



St. Catharines Public Library Board

Regular Meeting

Thursday, June 12, 2025, 6:00 pm
Mills Room, Central Library & Microsoft Teams

AGENDA

Chair calls meeting to order and Lori Littleton to read SCPL Land Acknowledgment.

1. **Adoption of Agenda**

1.1 Additions/Deletions to Agenda

1.2 Adoption of Agenda

Motion

2. **Chair's Remarks & Declarations of Interest**

3. **Presentations**

3.1 **Fundraising Feasibility Study**

Martin van Zon, President and Lee Zhang, Director, Interkom

4. **Adoption of Minutes (attachment)**

4.1 Regular Meeting – May 15, 2025

Motion

5. **Monthly Updates (verbal)**

5.1 St. Catharines City Council

5.2 OLS Update – J. Coles

5.3 CEO Update – K. Su

5.4 Department Update – Merritt Branch Renovations

6. **Consent Agenda (attachments)**

Motion

6.1 CEO Report – K. Su

6.2 Department Reports – May 2025

6.2(a) Customer Service – J. Spera & M. Haanstra

6.2(b) Innovation, Collections, and Technology – D. Bott

6.2(c) Programming & Promotions – H. Jones

6.2(d) Facilities – S. Mannella

- 6.2(e) Performance Review Document Update – A. Maciukas
- 6.3 2024 Annual Report – K. Su
- 6.4 Quarterly Progress Update on 2025 Work Plan (Q2) – K. Su
- 6.5 SCPL Marketing and Communications Plan – H. Jones

7. Discussion Reports (attachments)

- 7.1 Policy (G-05) Meeting Rooms – L. DiDonato Motion
- 7.2 2025-2026 Operating Budgets Update – K. Su and L. DiDonato Motion

8. In-Camera Session

- 8.1 In-Camera Agenda (attachment)
 - 8.1(a) Additions/Deletions to In-Camera Agenda
 - 8.1(b) Adoption of In-Camera Agenda Motion
- 8.2 Motion to Move In-Camera Motion
- 8.3 Adoption of In-Camera Minutes
 - 8.3(a) In-Camera Session – May 15, 2025 (attachment) Motion
- 8.4 In-Camera Consent Agenda (attachments)
 - 8.4(a) Staffing Update (May 2025) – A. Maciukas
 - 8.4(b) Plan Update – D. Bott
- 8.5 In-Camera Discussion Report (attachment)
 - 8.5(a) Planning Matter – D. Bott and L. DiDonato
(Closed Session in accordance with the Municipal Act section 239(2)(k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria, or instruction to be applied to negotiations)
 - 8.5(b) Planning Matter – K. Su
(Closed Session in accordance with the Municipal Act section 239(2)(k) a position, plan, procedure, criteria, or instruction to be applied to negotiations)
- 8.6 Return to Open Session Motion

9. Motion(s) Arising From In-Camera Session Motion

10. Motion to Adjourn Motion

11. Next Meeting / Upcoming Events

- Board Meeting – Thursday, September 18, 2025 at 6:00 pm, Mills Room, Central Library & Microsoft Teams



St. Catharines
Public Library

Fundraising Feasibility Study – Draft Report

Presented to St. Catharines Public Library Board

June 12, 2025

interkom.



Table of Contents

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- Introduction
- Fundraising Feasibility Study Findings
- Situational Analysis
- Recommendations & Next Steps
- Campaign Timeline & Gift Chart (Draft)
- Appendix

Executive Summary

- This fundraising feasibility study assesses the St. Catharines Public Library's readiness to pursue a capital campaign to raise \$3-5 million in support of the Central Branch renovation.
- The Study used both primary and secondary research methodologies, including research, in-depth interviews and surveys conducted with 30 community members, including library board members, elected officials, City leadership, local companies and key opinion leaders.
- The findings reveal broad support for the project, viewing the fundraising goal as achievable, however, tempered by realistic concerns about economic uncertainty (Trump, tariff, etc.), donor fatigue, and the downtown core's challenges.

Introduction

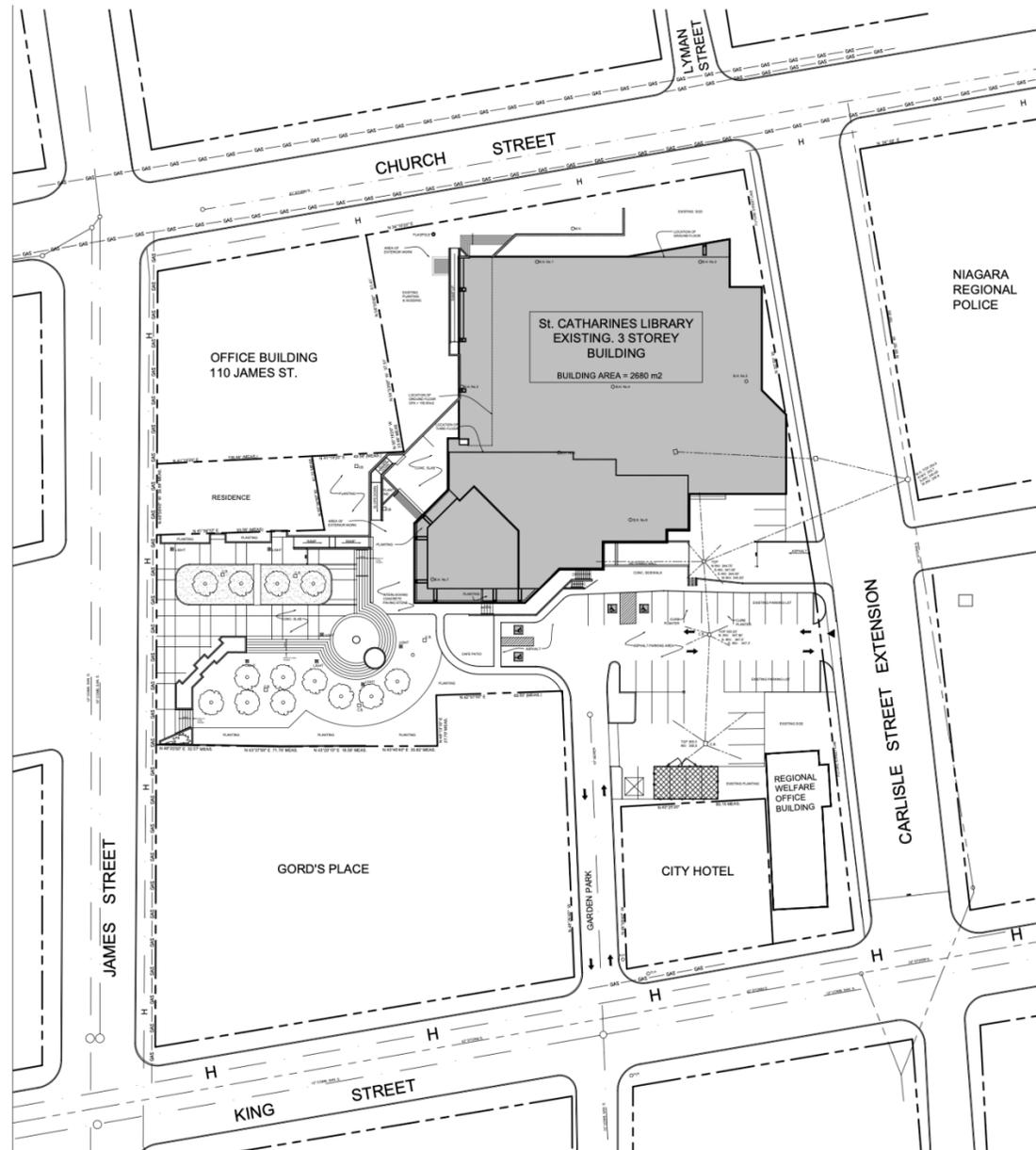
- The St. Catharines Public Library (SCPL) has been a beacon of knowledge, culture, and community since 1888. Its Central Branch, built in 1976, now requires significant upgrades to meet the demands of a modern, vibrant city.
- The proposed renovation will transform the library into a flexible, sustainable, and welcoming space, fostering a deep sense of community while advancing the Library's role as a leading resource for information, technology, and engagement.
- Project Timeline:
 - 2019: Completion of Building Condition Assessment
 - 2020: Space Audit conducted
 - 2022: Conceptual Design finalized and approved by City Council
 - 2024: Detailed Design completed
 - 2025-2027: Fundraising campaign and construction phases

Introduction (cont'd)

- The total estimated project cost is \$14 million, with \$4.85 million already committed by the City of St. Catharines. The remaining funds will be secured through a combination of library reserves, grants, partnerships, and a robust community fundraising campaign. The community fundraising goal is to raise approx. \$3-5 million to bring this vision to life.
- To make the renovation and expansion of the Library's Central Branch a reality, the SCPL engaged Interkom, a fundraising consulting firm, to conduct a feasibility study to assess the viability of a capital campaign to raise the funds necessary for the renovation of the Central Branch.



Site Plan and Architectural Rendering

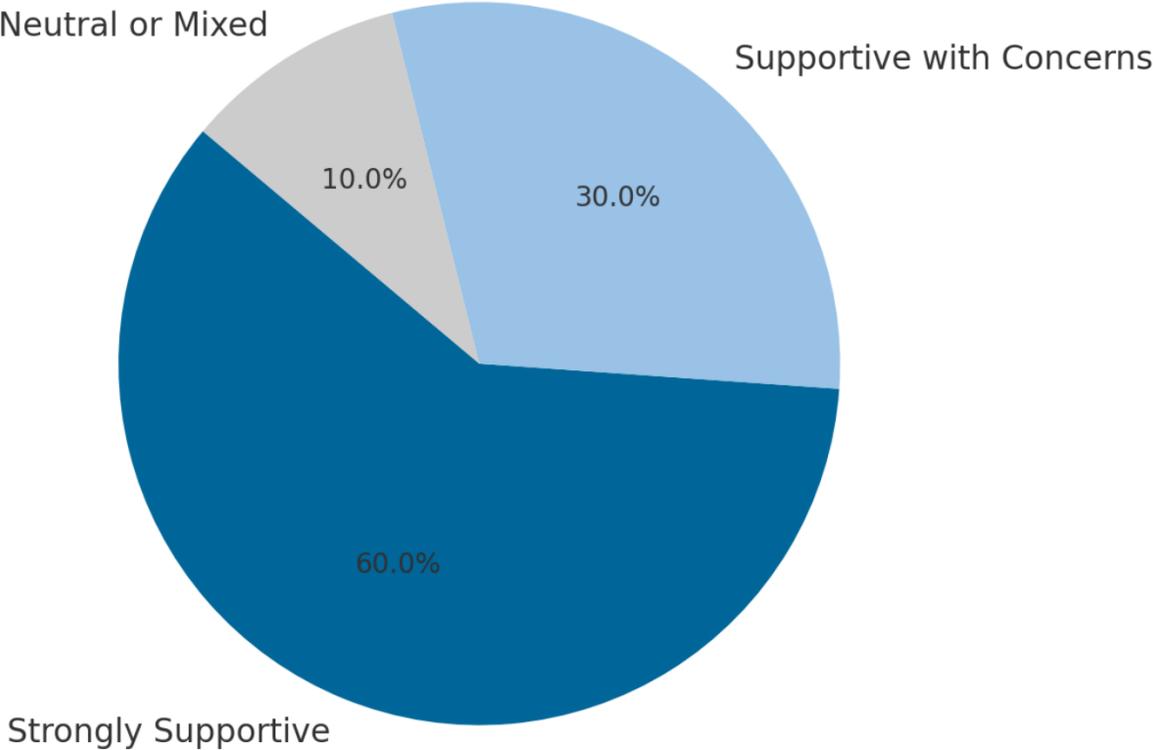


Fundraising Feasibility Study Findings – About the Library Renovation Project

“What is your feedback on the Project Overview?”

- Overall response to the project was positive.
- Project is timely and strategically aligned.
- Campaign is feasible.
- Most respondents found the Project Overview “clear, informative, and compelling”, especially in its connection to downtown revitalization and improved accessibility.
- Community support is strong and there is a clear understanding that the renovated & expanded facility will be an asset and of overall benefit to the community.
- However, there is a disconnect with non-library users who do not understand the important role libraries have.

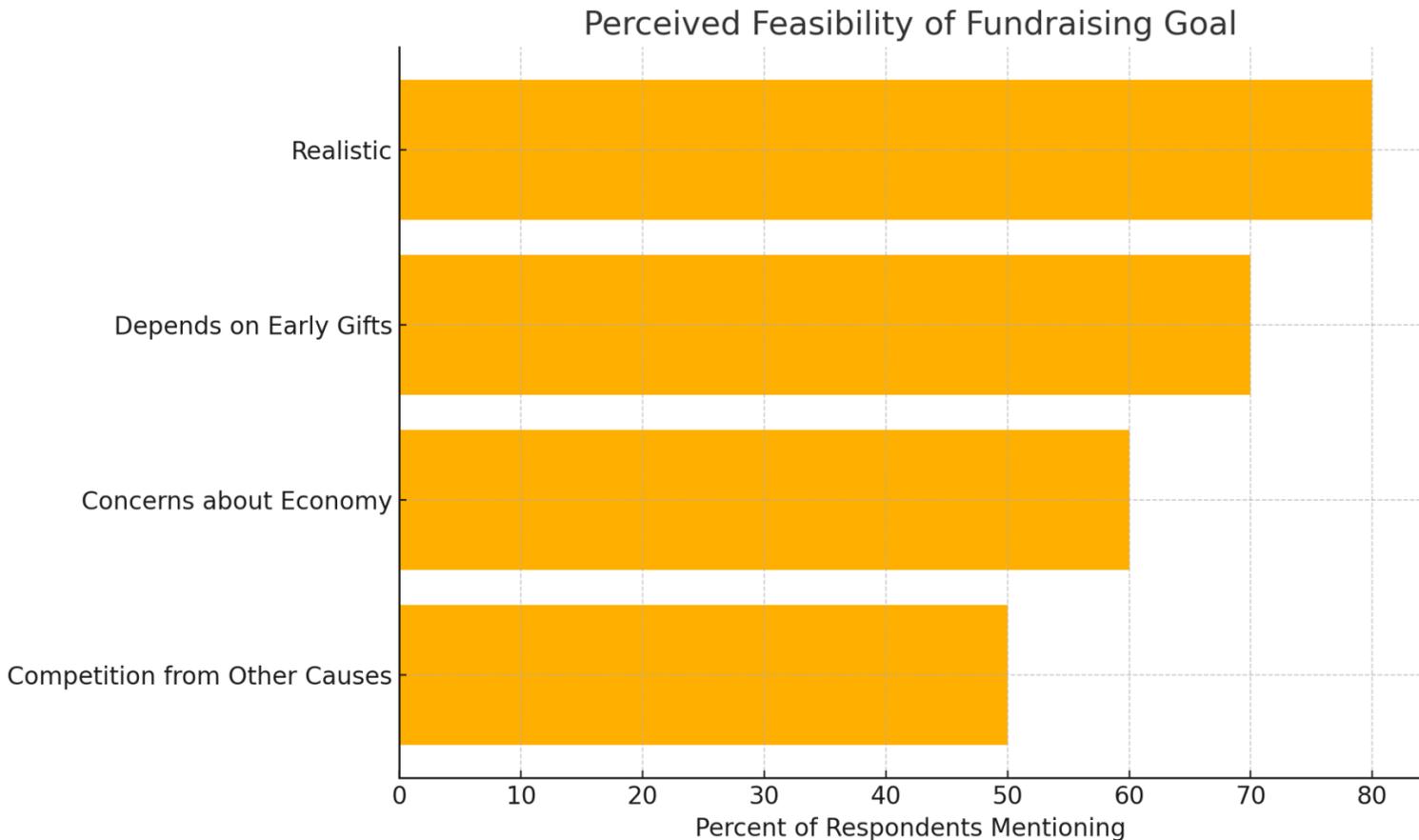
Stakeholder Sentiment Toward Library Renovation



Fundraising Feasibility Study Findings – About the Campaign Goal

“How realistic is the \$3 to \$5 million fundraising goal?”

- A majority of stakeholders view the \$3-5 million target as achievable, but contingent on several factors:
 - A well-crafted Case for Support
 - Strong leadership and campaign visibility
 - Early commitments from major donors
- Key concerns:
 - Philanthropic competition: With major health care and social services campaigns in the Niagara community, donors may feel spread thin
 - Economic uncertainty: U.S. tariffs are making donors cautious
 - Downtown social issues: Homelessness and safety concerns may impact perceptions of the project’s value



Fundraising Feasibility Study Findings – About Campaign Involvement

“Overall likelihood of your involvement in the potential fundraising efforts for this important community project?”

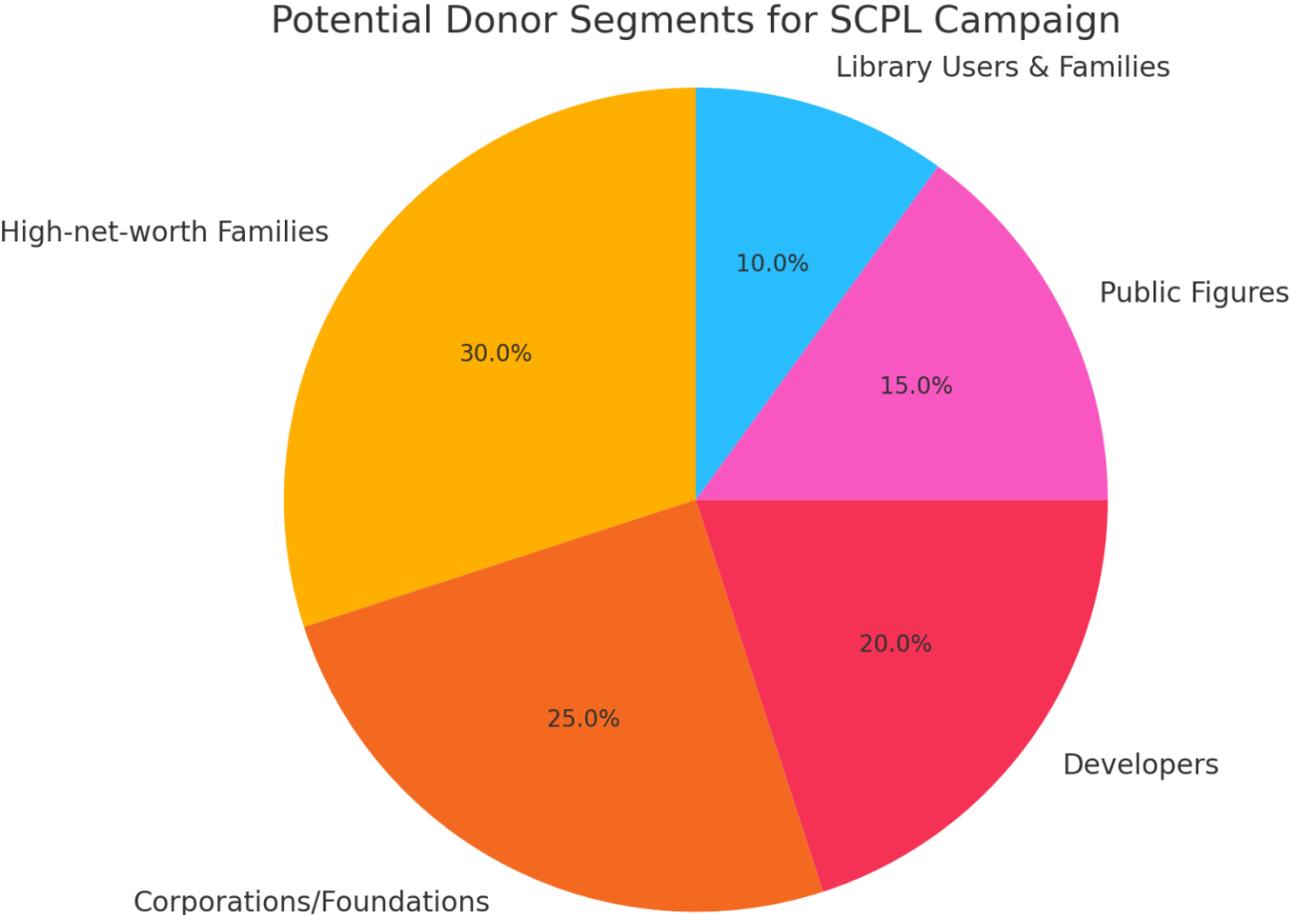
- Most participants are open to supporting via advocacy or connector roles – preference for behind-the-scenes support.
- Some are unavailable for active participation due to other commitments or lack of fundraising experience.
- Emphasis on hiring an experienced, professional campaign lead, not solely relying on Board members.

Fundraising Feasibility Study Findings – About Community Support

“Recommendations on community members who would be particularly important to the success of the campaign?”

Key groups identified include:

- Local philanthropists
- Corporate donors
- Foundations (including Family Foundations)
- Civic leaders
- Local business organizations and strategic partners



Additional Thoughts and Considerations

- Linkage to the Civic Square and Downtown Revitalization is a strong asset.
- Messaging must confront perceptions around downtown safety and the Library's association with homeless people (or mental health and/or social issues).
- Explore strategic partnerships and consider incorporating into the renovation for added visibility and shared community impact.
- Some suggest hosting fundraising events or Open Houses at the Library to encourage community involvement.
- Leverage nostalgia and community pride: The Library has served generations, and donors may be motivated by personal memories and hopes for the future.

Situational Analysis

Strength	How SCPL Can Capitalize Strengths
Trusted Legacy of the Library – Over 135 years in the community	Use storytelling and intergenerational testimonials to highlight continuity, trust, and impact.
Civic Anchor Location – In the heart of Downtown St. Catharines	Tie the campaign directly to the Civic Square revitalization. Promote the Library as the centerpiece of Downtown renewal efforts.
Strong Support from the City – \$4.85 million committed by City Council	Publicly amplify this support to validate the project’s importance and momentum.
Mission of Equity and Inclusion	Highlight inclusive access, barrier-free spaces, and community programming in campaign materials.

Situational Analysis

Weakness	How SCPL Can Address Weaknesses
Aging Facility Affects Public Perception	Use bold architectural renderings, virtual walk-throughs, and “before/after” imagery to show transformation. Reframe the narrative from “ <i>old building</i> ” to “ <i>future-ready civic hub</i> .”
Negative Perceptions of Downtown	Include public safety and revitalization language in the case to promote the campaign and its urban impact.
Limited Fundraising Experience (Board/Staff)	Hire a professional fundraising firm with capital campaign expertise. Offer Board training in donor engagement.

Situational Analysis

Opportunity	How SCPL Can Seize Opportunities
Civic Square & Downtown Redevelopment	Brand the campaign as part of a larger civic transformation – tie the Library’s future to the City’s revitalization goals.
Cultural Collaboration	Explore co-programming, gallery exhibitions, and shared space opportunities. Consider showcasing arts & culture as part of the building design and community offering.
Strong Storytelling Potential	Invest in a mini-documentary, donor testimonial videos, and immersive website content. Invite patrons and families to “Tell Us What the Library Means to You.”

Situational Analysis

Threats	How SCPL Can Mitigate Threats
Donor Fatigue from Competing Campaigns in the Niagara Region	Differentiate by emphasizing the <i>universal, lifelong, free</i> nature of the library. Highlight its reach across all demographics and needs.
Downtown Social Challenges (homeless, mental health)	Address head-on: position the library as a safe, welcoming, stabilizing space in the core: The Opportunity Centre. Consider partnerships with service agencies to strengthen this message.
Economic Uncertainty	Offer multi-year pledging options, planned giving, and smaller monthly donor tiers. Position giving as a legacy investment during unstable times.

Conclusion

The St. Catharines Public Library renovation project is viewed as timely, necessary, and capable of uniting philanthropic, civic, and community stakeholders. While challenges exist, the opportunity to reimagine the Central Branch as a modern, inclusive, and revitalizing force for downtown St. Catharines is powerful—and funders/donors are likely to respond if approached with the right message, strategy, and campaign leadership.



Recommendations

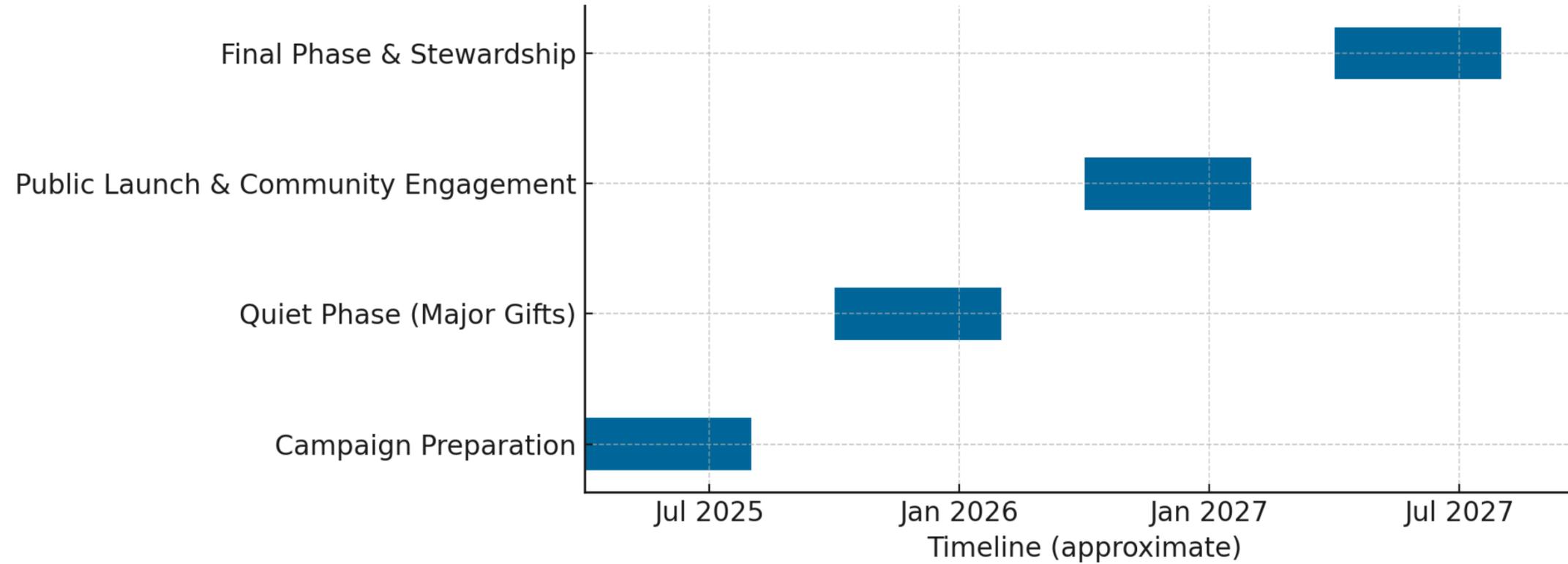
1. Proceed with a Capital Campaign, targeting \$3-5 million, beginning with a quiet phase focused on securing lead gifts.
2. Engage an experienced fundraising consultant to lead the campaign and coordinate with Board members and stakeholders.
3. Develop a compelling Case for Support with emotional appeal and storytelling for donor engagement.
4. Focus on naming opportunities and creative donor recognition tiers.
5. Consider partnerships to demonstrate a wider cultural impact and secure additional donor interest.

Next Steps

- Develop Capital Campaign plan, timeline and budget.
- Create campaign branding and narratives.
- Develop recognition tiers based on the Naming Policy.
- Identify prospects for major gifts.
- Begin quiet phase: target lead donor conversations.
- Launch public phase with community events and media campaign.
- Monitor economic indicators and adjust timelines if necessary.



Campaign Timeline (Draft) (July 2025-December 2027)



Major Gifts Campaign (Naming Recognition):					
Location	Space	# of Gifts	Valuation	Amount	# of Qualified Prospects
Exterior	Garden & Grounds	1	\$250,000	\$250,000	5
Exterior	Accessible Entrance	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Ground Floor	Main Lobby	1	\$250,000	\$250,000	5
Ground Floor	Program/Collaborative Meeting Room (Rentable) - Large	1	\$150,000	\$150,000	5
Ground Floor	Program/Collaborative Meeting Room (Rentable) - Medium	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Ground Floor	Program Room	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Ground Floor	Public Art Display Area	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Ground Floor	Café (facing new Lounge and entry)	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Ground Floor	Lounges	4	\$75,000	\$300,000	20
Ground Floor	Meeting Room (Rentable)	1	\$75,000	\$75,000	5
Ground Floor	Teen Area	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
Ground Floor	Tween Area	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
Ground Floor	Children's Area	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
Ground Floor	CEO/Staff Offices Break-out Room	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
Ground Floor	Laptop Bars	2	\$25,000	\$50,000	10
Second Floor	Makerspace	1	\$125,000	\$125,000	5
Second Floor	Computer Innovation Lab/Gaming	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Second Floor	Public Art Display Area	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Second Floor	Lounge	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Second Floor	Private Study Rooms (Rentable) - Large	2	\$50,000	\$100,000	10
Second Floor	Private Study Room (Rentable) - Medium	1	\$25,000	\$50,000	5
Second Floor	Laptop Bars	3	\$25,000	\$75,000	15
Second Floor	Collaborative Meeting Pods	5	\$10,000	\$50,000	25
Third Floor	Public Art Display Area	1	\$100,000	\$100,000	5
Third Floor	Flexible Work Room	1	\$75,000	\$75,000	5
Third Floor	Green Roof	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
Third Floor	Private Study Room (Rentable) - Large	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
Third Floor	Private Study Rooms (Rentable) - Medium	4	\$25,000	\$100,000	20
Third Floor	Private Study Rooms (Rentable) - Small	4	\$10,000	\$40,000	20
Interior	Staircase (Centre, New)	1	\$75,000	\$75,000	5
Interior	Elevator	1	\$50,000	\$50,000	5
Subtotal		48		\$3,015,000	240
Community Campaign:					
		# of Gifts	Gift Level	Amount	# of Prospects
		20	\$5,000	\$100,000	100
		40	\$500	\$20,000	200
		100	\$100	\$10,000	500
Subtotal		160		\$130,000	800
Estimated Total:				\$3,145,000	

Fundraising Campaign Gift Chart

(Draft – based on \$3 million goal)

Appendix

Project Overview



Case Statement: St. Catharines Public Library Central Branch Renovation

Project Overview

The St. Catharines Public Library (SCPL) has been a beacon of knowledge, culture, and community since 1888. Located at 54 Church Street in downtown St. Catharines, the Central Branch is the largest facility in SCPL's system, spanning four levels.

While the library continues to provide essential services, programs, and resources, its aging infrastructure no longer meets the needs of the growing and diverse community it serves. To address these challenges, SCPL has embarked on a transformative renovation project to modernize the Central Branch, ensuring it remains a vital community hub for generations to come.

The Challenge: Current Situation and the Need

The Central Branch was constructed in 1976, with subsequent upgrades limited to essential systems, such as HVAC replacement in 2022. However, its dated layout, inadequate accessibility features, and lack of flexible spaces hinder the library's ability to deliver modern programs and up-to-date and ever-changing services effectively.

Key challenges include:

- ❑ Outdated infrastructure, limiting the library's ability to provide present-day services and programs.
- ❑ Insufficient accessibility features, creating barriers for customers with mobility challenges.
- ❑ Inefficient use of space, restricting opportunities for changed service delivery demands such as collaboration, innovation, and community engagement.
- ❑ Environmental inefficiencies, resulting in higher operational costs and an unsustainable carbon footprint.

The current infrastructure fails to reflect the library's role as a dynamic community resource, limiting its opportunity to fulfill its mission as a cornerstone for learning, cultural enrichment, and social connection.

The Revitalization Project - How It Benefits the Community

The planned \$14 million renovation presents a unique opportunity to revitalize the Central Branch, add to its relevance, and adapt its role in the community. The project will modernize the facility, incorporating flexible, multi-use spaces, accessibility upgrades, and technology integration.

St. Catharines Public Library | 54 Church Street
St. Catharines, ON L2R 7K2 | myscpl.ca

(905) 688-6103
info@myscpl.ca

Key benefits include:

- **Enhanced Accessibility:** The renovation will ensure barrier-free entrances, inclusive design features, wayfinding improvements, and fully accessible facilities, creating a welcoming space for everyone in the community.
- **Modernized Spaces:** Versatile and flexible areas will be created to accommodate workshops, events, and community programs, enhancing the library's role as a dynamic and safe gathering place.
- **Digital Innovation:** Expanded access to digital resources, cutting-edge makerspaces, innovation labs, and business hubs will meet evolving technological needs and empower customers with the tools and knowledge for the future.
- **Sustainability and Efficiency:** Energy-efficient features, including a green roof, upgraded HVAC systems, improved insulation, and modern lighting, will align with City of St. Catharines' environmental goals while reducing energy costs and ensuring year-round comfort for customers.
- **Community Engagement:** Improved meeting spaces and amenities will allow for enriched cultural programming which fosters stronger connections and collaboration within the community.
- **Cultural Connection:** Enhanced spaces for exhibitions, special collections, and local history displays, fostering a deeper appreciation of St. Catharines' heritage.

Project Budget, Funding Sources, and Fundraising Goal

The total estimated project cost is \$14 million, with \$4.85 million already committed by the City of St. Catharines. The remaining funds will be secured through a combination of library reserves, grants, partnerships, and a robust community fundraising campaign. The community fundraising goal is to raise approx. \$3-5 million to bring this vision to life.

Project Timeline

2019: Completion of Building Condition Assessment.
2020: Space Audit conducted.
2022: Conceptual Design finalized and approved by City Council.
2024: Detailed Design completed.
2025-2027: Fundraising campaign and construction phases.

Summary

The St. Catharines Public Library Central Branch renovation is a forward-thinking investment in our city's future. By modernizing this iconic space, it will create an inclusive, accessible, and sustainable library that reflects the changing and diverse needs of our community. This project not only enhances the library's role as a centre for knowledge and culture, but also contributes to the social vibrancy of downtown St. Catharines.

Community support is essential to making this vision a reality. Together, we can ensure that the Central Branch remains a source of inspiration, learning, and connection for generations to come.

Appendix

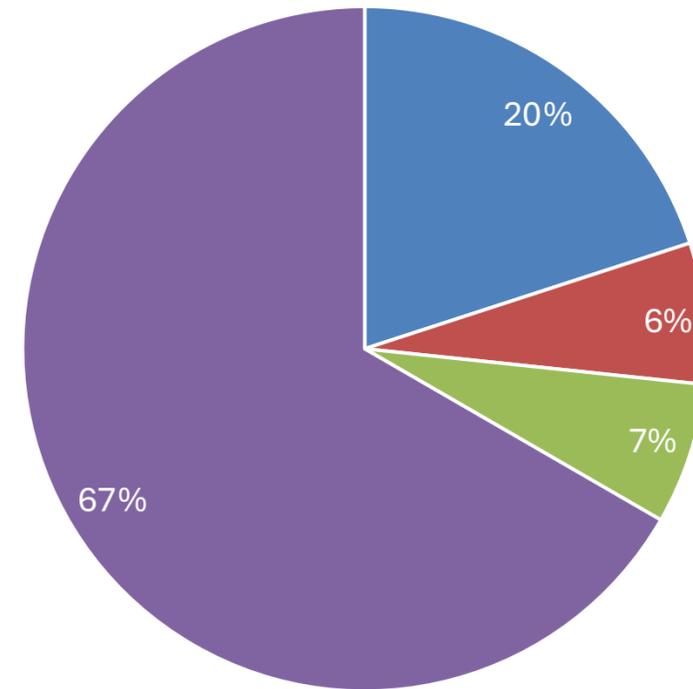
Feasibility Study Discussion Guide

1. What is your initial feedback regarding the Project Overview? What is your opinion of the Project Overview messaging in general?
2. The Library aims to raise \$3 to \$5 million for its renovation project. In your opinion, how realistic is this fundraising goal based on the current economic and philanthropic environment in St. Catharines?
3. Is there anything about this project that would compel you to become personally involved in the fundraising efforts for this important community project? In what capacity?
4. Who do you believe will be key to the success of the fundraising campaign (i.e. local families, individuals, corporations or foundations)? Why? Are there other members of the community whose involvement would be particularly important to the success of the campaign (i.e. interested in contributing or playing a leadership role in the fundraising campaign)?
5. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share with us about this project?

Appendix

Consulted Stakeholders

Total Contacts	181
Respondents	30
Participation Rate	17%



- Library board members
- Elected officials
- City leadership
- Local companies & KOLs

Interkom Fundraising Campaign Examples – City of St. Catharines – FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre

- \$5 million fundraising goal
- \$7.5 million raised
- Fundraising Feasibility Study
- Fundraising Campaign implementation



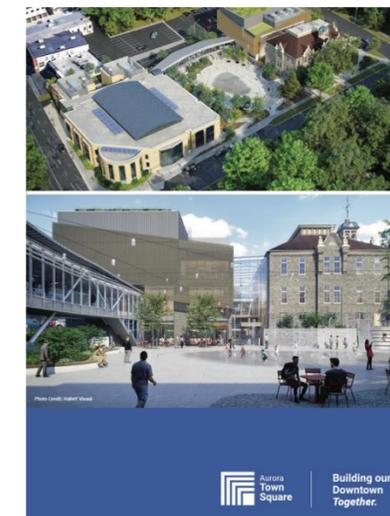
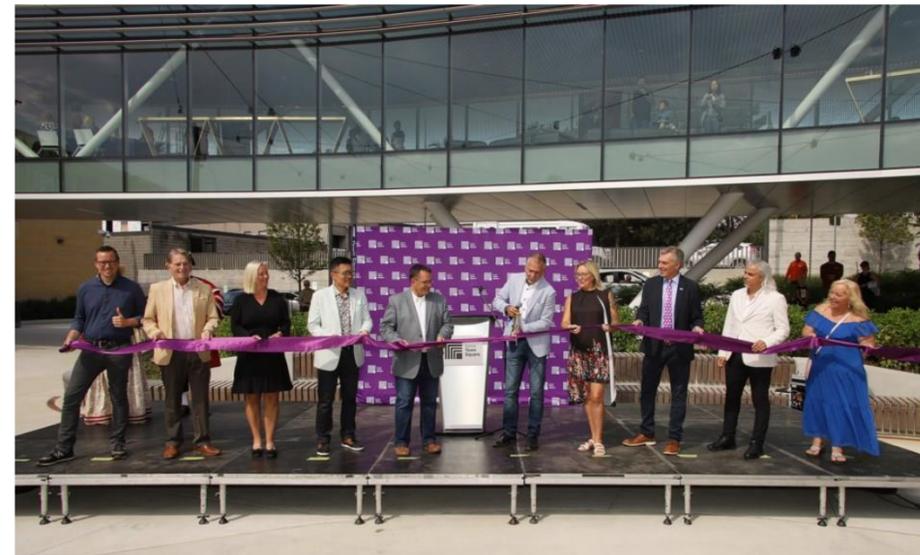
Interkom Fundraising Campaign Examples - Town of Pelham – Meridian Community Centre

- \$3 million fundraising goal
- \$3.3 million raised
- Fundraising Feasibility Study
- Fundraising Campaign implementation



Interkom Fundraising Campaign Examples - Town of Aurora – Aurora Town Square

- \$5 million fundraising goal
- \$5 million raised
- Fundraising Feasibility Study
- Fundraising Campaign implementation





St. Catharines Public Library Board

Regular Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 15, 2025, 6:00 pm
Mills Room, Central Library & Microsoft Teams

Present:	P. Clausi J. Coles (Chair) K. Diiorio (joined at 6:08pm) S. Dimick (Vice-Chair) (joined at 6:02pm)	L. Littleton Councillor G. Miller (joined at 6:02pm) N. Olmstead G. Riihimaki
Regrets:	Councillor J. Lindal	
Staff:	D. Bott (left 6:32pm, returned 6:48pm) L. DiDonato M. Haanstra (left 6:01pm, returned 6:48pm) L. Jenter (Recording Secretary) (left 6:44pm, returned 6:48pm) H. Jones (left 6:01pm, returned 6:48pm)	A. Maciukas (left 6:32pm, returned 6:48pm) S. Mannella (left 6:01pm, returned 6:48pm) J. Spera (left 6:01pm, returned 6:48pm) K. Su (Secretary)

Chair calls Regular Meeting to order at 6:00pm.

G. Riihimaki reads the following SCPL Land Acknowledgment:

The land on which the Board meets today is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples, many of whom continue to live and work here today. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the land protected by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum agreement. Today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit Peoples. Acknowledging this is a reminder that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people.

1. Adoption of Agenda

1.1 Additions/Deletions to Agenda
Move In-Camera Session to Item 2

1.2 Adoption of Agenda

MOTION: 2025-55
MOVED BY:

THAT the Agenda be adopted as amended.
G. Riihimaki

SECONDED BY: L. Littleton
MOTION CARRIED.

2. In-Camera Session

2.1 In-Camera Agenda

2.1(a) Additions/Deletions to In-Camera Agenda
Add 2.5(a) Financial Matter – D. Bott, K. Su and L. DiDonato

2.1(b) Adoption of In-Camera Agenda

MOTION: 2025-56 THAT the In-Camera Agenda be adopted as amended.
MOVED BY: P. Clausi
SECONDED BY: N. Olmstead
MOTION CARRIED.

M. Haanstra H. Jones, S. Mannella, and J. Spera left the meeting at 6:01pm.

2.2 Motion to Move In-Camera

MOTION: 2025-57 THAT the Regular Meeting move to In-Camera Session to discuss legal matters.
MOVED BY: G. Riihimaki
SECONDED BY: L. Littleton
MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting moved to In-Camera Session at 6:02pm.

S. Dimick and Councillor G. Miller joined the meeting at 6:02pm.

K. Diorio joined the meeting at 6:08pm

D. Bott and A. Maciukas left the meeting at 6:32pm

L. Jenter left the meeting at 6:44pm.

2.6 Return to Open Session

MOTION: 2025-59 THAT the In-Camera Session return to Open Session.
MOVED BY: N. Olmstead
SECONDED BY: L. Littleton
MOTION CARRIED.

The Meeting returned to Open Session at 6:47pm.

3. Motion(s) Arising From In-Camera Session

MOTION: 2025-60 THAT the Board receive the information presented during the closed session and approve the Staff recommendations related to the closed session report.

MOVED BY: L. Littleton
SECONDED BY: N. Olmstead
MOTION CARRIED.

D. Bott, M. Haanstra, L. Jenter, H. Jones, A. Maciukas, S. Mannella, and J. Spera returned to the meeting at 6:48pm.

4. Chair's Remarks & Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations of Interest.

5. Presentations

5.1 Audited Financial Statements, December 31, 2024 – Paul Ciapanna, CPA, CA, Partner, Audit and Jodie Nesbit, CPA, CA, Manager, Audit, KPMG LLP

The Board received a presentation of the audited financial statements from KPMG. The Board discussed the presented deficit based on amortization adjustments.

MOTION: 2025-61 THAT the Board receive the presentation and approve the audited financial statements for the St. Catharines Public Library Board for the year ending December 31, 2024 as presented.

MOVED BY: K. Diiorio
SECONDED BY: L. Littleton
MOTION CARRIED.

5.2 Central Renovation - Tina Ranieri-D'Ovidio, Principal Architect, ward99 architects inc.

The Board received a presentation of the Central Renovation detailed design development phase, outlining updates to the drawings. The Board discussed the design features, financial impact, and safety concerns.

6. Adoption of Minutes (attachment)

6.1 Regular Meeting – April 16, 2025

MOTION: 2025-62 THAT the Regular Meeting Minutes of April 16, 2025 be adopted.

MOVED BY: G. Riihimaki
SECONDED BY: Councillor G. Miller
MOTION CARRIED.

7. Monthly Updates (verbal)

- 7.1 St. Catharines City Council – Councillor G. Miller
Public space bylaw has been approved by City Council restricting homeless encampment locations.
- 7.2 OLS Update – J. Coles
The Chair provide an update regarding the OLS webinar on the topic of Strong Mayor Powers and the implications for libraries.
- 7.3 CEO Update – K. Su and L. DiDonato
The CEO updated the Board about the following:
- Fall Board Retreat – Niagara CEOs are working with OLS to plan a Board retreat for the fall, aimed at ensuring a smooth transition into the next Board term. The retreat is expected to take place in October or November.
 - Merritton Pharmacy Holds Locker – CEO was able to connect with the Pharmacy landlord who shared concerns about liability. The Library is willing to name landlord on the insurance. Depending on the resolution, the Library may need to explore alternate options.
 - Merritt Branch Construction – The exterior entrance is expected to be completed in coming weeks. The demolition of the wall between units and permit process is ongoing. Furniture and flooring will be delivered in early June and stored on site before installation. Current landlord has agreed to the extension to the end of July.
- 7.4 Department Update – Indigenous Library Services – D. Bott, H. Jones, and J. Spera
The Board received a presentation from Staff about the Indigenous information and services in the Library collection, customer service, and programming. Staff addressed recent challenges and future opportunities. The Board thanked the Staff for the information and encouraged continued education and partnerships.

8. Consent Agenda

- 8.1 Correspondence
- 8.2 CEO Report – K. Su
- 8.3 Department Reports – April 2025
- 8.3(a) Customer Service – J. Spera & M. Haanstra
 - 8.3(b) Innovation, Collections, and Technology – D. Bott
 - 8.3(c) Programming & Promotions – H. Jones
- 8.4 December 31, 2024 Financial Statement Reconciliation – L. DiDonato
- 8.5 Valuing SCPL 2024 Update – K. Su

MOTION: 2025-63 THAT the Consent Agenda be received as circulated.
MOVED BY: S. Dimick
SECONDED BY: Councillor G. Miller
MOTION CARRIED.

9. Discussion Reports

9.1 Policy (G-09) Artificial Intelligence Use – K. Su
The Board received Policy (G-09) Artificial Intelligence Use with revisions. The Board recommended additional amendments for clarity and scheduled the policy for review in May 2026.

MOTION: 2025-64 THAT the Board approve Policy (G-09) Artificial Intelligence Use as amended.
MOVED BY: N. Olmstead
SECONDED BY: P. Clausi
MOTION CARRIED.

10. Motion to Adjourn

MOTION: 2025-65 THAT the Regular Meeting be adjourned.
MOVED BY: K. Diiorio
SECONDED BY: N/A
MOTION CARRIED.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07pm.

11. Next Meeting / Upcoming Events

Board Meeting – Thursday, June 12, 2025 at 6:00 pm, Mills Room, Central Library & Microsoft Teams

Chair

Secretary

Consent Agenda

Recommendation

THAT the Consent Agenda be received as circulated.

6. **Consent Agenda (attachments)**

Motion

- 6.1 CEO Report – K. Su
- 6.2 Department Reports – May 2025
 - 6.2 (a) Customer Service – J. Spera & M. Haanstra
 - 6.2 (b) Innovation, Collections, and Technology – D. Bott
 - 6.2 (c) Programming & Promotions – H. Jones
 - 6.2 (d) Facilities – S. Mannella
 - 6.2 (e) HR - Performance Review Document Update – A. Maciukas
- 6.3 2024 Annual Report – K. Su
- 6.4 Quarterly Progress Update on 2025 Work Plan (Q2) – K. Su
- 6.5 SCPL Marketing and Communications Plan – H. Jones

CEO Report

submitted by Ken Su, CEO (May 2025)

For Information

Merritt Holds Locker

The Library originally planned to install a holds locker at the Merritton Community Pharmacy, close to the current Merritt branch location. The pharmacy staff have been very supportive of this initiative, but unfortunately, the landlord of the pharmacy has been unresponsive to the request over the last few months, so the Library was unable to get the permission to move the project forward. As a result, the Library has to explore other options and is now working with the City to determine the possibility of installing a holds locker at the Merritton Centennial Arena.

Councillor Library Tour

Due to a schedule conflict, Councillor Mako rescheduled his tour and visited the Library on June 7.

Welcoming Streets Initiative

On May 28, 2025, the Library partnered with staff from Welcoming Streets Initiative (WSI), a collaborative program between Positive Living Niagara and REACH Niagara, to offer a presentation followed by a Q&A to library staff. The presentation covered what WSI does and how SCPL can work with WSI to provide information and resources to individuals who need necessary supports, to build positive relationships between service providers, businesses, and community members, and to identify and deal with issues before they escalate. The Library will be able to contact WSI to help those living on the streets and also to support staff dealing with difficult situations.

Customer Service

submitted by Joanna Spera, Customer Service Manager (May 2025)

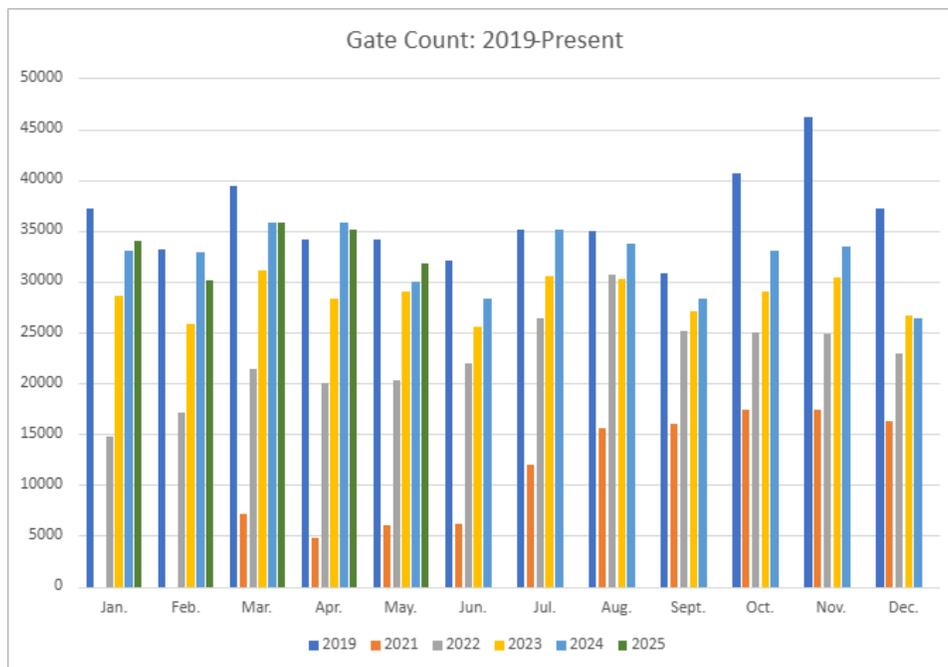
For Information

All data provided is for May 2025 compared to the same month in 2024. The library continues at full operations.

	May 2025	% change from 2024
Gate Count	31,814	29,974 (+6%)
Membership	556	512 (+8%)
Holds Placed	12,613	11,782 (+7%)
Questions	6,579	5,244 (+25%)

Gate Count

In May, our system-wide gate count was higher than in 2024. Our gate count system-wide continues its upward climb toward pre-pandemic 2020 levels.



Membership

New memberships continue to grow with an 8% increase over May 2024 and are up 11% this year to date. The membership reactivation campaign, class visits, an ongoing focus on community outreach, and the continued expansion of collections and services are contributing factors to our strong membership growth.

Holds Placed

The number of holds placed this month was up 7% from May 2024. The holds system continues to be an integral library service that offers equitable and convenient access to materials for customers across the city.

Training Highlights

On May 28, Madison McNeil, an outreach worker at Positive Living Niagara, provided a presentation followed by a Q & A session to SCPL staff about the Welcoming Streets Initiative. Positive Living Niagara and REACH Niagara have collaborated to launch the Welcoming Streets Initiative in St. Catharines. The Welcoming Streets Initiative is based on the idea that everyone deserves to feel safe, supported, and welcome in the downtown core, regardless of their housing, economic, or social status.

The session focused on what the Welcoming Streets Initiative does and how SCPL can work with their team to foster community connections.

Customer Service Feedback

The library collects passive customer feedback to help SCPL understand what customers are noticing and appreciating and how we can improve. Highlights from the feedback collected through March and April 2025 include:

- Friendly, knowledgeable and efficient customer service.
- Customers appreciate fine freedom which has encouraged them to return to the library.
- Provide a good selection of children's programs for March Break.

The library is continually evaluating the suggestions for improvements and new services. Highlights of actions taken based on feedback collected in 2025 include:

- Implementing self-serve scanning and lifting the scanning fee.
- Providing clearer communication of hold expiry dates and hold notifications by updating the wording on notices.

Innovation, Collections & Technology

submitted by David Bott, Manager Innovation, Collections & Technology (May 2025)

For Information

Physical Circulation

Physical circulation increased slightly (1.5%) from April to May 2025. This also represents a 3.4% increase from the physical circulation of May 2024. Year-to-date, physical circulation has increased 4% from that of January-April 2024.

Note: As this report is being prepared earlier than usual, some physical circulation stats for May 2025 may not have been captured. Therefore, the above is a conservative estimate of May's performance.

Digital Circulation

Digital circulation increased by 7% from April to May 2025.

Note: As this report is being prepared earlier than usual, some digital circulation stats for May 2025 may not have been captured. Therefore, the above is a conservative estimate of May's performance.

Seed Library

The Seed Library was launched at all Library locations on April 5, 2025 as part of the "Get Growing" event. Over the course of April and May a total of 2034 seed packets were selected and taken home by 407 customers. This is a slight decrease of 2% compared to 2024 but a 29% increase over 2023 participation numbers.

Library of Things

The launch of the Yoto Player, a screen-free audio player designed for children, exceeded expectations and over 40 people placed a hold on the device. Due to demand, ICT has purchased 2 more Yoto players for the collection

Digitization Project – Historic St. Catharines Public Library Board Minutes

Digitization of the historic St. Catharines Public Library Board Minutes is still ongoing. The years 1965 to 1970 have been completed.

Newspapers.com

The Newspapers.com database is now available to staff and customers within all SCPL locations. Users have access to all digitized copies of the St. Catharines Standard, and a selection of other local historical newspapers that the Library provided

Newspapers.com for digitization. We will be sending another batch (September 2016 to December 2024) for digitization in early June. Access to this resource has been provided to the Library for free by Newspapers.com (Ancestry) in exchange for lending our microfilm copies for digitization.

Programming and Promotions

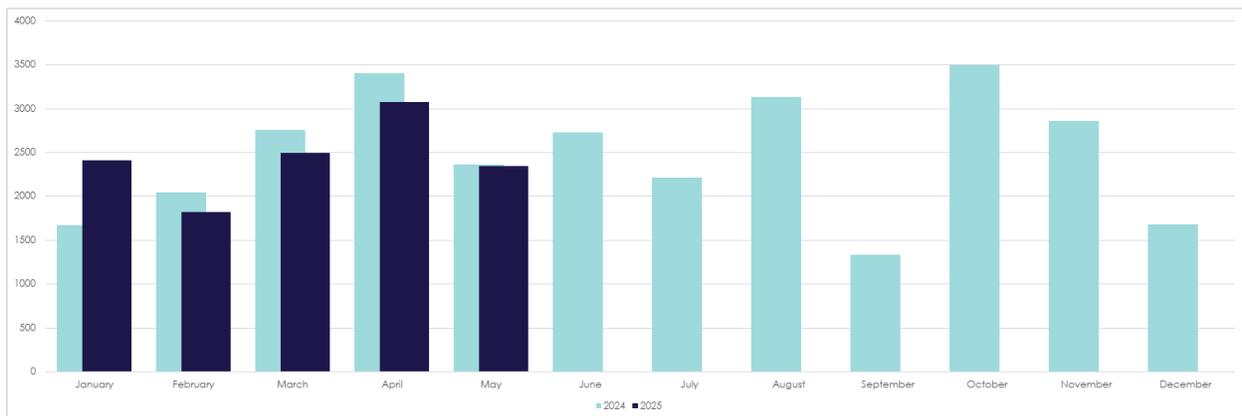
submitted by Holly Jones, Manager Programming & Promotions (May 2025)

For Information

Programming Highlights

In May 2025, program engagement totaled 2,339 customers, remaining broadly consistent with the 2,362 customers engaged in May 2024. The month-over-month attendance saw a 24% decrease from April 2025; however, April's figures were notably elevated by the significant participation in our large-scale 'Get Growing' event.

Program Attendees by Month, 2025 vs. 2024



Program Highlights:

Arts & Culture: The St. Catharines Art Association's Spring Art Exhibit at the Central Library ran for six weeks, showcasing local artists and generating 358 engagements.

Literacy & Learning: Our Early Literacy programming saw strong participation with 796 attendees. This included our core offerings like Books & Babies and Preschool Storytime, alongside specialized sessions such as STEAM Storytime and visits from Connaught EarlyOn and Odrohyageweh EarlyOn, all focused on literacy-building activities for young children and their families. The Drop-in Builder Lab provided a hands-on learning experience for children and families, with 44 attendees experimenting with materials like cardboard and LEGO in a process-oriented workshop.

Community Engagement & Outreach: We expanded our community reach with a Pop-Up Library at the Farmer's Market, engaging 35 individuals through a "bean-in-a-bag" planting activity and providing access to borrowable items. The library also hosted a Job Fair & Course Sign Up in partnership with the Canadian Association of Tourism

Employees (CATE). This event offered information on job opportunities in tourism, manufacturing, and construction, as well as courses for truck drivers, caregivers, and security, attracting 21 attendees. Furthermore, we welcomed 386 students from various St. Catharines schools for Class Visits, where they learned about library collections, services, and programming.

Communication Highlights

The Communications Specialist's May activities included supporting the new SCPL website launch, finalizing the SCPL 2024 Annual Report design, and developing promotional content for summer programs, such as the Summer 2025 Program Guide and Summer Reading Club materials.

SCPL's social media channels demonstrated strong engagement this month. Significant online interest was generated by posts announcing:

- The addition of Newspapers.com to the library's digital resource offerings
- The introduction of Yoto players to the Library of Things collection
- The launch of SCPL's redesigned website

Additionally, targeted engagement campaigns, including playful 'May the Fourth' and Met Gala readers' advisory content, were well-received and fostered positive community feedback.

Media Mentions

01-May 610 CKTB

Topics: SCAA Exhibit, Mother's Day programs, tennis rackets

29-May 610 CKTB

Topics: Job Fair program, Teen Book Bundles, Newspapers.com

Facilities

submitted by Salvatore Mannella, Manager Facilities (May 2025)

For Information

Central Branch

- Parking garage is fully operational. Authorized City and Library staff are now parking in the underground lot.
- Third Floor common area has been painted.

Huq Branch

- Lighting replacement is on schedule for June 16 closure.
- Facilities staff will complete a detail cleaning of the branch during the closure.

New Merritt Branch

- Front entrance doors have been installed.
- Ceiling has been painted, including all duct work, sprinkler piping, and conduit.
- Program room walls have been painted at new location.
- Interior walls/framing started June 2.
- New collection furniture delivered to the new location on June 2 and 3.
- Book drop is wrapped and will be stored at new location.
- Moving company is scheduled to move Library collection and remaining furniture from Hartzel Road to the Pen Centre

HR - Performance Review Document update

submitted by **Albertina Maciukas, Human Resources Manager**

For Information

Background:

- A survey was distributed to all staff to gather feedback on the current Performance Review (PR) process.
- Survey responses were collected and reviewed.
- Survey findings were presented to the management group, and initial feedback was received to guide next steps.
- A voluntary PR committee was established.
- A draft PR document was shared with the management team for preliminary feedback and changes were incorporated into the document.
- The draft was then provided to the PR committee for their review and input.
- Extensive feedback from the committee was incorporated into a revised draft (PR Draft 2.0).
- PR Draft 2.0 was redistributed to the committee, and a meeting has been scheduled to review the revisions and gather additional comments.

Next Steps:

- Following the committee meeting, final feedback will be incorporated into the document.
- The revised final draft will be presented to the management team for final review.
- Final management input will be integrated into the document.
- The finalized PR document will be prepared and implemented for use.

2024 Annual Report

St. Catharines Public Library

SCPL in — Bloom



2024 at the Library

2024 marks the end of a chapter as we close out the final year of our 2018-2024 Strategic Plan. As we reflect on the past year, we also recall all our efforts to meet our goals and create a library where everyone belongs.

In 2024, we truly embraced our commitment to being a library for all as we introduced reciprocal borrowing with 10 other Niagara Libraries. This is a program that not only enables St. Catharines residents to utilize library services throughout the region, but also allows members of neighbouring libraries to sign up for an SCPL card and borrow items from our physical collections. Since the program's launch in August 2024, we have created 353 reciprocal borrowing memberships for library enthusiasts across the region.

As our membership base grew, so did our collections. This year marked a year of technology as we expanded our Library of Things collection to include exciting new items including GoPros, LCD Projectors, a Bluetooth speaker, STEM Kits, and karaoke machines. With each new addition, we have seen a steady stream of holds demonstrating our success in meeting the needs of our community.

Things started to look a little different around the library with the culmination of the Port Dalhousie branch refresh project. New floors, new furniture, and fresh paint breathed new life into SCPL's smallest branch to create a modern and inviting space for the community to enjoy.

Despite the end of an era, 2024 was also a year of firsts as we introduce the inaugural SCPL LitFest, an all-ages celebration of literature and local authors. In November, we welcomed hundreds of community members to the Central Library for storytimes, drop-in activities, and a local authors showcase. That same evening, in partnership with our friends at the FirstOntario Performing Arts Centre, we hosted a talent-packed panel discussion with four romance authors. It was an event to be remembered!

We want to thank our community for being the driving force behind our mission of continual growth and innovation. With every step we took in 2024, our dedicated customers have been cheering us on and showing up to enjoy everything their local library has to offer. We cannot wait for another amazing four years as we launch into the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan with renewed energy and excitement to bloom alongside our community.

Message from the Chair and CEO

In 2024, SCPL continued to enhance library services and community engagement. We refreshed the Port Dalhousie Branch, launched a reciprocal borrowing service with neighbouring libraries, and hosted “SCPL LitFest,” our first major literary festival. These initiatives expanded access, improved spaces, and fostered a love of reading.

Looking ahead to 2025, we will relocate the Merritt Branch to the Niagara Pen Centre and provide a larger, more accessible space with expanded services. We remain committed to meeting community needs through innovative programs—including literacy and digital skills initiatives—and strengthening partnerships to enrich the library experience.

Thank you to our customers, staff and supporters for making these achievements possible. We look forward to another year of growth, innovation and excellence in library services.

Janice Coles
Library Board Chair

Ken Su
CEO

Financials

Revenues	
Municipal Contributions	\$6,641,583
Provincial Grants	\$228,616
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$260,406
Total Revenues	\$7,130,605

Expenditures	
Salaries and Benefits	\$4,937,616
Materials	\$792,005
Occupancy Costs	\$498,012
Services and Supplies	\$549,845
Operating Capital	\$353,127
Total Expenditures	\$7,130,605

Our Values

Inclusion

We are committed to creating a space that is welcoming, accessible, and free of judgement.

Change

We recognize that societal changes are occurring and we embrace our own evolution to keep up with the times and develop new ways of better serving the community.

Community

We believe the community is for all people and we are committed to building a healthy and connected St. Catharines.

Teamwork

We work collaboratively with the Board of Directors, staff, and community partners to provide the best possible service to our customers.

Service

We believe every customer deserves to be treated with kindness and we are dedicated to delivering outstanding customer service.

Accountability

We understand the importance of being transparent and taking responsibility for our actions to foster a healthy organization and an engaged community.



SCPL by the numbers

385,755

in-person visits
to all branches across
St. Catharines.

6,405

memberships
were issued, including 1,117
online memberships.

874,083

physical items
were borrowed in 2024.

241,288

digital items
were checked out in 2024.

29,636

attendees
attended 1,283 programs.

73,148

electronic resource sessions
were recorded in 2024.

191,105

questions answered
by staff.

1,724,075

catalogue searches
were conducted last year.



SCPL by the borrows

316,442 adult fiction & non-fiction books borrowed

255,538 children's books borrowed

124,638 ebooks borrowed

113,910 movies borrowed

85,704 audiobooks borrowed

32,382 newspapers and magazines borrowed

34,402 video games borrowed

23,030 teen books borrowed



Through our collections, services, and programs, we have created

\$45,192,569

of economic benefit for our community in 2024!

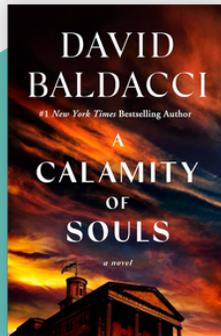
*as calculated using the Ontario Library Service's Social Return on Investment Calculator in the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit.



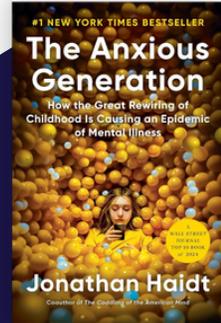
Your favourite SCPL items



Library of Things



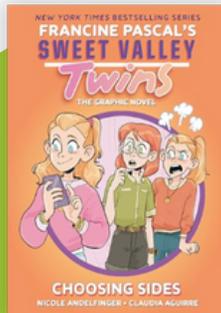
adult fiction



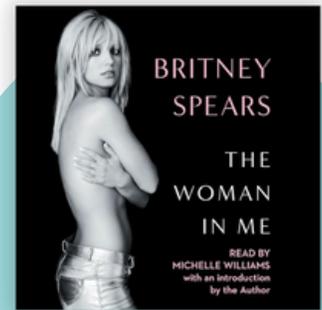
adult non-fiction



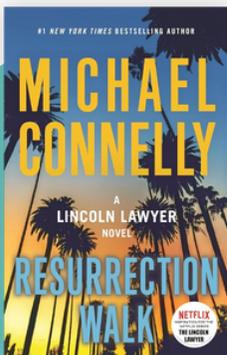
teen book



children's book



eAudiobook



ebook



movie



video game

Serving our community

5,149 participants attended **164** community outreach programs.

Throughout the year, we hosted **98** book club meetings.

And made **390** Visiting Library visits.



TD Summer Reading Club

1,658 readers signed up for the Summer Reading Club.

Together, we read for a collective total of

45,161 days.

Yes, that's a new record!



Visit your local library

Locations

Central Library

54 Church Street
St. Catharines, ON
L2R 7K2

Dr. Huq Family Library Branch

425 Carlton Street
St. Catharines, ON
L2M 4W8

Merritt Branch

149 Hartzel Road
St. Catharines, ON
L2P 1N6

Port Dalhousie Branch

23 Brock Street
St. Catharines, ON
L2N 5E1

Books to Go Kiosk, Holds to Go Locker

240 St. Paul Street W.
St. Catharines, ON
L2S 4B8

Contact us

info@myscpl.ca

905-688-6103



Quarterly Progress Update on 2025 Work Plan

submitted by Ken Su, CEO (June 2025)

For Information

The objective of this report is to inform the Library Board about the progress on various tasks outlined in the 2025 Work Plan, including both newly introduced and ongoing tasks from the previous year. The report's content will vary each quarter as new tasks commence, advancements are made, and tasks are completed. This document does not aim to provide an exhaustive account of the Library staff's activities for that quarter but rather to spotlight specific tasks that are noteworthy and align with the Library's primary services and operations. Additionally, it aims to ensure communication between the board and staff and promote transparency.

Background

The previous Strategic Plan (2019 – 2024), which guided our efforts and initiatives over the last six years, has been successfully completed. This accomplishment reflects the dedication and hard work of our staff and the support of the Library Board. The completion of the previous plan has paved the way for the development and approval of a new Strategic Plan in 2024.

Our new Strategic Plan, effective from 2025 to 2028, outlines our vision for the library's future. It is designed to address the evolving needs of our community, enhance library services, and ensure that we remain a vital resource for all.

The new strategic goals are:

- Experience in Bloom
- Community in Bloom
- People in Bloom
- Literacy in Bloom

This report offers a snapshot of the current status of tasks, provides a summary of each task, highlights its contribution to the Strategic Plan, and identifies phases or timelines for each task, including those carried forward from previous years.

Highlights of the second quarter in 2025

The Library has seen several major progressions and accomplishments in this quarter. In April, after multiply delays, the Library was finally able to access the space at the Pen Centre. Contractors have finished painting ceiling and program room. The front entrance is close to completion. Furniture, flooring and book drop arrived in the week of June 2. The wall between the Library and Dollarama is anticipated to be demolished

mid-June. Interior framing will start early June. The Library is also hoping to receive the permit from the City early June.

Additional Key Accomplishments

- **New Website:** Staff had been working on redesigning the new website for over 6 months before the new website was successfully launched on May 5, 2025.
- **Marketing and Communications Plan:** The Library developed its first Marketing and Communications plan to support the 2025 – 2028 Strategic Plan and promote library programs and services.
- **Central Renovation Detailed Design:** The Library received the report from Ward99 that concludes the Detailed Design phase on the Central Library Renovation project. The Library hopes to move into detailed drawings and tender phase late 2025 or early 2026.
- **Fundraising Feasibility Study:** The fundraising consultants completed the fundraising feasibility study and presented to the Board at its June meeting. The study suggests that a 3 – 5 million campaign is achievable.
- **ILS RFP:** The Library worked with Niagara Falls Public Library to evaluate all RFP submissions. Each library presented their recommendation to their respective Board to secure funding for implementation.

STATUS KEY	
	No changes, progress as planned
	Minor changes, no significant impact
	Major changes, attention required
✓	Completed

2025 SCPL Departmental Work Plan - Quarterly Update

Strategic Goal 1:	Experiences in Bloom	Status	No Change
Strategic Goal 2:	Community in Bloom		Minor Changes, no significant impact
Strategic Goal 3:	People in Bloom		Major Changes, attention required
Strategic Goal 4:	Literacy in Bloom		✓, Completed

Department: Administration and Facilities					Q2 Update	
Strategic Goal	Annual Objective / Action Item	SMART Goals and outcomes	Key Players	Timelines	Status	Explanation
#3	Continue to work with the City, City Council and the Union collaboratively	Actively communicate with stakeholders and resolve any issues/concerns promptly, organize activities with City/Union at least 4 times a year	CEO	Ongoing		SORI and Impact reports shared with Council in May, had meetings with Mayor to discuss partnership opportunities and budget
#1	Provide new and enhanced spaces	Continue to explore opportunities to refresh/update other library spaces	CEO, Business Administrator, Facilities Manager	Ongoing		Continue to make layout adjustments at Central to enhance use of space and maximize staffing time.
#1	Central Library Renovation	Continue to work on the Central Renovation Project	CEO, Business Administrator, Facilities Manager	Ongoing		Received fundraising feasibility study report.
#1	Merritt Branch Relocation	Construct and relocate the Merritt Branch	CEO, Business Administrator, Facilities Manager	Ongoing to Q3		Daily progress on construction. Furniture and floors ready for installation.
#1, #2, #3, #4	Continue performance benchmarking and adjustments	Continue to identify key performance indicators to evaluate the Library's performance against our peers libraries	Management	Ongoing		Reported 2024 results and waiting for data shared by province
#1, #2, #3	Continue to investigate collaborative opportunities with Niagara libraries	Evaluate ILS RFP submissions, work with NFPL to explore opportunities to share an ILS and provide seamless borrowing experience to residents in both cities, also coordinate One Book One Niagara event with other Niagara libraries	CEO, Customer Service Manager, ICT Manager, Programming Manager	Ongoing		Evaluted submissions, make recommendation to the Board for funding approval
#1, #2	Develop a library marketing and communications plan	Develop a plan to communicate the Library's new strategic plan to the community and promote library programs and services to customers	CEO, Programming Manager	Q2		Presented to the Board at its June meeting
#1, #3	Continue to build on concept of process efficiencies and improvements in administration and facilities process.	Identify, analyze, and enhance processes to optimize efficiencies in day to day activities.	Business Administrator, Facilities Manager	Ongoing		ADP recruiting implemented. Performance appraisal and onboarding review and preparation to ADP in process.

#1, #2, #3	Capital Project Management	Oversee the ongoing capital facility projects.	Facilities Manager and Business Administrator	Ongoing		Merritt relocation in progress and garage and all other security changes complete.
#3	Collective Bargaining	Plan, prepare and successfully and respectfully engage in collective bargaining.	CEO, HR Manager, Business Administrator, Customer Service	Ongoing		Met with CUPE on May 30 and waiting for future dates
Department: Innovation, Collections and Technology						Q2 Update
Strategic Goal	Annual Objective / Action Item	SMART Goals and outcomes	Key Players	Timelines	Status	Explanation
#1, #2, #3, #4	Implement a new cloud-hosted ILS system	Provide a better experience to our customers, better resiliency and reduced costs through shared services.	ICT, all departments	Q4		Finished evaluations and recommendation made.
#1, #2, #3, #4	Upgrade the website to new hosted solution	Provide a better experience to our customers and better resiliency	ICT, Programming and Promotions	Q2	✓, Completed	Launched May 5, 2025
#1, #2, #3, #4	Implement Self-serve Printing Solution	Reduce reliance on staff for printing and provide printing service for mobile devices	Systems Administrator, Systems Technician	Q2		Selected EFI/Printme solution. Order placed for 1 unit at Central.
#1, #2, #3, #4	Install Hold-IT lockers in Merrittton Pharmacy	Install pick up lockers in Merrittton to serve the local community due to the branch move to Pen Centre.	Systems Administrator, Systems Technician	Q2		The pharmacy didn't work out due to the landlord's unresponsiveness, looking for other locations.
#1, #2, #3	Upgrade to BlueCloud Mobile2 App		ICT, Training Librarian	Defer pending outcome of ILS		Deferred pending outcome of ILS RFP.
Department: Customer Services						Q2 Update
Strategic Goal	Annual Objective / Action Item	SMART Goals and outcomes	Key Players	Timelines	Status	Explanation
#1, #3	Continue to provide training to enhance the Customer Service experience based on the annual training plan	Complete Customer Service Standards with "Accountable". Develop Customer Service Standards "Inclusive" training module. Develop a training module for security staff. Public facing roll out of the Customer Service Standard.	Training Librarian, CS Managers	Q4		Indigenous Awareness onboarding module rolled out to staff. Indigenous training presentation to staff in June.
#1, #2, #3	Review and update circulation policy, procedures and workflows system-wide to enhance customer service and reduce barriers to access	Create a more equal borrowing experience between ages/card types (i.e. borrowing limits). Review language on Lost Bills. Investigate changes to Temporary Membership. Implement charging stations, investigate launching digital comment card/form on our website for more active feedback. Investigate expansion of maker equipment for public access.	CS Managers, CS Technician, Librarians, Programming and Promotions Manager	Q4		Started highlighting how much money saved borrowing from the library on due date receipts. Improved language on hold notices for clearer communication.
#1, #2, #3	Develop an operational plan for Merritt's new location.	Staffing model, hours of operations, workflows such as radios, materials handling.	Customer Service Managers, Branch Librarian	Q2		New schedule template for Merritt's new location created. Adjusted schedule template for Central.
#1, #2, #3	Continue to develop efficiencies in Customer Service process and workflows.	Implement service design realignment.	Customer Service Managers	Q2		Printing solution selected. Determining roll out timeline for Central pilot.

#1, #2	Examine enhancing the space at Dr. Huq to maximize the use of space for our customers.	Investigate grant opportunities to enhance the Dr. Huq garden and sound booths to offer additional quiet study space.	Customer Service Managers			Waiting for grant application results to be released in June
Department: Programming and Promotions						Q2 Update
Strategic Goal	Annual Objective / Action Item	SMART Goals and outcomes	Key Players	Timelines	Status	Explanation
#1, #3, #4	Develop a Programming & Partnership plan.	Create a plan that aligns with the library's new strategic plan with a focus on literacy-based programming and community outreach.	Programming Manager, Programming Librarians	Q2		Continuing development, completion date adjusted to Q3
#1, #2	Increase engagement with teens.	Expand opportunities for teens to connect with the library by increasing outreach to local high schools and creating teen volunteer opportunities with the library.	Programming Manager, Programming & Outreach Librarians	Q3		"Teen Reviews" participant meet-up scheduled for June. 107 reviews submitted by 41 participants this first year. Program evaluation to occur over summer, any noted adjustments to be made ahead of Fall launch for the next school year.
#1, #2	Expand scope of library's outreach to include involvement in larger community events and festivals with greater impact.	Appear at one major community event per month April-October to increase visibility and awareness of library services, resources, programming and spaces.	Programming Manager, Programming & Outreach Librarians	Q4		Library facilitated 8 outreach events Jan-May (387 engagements). Summer Outreach schedule confirmed: 12 events planned June-September.
#1	Develop an inactive membership renewal campaign.	Develop a quarterly newsletter campaign targeting inactive members with goal of increasing the number of active memberships by 5% by year end.	Programming Manager, Customer Service Manager, Communications Specialist, CS Technician	Q4		Q2 email sent to 8604 customers, with 294 reactivations after one week.
#1	Develop a promotional campaign for the launch of the library's new website.	Create content to support and drum up excitement for the launch of the library's new website Spring 2025.	Programming Manager, Communications Specialist	Q2	✓, Completed	



SCPL Marketing & Communications Plan

Purpose

The purpose of the St. Catharines Public Library's (SCPL's) Marketing & Communications Plan is to support the library's Strategic Plan and to guide the organizational communications of the St. Catharines Public Library. This strategic document is designed to align library messages, communication strategies, and promotional tactics with the organizational vision, mission and overall objectives. The SCPL Marketing & Communications Plan serves as a guiding map for all internal and external communications with key audiences in alignment with our brand identity to help us achieve the organization's strategic goals.

Responsibilities

The responsibility for marketing and communications at SCPL lies with the SCPL Library Board, CEO & Management, and staff members.

Board

- Supporting the messaging and positioning of the library
- Helping to drive the key messaging of the community

CEO & Management

- Communicating the organization's goals clearly and effectively to staff
- Defining expectations and celebrating staff when expectations are met
- Supervising and providing guidance to staff to ensure communications strategies align with organization's mission, vision, and strategic plan
- Managing the communications budget
- Monitoring and reporting outcomes by reviewing successes and challenges of past campaigns, analyzing metrics and customer feedback to help refine future strategies

Staff

- Developing communications objectives
- Executing communications campaigns and developing all promotional materials

- Facilitating cohesive communication to customers across the organization by creating and implementing key messaging tools
- Receiving feedback from the community
- Researching target audiences and industry trends
- Upholding the integrity of the brand

Strategic Goals

Our strategic plan is built upon four key goals aimed at enhancing SCPL's role within the community. These goals reflect the vibrancy and joy at SCPL in building community and connecting people to fun and lifelong learning:

Experiences in Bloom: This strategic goal aims to position SCPL as a premier destination and essential resource for the community. To achieve this, our communications strategies will focus on highlighting convenience and comfort, community, and the diverse offerings that spark inspiration and joy.

Community in Bloom: This strategic goal centres on extending SCPL's reach and impact beyond its physical walls, fostering stronger community connections and increasing the library's overall visibility and contribution to the community.

People in Bloom: This strategic goal is about fostering a deeply inclusive and supportive environment within SCPL, where both customers and staff feel valued, heard, and empowered. It emphasizes data-driven decision-making and a culture of continuous improvement and recognition.

Literacy in Bloom: This strategic goal aims to establish SCPL as the leading hub for diverse forms of literacy, empowering individuals of all ages to learn, grow and connect to reach their full potential.

Communications Goals

External: To promote library programs, events, collections, and resources that enrich the lives of all the communities served by SCPL. To increase exposure in the community and enhance SCPL's reputation, fostering continued support and engagement.

Internal: To continue fostering open, accurate and timely communication between leadership and staff.

Audience

- Residents and potential SCPL customers
 - Families
 - Adults and older adults

- Teens and tweens
- Newcomers and refugees
- Educators
- Students
- Existing SCPL customers
- Current cardholders who have disengaged with the library
- Public leaders and change-makers
- City Council
- SCPL staff
- Community organizations
- Existing and future partners
- Media and advocacy groups

Brand Identity

SCPL's brand identity is a combination of our visual system, tone, and brand story as outlined in the SCPL Brand Guide established in 2022.

The visual system is bright and bold, making the SCPL brand easy to recognize in the community. It's also integral that the visual system remains consistent across all SCPL locations, marketing materials, digital marketing assets, and internal and external documents.

The SCPL brand voice is:

- Simple
- Friendly
- Inspiring
- Informative

SCPL's communications style should be friendly and informal, using contractions and avoiding jargon.

Marketing Tagline

SCPL's brand includes a marketing tagline "Ideas in Bloom" that showcases the library's spirit of innovation both in its approach to service and its desire to be a hub of innovation for its customers. In alignment with the brand guide, SCPL will use the tagline when appropriate to reinforce our clear and consistent message.

Marketing Opportunities

The following mediums are tools we used to create brand awareness and recognition, reach target audiences, and attract new customers and partners to the library:

PRINTED PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Annual Report

Annual Reports should be made available in the spring yearly. The Annual Report should be made available to the public on the website.

Welcome Package

The Welcome Package consists of the welcome brochure, app flyer, borrowing information flyer, and Port Plus pamphlet. Welcome Packages are distributed to every new customer upon registering for a library membership. Items in the Welcome Package are to be updated upon major changes to our core services, locations, or processes that may require a change in customer behaviour.

Bookmarks

Reader's Advisory bookmarks which promote the collection are created monthly. Bookmarks can also be used to promote special events or acquire customer feedback. They should be made readily available and given to customers when checking out materials.

Posters

Posters are produced monthly and promote the upcoming programs of the following month. Posters should be displayed in a prominent location at each branch.

Flyers

Flyers are created and distributed on an as-needed basis specific to the service and the audience the flyer targets.

Program Guide

Program Guides are published quarterly in December (Winter), March (Spring), June (Summer), and September (Fall). Each guide includes listings of every program being offered that season and promotes large-scale library events and new items to the collection where space is permitted.

DIGITAL MARKETING TOOLS

SCPL Website

The SCPL website is a tool for consistent communications and a hub of information regarding the services, programs, resources, collections. Any information added to the website should be scanned for accessibility.

The website is updated monthly or on an as-needed basis.

E-Newsletter

An e-newsletter is distributed monthly on the 3rd Monday of every month to library customers and newsletter subscribers. E-newsletters promote the library collections, services, spaces, and the latest month's program registration launch.

Social Media

SCPL has an Instagram account (@stcatharineslibrary) and a Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/stcathlibrary>). These social media accounts promote/inform the community of on-going programs and events, as well as new collections, services and resources at the library. Community engagement has also become a very important part of social media and serves a unique opportunity to showcase our brand identity as a fun, friendly, and welcoming community hub.

TV Displays

Short and colourful TV Display videos promote various collections items, services, resources, and events. TV Displays are updated monthly at the beginning of each month.

Evaluation Strategy

Using the annual workplan, we will develop marketing campaigns with tactile action items geared towards achieving specific communications outcomes. Each quarter, we will assess the progress of our annual workplan action items to ensure they continue to align with the goals of our marketing and communications plan and the organization's strategic plan. We will report on the progress of each action item every quarter and upon the completion of each goal.

Our marketing campaigns will be tied to library data (customer service, collections, programming) to demonstrate the impact of our efforts. Our goal will be to demonstrate the value of our marketing campaigns in terms of increased library use (e.g., circulation, membership, program attendance). Before launching any marketing campaign, we will establish specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals. This will be the foundation for gauging impact.

Examples of SMART Goals:

- **Circulation:** Increase circulation of the library's sports equipment collection by 15% in the month following a targeted promotional campaign.
- **Membership:** Increase new library card registrations by 10% during the "Library Card Sign-up Month" membership drive in September.

- **Program Attendance:** Boost attendance at the "SCPL LitFest" by 10% compared to the previous year, specifically for the events promoted via local community partners.

We will determine which specific marketing activities to connect to the data we collect in order to determine their efficacy.

Examples of marketing activities to track:

- Website analytics
- E-Newsletter performance, e.g. Open rates, click-through rates
- Social Media analytics, e.g. Reach, Impressions, Engagements
- Online Ads (Google, Facebook), e.g. impressions, clicks
- Traditional marketing (print, signage), e.g. survey responses, QR codes leading to specific landing pages

We will leverage the data we already collect (circulation, membership, programming) to analyze the impact of our marketing campaigns.

Examples of Key Metrics we may choose to track:

- **Growth in Key Metrics:** Percentage increase in circulation, membership, and program attendance directly attributable to specific campaigns.
- **Return on Investment (ROI):** for example, if a typical program costs X, and our marketing increased attendance by Y, what is the "value" of that increased engagement?
- **Conversion Rates:** Percentage of people who saw our marketing message and took the desired action (e.g., website visitors who registered for a program, email recipients who clicked on a link and then checked out an item).
- **Engagement Metrics:** Social media likes, shares, comments, email open rates, website time on page – these show interest and brand awareness, even if they don't directly translate to a checkout.

We will analyze customer feedback, online and in person, to allow us to track trends in attitudes and consumer behaviours and allows us to better understand the changing communications needs of our customers.

The data we collect will inform our future marketing and communications decisions. Our analyses will help us to identify what works (which channels, messages, and strategies yielded the best results for each type of goal), what doesn't work (so that we can stop using tactics that aren't effective), and continually adjust our strategies in order to allocate resources more effectively, and tailor our messages to better reach SCPL's target audiences.

Communications & Marketing 2025-2028

Over the next four years, SCPL will implement the following strategies, promotional tactics, and accompanying performance indicators to support the 2025-2028 Strategic Plan.

Communications Strategies

We will employ the following Communications Strategies to realize the Strategic Goals.

Experiences in Bloom

- **Elevate the library as a welcoming public space and community hub:** SCPL is your free, welcoming, and safe refuge. It's a comfortable space to relax, connect, or simply be.
- **Showcase the breadth and depth of resources, services and programs:** SCPL has something for everyone, from cutting-edge resources to creative programs that spark inspiration and joy.
- **Emphasize convenience and accessibility (physical & digital):** We're always finding new ways to make it easier for you to connect with your library, whether in person or online.

Promotional Tactics:

Visual Storytelling: Use high-quality photos and videos on social media, the website and print promotions showcasing people enjoying the library's comfortable spaces, quiet corners, and vibrant common areas. Include positive testimonials from customers.

Targeted Campaigns: Develop promotional campaigns that highlight SCPL as a space for entertainment, leisure, community, and learning.

In-Library Signage: Create inviting and clear signage that emphasizes the library as a welcoming, safe, and free public space.

Partnerships: Collaborate with local mental wellness organizations or community support groups to cross-promote the library as a safe and accessible space for all.

Measurements:

Increased Foot Traffic and Online Engagement: Physical visits to the library, website unique visitors and average session duration, library app usage, social media followers and engagement.

Community Feedback: Qualitative feedback received via the customer feedback forms and SCPL's social media channels that demonstrates a positive customer experience in reaction to library services, collections, programs, facilities, and SCPL's role in the community.

Program Participation: Annual statistics tracking program participation across age demographics, location, topic, etc.

Library Services Usage Data: Annual statistics tracking the use of the library's services (eg. Visiting Library, 3D Printing)

Circulation Data: Annual statistics tracking the circulation of the library's collections.

Community in Bloom

- **Amplify SCPL's presence in the community and the library's accessibility through outreach and external promotions:** Your library is coming to you! Access our resources and programs wherever you are in the community.
- **Highlight community partnerships and seek out new strategic collaborations:** We're stronger together. SCPL partners with community organizations to bring you more opportunities for learning and growth.
- **Showcase SCPL's Contribution to Community Well-being and Vibrancy:** The library is an active force in building a more vibrant and supportive community for everyone in St. Catharines.

Promotional Tactics:

Create a consistent brand for all outreach activities: Promote outreach events widely through social media, the library's event calendar, and print promotions.

Digital Access Promotion: Highlight how easy it is to access digital resources from anywhere. Share "how-to" videos and tutorials specifically for mobile access.

Local Media Spotlights: Pitch stories to local newspapers and online news outlets about SCPL's presence at community festivals, markets, and events.

Joint Promotions: Develop co-branded marketing materials (flyers, social media posts) with partner organizations for collaborative programs and initiatives.

Partner Spotlights: Feature interviews or testimonials from partner organizations on the library's website and social media, explaining the value of the collaboration.

Partnership Acknowledgement: Consistently thank and tag partners in all relevant communications.

Impact Stories: Collect and share compelling narratives from community members who have benefited from SCPL's extended reach or partnerships.

Data Visualization: Use infographics and easily digestible statistics in presentations, annual reports, and on the website to demonstrate the library's widespread community impact (e.g., number of community outreach events, reach of digital services).

Civic Engagement Promotion: Actively promote library-supported civic discussions, voter information sessions, or local issue forums held in partnership with community groups.

Testimonials from Community Leaders: Secure quotes or short video messages from local leaders endorsing SCPL's expanded role.

Measurements:

Outreach Engagement: Customer engagement data at outreach events (e.g., library card sign-ups, resource inquiries, qualitative feedback)

Partnerships: Number of active, strategic community partnerships, and qualitative feedback from partners.

Community Feedback: Qualitative feedback that demonstrates public perception of SCPL as a valuable contributor to the community.

Media coverage: Positive media coverage highlighting SCPL's community engagement efforts.

Membership Data & Program Participation: Number of new library card registrations and program participation from areas or demographics historically less engaged with the library.

People in Bloom

- **Promote a culture of listening and responsiveness:** Your voice shapes your library. We're actively listening to your needs and using your feedback to improve.
- **Cultivate an inclusive and welcoming environment for all:** Everyone belongs here. SCPL is a place where you are seen, heard, and feel a sense of belonging.
- **Empower and celebrate library staff:** Our dedicated team brings the library to life. We value their ideas and celebrate their commitment to your learning and well-being.

Promotional Tactics:

Dedicated Feedback Channels & Targeted Campaigns: Clearly signpost and promote the Customer Feedback form, ensuring it is accessible to all demographics (e.g., multilingual options, accessible formats). Develop targeted campaigns (in-library, website, social media) encouraging feedback on specific topics.

"You Spoke, We Listened" Updates: Regularly share how customer feedback has led to tangible changes or new initiatives at SCPL. This could be a dedicated section in the e-newsletter, social media posts, or in-library displays.

Data-Driven Stories: Create compelling visuals and simple explanations for use in the annual report and City Council updates showing how data (e.g., survey results, program attendance trends) informs decision-making.

"Faces of SCPL" Campaign: Feature diverse customers and staff in marketing materials (photos, short videos, testimonials) enjoying the library and sharing their experiences of belonging.

Accessibility Communication: Clearly communicate SCPL's commitment to accessibility for all abilities, promoting accessible resources, programs, and facilities.

Highlight Community Partnerships: Showcase partnerships with local cultural groups, diverse community organizations, and newcomers' services to demonstrate inclusivity and outreach.

Staff Onboarding and Mentorship Program: Provide a structured onboarding process for integrating new hires. Connect new staff with experienced employees who can offer guidance, support, knowledge sharing and cultivate a sense of belonging.

Staff Training Promotion: Internally, promote skill and knowledge-development training opportunities for staff. Externally, communicate the library's commitment to continuous learning and staff development in customer service and inclusivity. Facilitate the annual Staff Development Day for the purpose of professional development and training.

Staff Meetings: Plan for regular departmental and organizational staff meetings that invite greater staff participation and stronger communication between staff.

Staff Kudos: Continue to encourage the use of the Staff Kudos feature on the MySCPL SharePoint site, highlighting individual staff members, their contributions, and their passion for lifelong learning.

Staff Recognition: Celebrate the commitment and individual accomplishments of staff by marking and celebrating milestone years with SCPL.

"Behind the Scenes" Content: Share glimpses of staff collaborating, training, or preparing for programs to show the dedication behind the library experience.

Organizational Progress Reports (internal): Continue to share regular progress reports via the MySCPL SharePoint site that celebrate the library's successes with all staff (e.g. Customer Feedback Report, Programming Updates, Collections Highlights).

Measurements:

Feedback Data: Number of submissions received, nature of submissions (positive, negative, suggestions for improvement), customer testimonials that express a sense of belonging and positive experiences.

Staff Morale and Empowerment Feedback: Employ tools to measure staff satisfaction related to feeling valued, heard, and supported. Staff testimonials reflecting a positive and collaborative work environment.

Community Recognition or Awards: Indicating that the library is perceived positively by the community.

Literacy in Bloom

- **Broaden the Definition and Perception of "Literacy":** Literacy at SCPL goes beyond reading and writing; it's about gaining skills for life – from digital fluency to creative expression and critical thinking.
- **Position SCPL as a Premier Learning and Exploration Hub:** SCPL is your free and accessible launchpad for lifelong learning, exploration, and skill development, tailored to your unique journey.

- **Showcase SCPL's Role in Personal Growth and Community Impact:** By fostering diverse literacies, SCPL empowers individuals to reach their full potential and contribute positively to our vibrant St. Catharines community.

Promotional Tactics:

Targeted promotional campaigns: Highlighting specific types of literacies and related library resources, services, and programs (e.g., "Digital Literacy Month," "Financial Literacy Week," "Creative Literacy Showcase").

Testimonials & Community Impact Stories: Share powerful stories from community members who have gained new skills or achieved personal growth through SCPL's diverse literacy offerings. Seek opportunities to connect individual literacy achievements to broader community benefits (e.g. how a digital literacy classes can help job seekers, or how civic literacy programs foster more engaged citizens).

Infographics and Fact Sheets: Develop easy-to-understand materials that illustrate the different types of literacy supported by the library and their real-world benefits.

Curated Resource Paths: On the website and through in-library displays, create "learning paths" for different interests or skill levels (e.g., "Start Your Small Business," "Learn a New Language," "Dive into Local History").

Highlight Innovative Tools: Showcase specific, engaging tools and technologies available for learning (e.g., 3D printers, specialized software, musical instruments available for loan).

Partnerships in Action: Highlight collaborations with schools, community groups, and local businesses that jointly promote various forms of literacy and expand SCPL's reach.

Quantitative and Qualitative Reporting: Use annual reports and public presentations (e.g. City council) to demonstrate how literacy programs contribute to key domains as reported in the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT), like education, economic development, and civic engagement.

Measurements:

Library Services Usage Statistics: Track usage of the library's services that support the development of literacy skills (e.g. 3D printing).

Program Statistics: Track participation across the spectrum of "non-traditional" literacy programs (e.g., digital skills workshops, financial literacy seminars, creative arts classes).

Program Feedback and Evaluation: Track the number of participants who report gaining new skills or confidence from library programs (e.g., via post-program surveys).

Circulation Statistics: Track borrowing/usage of resources related to diverse literacies (e.g., online course platforms, musical instruments, memory care kits, technology lending).

Community Feedback: Gather feedback that demonstrates an enhanced public perception of SCPL as a learning hub and key destination for skill development and lifelong learning.

Media coverage: Track positive media coverage highlighting SCPL's innovative approaches to literacy.

SUMMARY:

Strategic Goals	Communication Strategies	Promotional Tactics	Measurements
<p>Experience in Bloom</p> <p>Positioning SCPL as a destination for resources, entertainment, and safe refuge through creative programming, useful services, and resources that spark inspiration and joy in daily life.</p>	<p>Elevate SCPL as a welcoming public space and community hub.</p> <p>Showcase the breadth and depth of resources, services and programs.</p> <p>Emphasize convenience and accessibility (physical & digital).</p>	<p>Visual Storytelling</p> <p>Targeted Campaigns</p> <p>In-library Signage</p> <p>Partnerships</p>	<p>Foot traffic & online engagement</p> <p>Community feedback</p> <p>Program participation</p> <p>Services usage data</p> <p>Circulation data</p>
<p>Community in Bloom.</p>	<p>Amplify SCPL's presence in the community and the</p>	<p>Consistent brand for all outreach activities</p>	<p>Outreach Engagement</p>

<p>Garner brand recognition and be recognized as a valuable partner in the community.</p>	<p>library's accessibility through outreach and external promotions.</p> <p>Highlight community partnerships and seek new strategic collaborations.</p> <p>Showcase the SCPL's contribution to community well-being and vibrancy.</p>	<p>Digital Access Promotion</p> <p>Local Media Spotlights</p> <p>Joint Promotions</p> <p>Partner Spotlights</p> <p>Partnership Acknowledgement</p> <p>Impact Stories</p> <p>Data Visualization</p> <p>Civic Engagement Promotion</p> <p>Testimonials from Community Leaders</p>	<p>Partnerships</p> <p>Community Feedback</p> <p>Media Coverage</p> <p>Membership Data & Program Participation</p>
<p>People in Bloom. Seek feedback from our community to service it better and empower SCPL staff to share ideas and contribute meaningfully.</p>	<p>Promote a culture of listening and responsiveness.</p> <p>Cultivate an inclusive and welcoming environment for all.</p> <p>Empower and celebrate library staff.</p>	<p>Dedicated Feedback Channels & Targeted Campaigns</p> <p>"You Spoke, We Listened" Updates</p> <p>Data-driven Stories</p> <p>"Faces of SCPL" campaign</p> <p>Accessibility Communication</p> <p>Highlight Community Partnerships</p> <p>Staff Recognition</p>	<p>Customer Feedback Data</p> <p>Staff Morale and Empowerment Feedback</p> <p>Community Recognition or Awards</p>

		<p>Staff Training & Professional Development</p> <p>Staff Meetings</p> <p>Staff Kudos</p> <p>"Behind the Scenes" Content</p> <p>Progress Reports (internal)</p>	
<p>Literacy in Bloom. Communicate the breadth of literacy and identify SCPL as a literacy leader.</p>	<p>Broaden the definition and perception of "Literacy".</p> <p>Position SCPL as a premier learning and exploration hub.</p> <p>Showcase SCPL's role in personal growth and community impact.</p>	<p>Targeted promotional campaigns</p> <p>Testimonials & Community Impact Stories</p> <p>Infographics and Fact Sheets</p> <p>Curated Resource Paths</p> <p>Highlight Innovative Tools Partnerships in Action</p> <p>Quantitative and Qualitative Reporting</p>	<p>Services Usage Statistics</p> <p>Program Statistics</p> <p>Program Feedback and Evaluation</p> <p>Circulation Statistic</p> <p>Community Feedback</p> <p>Media coverage</p>

Discussion Reports

7. Discussion Reports (attachment)

7.1 Policy (G-05) Meeting Rooms – L. DiDonato

Motion

7.2 2025-2026 Operating Budgets Update – K. Su and L. DiDonato

Motion

Policy (G-05) Meeting Rooms

submitted by Lisa DiDonato, Business Administrator

Recommendation

THAT the Board approve Policy (G-05) Meeting Rooms as amended.

Report

The purpose of this report is to amend Meeting Rooms Policy G-05 to require organizations hosting publicly advertised programs or events to include content to clearly indicate that the program or event is not sponsored by the St. Catharines Public Library and as such, the Library does not advocate or endorse the views expressed by the organizers or participants.

In addition, the amendments include updates to the fee schedule in connection with the Merritt Branch's relocation to the Niagara Pen Centre. The Meeting Rooms Policy was last reviewed and updated in September 2023, reflecting significant changes following the implementation of LibCal.

The policy with black-line amendments as well as a 'clean' version follows for the Board's review.



Policy Name	Meeting Rooms		
Section & Number	Board – G-05	Effective Date	1985-01-10
Motion Number	2023-102	Last Review	2023-09-21
Author	Business Administrator	Next Review	2027
Policy Maintenance	Reviewed by Management		

Policy Statement

Through this policy, the St. Catharines Public Library Board (Board) establishes practices and procedures necessary for the renting of meeting rooms.

The Board guarantees the right of free expression by making available its meeting rooms to all individuals, groups and organizations whose programs are consistent with the intent of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Ontario Anti-Racism Act.

Scope

Meeting rooms are provided for St. Catharines Public Library (Library) and Library-related programs and meetings. After these needs are met, meeting rooms may be booked by individuals, groups and organizations for meetings and cultural, educational and community activities and to generate revenue for the Library as allowed by *The Public Libraries Act (R.S.O.1990, Chapter P. 44)* of the Province of Ontario.

Permission to use these meeting rooms does not imply any endorsement of the aims, policies or activities of any group or individual.

The Library does not rent meeting rooms for:

- Private social functions such as parties or fundraisers;
- Business activities such as trade exhibitions and promotion and sale of products or services; or

- Programs that are not suited to the Library's physical facilities and family oriented atmosphere.

Definitions

Meeting Rooms means the spaces within Library facilities set aside for people to get together and/or hold meetings.

Regulations

1. All individuals, groups or organizations renting space from the Library must not violate the Library Rules of Conduct, all applicable laws and by-laws, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Ontario Anti-Racism Act* and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
2. Bookings are to be made online using the booking application available at myscpl.ca. Acceptance or refusal of a specific booking shall be at the discretion of the Library. Any person, group or organization so refused may appeal in writing to the Board.
3. Room and equipment fees are charged in accordance with St. Catharines Public Library Rental Schedule in Appendix A. Not for profit groups and organizations, i.e. community groups or registered charities, will be given a discount for room rentals. If not for profit groups charge admission or request donations, the full rate will apply. Groups must provide proof of not for profit status to receive the discount. At the discretion of the Library, rental charges may be waived if the group or organization's activities are in partnership with the Library.
4. If the Library is unable to provide the premises for the individual, group or organization's use due to matters beyond the Library's control, the booking shall be terminated and a refund of rental fees it has paid the Library will be provided. The individual, group or organization will waive any claims for damages or compensation on account of such termination beyond the fee refund.
5. If requested, the individual, group or organization, must provide, prior to the program start date, a Certificate of Insurance, naming the St. Catharines Public Library as an additional insured, and indicating the required insurance coverage being provided.
6. The individual, group or organization releases and forever discharges the St. Catharines Public Library from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, and demands for damages, loss, or injury, however arising, which may be

sustained in consequence of entering or using any Library facilities including theft or loss of property.

7. The individual, group or organization shall indemnify and save harmless the St. Catharines Public Library against all liability, claims, damages, or expenses due to, or arising out of, any act or neglect by the community partner, program presenter or performer and participants, on or about the facility, or due to, or arising out of, the entry or use of the facility, including liability for injury or damage to the persons or property of the community partner, program presenter or performer and participants.
8. The Library reserves the right to attend any meeting held in its facilities. The Library may terminate an individual's or group's right to the use of the premises if:
 - a) The Library becomes aware of a use contrary to law.
 - b) The group has misrepresented anything in the Meeting Room Application Form.
 - c) The group has misrepresented the event as a Library or Library partnership program.
 - d) There is a likelihood of harm to any person or property.
 - e) The group has previously misused the premises or other Library facilities or has failed to pay any fees owing to the Library.
 - f) There are unpaid fees from a previous booking.

Responsibility

The CEO or designate is responsible for the overall administration of this policy.

The individual, group or organization renting a meeting room is responsible for:

- i. Ensuring all fire protocols are followed including evacuating the room in case of a fire alarm or other emergency.
- ii. All damages, theft, or loss of property belonging to the Library, to persons renting Library rooms and/or to program attendees. The rental agreement indemnifies the Library Board against any and all claims arising out of the renter's use of the facilities.
- iii. Organizations hosting a publicly advertised program or event must clearly identify themselves as the sponsor in all promotional materials. Advertisements may not imply endorsement by the Library of the program's content. All materials must include the following disclaimer: This program/event is not sponsored by the St. Catharines

Public Library. The Library does not advocate for or endorse the views expressed by the organizers or participants.

Operational Guidelines

Use of Library Meeting Rooms

1. Meeting rooms are available for rent at the Central Library, Dr. Huq Family Library and Merritt Library during open hours. All meetings must conclude 15 minutes before the close of the Library. Bookings are not available on Sundays.
2. Meeting rooms must be left in an orderly and clean condition. All garbage must put into waste containers.
3. Smoking and alcohol consumption is not permitted.
4. The use of open flames, smoke or odour produced by burning aromatic substances such as candles is strictly prohibited. Smudging must be requested at the time of application and is only permitted in the Rotary Room or Bankers Room at the Central Library.
5. Use of the kitchen facilities and any equipment must be requested at the time of application. Use of the kitchen is for serving non-alcoholic beverages and light refreshments only. The Library does not supply dishes or utensils.
6. A baby grand piano, located in the Mills Memorial Room, may be booked for events and practice. Bookings should be made in advance. The Library follows a regular piano tuning program. However, if piano tuning is requested by a group or individual, arrangements must be made through the Library at the time of the booking. The current rate for tuning will be charged.
7. Any promotional material for meetings or activities using rented space at the Library must not misrepresent or imply that event is Library sponsored. The Library logo cannot be used. Distribution of promotional material in the Library is not permitted, except for requesting inclusion on any community events displays.

Bookings, Fees, Payment, Cancellations and Refunds

1. Groups must designate a contact person using the booking application available at myscpl.ca.
2. Meeting rooms are booked using the booking application available at myscpl.ca. The Library reserves the right to limit the number of bookings.

3. Payment may be made in advance or the group may request an invoice. The Library accepts cash, debit, credit, e-transfers and cheques payable to the St. Catharines Public Library. NSF (not sufficient funds) cheques will be subject to a \$30.00 handling charge.
4. To receive a full refund, cancellations for room bookings must be reported at least 48 hours in advance. There will be no refunds for cancellations within 48 hours of booking start time.
5. The Library will not accept new bookings and will cancel existing room bookings for groups that have invoices outstanding for 45 days or more. Those accounts will be turned over to a collection agency.

Appendix

Appendix 1 - St. Catharines Public Library Room and Equipment Rental Fee Schedule

Implementation

~~The CEO or designate will implement this policy.~~

Appendix 1

St. Catharines Public Library Room and Equipment Rental Fee Schedule

I. Room Rental Fees

Room	For Profit Price per Hour	Not for Profit Price per Hour
Mills Memorial Room at Central (100 max. capacity)	\$30.00	\$20.00
Rotary/Bankers Room at Central (60 max. capacity)	\$30.00	\$20.00
Rotary Room at Central (30 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Bankers Room at Central (30 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Kiwanis & Trust Room at Central (10 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
2nd Floor Meeting Room at Central (10 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Dr. Huq Branch Meeting Room (20 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Merritt Branch Program Room (40 max. capacity)	\$30.00	\$20.00
Merritt Branch Meeting Room (10 max. capacity)	15.00	10.00

II. Equipment Rental Fees *

Equipment	Rate
Piano	\$10.00 per Hour
Laptop/Computer	\$30.00 per Rental
LCD Projector	\$50.00 per Rental
Owl Camera	\$25.00 per Rental
TV/DVD/VCR Combination	\$20.00 per Rental
Sound System (with Microphone)	\$40.00 per Rental
Kitchen Rental	\$5.00 per Rental

* Equipment is subject to availability at each location.



Policy Name	Meeting Rooms		
Section & Number	Board – G-05	Effective Date	1985-01-10
Motion Number	25-XX	Last Review	2025-06-12
Author	Business Administrator	Next Review	2029
Policy Maintenance	Reviewed by Management		

Policy Statement

Through this policy, the St. Catharines Public Library Board (Board) establishes practices and procedures necessary for the renting of meeting rooms.

The Board guarantees the right of free expression by making available its meeting rooms to all individuals, groups and organizations whose programs are consistent with the intent of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Ontario Anti-Racism Act.

Scope

Meeting rooms are provided for St. Catharines Public Library (Library) and Library-related programs and meetings. After these needs are met, meeting rooms may be booked by individuals, groups and organizations for meetings and cultural, educational and community activities and to generate revenue for the Library as allowed by *The Public Libraries Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 44)* of the Province of Ontario.

Permission to use these meeting rooms does not imply any endorsement of the aims, policies or activities of any group or individual.

The Library does not rent meeting rooms for:

- Private social functions such as parties or fundraisers;
- Business activities such as trade exhibitions and promotion and sale of products or services; or
- Programs that are not suited to the Library’s physical facilities and family oriented atmosphere.

Definitions

Meeting Rooms means the spaces within Library facilities set aside for people to get together and/or hold meetings.

Regulations

1. All individuals, groups or organizations renting space from the Library must not violate the Library Rules of Conduct, all applicable laws and by-laws, the *Ontario Human Rights Code*, the *Criminal Code of Canada*, the *Ontario Anti-Racism Act* and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.
2. Bookings are to be made online using the booking application available at myscpl.ca. Acceptance or refusal of a specific booking shall be at the discretion of the Library. Any person, group or organization so refused may appeal in writing to the Board.
3. Room and equipment fees are charged in accordance with St. Catharines Public Library Rental Schedule in Appendix A. Not for profit groups and organizations, i.e. community groups or registered charities, will be given a discount for room rentals. If not for profit groups charge admission or request donations, the full rate will apply. Groups must provide proof of not for profit status to receive the discount. At the discretion of the Library, rental charges may be waived if the group or organization's activities are in partnership with the Library.
4. If the Library is unable to provide the premises for the individual, group or organization's use due to matters beyond the Library's control, the booking shall be terminated and a refund of rental fees it has paid the Library will be provided. The individual, group or organization will waive any claims for damages or compensation on account of such termination beyond the fee refund.
5. If requested, the individual, group or organization, must provide, prior to the program start date, a Certificate of Insurance, naming the St. Catharines Public Library as an additional insured, and indicating the required insurance coverage being provided.
6. The individual, group or organization releases and forever discharges the St. Catharines Public Library from any and all actions, causes of action, claims, and demands for damages, loss, or injury, however arising, which may be sustained in consequence of entering or using any Library facilities including theft or loss of property.

7. The individual, group or organization shall indemnify and save harmless the St. Catharines Public Library against all liability, claims, damages, or expenses due to, or arising out of, any act or neglect by the community partner, program presenter or performer and participants, on or about the facility, or due to, or arising out of, the entry or use of the facility, including liability for injury or damage to the persons or property of the community partner, program presenter or performer and participants.
8. The Library reserves the right to attend any meeting held in its facilities. The Library may terminate an individual's or group's right to the use of the premises if:
 - a) The Library becomes aware of a use contrary to law.
 - b) The group has misrepresented anything in the Meeting Room Application Form.
 - c) The group has misrepresented the event as a Library or Library partnership program.
 - d) There is a likelihood of harm to any person or property.
 - e) The group has previously misused the premises or other Library facilities or has failed to pay any fees owing to the Library.
 - f) There are unpaid fees from a previous booking.

Responsibility

The CEO or designate is responsible for the overall administration of this policy.

The individual, group or organization renting a meeting room is responsible for:

- i. Ensuring all fire protocols are followed including evacuating the room in case of a fire alarm or other emergency.
- ii. All damages, theft, or loss of property belonging to the Library, to persons renting Library rooms and/or to program attendees. The rental agreement indemnifies the Library Board against any and all claims arising out of the renter's use of the facilities.
- iii. Organizations hosting a publicly advertised program or event must clearly identify themselves as the sponsor in all promotional materials. Advertisements may not imply endorsement by the Library of the program's content. All materials must include the following disclaimer: This program/event is not sponsored by the St. Catharines Public Library. The Library does not advocate for or endorse the views expressed by the organizers or participants.

Operational Guidelines

Use of Library Meeting Rooms

1. Meeting rooms are available for rent at the Central Library, Dr. Huq Family Library and Merritt Library during open hours. All meetings must conclude 15 minutes before the close of the Library. Bookings are not available on Sundays.
2. Meeting rooms must be left in an orderly and clean condition. All garbage must put into waste containers.
3. Smoking and alcohol consumption is not permitted.
4. The use of open flames, smoke or odour produced by burning aromatic substances such as candles is strictly prohibited. Smudging must be requested at the time of application and is only permitted in the Rotary Room or Bankers Room at the Central Library.
5. Use of the kitchen facilities and any equipment must be requested at the time of application. Use of the kitchen is for serving non-alcoholic beverages and light refreshments only. The Library does not supply dishes or utensils.
6. A baby grand piano, located in the Mills Memorial Room, may be booked for events and practice. Bookings should be made in advance. The Library follows a regular piano tuning program. However, if piano tuning is requested by a group or individual, arrangements must be made through the Library at the time of the booking. The current rate for tuning will be charged.
7. Any promotional material for meetings or activities using rented space at the Library must not misrepresent or imply that event is Library sponsored. The Library logo cannot be used. Distribution of promotional material in the Library is not permitted, except for requesting inclusion on any community events displays.

Bookings, Fees, Payment, Cancellations and Refunds

1. Groups must designate a contact person using the booking application available at myscpl.ca.
2. Meeting rooms are booked using the booking application available at myscpl.ca. The Library reserves the right to limit the number of bookings.
3. Payment may be made in advance or the group may request an invoice. The Library accepts cash, debit, credit, e-transfers and cheques payable to the St.

Catharines Public Library. NSF (not sufficient funds) cheques will be subject to a \$30.00 handling charge.

4. To receive a full refund, cancellations for room bookings must be reported at least 48 hours in advance. There will be no refunds for cancellations within 48 hours of booking start time.
5. The Library will not accept new bookings and will cancel existing room bookings for groups that have invoices outstanding for 45 days or more. Those accounts will be turned over to a collection agency.

Appendix

Appendix 1 - St. Catharines Public Library Room and Equipment Rental Fee Schedule

Appendix 1

St. Catharines Public Library Room and Equipment Rental Fee Schedule

I. Room Rental Fees

Room	For Profit Price per Hour	Not for Profit Price per Hour
Mills Memorial Room at Central (100 max. capacity)	\$30.00	\$20.00
Rotary/Bankers Room at Central (60 max. capacity)	\$30.00	\$20.00
Rotary Room at Central (30 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Bankers Room at Central (30 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Kiwanis & Trust Room at Central (10 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
2nd Floor Meeting Room at Central (10 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Dr. Huq Branch Meeting Room (20 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00
Merritt Branch Program Room (40 max. capacity)	\$30.00	\$20.00
Merritt Branch Meeting Room (10 max. capacity)	\$15.00	\$10.00

II. Equipment Rental Fees *

Equipment	Rate
Piano	\$10.00 per Hour
Laptop/Computer	\$30.00 per Rental
LCD Projector	\$50.00 per Rental
Owl Camera	\$25.00 per Rental
TV/DVD/VCR Combination	\$20.00 per Rental
Sound System (with Microphone)	\$40.00 per Rental
Kitchen Rental	\$5.00 per Rental

* Equipment is subject to availability at each location.

2025-2026 Operating Budgets Update

submitted by Ken Su, CEO and Lisa DiDonato, Business Administrator

Recommendation

THAT the St. Catharines Public Library (SCPL) Board direct staff to update the City of St. Catharines (City) of the proposed municipal contribution funding increase of \$120,000 for the 2026 Operating Budget and request that the increase be incorporated into the 2026 reconfirmation budget, to be presented to Council on October 15, 2025.

2024 Approved Municipal Contribution	2025 Approved Municipal Contribution	2026 Approved Municipal Contribution	2026 Proposed Municipal Contribution
\$6,641,583	\$7,010,502	\$7,397,958	\$7,517,958

Report

Background

The SCPL 2024-2025 municipal contribution increases of 7.05% in 2024, 5.55% in 2025 and 5.53% in 2026 were approved as part of the City multi-year budget on February 3, 2024.

In April 2025, the City advised SCPL that any proposed changes to 2026 Operating Budget need to be communicated by early August - or as soon as possible. These changes will be incorporated into the 2026 reconfirmation budget, which will be presented to Council on October 15, 2025.

Update

The collective agreement between the SCPL Board and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Local 2220, expired on December 31, 2024. Historically, salary increases for SCPL and the City under CUPE agreements have been aligned, with SCPL finalizing its agreement after the City reaches a settlement. In April 2025, the City finalized a three-year collective agreement with CUPE representing both inside and outside workers. The agreement includes salary increases that exceed the amounts allocated for 2025 and 2026 in the 2024 to 2026 multi-year budget.

Given the historical alignment of SCPL's annual salary increases with the City, the expectation is that CUPE will be seeking salary increases at SCPL consistent with those negotiated with the City. As the 2025 and 2026 budgets did not account for salary increases at the level agreed to by the City, SCPL is facing an estimated shortfall of \$60,000 for 2025 and \$120,000 for 2026. For 2025, SCPL is optimistic we can absorb the shortfall through operational savings.

In May, the SCPL Management team conducted a thorough review of the 2026 Operating Budget and have determined that SCPL will not be able to absorb the

estimated \$120,000 shortfall without additional funding. Staff recommend that the Board direct staff to update the City of the proposed municipal contribution funding increase and present the increase to Council in October 2025.

Failing to address the 2026 budget shortfall will lead to compounding financial challenges moving forward. SCPL has already absorbed the additional occupancy costs resulting from the relocation of the Merritt Branch in 2025 and 2026 using Reserves and will be asking for an increase in the 2027 budget.