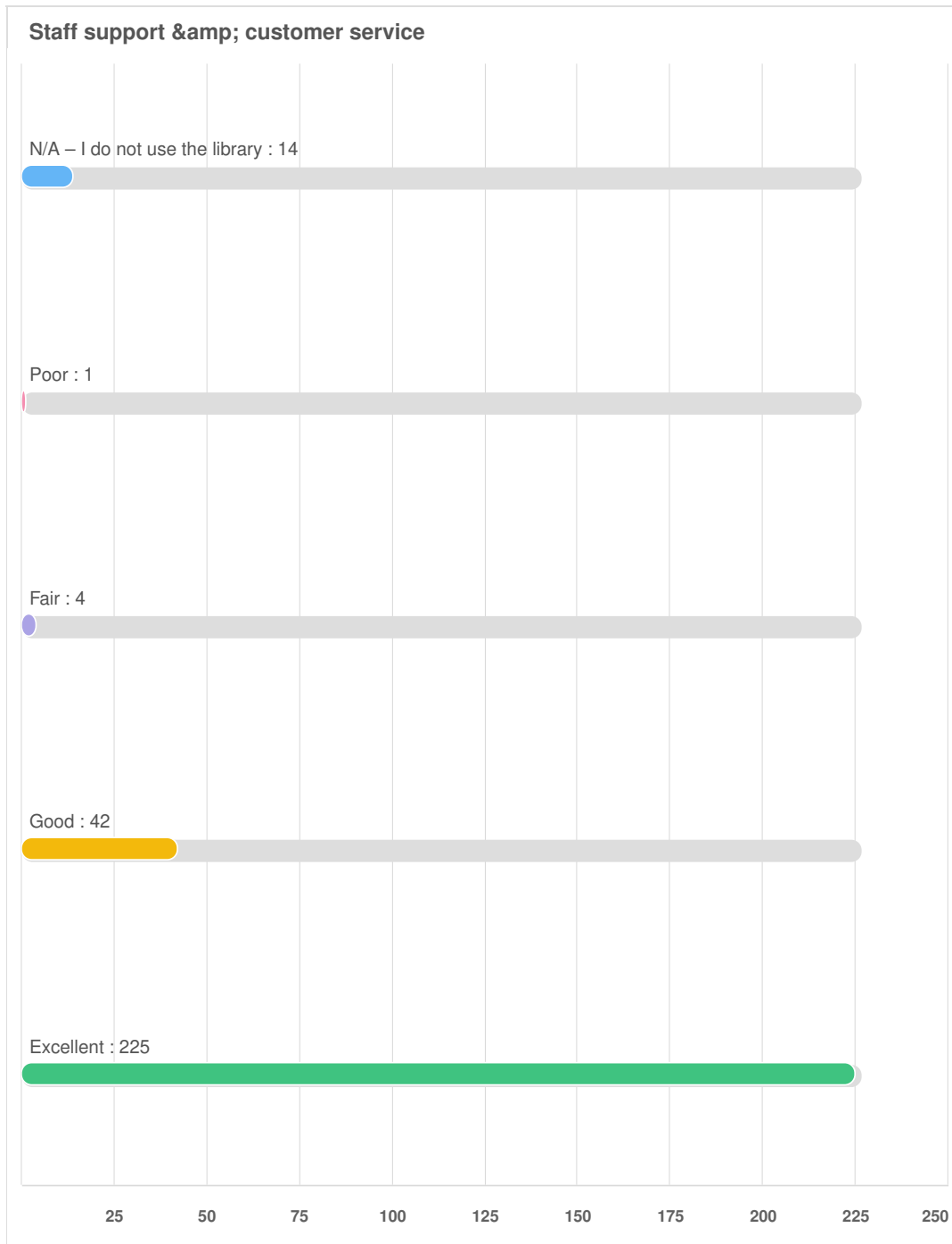
### Technology access



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Q10 How would you rate the following?



Mandatory Question (286 response(s))  
Question type: Likert Question



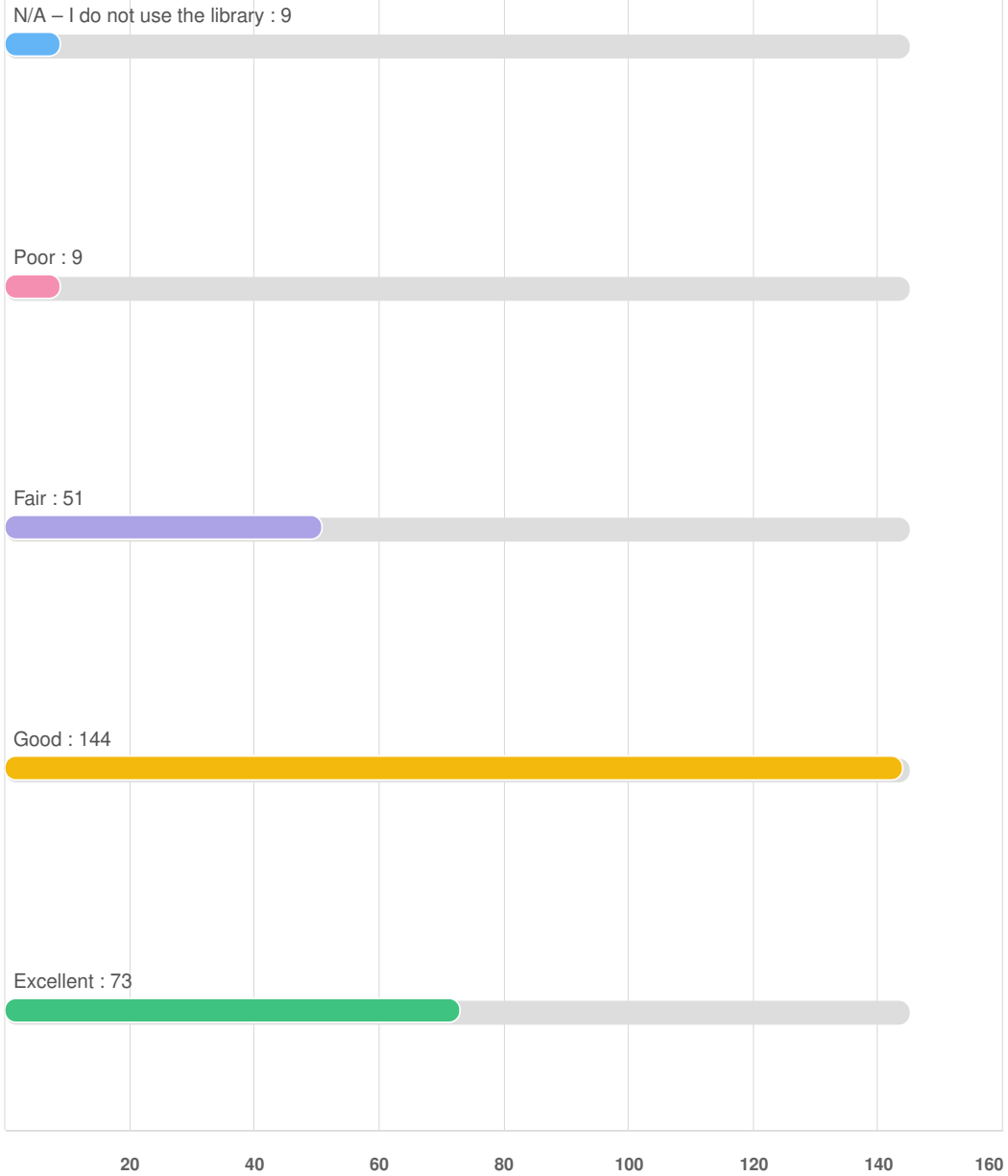
# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Q10 How would you rate the following?

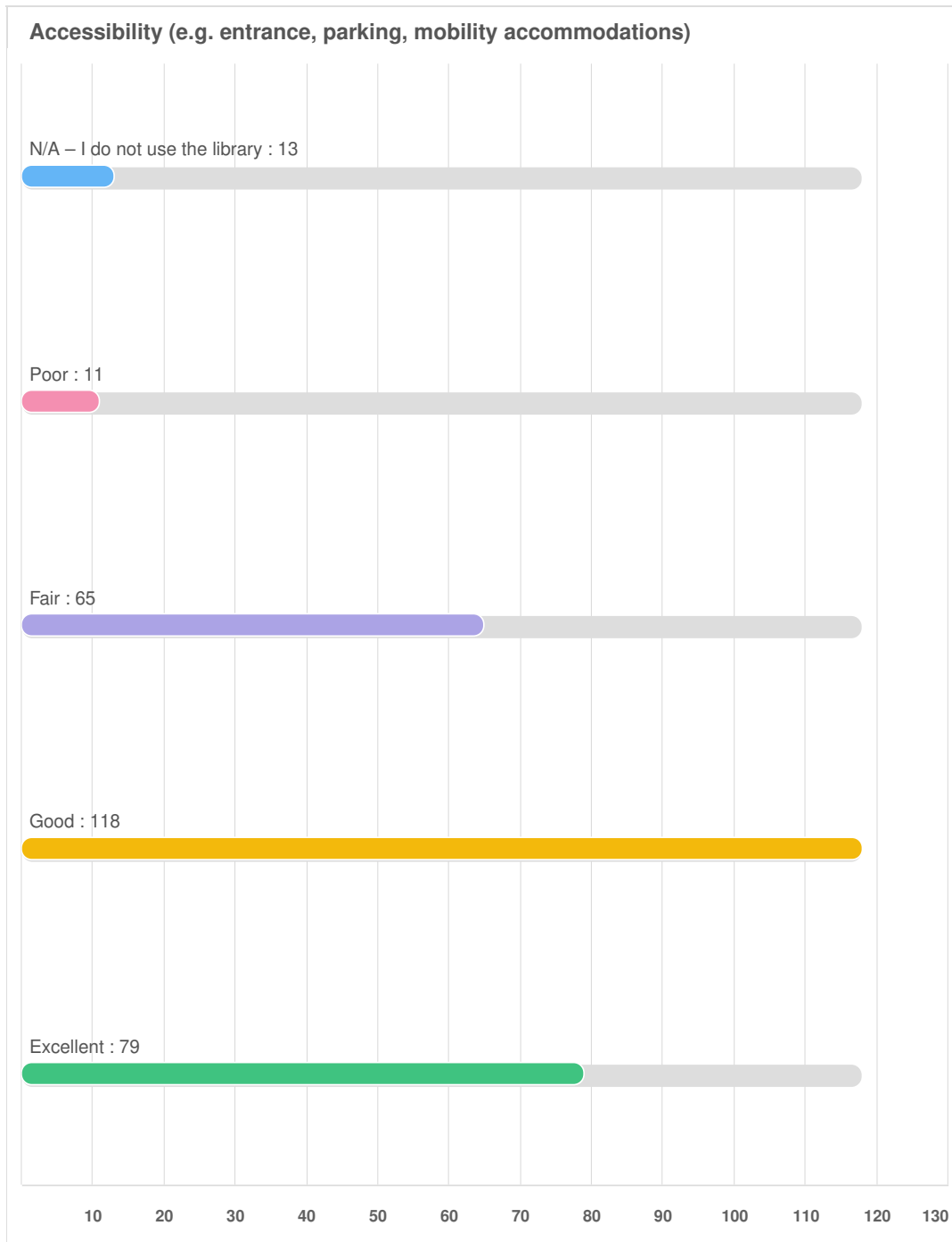
#### Overall condition of the building



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

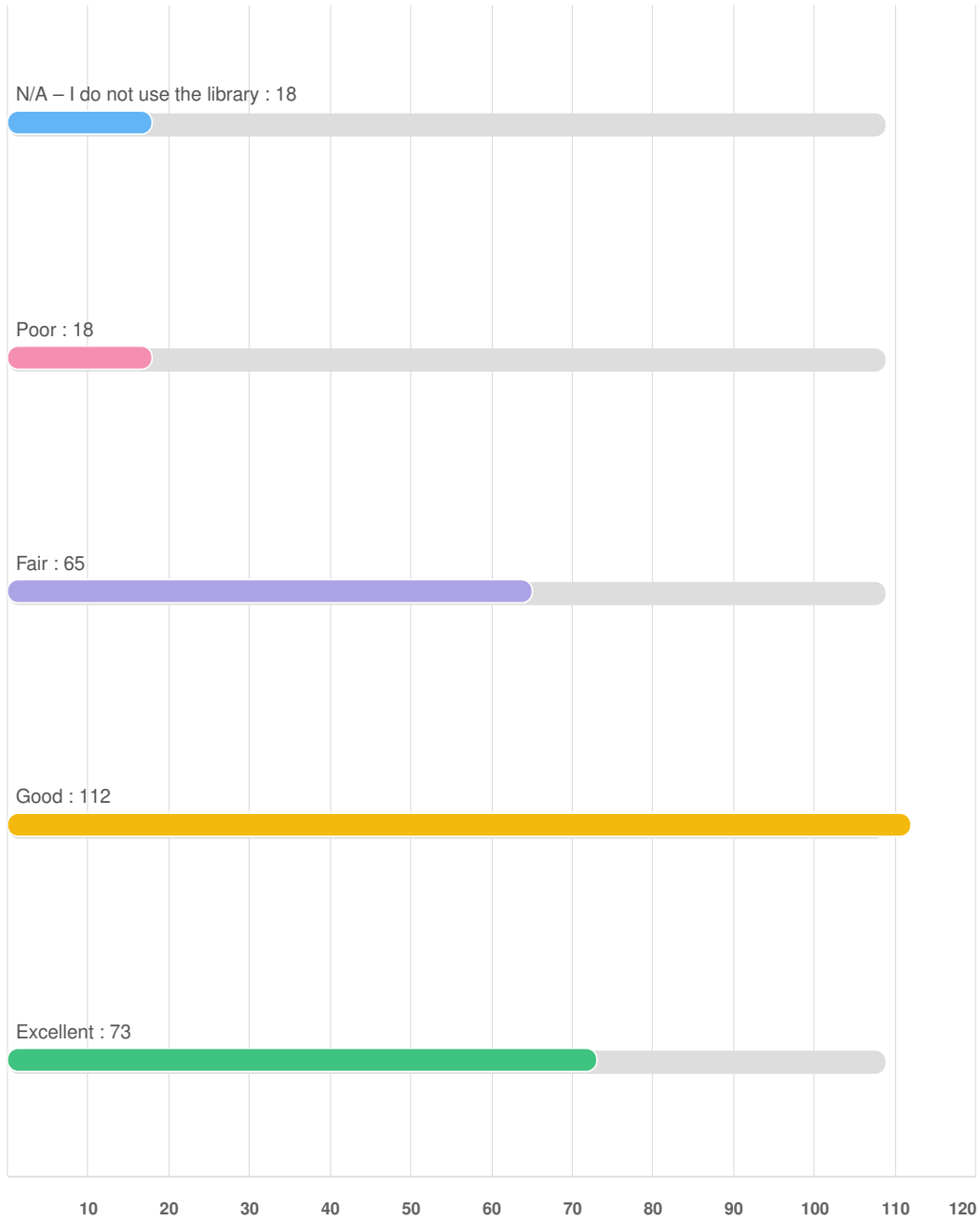


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Seating options

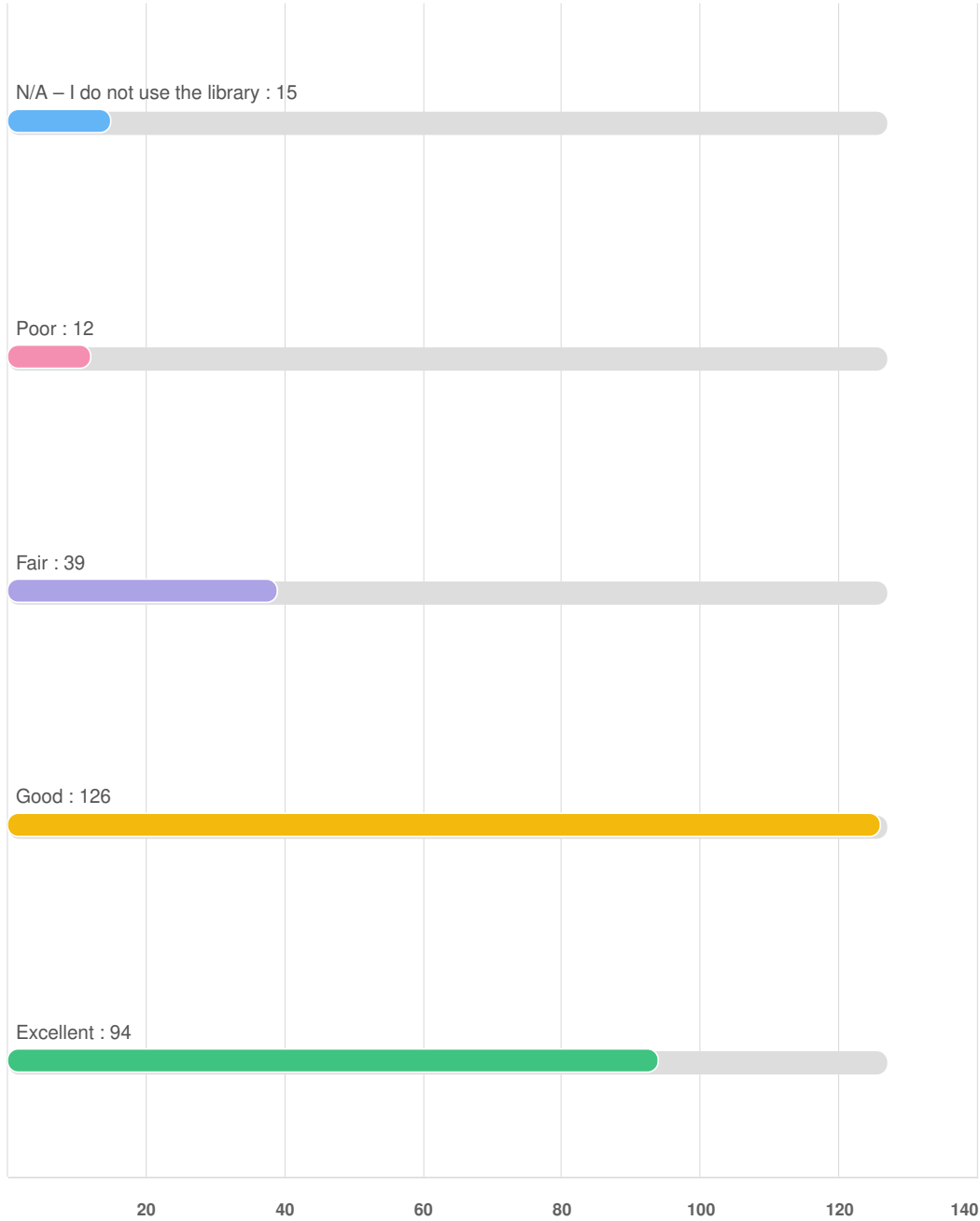


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Lighting

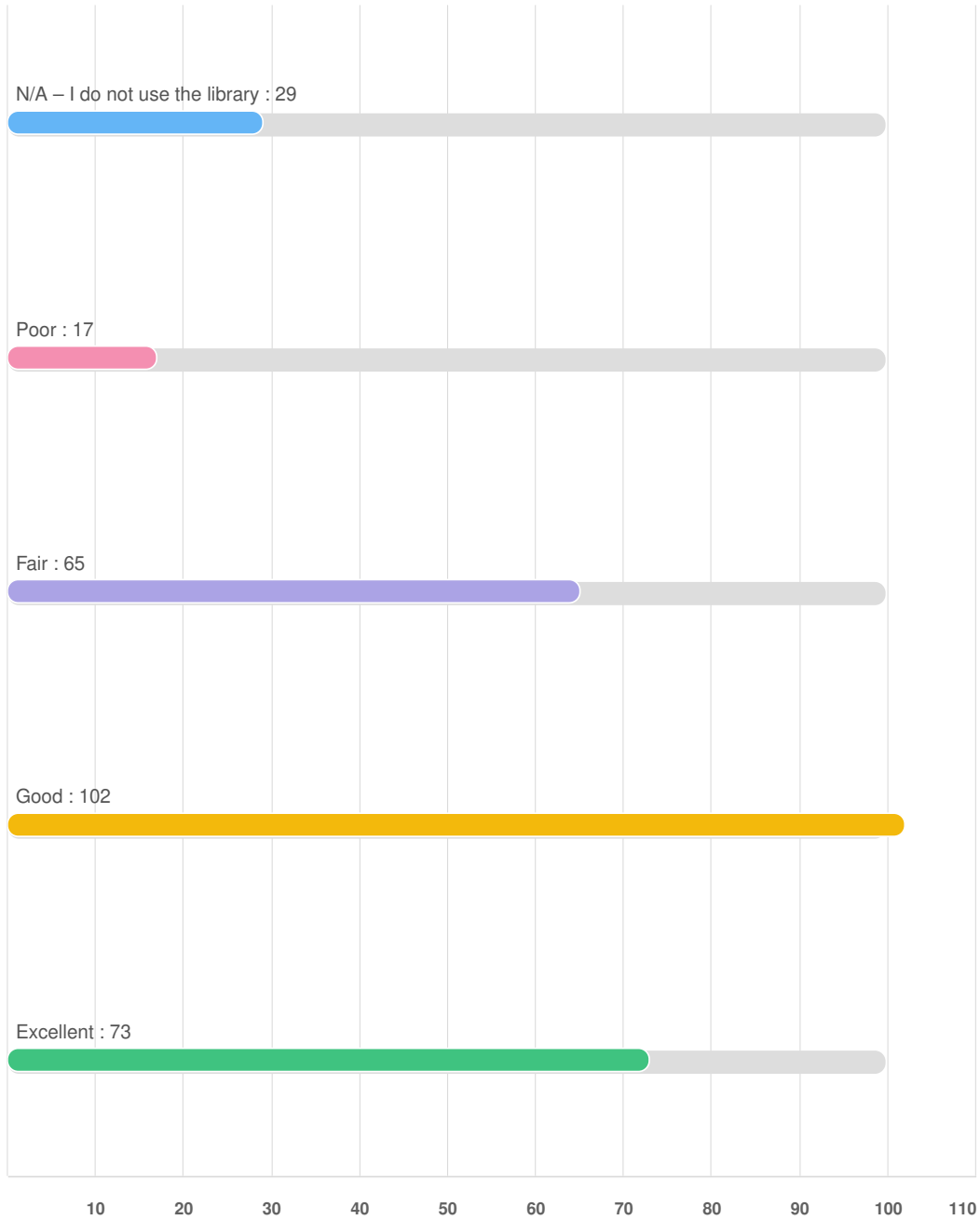


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

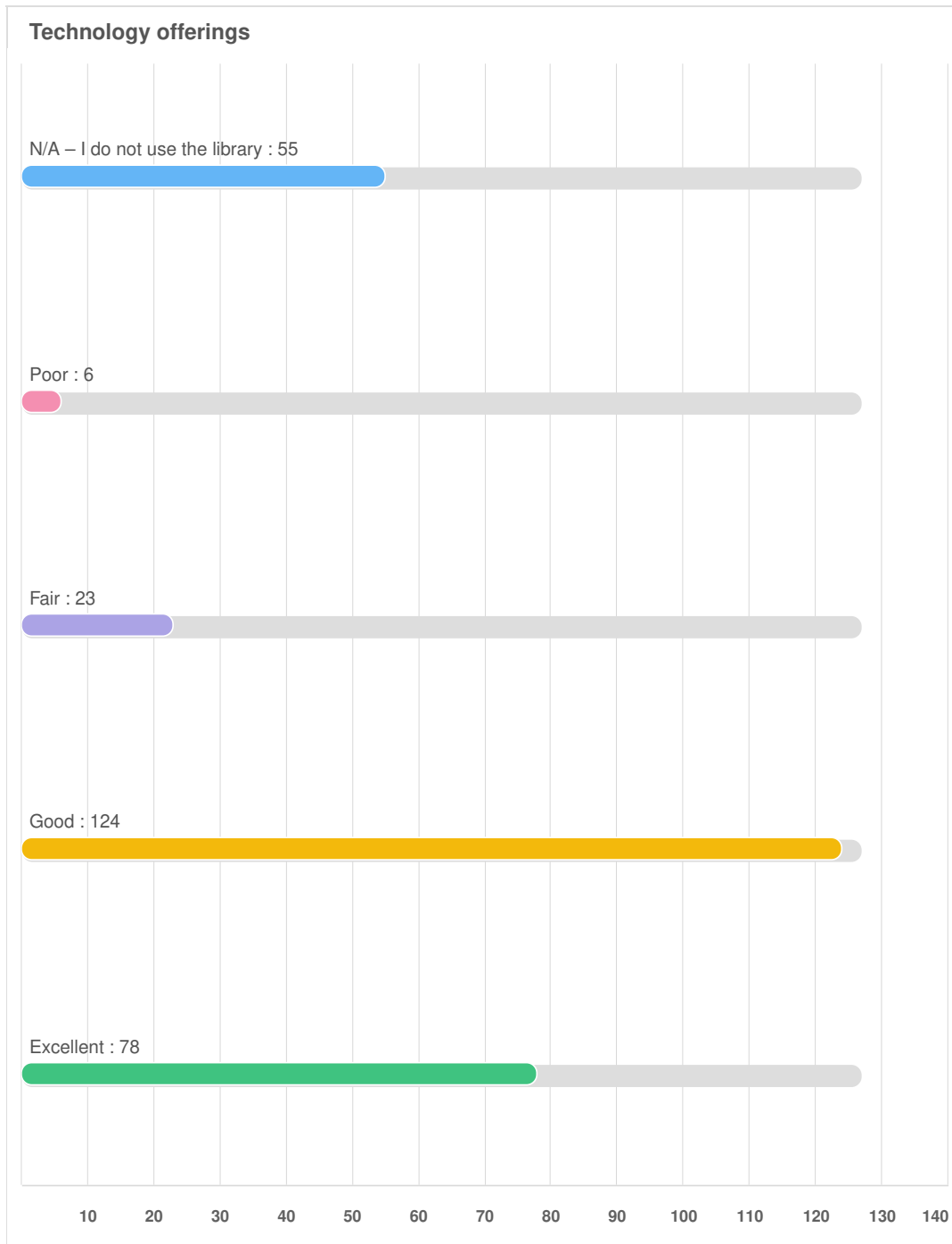
### Quiet study/reading space



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

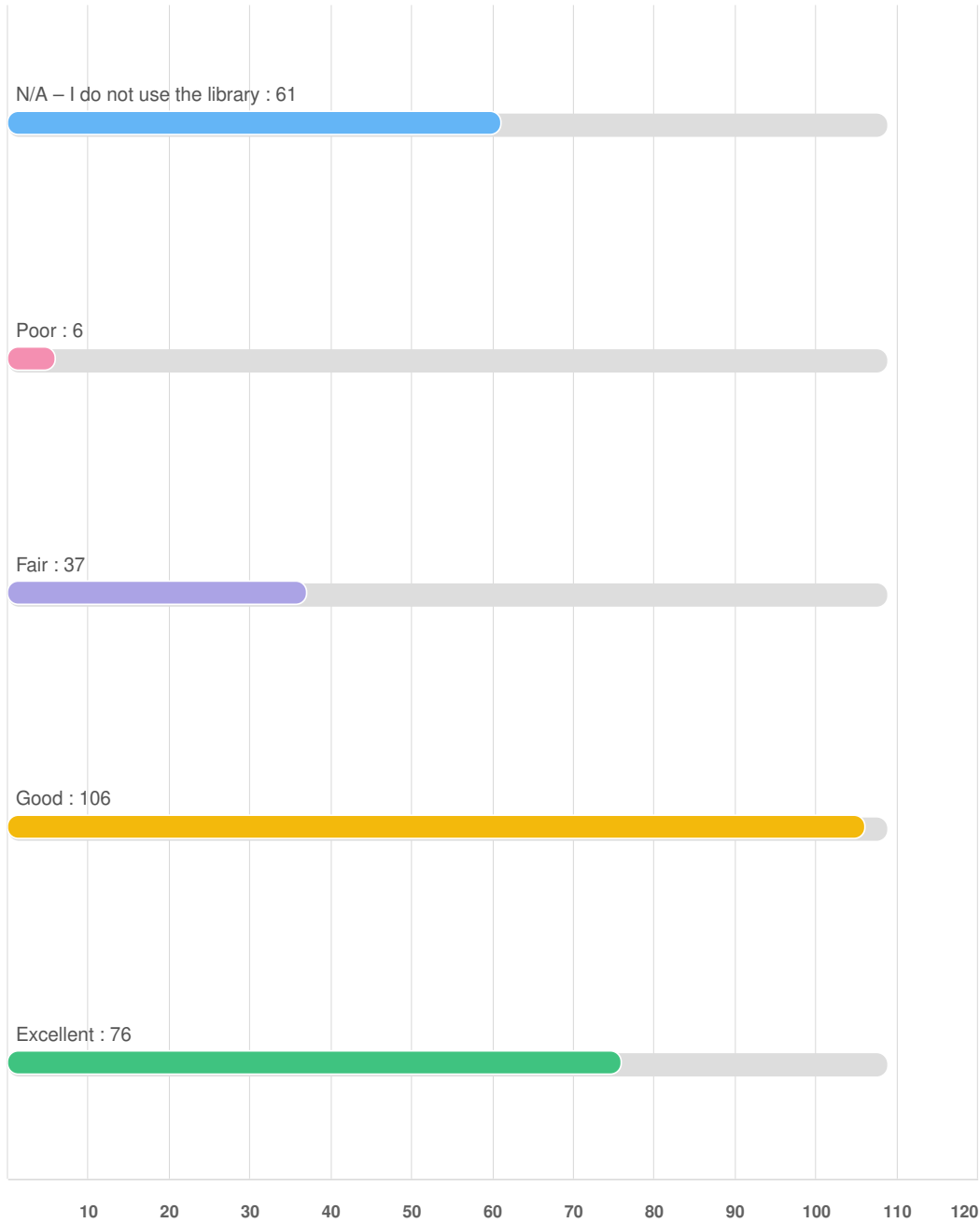


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Meeting spaces

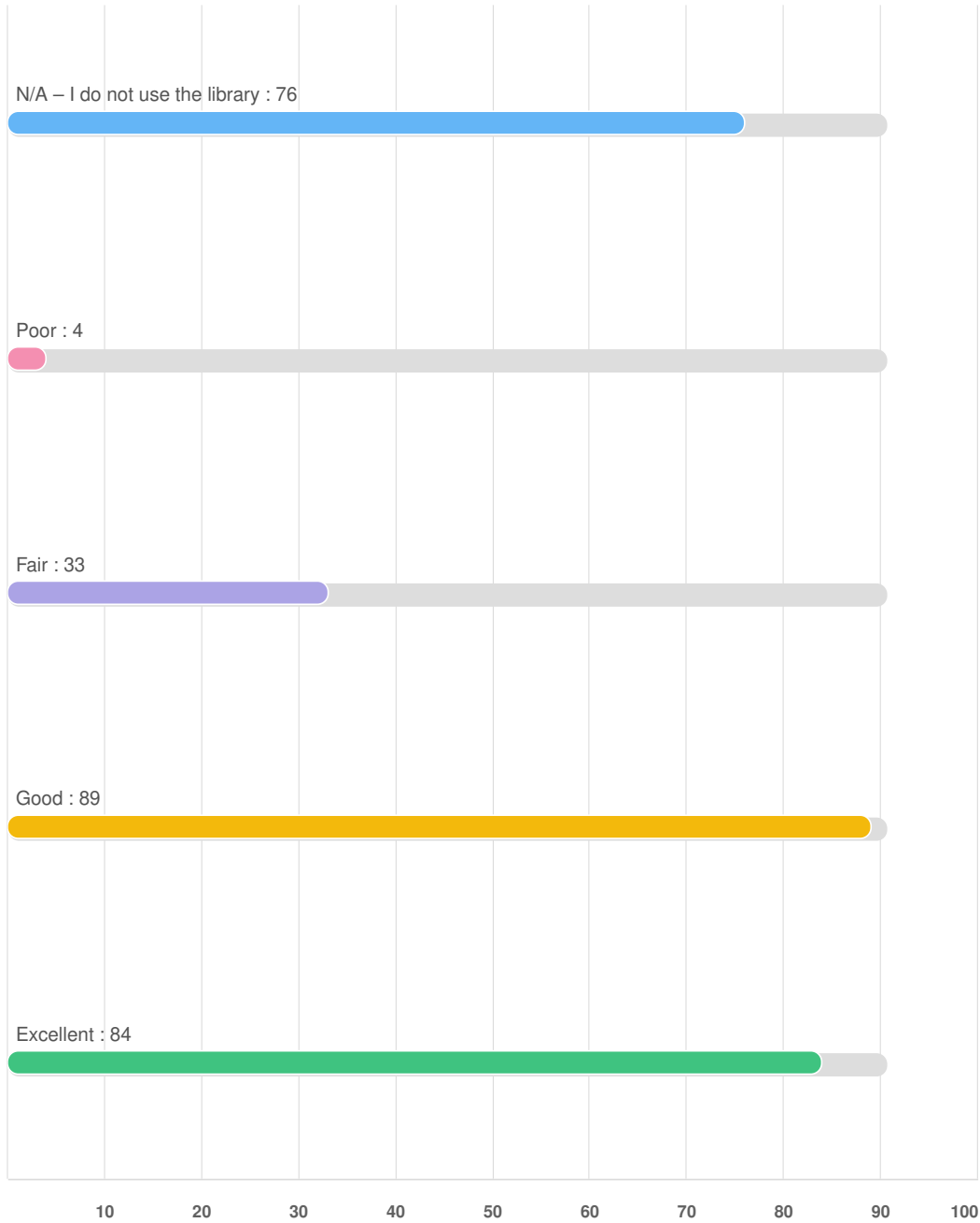


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Children's Area

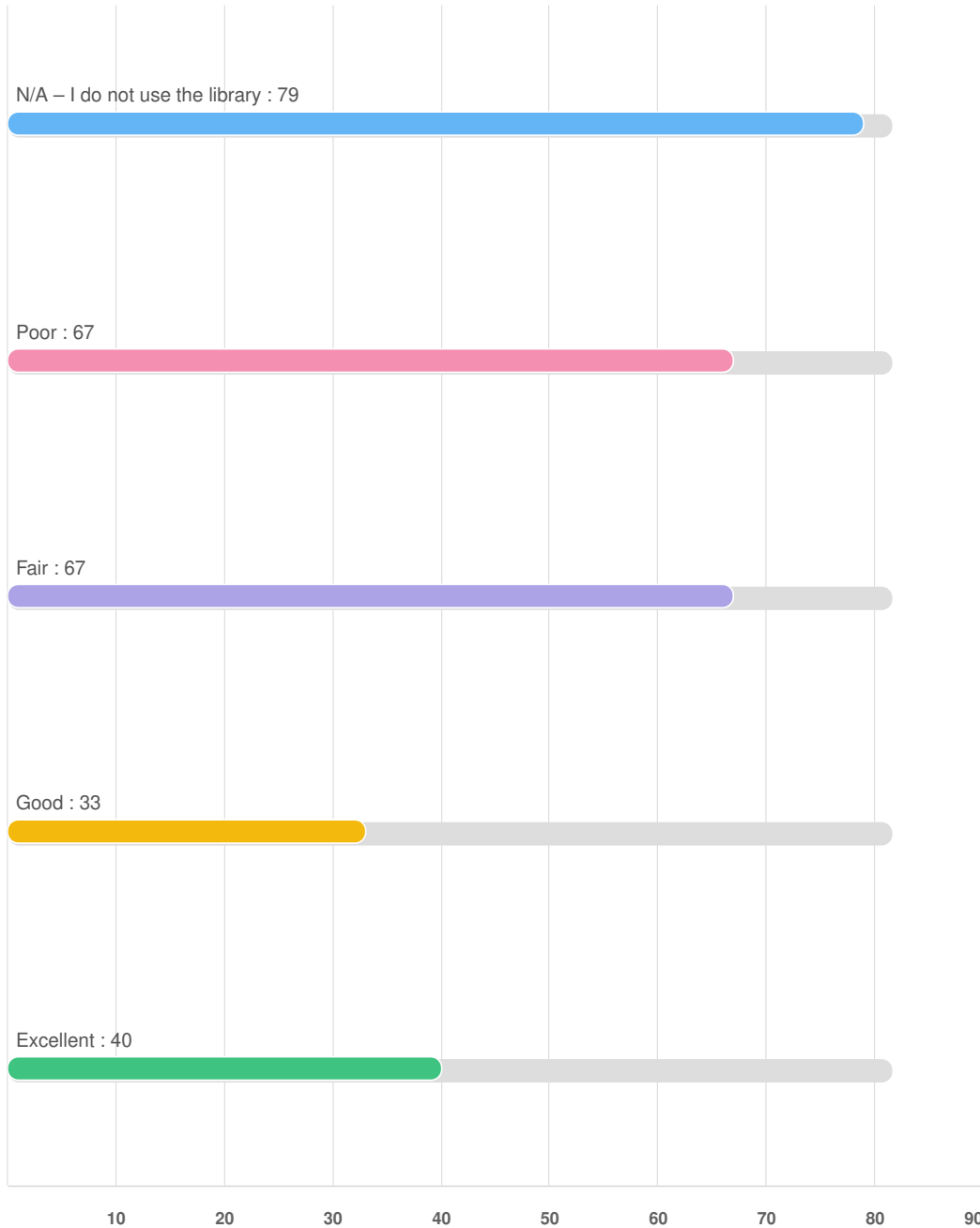


# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Huntsville Public Library Master Plan Survey : Survey Report for 04 March 2019 to 23 November 2025

### Outdoor spaces



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### Q11. HOW MIGHT THE LOCAL LIBRARY IMPROVE ITS INTERIOR SURROUNDINGS AND FURNISHINGS TO ENCOURAGE YOU TO SPEND MORE TIME THERE?

#### 1. Seating, Comfort, Ambience, Furnishings

- More seating, more aisles
- more fans (we visited in Aug and it was hot outside)
- More workspaces and better lighting. Overall atmosphere is dark and uninspiring.
- A few more comfy chairs for sitting and reading would be lovely – if you had spot to put them!
- Utilize empty space on the walls for book shelves freeing up space on the floor for more desk space/table space. Tables with electrical outlets/usb ports for people bringing their own computers/devices
- More adult seating in the children's area.
- It would be great to have a designated quiet room area in which to read books. No talking allowed.
- I find the library very noisy. The floors are hollow sounding especially when people are moving around. It also echoes a lot
- comfy chairs. chess boards
- It feels comfortable to spend time there. Chairs etc and puzzle table, hidden study areas.
- Maybe some more lounge spaces with comfy furniture
- personal work stations with chargers and privacy screens more comfy chairs
- More space, more natural lighting.
- Quiet work spaces; comfortable reading chairs; inviting, cozy nooks
- Comfy chairs, nooks for reading, vibrant artwork!
- More comfortable sitting areas, more plants, more natural lighting, expanded/more quiet rooms for studying.
- I think a refresh is in order...carpets, an updated interior (furnishings, newly painted walls, remove the smell of the interior of library room) Easier self checkout.
- private lounging areas to read meeting areas for discussions and food consumption
- Have the comfortable chairs for reading further away from the Check-in desk so that it is quieter. And further away from the computers...
- less posters
- Better seating areas Air quality
- Get rid of the yellow wood shelves, the library looks like it is out of the 90s.
- more seating/comfy seating additional toys/activities in the children's section
- The interior is well maintained, clean, conducive for learning/reading
- More quiet spaces.
- More comfortable seating areas, like couches, maybe an area to sit and have a coffee while reading a book or doing some work quietly
- more comfortable seating for groups of people more hygge-soft lighting, side tables for drinks, pillows, electric fireplace, electric candles, adult tea time, board games, plush arm chairs
- Cozy seating, welcoming clean carpet, multiple seating places... ambient lighting- less fluorescent lighting
- Paint
- comfy chairs with reading lights



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- More seating and workspaces that are also near power outlets...
- Windows for quite study/reading spaces.
- more "comfy" chairs or couches
- Better seating options
- more small recliners/comfy chairs all around. Otherwise pretty good
- Make is brighter, and more cosy
- more spaces with plugs for laptops
- Cozier chairs
- More comfortable chairs spread around. Another Hub room.
- More cozy kids area possibly
- A small enclosed outdoor space for children to play worry free. Get rid of that dirty old carpet.
- More comfortable seating that can fit multiple people (e.g., families reading books together)
- It's a bright attractive space already! Very Inviting! Maybe more comfy chairs?
- More comfortable seating, having a outdoor seating space, having a small coffee shop.
- More comfortable seating, bench, interactive community space, poor outdoor spaces
- more comfortable seating, esp in children's area (maybe chairs rather than couches...)
- Maybe more comfy seating
- More cozy seating for reading, Muskoka themed decor..., dimmer lighting
- more areas to sit down...
- maybe put more tables or seating
- Maybe modernized the seating.
- more single person tables
- more secluded quiet spaces to read or browse books...
- reading area for adults (comfy) coffee mornings guest speakers (author)/book club
- update, more light/lighter colours, comfortable reading areas, updated kids area
- comfortable seating
- more seating/working areas
- We like the coffee service more comfortable chairs
- more natural light. View or access to outside space or street
- More areas to sit down
- maybe put more tables or seating



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 2. Quiet Rooms, Study Space, Work Areas

- small rooms for discussing with others or working on a common project
- Additional solo pods for remote work
- Maybe more individual desks in the history area so I can focus on what I'm doing.
- more areas to work quietly without general library noises
- private lounging areas to read...
- Personal work stations with chargers and privacy screens
- Maybe more spaces to lounge with comfier seating in addition to the chairs and tables for working at.
- Create a space where a person can go to and enjoy quiet.
- more couches - high top tables - and study space
- Having more areas are available for private work. Just a desk with divider.
- Private area for computer use.
- more single person tables
- More reading nooks in stacks.
- More seating and lounge areas or reading nooks at windows.
- more secluded quiet spaces to read or browse books
- More quiet spaces.

### 3. Children's Area Improvements

- More interactive toys/puzzles/activities in the children's area.
- more lego's or toys/games in childrens area
- The kids side is pretty good, but maybe more space wit comfy pillows and sofas and easy access to books.
- Make the children's section more engaging. More seating, flexible seating.
- would be difficult, but seating and temperature in children's room
- Larger, inclusive childrens area with some play space. My daughter is autistic.
- Separate the technology area (iPads/computers) from the kids books area...
- more reading "nooks", comfy seating tucked away
- A large baby or toddler area
- Sensory friendly space for autistic children...
- more interactive activities for kids (not just the computers)
- more board games in the children's area bean bags or sensory seating/carpets fidgets
- Maybe more cozy kids area
- A small enclosed outdoor space for children to play worry free
- More kids toys and activities or programming
- more lego's or toys/games in childrens area
- more infant'/toddler activities
- bigger kids area mix of things for 7+ and 2+ age



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- more comfortable seating, esp in children's area (maybe chairs rather than couches...)
- The adult section is pretty good but more space is needed. Huntsville has outgrown the present library.

### 4. Cafe, Food, Social Space

- self serve coffee/tea machine easily accessible...
- A cafe attached with a comfortable seating area - a meeting place where conversation can take place.
- More comfortable seating... an area to sit and have a coffee while reading a book...
- cafe like space
- We like the coffee service
- reading area for adults (comfy) coffee mornings

### 5. Collections, Displays, Technology, Services

- more graphic novels, lessons in the arts
- Displaying novels for different seasons...
- better book organization
- Apparently there's coffee there but I've never seen where so better signage would help.
- more books on the Pride community
- more up to date
- 3D printer
- Recently the computers giving access to search the collection have been out of order...
- more physical books
- It's like visiting an afterschool program... the non-fiction legal/ civic interest section is lacking.
- Open on Sunday, no censoring on the computers or suppressing information and sites online
- more puzzles for kids Tutoring program... later hours (open to 10pm)
- more books on walls. more open space
- more modern and welcoming...
- more interactive areas for children, lounge style sitting areas...
- If the young adult was bigger

### 6. Building Size, Layout, Major Renovation, New Facility

- The Huntsville Public Library is dark and dingy... needs a complete update/ renovation including windows and a fireplace...
- Update to become more modern... Muskoka lakes library would be one I would model after...
- increase in size
- A larger facility would be wonderful...
- outdoor space
- larger space
- more modern and welcoming..... see the new Bracebridge Library...
- Huntsville has outgrown the present library.
- more natural light. View or access to outside space or street

# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 7. Miscellaneous

- no improvement needed
- Ok to me- sufficient seating capacity nice interior well lit
- more things
- very well laid out- no problems, comfortable
- button to make washroom accessible
- I don't feel the library's interior surroundings and furnishings need improvement...
- I have no problem with current layout
- I always feel welcome. Wonderful staff!!
- I really like the way you have the furniture arranged...
- No change is necessary
- I am not interested in spending more time at the library
- It's the exterior that's troublesome...
- The facility is great! I have no issues
- I find the library comfortable and welcoming. I can't think of anything I'd change.
- I find the set up at the library very functional and easy to navigate.
- Happy with services I use
- I find the library very welcoming and comfortable...
- no way it's awesome!
- Since I mainly go to borrow books I don't spend a lot of time...
- There is nothing I can think to improve on right now.
- seems fine to me
- I don't have any suggestions, my 4 year old loves the library
- The computer area can be quite loud sometimes... I don't think this really needs to be improved though
- excellent service I can't find anything wrong
- lovely as it is?
- Very friendly place and very helpful people...
- don't change anything
- I personally think the way it is, is all ready very inviting
- I find it meets my needs
- I think its good
- I feel that the surroundings and furnishings are fine. I can complete my visit in 1/2 hour
- I think it's great!
- not applicable it is part of my day in town doing errands
- It looks like there is space to sit and enjoy, but I have never used it
- given space + age of building. I think the seating and study areas are adequate.
- good as it is



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- I think things are fine as they are...
- It is always nice to have comfortable seating...
- I have only time to look for a book...
- While it is important for the library to welcome visitors... our library is already very welcoming.
- Everything is fine
- Generally, I come to the library to borrow books... very welcoming and user friendly
- Not looking to spend more time...
- it is just fine for me
- It's a bright attractive space already!
- perfect as it is
- I think it needs no improvement
- It's fine the way it is.
- it's good already

### Q12. ARE THERE THINGS THAT YOU WISH YOU COULD DO AT THE HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY THAT ARE CURRENTLY UNAVAILABLE?

#### 1. Programs, Workshops, Clubs

- Native crafts like beating doing the ribbon skirt again anything to do with the native culture? because I would like to know my culture more my background.
- writing workshops a young persons book club
- More tech support for seniors, bring back the cook book get together
- more small groups. i-phone use (new models) -photography using i-phone -options for i-phone storage or how to delete unnecessary items
- A Maker's space with all the latest technologies and lessons on how to use them.
- I would love to participate in children's programming but it doesn't align with my work schedule. If there were activities on the weekend I would definitely join!
- maybe it's available & I don't know about it! -book binding -find canadian publishers/content (eg Tundra books) - not scholastic
- Outdoor sensory play for young children, during times that are convenient for mothers on parental leave.
- Did sewing in 2024, wish it would come back again
- More programs for adults after work hours such as craft workshops
- crochet classes for kids
- have a reading group to discuss novels have a creative craft group for knitters, etc to meet others
- I would love to do some adult programming ie learn to sew or a book club, however I have not found anything outside of my working hours-programs are aimed at those not working Mon-Fri 9-5
- Portable tool rental for public. Drill, stud finder, level etc. Most apartment dwellers only have occasional need for these items. More day passes for local parks.
- adult book club was discontinued and never restarted despite input to management and board of directors chair.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- Adult book club in the evening, rather than mid-weekday. Adult cookbook club. Cooking classes. Sewing and clothing mending help drop-in. Board game nights. More adult programs and events on the evenings and weekends. Transfer personal CD collection to digital MP3s format. Transfer personal VHS tapes to DVD or digital format.
- Maybe more options for a maker-space?
- D&D club
- continue indigenous education partnerships and programming
- More events that speak on genealogy. Like a Ted talk from people who have more knowledge on Ancestry
- Movie nights Book club (might already exist) Author presentations Easier access to inter- library loans Teacher resources Art/ culture exhibits Classes for English language learners (adults)
- youth specific involvement (high school) , educational workshops, community support services, and spaces for collaboration and creativity
- Adult book clubs
- more technology courses for seniors
- -more programing for older kids 8-16 range \* I can offer ideas -a dungeons & dragons club (meet and play)  
-more programing/events for homeschool kids, crafts, experiments, games A suggestion box to offer ideas all year long.
- Non-screen items for kids ages 2-12 to play with such as a Lego zone/wall, wooden train table, magnetic building toys, more options for kids puzzles or board games
- I'd like more availability for tech support ie use of iPads to full benefit, guidance for making photo books as we rid ourselves of albums, diy afternoons for making book sleeves, iPad covers etc - perhaps for sale, attached yoga, fitness, health talks, local authors, memoir writing classes and definitely visiting authors!
- my children have enjoyed a "VR" room at other libraries, they're a great addition! More paces in kid's programs
- I used the adult programs until fall of 2024 and since Cara left there have been no programs offered that interest me. Bring back some Indigenous programs, some senior health programs, some crafts for adults, some activities for adults/seniors that would get me back into the library more frequently.
- Non fiction book club to meet other intellectually curious folk
- more author visits, evening book club, more community engagement, updated meeting rooms with AV
- A go club or art club
- -learn how to use tools/machine such as sewing or 3d printers -an outdoor courtyard -Clubs/community meet ups
- Dungeons and Dragons club
- D&D club
- Not aware of any. I enjoyed the series of videos that Bob Atfield (deceased) used to put on..." Movies that make you think" and the ensuing discussions.
- Learning a new language or speakers telling about traveling (specifically things to do or avoid doing while traveling).
- more children's programs



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 2. Hours, Scheduling

- I would love to participate in children's programming but it doesn't align with my work schedule.
- More programs for adults after work hours such as craft workshops
- I would love to do some adult programming ... programs are aimed at those not working Mon-Fri 9-5
- I wish I could have attended the will program run by a lawyer but it's time was during my working hours
- Visit in the evenings during the week.
- open sundays
- I wish that I could visit the library after work, but you close at 6.
- Kids/teen programming that is after 6pm on weekdays
- More programs for children aged 4-6 Saturday or Sunday mornings
- I wish there was another storytime time during the week
- more story times
- go after work/later in the day
- Open seven days a week....
- The timing of some of your programming does not work for those that work during the day.
- More home school stuff, more than once a month. something to do outside.

### 3. Space, Seating, Atmosphere, Building Improvements

- Sit outside of the library to read. Have more natural lighting in the library- improve lighting. More windows with a views of nature— we need a second library.
- Better seating option, more children's books to engage young people and encourage them to enjoy the library
- It would be very nice to have quiet , comfortable ares to have fewer distractions.
- I am out of touch with what is available... I avoid the library because it is so dark and dingy.
- Sit in a comfortable area and br able to concentrate in a quiet environment.
- more comfortable seating
- seating is only "semi" quiet for reading
- There should be more modern computers, a larger space, and a flexible outdoor space.
- An outdoor seating area
- Outdoor reading or community space
- Do work at the library but choose not to due to the dull atmosphere
- wish there was more natural light
- Study or work for long periods of time with access to good lighting and charging ports
- A interactive area for children not on computers
- Larger kids room!
- parking can sometimes be challenging
- If would be nice if there was more of an outside space dedicated to sitting and reading or meeting that was weather-resistant
- A clean and new children's engagement area for kids under 2.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- Outdoor seating for reading or meeting with people Better /more parking
- An outdoor area with seating would be very nice.
- I would like there to be a couch at the library so I can lay and read on it
- outdoor space!
- couch
- Maybe more options for a maker-space?

### 4. Collections, Materials, Borrowing

- borrow a microscope
- Borrow board games
- Larger graphic novel collection for kids, stocking older ones that may have been damaged with age and never replaced.
- Borrow tickets to science park, museum, events outside of Huntsville
- maybe it's available & I don't know about it! ... find canadian publishers/content
- I'm interested in non-fiction to do with business, leadership, etc and I don't see much
- sometimes request "older" items for purchase if it is "trending"
- dvd player
- No adult French books.
- reading garden resources to pay for help with research project
- Have a longer window for borrowing
- renew books myself online, current system is inflexible, reinstate system of fines
- a toy lending section
- miss the music cds that used to be on loan... Will really miss the entertainment DVDs if eliminated
- Borrow board games
- maybe a good or more selections or sets of decodable books and graphic novels for beginning readers or readers of different interests.
- public phone, pay phone Alternative media-printed ie Druthers
- Get a library card online.
- self search ILLO
- Borrow tools (eg for arts & crafts, carpentry) use 3D printer and other expensive tools
- Borrow board games

### 5. Technology, Equipment, Digital Services

- More tech support for seniors
- A Maker's space...
- 3d printer
- There should be more modern computers
- Transfer personal CD collection to digital MP3s... transfer VHS tapes
- Tool rental. Fixing stuff area.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- tech classes iphone-how to take good photos, store photos
- Signing out a laptop or chrome book.
- Access to Hoopla... make HPL users aware
- View a larger screen- for you tube etc
- more online resources eg creativebug, ancestry.com to be available at home
- Improve Overdrive. Sometimes doesn't work properly
- music room

### 6. Accessibility, Inclusion

- get in the washroom by myself- I went to check the one in the children's area but the doors were closed
- I would like to bring my son, but he vocally stims and we receive a lot of side comments, glares and judgement. So we just don't go
- My daughter would like more computer games and I would like more service for babies and mothers

### 7. Miscellaneous

- Browse for a while.
- Everything that I need to do is very adequate... appreciate the variety in those books provided for recipes.
- not for me-library delivers what I need use your dvd's a lot and read newspapers
- I answered poor under quiet reading area, but maybe there is one and I just don't know about it?
- I appreciate children's programs I appreciate the awesome staff here
- I can't think of anything I can't do at the library always a pleasant experience and can get help with technology if needed
- I struggle with your website - ... the website is the worst site I've ever used
- as above better book organization.... stacks by author vs stacks by subject

## Q13. WHAT OTHER PRODUCTS OR SERVICES WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE THE HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY OFFER?

### 1. Collections

- As per above question, French books for adults.
- Bigger movie selection
- I would like amore extensivr selection of reading materials. Instead of having book 1, 3 and 4 in a series it would be nice to have an entire series available.
- More devices like nintendos available
- More toys in the children's library, also the craft takeaway that many many other children's libraries offer these days.
- a more extensive collection of books on cd, the ability to request books and audiobooks be purchased outside the current 3 year limit
- I hope the library continues to increase its DVD collection.
- better DVD selection, more new release
- Classic books and movies.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- More books and audiobooks available through the app Libby
- more movie selection
- nature lending library like @Mary JL Black library in thunder Bay
- more graphic novels in the children's section playstation rental
- add more to library of things eg tools, 3d printer, board games, toys, karaoke machine, musical instruments, ping pong kit, telescope, tennis kits, craft kits seed exchange/house plant swap
- better e-book catalogue
- Complete book series , not just partial. Also, please stop making titles only available on e-read. Some of us still like to read actual books.
- my grandson wishes there were more boardgames to borrow. My granddaughter agrees with this suggestion
- More books for older kids with dyslexia.
- New book selections youth and adults More variety of programs for adults
- more availability of jigsaw puzzles - medium difficulty
- more dvds
- documentary books and videos
- more DVDs
- A better collection of knowledge.
- Having visited libraries in Orillia, Bracebridge... would recommend surveying other libraries to see hot items
- Please continue to collect the books I place on hold. \*I wish the juvenile non-fiction was in the children's section

### 2. Programs, Classes, Events

- More winter programs and activities
- Cooking and baking classes, maker space or idea lab, continue with the historical section - so impressed by it, knitting and crocheting classes, book clubs, more non-fiction books, more labels on books for genres- very helpful
- More children's events in the summer
- cricut classes
- adult education series
- more story times play area for toddlers
- Lessons on creating SVGs, 3D printing files, CNC files
- You've got a good range of offerings - tech lessons are always welcome, for all ages.
- More programming for children 7-12 such as crafts (drawing, painting, sewing, making jewelry, etc.), movie afternoon, read aloud
- Mental health
- adult bookclub-or clubs in a foreign language, more french books create more volunteer participation opportunities ie teen participation?
- Life skills programs Learn to sew Learn to knit Cooking?
- More community public education about strategies to be prepared/ adapt to climate change...
- More outdoor programming
- Magic shows for kids



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- Offer workshops on how to write and become an author or poet... youth programming... games night for teens...
- Increase adult activities: Clubs-book, crafts, art Programs-exercise, health, mindfulness, senior focus
- More activities for teens both boys and girls
- more children programming creative writing, more craft classes
- I would like to see more in house senior type activities.
- informal knitting group- 9am willing to help organize this.
- an option for children's programming (like read along etc)
- More children's programming please :) specifically more preschool programming (Under 5 years old)
- More after school programs
- current event talks (adult education) crafts for adults always appreciated
- Workshops that are not when I work 9-5 weekdays
- Senior related technology learning
- movie night
- programs for hearing impaired seniors
- to learn computer skills
- adult classes/hobbies
- more information sessions like the lawyer one and also the Alzheimer society
- More children's programming! We love lego club. More craft/nature drop ins.
- Weekend story time or other children's programming.
- movie night
- previous programs that were offered (wills and power of attorney etc.)
- Events for older children 13 to 18 like a Lego contest
- craft groups, author talks, learn new skills, or even a car or gaming group
- kayaking info for beginners
- nutrition courses
- Similar programs as the Bracebridge library is offering

### 3. Library of Things, Equipment Lending

- sensory item lending
- borrow equipment for making and doing things ie sewing machings, critcut machines, button maker, instrumbents, silk screening, karaoke machine, gopro camera, spike ball kit, passes to local places ie pecca farm, santa village...
- add more to library of things eg tools, 3d printer, board games, toys, karaoke machine, musical instruments, ping pong kit, telescope, tennis kits, craft kits seed exchange/house plant swap
- It might be interesting if the public library looked into lending more things like bikes
- Thermal camera for iPhone
- -loan out gadgets like a speed gun, drones etc.
- 3d printer



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 4. Technology, Digital Services, Tech Help

- tech lessons are always welcome
- More help free for seniors.
- Easier access to Inter-Library Loan services through an online catalogue and digital request system.
- better e-book catalogue
- More books and audiobooks available through the app Libby
- more info on AI ie how to use, "Be Aware" of certain AI features, etc
- to learn computer skills
- Senior related technology learning
- inter Library connections
- more access to more libraries... agreements with nearby systems... drop box idea
- Hoopla!!!
- I find it difficult to find books I am looking for. A way of mapping book to location would help

### 5. Facilities, Spaces, Hours

- library access to big screen @town hall!
- Lending more objects, games and puzzles. Better view, raise funding to relocate the library. For the town our size we should have a better facility
- Library access on Sundays.
- more comfy chairs
- Always thought it would be good to offer music rooms for people to borrow instruments and practice with others
- Book Mobile to port sydney/utterson or permanent location in port sydney/utterson
- reading garden
- How about a small coffee shop
- Library hours are very limited... need evenings and weekends
- Better access to the Ontario Park Pass as it never seems to be available.
- the building needs a better "tie" to the community... public space...
- Open on Sundays
- more story walks

### 6. Community Outreach, Education, Partnerships

- I want people to learn about more of the native land, then Canada.
- More community public education about strategies for climate change, borrowing a community resource person
- community outreach to let everyone know what workshops are available
- Have the OPP come in for Child Identification Program
- youth focused intervention programming to help deter teens from drugs and alcohol
- continued workshops for business owners
- general information posted visually about the things happening in council meetings
- More programs with the horticultural society



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 7. Miscellaneous

- none, already trying to do too much
- I'm actually amazed at the wide variety of products and services available at the library.
- not sure I'm I'm pleased with what I do
- Can't think of anything at the moment.
- I'm actually amazed at the products the library offers...
- I can't think of any
- I was very disappointed when the children's nonfiction books were combined in the adult section...
- services are awesome
- not sure
- fine for me
- I don't know
- I can't think of any
- I can't think of anything
- The library offers a good selection of products and services.

### Q14. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE TOP STRENGTHS OF THE HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY?

#### 1. Staff

- the people
- Location, staff, online book collection
- Location, great employees.
- Customer Service
- the people who work here fairly large book collection
- wonderful staff good location always improving/switching it up ie puzzle table great idea
- Staff Variety
- good staff. Very helpful
- location helpful staff
- staff is amazing. Variety of additional things other than books that are available
- Staff. Lovely people at the desk. Always helpful
- the staff - very helpful. Communications are excellent
- knowledgeable staff
- The staff. They are knowledgeable, patient, helpful and friendly. The best!
- Service
- Amazing staff, fabulous programming and collections
- great staff great books
- the staff that work with the public
- The staff



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- 1. The fantastic staff and volunteers 2. The excellent selection of resources and programs 3. The welcoming space to spend time downtown without spending money
- Great staff
- Staff are very helpful. Children's programs are also good.
- Helpful skilled staff
- staff
- I am quite happy with the library. The people who work there are very friendly and helpful and I enjoy the books that I get every 2-3 weeks
- The staff... Friendly, efficient and knowledgeable. The location...in the downtown core so accessible to all, convenient and well used. Programming... plentiful and well used.
- the staff
- The staff is very friendly, helpful and available if I have questions or require assistance. They make each visit a pleasant one. Also the girls who do the children's programs are gifted in their roles
- friendly, helpful staff always have current fiction/nonfiction books love the lending program-puzzles, sew machine, park pass etc community info board and used book sales + free book section
- staff, location
- the new releases, librarians, and the proximity
- Excellent friendly customer service. For its size a good variety of offerings, services etc.Computers available...
- excellent & friendly service by staff...
- Welcome good in place there's nothing going on. It's perfect.
- staff
- staff
- ...staff support safe place to learn
- The staff are great Physical media selection seems good
- I like the lending library-puzzles, sew machine, backpack birding. Friendly place to spend time- staff are super helpful.
- books, papers, magazines, movies happy friendly staff
- Staff
- staff-so friendly, welcoming, and helpful. Great programming
- Friendly and helpful staff
- staff and new programs
- Helpful staff friendly and welcoming
- Excellent, knowledgeable and helpful staff/location/friendly vibe...
- the staff
- The staff, helpful, polite, cheerful. The children's room...
- staff are always friendly and helpful...
- Personnel are very helpful.
- Great Staff. Up to date book selection. Open to suggestions
- 99% of staff



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- The helpful, knowledgeable and friendly Librarians.
- Friendly staff and good book options
- kind staff lots of books and everyone is able to come
- Staff are the best!
- staff encounters
- excellent, friendly and helpful staff clean and welcoming
- the staff is amazing. They are very kind, helpful and knowledgeable
- staff
- friendly staff a good selection of lending materials
- Staff and customer service. Children and Youth programming...
- Very knowledgeable staff
- The Children's programming... We do like that there is no fine...
- knowledgeable staff diverse collections...
- The front desk staff
- The Libby app, the staff are awesome
- the staff are friendly and very helpful. Special mentions goes to Christina, Matt and Amber
- staff is excellent autorenewals no fines
- Christina is the greatest asset
- consistent, knowledgeable, staff children's programming...
- None. May be staff.
- The staff is great!
- Staff are amazing and so cheerful.
- Staff
- The staff are very kind and helpful. There is a wide variety of books...
- good customer service, friendly atmosphere
- exceptional service
- The people, the employees of the library are great.
- 1)Staff! Friendly and helpful...
- Guidance and customer service.
- excellent staff good summer programs
- staff availability of books...
- wonderful staff great book selection
- Excellent staff
- great book collection friendly helpful staff
- customer service is good!
- excellent lighting! staff are very helpful and accommodating...
- I love the help the staff gives! Especially to children



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- The staff and the book collection.
- staff
- friendly and helpful staff. great selection...
- The staff
- Great staff, Nice comfortable surroundings...
- great location and staff and services
- Staff
- staff are kind, patient and always listen to us self check out is fun
- excellent staff
- Amazing staff, wonderful programs...
- Good range of books, organization, great staff
- Staff! Children's programs are also really good...
- very helpful and understanding staff
- Books, various materials, staff, services and programming...
- The people are wonderful (who work in the library)...
- the staff are incredible communication...
- Friendly, helpful staff
- The staff! They are knowledgeable, patient, helpful and friendly. The best!
- Staff are amazing. Love the seclusion of the children's area...
- Staff!!
- Staff willing to help. Cozy atmosphere.
- the staff at circulation are excellent...
- staff services-options
- Book and movie availability staff
- central location friendly, helpful staff
- great staff open to suggestions which is great
- Community spirit and staff
- kind staff
- Well laid out friendly staff
- Customer service/Accessibility/hours of operation
- friendly/welcoming...
- The collection. The staff
- staff
- The staff. Helpful, courteous, always
- staff-they are always welcoming and very helpful...
- The staff is very friendly and helpful and there are many great programs
- Staff and physical collection



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- Great selection knowledgeable customer service.
- Always willing to purchase suggested books. The staff are so kind and helpful...
- service the staff are great!
- The staff- knowledgeable and helpful...
- Staff helpfulness, children's area
- staff children's programs welcoming, inclusive
- Staff are amazing and so cheerful.
- ILLO
- The staff are very kind and helpful...
- excellent staff
- The staff
- Staff
- Staff

### 2. Location, Accessibility, Hours, Physical Space

- Its nice to have it downtown but there's little parking and not enough room for expansion.
- proximity to downtown
- location, clean, easy to use
- location
- It is central and easy to get to for downtown residents
- It's a nice place I can explore or just sit and relax...
- location & parking
- Location to town is excellent
- location
- easy access to downtown...
- it is in the downtown area.
- It has potential. The location is ideal.
- being in downtown core
- Location and offerings.
- easy to walk to and from
- It's really working hard to keep up with the need of the community...
- I like that the children's area is separate I like that it's not too big
- great location proper sized building for population
- location
- central location friendly, helpful staff
- Location
- location, availability, movies, newspapers, books
- location & staff and services



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 3. Collections

- the people who work here fairly large book collection
- -good collection of graphic novels and DIY books
- Good collections of books, DVDs etc...
- children's books, puzzle ,games, story times
- computers, movies, newspapers what a good library should be
- staff is amazing. Variety of additional things other than books...
- great books
- the new releases, librarians, and the proximity
- Excellent friendly customer service...free online services ie Consumer reports etc.
- adult programs
- I am impressed that you offer Libby for audio books.
- so many books... lay out of the space...
- The staff are great Physical media selection seems good
- I like the lending library-puzzles, sew machine, backpack birding...
- books, papers, magazines, movies...
- the Books! Duh!
- desk service, online access, homepage for info
- Variety of thins to borrow-puzzel
- Excellent, knowledgeable and helpful staff... a true gathering hub
- Love to bring my daughter to the ?? room. Great selection an dlove the ILLO
- the variety of services the dvd collection/selection...
- lots of selection
- Lots of kids books... Inter-library loan program...
- Up to date book selection...
- selection of books
- children's programming. Wide variety of other items to borrow...
- I can access the books
- The children's program and the book variety
- books & dvd collection
- -Great children's programming -The wide range of items now available for loan...
- the accessibility to computers
- friendly staff a good selection of lending materials
- Ease of access to services... ILLO...
- Reserving book service
- It is wonderful to have interloan library...
- knowledgeable staff diverse collections current/new collections/videos/games...



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- The Libby app...
- offering of non book items, such as puzzles, pickleball items
- available used books for free and for sale
- Newsletters... new books...
- The Huntsville library offers a large range of newer titles...
- staff availability of books, either on-site or ILLO...
- great book collection friendly helpful staff
- The staff and the book collection.
- friendly and helpful staff. great selection of reading materials, physical and online
- selection of books
- DVD collection; access to new materials...
- Kids room Kids activities Book sales
- Book and movie availability staff
- The books, cds etc that are available to borrow...
- DVD collection, used books used DVDs
- good variety of authors
- catalogue-I can often find the titles I am looking for
- a quiet place to work... great selection of books & movies
- Good range of books, organization...
- Books, various materials, staff, services and programming...
- Great selection knowledgeable customer service.
- After school programs... variety of books...
- children's area... French books
- item loaning libraries, online (app) reading options
- The collection. The staff
- books, movies, newspapers...
- Books, various materials, staff...
- The children's programing... book variety...
- books, papers, magazines...

#### 4. Children's Area, Children's & Youth Programming

- children's books, puzzle, games, story times
- kids section
- Staff are very helpful. Children's programs are also good.
- Lego Builders Club, programs/shows at the Legion, story time for 0-6, older adult programs.
- Staff are amazing. Children's programs are also really good...
- the staff assistance. I see a lot of children's programmes...



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- The children's room...
- Lots of kids books... kids programming... family bathroom...
- Children's programming. Wide variety of items...
- The children's program and the book variety
- children's programming
- -Great children's programming...
- staff, kids areas, halloween photos
- The Children's programing and even for teens...
- knowledgeable staff... seperate childrens area
- Kids room Kids activities Book sales
- I love the help the staff gives! Especially to children
- kids French section
- The staff at circulation... Other staff helpful... room booking
- Staff helpfulness, children's area
- Staff! Children's programs are also really good.
- children's area... seclusion
- It is wonderful to have interloan library... kids and youths!
- The children's area, when my kids were young...
- kids section
- Programs for all ages
- Customer service and offering programs for school Aged children during pa days and March break
- excellent staff good summer programs
- consistent, knowledgeable staff children's programming inclusive...
- The children's section- good selection French books
- Staff helpfulness, children's area
- Children and Youth programming
- kids French section
- The Children's programing and even for teens...

### 5. Programs, Events, Community Space, Atmosphere

- wonderful staff good location always improving/switching it up ie puzzle table
- Amazing staff, fabulous programming and collections
- It is a very excellent place to meet and get informed...
- adult programs
- always adding new things
- staff and new programs
- Excellent... friendly vibe... a great community space... gathering hub



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- the opportunity to learn, to join seminars and children activities
- staff support... safe place to learn
- Friendly place to spend time...
- community info board...
- Amber is the best! Programs are always fun!
- It is a nice place to explore or sit and relax...
- open to suggestions...
- Community spirit and staff
- A quiet place to work
- It's offering more space for the community to come together
- Cozy atmosphere
- Quiet, meditative zone- highly promote!
- Great author talks/events
- Programs for all ages
- Very comfortable surroundings
- great location and staff and services
- Amazing staff, wonderful programs...
- welcoming, inclusive space
- The Friends room... meeting space
- Good programs
- after school programs good

### 6. Technology, Computers, Online Services

- ease of getting library card layout room for computer use
- computers, movies, newspapers...
- Good technology... good online website
- computers and meeting areas
- desk service, online access, homepage for info
- the accessibility to computers
- Ease of access to services, ILLD... ability to see what new books have been ordered through the website
- The Libby app
- online (app) reading options
- computer/printer
- self check out is fun



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 7. Miscellaneous

- Availability
- Puppet barry
- It still exists! and even expanded!
- I don't use it enough to know
- None. May be staff.
- It has potential. The location is ideal.
- The amount of books and public out reach
- It's perfect.
- Great stuff open to suggestions which is great
- The books, cds etc that are available to borrow. Location is where I do a lot of my shopping

### Q15. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT ARE THE TOP WEAKNESSES OF THE HUNTSVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY?

#### 1. Hours of Operation

- the hours are good
- Hours of operation are pretty short, wouldn't mind longer into the evening, parking could be better, but not bad
- I understand that you can't be open every day but Sundays would be nice
- hours
- hours outdated website
- Hard to park in the summer to get here. I would like more home school things
- Closed on Sunday
- Hours
- Poor hours of operation. If you want more community engaged especially with younger audiences and families, you need to think of when they are able to go to the library. Sundays are a big one!
- hours of operation - Sunday opening would be amazing!, as would some evenings, especially in the winter, so there is somewhere to just relax and read a book outside of your own home
- Hours. It would be so nice to see one later evening per week. I work 9-5 outside of town and I have to rush to get to the library during the week
- Hours of operation, adult programming, greeting/welcoming at front desk
- Library needs to be open longer hours, and Sunday
- limited hours summer I'd like early morn winter I'd like later eves Sundays are when we're free to go
- I wish it were open on Sundays, since I only have weekends off and can't always make it on Saturdays.
- Limited weekend hours and children's programming, lack of interactive areas for kids, limited seating to enjoy materials while there.
- hours of operation
- Limited hours, closed on Sundays
- closed Sunday! Possibly open earlier/later on some days!



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- Lack of hours , not open Sunday. When you work, difficult to get in by 6 pm weekdays. Saturday is difficult to find parking. So really restricts access to library. Then closed Sunday when there might be availed parking. Why not open at noon and close at 8 pm two days a week?
- opens too late in morning 9:00 am would be better
- closed sunday
- with it was open later at night

### 2. Parking, Exterior Access, Outdoor Space

- Accessibility in winter due to unshovelled access via sidewalk
- parking availability in the summer
- very little exterior space parking is not great. Backing into traffic at times is not easy
- the size-I think as a growing town needs a bigger library Parking-need more and dedicated to the library
- lack of parking during busy times of year no outdoor space
- Hard to park in the summer to get here. I would like more home school things
- library looks dates parking can be a problem during summer
- The exterior and parking
- Can be difficult to find parking
- Parking
- Library access from parking.
- Is there an outdoor space at the library? Parking can be difficult. Don't always have the latest book you want.
- Poor building Limited parking
- parking
- Parking - more parking closer to the library would be great. Toys for older children (5-10) as an alternative to screen time.
- parking
- Location. The parking is terrible. There is no green space.
- parking is an issue especially in the summertime
- Parking
- parking spaces in kid programs
- I haven't noticed any weaknesses other than a few more parking spaces
- I would say that the parking outside the library is always taken. And usually by those not using the library because the other town lots are in disrepair.
- parking- public parking in front of library taken up by tourists
- lack of its own parking spaces, lack of exterior grounds
- not a lot of parking, tricky to cross from parking area into library sometimes
- Outdoor lighting and resources like bike repair
- zero outdoor space not lots of comfortable seating
- -Lack of nice outdoor space -area around the library is pedestrian hostile
- No outdoor space
- The exterior and parking



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 3. Building Size, Layout, Seating, Quiet Space, Atmosphere

- the size-I think as a growing town needs a bigger library
- Hours, poor seating options
- The physical space The adult programs
- Lack of more quiet places to work on laptops
- lack of quiet at times. Hard to focus if large school groups are present
- The physcail space, it is too small. The library should be relocated for 3 years, have both the library and Annex torn down and rebuild a multi story building that is modern.
- Old shelves and look
- Building is old. Furniture is tired.
- Not sure. but I think the family/children's area could be larger to accommodate programming etc..
- Lack of space for queet reading. Maybe a cozy spce to read/draw / do research relaxing and study. I suggest a quiet spay for all ages
- somewhat noisy
- still too "noisy" for quiet reading
- Lack of space, if you look at what Bracebridge has done with their new facility, there's so much that Huntsville could emulate if it had more space
- It is limited by it's size (particularly the children's area) as book collections grow there is nowhere to expand to.
- Too small, not enough windows for natural lighting, not enough semi-private reading spaces or comfy seating, need more resources and books, needs to be more of a community hub and buzz of learning — more space and more activities
- Gap in the variety and size of the book collection and lack of work spaces
- The building has a bad smell More space needed More seating areas etc
- A bit dated overall and lack of visibly space for growth
- Noisy, echoes very badly or when people/children walk and run quickly
- not enough sitting spare
- comfortable seating
- Space
- physical space- lack of natural light, space for collections and quiet reading
- the building itself - needs bigger and better location
- The interior and lighting
- -Location, building and atmospehere at the biggest deterrents. Just not an enjoyable space to be in.
- limited hours in the evenings, a very dated archival area, and lack of connection to outdoor space.
- Not big enough, not enough meeting/quiet work areas, industrial lighting needs some warmth, insufficient seating.
- Lack of visibly space for growth
- Not many weaknesses to suggest. Storage for regular facility renters/groups would be ideal. more meeting areas of various sizes and configurations would be useful.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- It's tired and showing it's age... kids area... carpet worn...
- library looks dates parking can be a problem during summer
- Old shelves and look
- Building is old. Furniture is tired.
- A bit dated overall and lack of visibly space for growth
- The building has a bad smell
- Age of building?
- As noted above the dinginess.
- It could be bigger and more well lit.

### 4. Collections

- Not enough Books
- Do not often have the full collection of a book series. So have to use ILLO (which is a good thing)
- Sometimes there is only half of a book series
- not enough of the "new" books
- Not as many books available as in a bigger library, but ILLO is helpful
- Not many I can think of but I do wish that books older than 2 years would be considered for purchase, especially when part of a series with newer books
- There are some gaps in the collection that could be purchased-classic novels.
- limiting purchases to last 3 years
- books or videos that are not available
- book collection has been reduced
- Better selection of current books fiction/non fiction/how too
- Lack of reading material
- Missing books in a series. I like to read books in order even if the stories are separate the characters follow through each book and I want to follow their lives
- Lack of a French adult reading books!
- Speed at which new releases (books) are acquired
- I find when borrowing books a lot of the newer books on overdrive have long wait times. Also maybe more adult hobby programs. Adults can have fun too!
- The selection on Libby is quite limited compared to other libraries I have interacted with.
- Electronic books
- more videos
- I would like more options for videos
- More DVDs, park passes things library
- dumping the music CD collection suddenly without notification



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 5. Programs

- more children's programs
- Programs for young children (music, books,)
- more adult hobby programs. Adults can have fun too!
- too small and therefore limited in what can be offered. Out reach to community could be better.
- Hard to park in the summer to get here. I would like more home school things
- more programs need to be offered in fall and winter
- No newsletter. I am a member of the Dwight Library...
- Not enough Community Programs that bring People together.
- adult programming during the day for retired people would be nice...
- Maybe more adult programs that aren't only geared to seniors, or retired persons
- adult programming during the day for retired people would be nice
- Lack of adult programming at the moment. It was good, now is virtually non existent.
- access to kids programs
- limited weekend hours and children's programming, lack of interactive areas for kids...
- Being in a small town... programming limitations... murder mystery nights, board game nights, paint nights, yoga classes, etc.
- Need more space and would like to see a wider variety of programs, especially for kids.
- Timing for activities
- The adult programs

### 6. Staff

- leadership-director
- some staff are excellent (Krystenia) and some need to be more friendly...
- Library hours; most staff are not particularly friendly, especially for a small town environment
- The staff are at times less than helpful. I find they are many times uninterested in truly helping.
- unfortunately there was only one negative interaction...
- Annual renewal of library card. Why can't a card be valid for 1+ years?
- don't offer cards to people in Novar

### 7. Website, Technology, Computers

- -online catalogue is hard for me to navigate
- hours outdated website
- the amount of out of service computers
- Your website. I don't care about your "fine" removal but i'd like to renew my own books - I want control.
- no 3d printer
- Not enough technology lessons targeted towards older people.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 8. Policy Concerns, Governance, Rules

- The limited opening hours. Censorship politically not neutral. It would be good to have an unbiased place for communication. No pay phone is a drawback
- verification of yearly card-some staff too rule oriented...
- Trying to be all things to all people. Just be a library.
- only allowing purchase requests for new items was a stupid decision, sorry.
- Maybe more open information about the library financial position...
- limiting purchases to last 3 years

### 9. Miscellaneous

- I can't think of anything.
- nothing comes to mind
- There's nothing really bad about Huntsville Public Library that I could see.
- it is fine for me
- Do not know
- Cannot see any
- I Do not know
- For my needs I see no weaknesses. I am extremely happy with our library.
- I am not sure of any weaknesses
- I can't think of any reasonable suggestions... shrinking budgets...
- Very satisfied
- Don't really know

### Q16. PLEASE SHARE ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS ABOUT LIBRARY SERVICE NOT COVERED IN THESE SURVEY QUESTIONS.

#### 1. Staff

- We are from Thunder Bay - thought the Huntsville library was lovely in comparison. Great book offerings for a town of 20 000. If we lived here we would be here weekly.
- I love our library! My favorite place in town. Warm, welcoming staff
- I love the library, it keeps me informed and connected. The staff are amazing!
- Thank you for this opportunity to give a shout-out to the amazing library staff.
- We love it here! Thank you for your work daily.
- Great staff
- The staff are wonderful even if I just stop in to buy a bus pass.
- The staff is friendly, helpful and loyal
- TY
- staff are so good with ALL customers young, old, disabled, strong smelling etc. absolutely great
- The staff are always very friendly when I do occasionally go to the library.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- The staff is amazing very kind
- staff is amazing!
- people are very helpful with information
- very pleasant staff, helpful and always make you feel welcome
- great staff
- thanks for this opportunity to give a shout out to our library's wonderful staff
- -staff is very friendly!
- Just keep on doing the great job each of you do to make our library a great one.
- Every time I don't I'm welcome, and you guys welcome people, you guys are so kind and welcome.
- good staff
- good job guy

### 2. Hours

- Could have... It would be amazing if there was 1 night a week the library was open a little later (to 7pm?) to be able to pop in after work hours.
- I do find it difficult to regularly make it during open hours... Being open on Sunday could make it more accessible...
- It would be nice if the library was open one evening per week.
- I would like to see the library open on Sundays
- The hours of operation are not great, but understandable. I study for school each Sunday and always wish the library was open.
- flexible hours for kids activities! Fund our library!

### 3. Space, Building Condition

- Our community deserves a larger, modern library space with greater municipal and provincial investment...
- I love the Huntsville library a lot, but it's clearly not getting the funding/prioritization that Bracebridge's is...
- I enjoy the Huntsville Library. It's cozy and comfortable... Unlike all those new cold and uninviting modern looking buildings.
- If you continue to use this location then... consider a two or three storey library...
- The library seems to have been poorly built. Issues with snow and ice buildup... Lack of parking...
- The library needs to be a community hub... I miss not coming and meeting people and engaging in crafts and social activities.
- Although the new library in Bracebridge provides room for growth... I hope Huntsville isn't contemplating following in Bracebridge's footsteps.
- the glass room - muskoka room is under utilized
- as above the building needs a better "tie" to the community... link to the main street...
- I must emphasize- it's dark and dingy and needs a complete overhaul if not, a whole new building...
- I think we need a new library. New spaces, and the collection that exists needs to be rehauled and reorganized...
- If there was an outdoor space that would be amazing ( but obviously this is blue sky)
- More comfortable seating options would be great...



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 4. Parking

- Parking can be challenging...
- I want to be able to park when I get there...
- parking is always an issue in this town
- I don't have a solution... but parking can be impossible for most of the summer...
- It would be great to have more parking... it's a big stressor with kids.

### 5. Programs

- I have been aware that there is an effort to bring library materials to people who are restricted to their homes... I hope this continues.
- It would be nice if the library was open one evening per week. Guest speakers in the meeting room always a good idea!
- As the saying goes skate to where the puck is going... look to Baysville for excellence in that area.
- I was just told recently that the recorded options were hard to navigate...
- I don't currently access children's programming... continuing to offer excellent children's programming should be a top priority.
- we don't know what we don't know so perhaps more signage on what is offered...
- Gardening workshops, Workspaces with other local experts
- The library needs to be a community hub...
- love the weekly story time at various locations in town
- monthly listings of new acquisitions... more displays... nature services... school contests...
- seeing more programming for adults has been good
- Children programs should start early 9...
- now has better adult programs tyvm

### 6. Collections

- Could have a "parent recommended" wall for youth books/novels...
- The online library has limited books available to borrow making for long wait times...
- highlight out door lighting to showcase the building use more wall space for books
- I love the information sessions you provide... storytime... book sales...
- get a new simpler website for book search
- I would love if I could renew my library card online... also could you put a front desk option when you phone the library
- I like curated collections both for enjoyment and research...
- Love that you can borrow puzzles
- It was so appreciated that if a book wasn't here - they would buy it then call us when it's in.
- I am so glad you have all 5 "five worlds" because where I live the library only has 4 of them
- Often too loud through the children's activities... Perhaps print out of Doppler news?
- Children's books - more :)



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

### 7. Miscellaneous

- no additional comments
- We love the library!!
- the puppet is amazing. ppl all over town are talking about it.
- the staff have ALWAYS been helpful, welcoming and kind...
- We like this HPL...
- the thing I've been hinting about this entire survey
- so glad to have a great library in our small town
- I enjoy my library visits as it feels so welcoming...
- I like the library. I use it for meetings...
- I have not paid attention to the programming. This survey has peaked my interest.
- Please forgive my spelling errors
- I always know where to go if I am lost in this Tech world
- Can't think of any
- Everything is just fine. I'm very happy.
- Love the library!
- good service for community
- I like the library.
- the people are very nice and the search is good
- Should have read all the questions 1st...
- It would have been helpful to also share current considerations in advance of the survey.
- I am a long time lover of libraries... Promote Libraries...
- If we lived here we would be here weekly.
- I love our library and it's a vital service in our community
- Thanks for everything... making this such an important space for our community.
- I so appreciate having our library here in downtown Huntsville. Thanks to all levels of gov't that support. How can we better support our Library
- Keep up the fabulous work!
- Thanks for providing an essential service to the Huntsville community...
- good overall benefit... enjoy the library
- For a smaller town I think our library is great!!



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX B: STAFF SURVEY AND INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS

### SURVEY BACKGROUND

HPL staff were asked to complete a confidential online survey. Survey questions were designed to encourage open-ended feedback. The survey was completed by 6 of the 15 staff members, and was supplemented by one-on-one in-person interviews with 5 members of the library's Lead Team.

The survey questions were as follows:

- How many years have you worked for the Huntsville Public Library?
- Are you given the tools and workspace you need to perform your job effectively?
- Are there any changes that you would like to see to procedures and/or policies that would help you to do your job more effectively?
- What specific changes to your workplace would help you to do your job more effectively? (e.g. desk reconfigurations, increased storage space, new furnishings and equipment, etc.)
- Do you feel that you receive the training that you require to do your job well?
- Are there topics and skill sets that are required in the performance of your job that are not adequately addressed by available training opportunities? Please describe.
- What, in your opinion, are the top five strengths of the Huntsville Public Library as a service?
- What are the top five weaknesses of the Huntsville Public Library as a service?
- What are the biggest challenges currently facing the Huntsville Public Library?
- What challenges to customer service are caused by the existing library facility?
- What might help to lessen or eliminate those challenges?
- Which demographics do you feel are best-served by the library?
- Which demographics do you feel are underserved? Why do you think that is the case?
- What feedback do you hear from the public (both in the library and out in the community) about the Huntsville Public Library facility?

### OBSERVATIONS BASED ON STAFF SURVEY RESPONSES:

The survey questions were designed to gain input from staff on: the current library facility as a workplace as well as a public service; public perceptions of the services provided by HPL; top strengths and weaknesses of the library in its current location; priorities and suggestions for a new/enlarged facility; and suggestions for new services and partnerships to consider in a new/enlarged facility.

Many challenges were identified regarding the current facility as a workplace, but in general, staff felt that they were provided the tools and training needed to perform their jobs. The workplace is severely lacking, particularly in storage space and individual work spaces. From a customer service standpoint, there was broad agreement that the present facility is inadequate for many needed services and cannot accommodate the development of new ventures without significant redesign.

Ideas raised by some survey responses that refer to specific aspects of library service have been incorporated in the individual functional analyses earlier in this Report. Below are the top staff responses to the key questions in the survey:



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX B: STAFF SURVEY AND INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Top strengths of HPL as a service:

- Staff are considered to be knowledgeable, professional, caring, and helpful
- No cost/low cost/high quality programs for all ages – well-received and well-used
- Location in downtown core, close to schools
- Library of Things collection
- Solid collection, both print and electronic

Top weaknesses of HPL as a service:

- Building issues – air quality, heating/cooling, odors
- Limited space for collections, inadequate private spaces and study spaces
- Lack of parking
- Hours should be extended
- Acoustics – sound carries and reverberates, cannot have private or confidential conversations

Biggest challenges currently facing HPL:

- Aging infrastructure, heating/cooling, air circulation
- Lack of space for collections, private space, room rentals, staff work areas
- Funding for staffing and collections – digital content is increasingly in demand but is expensive
- Acoustics

Challenges to customer service caused by facility:

- Not enough private, quiet spaces
- Acoustics
- Not enough space to grow the collections
- Children's area too small, crowded

Demographics best-served by HPL:

- Children and families
- Seniors
- Cottagers and tourists
- English readers of all ages

Demographics underserved by HPL:

- Important to distinguish between underserved vs. underutilized due to lack of awareness
- 18 – 35 age group – many rely on digital content – inadequate e-resources budget to meet demand
- Youth, and adults working 9-to-5 jobs due to limited hours, lack of after-hour programs
- Vulnerable populations
- Seasonal workers



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX B: STAFF SURVEY AND INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

Feedback heard from the public (in-library and out in community) about HPL facility:

- “very nice library”, feedback is usually positive about services and staff
- The library service is appreciated, even with the facility’s limitations
- Old and musty smelling

Feedback heard from the public about library services (collections, programs, technology, customer service):

- Great customer service
- Nice collection, although some areas are lacking
- Surprise at the number of services offered
- Praise for the Visiting Library Service
- Not open early enough; longer hours wanted

Staff suggestions for new programs and services:

- Makerspace activities for adults and children
- Arts & crafts programming for adults
- Expand the Library of Things
- More online learning platforms
- Programs that serve non-traditional users
- More computer training
- English as a Second Language

Should Alternate Service Delivery options be considered? (e.g. book lockers, kiosks, bookmobile, pop-up library services):

- More than one staff person expressed concern about staff capacity – how do we take this on in addition to what we are already doing?
- Recognition that areas of the Town are underserved – however, residents in outlying areas must come into town to access many services, so how critical is the need for outreach services?
- pop-up library services and a bookmobile could help address underserved areas
- Little Free Libraries on trails or in parks?

Staff suggestions for a new or updated facility:

- Open, airy, lots of windows, Muskoka feel
- More open space – flexible spaces
- Community think tanks
- Creative spaces, sound studio, advanced technology
- More parking
- Natural light, large windows
- More collection space
- More office space
- Designated space for Friends of the Library to store, sort, and sell books
- Service desk is the heart of the library – make it functional and beautiful



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX B: STAFF SURVEY AND INTERVIEW HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- Outdoor staff area
- Café
- Rentable meeting spaces, business incubation hub
- Fireplace(s)
- Living Wall, water feature

Priorities for a new or updated library:

- Larger facility, a community space
- Parking
- Storage and work areas
- Accessibility
- Maker Space.

### ADDITIONAL HIGHLIGHTED OBSERVATIONS BASED ON INDIVIDUAL STAFF INTERVIEWS:

- length of time required per transaction with e-commerce tool. A small transaction (e.g. \$0.50) requires multiple steps, taking up time with the patron standing at the desk. Due to the time required, staff are at times tempted to note the transaction and enter it later. Most e-commerce tools do require many screen clicks before the transaction is completed, and few tools can be integrated with the library ILS, requiring transaction entries in the patron record as well – an additional step for a small transaction. Staff hoped that a tool could be found that would streamline the process – or have the option to bypass the e-commerce tool for small transactions that do not require patron identification tracking (e.g. copying, printing).
- the requirement that seasonal residents show documented proof of address in order to register for a library card. This requirement was understood, and not called into question, but several staff suggested that it be made easier for the seasonal resident. (Consultant's note: perhaps an initiative with the Town could be pursued, such as including a library card voucher in the property tax bill mailing, with the property owner's name and address printed on the voucher so that presenting the voucher at the library, along with an ID check, would be adequate).
- while staff generally supported the value of the "small town library feel" of Holds being placed behind the desk, requiring staff to retrieve them and perform the checkout, and expressed a comfort and willingness with providing that level of service, there was acknowledgment that it would be ideal if clientele became more comfortable with self-check technology – but the current self-check system is not user friendly.
- pressures of managing customer demand against the limits of the materials budget are a point of stress for senior staff with collection development responsibility. Not being able to offer adequate print copies of bestsellers creates reliance on expensive online tools such as Libby (and the now-unsubscribed service Hoopla which was hugely popular but financially unsustainable). Print materials are considered to be better value for money.
- collections are crowded and shelves are full. Staff would like to be able to feature certain collections to ensure that they are readily accessible, such as mental health resources. Ideally, a variety of display options to feature rotating theme collections would be possible.
- there is a high demand for craft programs and similar hands-on activities – there is a need to find community people/experts to help facilitate that, and the space within the library to host it.
- an outdoor space to hold programs, like the Dwight covered pavilion, would be wonderful. Staff also expressed a desire to have a small outdoor space available during staff breaks.
- there is the potential to do more outreach to promote HPL services, but it is beyond current staff capacity. One idea shared was going to retirement homes to demonstrate how to access and use Libby resources.
- the library could facilitate a wide range of educational events to a wide audience, given the connections it already has and the connections it is building, if it had the space to do so.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX C: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS

In this first phase of the project, to explore the range of programs, services, and spaces that a new or renovated library should offer, several key stakeholders were contacted. This included:

- An in-person Huntsville Public Library Board workshop (October 21, 2025)
- An in-person meeting with five members of The Friends of the Huntsville Public Library (October 20, 2025)

Interviews, in-person or by telephone:

- Director of Corporate Strategy & Communications, Town of Huntsville
- Director of Community Services, Town of Huntsville
- Manager of Recreation, Culture and Heritage, Town of Huntsville
- Collections Coordinator, Muskoka Heritage Place

And with the assistance of library staff, we gathered:

- Input from members of the Huntsville Public Library Teen Advisory Group
- Input from Community Living Huntsville
- Public input, Muskoka Market – Summer Edition
- Public input, “Imagine a Library” in-branch feedback exercise

Many of the points raised during these conversations have already been incorporated into earlier sections of this Report.

Themes heard from these contacts:

- There was near universal agreement on the need for a (preferably) new or greatly enlarged library facility. The most common complaints about the current facility were lack of space and an uninspiring building.
- The library is well-positioned to serve as a Community Information outlet and could become the first place to go – a “one stop shop” – for new residents or anyone wanting to get connected with community resources. The Town would strongly support an “Information Huntsville” feature within the library and would ensure that the library be supplied with all informational materials about programs and services.
- The library’s slate of programs is effective but could be greatly enhanced in a larger facility. Town staff suggested that Recreation staff and library staff could team together to provide outreach to other areas within the Town.
- The new Bracebridge Public Library facility had been visited by several of the interviewees. The abundant natural light, huge windows, and plentiful seating and study areas were referred to often. The ability to buy a coffee or drink in the lobby of the Bracebridge complex was seen as a nice feature, and the possibility of engaging a local entrepreneur to operate a café was suggested. Several individuals indicated that they would want a Huntsville library facility to feel cozy – to maintain a “Muskoka feel” – incorporating natural materials and plants and creating indoor/outdoor crossover spaces. The library needs to be a chosen destination where people can feel comfortable and welcomed and will want to spend some time there, using the resources, meeting up with others, and feeling part of the community.
- There is strong demand for arts programming in Huntsville. The challenge has been to find people who can lead the classes. A wide range of adult education topics were suggested, including parenting workshops, life skills classes, financial literacy, creative writing, entrepreneurship, and intergenerational gatherings. Engagement with local experts would enhance what the library can offer in terms of programming and would help to build connections.
- Outdoor spaces would be a great asset, providing inspirational space for programs and a peaceful reading garden.



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX C: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- The library needs to offer more work and study space and should enhance its technology offerings. Adobe Suite software was specifically referenced as a valuable tool, particularly for high school students who only have access to it at the school if they are enrolled in the photography class. Fully accessible computer stations (adjustable desks, large monitors, adaptive keyboards, screen readers) made available to Community Living clientele and others would provide needed support for job searching, resume building, and navigating online forms.
- More services for youth are needed in the Town. A Youth area in the library and access to superior technology would be imperative, but in addition, possible consideration of before- and after-school services as well as homework help would address a need. The Town and Community Living Huntsville have had discussions around services targeted at youth, such as teaching independence, life skills, food security, and employment help. A potential demonstration kitchen in a library activity room would enhance such life skills programs and would encourage collaboration between community agencies.
- Adaptive spaces and programs were suggested on several occasions, including sensory-friendly storytimes and sensory rooms (Snoezelen Rooms).
- Concerns were raised with regard to the cost of a new building. It would be imperative to design a building with multiple meeting spaces, technology throughout to allow for future growth, and ensure that the design is flexible to allow for changes and adaptations as library services evolve and grow.

At the Library Board workshop, Board members were asked to prioritize various proposed spaces within a new facility which had emerged as worthwhile elements of a library facility based on the public survey and the consultant's research to date. They were classified as either:

- Mandatory – spaces that must be provided in the library.
- Preferred – spaces that if provided will allow HPL to fulfill in a satisfactory manner all or most of its service delivery outcomes.
- Ideal – spaces that if provided would be a desired enhancement.
- External Partnership Opportunity.

The results are presented in the following table:



# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX C: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

LARGE MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM	QUIET STUDY ROOM	ACTIVITY / CRAFT ROOM	MAKER SPACE	BOARD / FRIENDS ROOM	OUTDOOR READING GARDEN / PROGRAM SPACE	DIGITAL RECORDING STUDIO / MUSIC ROOM	LOCAL HISTORY ROOM	FRIENDS STORE	COMMUNITY INFORMATION KIOSK	CAFE	TEEN DROP-IN / GAMING	SNOEZELIN SPACE
<b>MANDATORY</b>												
X	X			X					X	X	X	X
X	X			X					X			
X	X											
X												
X												
<b>PREFERRED</b>												
	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
		X	X		X	X	X	X			X	X
		X					X	X				X
		X										
<b>IDEAL</b>												
	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
			X	X	X	X	X	X		X		
			X	X	X	X						
<b>EXTERNAL PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY</b>												
		X							X	X	X	X

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