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## Board Meeting

**Meeting Date:** March 13, 2025  
**Meeting Time:** 1:00 p.m.  
**Location:** The Boardroom at L.E. Shore  
**Prepared By:** Jennifer Murley, CEO/Secretary of the Board

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*Mission: The Blue Mountains Public Library is a dynamic centre of community engagement where everyone can connect, explore and create.*

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When available, this Board meeting will be recorded and made available on the BMPL YouTube Channel. Technical difficulties with social media platforms are not sufficient reason to cancel/postpone a meeting. The Community is also welcome to be onsite for meetings, or to present in either E1 or E2.

### A. Call to Order

- A.1 Moment of Reflection
  - A.2 Indigenous Acknowledgement Statement
  - A.3 Public Announcement
- If members of the public are present.*

### B. Agenda

- B.1 Approval of the Agenda

#### Recommended Motion

Moved by \_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_, THAT the Agenda of March 13, 2025, be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda.

- B.2 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

NOTE: Known pecuniary interests should be provided to the Board Secretary in writing and be noted as part of this agenda item. Should items arise during the meeting, the member shall make notice.

## C. Reports to be “Received as Information”

NOTE: Before there is any discussion on the items listed below, they must be received by this Board. Additional recommendations outlined in any of these items, as well as any subsequent motions, will be addressed at the time of discussion.

### Recommended Motion

Moved by \_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_, THAT this Board receive as information:

1. ADM.25.06 entitled “2025 Draft Action Plan”
2. ADM.25.07 entitled “Accessibility Report”
3. ADM.25.08 entitled “2024 Risk Assessment Report”
4. ADM.25.09 entitled “Ontario Public Library Super Conference: Post Conference Reflection”
5. FIN.25.01 entitled “Finance Report of Q4 2024”
6. ADM.25.10 entitled “CEO Service Update-March”

## D. Minutes

### D.1 Previous Minutes

#### Recommended Motion

Moved by \_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_, THAT this Board approve the minutes of January 16, 2025 circulated/amended; and THAT this Board approve the minutes of the February 13, 2025 Committee of the Whole meeting as circulated/amended.

### D.2 Business Arising from the Minutes

## E. Communications with the Board

***Deadline for registration is Monday, January 13 at 2pm.***

### E.1 Deputations

None at the time of agenda creation.

NOTE: In accordance with Ontario’s Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and Board policy, the Blue Mountains Public Library Board wishes to inform the public that all information including opinions, presentations, reports, and documentation provided for or at an Open Meeting are considered part of the public record. This information may be posted on the Library website, included in Board packages, published in video record, and/or made available to the public upon request.

### E.2 Public Input on the Agenda

NOTE: Any individual may choose to register for a virtual link to participate in the Public Input virtually or be present onsite for face-to-face meetings without registering. Said correspondence must meet the BMPL’s [BLG.2018.6.7 Public Input on Agenda Items](#) criteria.

In addition to Correspondence, any members of the public who would like to attend the Board Meeting virtually may do so by contacting [LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca](mailto:LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca). Requests received prior to 4:00pm the *day prior* to the Board Meeting will be provided with internet and/or phone login information. Credentials are available one month prior to the meeting, so requests need not be made the day of. Visitors may also attend in person without registering.

## E.3 Correspondence

## F. Strategic Plan Updates & Action Items

NOTE: To better facilitate this section, all reports and discussions have been identified. The Board may make decisions at any time and does not require a formal report or recommended motion to do so.

### F.1 Action Planning

1. **Report:** ADM.25.06 entitled *"2025 Draft Action Plan"*

### F.2 Strategic Plan Pillar: Community Hubs

1. **Report:** ADM.25.07 entitled *"Accessibility Report"*
2. **Verbal Report:** CEO Update on the Multi-use Recreation Feasibility Assessment (MURFA)
3. **Verbal Report:** CEO Update on the Youth Climate Action Fund (YCAF)

### F.3 Strategic Plan Pillar: Organizational Excellence

1. **Discussion:** Protocol for receiving staff reports
2. **Report:** ADM.25.08 entitled *"2024 Risk Assessment Report"*
3. **Report:** ADM.25.09 entitled *"Ontario Public Library Super Conference: Post Conference Reflection"*
4. **Report:** FIN.25.01 entitled *"Finance Report of Q4 2024"*
5. **Discussion:** 2025 Town Budget

### F.4 Strategic Plan Pillar: Empowering Services

1. **Verbal Update:** TBM Tourism Strategy
2. **Report:** ADM.25.10 entitled *"CEO Service Update-March"*

## G. Other Business

## H. Roundtable

### H.1 Roundtable—General updates by the Board

NOTE: The Roundtable is an opportunity for members to share information on events, activities, or general information which members may wish to attend and/or review. This is not intended for new business or discussion pertaining to Action Items.

- 1) Community Updates and News
  - [TBM Newsletter Issue 13 \(February 2025\)](#)
  - [CBC News Article \(February 28\): Ontario Librarians Say They Have to be Ready Amid Growing Calls in U.S. to Ban Books](#)
  - [Youth Climate Action Fund Now Accepting Round 2 Applications \(February 26, 2025\)](#)
- 2) BMPL Special Events
  - [March Break at BMPL](#)
    - i. Paint Jam with Tyler Boyle: Monday, March 10 | 11 am- 1pm
    - ii. Tissue Paper Canvas Art: Tuesday, March 11 | 11am-12 pm
    - iii. Mosaic Bead Sun Catcher: Wednesday, March 12 | 11 am-12pm
    - iv. Teen Escape Room: The Lost Masterpiece: Thursday, March 13 | 7-8:30 pm
    - v. Storytime, Finger Painting, and Bestie Bracelets: Friday, March 14 | 11 am-12 pm

- [Youth Climate Action Funding Grant Writing Workshop](#)  
Tuesday, March 11 | 5-6:30 pm | L.E. Shore Library
- [Exhibit Opening: Garden Stories](#)  
Saturday, March 15 | 2-4 pm | The Gallery at L.E. Shore
- [Declutter with House n'Order](#)  
Friday, March 21 | 11 am – 12 pm | L.E. Shore Library
- [Death Café](#)  
Wednesday, March 26 | 7-9 pm | L.E. Shore Library

## I. Key Messages

### I.1 Key Messages Update

#### Recommended Motion

Moved by \_\_\_ and seconded by \_\_\_, THAT this Board approve the release of the Key Messages Update-March 2025.

## J. Notice of Meeting Dates

The next regular Board Meeting is scheduled for April 17, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. in the L.E. Shore Boardroom.

All meetings and relevant agenda materials will be posted on the [Meeting and Agenda](#) page of Governance.

## K. Adjournment

#### Recommended Motion

Moved by \_\_\_, THAT this Board does now adjourn at \_\_\_\_ p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair.



## The Blue Mountains Public Library Board Meeting

**DRAFT**  
**Not Approved**

**Meeting Date:** January 16, 2025  
**Meeting Time:** 1:00 p.m.  
**Location:** Library Boardroom  
Posted to [YouTube](#)  
**Prepared By:** Jennifer Murley, CEO/Secretary of the Board

**In Attendance:** Carol Sackville-Duyvelshoff  
Joanne de Visser (Vice-Chair)  
Julia Scott (Chair)  
Kristina Wichman  
Laurey Gillies  
Marie Swift  
Shawn McKinlay

**Absent:** N/A  
**Regrets:** N/A  
**Staff:** Jennifer Murley, CEO  
Franz Greenfield, Administrative Assistant

### A. Call to Order

The Board meeting, was called to order by the Chair at 1:02p.m. A Moment of Reflection was observed, followed by the reading of the Indigenous Acknowledgement Statement.

### B. Agenda

#### B.1 Approval of the Agenda

##### **BMPL-Resolution 2025-001**

Moved by Kristina Wichman and seconded by Marie Swift, THAT the Agenda of January 16, 2025, be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda. CARRIED.

#### B.2 Declaration of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof None.

### C. Reports to be “Received as Information”

All reports to be received as information were received with additional discussion occurring as the items arose within the agenda.

#### BMPL-Resolution 2025-002

Moved by Shawn McKinlay and seconded by Carol Sackville-Duyvelshoff, THAT this Board receive as information:

1. ADM.25.01 entitled *"2024 Action Plan Final Update"*;
2. ADM.25.02 entitled *"Outreach & Partnerships Report"*;
3. ADM.25.03 entitled *"Respectful Workplaces Compliance Report"*;
4. ADM.25.04 entitled *"CEO Service Update-January"*. CARRIED.

### D. Minutes

#### D.1 Previous Minutes

#### BMPL-Resolution 2025-003

Moved by Joanne de Visser and seconded by Laurey Gillies, THAT this Board approve the minutes of the November 21, 2024, Board meeting as circulated. CARRIED.

#### D.2 Business Arising from the Minutes

None.

### E. Communications with the Board

The deadline for registration was **Monday, January 13 at 2:00 p.m.** No members of the public were present.

#### E.1 Deputations

None.

#### E.2 Public Input on the Agenda

None.

#### E.3 Correspondence

None.

### F. Strategic Plan Updates & Action Items

#### F.1 Action Planning

1. **Report:** ADM.25.01 entitled *"2024 Action Plan Final Update"*

Of the 2024 Action Plan's 46 items, 41 were achieved (89% completion rate), with 5 incomplete items to be included in the 2025 Action Plan.

Although this report has been published, the Board noted that the following corrections be noted in the minutes:

- CH2.3 (Annual outreach strategy): for clarity, add the appropriate years to the dates noted.
- ES2.3 (Programming and resources on eco-consciousness): clarify that the \$44,275.00 amount was not from the library's budget but came from a grant secured by the Town of the Blue Mountains, which the library co-distributed as a member of the Town's Youth Climate Action Fund Project Committee.

- OE5.2 (Identify key stakeholders): the Board asked that this item be included again in the 2025 Action Plan.
- The Board also requested that when the 2025 Action Plan's final update is prepared, comparable numbers from the previous year (2024) be included as a reference.

The CEO noted:

- CH1.2 (Physical audit of GLAM spaces): The accessibility audits are complete, and final reports are in the works. The Board will receive readily available information at its February meeting to support their 2025 planning.
- ES3.1 (Community Builders' page): This project was intended as pilot project, and to date, there has been limited uptake. CEO Murley and the Manager of Community Engagement will reevaluate the future of the project and provide an update to the Board (as information).

2. **Discussion:** POL-BLG.2018.99 entitled "Agenda & Multi-Year Agendas"  
The Board made several minor edits to the policy. "A.3 Public Announcement" will be read as a permanent item of the agenda. If members of the public are present, the Chair will provide a brief overview of emergency procedures.

#### **BMPL-Resolution 2025-004**

Moved by Kristina Wichman and seconded by Joanne de Visser, THAT this Board approve POL-BLG-2018.99 entitled "Agenda & Multi-Year Agendas" as amended. CARRIED.

### **F.2 Strategic Plan Pillar: Community Hubs**

1. **Report:** ADM.25.02 entitled "Outreach and Partnerships Report"  
This report was presented.
2. **Verbal Report:** CEO Update on MURFA  
The final MURFA report had been tentatively scheduled for presentation to both the Blue Mountains and Collingwood councils on December 12, 2024. Due to several logistical issues, this had been postponed. Currently there is no date scheduled for the report's presentation.

### **F.3 Strategic Plan Pillar: Organizational Excellence**

1. **Report:** ADM.25.03 entitled "Respectful Workplaces Compliance Report"  
This report outlines 2024 incidents, actions taken in response, and further recommendations.

CEO Murley noted that 2024 saw improvement in the Library's approach to incidents - introducing new policies and staff supports, forming a good relationship with the local OPP, as well as improving communication and consistency of approach with other Town facilities.

2. **Discussion:** POL-SYS-2025.01 entitled "Severe Weather Events"  
This policy was presented to the Board.

## BMPL-Resolution 2025-005

Moved by Laurey Gillies and seconded by Carol Sackville-Duyvelshoff, THAT this Board approve POL-SYS-2025-01 entitled “Severe Weather Events” as presented. CARRIED.

### F.4 Strategic Plan Pillar: Empowering Services

1. **Report:** ADM.25.04 entitled “CEO Service Update-January”  
This report was presented.
2. **Discussion:** Craigleith Community Working Group Open House  
A Craigleith Community Working Group meeting will occur on January 23 from 4-6pm at the Shed (Clarksburg). The meeting aims to gather feedback on what the Group’s priorities should be. While the Board has not been specifically invited, several members will attend to learn more about the concerns and needs of the Craigleith community.

### G. Other Business

#### G.1 Verbal Update: Ontario Digital Public Library

The Federation of Ontario Libraries (FOPL) has asked Ontario library CEOs to meet with their respective MPPs regarding the Ontario Digital Public Library – which, if implemented, will be a province wide platform of digital resources (not books). Currently, this project requires government support and funding.

The project builds on championed government initiatives (i.e., broadband internet infrastructure across Canada for highspeed internet connectivity). Additionally, Digital Public Libraries have successfully launched in other provinces.

The Ontario Digital Public Library will positively impact libraries – several online resources could be allocated to this online platform, reducing individual library expenses.

CEO Murley will provide the project’s advocacy document to the Board, but no further action is required from members.

### H. Roundtable

#### H.1 Roundtable—General updates by the Board

- 1) Community Updates and News:
  - i. Julia Scott and Marie Swift provided observations of libraries they recently visited in British Columbia and Alberta.
  - ii. Laurey Gillies reminded the Board of her presence on a panel at the Ontario Library Association conference. Gillies will be presenting with former BMPL CEO Sabrina Saunders on the Town/Library MOU. CEO Murley also reminded the Board that she will present on the MURFA, along with her colleagues from the Town of The Blue Mountains, Collingwood Public Library, and Town of Collingwood. Further, Library Assistant, Ashley will be presenting on delivering empathy-driven tech-help.

- iii. Kristina Wichman attended an Arts & Culture Council (ACC) event on January 14, which saw 100 attendees. The parking lot and gallery space were full to the seams, highlighting the need for additional space.
- 2) BMPL Events: a shortlist of special events occurring prior to the next meeting was provided.
  - [Writer's Course with Katie Zdybel](#)  
Thursday, January 23 | 4-6 pm | L.E. Shore Library
  - [Family Literacy: Learn to be Green](#)  
Monday, January 27 | 11 am- 12pm | L.E. Shore Library
  - [Exhibit Opening: Celebrating the Colour Magenta](#)  
Saturday, February 1 | 2-4 pm | L.E. Shore Library

## I. Key Messages

The Key Messages were determined by the Board and approved for release.

## J. Notice of Meeting Dates

The next Board meeting was originally scheduled for February 20, 2025, but has been rescheduled to **February 13, 2025, at 1:00 p.m.**

All meetings and relevant agenda materials will be posted on the [Meeting and Agenda](#) page of Governance.

## K. Closed Session

The Board certified that no other business would occur following the closed meeting.

### K.1 Move Into Closed Session

#### **BMPL-Resolution 2025-006**

Moved by Shawn McKinlay and seconded by Carol Sackville-Duyvelshoff, THAT with regard to section 16.1(4) of the Public Libraries Act, THAT this Board move into closed session to discuss personal matters about an identifiable individual and labour relations or employee negotiations. CARRIED.

The Board moved into Closed Session at 2:48 p.m.

### K.2 Adjournment of Closed Session

The Board returned to Open Session at 3:32 p.m.

## L. Adjournment

#### **BMPL-Resolution 2025-007**

Moved by Joanne de Visser and seconded by Marie Swift, THAT this Board does now adjourn at 3:33p.m. to meet again at the call of the Chair. CARRIED.

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Julia Scott, Chair

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Jennifer Murley, Board Secretary

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## Board Committee of the Whole Meeting

**DRAFT**  
**Not Approved**

**Meeting Date:** February 13, 2025  
**Meeting Time:** 1:00 p.m.  
**Location:** The Boardroom at L.E. Shore  
**Prepared By:** Jennifer Murley, CEO/Secretary of the Board  
**In Attendance:** Carol Sackville-Duyvelshoff  
Joanne de Visser (Vice-Chair)  
Julia Scott (Chair)  
Kristina Wichman  
Laurey Gillies  
Marie Swift  
Shawn McKinlay

**Absent:** N/A  
**Regrets:** N/A  
**Staff:** Jennifer Murley, CEO/Secretary of the Board  
**Guests:** Adam Smith, Acting CAO, The Town of The Blue Mountains

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### A. Call to Order

The Board meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Members Laurey Gillies and Shawn McKinlay joined the meeting via Microsoft Teams.

Board Chair Julia Scott welcomed Acting CAO Adam Smith to the meeting. After introductions the Board engaged in a discussion of GLAM services and priorities in The Town of The Blue Mountains.

### B. Agenda Review

### C. Action Planning

#### 1. Discussion: ADM.25.05 entitled "2025 Draft Action Plan"

The CEO provided a brief overview of the planning session she attended regarding Key Performance Indicators at the Ontario Library Super Conference, and how this conversation informed the proposed template. The Board reviewed the template and its content, adjusting language and discussing priorities that were absent. The CEO indicated that she and the Manager of Facilities and Fleet plan to work together on an application to the Trillium Foundation's Capital Grant program.

The Board requested that the CEO update the rationale for objective 3, Enhance Organizational Resilience before the next meeting.

Further work on the plan is required, including more direct alignment with the current Strategic Plan.

**BMPL-Resolution 2025-008**

Moved by Kristina Wichman and seconded by Joanne de Visser, THAT this Board receive as information: ADM.25.05 entitled “2025 Draft Action Plan”.

**D. Notice of Meeting Dates**

The next regular Board Meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2025, at 1:00 p.m. in the L.E. Shore Boardroom. All meetings and relevant agenda materials will be posted on the [Meeting and Agenda](#) page of Governance.

**E. Adjournment**

**BMPL-Resolution 2025-008**

Moved by Kristina Wichman and seconded by Marie Swift, THAT this Board now adjourn to meet again at the call of the Chair. Carried.

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Julia Scott, Chair

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Jennifer Murley, Board Secretary



# 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

## Annual Planning Context

### This Year's Context

This year, we will continue to advocate for the expansion of GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums) services to ensure our collections, programming and facilities meet the needs of our growing community, while recognizing that funding constraints and concurrent projects, such as the MURFA, will influence Council's decision-making process. Beyond expansion and space planning, BMPL is focused on strengthening risk management, collaborating with the Town's staff and finance team to identify operational opportunities and efficiencies.

### This Year's Complications

BMPL enjoys strong community support and high satisfaction with its services; however, several challenges compromise its ability to meet growing demands. Space constraints hinder our ability to expand programs. Without strategic investments in current facilities, future infrastructure, and new technologies, BMPL risks falling behind as the community continues to grow.

Another key challenge is effectively communicating the broad range of BMPL's services. Many decision-makers and community members primarily associate BMPL with literacy initiatives, overlooking its role as a cultural and community hub. Strengthening advocacy efforts, increasing public awareness, and demonstrating the value of GLAM services beyond traditional expectations are essential.

We are also aware of the broader challenges posed by an increasingly complex global political and economic climate. Issues such as

1. Challenges to intellectual freedom, shifting attitudes toward formal commitments to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA), and economic instability present potential risks for public institutions like BMPL.
2. Cyber security threats continue to evolve, necessitating ongoing investments in IT infrastructure and staff training to protect sensitive information and ensure operational continuity.
3. Staff safety is an emerging concern, as front-line workers in public spaces may encounter difficult or unpredictable situations. BMPL is committed to providing a safe and supportive work environment through enhanced training, clear protocols, and collaboration with local authorities when necessary.

To address these challenges, BMPL will continue to prioritize data-driven advocacy, collaborate with municipal partners to explore funding solutions, and engage proactively with stakeholders to align planning with community needs. By remaining adaptive and forward-thinking, BMPL aims to sustain its impact and evolve alongside the community.



## 2025 Action Plan - Summary

Pillar	Key Results	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Highlights
COMMUNITY HUBS	Ensure BMPL keeps pace with growth and community needs		
	1. Implement top 2 - 3 priority Space Improvement items identified in the Space accessibility audits and gap analyses		
	2. Council supports Space improvements and/or expansion recommendation through resolution		
EMPOWERING SERVICES	Strengthen awareness and support of the BMPL's role in the community		
	1. Improve Awareness of BMPL as a valuable community resource. (through in-person and media exposure)		
	2. Increase use of GLAM services		
	3. Increase Participation in Town Initiatives		
	4. Increase Participation in Community Advocacy efforts		
ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE	Staff are trained on Privacy of Information, Cybersecurity, AI and trained on safety protocol for Challenging Interactions		
	1. Staff are trained on Privacy of Information, Cybersecurity, AI and safety protocols for Challenging Interactions		
	2. Formalize annual plan and reporting routines (incl. metrics) and develop a multi-year Financial Outlook and routines		

## 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

STRATEGIC PILLAR	COMMUNITY HUBS			
Objective 1	Ensure BMPL keeps pace with growth and community needs			
Rationale	The TBM is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Ontario and the BMPL is challenged to meet current community needs.			
Key Result 1				
Implement top 2 - 3 priority Space Improvement items identified in the Space accessibility audits and gap analyses.				
Key Initiatives	Who is Responsible	In Collaboration With	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Comments
Complete accessibility audit of all BMPL facilities	CEO	CEO, Museum Curator, Manager of Facilities & Fleet		
Complete a space utilization study for L.E. Shore	CEO	CEO (?Manager of Facilities & Fleet)		
Create a building expansion/enhancement action plan including capital funding needs & sources. (incl. update of Gap analysis with accessibility audits and utilization study and related historical studies)	CEO & Board	CEO, Museum Curator, Manager of Facilities & Fleet		Determine what areas of funding need Council approval

## 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

STRATEGIC PILLAR	COMMUNITY HUBS			
Objective 1	Ensure BMPL keeps pace with growth and community needs			
Rationale	The TBM is one of the fastest growing municipalities in Ontario and the BMPL is challenged to meet current community needs.			
Key Result 2				
Council supports Space improvements and/or expansion recommendation through resolution				
Key Initiatives	Who is Responsible	In Collaboration With	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Comments
Actively engage Councilors about Library services and opportunities /community needs now and in the future.	Board	CEO		
Formal presentation to Council as opportunities present (tbd)	Board	CEO		
Actively participate in the TBM’s Multi-Use Recreation Feasibility Assessment Committee.	CEO	Town Staff and MURFA committee		



## 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

STRATEGIC PILLAR	EMPOWERING SERVICES			
Objective 2	Strengthen awareness and support of the BMPL’s role in the community			
Rationale	General knowledge of the full range of GLAM services and community impact is lacking. Helping residents, visitors, and partners better understand the BMPL’s full range of services beyond literacy programs, supporting intellectual freedom and inclusion through policies and advocacy, and engaging with decision makers and the public on the importance of GLAM services, will enhance awareness and support.			
Key Result 1				
Improve Awareness of BMPL as a valuable community resource. (through in person and media exposure)				
Key Initiatives	Who is Responsible	In Collaboration With	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Comments
Develop and implement a plan to celebrate 30 years of the BMPL.	CEO	Manager of Public Services, Manager of Community Engagement, Town Staff		
Increase accessibility & use of the digital Cultural Map resource, highlighting the TBM’s cultural assets.	Museum Curator	CEO, TBM GIS Specialist		
Improve visibility of Gallery, Archive, and Museum services by Q3,	CEO	Museum Curator, Art Committee, Manager of Public Services, Manager of Community Engagement		

## 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

PUBLIC LIBRARY				
STRATEGIC PILLAR	EMPOWERING SERVICES			
Objective 2	Strengthen awareness and support of the BMPL’s role in the communit			
Rationale	General knowledge of the full range of GLAM services and community impact is lacking. Helping residents, visitors, and partners better understand the BMPL’s full range of services beyond literacy programs, supporting intellectual freedom and inclusion through policies and advocacy, and engaging with decision makers and the public on the importance of GLAM services, will enhance awareness and support.			
Key Result 2				
Increase use of GLAM services				
Key Initiatives	Who is Responsible	In Collaboration With	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Comments
Develop and implement L.E. Shore programming plan	CEO	Staff		
Develop & Implement annual Gallery Art event plan	CEO	Art Committee		
Develop & Implement annual Craigleith Heritage Depot programming plan	CEO	Museum Curator		
Develop program and service tracking/reporting routines including program participation audit (e.g. wait-list tracking)	CEO	Board		



## 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

STRATEGIC PILLAR	EMPOWERING SERVICES			
Objective 2	Strengthen awareness and support of the BMPL’s role in the community			
Rationale	General knowledge of the full range of GLAM services and community impact is lacking. Helping residents, visitors, and partners better understand the BMPL’s full range of services beyond literacy programs, supporting intellectual freedom and inclusion through policies and advocacy, and engaging with decision makers and the public on the importance of GLAM services, will enhance awareness and support.			
Key Result 3				
Increase Participation in Town Initiatives				
Key Initiatives	Who is Responsible	In Collaboration With	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Comments
Actively participate in and collaborate with the TBM’s initiatives such as IDEA, MURFA, Health and Safety, and Tourism Strategy.	CEO	Town Staff/committees, Board		
Key Result 4				
Increase Participation in Community Advocacy efforts				
Actively participate in and collaborate with community groups such as the Craigleith Community Working Group and the BMRA.	Board	CEO		



## 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

STRATEGIC PILLAR	ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE			
Objective 3	Enhance Organizational Resilience			
Rationale	Respond to challenges to security, intellectual freedom, shifting attitudes toward formal commitments to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA), and economic instability.			
Key Result 1				
Staff are trained on Privacy of Information, Cybersecurity, AI and trained on safety protocol for Challenging Interactions				
Key Initiatives	Who is Responsible	In Collaboration With	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Comments
Develop a Staff Technology Training Plan to address learning gaps.	CEO	Managers, Town IT		
Develop an AI policy for staff and library users	CEO	Town IT		
Implement mandatory training for all staff re: privacy of information, cybersecurity, and ethical use of AI by October 1, 2025.	CEO	Managers, Town IT, Town HR		
Develop and implement a Staff Challenging Interactions Training Plan	CEO	Town HR		

## 2025 Action Plan - DRAFT

STRATEGIC PILLAR	ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE
Objective 3	Enhance Organizational Resilience
Rationale	Respond to challenges to <b>security</b> , intellectual freedom, shifting attitudes toward formal commitments to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility (IDEA), and economic instability.

**Key Result 2** ~~Develop a financial strategy with the Town's finance team to improve long-term sustainability.~~

Formalize annual plan and reporting routines (incl. metrics) and develop a multi-year Financial Outlook and routines

Key Initiatives	Who is Responsible	In Collaboration With	Status (Red Green Yellow)	Comments
Update annual plan template and process	CEO	Board		
Develop and implement monthly and quarterly Board reporting routines	Board	CEO		
Develop consultation plan for the new Strategic Plan by Q4.	Board	CEO		
Establish a working group to develop a Business continuity plan	Board	CEO, others tbc		Working group to establish approach, resources needed and timelines
Finalize Charitable status and develop policies to guide accounting, use and reporting of charitable funds	CEO	Dir. of Corporate and Financial Services (?)		
Apply for a min. of 1 new funding source/ grant	CEO	Dir. of Corporate and Financial Services		





# Staff Report

## Strategic Initiatives

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**Report To:** Special Committee of the Whole  
**Meeting Date:** January 7, 2025  
**Report Number:** SI.25.001  
**Title:** 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results  
**Prepared by:** Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives

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### A. Recommendations

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THAT Council receive Staff Report SI.25.001, entitled “2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results” for information;

### B. Overview

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This report provides Council with a summary of the results from the 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey.

### C. Background

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The Resident Satisfaction Survey was conducted from October 16, 2024 – November 24, 2024, and received a total of 828 responses.

The survey questions were approved by Council in August 2024 through report [FAF.24.082](#). The questions were also reviewed by the Accountability and Transparency Committee, with minor changes made to reflect the feedback provided.

The purpose of the Resident Satisfaction Survey is to better understand resident satisfaction related to the Town’s service delivery, customer service and communication, financial management and leadership. The survey also included questions regarding resident satisfaction with Town-owned infrastructure, including roads, sidewalks, bridges, water and wastewater systems, and recreational facilities/amenities.

The survey was developed through consultation with the Town’s external survey consultant, The W Group. For background information, The W Group specializes in supporting municipalities across Canada with public consultation, including surveys and research panels.

The survey questions were designed based on the [2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey](#), with minor adjustments made to reflect accuracy and consistency based on current Town operations.

The survey was supported by a strong and robust promotional plan, which included the following actions:

- **Town Website:** A dedicated project webpage was created with a featured block directly on the homepage ([www.thebluemountains.ca/residentsurvey](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/residentsurvey)).
- **Press Release & Notice to Email Subscribers:** A press release was issued and emailed to 1400+ website subscribers announcing the launch of the survey.
- **Town Newsletter:** The survey was promoted in the November edition of the Town e-newsletter and emailed directly to 1600+ subscribers.
- **Social Media:** The survey was promoted on the Town's Facebook, Instagram and X (Twitter) social media accounts. In addition, a paid advertising campaign was conducted on Facebook and geotargeted to residents within the Town. The advertising reached a targeted audience of 3,600 residents throughout the community.
- **Mailed Post Cards:** Approximately 7,000 postcards were mailed to properties in The Blue Mountains through Canada Post general mail.
- **Road Signs and Posters:** Approximately 20 road signs were installed at key locations throughout the community, and posters were installed at the entrances of Town facilities.
- **Newspaper Advertising:** Advertisements were included within the Blue Mountain Review and Collingwood Today news publications.

## D. Analysis

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The purpose of the Resident Satisfaction Survey was to gather feedback from residents to help inform decision-making, budgeting and priority setting for the Town and to inform the 2025 budget process and deliberations.

The W Group is in the process of benchmarking the results against the 2022 survey results to highlight the net change in satisfaction related to the Town service areas, operations, assets, financial management and leadership.

The survey results have been reviewed in detail by the Town's Senior Management Team and will be used to track and implement measures to strengthen service delivery. To ensure that the survey results are actionable, a mid-year staff report will be presented to Council to outline the steps taken to address the comments and feedback provided.

## E. Strategic Priorities

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### 1. Communication and Engagement

We will enhance communications and engagement between Town Staff, Town residents and stakeholders

## **2. Organizational Excellence**

We will continually seek out ways to improve the internal organization of Town Staff and the management of Town assets.

## **3. Community**

We will protect and enhance the community feel and the character of the Town, while ensuring the responsible use of resources and restoration of nature.

## **4. Quality of Life**

We will foster a high quality of life for full-time and part-time residents of all ages and stages, while welcoming visitors.

## **F. Environmental Impacts**

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No environmental impacts are anticipated as a result of this report.

## **G. Financial Impacts**

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No direct financial impacts are anticipated as a result of this report.

## **H. In Consultation With**

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Senior Management Team

The W Group, External Consultant

Allan Gibbons, Acting Manager of Communications & Economic Development

## **I. Public Engagement**

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The topic of this Staff Report has not been the subject of a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. However, any comments regarding this report should be submitted to Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives [si@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:si@thebluemountains.ca).

## **J. Attached**

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1. 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Hendry  
Director of Strategic Initiatives

For more information, please contact:  
Tim Hendry, Director of Strategic Initiatives  
[si@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:si@thebluemountains.ca)  
519-599-3131 extension 282

### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SI.25.001 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results.docx
Attachments:	Attachment 1 - 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Dec 20, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**No Signature - Task assigned to Tim Hendry was completed by assistant Taylor Raffy**

**Tim Hendry - Dec 20, 2024 - 11:00 AM**

### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SI.25.001 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results.docx
Attachments:	Attachment 1 - 2024 Resident Satisfaction Survey Results.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Dec 20, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**No Signature - Task assigned to Tim Hendry was completed by delegate Allan Gibbons**

**Tim Hendry - Dec 20, 2024 - 11:34 AM**



2024

# Resident Satisfaction Survey



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# 1 Executive Summary

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## 1.1 Introduction

*The Town of The Blue Mountains is Canada's second fastest growing municipality and serves home to over 9,300 full-time residents, with an extensive part-time and seasonal population. Recognized as Ontario's true four-season tourism and recreation destination, The Blue Mountains welcomes an additional 2.5 million visitors annually.*

Source: <https://data.thebluemountains.ca/>

## 1.2 Survey Framework

The Town conducted a Resident Satisfaction Survey to help inform future decision-making, budgeting and priority setting. The survey sought to understand resident satisfaction related to service delivery, customer service and communication, financial management and leadership. Survey results will be presented to Council this Winter and will assist with the creation of the 2025 Town Budget.

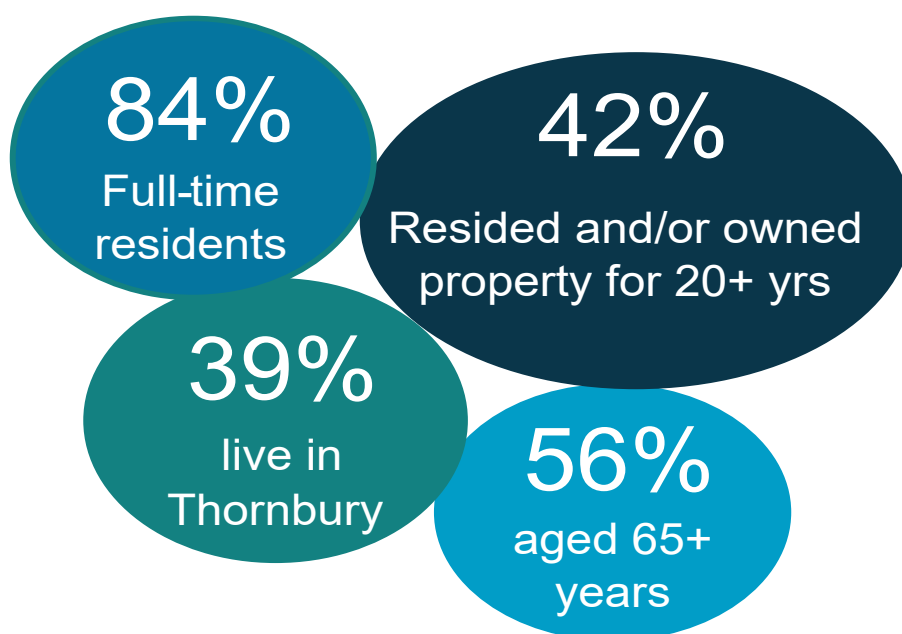
The survey was open from October 17, 2024 to November 26, 2024.



### 1.3 Study Respondent Characteristics

In total, 774 respondents participated in the survey, however, responses to demographic and classification results are based on 567 responses.

- The majority of respondents (84%) are full-time residents of the Town of The Blue Mountains.
- Thornbury is the primary property location for almost 4 in 10 respondents (39%), followed by Craighleith, with 2 in 10 (20%) respondents living there.
- Those aged 55 and older account for 84% of respondents.
- 42% have resided and/or owned property in the Town for more than 20 years.
- Almost 1 in 4 respondents (24%) live in a condominium subdivision.



## 1.4 Study Highlights

In total, 774 respondents participated in the Town of The Blue Mountains' 2024 Resident Satisfaction survey. When asked how they feel about the Town as a place to live, 9 in 10 respondents reported being *satisfied* or *very satisfied*.

### Service Delivery

Satisfaction with the delivery of administrative, public works, public safety and other services by the Town is generally high. The Town's gallery, library, archives and museum services, fire protection services and the maintenance of Town-owned recreation facilities were the top scoring services (95%+) based on both *satisfied* and *very satisfied* ratings.

### Customer Service

Most respondents (84%) have had contact with a Town employee in the past year and almost 8 in 10 of these respondents report being *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their interaction experience. Staff members are rated most notably for being courteous and respectful, treating residents fairly while also being knowledgeable and competent. Furthermore, enquiries/ requests are typically dealt with in a timely manner, with more than half (55%) of respondents receiving an initial response *within one business day*.





## Corporate Communications

The Town's website is used by most respondents (66%) for news and information about the Town. Participation in public surveys is very popular with 9 in 10 respondents having completed at least one. In general, a moderate number of respondents take advantage of the public engagement opportunities presented by the Town.

## Financial Management & Planning

Six in 10 respondents believe that that receive *good value* for their tax dollars, being generally satisfied with the services provided by the Town. A very small percentage (4%) say the get *very good value*. The remainder report that they get *poor* or *very poor value* citing a variety of reasons including taxes are too high, wasteful spending by the Town, needing better water and sewage options etc. to explain their dissatisfaction.



## Leadership

Two-thirds of respondents were either *very satisfied* or *satisfied* with the Council's overall performance. The Council's collaboration with community partners and organizations and actions to respond to climate change also scored highly – 70% and 65% respectively.

Increasing access to healthcare (both family healthcare and long-term care) should be the key priority for the next council, however, investing in the Town's infrastructure replacement is critical with 94% of respondents rating it as a *high* or *medium* priority.

## The Future Outlook

The impact of the recent residential growth and development in the Town is perceived negatively (*somewhat* to *very*) by more than half of the survey respondents.

When asked to identify the key issue facing the Town today, affordability, both in terms of the cost of living and housing, was the most frequently mentioned issue. Many commented on other issues and challenges related to the Town's growth and development, for example, poor planning and management, the need for more infrastructure and services to support a growing population, the need for more and different affordable housing options, the negative impact on the environment and the loss of the small-town feel.

## 2 Survey Results

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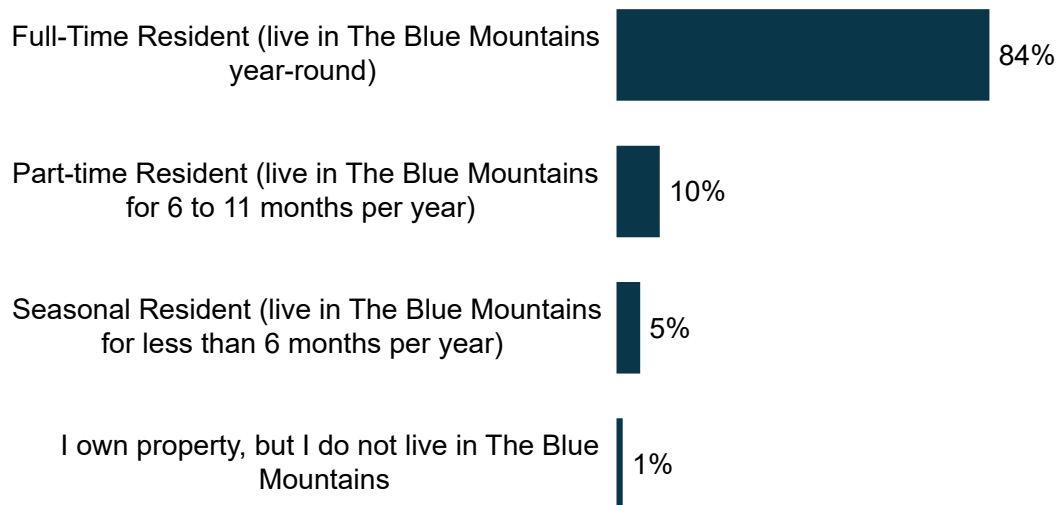
### 2.1 Respondent Profile

#### Resident Type

84% of respondents live in the Town of the Blue Mountains year-round while 10% are part-time residents, residing in the Town 6-11 months per year.

Q: Please select the option that best describes yourself:

Total Respondents: 774

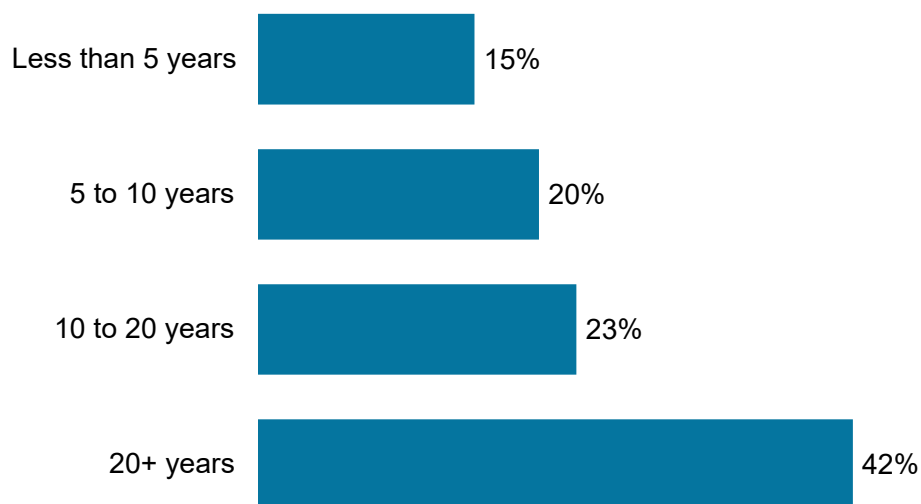


#### Years Resident and/or Owned Property in the Town

In total, 15% of respondents are relative newcomers to the Town of The Blue Mountains, having resided and/or owned property on the Town for less than 5 years. Conversely, 4 in 10 (42%) have resided and/ or owned property in the Town for more than 20 years.

Q: How long have you been a resident and/or owned property in the Town of The Blue Mountains?

Total Respondents: 567

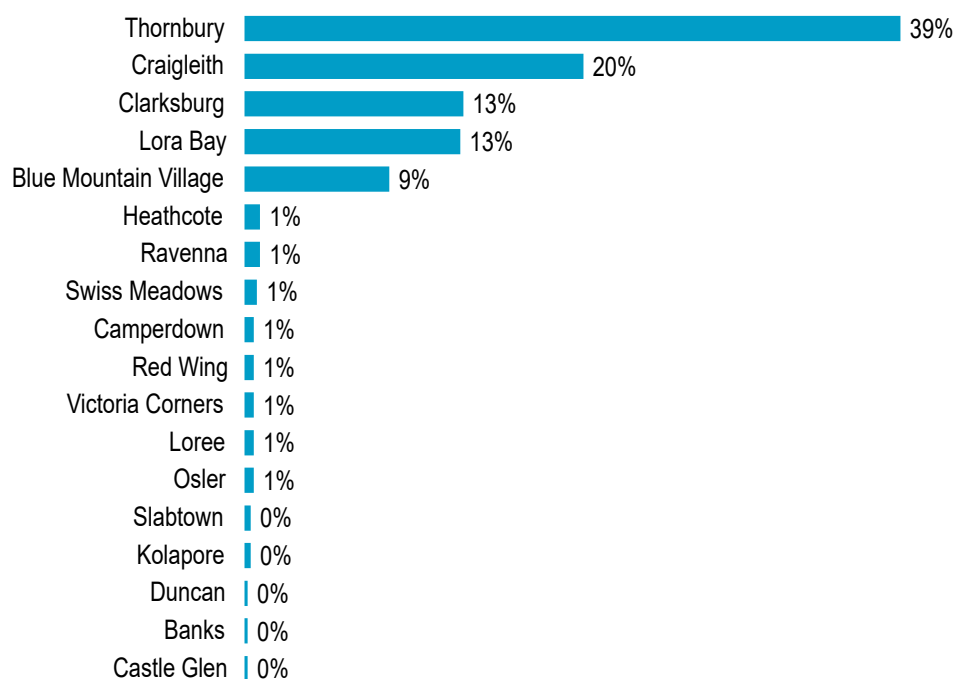


## Property Location

The majority of respondents (85%) reside in Thornbury, Craigleith, Clarksburg and Lora Bay.

Q: Where is your property located in the Town of The Blue Mountains?

Total Respondents: 547. Excludes N/A.

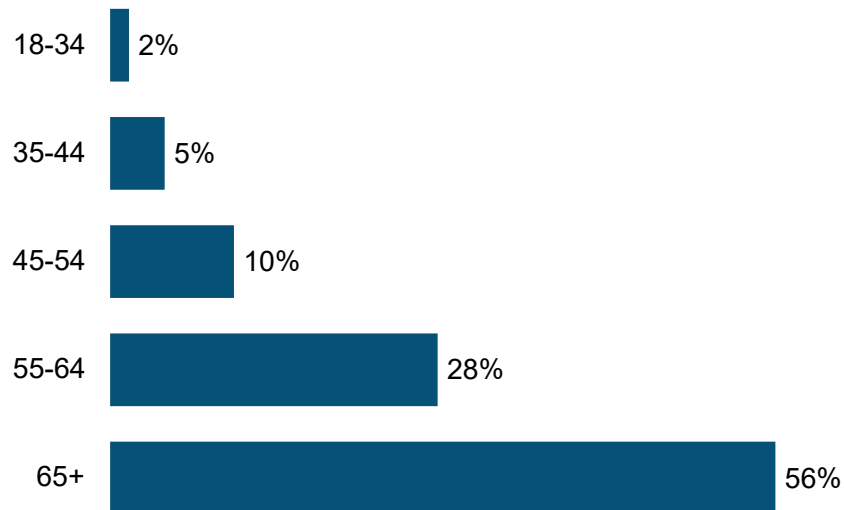


## Age Range

In summary, 15% of respondents are aged 35-54 years with those aged 55 and older accounting for 84% of respondents.

Q: What is your age?

Total Respondents: 567



## Resident of a Condominium Subdivision

Almost 1 in 4 (24%) live in a condominium subdivision and pay annual fees to a condo association.

Q: Do you live in a condominium subdivision and pay annual fees to a condo association?

Total Respondents: 567





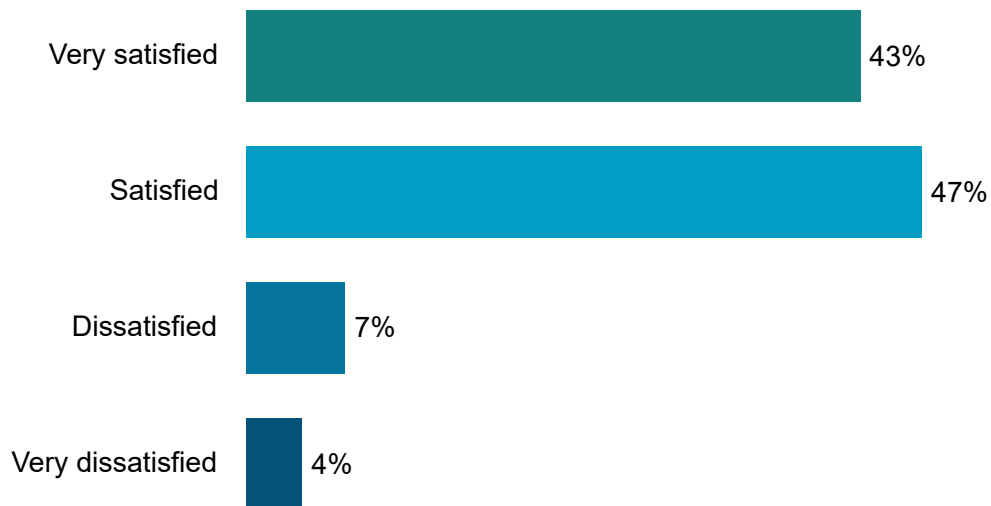
## 2.2 Living in the Town of The Blue Mountains

### 2.2.1 Satisfaction with Living in the Town of The Blue Mountains

Overwhelmingly, residents feel very positive about living in the Town of The Blue Mountains – 90% are either *very satisfied* or *satisfied*.

Q: How do you generally feel about the Town of The Blue Mountains as a place to live?

Total Respondents: 774

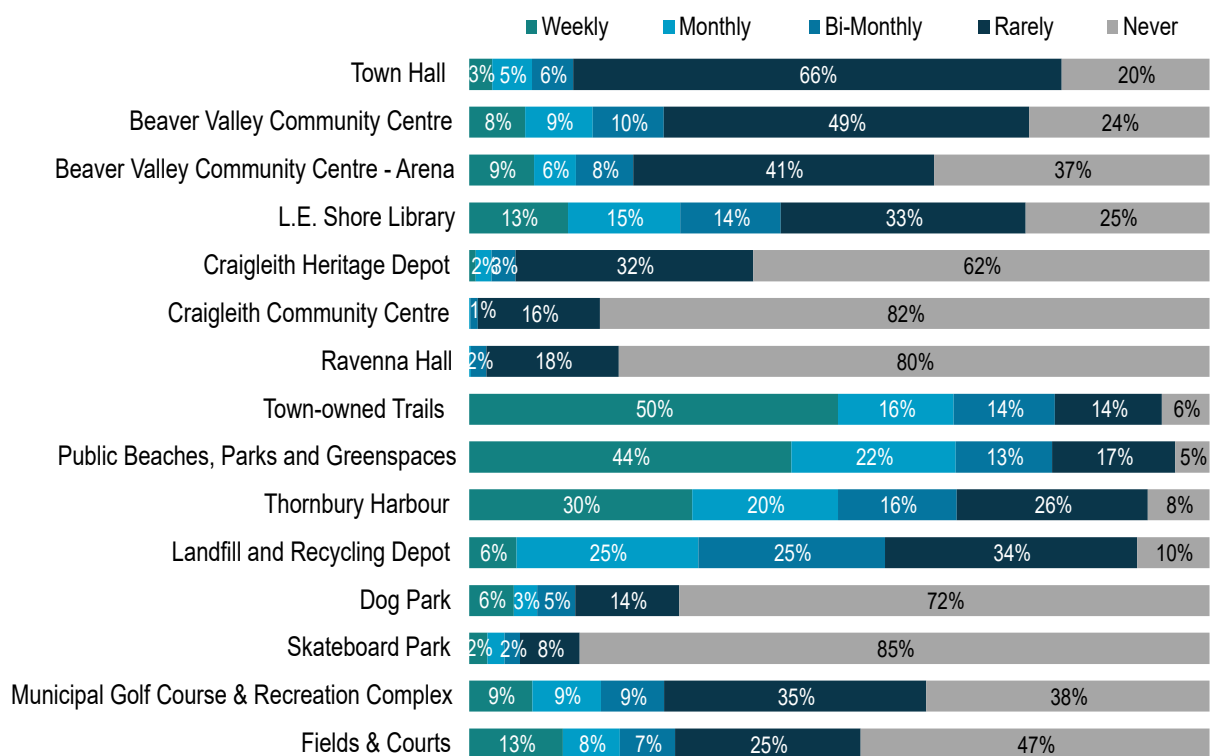


## 2.2.2 Frequency of Visits to the Town's Facilities

Survey respondents were asked about how often they visit various facilities throughout the Town to gauge their general involvement and engagement in the community. Town-owned trails, public beaches, parks and greenspaces and Thornbury Harbour receive the highest levels of weekly visits. Ravenna Hall, Craigleith Community Centre, Craigleith Heritage Depot and the skateboard park appear to be the least frequently visited Town facilities.

Q: Please indicate how often you visit or use each of the following Town facilities.

Total Respondents: 741-770



## 2.3 Service Delivery Satisfaction

### 2.3.1 Satisfaction with Town Services

Survey participants were presented with a list of specific services that are delivered by The Town and asked to rate their level of satisfaction with each one. Satisfaction levels were generally very high. The Town's gallery, library, archives and museum services, fire protection services and the maintenance of Town-owned recreation facilities all scored 95% based on *Satisfied* or *Very satisfied* ratings.

Also scoring 90% or higher in satisfaction (*very satisfied* or *satisfied*) were:

- the maintenance of trails, beaches, parks and greenspaces,
- snow removal services specifically related to maintaining access to businesses in the Thornbury and Clarksburg downtown areas,
- garbage and recycling collection services and
- financial services.

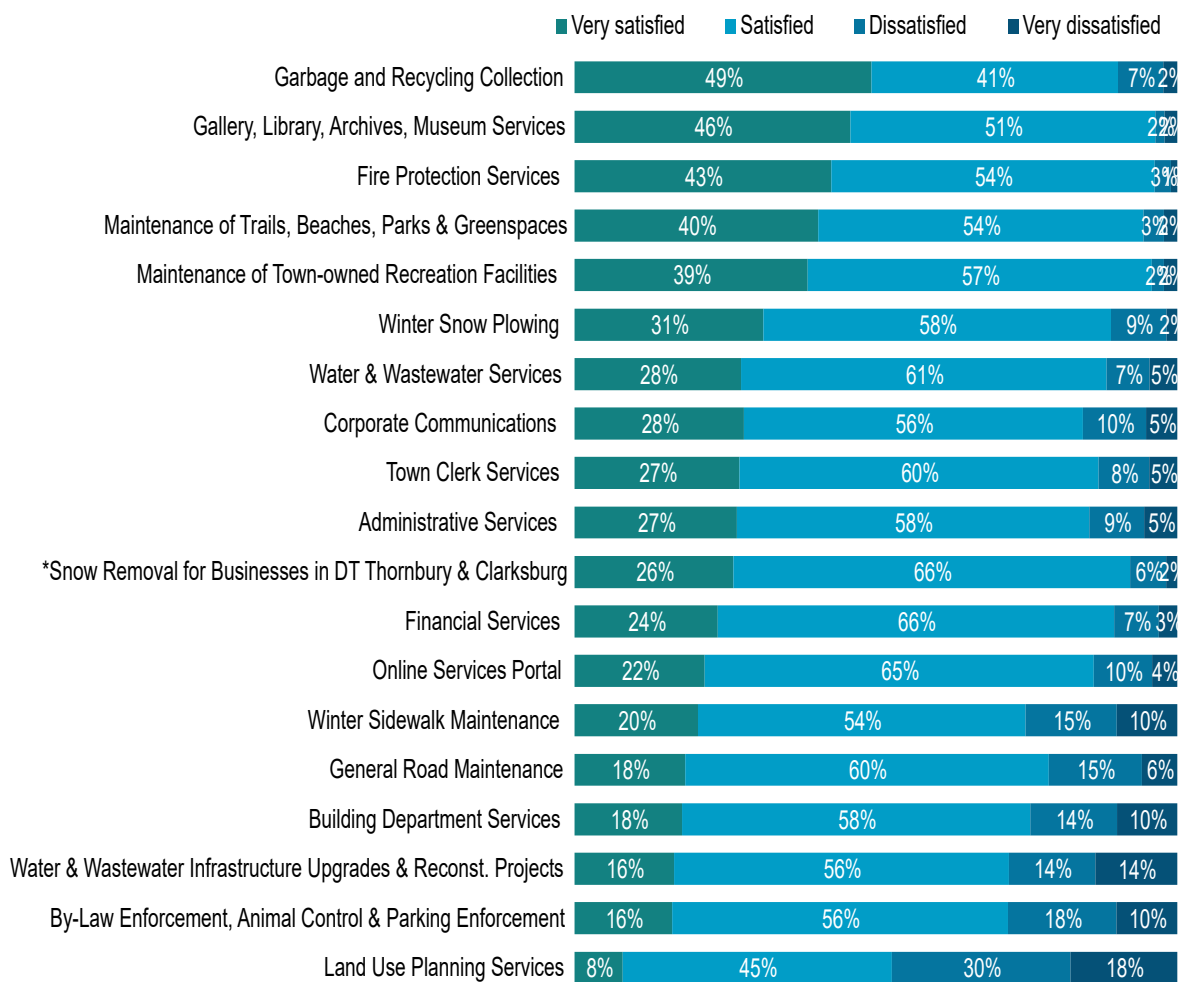
Land use planning services received the lowest satisfaction score at 53%. Following the results of the 2022 Resident Satisfaction Survey, where land use planning received a similar score, a customer satisfaction survey was conducted to receive feedback from those who have directly interacted with the department. The survey gauges the levels of service delivered, customer satisfaction and provides opportunities for additional feedback regarding their interactions with the department. While this survey remains on-going, 83% of respondents to date have been very satisfied or satisfied. In 2025, staff will bring forward a report on the results of the customer satisfaction survey.





Q: Please indicate your level of satisfaction regarding each of the following Town services:

Total Respondents: 381-698. Excludes N/A.



\*Snow Removal to Maintain Access to Businesses in Downtown Thornbury & Clarksburg

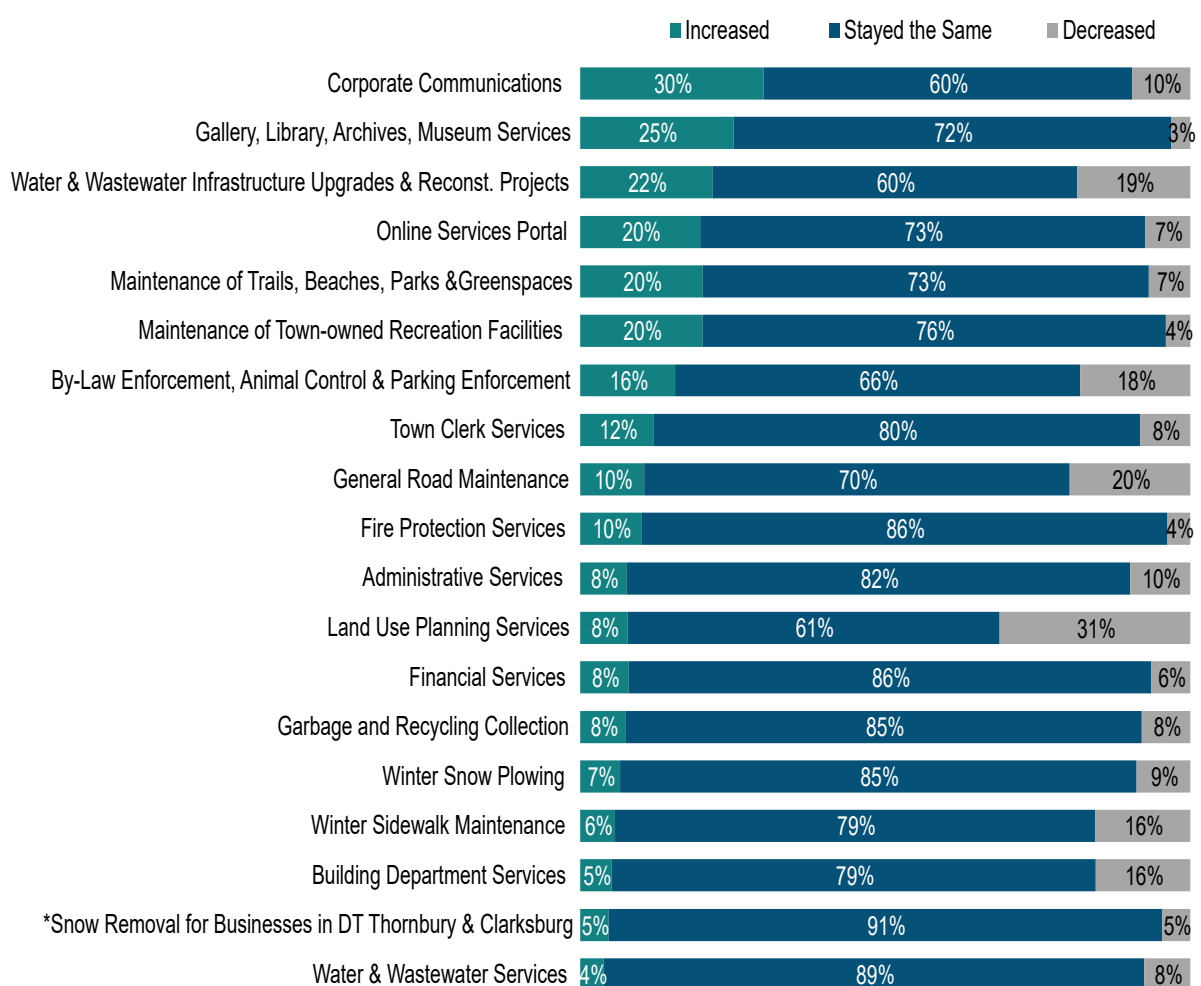


## 2.3.2 Perception of Quality in Service Delivery

When asked whether the quality of service has increased, decreased or remained the same over the past five years, the majority of the service areas are perceived to have remained the same. Corporate Communications and Gallery, Library, Archives, Museum Services showed the largest perceived improvements in service quality – 30% and 25% respectively.

Q: For each service listed, please indicate whether you feel that the quality of the service has increased, decreased, or stayed the same over the past five (5) years (or for as long as you have lived here if it has been less than five years).

Total Respondents: 367-668. Excludes N/A



\*Snow Removal to Maintain Access to Businesses in Downtown Thornbury & Clarksburg



## 2.4 Customer Service and Communication

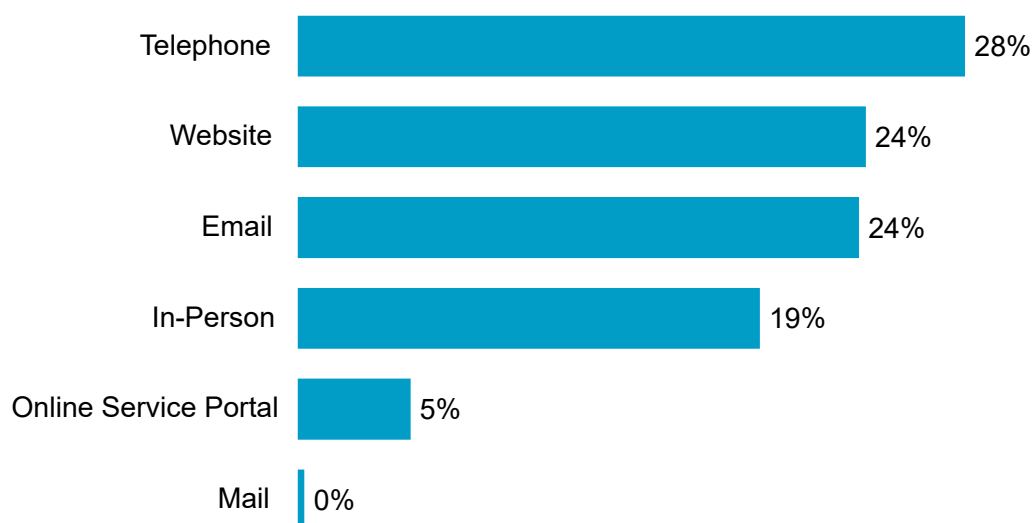
This section of the report focuses on the type and perceived quality of contact and communication that respondents have had with the Town.

### 2.4.1 Type of Contact

Firstly, when contacting the Town for information, services, or assistance respondents are most likely to use telephone, website or email. The online service portal is less frequently used at 5%.

Q: What method are you most likely to use when contacting the Town for information, services, or assistance?

Total Respondents: 695



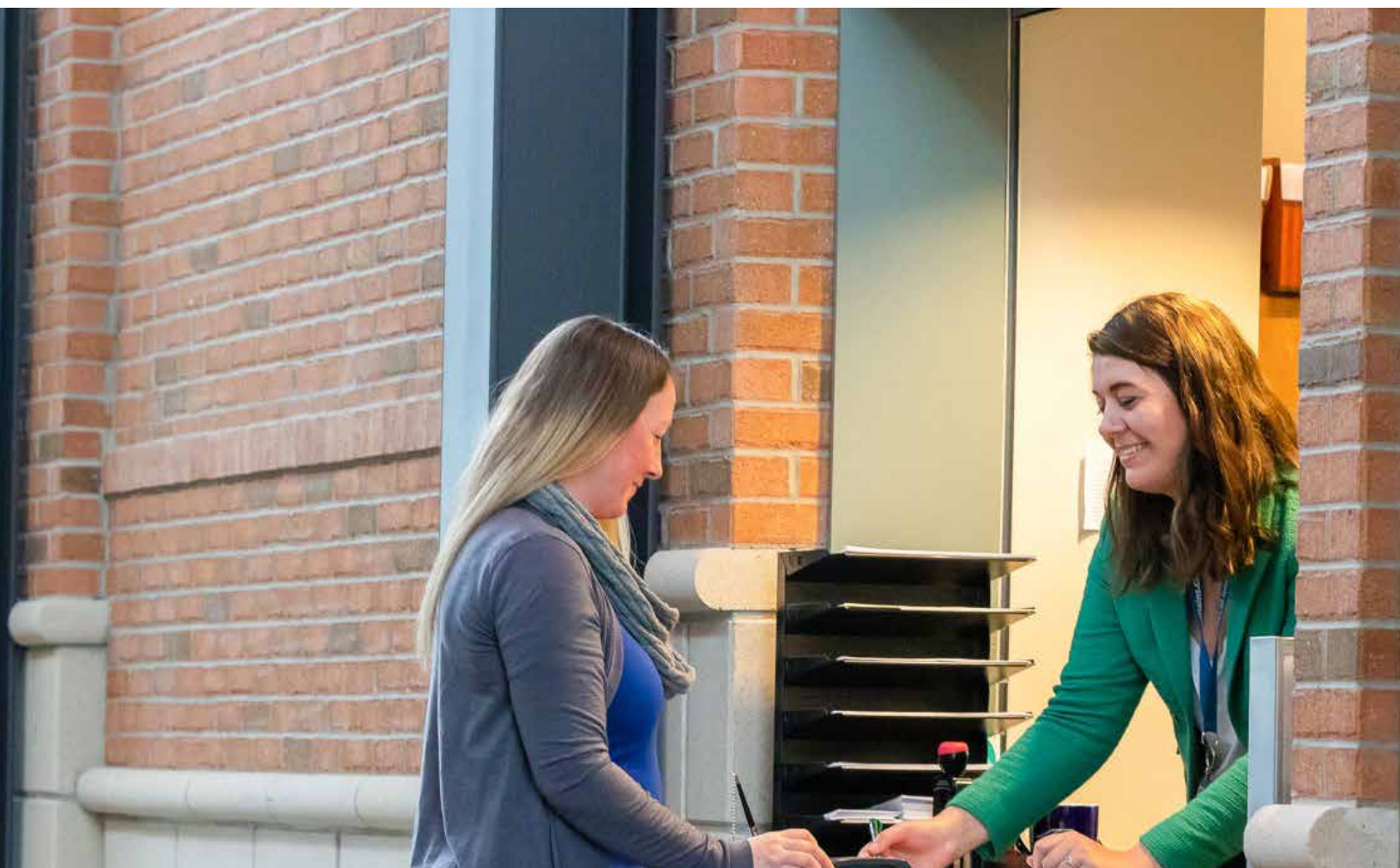
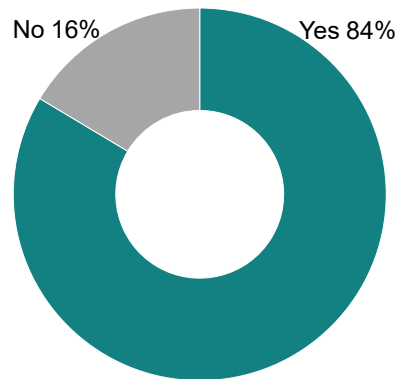


## 2.4.2 Employee Contact

The vast majority (84%) of respondents reported that they have had contact with a Town employee either via email, telephone, in-person or other means, in the past year.

Q: In the past year, have you had contact (via email, telephone, in-person, etc.) with a Town employee?

Total Respondents: 695

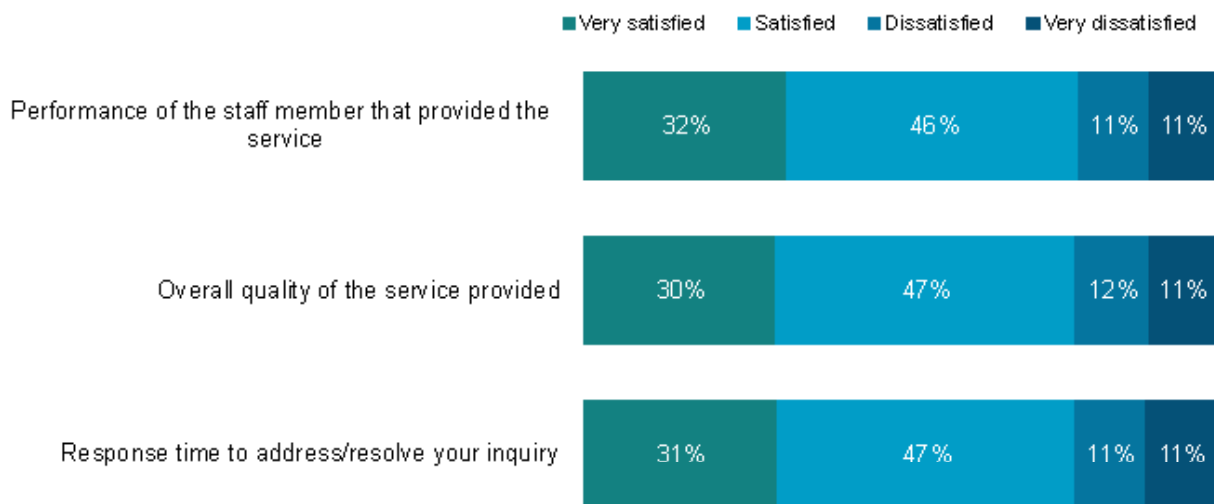


### 2.4.3 Satisfaction with Employee Contact

Based on their most recent experience, almost 8 in 10 respondents (77-78%) say that they have been *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their contact with a Town employee.

Q: Based on your most recent experience and contact with a Town employee, please indicate your level of satisfaction for each of the following statements:

Total Respondents: 555-557



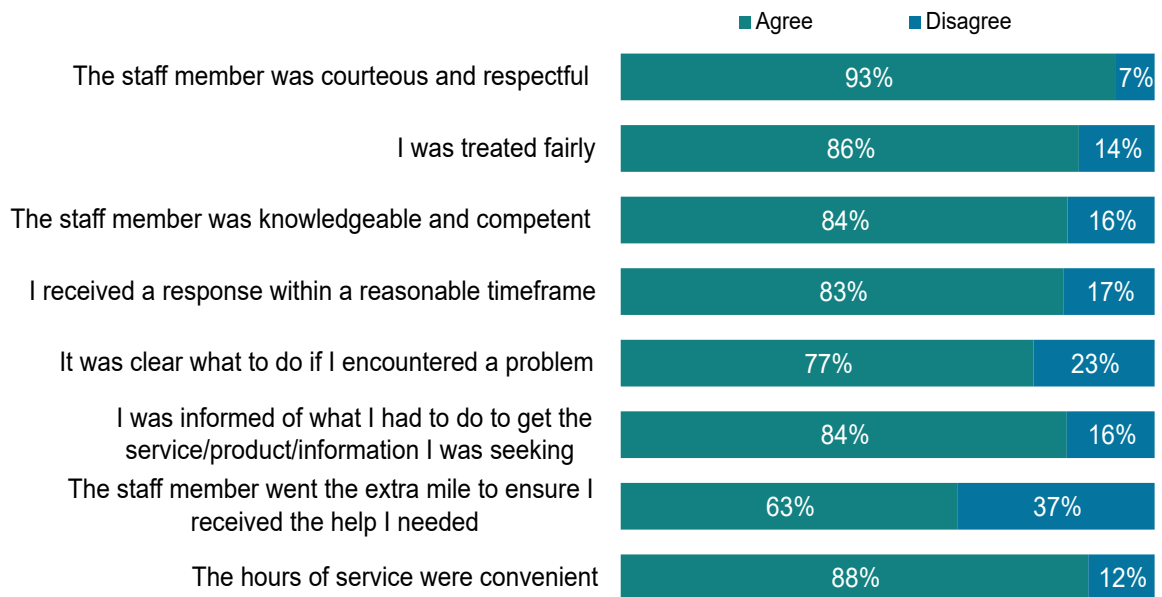
### 2.4.4 Customer Service Delivery

In addition, respondents indicated a very high level of agreement related to various aspects of customer service delivered by the Town's employees. In general, employees are courteous, competent, fair and thorough when resolving issues and responding to enquiries.



Q: Based on your most recent experience and contact with a Town employee, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements:

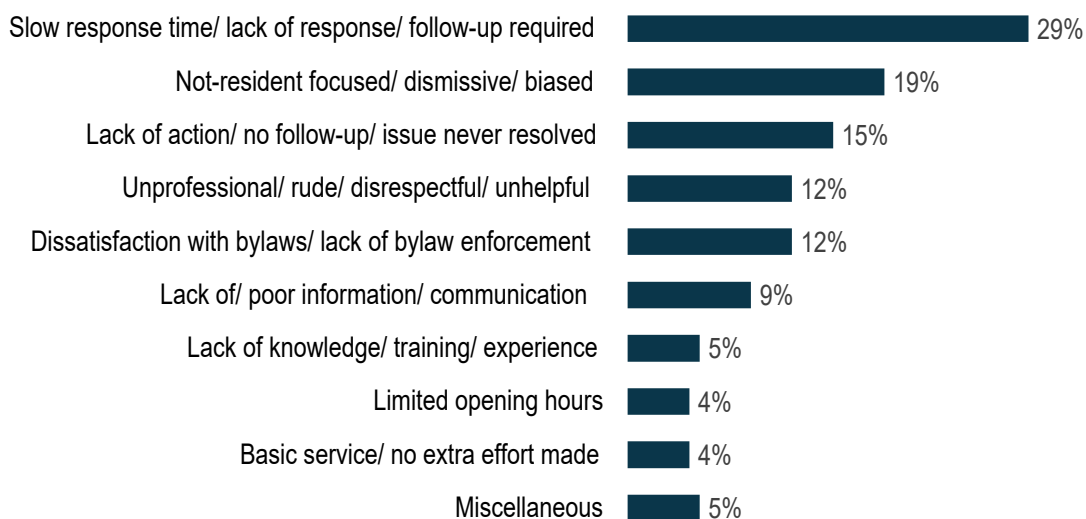
Total Respondents: 398-526. Excludes *No opinion*.



Among those who explained why they disagreed with the previous statements about their recent interactions with Town employees (134 respondents), the primary reasons related to the following experiences or issues:

Q: If you disagreed with any of the statements above, please explain:

Total Respondents: 134

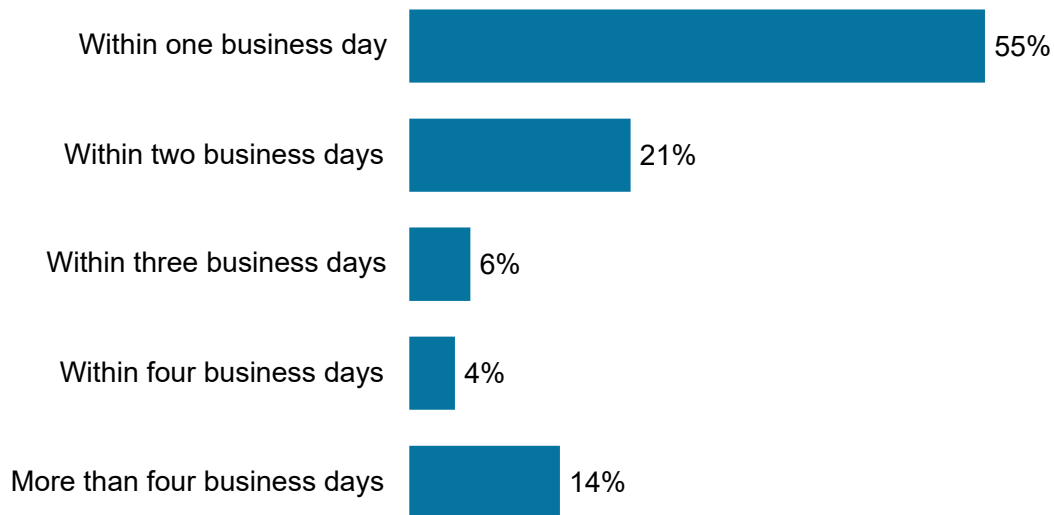


## 2.4.5 Response Times

These respondents were also asked about the response time to receive an initial response during their most recent experience and contact with the Town – three-quarters (76%) said they received a response *within two business days* with a notable 55% receiving a response *within one business day*.

Q: Based on your most recent experience and contact with the Town, how long did it take to receive an initial response?

Total Respondents: 553

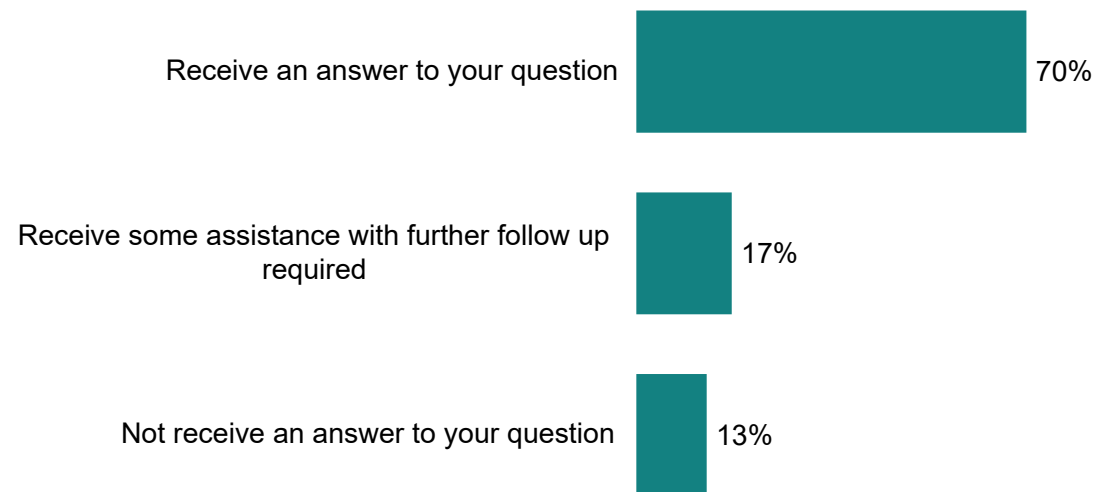


## 2.4.6 Outcome of Most Recent Contact

Positively, among those recounting a recent contact experience, 7 in 10 (70%) did receive an answer to their enquiry, while 17% received some assistance with further follow-up required. However, 13% did not receive a response to their enquiry at all.

Q: Based on your most recent experience and contact with the Town, did you ultimately:

Total Respondents: 553





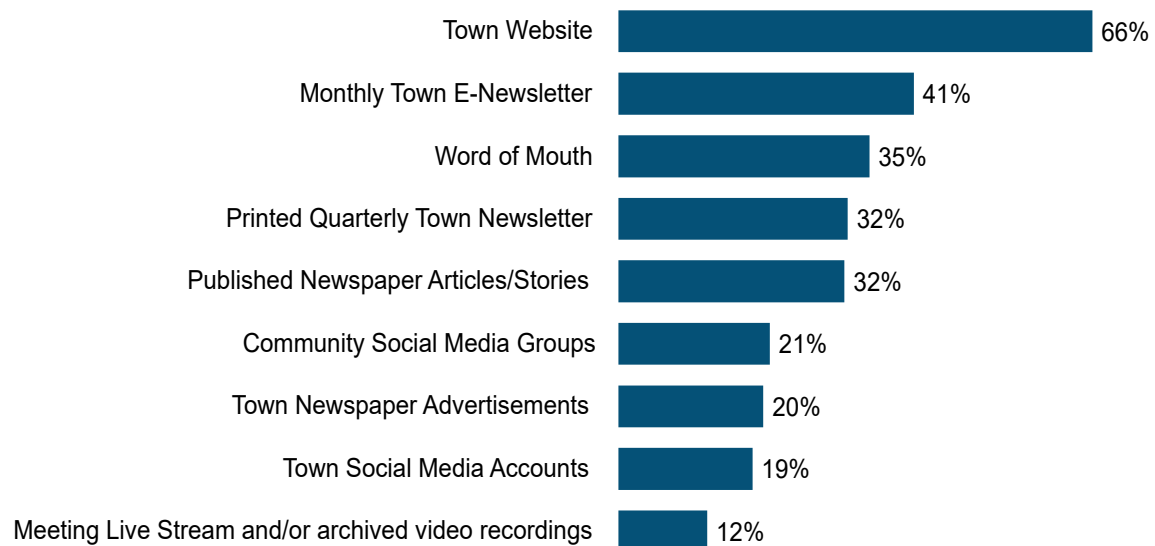
## 2.5 Other Communication and Engagement

### 2.5.1 Sources of News and Information about the Town

The Town's website seems to be the "go-to" source for news and information about the Town – regularly used by two-thirds (66%) of respondents. Other popular sources curated by the Town are the monthly e-newsletter (41%) and the quarterly printed newsletter (32%).

Q: Which of the following methods do you most commonly use to seek news and information about the Town?

Total Respondents: 659

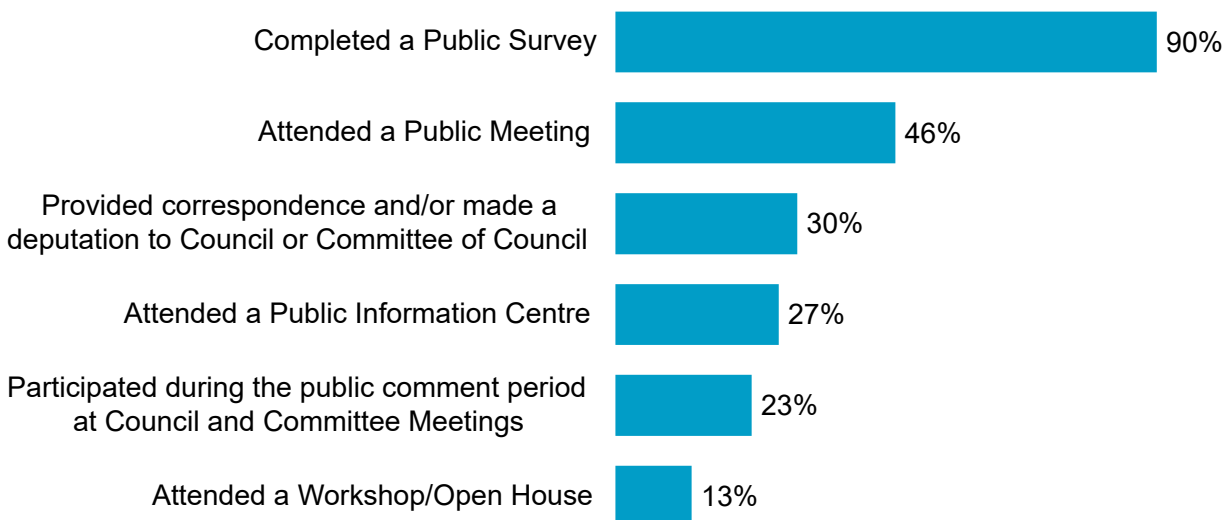


## 2.5.2 Participation in Public Engagement Opportunities

When asked about their participation on public engagement activities, 9 in 10 (90%) have completed a public survey and almost half of respondents (46%) have attended a public meeting.

Q: The Town offers several opportunities for residents to gather information and formally share feedback regarding Town initiatives and projects. Please indicate if you have used any of the following methods:

Total Respondents: 584







## 2.6 Financial Management & Planning

The Town was keen to gather public input in order to inform its fiscal management and planning and the long-term community economic activity.

*“The Town of The Blue Mountains collects approximately \$45 million per year in property taxes. Of the taxes collected, 41% stays with the Town to support operations and infrastructure. The remaining 59% is allocated to the County of Grey and the School Board. There are several factors that affect the Town’s annual budget, including inflation, growth, development activity, economic trends, changing market conditions, taxation issues, and policy decisions of Council.*

*The Town understands the need to achieve balance between the demand for services and the taxpayers’ ability to pay for these services. The goal is to ensure, through prudent fiscal planning, the long-term economic sustainability of the community.”*

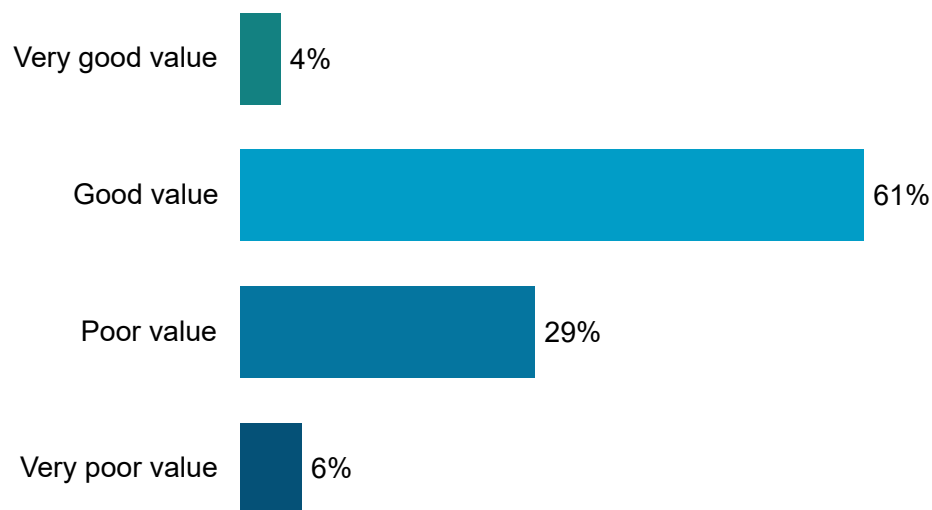


## 2.6.1 Value for Tax Dollars Spent

Survey respondents were asked to consider the above statement and then rate the value they receive for their tax dollars. The majority (61%) believe that they receive *good value* for their tax dollars. Conversely, 35% are less positive in their assessment, indicating that they receive either *poor value* or *very poor value* for the taxes they pay to the Town.

Q: Based on the information above, please rate the value that you get for your tax dollars:

Total Respondents: 630



Q: Please explain:

Total Respondents: 97/ 168

Among those who think that they receive *good value* or *very good value* for their tax dollars, their reasons relate to the following:

- General satisfaction with services and value receive/ taxes are reasonable
- Need improvements to and better maintenance of local Infrastructure e.g. roads, water, sewage etc.
- Want to see improvements in snow removal and garbage collection services
- Grey County transfers are perceived as being too high
- Need more investment in recreational and community facilities e.g. indoor pool, racquet courts etc.
- Taxes are high especially for those who do not get essential services such as water and sewage from the Town
- Improvements to traffic congestion, biking infrastructure and road safety are needed.

Perceptions of receiving *poor* or *very poor value* for tax dollars are due to:

- Taxes are high/ not getting value for money/ other areas benefit more than their own
- Need improvements to and better maintenance of local Infrastructure e.g., trees, drainage, roads, etc.
- Grey County transfers are perceived as being too much/ not delivering value for money
- Poor financial management/ wasteful spending/ high staff salaries
- Need better water and sewage management options
- Want to see improvements in snow removal, yard waste and garbage collection services
- Need more investment in recreational and community facilities e.g., indoor pool, pickleball courts, gym etc.
- Improvements to traffic congestion, biking infrastructure and road safety are needed
- Many receive limited municipal services or pay for their own snow plowing and garbage collection services.

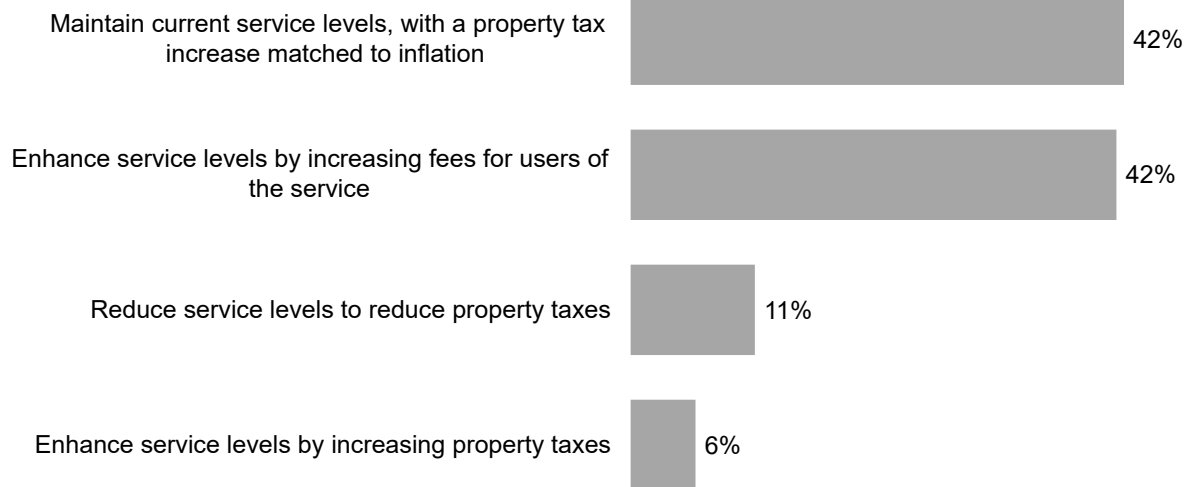


## 2.6.2 Tax Strategy Concepts

Respondents were then asked about their support for specific tax strategies. Support for maintaining current service levels, with a property tax increase matched to inflation and enhancing service levels by increasing fees for users of the service was tied at 42%. The least popular option is enhancing service levels by increasing property taxes, at 6%.

Q: Thinking about the services provided by the Town, which of the following tax strategies do you support?

Total Respondents: 630



### 2.6.3 Reducing Services to Maintain Taxes

Respondents were asked the hypothetical question of which services they would reduce to maintain the current level of taxes. There was a clear preference for reducing services in administrative/ public areas rather than in operational/ maintenance areas. Services that would most likely face reduced spending are Town hall administrative operations, events/ festivals etc., environmental/ climate change initiatives and gallery/ library/ archives and museum services.

Q: If the Town had to reduce services to maintain taxes, which services would you reduce?

Total Respondents: 566/ 128



A significant proportion (30%) of those respondents who made a comment believe that all these services are important/ necessary and should not be reduced. Others pointed to the need for a review of resource allocation to reduce wasteful spending and a review of staffing levels and salaries. Less frequently mentioned areas that could potentially be reduced are funding of tourism/ event promotion and community organizations or a reduction in the frequency of curbside garbage/ recycling collection services and the size of the Town's fleet of vehicles.

## 2.7 The Town's Leadership

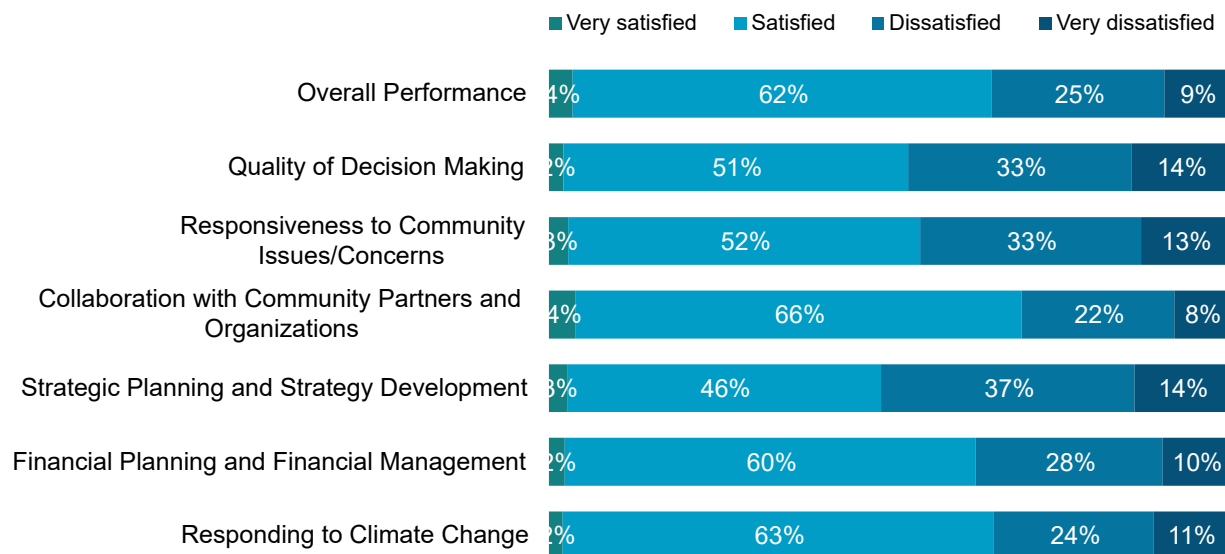
This section of the Town's Resident Satisfaction Survey related to respondents' satisfaction with the Town Council's performance in the current term and their priorities for new initiatives in both the current and next term.

### 2.7.1 Performance of Council

In terms of the Council's overall performance, two-thirds (66%) of respondents were either *very satisfied* or *satisfied*. The Council's performance with respect to *collaboration with community partners and organizations* and *responding to climate change* also scored highly – 70% and 65% of respondents being *very satisfied* or *satisfied*, respectively. The Council's lowest satisfaction score was reported for *strategic planning and strategy development* (49%).

Q: When you think about the current term of the Town of The Blue Mountains Council, how satisfied are you with each of the following areas

Total Respondents: 553-571





## 2.7.2 Prioritizing Current Initiatives

During Council's current term, several new initiatives have been prioritized. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of priority for each initiative.

The three highest priority initiatives (those rated as *high priority*) for respondents were:

- Attracting and retaining family doctors (81%)
- Ensuring accountability and transparency in decision-making (67%)
- Preserving trees and green space throughout the community (64%)

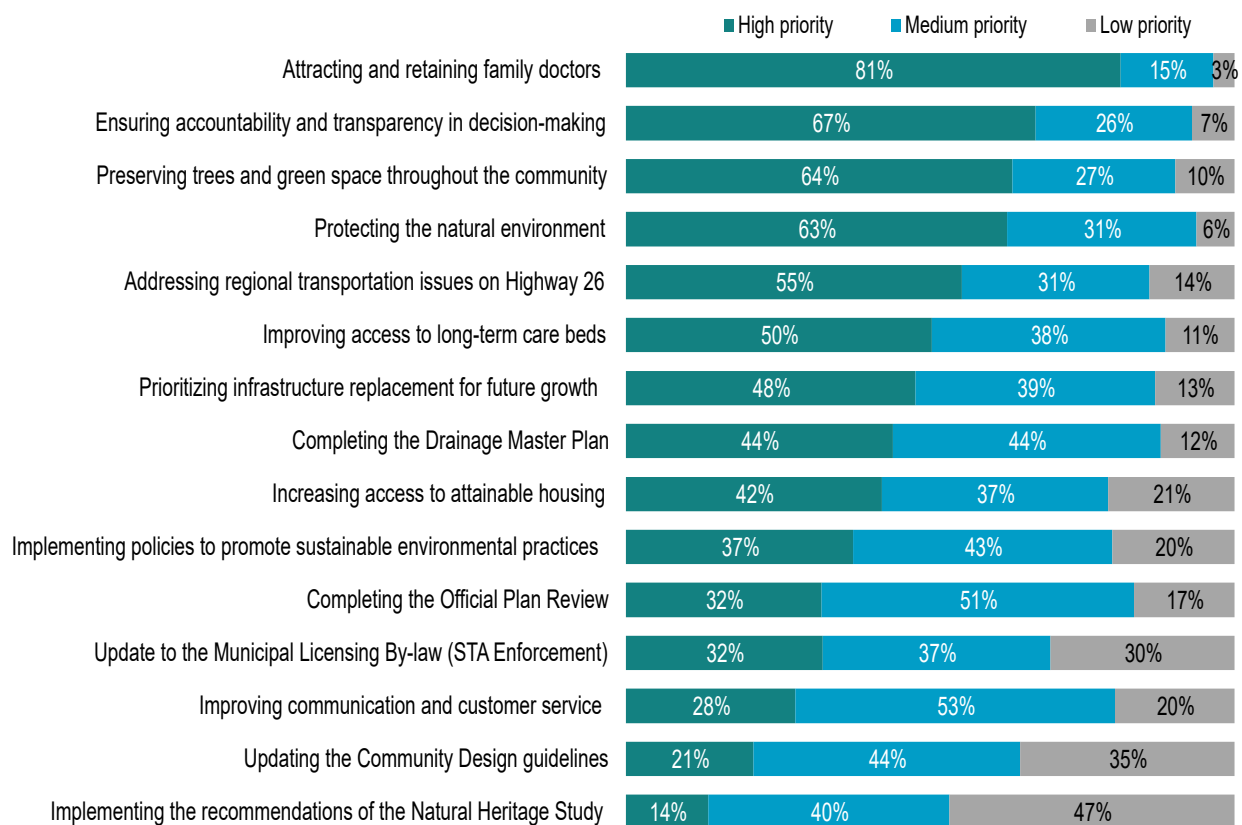
Current initiatives that are less of a priority (those rated as *low priority*) include:

- Implementing the recommendations of the Natural Heritage Study (47%)
- Updating the Community Design guidelines (35%)
- Update to the Municipal Licensing By-law (Short-Term Accommodation Enforcement) (30%).



Q: Throughout the current term of Council, several new initiatives have been prioritized. In your opinion, please indicate your priority for each of the following items.

Total Respondents: 568-578





## 2.7.3 Prioritizing New Initiatives

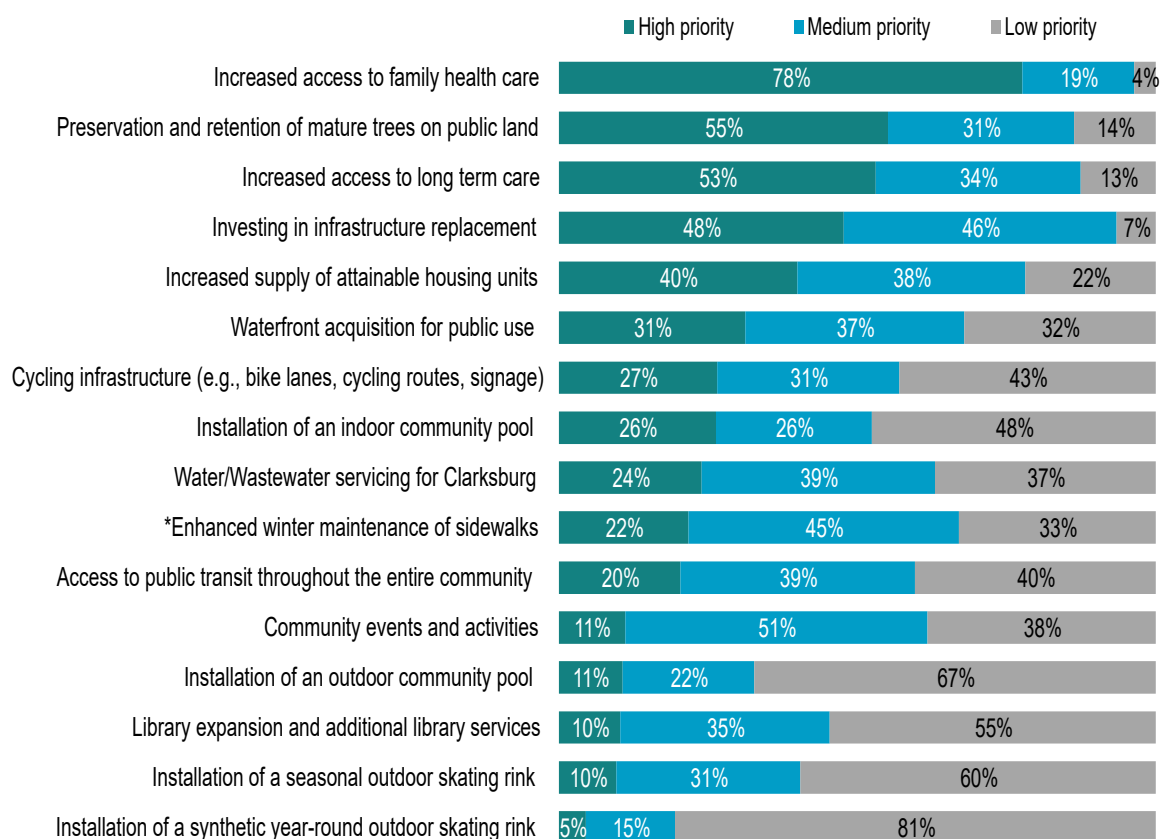
Looking forward to the next term of Council, the top priorities (rated *high priority*) by respondents are:

- Increased access to family health care (78%)
- Preservation and retention of mature trees on public land (55%)
- Increased access to long term care (53%)

When *high priority* and *medium priority* ratings are combined, increasing access to healthcare (both family healthcare and long-term care) still dominates but the importance of investing in the Town's infrastructure replacement is further highlighted, with 94% of respondents rating it as a *high* or *medium priority* for the next Council.

Q: To help guide what projects the Town of The Blue Mountains should focus on during the next term of Council, please indicate your priority for each of the following topics:

Total Respondents: 571-577



\*Enhanced winter maintenance of sidewalks throughout the entire community (where sidewalks exist)

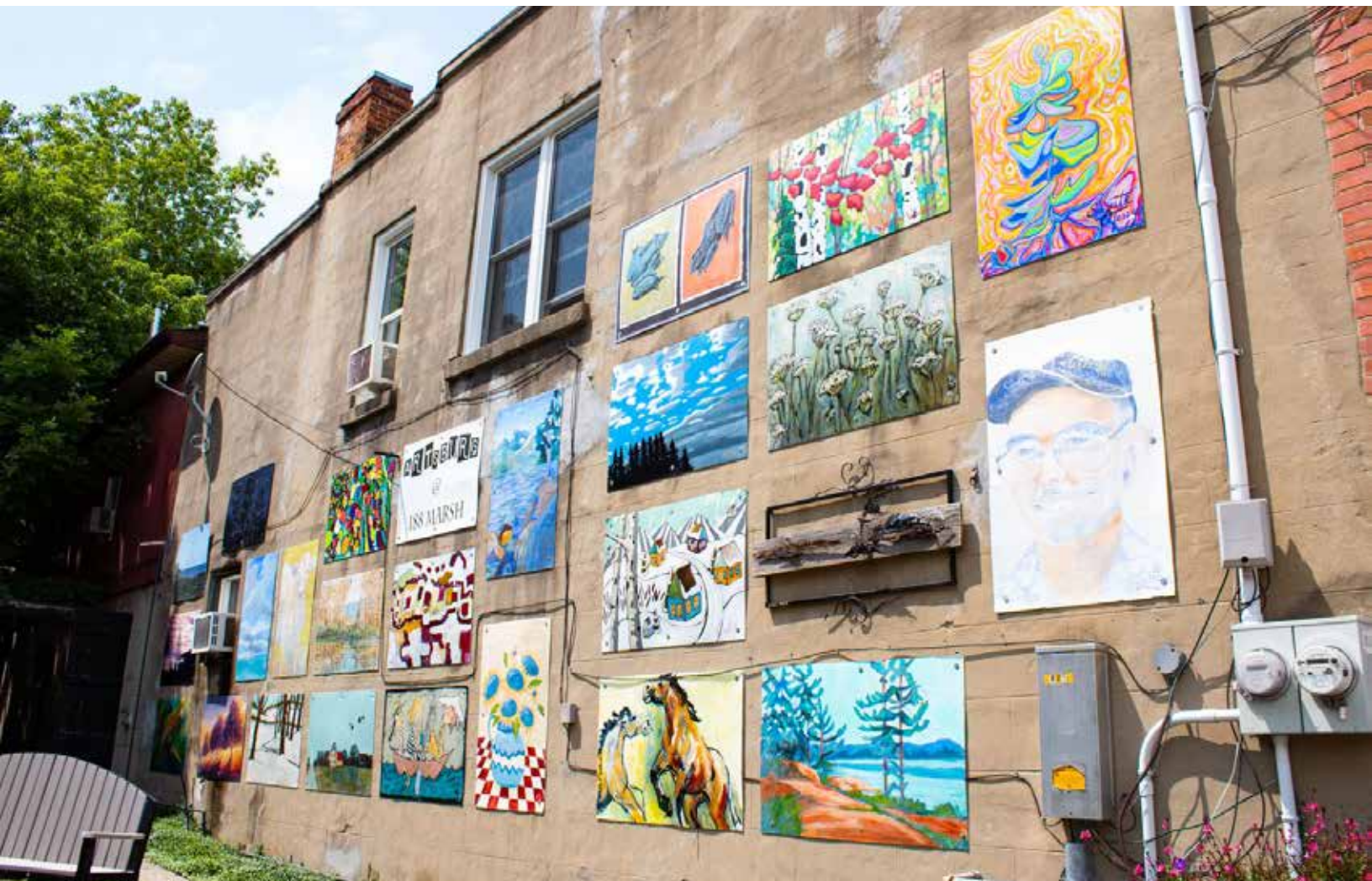
## 2.7.4 Other Priorities

Q: Is there anything else you feel should be a priority for the Town during the next Term of Council?

Total Respondents: 285

Other priorities that Council should consider during the next term include:

- Better planning and management of development projects and the required infrastructure and utilities
- More transparent decision-making and information sharing with residents from Council and Town staff
- More investment in recreational and sports facilities e.g. pickleball/ tennis facilities, gym etc.
- Preservation of the small-town feel and charm
- More effective communications and public engagement efforts
- More robust financial management, reducing taxes and reducing transfers to Grey County



## 2.8 The Future Outlook

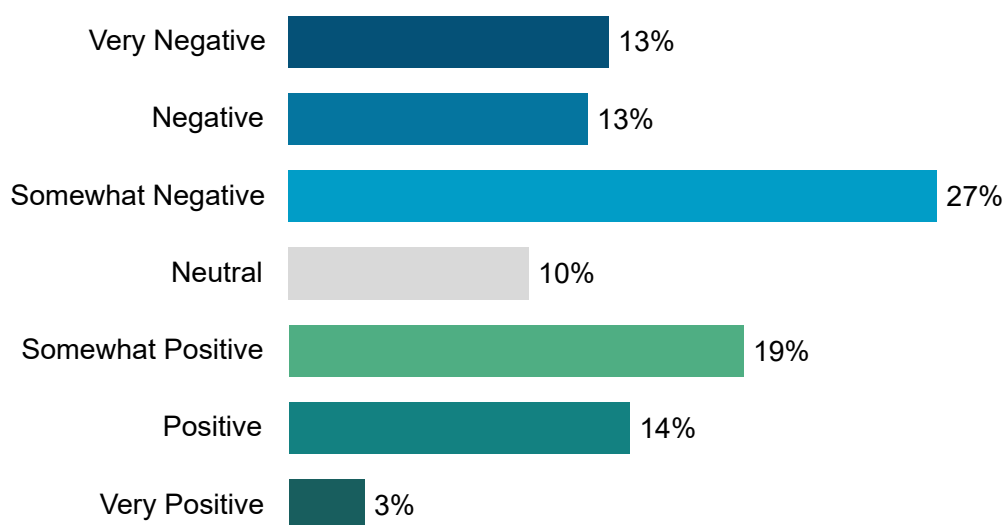
*The Town of The Blue Mountains was ranked as the second-fastest growing municipality in Canada as reported through the 2021 Census. The Town's population increased by 33.7% from 7,025 to 9,390 people.*

### 2.8.1 Impact of Residential Growth and Development

Respondents were asked to rate the overall impact of residential growth and development happening in the community. More than half (53%) of the survey respondents rated the overall impact as negative (*somewhat to very*). Less than 1 in 5 (17%) rated it as *positive* or *very positive*.

Q: How would you rate the overall impact of residential growth and development happening in the community?

Total Respondents: 565. Excludes N/A.



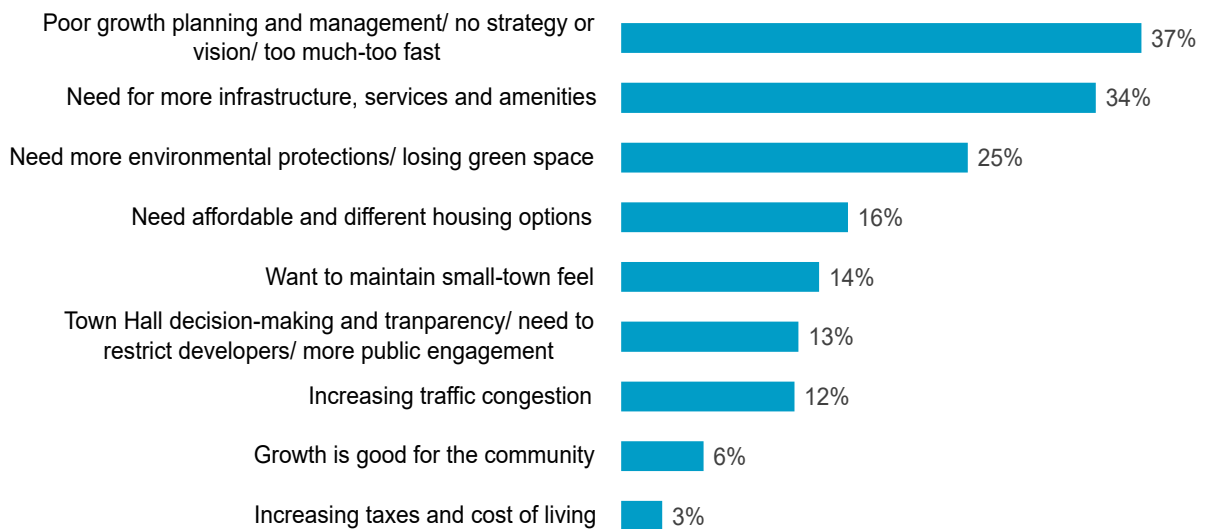


## 2.8.2 Commentary on Recent Community Development and Growth

Many respondents mentioned needs and challenges that have arisen for the community owing to the Town's recent rapid development and growth. The chart below presents the key themes that emerged from a review of the comments submitted.

Q: Please provide any comments you have regarding recent community development and growth.

Total Respondents: 342



### 2.8.3 Most Important Issue Today

At the end of the survey, participants were asked what they considered to be the most important issue facing the Town today.

The cost of living in general, housing affordability and housing attainability was the most frequently mentioned issue. Other key issues mentioned can also be attributed to the pace of growth and development that the Town is currently experiencing.

Q: In your opinion, what is the single most important issue facing the Town of The Blue Mountains today?

Total Respondents: 543

Most Important Issues	%
Cost of living/ housing affordability/ lack of attainable housing	18%
Over-development/ rapid growth/ lack of planning and infrastructure	14%
Loss of community and small -town feel/ preservation of Town's character	11%
Environmental protection/ loss of green space	10%
Council and Town Hall effectiveness/ decision making/ lack of accountability and transparency	10%
Planning/ updating infrastructure and providing municipal services for growing population	10%
Transportation infrastructure/ traffic congestion/ road safety	9%
Lack of healthcare services and family doctors	9%
Managing and controlling growth	7%
Fiscal management/ high taxes/ tax increases/ Grey County transfers	5%
Recreational and public space improvements	3%
Serving the needs of residents/ listening to and respecting the community	3%
Other	2%

## Board Meeting

**Report To:** The Blue Mountains Public Library Board  
**Report Name:** ADM.25.07 Accessibility Report  
**Prepared by:** Jennifer Murley, CEO

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### A. Recommendations

That this Board receive as information ADM.25.07 entitled “Accessibility Report”.

### B. Background

In the 2024 Action Plan, completing a physical audit of GLAM spaces was identified as a priority. Following the Board's review of the audit results for L.E. Shore, an audit of the BMPL's second branch, the Craigleith Heritage Depot, was conducted by the CEO and Museum Curator, in collaboration with the Manager of Facilities and Fleet at the Town of The Blue Mountains.

This report presents the findings of the Craigleith Heritage Depot's accessibility audit, outlining the responsibilities and urgency of each identified item. The [L.E. Shore Memorial Library's accessibility audit](#) is also provided for reference.

This report will also serve as a basis for exploring funding opportunities to ensure that all GLAM spaces are accessible, safe, and welcoming for people of all abilities. Additional supporting reports, including [the 2022 Gap Analysis Update](#) and [the 2018 Building Condition Reports](#), were consulted during the process.

### C. Accessibility Standards for Community Museums

As highlighted in Unity Studio's accessibility audit of the L.E. Shore Memorial Library, “While the Ontario Building Code and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act set minimum legal requirements, a building that is more inclusive and accessible is more likely to stand the test of time.”

Community museums, including the Craigleith Heritage Depot, must adhere to the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) and the accessibility standards outlined in Ontario's Standards for Community Museums. This includes not only making exhibitions accessible but also thoughtfully designing the building and grounds to meet the needs of all visitors, ensuring safety for staff, visitors, and property.

The Craigleith Heritage Depot holds significant value as a historic structure within the community. Many proposed improvements would require significant infrastructure upgrades. However, enhancing accessibility is essential to preserve the building's historic character while

also expanding opportunities for public engagement with local culture and education. By doing so, the Museum will foster a more inclusive environment.

As the L.E. Shore audit emphasizes, “Safety, independence, and dignity are paramount in making a space accessible.” These principles should guide both short-term upgrades and long-term planning, ensuring the Craigleith Heritage Depot becomes a more welcoming and accessible space for all.

## D. Summary of Results

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This section provides a summary of the audit findings for the Craigleith Heritage Depot. For reference, the audit for the L.E. Shore Memorial Library has been included in the appendix.

### Parking & Building Approach

The Craigleith Heritage Depot is in Craigleith, visible from Highway 26 and near popular tourist attractions such as Northwinds Beach, the Georgian Trail, and the Village at Blue Mountain. While the parking lot is conveniently located for visitors, it presents significant accessibility, security, and maintenance challenges. It is a high-traffic area, with tourists using it for vehicle charging, beach access, and/or carpooling to Blue Mountain Village.



There are two accessible parking spaces, close to the main entrance, that are clearly marked. However, the overall lot presents several barriers for people with accessibility needs:

1. **Uneven Surfaces:** The parking lot is made of gravel, and the ground surrounding parking spaces is uneven, which poses difficulties for individuals using mobility devices or those with limited mobility. Potholes and loose gravel also present tripping hazards for people with vision impairments.
2. **Lack of Marked Parking Spaces:** The absence of clear parking lines makes it difficult for drivers to identify appropriate parking spots, particularly for those with mobility challenges. Without defined lines, vehicles may park inefficiently, reducing the available spaces for those who need accessible spots.





### Outdoor Areas

The north-west deck is currently inaccessible to visitors with mobility impairments due to stairs and a gravel path, which are difficult to navigate with wheelchairs or mobility aids. While three outdoor benches are available, two are located on the grass without accessible paths. The third bench is situated on the inaccessible north-west deck. The ski chair lift on the back deck provides accessible seating, but adding another seating option would further improve accessibility.

### Building Entrance

The brick walkway leading to the main entrance poses a tripping hazard due to uneven surfaces. Although no major obstacles are present, the outdoor book return is not clearly marked as a BMPL book return, patrons must go on the grass to access it, and its height poses challenges for individuals using mobility devices.



The main entrance features power-operated doors with standard round push buttons.

While these are acceptable, best practice includes buttons accessible from various heights. The doors are heavy and tend to stick, making them difficult for individuals with limited mobility. The sticking can also cause the doors to swing back unexpectedly, potentially injuring those waiting to enter.

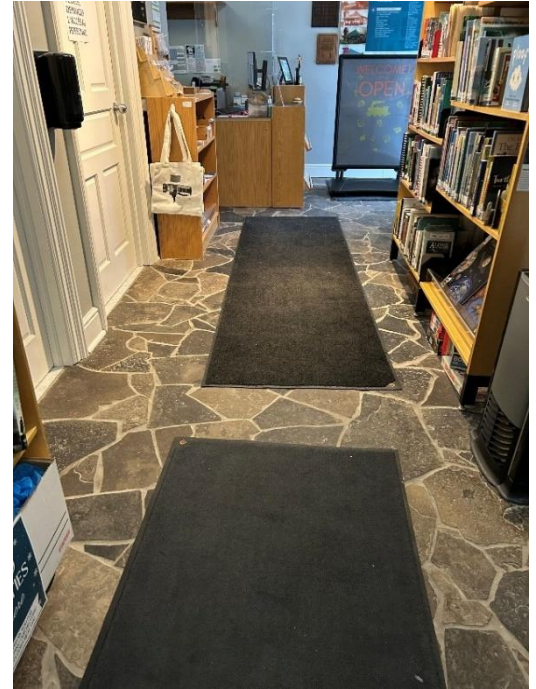
There is a separate staff entrance that was not designed with accessibility in mind. While staff typically do not use the main entrance, it is important that staff with accessibility needs are able to access it. The vestibule at this entrance is small, and the security access panel is awkwardly positioned next to the stairs leading to the basement/storage area. It would be inaccessible to someone using a mobility device. The style of panel, which has a keypad with raised buttons, is accessible.

### Doorways and Paths of Travel

The main entrance of the building is not wide enough for two-way traffic, making passing difficult. The flooring in this area is uneven flagstone, creating a tripping hazard for staff and visitors, particularly for those using mobility devices. This issue was also noted in the 2018 TBM Building Condition Report.

The archive and turret room doorways are original to the building and do not meet minimum accessibility requirements, limiting access for visitors with mobility impairments or those using wheelchairs. While there is an alternative entrance for the archive room, the turret room remains inaccessible.

To improve accessibility, door handles could be replaced to allow individuals to open doors with a closed fist or by using a service dog. The staff entrance features a tap-system for locking/unlocking, which enhances accessibility.



**Archive Room Doorway**



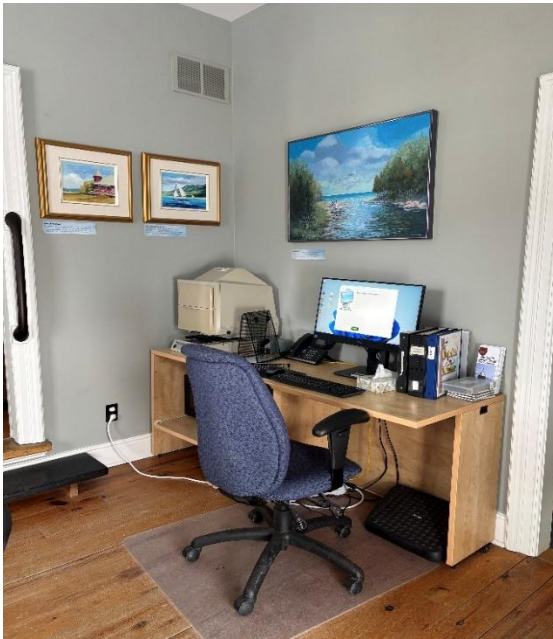
**Turret Room Doorway**

### Library

The library collection is located near the main entrance, but the shelving is outdated. The materials are stored too high or too low, making them inaccessible for some visitors. As noted in Unity's audit of L.E. Shore, which has similar shelving, "the top two shelves and bottom of the lowest shelf are not within accessible reach."

There is one public access computer located outside of the Curator's office, but it can only be accessed by stairs, through a doorway that is not accessible to individuals using mobility devices. Additionally, the emergency exit door lacks an automatic door opener, even though it is occasionally used as an accessible entrance.

The reception desk is not accessible for either staff or visitors. There is insufficient space for staff to sit comfortably, and the public-facing side lacks knee space for individuals using mobility devices.



**Public Access Computer**



**Reception Desk**

### Museum

While there are clear pathways throughout the museum, space constraints make navigation difficult for individuals using mobility devices, particularly when the space is crowded. Signage is available in print, and staff are on hand to provide verbal interpretations for visitors who cannot read print.

### Archive Room

The archive room, located in the southwest corner of the building, is only accessible via stairs. There is an exit door that provides wheelchair access, but it lacks automatic door openers and is only 30 inches wide—narrower than the 32-inch minimum required by the Ontario Building Code. During winter, the door can freeze, making it even more difficult to access.

The only public access computer and microfilm machine are also located in this room. The 2018 TBM Building Condition Report recommended the installation of a ramp to allow mobility device users to access all public areas inside the building.



**Curator's Office**

The Curator's Office is located off the archive room, making it only accessible via stairs or through an exterior door, which may present challenges for visitors with mobility impairments.



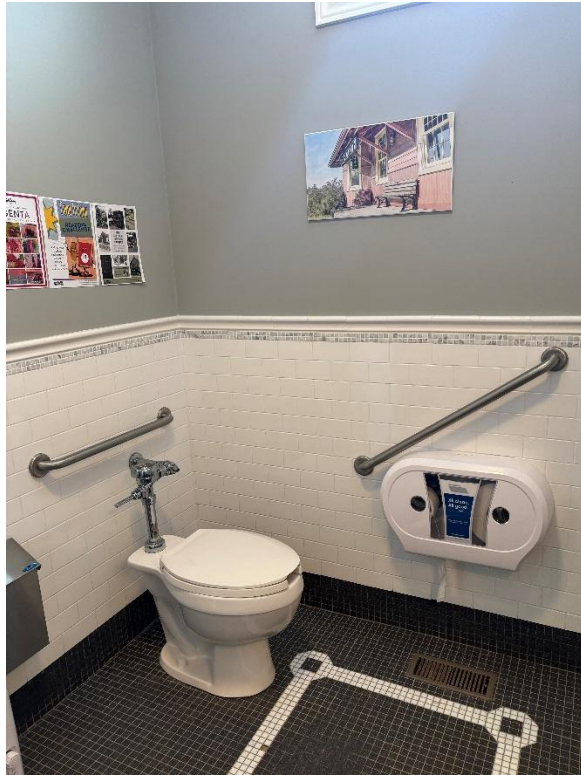
The tiled "subway" floors in this area are deteriorating. The uneven and deteriorating tiles pose a significant tripping hazard for all visitors. Furthermore, loose or broken tiles can create sharp edges that may cause cuts or scrapes.

The deteriorating floor can also damage office supplies or equipment. Additionally, the Curator's office does not have a door, which poses a series of challenges for staff and patrons

who may find it difficult to focus and communicate. This also poses a risk in terms of privacy and confidentiality.

**Washrooms**

There is one universal staff washroom and one universal public washroom. Neither washroom have power door operators, and the public washroom lock is a small push button, which can be difficult for individuals with flexibility and dexterity issues. While there are grab bars and automatic hand dryers present, the soap dispensers are push type, which can again pose challenges for those with flexibility and dexterity issues. The flooring mimics the 1" ceramic tiling in the Curator's office, and similarly, the tiles are in poor condition, popping out in certain areas. This was noted in the 2018 TBM Building Condition Report, in addition to a gap being noted between the wall tiles and the floor tiles. The staff washroom contains a filing cabinet and other small items that require storage. These should be moved to create more accessible space, and a dedicated storage closet should be purchased if necessary.

**Public Washroom****Staff Washroom****Basement Workspace & Storage**

The basement, used for artifact and archival storage, can only be accessed by stairs, which creates challenges for staff who must transport materials. The 2022 Gap Analysis Report acknowledged this issue and suggested the installation of a dumbwaiter or a prep station on the first floor to address immediate needs.

The basement workspace is small and cluttered, with obstructed walkways that make it difficult for mobility device users to navigate. The lack of natural light and ergonomic furniture also presents challenges. At the sit-down workstation, there is not suitable knee space.

The ceiling height in the basement varies, posing discomfort and safety risks for individuals taller than 5'4". Although the space was reorganized in





Fall 2024 to improve storage, further investigation into first-floor storage options will be considered to enhance accessibility and safety.



### **Kitchen**

The basement kitchenette is obstructed by waste receptacles.

### **Signage and Wayfinding**

In general, like L.E. Shore, the building has plenty of signage, but it lacks consistency and features to support wayfinding.

There is no clear indication outside of the building that it houses a museum, archive, and library, or that it is a branch of the Blue Mountains Public Library. Additionally, the outdoor book drop does not have appropriate signage identifying that it is the property of the BMPL. The large outdoor panel is frosted and obstructed by shrubbery, significantly limiting its visibility. Furthermore, the sign "Craigleith Heritage Depot," fails to convey the building's function or its connection to the BMPL.

There is a lack of clear signage inside the building distinguishing the library, archive, and museum areas. Signage does not have raised characters, symbols, and Braille.

The basement emergency exit sign (pictured) is not above or directly next to the emergency exit.

There is no emergency exit sign in the archive room door – which is one of the emergency exit doors.

The lack of clear signage distinguishing the library and museum areas within the building can disorient visitors and hinder their ability to navigate the space effectively.

### Emergency Systems

There are visual fire alarms in some parts of the building, but not in the basement where staff often work alone.

Emergency exits, other than the main entrance, are not accessible. The door frames do not meet the minimum requirement under the Ontario Building Code.

Most fire extinguishers are mounted in corners, next to doors. The L.E. Shore audit indicated that all emergency systems should be mounted within accessible reach, and away from corners of walls or other obstacles so that someone using a wheeled mobility device has the clear space to approach and operate the equipment.



### Other Considerations

In the late Fall of 2024, the collection and main storage space at the Craigeleith Heritage Depot was reorganized. Despite this important exercise, storage remains an issue on both floors of the building, creating obstacles.

## E. Suggested Improvements

Like L.E. Shore, it is clear from this site review that there are space challenges within the building that affect functionality and accessibility. Unlike L.E. Shore, as noted previously, the

Museum is located in an historical building, which presents additional challenges in terms of structural limitations and architectural preservation.

Below is a chart outlining the suggested improvements for the Museum using the same framework as L.E. Shore.

High impact improvements are likely high priority improvements, as they are anticipated to make a big difference in overall accessibility.

Lower impact improvements will still enhance accessibility but are not necessarily addressing direct barriers to participation or safety issues.

A number of high impact improvements are larger projects and will be more costly to implement and will therefore likely need to be implemented over a longer time frame.

Lower impact improvements, while also likely lower priority, may be easier and cheaper to implement in the short term while planning of higher priority upgrades is in progress.

#	Suggested Improvement	High Impact	Low Impact	Short Term	Long Term
1	Pave parking and clearly identify parking spaces.				
2	Rethink strategy for amenities on route to main entrances (book returns, benches, etc)				
3	Provide accessible seating in outdoor areas: seats at accessible height with backs, options with and without arms, and that contrast with surroundings.				
4	Provide a designated service dog relief area with waste bin.				
5	Provide a new accessible reception desk and workstation in basement. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include standing height and seated height sections</li> <li>• Provide knee clearance height of 685 mm</li> <li>• Design waste and recycling areas into desk so knee space areas will not be used for this purpose.</li> </ul>				





6	Provide variable height desks for staff				
7	<p>Replace or modify library shelving so that all items are within accessible reach. Select/fabricate product without any sharp edges.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shelves should be between 400-1200 mm above floor finish, or 460-1100 mm for better practice.</li> </ul>				
8	<p>Provide a more accessible book return</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Replace and/or add permanent signage that indicates it is a BMPL book drop</li> <li>Provide access to book return via hardscaped pathway. Concrete is preferred.</li> </ul>				
9	<p>Improve accessibility of kitchen and staff areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Add a door to the Curator's office</li> <li>Provide single lever faucets on sinks</li> <li>Fridge should be moved to a more accessible area for staff.</li> </ul>				
10	Provide variable height desks for staff				
11	Fix or replace uneven flagstone flooring in the main entrance/library				
12	Replace the subway flooring in the washrooms and Curator's office				
13	Purchase a storage closet for the supplies in the staff washroom				



14	Improve accessibility of the washrooms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Replace doorhandles</li> <li>• Declutter staff washroom</li> <li>• Purchase &amp; Install no-touch soap dispensers for public washrooms</li> </ul>				
15	Replace old style exit signs with new green running man signs				
16	Create a comprehensive and consistent signage strategy for the building that is consistent with L.E. Shore. Provide new signage for rooms and spaces that is high contrast, with raised characters/symbols and Braille, and located in the correct place per OBC. Ensure surface of signs is matte and does not cause reflections or glare.				
17	Add a vision strip to entrance glazing. Yellow is considered the best colour for vision strips. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Position strip between 1350-1500 mm per OBC and CSA B651</li> </ul>				
18	Replace existing door hinges with clear hinges to increase clear width of existing doors.				

Based on an analysis of the accessibility audit of the L.E. Shore Memorial Library and the Craighleith Heritage Depot, the chart below identifies improvements that can be completed with minimal resources, who is responsible for completion, potential funding sources, and a timeline for completion. It is important to note that should Council approve a renovation or expansion of any of these facilities, each audit should be referenced, and timelines may be adjusted. It should also be noted that multiple items identified as the Town's responsibility, once costed, can be amalgamated into one capital project completed in 2025.

Major enhancements related to renovations and capital improvements, such as the renovation of washrooms, paving of parking lots, raising floors, and installing concrete ramps, will remain the focus of grant proposals, and pending Council's decisions regarding the MURFA and

expansion, included in future capital budgets (at Council's discretion). The replacement of shelving at both facilities can be included in future budgets, at the Board's discretion.

Item	Facility	Responsibility	Funding Source	Timeline
<p>Add tactile attention indicators to curb ramps or places where sidewalks are flush with vehicular areas:</p> <p><b>SAMPLE PHOTO</b></p> 	L.E. Shore	Town	Town	2025
<p>Add a vision strip to entrance glazing. Yellow is considered the best colour for vision strips.</p> <p>Position strip between 1350-1500 mm per OBC and CSA B651</p> <p><b>SAMPLE PHOTO</b></p> 	Both	Town	BMPL	2025
Resolve issue with unprotected doorswing of the courtyard door	L.E. Shore	Town	Town	2025
Rethink strategy for amenities on route to main entrances (wastebins, benches, book returns, bike racks)	L.E. Shore	Both	N/A	

<p>Provide accessible seating in outdoor areas: seats at accessible height with backs, options with and without arms, and that contrast with surroundings</p> <p><b>SAMPLE PHOTO</b></p> 	Both	BMPL	Town	2025
<p>Provide a designated service dog relief area with waste bin</p> <p><b>SAMPLE PHOTO</b></p> 	Both	Town	Town	2025
Place seating/obstacles in corridors so that they don't project into the path of travel	L.E. Shore	BMPL	N/A	Spring 2025
Replace existing door hinges with swing-clear hinges to increase clear width of existing doors.	Both	Town	Town	2025
Provide a new accessible reception desk	L.E. Shore	BMPL	BMPL	RFP to go out in Spring of 2025,



				with the anticipated project completion by the end of the year.
Provide a new accessible reception desk	CHD	BMPL	BMPL	Include in 2026 Budget
Increase amount of artificial lighting in the gallery (and library) by changing all bulbs to modern LED with a higher output	L.E. Shore	Town	Town	2025
Reduce clutter in the building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff workspaces</li> <li>• Staff washroom</li> <li>• Dungeon</li> <li>• Main pathways, including seating in the lobby at L.E. Shore</li> </ul>	Both	BMPL	BMPL *Will include the purchase of a storage closet for CHD and shelving for workstations at L.E. Shore	Spring 2025
Relocate emergency and first aid equipment so that it is in an accessible location and within accessible reach	L.E. Shore	BMPL	N/A	Summer 2025
Replace old style exit signs with new green running man signs	Both	Town	Town	2025
Create a comprehensive and consistent signage strategy for the building that is consistent with L.E. Shore. Provide new signage for rooms and spaces that is high contrast, with raised characters/symbols and Braille, and located in the correct place per OBC. Ensure surface of signs is matte and does not cause reflections or glare.	Both	BMPL	BMPL	Include in 2026 Budget
Improve accessibility of kitchen and staff areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide single lever faucets on sinks</li> <li>• Paper towel dispensers should be within 500 mm reach of sinks</li> </ul>	Both	Both	Both	2025

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fridge should be modified or replaced so that the door opens</li> </ul>				
Replace the subway tiles in the Curator's office and washrooms.	CHD	Town	Town	2025

## F. Next Steps

The BMPL CEO, Museum Curator, and TBM Manager of Fleet and Facilities will work together on a bid for all improvements that can be completed within the 2025 Capital project budget. The results of each audit will be integrated into future advocacy efforts for renovations and expansion and used to support capital budget proposals and future grant applications for facilities. Suggestions for assistive technology will be referenced when purchasing new technology for the BMPL.

## G. Strategic Alignment

Funding and participating in this comprehensive assessment are consistent with the following overarching Strategic Priorities in the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan:

1. Community Hubs  
Vision: Provide spaces to connect, explore, and create.  
Goal: Provide technologically connected spaces.
2. Empowering Services  
Vision: Create a service model that reaches those who live, work, and play in the Town of The Blue Mountains.  
Goal: Provide diverse GLAM services, collections, and programs.
3. Organizational Excellence  
Priority: Grow BMPL as a key partner and community resource.  
Goal: Be a Key Partner with the municipality.  
Goal: Provide inclusive and engaging communications with and to the community.

It is also consistent with the following values of the organization:

1. Accessibility
2. Inclusivity
3. Community Centered
4. Respectful
5. Responsive
6. Equitable

Moreover, the mission, vision, and under-pinning themes of the BMPL all focus on inclusivity and responsiveness to the evolving needs and interests of the diverse, growing population of the Town of The Blue Mountains.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Murley, CEO

[LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca](mailto:LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca)

519-599-3681 extension 148

In consultation with:

Alessia Farris, BMPL Museum Curator

Phil Pesek, TBM Manager of Fleet & Facilities

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**01 Introduction**

**02 Summary of  
Current Conditions**

**03 Owner Concerns  
& Aspirations**

**04 Areas of Success**

**05 Areas of Concern**

**06 Suggested Improvements**

**07 Accessibility  
Improvements Matrix**

**08 Conclusion**

**01**



Introduction

Unity Design Studio was commissioned by the Town of The Blue Mountains and the Blue Mountains Public Library to review the accessibility of the L.E Shore Memorial Library at 173 Bruce St South in Thornbury.

Accessibility concerns have come to their attention through complaints and feedback from members. The library is a landmark of the community and the Board wants it to be accessible for all users.

The benefits of a built environment that is as inclusive as possible are supported by the demographics: as of 2017, 22% of Canadians over the age of 15 had self-identified as having at least one disability, and seniors account for 38% of that number.

1000 people turn 65 every day in Canada, and the growth rate for seniors is four times faster than the population at large.

When one considers family members of people with disabilities, an aging population, and temporary or situational disabilities, it is clear that disability affects most if not all of us in some way, at some point during our lives.

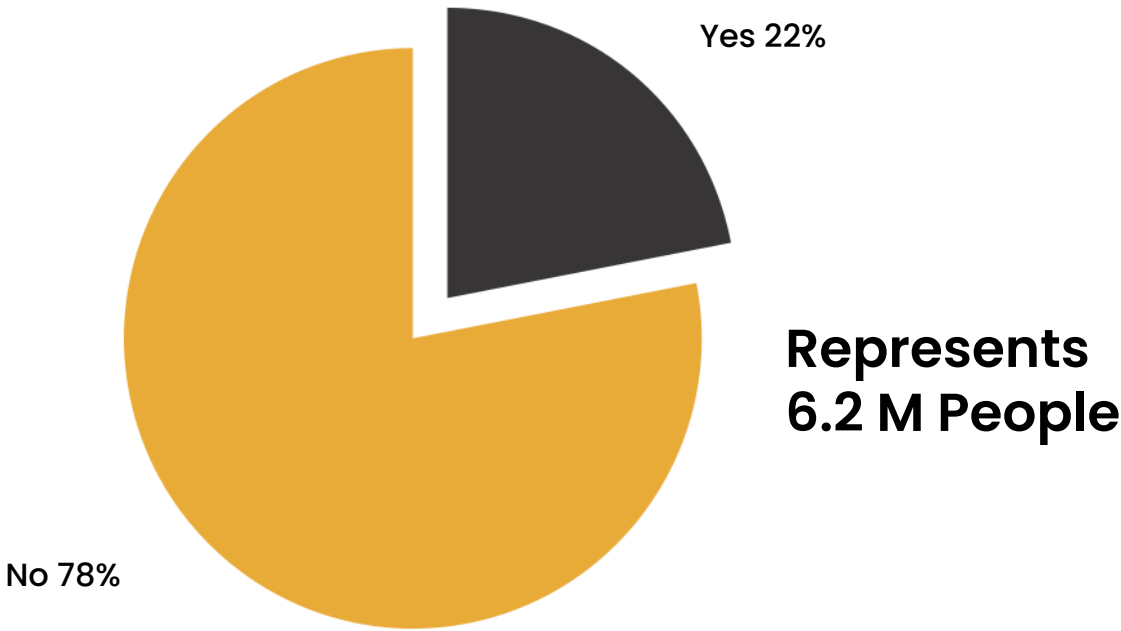
This is reflected in public opinion on accessibility: 93% of Canadians believe that accessibility is a basic human right, and 91% believe that accessibility should be a priority.

There is also a growing desire for a more sustainable built environment, and part of that is future-proofing our buildings so that they will continue to be useful for as long as possible.

A building that is more inclusive and more useful to a broader range of people is more likely to successfully stand the test of time.

While the Ontario Building Code (OBC) and the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) contain many requirements pertaining to accessibility, these are minimum legal requirements in the province of Ontario.

Canadians aged 15 years and over who have at least one disability.



From the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability from Statistics Canada

	Permanent	Temporary	Situational
Hear	 Deaf	 Ear infection	 Bartender
Speak	 Non-verbal	 Laryngitis	 Heavy accent
Move	 Wheelchair user	 Broken leg	 Parent with stroller
Touch	 One arm	 Arm injury	 Arms full
See	 Blind	 Cataract	 Distraction

The building code update process moves slowly, and as a result, designs that only meet the barrier-free requirements of the building code will not provide the level of accessibility that is required to ensure meaningful access to our built environment.

Building codes are also not very inclusive of the spectrum of disability experience: they remain very focused on mobility disabilities and to a much lesser extent sensory disabilities.

The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Ontario Human Rights Code both supersede the Ontario Building Code and AODA.

The protected status of people with disabilities is enshrined in the Ontario Human Rights Code, which states that every person in Ontario has the right to equal treatment with respect to goods, services and facilities.

This creates an obligation for businesses operating in Ontario to make their facilities accessible, and a failure to provide equal access to a facility or equal treatment constitutes a violation of the Human Rights Code and provides basis for a human rights complaint.

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has indicated that reliance on relevant building codes is not an acceptable defense to a Human Rights complaint.

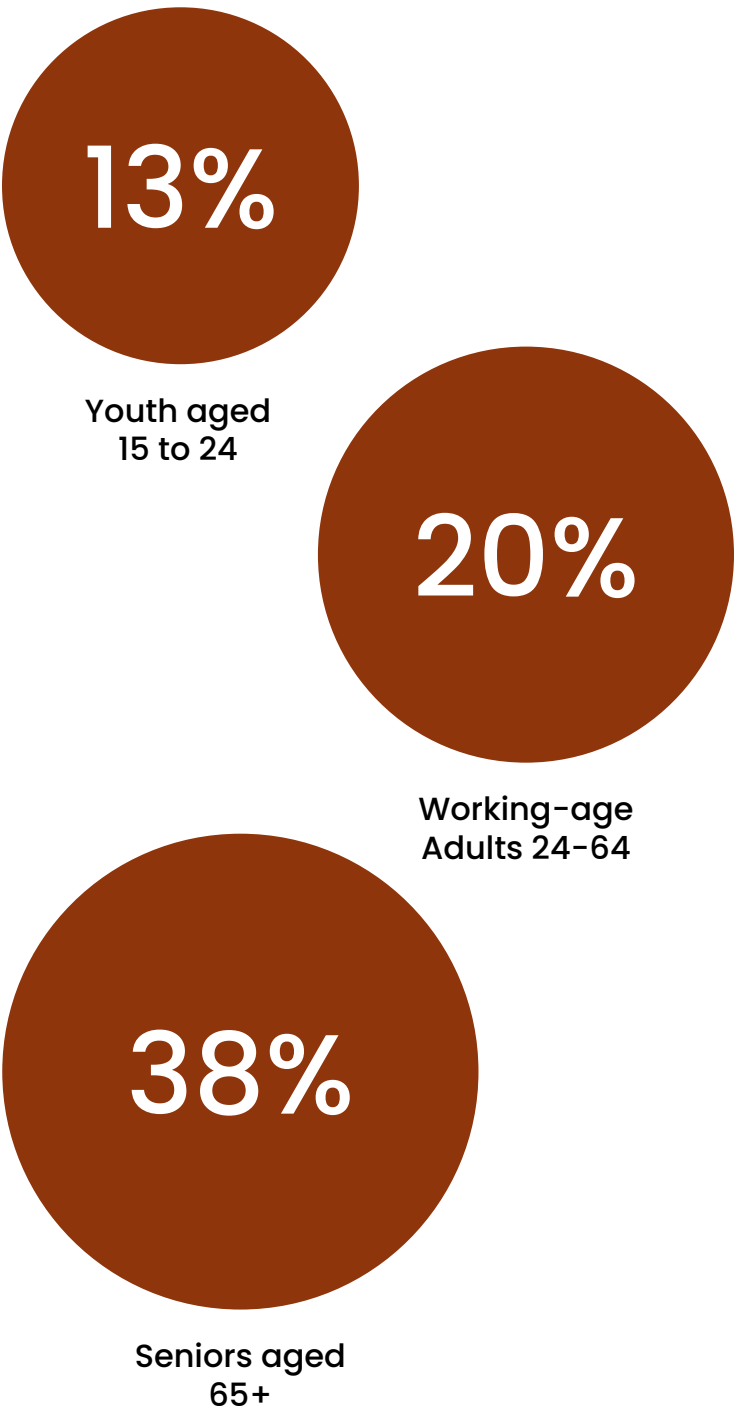
Truly meaningful access comes from an understanding of how people with disabilities experience space differently, and holistic design that considers that experience from the point of arrival to the use of the services and spaces in the building.

Unity Design Studios’ scope of work included a visit to the building to assess current conditions as they relate to accessibility, and to subsequently propose various possible improvements that could be undertaken to improve the meaningful accessibility of the site.

Several sources were used as guides in conducting this review: the CSA B651 Accessible Design for the Built Environment standard, Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) criteria, principles of Universal Design, and to a lesser extent the OBC and the AODA.

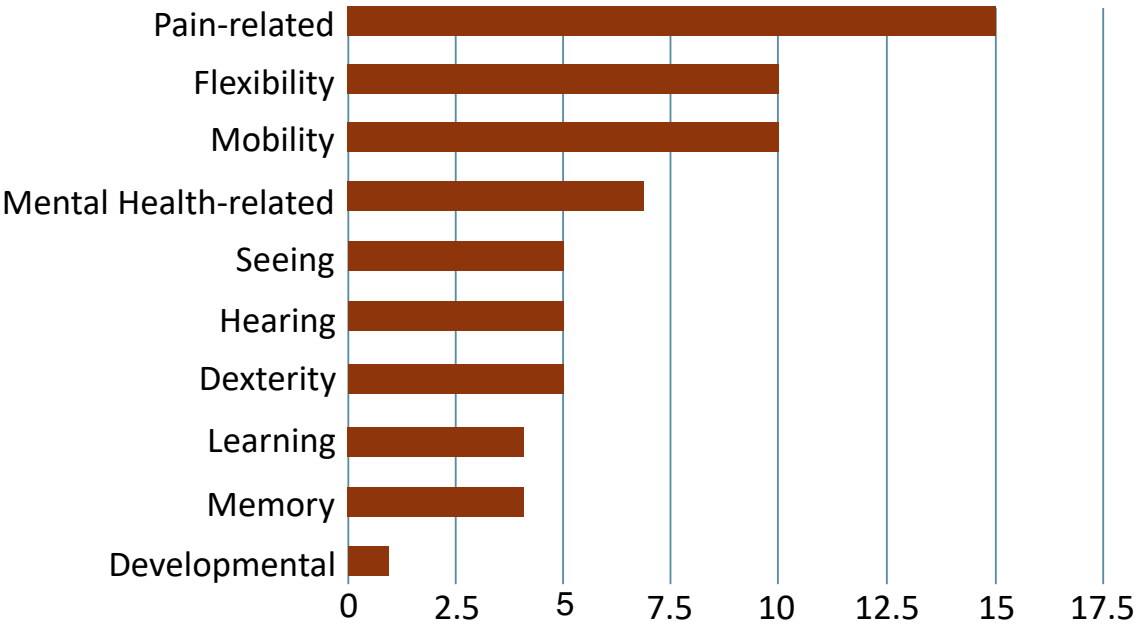
This review is not to be considered an audit of the building’s compliance with current OBC or AODA requirements.

Canadians aged 15 years and over who have at least one disability.




From the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability from Statistics Canada

Disability by Type



From the 2017 Canadian Survey on Disability from Statistics Canada



- 
- 01 Introduction
  - 02 Summary of Current Conditions**
  - 03 Owner Concerns & Aspirations
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# 02



# Parking & Building Approach

The site is in Thornbury and easily accessed by car, but although connected to neighbouring towns by a transit system, within Thornbury itself there is no public transit.

There is plenty of parking on site, including four designated accessible parking spaces, which exceeds the AODA and CSA B651 requirements. The parking spaces lacked access aisles and had a 5% slope. Their location also requires users to cross a vehicular lane or pass behind parked vehicles to get to the main entrance.

Adjacent streets leading up to the library were assessed as part of the accessibility of the site for users arriving on foot.

The pedestrian crossing at Bruce Street S and Napier Street E lacked tactile attention indicators and zebra crosswalk markings.

Tactile attention indicators are also required at any curb ramps or places where sidewalks are flush with vehicular areas.

These features are important for the safety of people who are blind or partially sighted.

Entrances are defined architecturally by the pergolas, the shape of the roofs, and the curved wall of the courtyard. These architectural features can help people locate the building entrances.





02      **Summary of Current Conditions**

Paths of travel to the entrances are wide enough to accommodate two-way pedestrian traffic and include rest areas, however the benches at the Bruce Street entrance are not accessible.

Seating located along the path of travel should be situated on a firm and stable surface, with adjacent space for a wheeled mobility device or service dog.

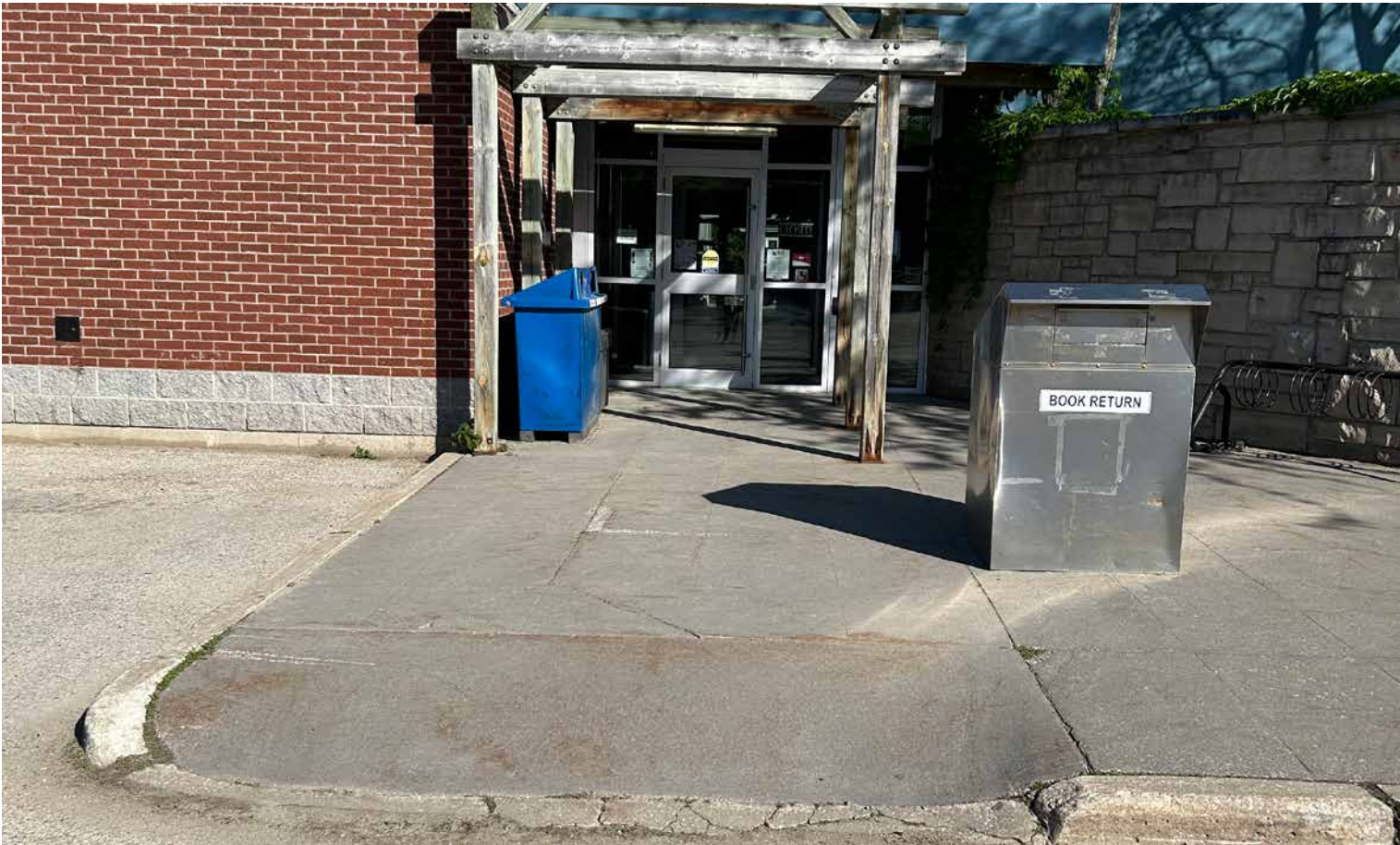
Obstacles along pathways leading up to the building can impede people with vision loss and make travel challenging for those using mobility devices.

Obstacles such as waste receptacles and the book return should be colour-contrasted with their surroundings and placed in amenity zones that have colour and textural contrast from the primary path of travel.

The door to the courtyard swings out into the path of travel, which is a safety hazard. It's currently marked by pylons, but the remaining space on the sidewalk is too narrow.

The door should swing inwards, be removed entirely, or the walkway could be widened and the door swing protected by a wall or cane-detectable guard.

Parking & Building Approach





**Outdoor Areas**

Doors into the courtyard have a 200mm step down into the courtyard area with no access ramps or sloping walkways, which make this space inaccessible to people in wheeled mobility devices.

Having a step right on the threshold of a door is also a safety hazard.

The outdoor seating areas require pathways that are firm and stable to be accessible for people in wheeled mobility devices or with blindness and low vision.



Outdoor seating options should include styles that have backs, heel space, arms and no arms, as well as an appropriate seat height.

Muskoka chairs, which are currently provided in the courtyard, can be challenging to get up from due to their low, rear-sloping seats.

Seating should also contrast with surroundings to make it easier to locate for people with reduced vision.





**Building Entrance**

Both main entrance doors are located under small canopies that provide some weather protection for people entering the building, and are on power door operators.

Push buttons for the power doors are round button types, which are acceptable, but best practice would be to provide buttons that can be pushed from a variety of heights.

The push button for the Bruce Street entrance may be better relocated to the nearest wood column. Opening and hold open times for the power door operators are sufficient.

Current Ontario Building Code and CSA B651 standard require a minimum accessible door width of 860mm.

The entrance doors currently have a clear opening width of 850mm. Change the hinge style to swing-clear hinges to meet this minimum clear space. The threshold height between interior and exterior is excellent.

Glazing should have vision strips at two heights to ensure glazing is not mistaken for openings.

The entrance glazing has horizontal mullions, but best practice would be to add another contrast strip at a higher level.





The size of the vestibules is somewhat smaller than current OBC requirements, but meets or is close to CSA B651 requirements.

The security access panel is mounted too high and too close to the wall – someone using a wheeled mobility device would not be able to access it.

It is also better for the device to contrast with its mounting surface so it can be more easily located by someone with low vision.

The style of panel, which has a keypad with raised buttons, is accessible.





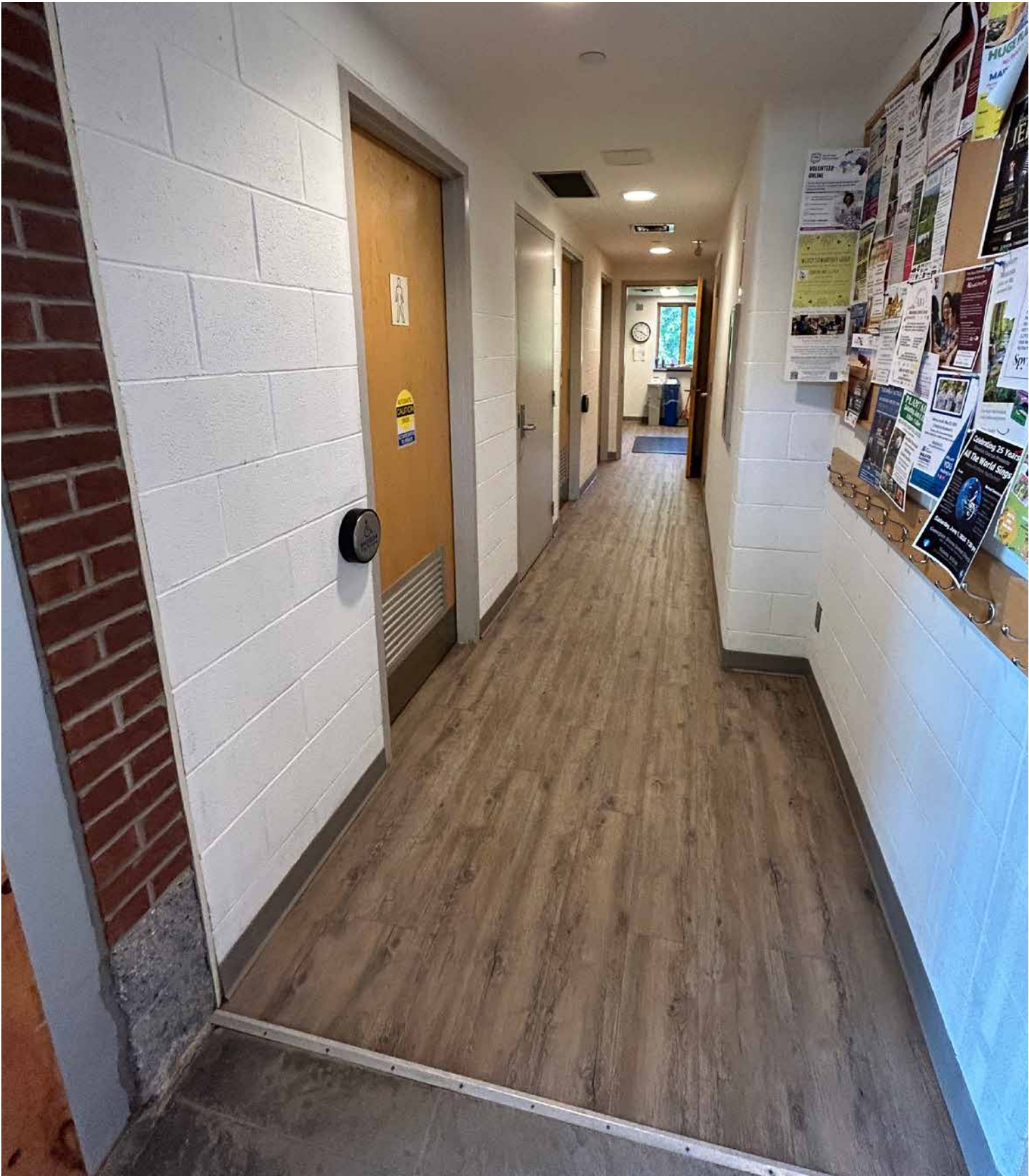
**Doorways & Paths of Travel**

The main corridor of the building is sufficiently wide to accommodate two-way travel and passing.

There are a few pieces of furniture that project into the path of travel and create an obstacle for people with vision loss.

These should be removed or repositioned.

The hallway where the washrooms are located meets the minimum requirements for a barrier free path of travel as per the OBC, however this dimension does not allow for two-way traffic of people in mobility devices or a service dog team.





02      **Summary of Current Conditions**

Transition strips throughout the building meet requirements of a maximum height of 13mm set by OBC and CSA B651, though completely flush transitions are always preferred.

Many of the doors in the building do not have adequate clear space on the pull side and the push side of a door. OBC and CSA require 300mm on the push side of a door and 600mm on the pull side, if the doors are not on power door operators.

In some cases, items and clutter around the door can be removed to achieve this clearance.

In other cases, automatic door operators would be required or these doors can be left propped open.

The bottom edge of the glazed vision panels in doors are too high and do not comply with the OBC requirement.

All interior doors had a clear width of less than 860mm.

Replacing the existing hinges with swing-clear hinges will increase the clear width of doors and could allow some of them to achieve 860mm clear width.

Door handles are of an appropriate style and can be opened with a closed fist or by a service dog, however the lock style requires twisting.

This style of lock is difficult to operate for people with limited dexterity.

Change to a style of lock that can be operated with a knuckle or closed fist, or proximity cardreaders.





**Library**

The flooring running throughout has a strong linear pattern that can act as a source of directional confusion for people with diverse neurological experiences.

A library is intended to be a quiet setting and it is recommended to use a soft flooring material that will dampen sounds from sources such as footsteps that would otherwise echo through the space.

There are two existing reception desks in the library, one at a standing height and the other at a sitting height.

At the sitting height section of the desk the staff side does not have adequate knee space available due to the drawer under the counter.

There is no knee space available on the public-facing side of either desk.



Within the book stacks, the top two shelves and bottom of the lowest shelf are not within accessible reach.

Many of the aisles comply with the minimum OBC width for accessible path of travel and they're close to the CSA B651 minimum, but there are some aisles that do not meet the OBC minimum.

The CSA B651 minimum is based on one-way travel with no space for passing.



Reducing the height of the book stacks and increasing aisle space within the stacks will increase the amount of space required by the library to house the existing amount of material.

Furnishings with sharp edges present a risk of injury for users with vision loss or balance issues.

Some of the tables did not have adequate knee clearance, and the independent study carrels are also not wide enough for use with a wheeled mobility device.

Loose furniture has been arranged in such a way that there is no space in the seating arrangement for people with wheeled mobility devices.

The outdoor book returns are slightly above accessible reach, and the weight of the drawer makes it very difficult to open with a closed fist.





**Gallery**

The gallery is a large volume mainly consisting of hard surfaces and therefore has some issues with echo. Similar to the library, the flooring running throughout has a strong linear pattern that can act as a source of directional confusion for people with diverse neurological experiences.

Lighting levels in the gallery are also rather low, especially with the window shutters closed.





**Boardroom**

The boardroom is fairly accessible. Improvements can be made by increasing colour contrast between the furnishings and surroundings, and reducing clutter.





**Kitchen**

Kitchen provides a turning radius that is compliant with the OBC, though not the CSA B651 standard.

Counters are standard height, so there are no accessible counters or sinks with knee space.

There are some open spaces below one of the counters in the staff lounge, but they are being used for storage.

Sink faucets in both kitchen spaces should be a single lever style.

The paper towel dispensers should be located within reach of the sinks.

Drawer-style storage is typically considered more accessible than cupboards in the lower cabinets.

All lower cabinets have a drawer with a cupboard below, so there are some accessible storage options but limited to smaller items since all the drawers are the same size.

The pantry is inaccessible as it is too close to the wall and has obstacles placed on the floor in front of it.

The bar height is too high for accessible use and people of short stature, it also has no knee space on the service side or the public side.





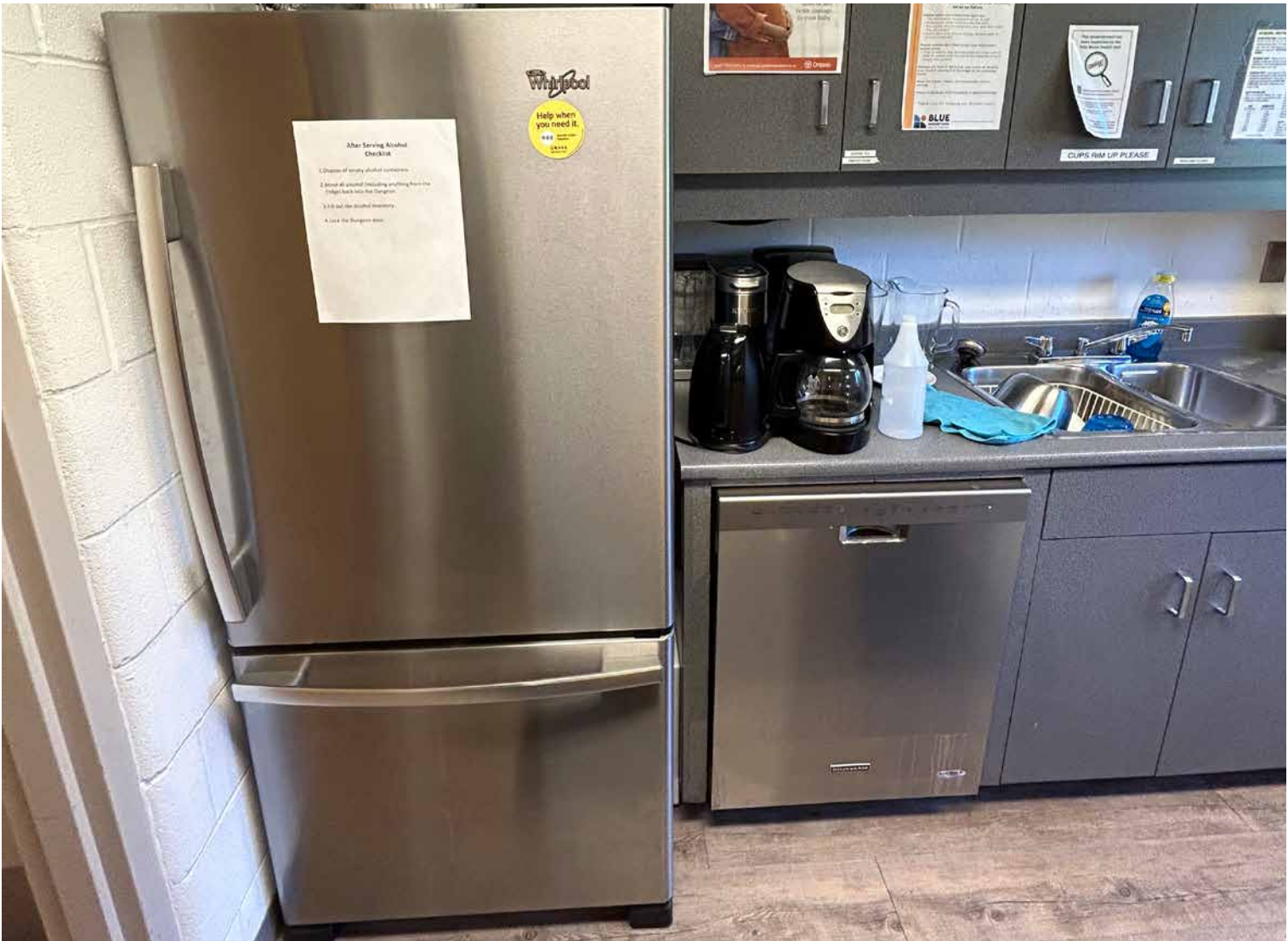
The style of the bottom drawer freezer fridge is good however the door swing on the fridge needs to open in the opposite direction to be accessible.

The undercounter fridge in the staff room cannot be opened with a closed fist.

Microwave placement in the staff room has sufficient adjacent space on the latch side of the door to put hot food.

General amount of clutter in kitchen spaces needs to be resolved to make the spaces more maneuverable.

The staff lounge in particular appears to have serious functionality issues as it is trying to serve too many different purposes.





**Offices**

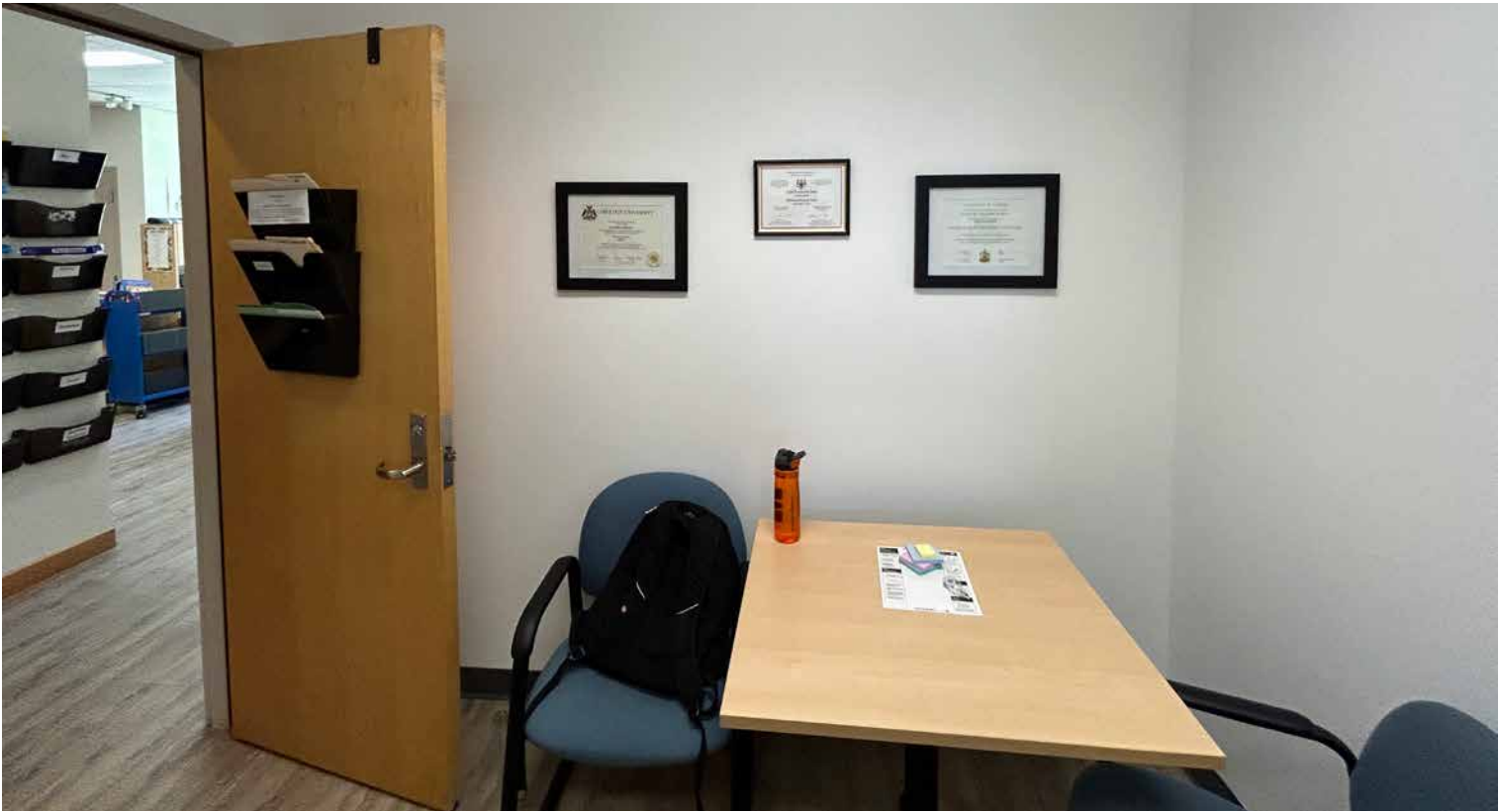
Volume of items in the space impedes circulation in many areas of the office.

By moving these items to a dedicated storage area, the office area will function better.

The overhead desk storage overhangs the computer monitors, making them difficult to see especially for people who are taller.

Provide variable height desks that can accommodate a wide variety of users at a comfortable height.

The furniture has sharp corners, and there is not much contrast between the furniture and its surroundings.





Washrooms

The building contains male and female washrooms with three fixtures each, a staff washroom accessed from the office area, and a family washroom off of the library.

The gendered washrooms contain accessible washroom stalls.

These are the only accessible washrooms in the building and they offer limited accessibility.

Power door operators have been provided on the doors of the gendered washrooms.



Bar-style push buttons would be a better choice as they can be operated from a variety of heights. The opening and hold-open time are sufficient.

The corridor leading into the men’s washroom is a bit narrow, and the lighting levels in both gendered washrooms are low with strong pools of light and shadow.

The floor and toilet partitions are both a dark gray and so lack contrast from each other, though they do contrast with the walls.



Neither of the urinals in the men’s washroom is accessible, and the mounting heights clearly present an issue for children as well, evidenced by the stepstool in front of one of the urinals.

The accessible stall is not quite large enough to accommodate a 1500mm turn circle in the men’s room, though the one in the women’s is large enough, and the transfer space in both washrooms is not quite large enough.

Stall locks in both washrooms are rotary style, which are challenging to operate for people with flexibility and dexterity issues. Stall doors also should have vertically-mounted pulls to help close them.



Grab bars behind toilets have the correct size and mounting height, but other grab bars have incorrect configuration and placement.

Flush valves should be located on the transfer side of the toilet, where they can be reached.

Toilet paper dispensers are too high, and in the women’s washroom, the sanitary napkin disposal should be placed where it can be reached without twisting around and risking a fall.



The sinks are too close to the side walls, with separate taps for hot and cold water that require a twisting motion to operate.

Some of the pipes are uninsulated, which presents a risk of burns if someone’s knees are beneath the counter.

Mirrors and other washroom accessories at the sinks are generally acceptable.

The family washroom and staff washroom are located back-to-back and neither is accessible for someone using a wheeled mobility device.

Not all washrooms need to be wheelchair accessible, but something that should be kept in mind when considering equitability is the division between front-of-house public spaces and back-of-house staff spaces.

If staff are generally not required to use public washrooms, then staff with disabilities should not be required to use them either and there should be an accessible staff washroom available.





**Signage & Wayfinding**

The building has lots of signage, but it lacks consistency and features that would make it more accessible.

Although most signage has appropriate contrast, it is not always mounted at accessible heights or locations, and there is no Braille and raised characters and pictograms.

The washroom signs have pictograms, but they are engraved as opposed to raised, which is not as easy to read.

Most signs are also in uppercase text, which is more difficult to understand than sentence or title case.

Some signage surfaces are susceptible to glare and reflections, making them difficult to read.

Exit signs are of the older style that read “EXIT” in red letters.

Upgrading to new “green running man” exit signs is not required unless renovating, but could be considered.





Emergency Systems

The building has visual fire alarms in some parts of the building, but they appear to be in compliance with the OBC requirements for visual fire alarms in assembly occupancies, which is inadequate.

There are no visual fire alarms in spaces where people are more likely to be alone, which is a safety issue for people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

Emergency exits other than the main entrances are not accessible as they have high thresholds and a step down.

First aid and firefighting equipment was mounted too high in some cases.

There were obstacles impeding the use of emergency equipment, such as a fire extinguisher behind the charging station and a fire alarm pull station that was blocked by a small shelf.

The fire extinguisher cabinet should be able to be operated with a closed fist.

All emergency systems should be mounted within accessible reach, and away from corners of walls or other obstacles so that someone using a wheeled mobility device has the clear space to approach and operate the equipment.





**Other Considerations**

Thermostats are mounted outside of accessible reach and the touchscreen controls would not be usable by people with visual impairments.

It is recommended to change this to a model with physical buttons.

Sun casting patterns or strongly patterned surfaces in the path of travel can be seen as physical obstacles for people with diverse neurological experiences.

Where appropriate, glass can be replaced with insulated light diffusing glazing.

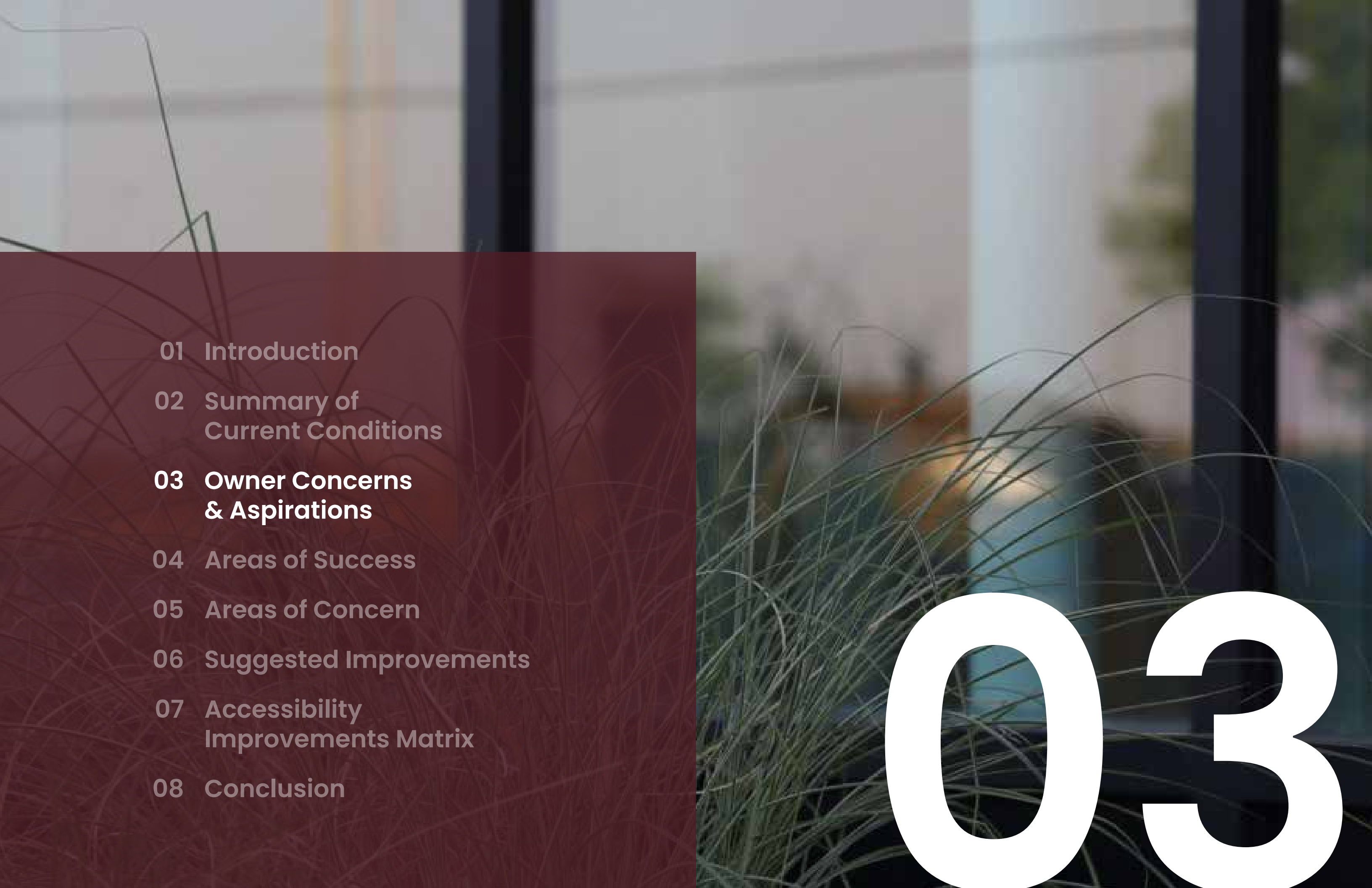
There contrast between some of the building elements in many of the spaces is low and could be improved.

Contrast can be helpful for wayfinding, and it is good to have contrast between floors and walls, doors and walls, furnishings or cabinetry and their surroundings.

Any upgrades to finishes and furnishings should be done with consideration to contrast and acoustics.





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# 03

Owner Concerns  
& Aspirations

The Town of The Blue Mountains and the Blue Mountains Public Library commissioned this feasibility report due to concerns they have regarding the accessibility of their building at 173 Bruce St South.

Accessibility concerns have come to their attention through complaints and feedback from employees and community members.

Concerns have primarily focused on the washrooms and lack of a fully accessible washroom, which is a significant barrier to inclusion.

Having a universal washroom would greatly improve the accessibility of the building.

The sunken reading room in the turret also came up during initial discussions, as the level change makes this space completely inaccessible for someone in a wheeled mobility device.

There are also concerns about the lack of storage.

Clutter is a prominent issue in the building that often impedes clear path of travel and door opening clear space.

The library has a large collection of items available to borrow and not enough space to store and display them all, even in the current configuration, which is understood to not be fully accessible.

The library is a community hub in the small town of Thornbury, as well as an architectural landmark in the area.

The library staff and Board have taken measures to maintain the building throughout the years, however there are accessibility challenges and addressing these would make the library more inclusive.





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Areas of Success

With the exception of the sunken reading room, all key functional spaces for the building are on the same level.

The main circulation spine in the building and the pedestrian walkways on the site are generously sized with plenty of space for maneuvering.

There is lots of natural light in the library space, and a number of different styles of seating throughout the building.

Most of the furniture arrangements are flexible, which allow them to be configured differently depending on who will be using the space.

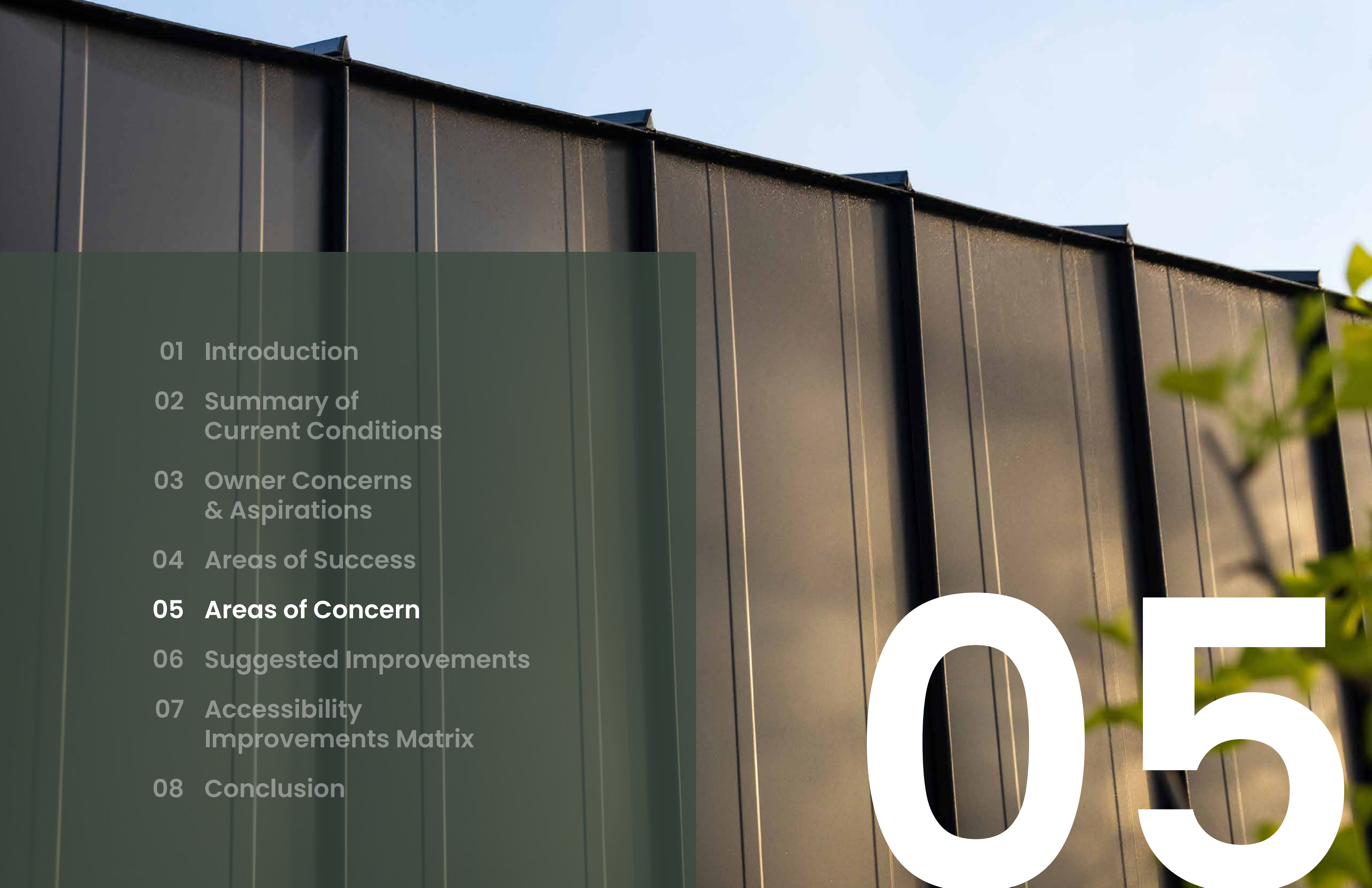
This is helpful for ensuring space can be provided for people using wheeled mobility devices and/or with service animals, or that furnishings can be arranged in more circular groupings for people who are Deaf/hard-of-hearing.

Many people with disabilities find attitudinal barriers to be among the most significant barriers they encounter.

There is much then to be said for the attitude of organizations that continuously attempt to improve themselves, that put in place policies and procedures that will improve accessibility, and who ask what they can do to help and are willing to work to find solutions to the problems presented to them.





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# 05

Areas of Concern

There are a number of areas of concern regarding the accessibility of the building.

The following is not an exhaustive list of accessibility issues in the building, some of which represent more significant barriers and/or safety issues than others.

Safety, independence, and dignity are paramount in making a space accessible, and can serve as guiding factors in determining priorities for initial focus as well as when considering future upgrades.

The items related to safety and washrooms are of particular concern in improving the accessibility of the L.E. Shore Library.





Vehicular Access

- Accessible parking spaces lack access aisles
- Location of accessible parking spaces requires crossing vehicular lane to get to the building

Exterior Approach & Entrance

- No tactile attention indicators on the site to mark transitions between dropped curbs and vehicular access
- Entrance doors do not have a clear width of 860 mm
- Courtyard door opening outward into path of travel is a safety hazard

Interior Circulation

- Doorways do not have a clear width of 860 mm

Interior Areas & Services

- Most of the book stacks in the library have shelves that are outside of accessible reach
- Aisles between book stacks are on the narrow side, only allowing for one-way travel
- The reading room in the turret is one of the unique features of the building but is currently inaccessible
- Window seats, another unique feature of the building, are not accessible
- Kitchen and staff room are generally inaccessible
- Reception desks are not accessible
- Some furnishings, such as the information kiosks and study carrels, are not accessible
- No assistive listening system available
- Clutter creates obstacles in some spaces
- There is a lack of assistive technology in the Library of Things Collection

Sanitary Facilities

- There is no fully accessible universal washroom in the building

Wayfinding & Signage

- Signage does not have raised characters, symbols, and Braille

Emergency Systems

- Visual fire alarms do not extend throughout the entire building. This is a safety hazard for people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing
- Accessibility of emergency exits. Despite being at grade, the emergency exits from the gallery and library are not accessible
- Accessibility of emergency and first aid equipment. It should be mounted at an accessible height and location, and unimpeded by clutter and obstacles

Interior Environment

- Lack of contrast between finishes
- Lighting is dim in some places
- Acoustics are challenging in some places

Outdoor Areas

- Courtyard is inaccessible
- There are no accessible pathways leading to outdoor areas
- Seating in outdoor areas is generally not accessible

- 
- A photograph of a modern building facade featuring a series of vertical, metallic-looking fins of varying heights. The building is set against a clear blue sky. A semi-transparent blue rectangular overlay covers the left side of the image, containing a table of contents. The number '06' is prominently displayed in large white font on the right side of the image.
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06



Suggested Improvements

It was clear from the site review that there are space challenges within the building that are affecting functionality.

These space challenges are also affecting accessibility.

Accessibility for people in wheeled mobility devices in particular involves having enough space for travel and maneuvering, as well as having all items and controls within a height range that can be reached from a seated position.

These needs are not reflected in the current design and setup of the library area in particular and addressing them will increase the amount of space required to house the current collection of materials.

One of the most significant upgrades is to provide a universal washroom for the building.

People who require a high level of accessibility in washrooms to be able to use them must plan their excursions around the availability of washrooms that meet their needs.

It can affect the duration of their visit or their ability to visit at all.

From a staffing standpoint, the lack of an accessible washroom is also a barrier to employment.

Universal washrooms require a significant amount of space and the best option for providing one in this case is to include it in a building addition.

An addition would increase the amount of space available to the library, address the need for more space to improve the accessibility of the book stacks and the lack of storage that is creating clutter throughout the building, and provide a functional and easily accessed universal washroom without affecting the washroom fixture counts and layout of the existing washrooms.

Trying to extensively renovate the existing washroom area to accommodate a universal washroom would result in a layout that is ultimately less functional and would almost certainly reduce the current number of fixtures.

The presence of building services such as a hot water tank and electrical panel in the janitorial closet between the washrooms would also present a challenge to renovating this area.

The following is a list of suggested accessibility improvements to address the concerns outlined in the previous section, along with some additional suggestions to continue enhancing accessibility.

06 Suggested Improvements

Vehicular Access

- Reconfigure parking lot so that accessible parking is directly in front of sidewalk in front of building, properly sized and with access aisles
- Regrade accessible parking spaces to a maximum of 2% slope
- Provide TIAs at all curb ramps/wherever sidewalk is flush with vehicular access

Exterior Approach & Entrance

- Resolve issue with unprotected doorswing of courtyard door
  - ◊ The door should swing inwards, be removed entirely, or the walkway could be widened and the doorswing protected by a wall or cane-detectable guard
- Rethink strategy for amenities on route to main entrances (wastebins, benches, book returns, bike racks, etc)
- Provide a designated service dog relief area with waste bin
- Replace push buttons with bar-style ones and relocate button for Bruce St. entrance on a column
- Add a vision strip to entrance glazing. Yellow is considered the best colour for vision strips
  - ◊ Position strip between 1350-1500 mm per OBC and CSA B651
- Relocate security keypad
  - ◊ Locate between 460-1100 mm above floor finish
  - ◊ Locate minimum 695 mm from any adjacent walls
- Replace existing hinges with swing-clear hinges to increase clear width of existing doors

Interior Circulation

- Replace push buttons with bar-style ones (interior and exterior doors) and relocate button for Bruce St. entrance on a column
- Place seating/obstacles in corridors so that they don't project into the path of travel
- Replace existing door hinges with swing-clear hinges to increase clear width of existing doors
- Provide adequate clear space for doors (remove obstacles if necessary). If clear space cannot be provided and door needs to be kept closed, considering putting operators on the doors

Interior Areas & Services

- Provide new accessible reception desk
  - ◊ Include new standing height and seats height sections
  - ◊ Provide knee clearance height of 685mm
  - ◊ Design waste and recycling areas into desk so knee space areas will not be compromised
- Provide variable height desks for staff
- Replace or modify book stacks so that all shelves are within accessible reach. Select/fabricate products without any sharp edges
  - ◊ Shelves should sit between 400-1200mm above floor finish, or 460-1100mm for better practice
- Increase width of aisles within book stack area
- Raise information kiosk tables so that they have adequate knee space
- Raise floor in the turret to match adjacent floor. Could provide a variety of seating types, including some higher and lower benches, beanbags, etc or entirely flexible furnishings (the more accessible option) as long as there is space for mobility devices
- Create a reading nook area that is also accessible (accessible option to the window seats)



06 Suggested Improvements

Interior Areas & Services	Sanitary Facilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Rearrange furnishings in lounge areas so there’s space for someone in a wheeled mobility device</li><li>• Replace existing study carrels with accessible ones<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◊ Minimum width of 820 mm</li><li>◊ Minimum knee clearance of 685 mm AFF</li></ul></li><li>• Provide more accessible book returns</li><li>• Purchase an assistive listening system that can be used in the gallery or boardroom or for other programming. A flexible system may be best so it can be brought to different areas that need it</li><li>• Improve accessibility of kitchen and staff room<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◊ Provide single lever faucets on sinks</li><li>◊ Paper towel dispensers should be within 500mm reach of sink</li><li>◊ Fridge should be modified or replaced so that the door opens from the other direction</li><li>◊ Undercounter fridge in staff room needs to have a handle that allows it to be opened with a closed fist</li></ul></li><li>• Replace existing workstations with sit-stand desks</li><li>• Reduce clutter, which impedes maneuvering spaces and creates safety hazards for people with partial sight or blindness by storing items in dedicated storage areas</li><li>• Consider providing a sensory/respite area and access to sensory stimuli and equipment to help individuals with sensory processing issues engage and regulate their sensory input. This could include things like weighted blankets, tactile textures, headphones, sound/noise machines, fidget spinners, and interactive displays</li><li>• Add basic assistive technology to the Library of Things Collection. Items such as book stands for hands-free reading, handheld magnifiers, lingo pens, and exam reader pens would allow the library to better serve the needs of the community</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide a universal washroom. Given space challenges in the existing facility, an addition that includes a universal washroom is recommended</li><li>• To improve the accessibility of the existing washrooms (universal washroom is being provided elsewhere):<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◊ Replace rotary style locks with sliding locks</li><li>◊ Orient washroom stall handles vertically</li><li>◊ Provide sinks at appropriate height and distance from side wall</li><li>◊ Insulate all sink pipes</li><li>◊ Provide single lever style faucets</li><li>◊ Ensure flush lever is on the transfer side of toilet</li><li>◊ Placement and mounting height of washroom accessories to meet OBC &amp; CSA B651</li><li>◊ One urinal in the men’s washroom should be made accessible. Mount with rim 430mm max from the floor, with appropriate size and configuration of grab bars</li></ul></li><li>• Merge staff washroom and family washroom into a larger, more accessible staff washroom. The size will likely not be large enough to accommodate a fully accessible washroom</li></ul>

06 Suggested Improvements

Interior Environment

- Acoustical improvements
  - ◊ Changing the floor to a soft surface
  - ◊ Using an acoustic ceiling or wall baffle system
- Remove shutters on clerestory windows and replace glass in all the building's clerestory windows and the skylight over the main spine with insulated light-diffusing glazing
- Increase amount of artificial lighting in the gallery (and library)
  - ◊ Changing bulbs to modern LED bulbs with a higher output will brighten the space
  - ◊ Some additional fixtures may be needed
- Rethink colours and finishes throughout the building to achieve better contrast between elements
- Consider an alternative flooring material without a directional pattern for spaces where the flow of traffic is more flexible
- Relocate building controls such as thermostats so that they are in an accessible location and within accessible reach. Replace thermostats with non-touchscreen type

Outdoor Areas

- Provide access to courtyard: level concrete pads that are 1700 x 1700mm in size, that ramp down into the courtyard space at a slope of at least 1:12, but over 1:20 is preferred
- Provide access to outdoor areas via hardscaped pathways. Note that pavers can be problematic as they can lift or spall over time – concrete is preferred.
- Provide accessible seating in outdoor areas: seats at accessible height with backs, options with and without arms, and that contrast with surroundings.


Wayfinding & Signage

- Create a comprehensive and consistent signage strategy for the building. Provide new signage for rooms and spaces that is high contrast, with raised characters/symbols and Braille, and located in the correct place per OBC. Ensure surface of signs is matte and does not cause reflections or glare.

Emergency Systems

- Relocate emergency and first aid equipment so that it is in an accessible location and within accessible reach
- Add concrete pads and OBC-compliant thresholds to emergency exits so that all emergency exits are accessible
- Expand visual fire alarm system so it extends into all spaces, especially ones where people are likely to be alone
- Replace old style exit signs with new green running man signs



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07

Suggested Improvements

The following is a list of suggested accessibility improvements to address the concerns outlined in the previous section, along with some additional suggestions to continue enhancing accessibility.

The included Accessibility Improvements Matrix further classifies the improvements based on whether they are felt to be high impact or lower impact, and short term versus long term projects.

High impact improvements are likely high priority improvements, as they are anticipated to make a big difference in overall accessibility.

Lower impact improvements will still enhance accessibility but are not necessarily addressing direct barriers to participation or safety issues.

A number of the high impact improvements are larger projects and will be more costly to implement, and will therefore likely need to be implemented over a longer time frame.

Lower impact improvements, while also likely lower priority, may be easier and cheaper to implement in the short term while planning of higher priority upgrades is in progress.

#	Suggested Improvement	High Impact	Lower Impact	Short Term	Long Term
1	Reconfigure parking lot so that accessible parking is directly in front of sidewalk in front of building, properly sized and with access aisles				
2	Regrade accessible parking spaces to a maximum of 2% slope				
3	Provide TAIs at all curb ramps/wherever sidewalk is flush with vehicular areas				
4	Resolve issue with unprotected doorswing of courtyard door				
5	Rethink strategy for amenities on route to main entrances (wastebins, benches, book returns, bike racks, etc)				
6	Provide access to courtyard: level concrete pads that are 1700 x 1700mm in size, that ramp down into the courtyard space at a slope of at least 1:12, but over 1:20 is preferred				
7	Provide access to outdoor areas via hardscaped pathways. Note that pavers can be problematic as they can lift or spall over time – concrete is preferred.				
8	Provide accessible seating in outdoor areas: seats at accessible height with backs, options with and without arms, and that contrast with surroundings.				
9	Provide a designated service dog relief area with waste bin				
10	Replace push buttons with bar-style ones (interior and exterior doors) and relocate button for Bruce St. entrance on a column				



07      **Accessibility Improvements Matrix**

11	Add a vision strip to entrance glazing. Yellow is considered the best colour for vision strips. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Position strip between 1350-1500mm per OBC and CSA B651</li></ul>					19	Replace or modify book stacks so that all shelves are within accessible reach. Select/fabricate product without any sharp edges. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Shelves should be between 400-1200mm above floor finish, or 460-1100mm for better practice</li></ul>				
12	Relocate security keypad <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Locate between 460-1100mm above floor finish</li><li>Locate minimum 695mm from any adjacent walls</li></ul>					20	Increase width of aisles within the book stacks area				
13	Place seating/obstacles in corridors so that they don't project into the path of travel					21	Raise information kiosk tables so that they have adequate knee space.				
14	Replace existing door hinges with swing-clear hinges to increase clear width of existing doors					22	Raise floor in the turret to match adjacent floor. Could provide a variety of seating types, including some higher and lower benches, beanbags, etc or entirely flexible furnishings (the more accessible option) as long as there is space for mobility devices.				
15	Provide adequate clear space for doors (remove obstacles if necessary). If clear space cannot be provided and door needs to be kept closed, consider putting operators on the doors.					23	Create a reading nook area that is also accessible (accessible option to the window seats).				
16	Provide a new accessible reception desk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Include standing height and seated height sections</li><li>Provide knee clearance height of 685mm</li><li>Design waste and recycling areas into desk so knee space areas will not be used for this purpose</li></ul>					24	Rearrange furnishings in any lounge areas so there is space for someone in a wheeled mobility device				
17	Provide variable height desks for staff					25	Replace existing study carrels with accessible ones. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Minimum width of 820mm</li><li>Minimum knee clearance of 685mm AFF</li></ul>				
18	Consider an alternative flooring material without a directional pattern for spaces where the flow of traffic is more flexible					26	Provide more accessible book returns				
						27	Acoustical improvements <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Changing the floor to a soft surface</li><li>Using an acoustic ceiling or wall baffle system</li></ul>				

07      **Accessibility Improvements Matrix**

#	Suggested Improvement	High Impact	Lower Impact	Short Term	Long Term
28	Remove shutters on clerestory windows and replace glass in all the building's clerestory windows and the skylight over the main spine with insulated light-diffusing glazing				
29	Increase amount of artificial lighting in the gallery (and library) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Changing bulbs to modern LED bulbs with a higher output will brighten the space</li><li>• Some additional fixtures may be needed</li></ul>				
30	Purchase an assistive listening system that can be used in the gallery or boardroom or for other programming.				
31	Improve accessibility of kitchen and staff room <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide single lever faucets on sinks</li><li>• Paper towel dispensers should be within 500mm reach of sink</li><li>• Fridge should be modified or replaced so that the door opens from the other direction</li><li>• Undercounter fridge in staff room needs to have a handle that allows it to be opened with a closed fist</li></ul>				
32	Replace existing workstations with sit-stand desks				
33	Reduce clutter, which impedes maneuvering spaces and creates safety hazards for people with partial sight or blindness by storing items in dedicated storage areas				
33	Provide a universal washroom. Given space challenges in the existing facility, an addition that includes a universal washroom is recommended				

#	Suggested Improvement	High Impact	Lower Impact	Short Term	Long Term
34	To improve the accessibility of the existing washrooms (universal washroom is being provided elsewhere): <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Replace rotary style locks with sliding locks</li><li>• Orient washroom stall handles vertically</li><li>• Provide sinks at appropriate height and distance from side wall</li><li>• Insulate all sink pipes</li><li>• Provide single lever style faucets</li><li>• Ensure flush lever is on the transfer side of toilet</li><li>• Placement and mounting height of washroom accessories to meet OBC and CSA B651</li><li>• One urinal in the men's washroom should be made accessible. Mount with rim 430mm max from the floor, with appropriate size and configuration of grab bars</li></ul>				
35	Merge staff washroom and family washroom into a larger, more accessible staff washroom. The size will likely not be large enough to accommodate a fully accessible washroom				
36	Create a comprehensive and consistent signage strategy for the building. Provide new signage for rooms and spaces that is high contrast, with raised characters/symbols and Braille, and located in the correct place per OBC. Ensure surface of signs is matte and does not cause reflections or glare.				



07     **Accessibility Improvements Matrix**

#	Suggested Improvement	High Impact	Lower Impact	Short Term	Long Term
37	Relocate emergency and first aid equipment so that it is in an accessible location and within accessible reach				
38	Add concrete pads and OBC-compliant thresholds to emergency exits so that all emergency exits are accessible				
39	Update evacuation plans with legends and showing locations of emergency exits (including accessible exits). Ensure surface of plans is matte and does not cause reflections or glare.				
40	Expand visual fire alarm system so it extends into all spaces, especially ones where people are likely to be alone				
41	Replace old style exit signs with new green running man signs				
42	Consider providing a sensory/respite area and access to sensory stimuli and equipment to help individuals with sensory processing issues engage and regulate their sensory input. This could include things like weighted blankets, tactile textures, headphones, sound/noise machines, fidget spinners, and interactive displays				
43	Relocate building controls such as thermostats so that they are in an accessible location and within accessible reach. Replace thermostats with non-touchscreen type				
44	Rethink colours and finishes throughout the building to achieve some better contrast between elements				

- 01 Introduction
- 02 Summary of Current Conditions
- 03 Owner Concerns & Aspirations
- 04 Areas of Success
- 05 Areas of Concern
- 06 Suggested Improvements
- 07 Accessibility Improvements Matrix
- 08 Conclusion

08



## Conclusion

It's important to consider the needs of the specific user group of the building when determining how to proceed.

The accessibility review of the site completed as part of this report attempted to consider accessibility from the perspective of a range of disabilities, and the impact of upgrades has been assessed based on what appear to be the most significant barriers and safety issues.

It is recommended that the library consult with their users, and particularly users with disabilities, to assist in assigning priority to the suggested accessibility upgrades.

Consultation with members with disabilities should be also be included as part of any design process undertaken for improvements to the building, to ensure those with lived experience have the opportunity to provide input and give feedback.





**Architecture** for  
the human spirit

**Collingwood**

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**Confidentiality**

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## The Blue Mountains Public Library

**Report To:** The Blue Mountains Public Library Board  
**Report Name:** ADM.25.08 2024 Risk Assessment  
**Prepared by:** Jennifer Murley, CEO

### A. Recommendations

That this Board receive as information ADM.25.08 entitled “2024 Risk Assessment”.

### B. Background

Annually, a report on Risk Assessment is presented to the Board. This assessment of risk is based on the political environment, the implication of the workplan of the Board and staff, operational concerns, and any external factors which the Board should be prepared to address.

### C. Evaluation of Overall Risk

BMPL is currently within a low-risk class.

- ✓ All required policies and procedures are in place.
- ✓ The Board and CEO work within the policies and procedures.
- ✓ All legislated requirements are maintained.
- ✓ All required reporting is up to date.
- ✓ All required record keeping is up to date, including those by ESA and our auditors.
- ✓ A successful 2024 audit has been received and there is no reason to expect the 2025 Financial Statements will not reflect the same.
- ✓ There are no active claims against BMPL including litigious or employment.

### D. Governance

The Board remains in a strong position as a governance body, consistently adhering to the Annual and Multi-Year Agendas policy (POL-BLG.2018.99) to ensure strategic planning, policy review, and key timelines are met. Staff satisfaction remains high, with low turnover, reflecting a stable and positive work environment.

In 2024, the Board proactively addressed emerging concerns related to staff and patron safety by implementing new policies and updating the Code of Conduct. As an employer, all contracts are current, and annual evaluations—including those for the Board and CEO—are conducted as scheduled.

The Board’s annual evaluation saw 100% participation, reflecting a high level of engagement and confidence in its ability to establish strategic directions for the BMPL, monitor the CEO’s performance, develop effective governance policies, prioritize the good of the BMPL over individual interests, present a positive image of the library in the community, and ensure effective succession planning.

The Board continues to meet in person and maintains a strong working relationship with municipal leadership and members remain actively engaged, attending community events, liaising with local groups and Council members, and advocating for library services. Their ongoing efforts help identify both strengths and opportunities for enhancing service delivery.

## E. Financial

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The organization adheres to a comprehensive finance policy and undergoes an annual audit. All purchases are made in accordance with the BMPL Purchasing Policy.

The TBM-BMPL multi-year funding agreement was renewed in 2024; however, the Board's surplus reserve will be required to balance the budget for the remaining term. This is not sustainable long term. Additionally, the Town's Finance department is under new leadership, with anticipated adjustments to Town finance processes and procedures. The CEO will monitor any changes and communicate relevant updates to the Board. Ongoing communication between the Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, and Library CEO is critical.

To support the Charitable Status Application, the CEO has submitted documentation to the CRA to update the authorized personnel on the account. While this process is ongoing, it does not impede staff from pursuing additional funding opportunities for BMPL as a not-for-profit organization or as a municipal partner.

## F. Personnel

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BMPL staffing model continues to take steps forward. In 2024, Town Council approved a shift to bring the salary grid for all Town and Library staff to the 60<sup>th</sup> percentile. Additionally, the Board approved a new vacation policy that would increase allotments for the staff.

## G. Health & Safety

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The Respectful Workplace Compliance Report addresses health and safety matters, as well as AODA-related risks. Since the BMPL employs less than 20 workers, there is no legislated requirement for a joint health and safety committee, however, an internal committee is in place, there are JHSC certified library staff, and the Library CEO serves as a non-voting member of the Town's Joint Health and Safety Committee, which offers resources and oversight to ensure the Library adheres to best practices and legislative requirements. The CEO also co-chairs the Town's IDEA Committee, advocating for inclusivity, diversity, equity, and accessibility at the corporate level.

## H. Facilities

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In 2018 TBM completed Facility Condition Reports for each of the Town-owned facilities, including both the [L.E. Shore Library](#) and the [Craigleith Heritage Depot](#). Additionally, a [compendium report](#) was created addressing all the gaps in service and facility gaps not included in the condition reports. These reports were presented to the Board in 2018 and again during the 2023 orientation, as well as received by Council in 2019.

A new Building Condition Assessment will be conducted this year, as these assessments are typically completed every 3-5 years. Areas remaining on these lists in 2025 are as follows:

- The Museum's HVAC has been reviewed and repaired to a level that is satisfactory to the Town. With the improvement of the building envelop, the ventilation systems work more efficiently. Museum staff continue to manage humidifiers and dehumidifiers throughout the building.
- Radon present in the bedrock-remediation has occurred. Proper monitoring of the systems and levels are required regularly.
- Bathroom plumbing at L.E. Shore is deteriorated and in need of repair. No comprehensive replacement is scheduled, as this would require a full rebuild to meet the Rick Hansen Standard. Minor bathroom repairs are included in the Maintenance Budget.



- Proper ventilation by ceiling fans is not present and could cause the reoccurrence of mould- *in the TBM budget and slated for immediate action.*

In 2024, the Museum's basement storage was reorganized to address space needs, appropriate storage of artifacts, and potential hazards. Security cameras were installed at both branches and an Accessibility Audit of the L.E. Shore Memorial Library was completed, identifying additional concerns that pose both an accessibility and health and safety concern for staff and the public. An accessibility audit of the Museum has been conducted by the Museum Curator and Library CEO, in consultation with the Town's Manager of Fleet and Facilities, identifying improvements that could be made with existing resources in the next 2 years.

As a matter of risk, the maintenance of the buildings is within the responsibility of TBM Facilities; however, risk to BMPL would include down time as a result of closure. Most of these matters are not posing a significant risk to operations and will continue to be advocated for by the CEO.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Murley, CEO  
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## Board Meeting

**Report To:** The Blue Mountains Public Library Board  
**Report Name:** ADM.25.09 Ontario Public Library Association Super Conference: Post Conference Reflection  
**Date:** March 13, 2025  
**Prepared by:** Jennifer Murley, CEO

### A. Recommendations

*That this Board receive as information ADM.25.09 entitled “Ontario Public Library Association Super Conference: Post Conference Reflection”.*

### B. Background

The Ontario Public Library Association (OLA) is Canada’s largest library organization, and annually, OLA hosts Canada’s largest continuing education event in librarianship: The OLA Super Conference. The Conference takes place in Toronto and is organized by OLA staff and volunteers across the library sector. The Conference plays host to some of the world’s leading speakers, library leaders and advocates, and in 2025 the list included: Leslie Weir, Catherine Hernandez, James Turk, Vickery Bowles, and Carol Off.

This year the Conference took place from January 29-February 1 and the theme “Building Bridges”, was both a call to action and a symbol of the library and information professions’ commitment to creating and sustaining spaces that facilitate community building through knowledge sharing and connection.

BMPL sent three Board members, its CEO, and a Library Specialist to attend sessions that would advance the organization, support existing membership on OLA committees (i.e. the Library Specialist is the Vice-President of OLITA), and provide networking opportunities for personal and professional growth. Staff led two sessions, one in collaboration with the Collingwood Public Library and the TBM Director of Community Services, introduced two sessions, and Board member Laurey Gillies participated on a panel session for the OLA Board Boot Camp.

This report will provide a summary of learning outcomes, highlighting common themes throughout the Conference (and library and information science profession): STEM, digital literacy in public libraries, accessible collections, annual planning, and the library/municipal relationship.

### C. Learning Outcomes

This pre-conference session, led by Brock Hart from Overlap Associates, explored how organizations can improve strategy execution using Objectives and Key Results (OKRs). Many organizations struggle to implement strategic plans effectively—OKRs provide a structured yet agile framework to drive meaningful progress.

#### Key takeaways included:

- **Rhythm of Execution:** Regular check-ins (weekly, biweekly, and quarterly) ensure visibility and accountability across the organization. Leadership should review OKRs weekly, using dashboards to identify where resources need to shift.



- **Setting the Pace:** Key initiatives should include timeframes (e.g., "by Q2") to maintain momentum and clarify resource needs.
- **Cascading Goals:** Organizational objectives become departmental, team, or individual priorities, ensuring alignment at all levels.
- **Impact-Driven Approach:** Focus on outcomes—if an initiative isn't delivering results, adjust it. Even a 1% improvement can be significant, especially for small organizations.
- **Annual Plan Template:**
  - Context: Consider external factors like community needs, funding changes, and strategic plan progress.
  - Challenges: Identify obstacles the organization must address.
  - Objectives (3-5): Define why each is critical, what barriers exist, and how progress will be measured.
  - Key Initiatives: Outline actions, assign responsibilities, and identify cross-departmental collaboration to break silos.
- **Adaptability & Continuous Learning:** Organizations must regularly evaluate progress and remain flexible in response to change.

OKRs foster alignment, adaptability, and strategic execution—key drivers of success. A template for implementation was provided to participants.

### **Ontario Library and Information Technology Association (OLITA) Annual Meeting**

Library Specialist, Ashley, is the Vice-President and incoming President of the Ontario Library and Information Technology Association (OLITA). In this capacity, Ashley attended a pre-conference session to discuss the upcoming year and set priorities for the group. In her capacity as President, Ashley will be actively involved in organizing OLITA's annual virtual conference Digital Odyssey.

### **Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (AMPLO) General Meeting**

The BMPL is a member of the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (AMPLO), an organization whose mission is to shine light on the importance of rural libraries by electing their profile through advocacy, training, development, and promotional efforts. Meets are held per quarter virtually, with an in-person meeting held in September. This year, a meeting took place at the Conference, which provided member libraries with the opportunity to connect and network in person. Highlights included:

- **Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) Update:** Since the Provincial Cabinet shuffle, FOPL and OLA have not been successful in securing an in-person meeting with Minister Cho. 12 deputations across the province have been delivered so far – the others have been cancelled because the election was called. The province continues to accept library deputations, which means they want to hear from us.
- **Ministry Update:** New questions were added to the Public Libraries Operating Grant (PLOG), some of which include how much it costs to participate in a consortium, in addition to broadband Internet speeds.
- **Ontario Library Service Update:** OLS received a 2-year extension on the broadband connectivity grant from the province. This means more runway to get libraries connected. ILLO training continues as libraries transition to a new system.
- **Ontario Library Association Update:** OLITA is looking to create a makerspace community of practice for paraprofessionals. OLA is investigating other priorities, and where other communities of practice is needed.

### **Power Plays and Public Purpose: Municipal Councils and Library Boards**

This interactive workshop, introduced by the BMPL CEO and attended by the BMPL Board Chair,

featured a panel including a mayor, a library board chair, a library CEO, and a former CAO/municipal lawyer. The session explored legal interpretations of the Public Libraries Act (PLA) and shared strategies for fostering collaboration between municipal councils and library boards.

**Key takeaways included:**

- **Council Awareness Gap:** Many Ontario municipalities lack understanding of the PLA, creating friction between councils and library boards.
- **CEO Contract Clarity:** A formal contract helps define the CEO's role and responsibilities.
- **Strong Mayors Act & Public Libraries Act (PLA):** While budget processes may shift, the PLA remains in effect.
- **Budget Best Practices:** Treating the budget process like grant funding—reporting back to council on fund allocation—enhances transparency. Councils can pass bylaws to define budget roles and responsibilities.
- **Facility Planning:** Library boards oversee long-term facility planning and should involve municipal councillors and staff.
- **Governance & Communication:**
  - Councillors should redirect library-related feedback to the board, as many residents are unaware of the library's separate governance.
  - Boards must establish policies for governance clarity.
  - While libraries are not covered under the Not-For-Profit Corporations Act, its best practices can inform governance work.
- **Library Authority:**
  - The PLA is silent on reserve funds.
  - Library boards have naming authority over facilities but need clear policies and municipal support.

Building trust, maintaining open communication, and aligning governance practices with legal frameworks are essential for effective library leadership.

**Let's Talk Tech Toys! STEM Learning in Libraries**

This session explored the role of play in children's learning and how library-based Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs foster communication, problem-solving, and early exposure to science and technology. Libraries across Canada shared their experiences, highlighting both successes and challenges in implementing STEM kits and programming.

**Key takeaways included:**

- **STEM programs enhance learning** by engaging children in hands-on exploration.
- **Staff buy-in can be a challenge**, but successful models exist for low-barrier STEM implementation.
- **Libraries play a crucial role** in making STEM education accessible and engaging for all.

This session provided valuable insights into building effective, inclusive STEM programming in libraries.

**Bridging Accessibility Gaps in Audiobooks**

This research-focused session explored the accessibility of audiobooks, revealing gaps between their potential as an inclusive format and the experiences of users with print disabilities. Led by the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA), the research aims to enhance audiobook standards and improve user experiences.



### OLITA Tech Talks

A fast-paced session featuring multiple lightning talks covering various tech innovations in libraries, including:

1. **PRODUCE:HER Sessions:** Creating inclusive recording studios for gender-diverse music creators.
2. **Bridging the Gap with GitHub:** Enhancing accessibility and reusability of work. GitHub is a website where people can store, share, and work together on files, especially for coding projects, similar to a digital notebook that multiple people can edit.
3. **Privacy in the Digital Era:** Safeguarding Canadians' data and online presence. A representative from the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada discussed the organization's efforts to educate children on online privacy. Their primary focus is helping young people understand how privacy works in the digital world. They have also released free graphic novels, which, in addition to benefiting children, have proven to be valuable resources for newcomers to Canada.
4. **Using Digital Historical Maps –** Bridging past and present with interactive mapping technology. A teacher from the Peel District School Board uses digitized late 1800s county atlases alongside Google Maps to immerse students in history and geography. By comparing historical maps with modern landscapes, he helps students see how much of the land remains unchanged despite urban development. His work has even led to the discovery of a burial site belonging to a Black community of escaped freedom seekers of the Underground Railroad.

### Keynote: Jael Richardson in Conversation with Catherine Hernandez

This keynote featured an engaging discussion between author Jael Richardson and best-selling writer Catherine Hernandez. They explored how real-life events shape novel writing and how fiction can address social justice, community-building, and healing.

### Neurodiversity on the Bridge: The Spectrum of Performance and Hidden Capacities

This session focused on the intersection of neurodiversity and library services, particularly the challenges and strengths of neurodivergent library staff. Presenters shared insights on accommodations, workplace culture, and ways to foster a more inclusive and understanding environment for both staff and patrons.

### Beyond Lego and Ozobots: Elevating Digital Literacy with Competitive Robotics

Vaughan Public Libraries, in partnership with CanSTEAM Foundation and iDesign 365, shared their approach to integrating competitive robotics into digital literacy programming. The initiative moves beyond basic coding and robotics play, incorporating competition elements that emphasize teamwork, presentation skills, and community involvement.

### Responding to Safety Issues with Your Library Board

Part of OLA's Board Boot Camp, this panel featured leadership from Burlington, Orillia, and Sault Ste. Marie Public Libraries, discussing the complex safety challenges libraries face and the policies, plans, and positions implemented to minimize risk and support both staff and the community.

### Key takeaways Included:

- **Rising Safety Concerns:** Libraries are experiencing an increase in both the number and severity of incidents.
- **Supporting the CEO:** The CEO is also a worker and requires support in managing safety issues.
- **Advocacy for Funding:** If funding isn't available for security measures, sharing impact stories with Council can help drive action.
- **Preparedness Matters:** Staff should know essential emergency procedures, such as shutting off water or power.

- **Workplace Safety:** Ensure staff have the tools needed to perform their jobs safely.
- **Incident Reporting:** Adding security footage to incident reports can improve staff awareness and response.
- **Social Work Integration & Data-Driven Justification:** As demonstrated in Orillia, incident reporting data can be used to both justify and measure the impact of employing social workers in public libraries. Professional intervention enhances safety, de-escalates conflicts, and provides essential support for at-risk patrons.
- **Human-Centered Approach:** Staff should prioritize treating all patrons with dignity, avoiding fear-based responses.
- **Simplified Procedures:** Risk mitigation strategies should be clear and accessible for all staff.

### **Canadian Public Libraries Fighting Mis- and Disinformation: Research and Recommendations**

This project by the Privy Council of Canada uncovered high levels of concern among Canadian libraries and highlighted the need for a national effort to fight mis- and disinformation.

#### **Key takeaways included:**

- In Canada, 56% see information they immediately suspected as fake at least a few times a month.
- Misinformation, Disinformation and Malinformation are rapidly growing threats to every community.
- As a non-partisan entity, BMPL can play a significant role in creating awareness of the challenge and educating community members

### **Bridging the Data Gap – Holistic Data**

This session showed how the LibSAT and LibPAS tools can help libraries collect and report on qualitative and quantitative data to enhance reporting accuracy, demonstrate value to stakeholders, and better inform decision-making.

- BMPL may need to invest in additional tools to provide more holistic and meaningful insights that integrate patron qualitative data with quantitative metrics. This will help us reflect both user experiences and measurable outcomes.

### **Social Impact Study: An Innovative Approach to Measuring the Value of Library Services**

This presentation by Toronto Public Libraries shared a unique study they adopted from Denmark. The study uses Experiential Event Data collection methodology to understand the impact of an experience on individuals. This has been used to measure experiential events such as films, cultural events, concerts etc. Quantitative data alone can't capture the deep impacts that personal experiences have on individuals and by extrapolation on a community.

BMPL can take these learnings and build on the qualitative data gathered for the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan for future planning.

### **Keynote Speaker Carol Off (Former CBC Journalist and Host)**

*'Being a journalist is easy – you just have to ask questions. Being a librarian is much harder – you have to have the answers.'*

- BMPL Board needs to ensure that our Library & staff have the support they need to be the centre of excellence for the Town of the Blue Mountains community.



## D. BMPL-Led Sessions

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### **See What's Feasible: Two Towns, Two Libraries, One Feasibility Study**

This panel session, introduced by the Acting CEO of Grey Highlands Public Library, featured the CEOs of BMPL and Collingwood Public Library, along with the Town of The Blue Mountains' Director of Community Services. With over 50 attendees, the discussion explored the joint feasibility study between Collingwood and Blue Mountains libraries and their municipalities. Key insights included navigating political dynamics, collaborating with multiple councils and boards, and the benefits and challenges of a shared approach to evaluating community services and facilities. BMPL Board Chair Julia Scott was in attendance.

### **Tech-Help with Empathy: A Human Connection**

Led by Library Specialist Ashley, this session emphasized the importance of empathy and empowerment in providing technology support to seniors. With over 40 attendees, discussions focused on addressing broader challenges like social isolation to create an inclusive learning environment. Key topics included patron expectations, staff buy-in, and IT department roles in academic settings. The session featured a lively Q&A and the BMPL Board Chair Julia Scott was in attendance.

### **Library Board Trustee Boot Camp: Navigating Memorandum's of Understanding**

Part of OLA's Board Boot Camp, this panel featured BMPL Board member Laurey Gillies and former BMPL CEO Dr. Sabrina Saunders, exploring the development and implementation of MOUs between municipal councils and library boards. Attended by hundreds of public librarians, leaders, and board members across Canada, the session covered the complexities of MOUs and the unique reasons for establishing them.

## E. Strategic Alignment

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Supporting career development by attending and reflecting on the Ontario Public Library Super Conference is consistent with the following strategic priorities (and subsequent goals) identified in BMPL's 2022-2026 Strategic Plan:

1. **Organizational Excellence: Grow BMPL as a key partner and community resource.**  
Goal: Retain and recruit personnel as an employer of choice.
2. **Empowering Services**  
Goal: [Continue to] support 21<sup>st</sup> century literacy through resources, opportunities, and coaching.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jennifer Murley, CEO  
[LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca](mailto:LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca)  
519-599-3681 extension 148

## Board Meeting

**Report To:** The Blue Mountains Public Library Board  
**Report Name:** FIN.25.01 Finance Report of Q4 2024  
**Date:** March 13, 2025  
**Prepared by:** Jennifer Murley, CEO

### A. Recommendations

THAT this Board receive as information the Finance Report of the Fourth Quarter (Q4) 2024.

### B. Background

The BMPL Board receives financial variance reports between the budget and actuals quarterly. This document is representative of the period ending on December 31, 2024 (4<sup>th</sup> Quarter) and based on the financial statements provided to the Treasurer by the TBM financial services staff.

### C. Grants

In 2024, BMPL received \$1,231,253.25 in grants. This is a breakdown of all grant funding:

Grant Name	Type	Total	Description
TBM Levy	Municipal	\$ 1,176,300	Annual funding based on TBM/BMPL Funding agreement
Ontario Public Library Operating Grant (PLOG)	Provincial	\$21,060	Annual Funding. Amount has not increased since the 90s. Dependent on submission of the Annual Survey for Ontario Public Libraries.
Young Canada Works at Building Careers in Heritage	Federal	\$19,128.53	Museum Internships – Special Collections Technican
Canada Summer Jobs	Federal	\$10,679	Funding for one summer student. Submitted annually.
Ontario Library Service ILLO Rebate	Provincial	\$1318	Annually, OLS provides a per lend rebate to libraries based on the total number of interlibrary loan lends for the calendar year, for all public libraries across the province.
Ontario Library Service Connectivity Grant	Provincial	\$2767.72	At the discretion of the Ministry, annually OLS receives Connectivity Funding for Internet costs for public libraries.



**D. Concerns**

Please note that while there are no immediate concerns, these are unaudited numbers.

**E. Current Standing of the Accounts and Funds**

Held By	Asset	Account	Status
Board	<b>Open Reserve</b>	Savings	\$292,869.77
Board	<b>Land Reserve Fund</b>	Savings Investment	\$18,744.18 [Next maturity April 28, 2025] 5.3 % interest rate  *For new builds.
Council	<b>Development Charge</b>	DC Act Town Lined Account	\$3,016,605.37 as of Dec 31, 2024 *Can only be used for growth-related items that were identified in the Town's DC Study. These include expansion, the purchase of land, and materials.
Council	<b>General Reserve (Non-Growth Related)</b>	Town Lined Account	\$72,389.83 Feasibility Study/Space Plan(s) balance available for engineering, consultation, legal pertaining to expansion.
CEO	<b>CHD Reserve</b>	Town Lined Account	\$0 All funds were used to offset costs for the Museum renovation.  *This is a Council reserve designated for CHD. Council could choose to put funding into this reserve, despite a current \$0 balance.

CEO	<b>CHD Fundraising Reserve</b>	Town Lined Account	\$15,790.80 Can be used to offset costs for future films, etc. Designated for the CHD.
Council	<b>Library Legacy Reserve Fund</b>	BL 2003-55  Town Lined Account	\$22,694 as of December 31, 2024  Limited for TBM needs such as BMPL IT.

1. Board accounts are held by the Board in High Interest Savings or invested per MTCS directions. All other funds are located in Town accounts.
2. BL Council held reserves require a recommendation resolution by the Board to access funds.
3. Town lined accounts are administrative and therefore require CEO authority when accessing within budget.

#### **F. Variance as of December 31, 2024**

The December 31, 2024, Budget Variance Report (Q4) is attached.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Murley, CEO

[LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca](mailto:LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca)

519-599-3681 extension 148



# UNAUDITED Consolidated Financial Report -- Q4 2024

Blue Mountains Public Library as of December 31, 2024

	No.	YTD	Budget 2024	Amount Spent	Balance
OPERATING EXPENSES	No.	YTD	Budget 2024	Spent	Balance
Staffing		\$ 1,051,882.78	\$ 1,042,161.16	101%	\$ (9,721.62)
Administrative		\$ 16,800.05	\$ 11,550.00	145%	\$ (5,250.05)
General Operating		\$ 55,509.38	\$ 69,590.00	80%	\$ 14,080.62
Communications		\$ 4,901.38	\$ 6,275.00	78%	\$ 1,373.62
Training & Travel		\$ 5,340.01	\$ 8,180.00	65%	\$ 2,839.99
Personnel		\$ 1,626.89	\$ 3,100.00	52%	\$ 1,473.11
Equipment Services		\$ 15,924.35	\$ 15,614.80	102%	\$ (309.55)
Purchased Services		\$ 5,983.49	\$ 3,500.00	171%	\$ (2,483.49)
Financial Services		\$ 946.68	\$ 2,805.00	34%	\$ 1,858.32
Minor Capital		\$ 785.75	\$ 2,400.00	33%	\$ 1,614.25
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		\$ 1,159,700.76	\$ 1,165,175.96	100%	\$ 5,475.20

Operating Revenue	No.	YTD	Budget 2024	Received	Balance Unrealized
Federal Grants	53005	\$ 40,591.95	\$ 7,980.00	509%	\$ (32,611.95)
Provincial Grants	53010	\$ 25,145.72	\$ 23,371.00	108%	\$ (1,774.72)
Municipal Grants	53015	\$ 1,176,300.00	\$ 1,176,300.00	100%	\$ -
Donations	53020	\$ 16,646.60	\$ 6,500.00	256%	\$ (10,146.60)
Own Source		\$ 28,859.49	\$ 1,500.48	1923%	\$ (27,359.01)
Commissions	55720	\$ 11,216.51	\$ 2,500.00	449%	\$ (8,716.51)
Capital Roll Over		\$ -			\$ -
Strat Plan Roll Over		\$ -	\$ -	0%	\$ -
Reserves / Roll Over		\$ -			\$ -
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>		\$ 1,298,760.27	\$ 1,218,151.48	107%	\$ (80,608.79)

Capital	No.	YTD	Budget 2024	Spent	Balance
Books	62051	\$ 59,921.98	\$ 61,803.00	97%	\$ 1,881.02
Replacement Furniture & Fixtures	64016	\$ 610.89	\$ 5,000.00	0%	\$ 4,389.11
Software	64004	\$ 3,806.59	\$ 2,500.00	152%	\$ (1,306.59)
Replacement Equipment	64011	\$ 18,725.36	\$ 20,000.00	94%	\$ 1,274.64
Contract Services	63125	\$ -	\$ 7,000.00	0%	\$ 7,000.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		\$ 83,064.82	\$ 96,303.00	86%	\$ 13,238.18

Strategic Plan	No.	YTD	Budget 2024	Spent	Balance
Administrative		\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	0%	\$ 1,500.00
Communications		\$ -	\$ -	0%	\$ -
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>		\$ -	\$ 1,500.00	0%	\$ 1,500.00

## Board Meeting

**Report To:** The Blue Mountains Public Library Board  
**Report Name:** ADM.25.10 CEO & Service Update-March  
**Date:** March 16, 2025  
**Prepared by:** Jennifer Murley, CEO

## A. Recommendations

*That this Board receive as information ADM.25.10 entitled "CEO & Service Update-January".*

## B. Background

The BMPL is comprised of a Gallery, Library, Archives and Museum (GLAM). GLAMs across the province are now understood to be the culture hubs of communities, and more regularly have a single operational body, such as in the BMPL model. While this is not the comprehensive report of activities of our GLAM; this CEO & Services Update Report includes general highlights which are of importance to the Board from either a governance standpoint or as talking points on our organization. This will focus on both facilities of the Craighleith Heritage Depot (CHD) and the L.E. Shore branch (LES), successes or concerns by GLAM service, and how each impacts the three Strategic Pillars and Annual Action Plan.

## C. Community Hubs

### Foster Social Cohesion in a Time of Growth and Challenges

The Community Quilt Project was a great way for community members to interact with Black History Month at BMPL by adding a coded quilt square made from paper to the quilt. Coded Quilts were used during the Underground Railway to guide enslaved people in their journey to freedom. Special Thank You to Howard N. Sheffield and his book "A Personal Acknowledgement of The Early Black Settlers of Simcoe and Grey Counties" for being the primary resource to create the infographic about the early Black settlers of our area, like the Cooper family who brought stones from Gibraltar to Thornbury to build the dam. An additional infographic outlines the history of Black slavery and racism in Canada, beginning in 1604 with the first recorded Black slave, a 6-year-old boy who was given no name to modern day. We encourage everyone in our community to continuing learning about Black History in Canada throughout the year by reading the infographics which can now be found in our non-fiction section, [borrow Mr. Sheffield's book](#), or visit and experience the [Sheffield Park Black History & Cultural Museum](#).







BMPL launched a social media campaign for [Freedom to Read Week](#) (February 23 – March 1) to highlight the importance of intellectual freedom and raise awareness about censorship. Featuring library staff as "outlaws" who read books that have been challenged, the campaign showcased why these books were contested and emphasized the library's role as a space for free access to diverse ideas. This initiative not only drew attention to the dangers of censorship but also reinforced the library's commitment to protecting the right to read. The campaign sparked community engagement and conversations about the importance of safeguarding intellectual freedom and combatting censorship.

## Develop Multi-Use Spaces and Provide Outreach Services

### Community Assist Days Ft. Elections Ontario

Elections Ontario joined Community Assists Day to help TBM residents with voter registration, volunteer opportunities, name and address changes, and information on how to vote by mail. Residents appreciated having Elections Ontario at the library to provide information and resources to help them with their civic participation in the upcoming election. Grey Bruce Public Health shared information for residents who do not have or are waiting for a family doctor and how they can still get their medical needs met through various health services in our area.



### Tracks to Slopes: The Craigeleith Ski Train at Owen Sound Marine and Rail Museum

The Craigeleith Heritage Depot collaborated with the Owen Sound Marine and Rail Museum to deliver a highly successful presentation on the pivotal role of the 1940 Sunday ski excursion train in establishing our region's winter tourism. The presentation, held at the Owen Sound Marine and Rail Museum, explored the broader context of local rail history, including track laying, station construction, and the rise of winter recreation. A particular emphasis was placed on the 1940 Sunday ski excursion train, which transported 200-300 skiers to Craigeleith Station each Sunday. This initiative is recognized as a crucial factor in the growth and development of our region's ski industry, demonstrating the significant impact of this early transportation system. This type of outreach provides valuable exposure for our institution and fosters a deeper understanding of our community's rich history.

## D. Empowering Services

### Provide Diverse GLAM Services, Collections, and Programs

January and February featured an exciting lineup of programs for all ages, offering a mix of creativity, learning, and hands-on experiences.

#### Family Literacy Day

We kicked off with *Family Literacy Day* on January 27, celebrating with an eco-themed event, *Learn to Be Green*. Young families—primarily with toddlers—enjoyed storytelling, nature activities, songs, and a hands-on green bean planting project, fostering both a love of reading and environmental awareness.

### Teen Lit Kits

In February, our *Tween Lit Kits* program encouraged literacy for ages 12 and up. Each month, tweens receive a surprise package with a mystery book, treats, and a creative craft. Another fun way to have young adults participate in library programming and encourage reading for pleasure.

### Kids Clubhouse

For school-aged children, *Kids Clubhouse* launched with 15 enthusiastic participants aged 8 and up. January's activities included LEGO challenges and a guided dolphin painting session, with a read-aloud from a chapter book each week.

### After-School Hip Hop

February introduced a new *After-School Hip Hop* program, led by Sharin Elizabeth Dance. This four-week series has been especially popular with boys, offering a fun and affordable way for kids aged 10+ to stay active while learning new moves.



### Kids Can Cook

*Kids Can Cook* engaged young chefs with a hands-on lesson in making s'mores, complete with a virtual campfire experience.

### Professional Writing Course with Katie Zdybel

For adults, January marked the launch of our first professional writing course, led by local author Katie Zdybel. This six-month creative writing program, supported by the library, provides emerging fiction and nonfiction writers with structured guidance in a paid course format.

### Blind Date with a Book

February also featured our popular *Blind Date with a Book* program. Patrons filled out surveys to be matched with personalized book bundles selected by library staff. In partnership with Good Grief Coffee, each participant also received a gift card for a coffee or a treat, the makings of a perfect date.



### **Inuit Block Printing Workshop**

We also hosted an *Inuit Block Printing Workshop* with Muckpaloo Ipeelie from the [Urban Inuit Identity Project](#). Muckpaloo shared Inuit cultural stories and taught participants how to create prints using traditional Inuit methods, offering a unique cultural experience.



### **The ACC Presents**

Complementing our cultural programming, The Gallery's Arts & Culture Council (ACC) curated two new exhibitions. "Near & Far", featuring Adele Derkowski and Paul G. Russell, launched in early January and explored a variety of mediums and perspectives. "Celebrating the Colour Magenta" opened in February and featured almost 100 local artists' magenta-themed work. The ACC also hosted Michael Arkless for a popular travel talk on Iceland that saw over 100 attendees.

From early literacy to creative expression and active learning, our winter programs continue to bring the community together in meaningful ways.

### **New Museum Exhibits**

We've had a busy and productive start to the year, with a focus on refreshing our exhibits and expanding our reach. In January and February, we launched three new exhibits, showcasing the rich local history and natural wonders of our region. These exhibits covered a diverse range of topics, including the development of the local ski industry, our area's unique biodiversity, regional geology and fossils, and the fascinating history of the Fleming Family.

In addition to these new physical displays, our digital presence has also been enhanced. We've completed updates to four of our 22 online exhibits, including popular features like the 'Communities' section and the 'Beaver River Rat Race' exhibit. These updates ensure our online content remains current and engaging.

By consistently creating new exhibits and updating existing ones, we are committed to providing both new visitors and returning patrons with fresh and engaging experiences. This strategy allows us to maintain a dynamic and relevant museum that continues to attract and educate our community.

## Expand the Virtual Branch

### Mango Languages – American Sign Language (ASL)

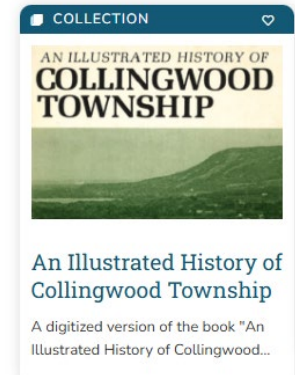
As of January 2025, we have added a new ASL course to our Mango Languages subscription. This multi-unit course was developed in partnership with ASL Inside. Patrons can access Mango Languages through the Online Collections section of our website.

### Hoopla Digital Budget Increase

We have increased the budget for Hoopla Digital, a pay-per-use platform that offers eBooks, audiobooks, movies, TV shows, and music. When the daily budget is met, checkouts pause until the next day. The budget increase will allow for more daily checkouts and reduce service interruptions for patrons.

### Museum Online Exhibits (Biblioboard)

Following Council approval, the Library and Museum successfully digitized 'An Illustrated History of Collingwood Township,' a significant historical document commissioned by the former Collingwood Council. This [digitized book is now accessible](#) on our online exhibit platform, Biblioboard, and integrated into our 'Communities' exhibit. Visitors can explore the full digital text, utilize a downloadable PDF index for research, and access a growing collection of related images, documents, newspapers, and artifacts pertaining to The Blue Mountains' history. In January, we saw a total of 146 visits to Biblioboard, and 236 visits in February.



## E. Organizational Excellence

### Increase BMPL Financial Opportunities

#### Thank You to Our Donors

A big & hearty Thank You to all of our donors throughout 2024! Here are the top 5 projects we were able to do during 2024 because of your generosity:

- **Books! Books! Books!** We grew our book collections even more with your help and captivated the imaginations and curiosities for generations to come.
- **2024 Arts & Crafts Walk** helped highlight the incredible work and talents of our local artists and their art. Thanks to you, over 1,000 participants discovered the impact of art.
- **REEL History Films** bring our local heritage to your living room. Your donations have helped us begin work on the 11<sup>th</sup> REEL History Film in the series!
- **Children's Programs & Storytime** brought you more glee, fun and programs steeped in supporting childhood development, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math), literacy and a lifelong love of reading.
- **Seed Library** sprouted and grew in its first year thanks to donations of seeds and funds for heirloom, open-pollinated and native seeds.

### Grant Applications

January and February were busy months for grant submissions. Below is a list of the projects submitted:

- **Canada Summer Jobs** – BMPL applied for its annual request for summer programming students.
- **Young Canada Works** – An application for two Museum interns was submitted to the Young Canada Works' Building Careers in Heritage program.
- **Seniors Fitness Grant** – Staff applied to the Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility's Seniors Community Grant Program to enhance our popular Seniors Fitness classes. The grant would fund the addition of new equipment, educational elements, and competitive instructor

compensation to improve health, reduce isolation, and foster community connections in our older adult population.

- **Truth & Reconciliation** – BMPL also applied for the *Canadian Heritage Grant* to host an intergenerational *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation* event in September 2025, featuring Indigenous Life Coach Heather McIntyre, who will reflect on the TRC's work and share a personal perspective on reconciliation in honor of both Orange Shirt Day and BMPL's 30th anniversary.

The Board will be updated on successful applications.

## Be a Key Partner Within the Municipality

### BMPL Feature in Town's Print Newsletter

In October 2024, the Library CEO presented *Valuing the Blue Mountains Public Library*, a report on BMPL's social return on investment, to Council. At Council's request, a summary of the findings, along with details about the study, was included in the Town's quarterly print newsletter, mailed to residents on February 20, 2025. Additionally, Town staff highlighted BMPL team member, Library Specialist Natashaia, and featured a small advertisement showcasing GLAM programs and services.

**What's on at the BMPL**

Your Gallery, Library, Archive, and Museum

- ✓ Celebrate Freedom to Read Week: February 23 - March 1
- ✓ March Break: Free Family Fun! Paint Jam w/ Tyler Boyle, Teen Escape Room, and more.
- ✓ Gallery Exhibit: Garden Stories Opening, March 1, 2-4 pm
- ✓ Museum Exhibits: Geology Through Time, Camperdown, Fleming: A Family Legacy

Learn more and plan your visit (519) 599-3681 [www.thebluemountainslibrary.ca](http://www.thebluemountainslibrary.ca)

## See What's Feasible: Two Towns, Two Libraries, One Feasibility Study

On January 30, BMPL and Town staff joined the Collingwood Public Library for a panel session at the Ontario Library Super Conference, drawing an audience of over 40 library professionals from across the province. The discussion explored the unique partnership between libraries and municipalities, highlighting the challenges and successes of collaborating on a joint multi-use recreation feasibility assessment. Attendees gained valuable insights into the benefits of tackling large-scale community projects through a cross-functional approach, fostering stronger, more integrated community services.





## Provide Inclusive and Engaging Communications with and to The Community

Members of the public, including the media and Town Council, have been invited to subscribe to the BMPL E-Newsletter and Key Messages. Subscription can occur at <https://www.thebluemountainslibrary.ca/about-us/follow-us>.

BMPL's primary method of communication is through the various e-newsletters and blogs. The main e-newsletter or any of the 4 topical monthly blogs are available by [subscription](#) whether a patron or not.

- [Library News](#): 1624
- [In the Gallery](#): 491
- [Staff Picks](#): 344
- [Key Messages](#): 204

### BMPL In the News

Date Published	News Outlet	Title (With Link)
January, 2025	Bay Watch	<a href="#">"Near &amp; Far"</a>
January, 2025	Bay Watch	"Iceland: A Ring Road Journey"
January 14, 2025	CTV News	<a href="#">"Blast into the past at Blue Mountain"</a>
February 23, 2025	Collingwood Today	<a href="#">L.E. Shore Library will host new art exhibit</a>

### Board Meeting Insights

Board meetings are typically uploaded on YouTube following a meeting. While the Board is meeting onsite and encourage the community to join us in person, we will continue to broadcast meetings for accessibility and transparency.

Month	YouTube
January	<a href="#">46 views</a>
February	N/A

Respectfully Submitted,

Jennifer Murley, CEO  
[LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca](mailto:LibraryCEO@TheBlueMountains.ca)  
 519-599-3681 extension 148

AD

London

## Ontario librarians say 'they have to be ready' amid growing calls in U.S. to ban books

Some libraries in Canada are taking a stance on intellectual freedoms

[Matthew Trevithick](#) · CBC News · Posted: Feb 28, 2025 12:00 PM EST | Last Updated: February 28



Kristen Caschera, supervisor of central information and fiction at the London Public Library's Central branch in southwestern Ontario, says rising calls in the U.S. to ban certain books 'reaffirms our commitment to making sure as much information is available as possible.' (Kristen Caschera/Twitter)

As libraries in the U.S. contend with growing book banning efforts largely targeting titles with 2SLGBTQ+ themes, London, Ont.-area librarians worry it could become a larger issue here.

Librarians here are using [Freedom to Read](#) week, which wraps Saturday, to call attention to the issue, fearing it could worsen and deter future librarians from entering the profession.

"Honestly, it's kind of scary," Kristen Caschera, supervisor of central information and fiction at the London Public Library's Central branch, said of news from the United States. In multiple states, laws [have been tabled](#) that threaten librarians with harsh punishments for distributing books deemed inappropriate.

"It's wild to think ... how this could possibly be happening. But more than ever, I think that reaffirms our commitment to making sure as much information is available as

possible," Caschera said.

Calls to remove books from library shelves in the U.S. have [soared in recent years](#), attributed in part to organized campaigns, often from [Conservative political groups](#).

Such book banning campaigns haven't materialized to the same extent in Canada, but similar efforts have made their way north, a recent [investigation by \*The Fifth Estate\* revealed](#).

A 2024 [study from the Canadian Federation of Library Associations](#) has documented a growing number of book challenges in recent years, in particular since the COVID-19 pandemic.

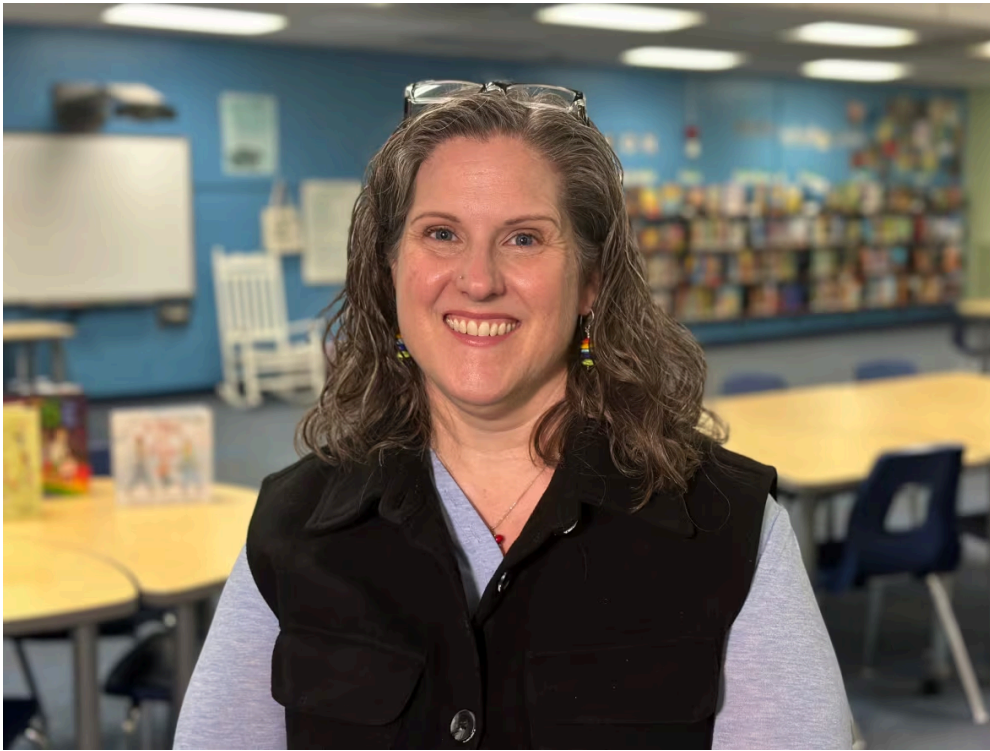
It found there were 197 complaints challenging books in Canadian libraries in 2023 and nearly half were about 2SLGBTQ content. That's compared to roughly 10 per cent in 2019, the study said.

- **THE FIFTH ESTATE** [This divided small town is on the front line in a fight to control what Canadians read](#)
- [Celebrate Canada Reads 2025 in your community!](#)

AD

Asked what she's heard from librarians in training about the current atmosphere, Caschera said, for some, it's strengthened their feelings about intellectual freedom.





Wendy Burch Jones, president of the Ontario School Library Association, says books about 2SLGBTQ+ issues and characters are among those targeted in challenges at school libraries in Ontario, influenced by U.S. campaigns. (Tess Ha/CBC)

In the U.S., book banning campaigns have seen the number of titles targeted surge over the last several years to more than 4,200 in 2023, compared to fewer than 200 a decade earlier, the [American Library Association](#) (ALA) says.

Books about 2SLGBTQ+ issues and characters have also been the target of a growing number of challenges at school libraries in Ontario, influenced by U.S. campaigns, said Wendy Burch Jones, president of the Ontario School Library Association.

"A lot of the times, the books that are getting challenged are coming off of [lists that get published](#) and get passed around. A lot of the time, the people asking for books to be banned haven't even read the books," she said.

She added it was important school boards have rigorous book selection and deselection policies, and clear language around how to deal with challenges.



**London Morning** 5:40

The Library It list

London librarian Kristen Caschera stopped by London Morning to talk about Freedom to Read Week in Canada and how it celebrates intellectual freedom.

South of London, St. Thomas Public Library is also taking the matter seriously, said its chief librarian. The library has designated 2025 as the year to ensure its stance on intellectual freedom is "really, really solid," and its intellectual freedom policy "ironclad," Heather Robinson said.

"We're not resting on our laurels. Because this could happen, and it could happen anytime, is what I'm thinking anyway. We have to be ready," said Robinson, who has been with the library for 27 years and is its CEO.

"There seems to be information out there" on how to get books removed, she said. "It's different methods than what has been. We're seeing the systematic removal of books a group deems should not be in the library."

According to the Centre for Free Expression at Toronto's Metropolitan University, Ontario libraries received 39 complaints about books in 2024, with 28 calling for removal of the offending title.

- [Renowned novelist says London board's teaching ban of his book is like 'burying our heads in the sand'](#)
- [AUDIO Author Maia Kobabe on having the most challenged book in the United States](#)

One challenge was reported at London's library. Caschera said it involved the coming-of-age book *A Sister* by Bastien Vivé — the complainant felt should be in the adult section. [In a letter to the complainant](#), the library said the book would stay in its young adult graphic novel section.

At the St. Thomas library, one challenge was filed for language in *Revolt Rhymes* by Roald Dahl. The complainant wanted the book removed, a [request that was unsuccessful](#).

Neither book deals with 2SLGBTQ+ themes, but a concern is that future challenges will be, driven by the kinds of pressure campaigns that have [targeted](#) drag queen story sessions at [local libraries](#).

Of the [top 10 books challenged](#) in the U.S. in 2023, most had "LGBTQIA+ content" cited as a reason, the ALA says.

"It's scary, and you feel a sense that we now need to stop being, sort of, neutral and nice," Robinson said.

"We are all of that, but there has to be a little bit more of an edge to libraries now. We're going to be asked to stand up for things like intellectual freedom."

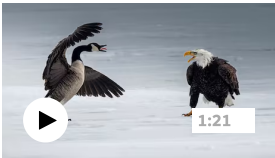
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AD

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TRENDING VIDEOS



VIDEO  
**#TheMoment** a brawl between a Canada goose and bald eagle was caught on camera

The National



VIDEO  
**Why** Trudeau called Trump 'Donald' in his tariff speech

CBC News



VIDEO  
**Americans in Buffalo** react to Trump's tariffs on Canada



VIDEO  
**Trudeau** says call with Trump on tariffs was 'colourful' but also 'substantive'

Politics News



VIDE  
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Politi

RECOMMENDED FOR YOU



**BREAKING**  
**Gene Hackman and his wife** died a week apart from separate causes, officials say

Entertainment



**Feds relax some EI rules,** provide \$6B in business support as Trump makes new tariff threats

Darren Major  
Politics



**UPDATED**  
**Buffy Sainte-Marie stripped** of Juno, Polaris music awards

Kevin Maimann  
Entertainment



**B.C. Conservative leader** kicks Dallas Brodie out of caucus for 'mocking' residential school testimony

Andrew Kurjata  
Canada - British Columbia



**Alber** recal U.S. f Dani

Walli  
Cana










# Town News

## THE BLUE MOUNTAINS NEWSLETTER

### STAY CONNECTED:

-  (519) 599-3131
-  [info@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:info@thebluemountains.ca)
-  Town Hall, 32 Mill Street  
Thornbury ON, N0H 2P0
-  Hours of Operation:  
Monday to Friday  
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
-  [www.thebluemountains.ca](http://www.thebluemountains.ca)

### STAY UP-TO-DATE:

Stay up-to-date on Town news, operations, projects and more by subscribing to the Town Email Newsletter. Never miss an update!

To sign up, visit:  
[www.thebluemountains.ca/subscribe](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/subscribe)

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@townofbluemtns



Please Recycle  
After Reading

## Celebrate Volunteers in The Blue Mountains

The Volunteer Recognition Awards are returning in 2025 to celebrate the exceptional individuals and organizations that make The Blue Mountains a vibrant and welcoming community.

This year's awards ceremony will take place on Wednesday, April 30, 2025, during National Volunteer Recognition Week. Launched in 2022, the Town's annual Volunteer Recognition Awards aim to celebrate and honour outstanding residents, community groups and organizations who work to enhance the quality of life in The Blue Mountains.

Nominations are open until March 14, 2025, for six categories including:

1. Arts and Culture
2. Blue Mountains Community Builder (Youth & Adult)
3. Heritage
4. Outstanding Community Group
5. Sports and Recreation
6. Sustainability



The awards ceremony is held in conjunction with a Volunteer Fair, an event where interested individuals can meet with local organizations and community groups that are looking for volunteers. If your group is interested in having a booth at the Volunteer Fair, the Vendor Information Package is available on the Town's website.

Mark your calendars for April 30, and join the Town in celebrating the great volunteers of The Blue Mountains!

For more information, visit the Town's website at [www.thebluemountains.ca/volunteer-awards](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/volunteer-awards) or contact Community Services at (519) 599-3131 ext. 254.

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## READ MORE

To stay up to date on all Town  
news and notices, please visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/news](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/news)



## Message from the Mayor

It's been a snow-filled start to the year, but spring is around the corner and I'm happy to share updates on Town plans and projects. Please enjoy learning more about the Town, and join me in looking forward at what's to come in 2025.

In December, the Town released the results of its Resident Satisfaction Survey. The full results are available to the public on the Town's website. I'd like to thank the 700+ residents who completed the survey and gave the Town feedback we can use to inform decision-making, budgeting and priorities for the Town. The results have been reviewed in detail by the Town's senior management team and will be used to track and implement measures to strengthen service delivery.

Town Council has been working closely with Town staff on the 2025 Budget. I'd like to thank our Finance Chair, Deputy Mayor Peter Bordignon, for guiding us through the process. We have worked to prioritize core services, maintain fiscal responsibility and strategically invest in the Town's future, while limiting the impact of inflation and growth on our residents. Public participation has been emphasized throughout the budget process and we appreciate the feedback and comments received.

Finally, I want to encourage everyone to get involved with our Volunteer Recognition Awards. Volunteers are the backbone of our community and the hours they contribute are vital to making The Blue Mountains such a great place to live. Nominations are open until March 14, and though I know none of the volunteers do it for the recognition, their contributions deserve praise, and this is our chance to show our appreciation. Please join us April 30 for the Volunteer Awards and Fair.

Enjoy the newsletter and remember to visit the Town's website for additional information, news and updates. Here's to 2025 being another great year for The Blue Mountains.

*Andrea Matrosos*

# 2025 TAX BILL INFORMATION

The enclosed 2025 Interim Tax Bill is based on 50% of 2024 total taxes and is payable in two instalments dated March 21, 2025 and May 21, 2025. The 2025 Final Tax Bill to be mailed in July will indicate the annual taxes for 2025 less the interim tax amount.

Tax payment options are noted on the reverse of the Tax Bill.

## PLEASE NOTE:

If tax is paid by pre-authorized withdrawal (PAP), the interim Tax Bill is for your records only – no payment is required.

## ASSESSMENT INQUIRIES?

For information on your property assessment, please contact the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC). Please call: **1-866-296-6722** or visit: [www.mpac.ca/en/contact](http://www.mpac.ca/en/contact)

## ONLINE INFORMATION:

To view your tax and utility account detail online, or to receive future bills by email, please visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH)

To sign in and activate an online account, you will need the customer ID and your name exactly as it appears on your tax or utility bill.

Example: Customer ID: SMITH0001

Name: SMITH JOHN

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/property-taxes](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/property-taxes)

email: [tax@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:tax@thebluemountains.ca) or

call: **(519) 599-3131 ext. 221**

## Trust and Transparency: The Blue Mountains' Lobbyist Registry

Last fall, the Town of The Blue Mountains introduced a Lobbyist Registry to enhance transparency and accountability in government decision-making. This initiative ensures that lobbying, a legitimate and important form of communication, is conducted openly. Lobbying allows individuals, businesses and organizations to share their views with elected officials and Town staff on decisions that impact the community.

The Registry catalogs details of lobbying activities, including who is lobbying, who they are lobbying for, and what they are lobbying for. This information then becomes part of the public record.

Registering yourself as a lobbyist is easy to do. If you've communicated with an elected official or Town staff seeking a direct or indirect financial benefit, you have ten business days to record your activities. Registration is free and can be done



through the Town's website. Activities such as casual conversations or requests for general information do not require reporting.

We encourage everyone to view the Registry as a positive step toward maintaining open and transparent communication between the public and our elected officials and Town staff. For more information, including how to register, visit:

[www.thebluemountains.ca/lobbyist-registry](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/lobbyist-registry)



# Infrastructure Project Preview

**2025 is shaping up to be a busy year for infrastructure projects in the Town of The Blue Mountains. Construction is scheduled to begin or continue on six significant municipal projects within the Town's boundaries.**

## **THORNBURY WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT EXPANSION**

Construction at the Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plant is on track to be completed in 2025. Installation of the new outfall pipe on Grey Street will see the plant's capacity increase to 5,330 m<sup>3</sup>/day from its original rated capacity of 3,580 m<sup>3</sup>/day.

## **THORNBURY WEST PHASE 1B RECONSTRUCTION**

With the construction tender closing in February, the Town plans to complete Phase 1 of the Thornbury West Reconstruction project in 2025. This work includes Lorne Street, Park Lane, Elma Street from Louisa to Alfred, Louisa Street from Bruce to Elma, and Alice Street from Bruce to the Phase 1A limits. Much of the existing underground infrastructure in this area of Thornbury is approaching 100 years old, and is well beyond its expected service life.



## **NEW CRAIGLEITH FIRE HALL #2**

The Town's Fire Department has outgrown its existing facility in Craigleith, and requires a larger space to meet the needs of the growing year-round and seasonal population in the service area. A pre-qualification for contractors was released in January, and work is expected to begin with brush cutting and clearing on the site before the end of March 2025.

## **PEEL STREET NORTH RECONSTRUCTION**

With development completed on High Bluff Lane and Timber Lane, the Town is looking to reconstruct Peel Street in accordance with the Development Charges Background Study. Trees were removed and utilities were relocated in 2024, and construction will continue in 2025. When completed, Peel Street North will have a 7 metre road surface, 2.7 metre multi-use trail and street lighting to meet the Town's standards.

## **BAY STREET EAST RECONSTRUCTION**

The existing watermain and gravity sewer on Bay Street East are approaching end of life, and a secondary forcemain is required between the Mill Street Sewage Pumping Station and the Thornbury Wastewater Treatment Plant to handle planned growth in the community. Work in 2025 is planned to be completed on Bay Street from Mill Street to Elgin Street, and on Grey Street from Bay Street to the wastewater treatment plant.

## **SUBSTANDARD WATERMAIN REPLACEMENT PHASE 3**

The final phase of the Town's Substandard Watermain Replacement program is scheduled to be completed in 2025. Work will be completed on Peel Street South from Highway 26 to Baring Street, Baring Street from Peel Street to Alice Street, and Alice Street West from Baring Street to Lansdowne Street/Beaver Street. The project will improve water movement and firewater flow and will provide operational savings.

You can learn more about the Town's major capital infrastructure projects, and sign up for project-specific email lists, on our website at:

**[www.thebluemountains.ca/capitalprojects](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/capitalprojects)**

# Online Services: Simplifying Life in The Blue Mountains

In an increasingly digital world, the Town of The Blue Mountains is committed to enhancing customer service by bringing Town services directly to your devices. Let's take a look at some of the convenient online services you can access from the comfort of your home!

## STREAMLINE BUILDING PERMITS WITH CLOUDPERMIT

New in 2025, the online Cloudpermit system transforms how residents, builders, and members of the business community apply for and track building permits. The cloud-based system offers the flexibility to start an application, complete it later, and receive email updates regarding its status, all online! Cloudpermit offers a more transparent and user-friendly experience by enhancing efficiency, reducing administrative burdens and streamlining communication with Building Services. To learn more about Cloudpermit, visit: [www.thebluemountains.ca/building](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/building)

## CONVENIENTLY MANAGE BILLS WITH VIRTUAL TOWN HALL

Managing your Town bills has never been easier with the Virtual Town Hall service portal. Property owners and residents can securely access and manage their tax and utility accounts from anywhere, at any time. By signing up for e-billing, you will receive your bills and statements directly in your inbox—eliminating excess paper and the wait for postal delivery. It's a convenient, eco-friendly way to stay on top of your accounts. To get started with Virtual Town Hall, visit: [www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/VCH)

## EFFORTLESS REGISTRATION WITH DIGITAL PARKING PERMITS

As the Town transitions to a more efficient, fully digital parking permit system in 2025, physical parking passes are no longer being issued. The easy-to-use system allows residents to skip the trip to Town Hall and register vehicles online. In just a few clicks, residents can park for free at any paid parking location owned by the Town, including beaches, parks, and trails. Stay tuned for future updates as the new digital



system will also offer the option to purchase Friends and Family Parking Passes. Please remember that parking passes are valid for one year, so registration is required annually. To register for a 2025 parking pass, visit: [www.thebluemountains.ca/parking](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/parking)

## The Blue Mountains 2024 Annual Water Report

In accordance with Ontario Regulation 170/03, please be advised that the Annual Water Report prepared for the Blue Mountains Drinking Water System is available for viewing at Town Hall or by visiting [www.thebluemountains.ca/water-services](http://www.thebluemountains.ca/water-services)

**Rob Gilchrist**, *Water Supervisor*  
Thornbury Water Treatment Plant

## DOG LICENCE REMINDER

**Don't forget to licence your pet!**

All dogs must be licensed within the Town. The licensing requirement applies to all residents including those that stay in the community full-time or seasonally.



[thebluemountains.ca/dog-licence](http://thebluemountains.ca/dog-licence)



# Be on the Lookout for Wild Chervil This Spring!

**When you're driving in the Town this spring, be on the lookout for Wild Chervil. Commonly found along field edges, roadsides, stream edges and pastures, Wild Chervil is an invasive species that out-competes native plants and has a negative impact on agricultural lands.**

Wild Chervil is a biennial or short-lived perennial that produces numerous compound Umbel-shaped clusters of white flowers. These flowers bloom from May to June, with seeds appearing late June through July. The seeds spread easily through human activity, wind and wildlife and can spread aggressively along ditches, road right-of-ways, fence lines and pasturelands.

## HOW TO IDENTIFY

Chervil resembles other plants in the carrot and parsley family, such as Queen Anne's Lace. The plant has alternately arranged, compound, fern-like leaves and its stems are entirely green, ridged and hollow. Portions of the stem are smooth while the lower portions are hairy. Chervil can grow up to 1.5 metres in height and is easily recognized as it's the first species in the carrot/parsley family to flower in late spring.



## HOW TO REMOVE

If you suspect or identify Wild Chervil growing on your property, there are actions you can take to eliminate its spread.

- Mowing Wild Chervil weekly and removing its roots can prevent the plant from going to seed.
- If the Wild Chervil has already flowered, cut and bag the plants and leave them in direct sunlight for several days. Then dispose of the plant by burning or burying deep underground.
- Once the plant is removed, be careful not to move the infected soil and remember to thoroughly clean equipment, vehicles and footwear before leaving the infested site.

## HOW TO REPORT

The Town of The Blue Mountains Operations Department will remove Wild Chervil that has grown on the Town's Road Allowance. If you suspect or identify Wild Chervil on municipal roads, please contact the Town at: [operationsinfo@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:operationsinfo@thebluemountains.ca) or (519) 599-3131 ext. 276.

If you suspect Wild Chervil on Grey County roads, please contact the Grey County Weed Inspector at (548) 877-0884.

Managing Wild Chervil is a shared responsibility among landowners, the Town and the County. With proactive elimination of the plant, the Town's agricultural industry can continue to thrive and provide fresh, local produce to the community.



# Getting to Know TBM Staff: Natasha Hudson

In this ongoing series, Town Staff will be introduced to the public with a glimpse into their roles and how their service impacts the community.

When you think of a librarian, do you picture someone who reads and talks about books all day? Natasha Hudson, Library Specialist at The Blue Mountains Public Library, dispels some myths about being a librarian in the digital age. Spoiler alert: a job at the library leaves very little time for curling up with a good book!

The Blue Mountains Public Library (BMPL) is a dynamic centre of community engagement where everyone can connect, explore and create. BMPL is more than just the library; it's a GLAM - Gallery, Library, Archive and Museum. The L.E. Shore Library (173 Bruce St. South) and Craigleith Heritage Depot (113 Lakeshore Road E.) are the buildings that house the art, books, technology, and artifacts, but more importantly, they're community hubs for learning, growing, and exploration.

Accepting a job at BMPL in 2020 was a no-brainer for Natasha, having grown up in neighbouring Meaford and previously worked at Meaford Public Library. While 2020 posed some challenges for libraries and the safe delivery of services, Natasha quickly discovered that the Blue Mountains community wholeheartedly supports their library, which makes for a positive and inspiring atmosphere. Internally, the team is supportive of one another and loves their jobs, and that passion is reflected in the meaningful work they do.



Natasha would like to impress upon residents of The Blue Mountains that libraries are so much more than a place to borrow books. They deliver valuable services and skills to patrons from as young as newborns, through early literacy programs, to seniors interested in expanding their proficiency with technology. The gaps libraries fill and the community needs they meet cannot be underestimated. Patrons not keen on books or programs might find something of interest in the *Library of Things*, a growing collection of useful items that are loaned out, including games, snowshoes, and even technology.

Beyond the library, Natasha likes to spend her time on the trails or harbour walking her dog, sampling the flavours at cideries and wineries, and shopping for unique finds at the Georgian Artisan Shop...and maybe squeezing in time for a few pages of a good book.

## What's on at the BMPL

Your Gallery, Library, Archive, and Museum

Celebrate Freedom to Read Week:  
February 23 - March 1

March Break: Free Family Fun! Paint Jam w/  
Tyler Boyle, Teen Escape Room, and more.

Gallery Exhibit: Garden Stories  
Opening, March 1, 2-4 pm

Museum Exhibits: Geology Through Time,  
Camperdown, Fleming: A Family Legacy

Learn more and plan your visit (519) 599-3681 [www.thebluemoountainslibrary.ca](http://www.thebluemoountainslibrary.ca)



# 'Smartball™' Technology to Help Find Water-system Leaks

The Town of The Blue Mountains strives to stay on the cutting edge of technology with the goal to increase efficiencies for staff and taxpayers. One example of this from the past year is the Water Division's employment of Pure Technologies SmartBall™ system to inspect water mains for leaks.

The SmartBall™ is a free-swimming inspection platform that moves through pipelines along with the flow of water, and is capable of pinpointing leaks within less than 2 metres of their actual location. It's basically a supercharged microphone – tracked by proprietary sensors – that listens for the telltale sounds of water and air escaping from the pipe.

"The Town has been struggling with high water loss in the drinking water system," said Allison Kershaw, Manager of Water & Wastewater. "Being able to find and repair leaks in watermains reduces the cost to deliver water and keeps our system secure. Watermains not only provide safe drinking


water to homes and businesses, but also provide the water required for fire fighting."

A total of 9.6 km of trunk watermain were inspected by the SmartBall™ between the Thornbury Reservoir and Arrowhead Road. Four leaks and three acoustic anomalies were detected in less than seven hours. Compared to traditional, surface-based leak detection methods, the SmartBall™ allowed the Town to obtain significantly more accurate results using fewer staff hours.



## March Break PUBLIC SKATING


Beaver Valley Arena



The Town of The Blue Mountains is excited to offer public skating during the March Break.

Please visit our website for dates and times.

[thebluemountains.ca/public-skating](https://thebluemountains.ca/public-skating)



Scan for tickets:



## Pitch Night & Gala

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY  
**INVEST IN WOMEN:  
ACCELERATE PROGRESS**



**THURSDAY, MARCH 6**  
6PM-9PM  
MARSH STREET CENTRE, CLARKSBURG

To celebrate IWD 2025, we want to help female entrepreneurs shine! Join us to hear six local women pitch their business ideas, and enjoy live music, appetizers and cocktails.

Tickets \$20    Contact [info@bluemountainschamber.ca](mailto:info@bluemountainschamber.ca)



For a complete listing of events, visit: [www.exploreblue.ca/events](http://www.exploreblue.ca/events)



# Youth Climate Action Fund Now Accepting Round 2 Applications

Press Releases

February 26, 2025

The Town of The Blue Mountains would like to advise the public that the **Youth Climate Action Fund** (YCAF) is now accepting applications for its second round of funding.

Following a successful Round 1 YCAF program, the Town has received an additional \$100,000 USD to distribute as microgrants of between \$1,500 and \$7,000 CAD to fund youth-led climate initiatives.

Eligible projects can include, but are not limited to:

- Awareness, education, research and co-development initiatives
- Launching climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives
- Involvement in governance of local climate action plans

These projects can be implemented in any community within the traditional **Territory of the Saugeen Ojibway Nation**, which includes The Town of The Blue Mountains, Grey County, Southern Georgian Bay communities, Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation, Chippewas of Saugeen First Nation, Bruce County and other communities within this area.



"We are proud to support youth in our region as they add said Town of The Blue Mountains Mayor and Grey Council Matrosovs. "It was inspiring to see our youth develop the encourage all youth to get involved and raise awareness their community and take bold climate action."



Live Council Meeting  
in Progress

[Launch Live Stream](#)

Projects must be led and implemented by three or more youth between the ages of 15 and 24 and support [The Blue Mountains Future Story](#) (the Town's sustainability plan) and/or [Going Green in Grey](#) (Grey County's Climate Action Plan). Proposals require the support of an eligible sponsoring organization to be considered. Organizations that are looking to participate or partner with youth applicants are encouraged to refer to the Eligible Groups and Organizations section of the [Youth Climate Action Fund](#) website.

Applications are due by March 31, 2025. Applicants are encouraged to begin the application process early to confirm project eligibility and to help youth leads partner with a sponsoring organization if necessary. Successful projects will be announced on April 22, 2025, with all projects to be completed by October 31, 2025.

For more information, including submission guidelines, eligibility criteria and funding details, visit the [Youth Climate Action Fund](#) page on the Town's Website or contact:

### Nicholas Cloet

Sustainability Coordinator

Town of The Blue Mountains

[Email](#)

(519) 599-3131 ext. 235

### About Bloomberg Philanthropies Youth Climate Action Fund:

*Kickstarted at the [Bloomberg Philanthropies Mayors Innovation Studio at COP28](#), as a part of the Local Climate Action Summit, the Bloomberg Philanthropies Youth Climate Action Fund provides cities with the tools, techniques, and supports to*

*leverage innovation approaches that invite and foster residents to participate in climate problem-solving and policymaking.*

*The Town of The Blue Mountains received \$50,000 USD in 2025 to distribute microgrants to fund youth-led projects of the Youth Climate Action Fund.*



**Live Council Meeting  
in Progress**

[Launch Live Stream](#)

*Bloomberg Philanthropies invests in 700 cities and 150 countries around the world to ensure better, longer lives for the greatest number of people. The organization focuses on creating lasting change in five key areas: the Arts, Education, Environment, Government Innovation, and Public Health. Bloomberg Philanthropies encompasses all of Michael R. Bloomberg's giving, including his foundation, corporate, and personal philanthropy as well as Bloomberg Associates, a philanthropic consultancy that advises cities around the world. In 2023, Bloomberg Philanthropies distributed \$3 billion. For more information, please visit [bloomberg.org](https://bloomberg.org), sign up for their [newsletter](#), or follow them on [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), [YouTube](#), [Threads](#), [Facebook](#), and [X](#).*