



## CEO – February 2025

### Sector Updates

#### Ontario Library Services (OLS)

The new Interlibrary loan software has been implemented province wide and now that labour relations at Canada Post have been resolved the service has fully resumed.

OLS consultants are developing a new training session around the Strong Mayor's Act / Powers.

The Nordick Institute will be updating the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT), early this year. OLS Staff stressed that the results are not comparable across libraries – like the annual statistics. All figures require context, and all libraries' operations are unique, and the use of any toolkit must consider a library's particular governance context whether provincial, regional, or municipal, and reflect the needs of the communities the library serves.

#### Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL)

All provincial government advocacy is focused on the impending election. FOPL has reached out to each party with an ask for support to Public Libraries and particularly the Ontario Digital Public Library (ODPL). Prior to the call for an election, Executive Director, Ms. Stevens expressed her optimism regarding the ODPL as she has been fielding questions and library representatives have been asked/invited to provide budget delegations (a clear indication that the ministry is curious and gathering facts).

#### Ontario Library Association (OLA)

The annual super Conference held in Toronto at the end of January focused on building bridges. As described by the OLA, *a bridge is an essential structure. It crosses a divide and allows people to overcome obstacles. A bridge's purpose is in the connections it creates. When we talk about building bridges, not only are we talking about physical connections, but we're also talking about connecting individuals with issues, identities, and ideas. **When we build bridges, we build hope.***

#### Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming

The platform to populate the figures for the Annual Survey is now open for input and the completed form is due April 30<sup>th</sup>. There were no updates provided as most business is paused during election period.

## Intellectual Freedom - Real time Canadian challenges

“A library in Valleyview, Alberta is caught in the crosshairs of an international movement that could be of concern to all libraries. There is a large group that would see all 2SLGBTQ+ material/books identified and removed from public view”. The article is available [here](#). CBC The Fifth Estate recording is available on YouTube at "[the war on public libraries](#)".

Freedom to Read Week (February 23 to March 1) provides an opportunity for Canadians public libraries to focus on issues of intellectual freedom.

## **Operations**

Preliminary year-end figures are now available for finance and operations. A quick review shows promising results.

### Revenue:

The increase to revenue is primarily due to a rise in non-resident memberships and donations. The library gratefully received multiple small donations from local service groups and individuals. We've made it easier for people to donate by adding a "Donate Now" button on our website. Donors can request a tax receipt and provide comments with their donation.

Collection Agreements (which account for approximately 7% of total annual revenue) with the neighbouring municipalities are fully executed for 2025. Amaranth council has requested a presentation which will be delivered next month by the Board Chair and CEO.

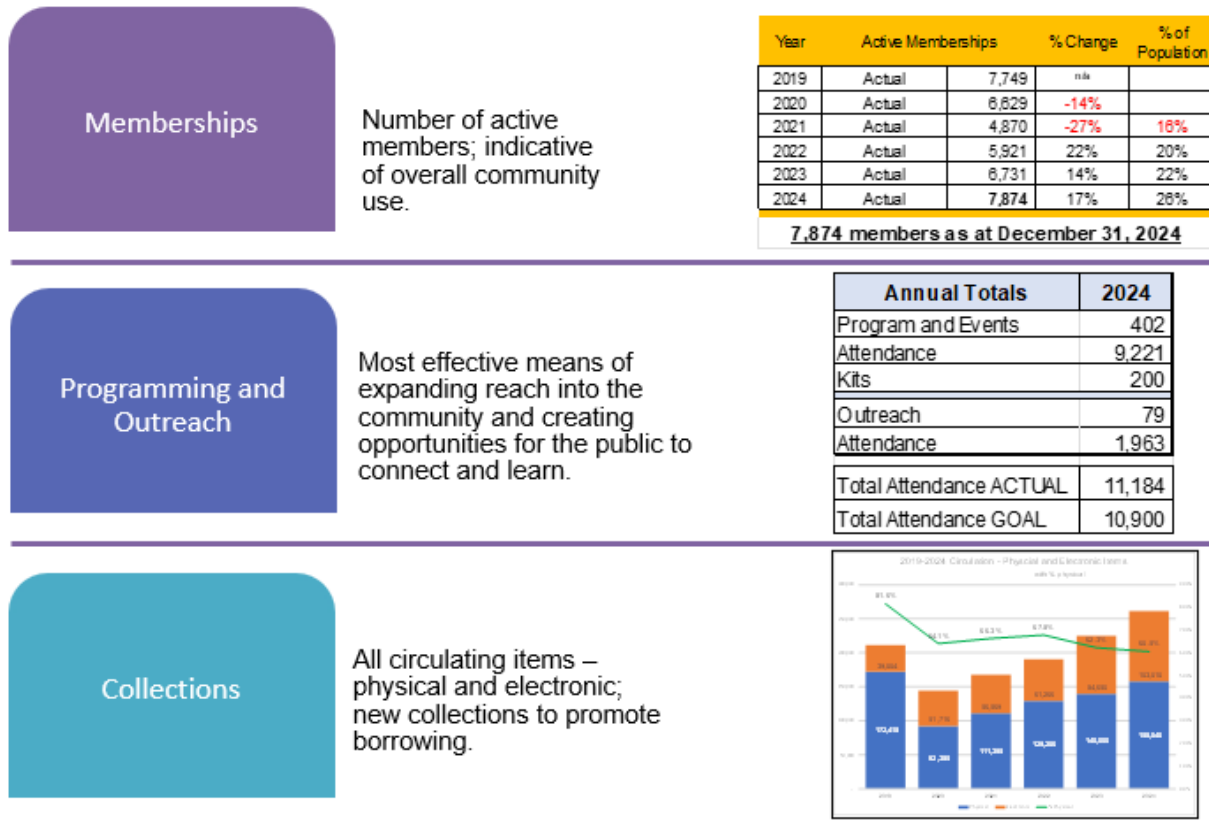
### Operations:

We have met or exceeded our goals in circulation, memberships, and program attendance. It's been a year since our return to full operations at the Mill Street location, and the library is thriving in our new space.

A comprehensive report on year-end detailing all metrics both achievements and those metrics not met is in the works. The year end statistics, along with data required by the ministry from the annual survey, will be included in a future report to the Board in April. It will also provide an update on the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit.

At first glance we can see that the number of active memberships and the number of electronic downloads have both exceeded 2019 figures. As for the physical collection and program attendance although we have not yet achieved pre-covid levels we did achieve our goal for 2024.

Figure 1: 2024 KPI's



Foot Traffic and Hours of Operation:

In considering a reduction in operating hours, the board’s input is crucial. Staff have been working on creative solutions to ensure adequate resources for Public Service Assistants training, desk time and programming (including the Makerspace). While my recommendation proposes a reduction of five percent, other alternatives are available. Staff have developed contingency plans to address any outcome below the five percent threshold and confirm their ability to implement any option chosen by the board.

We have been tracking foot traffic at both locations and suggest the following minor changes to our hours:

1. Friday Night Close at Alder: Shift closing time back to 6:00 PM from 8:00 PM. This change is justified by low usage and staff feedback.

2. Seasonal Hours at the Alder Location:

Some board members will recall when hours at the Alder library changed seasonally based on our service contract with Humber College. We propose implementing similar adjustments.

Staff recommend closing both Sunday and Monday at Alder during the summer months of June, July, and August.

Foot traffic heat maps show these are the least busy times for the Alder library. While the building is bustling with summer camps, foot traffic to the library is minimal.

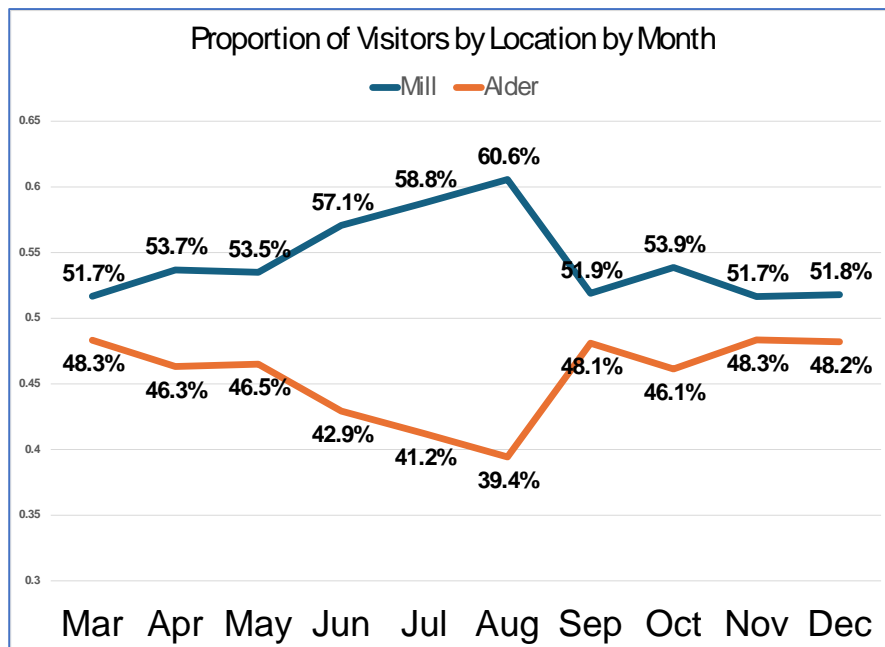
This adjustment would reduce the hours of operation by a total of 182 hours if the library closed Sunday and Monday from Victoria Day Weekend in May to Labour Day weekend in September. With less disruption to service due to three statutory holidays within this period. It is common practice among libraries (e.g. Grimsby, Sault Ste Marie, King Township) to offer reduced hours during the summer months.

To effectively maintain the 2024 program roster, our full-time staff have taken on additional responsibilities such as door monitoring and ensuring a second staff member is present in the building during evening programs (after hours – 70 hours logged). This creates a significant scheduling conflict, as the standard business hours do not align well with program delivery times. Full-time staff, including librarians and coordinators, have existing commitments that demand their attention during regular work hours. Consequently, managing time becomes a logistical challenge for everyone involved.

When librarians and coordinators cannot modify their work hours to accommodate program coverage within their normal 7-hour day, they must record extra hours as lieu time for any work exceeding a 35-hour week. Over the last year, more than 300 hours were accumulated as lieu time, intended to be used at the employee's discretion. However, due to ongoing workload and immediate obligations, scheduling time off remains difficult. While we are fortunate to have an incredibly dedicated team, the sustainability of this current program delivery model raises concerns.

The proportion of visitors by location based on the foot traffic counts fluctuates significantly during the months: June, July and August.

Figure 2 Proportion of visitors by location by month



This gap in the proportion of visitors between locations is depicted in figure 3 which highlights the difference in foot traffic for the summer months (June, July and August).

Figure 3 2024 average foot traffic counts by location

2024 (June-July-August) - Alder Branch - Average of Manual Counts													
	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	1:00 PM	2:00 PM	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	5:00 PM	6:00 PM	7:00 PM	Per Day	#Hours Open
Monday		25	15	10	9	9	8	15	13	16	9	129	10
Tuesday		27	21	17	17	16	19	19	19	24	14	192	10
Wednesday		19	15	13	11	13	12	17	23	23	11	156	10
Thursday		23	12	13	10	7	16	22	33	23	10	170	10
Friday		25	17	14	10	10	12	12	8	8	5	121	10
Saturday	10	21	18	14	16	13	12	10				115	8
Sunday				12	13	11	12					48	4

2024 (June-July-August) - Mill Street - Average of Counts													
		10:00 AM	11:00 AM	12:00 PM	1:00 PM	2:00 PM	3:00 PM	4:00 PM	5:00 PM			Per Day	#Hours Open
Monday		26	25	20	26	22	23	18	13			173	8
Tuesday		36	28	30	32	31	20	22	13			212	8
Wednesday		45	27	36	33	27	35	25	13			241	8
Thursday		38	28	28	36	28	21	19	12			208	8
Friday		28	30	25	29	28	26	22	10			198	8
Saturday		38	41	31	36	36	28	17				227	7
Sunday				15	17	16	15					63	4

Should a different option be selected, staff are equipped to adapt our strategies accordingly. Any changes to hours of operations will be carefully communicated to our library members and stakeholders. It is proposed that these changes be initiated starting May 20th.

Figure 4 Proposed changes to hours of operation

Option	Description of Change	Annual Hours Open	% Reduction in Open Hours
1	<b>Maintain Current Level of Service</b>	<b>5,594</b>	
2	Reduce Fridays 2 hrs (-100 hrs.)	5,494	1.8%
3	Reduce Sunday and Monday (Summer at Alder)	5,412	3.3%
4	Both changes	5,312	5.2%
5	Reduce Mondays Only (Summer at Alder)	5,464	2.4%
6	Reduce Sundays Only (Summer at Alder)	5,534	1.1%
7	Friday year round and Mondays during the Summer	5,364	4.2%
8	Friday year round and Sundays during the Summer	5,434	3.0%

Public Services has been busy with the fine free implementation- numerous calls and emails as members with long overdue items are receiving invoices for the items not returned.

The student pages have been performing well. Our Program and Research Librarian has been submitting grant applications and working with the human resources division to secure two students to support our summer programs. These students bring a dose of innovation and enthusiasm, positively impacting our team dynamics.

When opportunities coincide with resources, we can offer students mentorship or internship placements. Currently, Gansey Veldhuis is concluding a 105-hour placement tied to his studies at Mohawk College, through Confederation College. This arrangement provides mutual benefits: we gain from the educational process, Gansey's feedback, and his contributions. He's assisting on a special project and has had the chance to engage with various staff members. Gansey has shown a keen interest in pursuing a library career, which has been rewarding for the staff, knowing they've played a part in nurturing his enthusiasm.

Through a new partnership with Theatre Orangeville the library will offer a new collection, **borrowable tickets for Theatre Orangeville!** Staff are finalizing procedures, and adaptations will be made as we gain experience with the process. Patron guidelines and basic system applications are being communicated; a display is available at Mill St. along with the "faux tickets" that the patron will bring to the service desk.

### **Black History Month**

The staff did a great job creating displays and arranging posters in the libraries for Black History month. The following was shared Town wide by the CAO,

If you are looking for more resources on Black History Month, the library has prepared the links below for some books which are for all ages.

<https://www.orangevillelibrary.ca/en/news/black-history-month.aspx>

Here are the links in case you need them:

- [Non-fiction](#)
- [Picture books](#)
- [Black Canadian adult fiction](#)
- [Juniors and teens](#)

### Community Recognition Bench

The Town of Orangeville is committed to EDI landscape investments and is looking at ways we can recognize our commitment alongside our community partners.

## Landscape Investment– Community Recognition Bench

PURPOSE	MUNICIPAL BENCHMARKING	COMMUNITY CONSULTATION TO DATE	COST	CONSIDERATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A community recognition bench is both a practical seating solution and a powerful <b>symbol of recognition and support</b>.</li> <li>It serves to acknowledge a group's significance, foster inclusivity and awareness.</li> </ul>	<p><b>10+ Municipalities currently have community recognition benches</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>City of Burlington</li> <li>Kawartha Lakes</li> <li>Mississauga (Sheridan College)</li> <li>Muskoka (all 6 municipalities)</li> <li>Newmarket</li> <li>Vaughn</li> <li>Welland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Celebrate Your Awesome Committee</li> <li>Queer Village Book Club</li> <li>DCAFS GLOW 2SLGBTQ+ social group</li> </ul>	<p><b>\$3,000 – \$5,000</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recycled Plastic Approx. \$2,700</li> <li>Accessible Design</li> <li>Same vendor/style as downtown benches</li> <li>Can embed a plaque</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Location</b></li> <li>Additional embedded plaque message</li> <li>Lead time 12 – 14 weeks</li> </ul>

The library has been selected as a potential site for the installation of a community recognition bench. As part of the Landscape Investment initiative, mayor, Lisa Post in consultation with the Celebrate Your Awesome Committee has expressed their wish to find a location on Mill Street. The ask has come to Library Board for their assistance with determining some possible locations on Mill Street, ideally close to the library.

Dimensions: Length: 72”, Height 33.5”



Program Update *as submitted by Lauren Tilly*



Our first Experts in the Library event of 2025 featured local artist and adventurer AI Pace for an engaging presentation that wove together art and nature exploration via canoe.



On January 25 Family Literacy Day was celebrated at the Mill Street Library with a Magic Storytime. Special guest Marty the Magician amazed young attendees with some magic tricks, and everyone was reminded to practice their literacy skills together as a family.





Some big snow exploration has been happening at our Adventures in the Park program done in partnership with Dufferin EarlyON throughout the last two months. A perfect opportunity to read books about snow and winter as everyone engages in this outdoor play.



An impactful presentation was made on February 19 after the For King and Country event was rescheduled due to weather. OPL is grateful for the partnership with the DCCBA and the support of the Town of Orangeville EDI Committee to provide this educational opportunity.

## Up and Coming

- DCCBA their [Annual Black History Month Event](#) at the Orangeville Opera House at 5 p.m. on **Saturday, March 1** at the Orangeville Opera House which the Orangeville Public Library will be supporting, tickets are \$20 ea.
- A lineup of fun school age children's entertainment and programming is planned for [March Break 2025](#) taking place from March 10 to 14 with shows at ODSS in the morning and various afternoon programs including STEM, kids knit, LEGO and more
- The Brave Canoe is partnering with Orangeville Public Library to host two school age sessions open to the public on **Saturday, March 15** – more details to follow
- OPL will host [author Dr. Samra Zafar](#) as part of its Experts in the Library series, and a belated International Women's Day celebration, on **Saturday, March 22** as she discusses her latest book – Unconditional: Break Through Past Limits to Transform Your Future
- OPL will partner with the Headwaters Writers' Guild to host their annual spring Open Mic event on **Sunday, April 6 from 1 to 3 p.m.** - registration for speakers opens February 28
- Intermediate Battle of the Books will take place at the Alder Street Recreation Centre on **Thursday, April 24** and the Junior Battle of the Books will take place on **Thursday, May 8** – Save the dates!