

# BPL Library Board

## Agenda

Thursday, May 22, 2025

Frank Rose Room, 6:30 p.m.

*Burlington Public Library is located on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit.*

A light dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m.

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Declarations of Interest
4. Open Minutes of April 24, 2025
5. Decision Items
  - 5.1 Board By-Law
  - 5.2 Strategic Plan
  - 5.3 Community Bulletin Board Policy
  - 5.4 Kids Learning Fund
6. Discussion Items - None
7. Information Items
  - 7.1 CEO Report
  - 7.2 Advocacy Report
8. Closed Session
  - 8.1. Closed Minutes of April 24, 2025
  - 8.2. Security Matter

8.3. HR Matter

9. Approval of Motions from Closed Session

10. Other Business

11. Next Meeting:

Thursday, June 26, 2025, 6:30 p.m., Frank Rose Room

# BPL Board Minutes | March 27, 2025

## Attendance

Board: Jennifer Tarnawski, Jason Manayathu, Lindsay Zalot, Councillor Lisa Kearns, Ashley Cameron, Shayne Lemieux

Staff: Lita Barrie, Nicole Tewkesbury, Meg Uttangi Matsos, Elise Copps, Cindy Tchorz

Regrets: Akindayomi Odedeyi

## Minutes

A meeting of the Board was held on Thursday, April 24, 2025, in the Frank Rose Room at Central Branch.

### 1. Call to Order

Jason Manayathu, Library Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

### 2. Approval of the Agenda

The agenda was approved as presented.

#### **Motion 25-19, Approval of the Agenda**

**MOVED by Lindsay Zalot, SECONDED by Jennifer Tarnawski, that the agenda be approved as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

### 3. Declarations of Interest – None

### 4. Open Minutes of March 27, 2025

#### **Motion 25-20, Open Minutes of March 27, 2025**

**MOVED by Shayne Lemieux, SECONDED by Ashley Cameron, that the Burlington Public Library Board approve the Open Minutes of March 27, 2025, as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

## 5. Decision Items

### 5.1. Policy Review:

#### 5.1.1. Risk Management Policy

#### **Motion 25-21, Risk Management Policy**

**MOVED by Jennifer Tarnawski, SECONDED by Shayne Lemieux, that the Burlington Public Library Board approve the revised Risk Management Policy effective May 1, 2025, as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

#### 5.1.2. Finance Policy

#### **Motion 25-22, Finance Policy**

**MOVED by Lindsay Zalot, SECONDED by Ashley Cameron, that the Burlington Public Library Board approve the revised Finance Policy effective May 1, 2025, as amended.**

**CARRIED.**

### 5.2. Q1 Financial Statements

#### **Motion 25-23, Q1 Financial Statements**

**MOVED by Shayne Lemieux, SECONDED by Jennifer Tarnawski, that the Burlington Public Library Board approve the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Operating, Capital, and Other Fund Financial Statements for the period ending March 31, 2025.**

**CARRIED.**

### 5.3. 2024 Audit Statements

Jennifer Tarnawski provided an update from the Audit Committee meeting.

#### **Motion 25-24, 2024 Audit Statements**

**MOVED by Shayne Lemieux, SECONDED by Jennifer Tarnawski, that the Burlington Public Library Board approve the 2024 Audit Results, and the 2024 Audited Financial Statements as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

### 5.4. 2024 Senior Leadership Expenses

#### **Motion 25-25, 2024 Senior Leadership Expenses**

**MOVED by Ashley Cameron, SECONDED by Jennifer Tarnawski, that the Burlington Public Library Board approve the 2024 Board and Senior Leadership Expenses as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

5.5. Audit Committee Minutes of April 10, 2025

**Motion 25-26, Audit Committee Minutes of April 10, 2025**

**MOVED by Jennifer Tarnawski, SECONDED by Ashley Cameron, that the Burlington Public Library Board approve the April 10, 2025, Minutes of the Audit Committee as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

## 6. Discussion Items

### 6.1. 2026-2027 Strategic Plan Update

Elise Copps, Director, Communications & Engagement, provided a presentation on the draft objectives and key performance indicators for each of the strategic goals. Library staff will bring this back to the May Board meeting with the recommendations and some wordsmithing for the Board to review.

### 6.2. Board By-Law

Following a review, the Library Board made some additional recommendations: The Board Chair and Vice Chair cannot endorse or state a political view and will remain neutral; include a note about online voting to preserve secrecy; update and clarify the language around the CEO performance; and adjusting the committee terms by removing yearly appointments. Library staff will revise and bring this back to the June Board meeting for final approval.

## 7. Information Items

The following items were received by the Board

7.1. CEO Report

7.2. Q1 Metrics

7.3. 2024 Economic Impact Statement & Annual Report

**Motion 25 - 27, Move into Closed Session**

**MOVED by Lindsay Zalot, SECONDED by Jennifer Tarnawski, that the Burlington Public Library Board move into Closed Session.**

**CARRIED.**

The Library Board moved into Closed Session at 8:57 p.m.

**Motion 25 - 28, Move out of Closed Session**

**MOVED by Lindsay Zalot, SECONDED by Jennifer Tarnawski, that the Burlington Public Library Board moved out of Closed Session.**

**CARRIED.**

The Library Board moved out of Closed Session at 9:06 p.m.

## 9. Approval of Motions from Closed Session

**Motion 25 - 29, Closed Minutes of March 27, 2025**

**MOVED by Ashley Cameron, SECONDED by Lisa Kearns, that the Burlington Public Library Board approved the Closed Minutes of March 27, 2025, as presented.**

**CARRIED.**

## 10. Other Business - None

The meeting is adjourned at 9:07 p.m. Motion by Lindsay Zalot.

---

Chair

---

Secretary-Treasurer

## Next Meeting

Thursday, May 22, 2025, Frank Rose Room

## 5. Decision Items: 5.1 Board Procedural By-Law Report

### Recommendation

THAT the Burlington Public Library Board approve the proposed updates to the Board Procedural By-Law.

### Purpose

To provide an updated draft of the proposed updates to the Board Procedural By-law seeking the Board's approval.

### Background

In 2020, the Board passed the Board's Procedural By-Law. The By-Law was drafted in response to the recommendation of the City Clerk that a procedural By-Law was preferable to the Board's previous Board policy structure to define roles, responsibilities, and the regulation of Board business. The Procedural By-Law was last updated in June 2024.

In accordance with Section 8, Amendments of the By-law, this report is seeking approval in follow up to the Notice of Motion to revisions of the By-law at the April Library Board meeting.

### Discussion

The revised draft is attached. The highlighting of the previous changes has been removed and the new edits from the discussion at April meeting are highlighted in green:

- Land Acknowledge has been redescribed as Welcome and Intent for Gathering as per the guidance of the Mayor's Talking Circle.
- Revision of the elections by secret voting section clarifying that voting would occur in online format to preserve secrecy for all board members.
- The inclusion of a statement under Board responsibilities stating that the Board does not endorse or state a position on a political campaign. This is aligned with the interim updates to the COB Code of Conduct – Local Boards: ([filestream.ashx](#)).
- Clarification around the CEO performance committee removing duplication and reference to a selection committee.

- The phrasing around appointments and the use of calendar year is adjusted.

## Financial Considerations

There are no direct financial impacts related to these proposed By-Law revisions.

## Strategic Implications

This work aligns with all three goals within the current strategic plan under:

- Strategic Goal 1: Enhance community well-being, strengthening relations with community partners to support community needs through programming and other library services.
- Strategic Goal 2: Inspire discovery with diverse collections, services, and spaces.
- Strategic Goal 3: Create a workforce culture driven by our organizational values.

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Considerations

Strong governance positions the Library Board to ensure that BPL provides equitable service to our customers identifying ways we work to make a positive impact advancing equity, diversity, inclusion, and access within our workforce and in the provision of library services to the community.

## Sustainability Considerations

There are no direct sustainability considerations related to these proposed By-Law revisions.

## Risk Management

It is important that BPL policies and By-Law remain aligned with Board decision-making.

## Final Remarks

The proposed edits ensure that the Board By-Law is updated in a timely manner.

## Report Author(s)

Respectfully submitted: Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer



# BPL Board Bylaw

## Table of Contents

Procedural By-Laws of the Library Board .....	2
Section 1: Governance Vision of the Burlington Public Library Board .....	2
Section 2: Board Composition.....	3
Section 3: Officers .....	4
Section 4: Board Members Code of Conduct.....	6
Section 5: Board Meetings.....	7
Section 6: Payment of Board Expenses .....	14
Section 7: Budget Process and Monitoring.....	14
Section 8: Amendment of the By-Laws .....	15
Section 9: Board Committees and Task Groups.....	15
Section 10: Board Self-Assessment .....	17
References .....	17
Appendices .....	17
Audit Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix A.....	17
Purpose .....	17
Membership .....	18
Meetings.....	18
Appointment of External Auditors.....	19
Duties of Audit Committee .....	19
CEO Performance Appraisal Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix B .....	20
Nominating Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix C.....	22

## Procedural By-Laws of the Library Board

The Burlington Public Library Board (hereinafter called the “Board”) is a corporation appointed by the City of Burlington under and acting in accordance with the Public Libraries Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990 Chapter P.44 (hereinafter called the “Act”) including any amendments made to the Act and is established by City By-Law 68-2006 of the Corporation of the City of Burlington. The Board is responsible for ensuring that public library services are delivered effectively and efficiently to the City of Burlington.

The Board acts on behalf of the community in the discharge of its mandate and is appointed by and accountable to Burlington City Council for the financial affairs of Burlington Public Library (BPL).

The rules and regulations contained in this By-Law shall be used as the guidelines for the order and dispatch of business by the Board and its Committees.

### Section 1: Governance Vision of the Burlington Public Library Board

The Board oversees the purpose, plans and policies of BPL. The Board’s purpose is to provide the community of Burlington with comprehensive, efficient public library services reflecting the needs of the Burlington community.

It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure that the funding it receives provides the best possible library service to Burlington residents. In addition, it is committed to providing effective governance for BPL to ensure services and programs offered by BPL remain relevant to the changing needs of the communities we serve.

### Statement of Responsibilities

The Board:

- Establishes the bylaw and policies that govern the operations of BPL and of the Board itself and reviews these on a set schedule to ensure continued relevance.
- Adheres to Board Code of Conduct.
- Appoints the Chief Executive Officer who will have general supervision over and direction of the operations of the public library and its staff. (*Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 15(2)).
- Develops, approves and monitors progress on a multi-year strategic plan to set direction and goals for the Board term.
- Monitors the financial affairs of the Library and ensures that the organization operates on an ethical and sound financial basis approving annual operating and

capital budgets while receiving and approving quarterly budget updates throughout the Board term.

- Monitors the key performance indicators of the Library and endorses strategies to influence those performance indicators.
- Ensures the Library has policies and practices in place for proactive risk management in all activities.
- Assesses all relevant information regarding the library service needs of the community, endorses service priorities and advocates for adequate and appropriate funding to achieve the service priorities.
- Advocates in the community to gain support and approvals for appropriate public library services and seeks positive partnerships to best serve the community and to fulfill the Mission and Values of the Burlington Public Library.
- Does not endorse political candidates nor issue statements expressing a political or campaign view.
- Ensures the public is represented in the development and promotion of library services in the community.
- Conducts an annual performance appraisal of the Chief Executive Officer and recruits a new CEO when needed.
- Is responsible for naming all library locations and facilities for which it is responsible.

## Section 2: Board Composition

By-Law 70-200 of the Corporation of the City of Burlington defines the composition of the Board. The Board is composed of seven (7) board members. This includes: one (1) Member of the Council of the Corporation of the City of Burlington and six (6) community members appointed by the City Council.

The Board may, when it is deemed necessary by the Board, make a formal recommendation to the City, of an increase or reduction in the number of members sitting on the Board.

Burlington City Council appoints all members to the Board. Citizen appointees must meet the qualifications as outlined in section 10 of the Act. Board members shall hold office for a term concurrent with the term of Council or until a successor is appointed as the result of a resignation.

## Resignations & Vacancies

Members of the Board who must resign before the end of their term of appointment on the Board shall inform City Council through the Clerk of the City of Burlington, the Board

Chair and the Library Chief Executive Officer in writing, specifying the effective date of their resignation.

If or when a vacancy becomes available, the Council approved citizen member alternate will be appointed to the Board immediately and will assume the vacant seat for the remainder of the term with the exception of a term with less than 45 days remaining.

## Section 3: Officers

The Board shall have the following officers:

- Chair
- Vice Chair
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Chief Executive Officer

The Board will elect a Chair or Vice-Chair from the membership of the Board to serve as the Board Executive.

Chair or Vice-Chair is elected by balloting of all Members of the Board who are present. An election will take place at the first meeting of each new Board, at the first meeting of the calendar year (every two years) or at the meeting following a resignation from either one of these positions.

The term of office for each position will be for two years ending on December 31 (or until a successor is elected).

### Chair

The primary role of the Chair of the Board is to provide leadership to the Board and to ensure the proper conduct of Board business.

The Chair of the Board:

- Serves as the primary spokesperson for the Board
- Is a signing officer of the Board
- Represents the Board, alone or with other members of the Board, at any public or private meetings for the purpose of conducting, promoting or completing the business of the Board
- Develops the agenda for meetings in consultation with the Vice-Chair and Chief Executive Officer to ensure the effective use of Board and staff time and resources

- Presides at regular and special meetings of the Board in accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, other relevant legislation such as the City Bylaw for BPL and with the rules of procedure adopted by the Board.
- Commits the Board to a specific course of action only when the Board has granted specific authority by a motion or policy
- Determines the responsibilities of Committees to deal with matters that arise when responsibilities are not clearly defined subject to eventual confirmation of the full Board
- Ensures that vacancies on Board committees and task groups are filled as expeditiously as possible
- Advises the Vice-Chair, if for any reason, the Chair is temporarily unable to perform any of these functions
- Shall request, either at the first meeting of a new Board, or in December of each year, a written indication from each Board Member of their preference for appointments to the various committees or task groups of the Board; the Chair will propose Committee and Task Group appointments at the next regular meeting of the Board
- Is an ex-officio Member of all committees and task groups

### Vice-Chair:

The primary role of the Vice-Chair of the Board is to provide leadership, to ensure the proper functioning of the Board and the proper conduct of Board business, if for any reason, the Board Chair is not available.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair is vested with all the powers and performs all the duties of the Chair of the Board.

### Secretary

The Secretary of the Board shall be the Chief Executive Officer.

In the role of Secretary-Treasurer, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- providing and maintaining all records, agendas and minutes of meetings of the Board and its various Committees and Task Groups

### Treasurer

The Treasurer of the Board shall be the Chief Executive Officer.

In the role of Secretary-Treasurer, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for:

- presenting draft budgets and regular financial reports to the Board for approval
- The Chief Executive Officer is a signing officer of the Board but is not a member of the Board

## Chief Executive Officer

The Board shall appoint the Chief Executive Officer, who shall be its CEO, and who shall hold office until the Board rescinds the appointment, or a new appointment is made. The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible, under the supervision of the Board, for the general conduct and management of BPL.

Only decisions of the Board are binding on the CEO.

- Decisions or instructions of individual Board Members, officers or committees are not binding on the CEO except in rare circumstances when the Board has specifically authorized or delegated such exercise of authority.
- In the case of Board Members or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorization, the CEO can refuse such requests.

Operational achievement and conduct of library staff are the responsibility of the CEO, to whom the Board has delegated authority over and accountability for staff performance.

- The Board will never give instructions to persons who report directly or indirectly to the CEO.
- The Board will refrain from evaluating, either formally or informally, any staff other than the CEO.

## Section 4: Board Members Code of Conduct

Board Members are committed to act in an ethical, lawful and business-like manner and in accordance with City of Burlington's Code of Conduct for Local Boards and Committees. This commitment includes the proper use of authority, appropriate decorum in group settings and individual behaviour when acting as Board members.

Board Members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility by adhering to the regulations of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter M.50 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90m50> [2]))

Board Members shall support the interest of BPL when making or influencing decisions.

Board Members will not use their positions to obtain employment in BPL for themselves, family members or close associates.

Board Members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over any facet of BPL, the CEO, or other employees. Except for participation in the performance evaluation of

the CEO, Board Members will not express individual judgements of performance of employees or of the CEO.

Any Board Member who declares their candidacy for public office, whether at the municipal, provincial or federal level, shall submit a request for a leave of absence from the Board upon public declaration of their candidacy. This provision does not apply, however, to the Councillor of the City of Burlington who is appointed to serve on the Board.

Board Members shall respect the confidentiality of all information discussed in Closed Sessions and hold in strict confidence all information concerning matters dealt with in Closed Sessions. Board Members shall not release, make public or in any way divulge any such information or any aspect of Closed Session deliberations, unless expressly authorized or required by law to do so.

All decisions will be respected by all members of the Board.

The Chair is the primary spokesperson of the Board. Any Member speaking on behalf of the Board must present Board positions fairly, accurately and without bias. Board Members expressing individual comments of personal opinions should clearly identify such remarks as personal and not those of the Board as a whole.

Board Members interaction with the public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the inability of any Board Member to speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly stated Board decisions.

## Section 5: Board Meetings

In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*; R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER P.44, s. 16.1 (2) meetings will be open to the public **except when the subject matter being considered falls with the guidelines for closed meetings in the Act**, in which case the relevant portion of the meeting will be In Closed Session.

The Board will make a motion to go into Closed Session noting in the motion the reasons for the Closed Session. The following guidelines from the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER P.44, s. 16.1 (4) will be used to determine which issues will be discussed in Closed Session:

A meeting or part of a meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered is:

- the security of the property of the board;
- personal matters about an identifiable individual;
- a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the board;

- labour relations or employee negotiations;
- litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the board;
- advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
- a matter in respect of which a board or committee of a board may hold a closed meeting under another Act. 2002, c. 17, Sched. C, s. 24 (5);
- a meeting shall be closed to the public if the subject matter relates to the consideration of a request under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* if the board or committee of the board is the head of an institution for the purposed of that Act. 2002, c. 17, Sched. C, s. 24 (5).

## Location and Time of Meeting

Board Meetings shall normally be held at Central Library on the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 pm from January to June and September to November. Two meetings shall be held in September, the second and fourth Thursday of the month for the purpose of reviewing and approving the Library's annual budget submission to City of Burlington Council.

## Notification of Meetings

Notice of all scheduled Board Meetings will be shared with all Board Members in adequate time prior to the meeting and posted on the Library's website. Agendas and associated reports will be delivered to all Board Members in advance of the meeting and uploaded to the Library's website.

Board Members may also be notified of Committee or special meetings by telephone, or e-mail.

## Inaugural Meeting

In the first year of its term, the Board shall hold its inaugural meeting at a place and time to be determined by the Chief Executive Officer, provided that such meeting shall be held within 30 days of the appointment of a majority of its members.

## Special Meetings

The chair or any two members of the Board may summon a special meeting of the Board by giving each member reasonable notice in writing or via e-mail, specifying the purpose for which the meeting is called as referenced in *Public Libraries Act* R.S.O, 1990, c. P.44, s. 16 (2).



## Decision Making

The Board will aim to make decisions by reaching consensus. All final decisions will be made by vote. When procedures are in doubt, reference will first be made to the procedures recommended in Call to Order by Herb Perry.

## Voting

All members of the Board (including the Chair) - unless they have declared a conflict of interest on a matter and are therefore ineligible to vote on that matter - shall vote on all questions. A tie vote results in a negative decision. Abstentions are counted as a negative or no vote.

Motions shall be carried by a simple majority (more than one half the total members present eligible to vote), except as otherwise provided for in this By-Law.

Notice of motion given at the previous meeting and two-thirds majority vote is required for:

- A motion to reconsider a lost motion.
- A motion to amend the by-laws.

All votes except elections shall be by show of hands or poll at the discretion of the Chair.

Occasionally, voting may occur electronically between meetings to advance work as defined by the Board's statement of responsibilities and annual workplan. The results of electronic motion and vote will be captured in the minutes of the subsequent meeting.

Any member of the Board may call for a recorded vote in which circumstance the names and associated votes of each Board member on an issue will be recorded in the Board minutes.

Voting for elections shall be by secret **online** ballot. If the balloting results in a tie, the procedure for breaking a tie identified in the Municipal Act will be followed; names of both candidates will be placed in a hat and one name will be drawn.

## Authority for the Summer

- the Secretary-Treasurer/Chief Executive Officer, with approval of the Chair and/or Vice Chair, is authorized to carry out the work of the organization for the summer months (July-August),
- action taken under summer authority will be submitted to the Board for ratification at its meeting in September.

- such authority does not supersede the calling of a special meeting of the Board if necessary
- a special meeting of the Board will be called for approvals of budget expenditures or budget line variances in excess of the variance authority of the Secretary-Treasurer/Chief Executive Officer
- for all other matters the Chair and/or Vice Chair will determine if the matter is of significant importance to call a special meeting

## Hybrid Meetings

The Board holds special, regular or committee meetings in a hybrid format with in-person and online participation by Board members and the public.

Board Members participating by tele/video conference in the meeting will be considered present under the By-law. During meetings with online participation, the Chair will conduct a recorded vote by verbally polling members.

Meetings will be open to the public and instructions for public attendance will be posted on the Library's website.

## Delegations Wishing to Appear Before the Board

Delegations wishing to make a presentation to the Board regarding a specific issue relevant to BPL must register with the CEO/Secretary-Treasurer of their intention at least one week prior to the meeting.

Delegations will be scheduled at the beginning of the public portion of the meeting.

Delegations will be permitted to speak for 5 minutes each. The Board may direct questions to the delegation following the presentation.

Notice of a delegation will be included on the Board agenda.

All presentation material for consideration by the Board shall be legible, in writing and filed, in the office of the Chief Executive Officer no later than one week prior to the Board meeting and shall be included as part of the support material attached to the agenda.

The matter addressed by the delegations will be discussed by the Board as a regular part of the agenda.

Delegations can be added to the agenda at the meeting by amending the agenda at the pleasure of the Board.

The Board may decline a delegation request if the subject matter is irrelevant or not applicable to the scope and mandate of the Library and the Library Board.

## Quorum

The presence of a majority of the Board Members is necessary for the transaction of business at a meeting.

The Chair is included in the quorum.

If quorum is not present thirty minutes after the appointed time, the Secretary will record the members present and the Chair has the option of:

- declaring the meeting adjourned
- or calling the meeting to order to satisfy by-law requirements that the meeting was held then declaring no quorum and adjourning the meeting
- If all members present agree to not adjourn the meeting, the meeting may continue; however, no motion may be made or passed.
- When quorum is not present, the agenda cannot be moved to a closed meeting.

## Attendance

Board Members are expected to attend all regular Board meetings and other scheduled meetings. Board members are expected to inform the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer of an anticipated absence from a regular or other scheduled meeting.

In compliance with the *Public Libraries Act*; if a Board Member is absent from three consecutive meetings of the Board without a Board resolution, the remaining Board Members shall declare that seat vacant.

## Leave of Absence

Under extraordinary circumstances, a trustee can request a Leave of Absence to be considered by the Board if the trustee cannot fulfill their Board responsibilities over an extended period of time.

Requests will be reviewed and approved on an individual basis. The maximum length that can be requested is four consecutive Board meetings and only one leave will be approved during the trustee's full term.

During the period of the leave the trustee is classed as a non-voting member of the Board and will not attend or participate in any Board related meetings or functions but will retain access to the Board's intranet.

To request a Leave of Absence, the trustee must submit the request in writing to the Board Chair as soon as possible and prior to the next scheduled Board meeting where it will be dealt with in closed session.

Prior to returning, the Board Chair will meet with the trustee for a brief re-orientation.

## Elections

At the January meeting (every two years), the CEO will call the meeting order, shall call for the Nominating Committee Report with the full slate of nominations for the Chair and Vice-Chair and conduct the elections for the Chair. Once the Chair is elected for their term, the Chair will preside over the remainder of the meeting.

The CEO shall introduce the nominee for the Chair position individually and then ask if there are any nominations from the floor for the same position.

Any member of the Board has the right to make nominations from the floor. This can either be a self-nomination for any position - Chair, Vice-Chair or member of a standing committee – or the nomination of someone else.

- Nominations shall be made with no seconder required.
- Nominations shall be closed by a motion made and seconded.
- Voting shall be by secret ballot.
- The nominee receiving a clear majority of the votes cast shall be declared elected by the Chief Executive Officer.
- Should no member receive a clear majority, balloting shall proceed with the nominee's name receiving the smallest number of votes being dropped.

## Order of Business

The CEO, in consultation with the Board Executive, will prepare the meeting agenda. The meeting package containing a meeting agenda, minutes from the previous month's meeting and support documentation for the agenda items will be delivered to board members the Friday prior to meetings.

Any member wishing to place an item on the agenda should submit their request to the CEO or the Chair a minimum of ten days prior to the meeting. Requests will be at the discretion of the Chair.

The order of business for regular meetings will be as follows:

- Convene and confirm the Agenda
- Welcome and Intent for Gathering
- Declaration of Conflict of Interest

- Acceptance or correction of previous meeting minutes
- Presentations and/or Delegations
- Consent Items
- Correspondence
- Business arising from minutes
- Decision Items of Business / Reports / Financials
- Discussion Items
- Information Items
- Closed Session Items
- Other Business
- Adjournment
- Future Meetings and Events

## Consent Agenda Items

The Board will make use of the Consent Agenda, an approach that groups routine and straightforward items into a single agenda item, which can be approved in a single vote.

Every board member is responsible for ensuring that they have read the supporting documents relating to Consent Agenda items in advance of the meeting to ensure that due diligence is exercised.

When the Board Executive sets the agenda (in consultation with the staff), they may assign items to the Consent portion of the agenda. Typical consent agenda items are routine, procedural decisions, and decisions that are likely not to require discussion, such as:

- Approval of the minutes
- Final approval of proposals or reports that the Board has been dealing with for some time and all members are familiar with the implications
- Reports provided for information only

Items listed under the consent agenda are adopted in a single motion and the passage of such motion is taken to confirm that all recommendations as proposed in the relevant staff reports are approved. Any board member may request the separation of an item from the consent agenda for discussion purposes prior to the motion to adopt being placed or voted upon.

Typical reasons for this request are that the member wishes to ask a question about a report or wishes to have a vote recorded. However, no justification need be given and the issue is not debatable. Once a request is made, the item is dealt with as a separate agenda item (either immediately or at a later point in the agenda, at the discretion of the Chair).

## Section 6: Payment of Board Expenses

Citizen appointees shall be paid no salary, fees, or honorarium for their services.

Board members will be reimbursed for travel and other expenses incurred while conducting Board approved business. A request including receipts for all expenses should be submitted to the Chair for approval and to the CEO for reimbursement.

All Board Members are indemnified under the Library's insurance policies.

## Section 7: Budget Process and Monitoring

This section defines the financial statement-reporting schedule to allow the Board to monitor financial performance against the approved budgets and ensure the Library will not incur a deficit as per the Financial Policy.

### Annual Budget Guidelines and Timetable

The annual Operating and Capital budgets will be prepared and submitted within timelines established by the City of Burlington.

### Preparation of Draft Budgets

The CEO will prepare draft capital and operating budgets within budget guidelines provided by the City of Burlington. Any budget requests exceeding guidelines provided by the City will require the submission of a business case. The draft budgets and associated business cases are presented to the Board and once approved by the Board, submitted to the City. Any changes to the submissions that are requested by City staff, Committee or Council at any stage of the process will be considered by the Board and re-submitted to the City for Council approval.

### Delegation to City Council

The Board may decide to delegate to the City when business cases are included in the budget submissions, or to highlight needs or successes of the Library during any given budget cycle.

### Amendments to the Budget

Should City Council amend the Board's allocation of City funding, the Board shall accept those changes as required by Section 24.2 of the Public Libraries Act.

## Budget Monitoring

Operating and capital statements are presented to the Burlington Public Library Board for approval 4 times a year as follows:

- Q1 (January–March): presented for approval in April.
- Q2 (April–June): presented for approval in September.
- Q3 (July–September): presented for approval in October.
- Q4 (October–December): presented for approval in February.

The financial statements presented to the Burlington Public Library Board will provide a comparison of year-to-date actuals and year-to-date budget, and projected year-end results. Projected year-end results will assume that all budget lines will be spent unless quantitative objective evidence suggests otherwise.

## Section 8: Amendment of the By-Laws

Amendments to these by-laws may only be made at a regular meeting if Notice of Motion in writing shall have been given at the previous meeting. Such amendments shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the Board.

## Section 9: Board Committees and Task Groups

The Board has three standing Committees: The Nominating Committee; the Audit Committee and the CEO Performance Appraisal Committee. The term for standing committee membership will be aligned with the term of the Board Executive roles.

To carry out its business effectively, the Board may appoint various committees and task groups to monitor activity, develop new initiatives or research issues. These committees and task groups will report their findings to the Board for consideration.

The Board shall approve terms of reference for each committee and task group, which determine the size, quorum, composition, and responsibilities. These terms of reference may be amended on the recommendation of the committee or task group with the approval of the Board.

Board committees or task groups will not speak for the Board except when formally given such authority nor are they meant to advise staff or have any authority over staff.

The Board may invite non-board members to participate in the work of its committees and task groups. Officers (i.e. Chair, Secretary, etc.) of the Committees or Task groups will be chosen from Board or staff members.

The Chair of the Board is an ex-officio member of all Committees and Task Groups. The Secretary of the Board (or designate) shall attend all committee meetings and shall be the Secretary of all committees.

## Audit Committee

The Audit Committee oversees the financial reporting process, monitors the choice of accounting policies and monitors internal control procedures to ensure the effective development and maintenance of adequate financial controls and reporting.

The Committee is independent of the auditing function and ensures appropriate actions are taken with audit findings. The Committee has no direct responsibility for the operations and functions of audit areas. It does, however, make recommendations to the Board regarding both factors. (See Audit Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix A, for further information about the duties and responsibilities of this committee).

## Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee shall be established bi-annually by the Board to present the slate of officers for the ensuing executive cycle.

Whenever the position of the Chair or Vice-Chair becomes vacant, the Nominating Committee will identify candidates interested in serving in the position. The report of the Nominating Committee will be tabled at the next Board Meeting in the event of a mid-year vacancy in the Board Executive or at the January Board meeting for executive election year. Before the balloting takes place, nominations from the floor will also be requested verbally, three times, as per parliamentary procedures.

In a municipal election year, the outgoing Chair of the Board shall appoint the Nominating Committee from among the members of the new Board immediately following the appointment of the new Board by City Council

## CEO Performance Appraisal Committee

The Board is responsible for the annual performance evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

The Board is also responsible for the recruitment and probationary performance appraisal of a new CEO, if needed during the Board term.

The Committee to conduct the review or, when needed, recruitment will be composed of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Burlington Public Library Board plus one additional BPL



Board Member. The term of membership will be two years, aligned with the term of the Board Executive positions.

The Committee will follow the CEO Performance Appraisal Committee Terms of Reference and update them as needed.

## Section 10: Board Self-Assessment

A Board self-assessment demonstrates the values of accountability and learning and establishes its credibility not only with the funding agencies, but also with the public served. To monitor how well it is fulfilling its responsibilities, there will be an annual self-assessment carried out by the Board.

## References

- The Ontario Public Libraries Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990 Chapter P.44  
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90p44>
- City of Burlington's Code of Conduct for Local Boards and Committees  
<https://www.burlington.ca/en/council-and-city-administration/resources/Accountability-and-Transparency/Integrity-Commissioner/Code-of-Conduct-for-Local-Boards-and-Committees.pdf>

## Appendices

### Audit Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix A

#### Purpose

The Audit Committee is appointed by the BPL Board of Directors to oversee the financial reporting process, choice of accounting policies, and internal control procedures to ensure effective financial reporting and compliance with applicable legal and regulatory requirements. The Committee also identifies and monitors principal risks that may affect the reliability of financial reporting and/or library operations and oversees the work of the external auditor.

## Membership

The Audit Committee shall consist of at least three (3) Board members appointed by the Board as outlined in the BPL Board By-Law.

Each member of the Committee shall be financially literate or become financially literate within a reasonable time such that they can understand a set of financial statements that present the breadth and level of complexity of the issues that may be raised by the Library's financial statements. Comprehensive knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP) or general accepted auditing standards (GAAS) is not required.

## Officers of the Committee

The Committee Members will appoint one of the Board Members as Chair of the Committee. The Director, Finance & Infrastructure will be appointed as the Secretary and will be responsible for taking minutes.

## Term of Membership

The term of membership will be two years, aligned with the term of the Board Executive positions.

## Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least once annually, and additional meetings may be called at the discretion of the Chair as required. The external auditors will attend at least one meeting annually corresponding with the annual year end audit. Meetings may be held in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format.

## Quorum

A quorum for an Audit Committee meeting will be at least two (2) Committee Members.

## Agendas

The Secretary in consultation with the Audit Committee Chair will prepare an agenda in advance of each meeting. The agenda and supporting materials will be circulated a week in advance of the meeting.

The Committee will invite members of management e.g., the CEO; the Director, Finance & Infrastructure, and the external auditor when appropriate to attend committee

meetings. The Committee may consider Closed Sessions with the auditors without staff to discuss privately any matters of interest or concern to the members.

## Appointment of External Auditors

Under the Terms of the Public Library Act and the Municipal Act, the City of Burlington shall appoint the external auditors for BPL.

## Duties of Audit Committee

The Audit Committee shall be responsible for the following specific matters at a governance level:

### Accounting Policies

- Review the library's accounting policies and principles, and any changes in the selection or application of said policies and principles.
- Review with management any complex or unusual transactions that require significant judgement.
- Be aware of recent professional and regulatory pronouncements and understand their impact on the financial statements.

### External Audit

- Approve the Audit Plan annually prior to execution of the audit work.
- Discuss with the external auditor the matters that Canadian GAAS require to be communicated with the Audit Committee.
- Review with management and the external auditor any significant issues, concerns or difficulties encountered during the audit including any misstatements and why misstatements might remain unadjusted.
- Oversee the resolution of disagreements between management and the external auditor regarding financial reporting if required.
- Assess the external auditor's independence and objectivity in performance of the audit, and any threats to the auditor's independence and safeguards in place to mitigate those threats.

### Internal Controls and Risk Management

- Discuss the integrity of the library's financial reporting processes and any issues as to the adequacy of internal control with management and the external auditor.

- Annually review the expense reports of the members of the Board and the Senior Leadership Team including any related party transactions and potential conflicts of interest.
- Using the process outlined in the Whistleblower Policy, investigate any complaints received regarding questionable accounting or auditing matters.
- Review the library's Risk Register annually and discuss the key financial and business risks exposures and the steps management has taken to monitor and mitigate those risks.

### Terms of Reference

- Review and reassess the adequacy of the Audit Committee's Terms of Reference at least once in each Board term.

## CEO Performance Appraisal Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix B

The CEO Performance Appraisal Committee, in close consultation with the CEO, will establish an evaluation tool and process to ensure an annual appraisal of the CEO's performance is carried out in a timely, objective, and constructive manner.

The CEO's performance evaluation is based on the CEO's Job Description, the Strategic and Business Plan achievements, overall organizational performance, and the CEO's annual goals. The process will be collaborative and focus on achieving the priorities identified in the Library's Strategic Plan, professional development of the CEO and the future of the organization.

The Committee to conduct the review will be composed of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Burlington Public Library Board plus a minimum of one additional BPL Board Member. The term of membership will be two years, aligned with the term of the Board Executive positions.

.

### Annual Performance Appraisal Process

- The annual review will take place in the February/March time period for the previous year with an optional interim interview in the June - July time frame.
- The Committee will develop one consolidated appraisal form including rankings based on consensus reached by the Committee and confirmed by the Board

- The CEO will complete a self-appraisal using the same CEO Performance Review template and propose annual goals
- The CEO and the Committee will meet to discuss the Board evaluation, the CEO's self-appraisal and proposed annual goals
- The goals will be aligned with the Board's strategic priorities as identified in the Library's Strategic Plan
- The CEO may request an opportunity to address the entire Board regarding the consolidated evaluation
- A final version of the form will be developed based on the discussion; the form will be signed by the Chair of the Board and the CEO; the Chair will provide a report to the BPL Board at the March Meeting including the list of goals for the upcoming year
- The review form will be kept permanently in the CEO's file depending on the outcome of the performance appraisal, the Committee will recommend advancement on the salary grid.

## CEO Recruitment and Probationary Committee Process

The CEO Performance Appraisal Committee will oversee the recruitment and probationary appraisal process for a new CEO if needed during the Board term. The Committee will work with the Human Resources Manager to contract the services of an executive recruitment firm and will participate in short-listing and preliminary interviews of shortlisted candidates. The full Board will be involved in final interviews with the CEO candidate. The Committee will conduct the 6-month probationary review with input from the full Board.

## Probationary Performance Appraisal Process

- New appointees to the position of CEO of Burlington Public Library will serve a 6-month probation period which is considered an extension of the employee selection process.
- At the end of the 6-month period (earlier if needed) the Committee in consultation with the full Board will conduct a probationary appraisal interview of the CEO.
- Depending on the outcome of the probationary Performance Appraisal the Committee will recommend to the full Board:
  - Permanent appointment to the position of CEO in the event of successful performance and achievement of objectives and expectations.

- Dismissal, in the event of significant performance issues. Significant performance issues could include gross misconduct, illegal activity or other behaviour potentially damaging to the reputation of the Library.

The probationary appraisal form will be retained in the Chief Executive Officer's file permanently.

## Unsuccessful Probations

If the CEO is not meeting the recognized standard of performance during the initial 6-month probationary period, the Committee, in consultation with the Board, will discuss the issues with the CEO to seek to resolve them. If discussions do not result in improvement, a formal interview will be conducted. The Committee may choose to issue a formal warning, or if an action justifies, immediate dismissal, terminate employment.

## Disciplinary Process

If the CEO is not meeting the recognized standard of performance, the Committee will consult with legal counsel and the City of Burlington's Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) regarding the process to be followed. With input from the full Board and advice from legal counsel, the Committee will discuss these issues with the CEO. If the CEO's response is not satisfactory, a written warning will be issued at a formal interview. This warning will clearly identify issues and set steps and target dates required to resolve the problems. All verbal and written interactions in the disciplinary process will be guided by advice from legal counsel. If attempts to resolve the problems are unsuccessful or if an action justifies immediate dismissal, the CEO's employment will be terminated.

## Nominating Committee Terms of Reference, Appendix C

### Purpose

The Nominating Committee is a standing committee of the Board responsible for identifying, recruiting, and recommending qualified candidates for Executive and Standing Committee elections.

## Membership

The Committee shall consist of a minimum of 1 member of the Board of Directors who is not seeking an executive role. The term of membership will be two years, aligned with the term of the Board Executive positions.

## Duties:

The Nominating Committee shall:

- Establish and oversee the nomination process for Board positions
  - Ensure that candidates identified for executive or standing positions are interested and have capacity for the roles that they are nominated for
  - Recommend a slate of candidates to the Board for approval
  - Seek information from Board members and CEO as necessary to fulfill its responsibilities.
- 
- Effective Date: January 21, 2021
  - Motion #/Date: #21-03, January 21, 2021
  - Projected Review Date: 2026
  - Amended Dates: #21-58, October 28, 2021; #23-47, September 28, 2023; #24-45, June 27, 2024
  - Associated Documents:

## 5. Decision Items: 5.2 2026-2027 Strategic Plan Draft

### Recommendation

That the Library Board approve the 2026-2027 Strategic Plan draft, as presented.

### Purpose

To seek the Board's approval of the 2026-2027 Strategic Plan draft, which provides a two-year refresh and builds on the Library's current strategic direction. The Board's endorsement of the draft plan will allow Library staff to share the strategic priorities and goals with the community for input through BPL's annual Customer Satisfaction Survey in June.

### Background

The version of the 2026-2027 Strategic Plan presented here to the BPL Board incorporates input BPL staff and Board members provided on previous drafts. Wording has been simplified, unclear objectives have been updated to improve clarity, and KPIs have been revised to define success more objectively.

Burlington Public Library's current Strategic Plan covers 2021-2025 and was developed during the global pandemic, providing an opportunity to reimagine library services. The current plan established a customer-centered approach focused on community well-being, sustainability, diverse collections, digital access, and evolving spaces.

The 2026-2027 Strategic Plan refresh maintains the same mission, vision, and values while placing heightened emphasis on connection and community engagement. This refresh specifically addresses the challenges of our increasingly digital and polarized world by fostering opportunities for community members to encounter diverse perspectives and engage with one another in meaningful ways.

The proposed two-year timeframe allows the Library to:

- Build on the progress achieved during the current strategic planning period
- Align more closely with the City of Burlington's planning cycles
- Synchronize with the Library board recruitment cycle
- Respond to evolving post-pandemic community needs



## Discussion

The 2026-2027 Strategic Plan is organized around three key priorities:

**Priority 1:** Enhance community well-being, helping people feel connected, accepted, and empowered to live, work, and play to their full potential

- **Goal 1.1:** The Library helps people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences connect with and learn from one another
- **Goal 1.2:** The Library is a catalyst for community engagement and action, empowering individuals, businesses, and organizations to invest in community well-being
- **Goal 1.3:** Customers can rely on the Library for access to resources, services, and programs that help them thrive

**Priority 2:** Inspire discovery with responsive and representative collections, services, and spaces

- **Goal 2.1:** Library branches continuously evolve to meet present and future community needs, within the Library's budget
- **Goal 2.2:** The Library's tools, resources, and staff support empower customers to participate in our increasingly digital society
- **Goal 2.3:** BPL delivers maximum value for every dollar of its collection budget by leveraging data, staff expertise, and borrowing partnerships

**Priority 3:** Nurture a workforce culture driven by our organizational values

- **Goal 3.1:** Staff are equipped with the tools and skills to reinforce BPL values in interactions with customers, collaborators, and colleagues
- **Goal 3.2:** The Library provides dependable and consistent service to customers, no matter which branch they visit or which core service they use
- **Goal 3.3:** BPL's capacity for human-centred service can withstand outside pressures and changes

## Financial Considerations & Risk Management

The 2026-2027 Strategic Plan has been developed to align with the Library's current and projected resources, and potential constraints. Strategic initiatives will be funded primarily through the annual operating budget, and staff will explore grant opportunities to enhance eligible initiatives.

Staff resources are a significant consideration in this plan. The goals and objectives in the plan are intended to align with and build on existing Library services and internal functions with a focus on using resources more efficiently to improve reach, use, and quality of service. The Strategic Plan will inform any new projects to limit the addition of work that competes for planning and project resources (mainly staff time).

Library leadership will also need to balance focus on these ambitious goals with the resources required to maintain core services. Annual and quarterly work planning will ensure that time is balanced among departments and between projects and routine work. Quarterly performance reports provided to the Board will capture progress on strategic objectives in addition to standard key performance measures that capture reach, use, and value of core BPL services.

## Strategic Implications

Building on the existing strategic plan, this refreshed plan retains focus on community well-being, discovery, and workforce culture. The Library's mission, vision, and values, which provide overarching guidance to BPL operations, remain the same. An intensified focus on connection and community engagement are intended to extend BPL's impact and emphasize the ripple effect that occurs when individuals, organizations, and businesses benefit from the Library's services, spaces, and resources.

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

The 2026-2027 Strategic Plan explicitly addresses equity, diversity, and inclusion in multiple ways:

- connecting people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences
- increased awareness and use of Library resources among newcomers, Indigenous community members, youth, racialized groups, and people with disabilities
- outreach to equity-seeking groups
- enhancing BPL spaces to adhere with higher accessibility standards
- continued emphasis on the values of inclusion and intellectual freedom to provide foundational guidance for all BPL activities

The plan recognizes the essential role libraries play in creating an equitable society by providing universal access to information, technology, and learning opportunities for all

community members regardless of socioeconomic status, cultural background, or ability.

## Policy & Related Documents

- [Current 2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#)
- [Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44](#)
- [Burlington's 2022-2026 Plan: From Vision to Focus](#)

## Report Author

Respectfully submitted by Elise Copps, Director of Communications & Engagement

# 2026-2027 Strategic Plan (draft)

## Introduction

At Burlington Public Library, we believe in the power of connection. Our programs, our spaces, and our services are all designed to bring people together, inspire learning, and break down barriers.

Over the next two years, we plan to build on the progress we've made since the pandemic, and address some of the key challenges our community continues to face. In our increasingly digital world, it can be easy to stay comfortably inside your own echo chamber, surrounded by ideas and information that mirror your own beliefs and experiences. But progress and democracy work best when we can learn from folks who are different from us. When we can encounter a diverse range of people and perspectives.

This plan maps out how we'll spark discovery, compassion, and civic engagement, creating connections that help our community—and our Library—grow and evolve.

## Our Mission

To inspire imagination, collaboration, and compassion to support an informed and literate society.

## Our Vision

An engaged and sustainable community advanced by curiosity and discovery.

## Our Values

Our values express our fundamental beliefs. They guide how we treat people, make decisions, and plan for the future in all aspects of our work.

**Accountability** - We cultivate a culture of trust, responsibility, and authenticity

**Collaboration** - We are better through collective effort

**Inclusion** - We welcome everyone and encourage respectful sharing

**Innovation** - We embrace creativity and experimentation

**Intellectual Freedom** - We uphold the open exchange of information and ideas

**Learning** - We foster the lifelong pursuit of skills and knowledge so everyone can fulfill their potential

**Love of Reading** - We nurture the joy of reading in people of all ages

**Priority 1:** Enhance community well-being, helping people feel connected, accepted, and empowered to live, work, and play to their full potential

**Goal 1.1:** The Library helps people with diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences connect with and learn from one another

**Objective 1.1.1:** Expand learning opportunities that foster intellectual freedom, critical thinking, and civic engagement

**KPI 1.1.1a:** Number of staff completing Toronto Metropolitan University's Canadian Democracy @ Work training

**KPI 1.1.1b:** Number of customers taking part in media and information literacy programs through BPL

**Objective 1.1.2:** Increase awareness and use of Library resources among newcomers, Indigenous community members, youth, racialized groups, and people with disabilities through purposeful outreach

**KPI 1.1.2a:** Total attendance at outreach sessions focused on each equity-seeking group

**KPI 1.1.2b:** Increased number of Customer Satisfaction Survey respondents that self-report as a member of an equity seeking group and actively use BPL services

**Objective 1.1.3:** Foster a library atmosphere where customers of all ages can easily connect with one another through engaging, self-led activities and interactive displays.

**KPI 1.1.3:** Launch and evaluate a pilot program of self-guided activities (e.g., puzzles, conversation prompts) designed to increase spontaneous social interaction among adults

**Goal 1.2:** The Library is a catalyst for community engagement and action—empowering individuals, businesses, and organizations to invest in community well-being

**Objective 1.2.1:** Support local businesses and organizations to thrive and contribute to the Burlington community

**KPI 1.2.1:** Launch learning and networking program for small businesses and not-for-profit organizations

**Objective 1.2.2:** Help people discover and take part in local events, services, and civic engagement opportunities

**KPI 1.2.2a:** Increase in clicks from library platforms (website, eNewsletter) to community and civic engagement opportunities (including municipal, regional, provincial, federal, community organizations, Indigenous groups)

**KPI 1.2.2b:** Secure cross-promotion agreements with at least three new community organizations

**Objective 1.2.3:** Choose local and Canadian businesses first when we buy products and services

**KPI 1.2.3:** New purchasing guidelines favoring local/Canadian businesses (aligned with City of Burlington policy) created and approved by 2026

**Goal 1.3:** Customers can rely on the Library for access to resources, services, and programs that help them thrive

**Objective 1.3.1:** Offer each age group a broad and relevant range of learning, skill-building, and social programs

**KPI 1.3.1a:** Minimum number of distinct program categories offered for each age group (early years, children, teens, adults, seniors)

**KPI 1.3.1b:** Total program attendance for each age group (early years, school years, teen, adult)

**Objective 1.3.2:** Strengthen resource-sharing collaborations with support service organizations (e.g. job search, housing, Indigenous resources, newcomer settlement) to expand the scope and reach of these services

**KPI 1.3.2a:** Increase the number of active partnerships with different support service organizations

**KPI 1.3.2b:** Total number of drop-in customer interactions with support service organizations

**Priority 2:** Inspire discovery with responsive and representative collections, services, and spaces

**Goal 2.1:** Library branches continuously evolve to meet present and future community needs, within the Library's budget

**Objective 2.1.1:** Make our spaces more accessible for everyone in alignment with Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification standards

**KPI 2.1.1a:** Complete an inventory of accessibility features and deficits at each branch

**KPI 2.1.1b:** Develop a formal system to receive and address accessibility feedback from customers with disabilities

**Objective 2.1.2:** Make sure BPL is ready to grow with the City of Burlington.

**KPI 2.1.2:** Develop a system-wide facility strategy aligned with City of Burlington planning practices and development timelines

**Objective 2.1.3:** Adapt branch spaces and services to better support competing needs for quiet study, social interaction, group work, and play

**KPI 2.1.3:** Improved satisfaction rating for library spaces in Customer Satisfaction Survey

**Goal 2.2:** The Library's tools, resources, and staff support empower customers to participate in our increasingly digital society

**Objective 2.2.1:** Expand access to Maker equipment and learning opportunities across Library branches with a focus on digital skill building

**KPI 2.2.1:** Increase in total hours people spend using Maker services/equipment and attending Maker programs

**Objective 2.2.2:** Enhance digital literacy opportunities that leverage volunteer expertise and peer-to-peer learning

**KPI 2.2.2:** Increase in self-reported digital skills/confidence by tech program attendees (measured by Bridge Survey)

**Objective 2.2.3:** Support tech-curious customers to explore digital formats for books, magazines, and news as print options become less accessible

**KPI 2.2.3a:** Growth in the use of PressReader (target % increase)

**KPI 2.2.3b:** Growth in overall digital circulation (e.g., eBooks, eAudiobooks) (target % increase)

**Goal 2.3:** BPL delivers maximum value for every dollar of its collection budget by leveraging data, staff expertise, and borrowing partnerships

**Objective 2.3.1:** Leverage staff expertise and technology to connect customers to available and relevant print and digital material from BPL and partner libraries

**KPI 2.3.1a:** Increased circulation (turnover) rate per item in print and digital collections combined

**KPI 2.3.1b:** Growth in total number of items borrowed by BPL cardholders from 'More to Borrow' partner libraries

**Objective 2.3.2:** Adapt audiovisual collection to reflect community needs, technology, trends, and changing formats

**KPI 2.3.2a:** Remain on target for phased AV consolidation plan

**KPI 2.3.2b:** Increased percentage of AV budget allocated to newer/high-demand formats

**Priority 3:** Nurture a workforce culture driven by our organizational values

**Goal 3.1:** Staff are equipped with the tools and skills to reinforce BPL values in interactions with customers, collaborators, and colleagues



**Objective 3.1.1:** Develop staff capacity to address friction constructively, using disagreements between customers or with colleagues as opportunities to foster growth and understanding

**KPI 3.1.1:** Improved staff confidence and skills in handling friction, as shown by pre- and post-training survey results (Human First Training and Toolkit)

**Objective 3.1.2:** Support leaders throughout the organization to build and sustain strong collaborations that meet community needs and share common aims

**KPI 3.1.2:** Adoption rate—percentage collaborative programs and services using the BPL Collaboration & Outreach Framework

**Goal 3.2:** The Library provides dependable and consistent service to customers, no matter which branch they visit or which core service they use

**Objective 3.2.1:** BPL's services deliver on our role as a connector—connecting customers with valuable resources while building their capacity to navigate information and achieve goals

**KPI 3.2.1a:** Maintain or improve agreement with the statement, "Overall, the Library has a positive impact on my life" in the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey

**KPI 3.2.1b:** Each service stream has a built-out service model to deliver on BPL mission and values

**KPI 3.2.1c:** Staff demonstrate high adherence to service model, as assessed in semi-annual performance checkpoints

**Objective 3.2.2:** Update and organize internal guides and documents so staff can easily find and use the information they need

**KPI 3.2.2a:** Improved score on the Great Place to Work (GPTW) survey item: 'I have the resources and equipment to do my job well

**KPI 3.2.2b:** Complete reorganization of document management structure on intranet

**Objective 3.2.3:** Improve opportunities for customers to share actionable input and feedback about Library services

**KPI 3.2.3a:** Increase the number of unique community consultation or feedback opportunities offered each year

**KPI 3.2.3b:** Increase the total number of responses received for the BPL Customer Satisfaction Survey annually

**Goal 3.3:** BPL's capacity for human-centred service can withstand outside pressures and changes

**Objective 3.3.1:** Free up staff time to connect with customers by making material handling and office tasks quicker and easier through technology and better processes

**KPI 3.3.1a:** Measurable reduction in staff hours spent on materials handling and clerical tasks

**KPI 3.3.1b:** Maintain a high positive rating for the question “Library staff provide good service” on the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey

**Objective 3.3.2:** Focus staff performance goals and motivation on the tasks that make the biggest positive difference for customers

**KPI 3.3.2a:** Maintain or improve score on the Great Place to Work (GPTW) survey question related to sense of accomplishment

**KPI 3.3.2b:** Percentage of staff with documented performance goals explicitly linked to customer impact outcomes

## 5. Decision Items: 5.3 Community Bulletin Board Policy Review

### Table of Contents

Recommendations .....	1
Purpose .....	1
Background .....	1
Discussion.....	2
Financial Considerations .....	3
Strategic Implications .....	3
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations .....	3
Sustainability Considerations.....	3
Risk Management.....	3
Policy .....	3

### Recommendations

**THAT** the Burlington Public Library Board approve an update to the Community Bulletin Board Policy, effective June 1, 2025.

### Purpose

To seek the Library Board's approval for updates to the Community Bulletin Board Policy.

### Background

The Community Bulletin Board Policy outlines BPL's expectations for providing community bulletin and space for the promotion of community groups and community events. It was last updated May 18, 2022. The revised draft is attached as an appendix and there is a link to the existing policy at the end of this report.

Each full-service BPL branch has a dedicated community bulletin board. Kilbride Branch has one combined BPL and community bulletin board.

The purpose of these public boards is to provide space to non-profit, civic and community groups for educational, cultural, civic, intellectual, and charitable activities of interest to the local community. Providing this space aligns with the Library's role to provide access to a wide range of information sources for the community.

## Discussion

The following updates to the policy are proposed:

### **Remove pamphlets from the policy**

BPL has very limited space for pamphlets and is in most cases not able to accept these types of submissions. Due to this limited space, it is proposed that the policy focus exclusively on the community bulletin board. Pamphlet displays will continue to be managed through Information Burlington. BPL has a dedicated space for pamphlets from service organizations as part of the Information Burlington rack.

### **Update the process on how to submit a poster**

Currently, the Policy states that posters must be submitted to Central Branch. The update will now state that they can be submitted to any branch, making it easier for the community to make submissions.

### **Clarify and expand definition of non-profit organizations**

Currently, only registered non-profit and charity organizations are eligible for the community bulletin board. The change proposes to update the definition of non-profit to "community service provider, community group or club or non-profit/charitable organization". This aligns with the definition of non-profit in BPL's Room Rental Policy. The new definition is more inclusive as BPL receives many submissions from small community groups and associations.

The changes also include minor updates to wording to remove unnecessary or duplicate information.

## Financial Considerations

The updates to the policy have no direct financial impacts. However, clarity in the policy about which organizations are eligible aims to reduce administrative burden when approving submissions for the board.

## Strategic Implications

The updates support the Library's strategic pillars to enhance community well-being and inspire discovery by providing the community with access to a wide range of information.

- Strategic Goal 1: Enhance community well-being, strengthening relations with community partners to support community needs through programming and other library services.
- Strategic Goal 2: Inspire discovery with diverse collections, services, and spaces.

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

The updates are more inclusive and make it easier for community organizations to submit posters by allowing submissions to any branch and clarifying the definition of a non-profit organization.

## Sustainability Considerations

BPL's Sustainability Plan focuses on climate change mitigation, adaptation and climate equity considerations. The policy and associated processes are designed with environmental considerations, minimizing transportation for centralized approvals and posters are recycled when removed from the bulletin board.

## Risk Management

It is important that BPL policies are updated on a regular schedule and remain aligned with board decision making.

## Policy

- [Community Bulletin Board Policy](#)

Respectfully submitted by Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer and Elise Copps, Director,  
Communications and Engagement

# Community Bulletin Board Policy

## Table of Contents

Purpose .....	1
Scope.....	1
Statement of Policy .....	1
Community Bulletin Board Guidelines .....	2

## Purpose

This Policy outlines Burlington Public Library’s (BPL) standards for use of community bulletin boards in Library branches for the promotion of community groups, resources, and events.

## Scope

This Policy applies to community bulletin boards at all BPL locations, all employees receiving and posting promotional materials, and all community groups, organizations, businesses, and individuals submitting materials to be considered for display.

## Statement of Policy

Burlington Public Library is committed to supporting the community it serves. The Library prioritizes support for local community projects within the boundaries of the City of Burlington, through which the residents of Burlington will benefit collectively. Regional programs may be considered if space allows.

By offering Library spaces for community bulletins, BPL does not endorse or imply agreement with the ideas, policies, messages, or activities of any group or individual.

# Community Bulletin Board Guidelines

The Library provides space on its community bulletin boards to non-profit and community groups for the display of informational bulletins and posters regarding educational, cultural, civic, intellectual, and charitable activities of interest to the local community. These services are in keeping with the Library's philosophy of providing access to a wide range of information sources.

## Administration

Burlington Public Library's community bulletin boards are provided and used in alignment with the Library's Mission, Vision, Values, and Strategic Plan. All requests to display and distribute materials will be handled in a fair and consistent manner by Burlington Public Library staff.

The use of Library bulletin boards must not contravene Canadian laws, including the Criminal Code and the Ontario Human Rights Code, or disrupt anyone's ability to use the Library.

## Eligibility

Organizations wishing to display materials on BPL's bulletin boards must comply with these eligibility guidelines to be considered:

- The organization must be based in our community or be providing direct services to our community
- The organization must be a community service provider, community group or club, or a non-profit and/or charitable organization.
- Lobbying groups are ineligible
- For-profit businesses are ineligible (exceptions for literary events will be made on a case-by-case basis)

## Ineligible Content

1. No items devoted solely to the sale, advertising, solicitation, or promotion of commercial products or services for a single profit-making business will be accepted.



2. No personal ads and notices, petitions, notices of items for sale or rent
3. No political campaign advertising, partisan material, or lobbying
4. No material promoting unlawful practices (e.g., information which violates municipal, provincial, or federal legislation, including the Human Rights Code) will be refused. For example:
  - a. any violation of the Criminal Code, including: the communication of statements that incite or willfully promote hatred against an identifiable group;
  - b. any violation of the Ontario Human Rights Code, including any material that indicates discrimination or an intention to discriminate against a person or group, or is likely to expose a person or group to hatred or contempt, because of their race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age;
5. No material that is contrary to other policies, regulations, and procedures of Burlington Public Library

## Format

Items must be professionally printed (no handwritten publications will be permitted) and no larger than 11 inches by 17 inches in size.

## How to Submit

Up to six copies of a poster can be submitted in person to any BPL branch for consideration. Approved posters will be distributed across the system by staff if multiple copies are provided. BPL is not able to follow up with individuals to confirm the status of their poster and cannot return materials regardless of whether they were approved or declined. Materials found posted without approval, will be removed.

Materials will be displayed for a limited time only. Because space is limited, it may not be possible to display all posters that are acceptable under these guidelines. Generally, material will be displayed for a period of two weeks.

- Date: May 15, 2025
- Amended Dates:
  - May 26, 2022
  - January 1, 2019
  - November 15, 2018
  - October 18, 2017

## 5. Decision Items: 5.4 Kid's Learning Fund Report

### Recommendation

That the Library Board approve the use of \$3,000 from the Kid's Learning Fund to enhance the 2025 Summer Reading Club program.

### Purpose

To seek the Board's approval of the recommended use of funds as detailed above.

### Background

Established in 2023, the Kid's Learning Fund supports literacy in all forms by:

- growing our children's collection with books, technology, and more.
- funding free programs to build a love of reading, science, and art in kids of all ages.
- upgrading our children's areas with toys, furnishings, and technology that make the library a safe and welcoming place for everyone.

At the end of the fiscal year for 2023 and 2024, donations for the Kid's Learning Fund received in the year were transferred to the Operating Reserve Fund with Board approval. On December 31, 2024, there was a balance of \$13,819 and so far in 2025 and additional \$1,910 has been received.

### Discussion

Summer Reading Club operates annually with a modest budget that funds print materials, kick-off and wrap parties, and participation incentives, including prizes. These core elements continue to be funded through the BPL's operating budget. Additional funding, if approved, would enhance the experience of participants by funding a modest upgrade to weekly incentives offered to participants and enhancing activities at SRC kick-off parties.

Annual feedback in the SRC participant survey indicates that weekly incentives are valued by participants and make weekly check-in visits to the Library exciting and memorable. The Library reintroduced a small weekly incentive last year after forgoing weekly incentives for several years. Participants were given beads for their weekly

reading and created keychains over the course of the summer. This year's program will include a similar incentive, which could be enhanced with this funding.

Additionally, kick-off parties across the system are an important way to build enthusiasm for SRC and set participants up for sustained participation over the summer. Many SRC participants register during kick-off parties. Enhancing kick-off events with additional activities would help to attract attendees and create positive connections between families and the Library.

## Financial Considerations & Risk Management

As outlined in the Library's Donation, Sponsorship and Fundraising policy, any funds received through fundraising, sponsorships, or donations are considered supplemental to the library's core funding and will not be budgeted for or relied upon to fund day to day operations.

## Strategic Implications

The proposed use of funds aligns with the Library's strategic priorities, including to enhance community well-being and inspire discovery.

## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations

Summer Reading Club is open to everyone in Burlington. One of the program's core goals is help kids stay engaged with reading and learning over the summer to prevent setbacks between school years. This program supports equity among students in Burlington by providing a no-cost way for all children to experience enriching activities in the summer regardless of their family's income.

The program provides multiple ways for kids to participate in person and online, increasing accessibility. It also features a diverse range of identities and topics in the booklists provided to participants.

## Policy

- [Donations, Sponsorship and Fundraising Policy](#)

## Report Author

Respectfully submitted by Elise Copps, Director of Communications & Engagement

## 7. Information Items: 7.1 CEO Report – May Update

### Table of Contents

Purpose .....	1
Enhance Community Well-being .....	1
Inspire Discovery with Diverse Collections, Services and Spaces .....	2
Create a Workforce Culture Driven by our Organizational Values.....	3

### Purpose

The CEO report for May 2025 summarizes key activities that support the priorities outlined in BPL’s [2021-2025 Strategic plan](#). This report covers items that are not part of the Board package.

### Enhance Community Well-being

#### National Day of Awareness for MMIWG2S+

BPL hosted a display at Central Branch (1st floor) from April 30 until May 6 on behalf of Grandmother’s Voice, a local organization that shares Indigenous knowledge and practices. The Red Dress campaign is part of the collective response to the 231 Calls for Justice from the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ People (MMIWG2S+). Every red dress is a symbol of a life taken too soon and a voice that must never be forgotten. The campaign is also a call for legal and social transformation to address the staggering rates of violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQ+ people.



Write Here. Write Now.

BPL's annual [writing contest](#) is back and is open to everyone ages 10 and up, including adults. Participants are invited to submit a poem, a comic, or a short story. Entries will be reviewed, shortlisted, and judged by a team of library professionals. The contest deadline is midnight on May 31.

### Royal Rainbow Storytime

Royal Rainbow Storytime will be held at Central Library on Saturday, May 31. This is a family-friendly event, offered in partnership with Pflag Halton. It includes hands-on activities and a storytime performance by a drag artist who will showcase age-appropriate stories and songs that celebrate diversity, inclusion, and self-expression. Last year's Royal Rainbow Storytime, was met with great community support and interest with over 70 people in attendance and we are excited to bring it back for a 2<sup>nd</sup> year.

### Inspire Discovery with Diverse Collections, Services and Spaces



## BPL Booksale

On Saturday, May 24, BPL will be hosting our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual [Book Sale](#). This year's sale will be a one-day event. Shoppers can buy a sturdy *Books Make Me Happy* zippered canvas book bag at the sale and stuff it full of sale items for \$15—one price for the bag and the books.



## Free Comic Book Day

On May 3, BPL celebrated Free Comic Book Day. Free Comic Book Day is an annual event when participating comic book shops and libraries give away comic books. Customers were invited to drop by any branch for a day filled with comic-themed creative and interactive activities.

## Create a Workforce Culture Driven by our Organizational Values.



## Customer Satisfaction Survey

BPL's 2025 Customer Satisfaction Survey will run from June 2 until June 15. As outlined in the [2021-2025 Strategic Plan](#), BPL is committed to using data to improve services, spaces, and resources to meet our community's evolving needs.



This annual survey aims to continue identifying and track trends in customer expectations and satisfaction. This year's survey will include optional questions related to respondent demographics and seek customer input on BPL's draft strategic priorities and objectives. Staff will be analyzing the results and bringing a report to the Board in the fall.

In addition, as part of this year's survey, respondents will be invited to participate in the Canadian Urban Libraries Council's (CULC) National Impact Study. Twenty-three libraries are participating in this national study being led by CULC. The study is based on Toronto Public Library's 2024 *Enabling Torontonians to Grow and Thrive: Measuring the Social Impact of Toronto Public Library*: <https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/about-the-library/social-impact.jsp>



## Mental Health Week

May 5 to 11, BPL recognized Mental Health week. This year's Mental Health Week theme was, Unmasking Mental Health, encourages us to look past appearances and see the full person. Living with a mental health or substance use challenge is hard enough. Feeling the need to hide it behind a "mask" makes it even harder. The heavier the stigma, the heavier that mask becomes. When we create space for honesty, empathy, and real conversations, we not only support one another — we strengthen our workplace culture. The HR Team guided opportunities for BPL's team to reflect, connect, and increase awareness of understanding of supports for mental well-being across organization.



## Burlington Chamber of Commerce Mayor's Award

At the Burlington Chamber of Commerce 2025 Business Excellence Awards Gala on May 14, BPL was the proud recipient of the Burlington Public Library of the Mayor's Award. The Mayor's Award honours a business or organization (not-for-profit or for-profit) that excels in Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) in their operations internally with their staff and publicly with their customers to help ensure Burlington is a welcoming community for everyone.

BPL was chosen due to our commitment to fostering a more inclusive and accessible community through a variety of innovative programs, services, and practices and the Library's work on anti-racism, accessible resources, multilingual collections, and support for newcomers has had a profound impact on the lives of Burlington residents. Thank you to the Mayor Marianne Meed Ward for this incredible recognition.

## Report Author

Respectfully submitted: Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer

## 7. Information Items: 7.2 Advocacy Report

### Table of Contents

Purpose .....	1
Background .....	1
Financial Considerations .....	3
Strategic Implications .....	3
Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Considerations .....	3
Sustainability Considerations .....	3
Risk Management.....	4
Policy .....	4

### Purpose

To provide the Library Board an update on BPL's advocacy activities.

### Background

BPL's Board Governance calendar and workplan includes bi-annual reports to the Board summarizing key advocacy activities. In doing so, the Board is committed to supporting the advocacy work happening at the Federal and Provincial levels and identifying Board priorities at the municipal level.

Over the course of the winter and spring, BPL has continued to be engaged in a variety of advocacy efforts municipally, provincially, and federally.

### Municipal Advocacy Initiatives

- Staff continue to notify Ward Councillors of any service disruptions within their ward.
- In January, the CEO sent an email to City Council highlighting BPL 2024 milestones and thanking Council members for their ongoing support.
- In January, Board and staff attended the Chamber of Commerce *State of the City Mayor's Breakfast* event at the Burlington Convention Centre. The event was

opportunities to network with key stakeholders and learn more about the emerging City of Burlington priorities.

- In April, the CEO sent emails to City Council making them aware of the CBC Ideas for a Better Canada event.
- In May, the CEO sent letters to City Council providing copies of BPL's 2024 Annual Report and thanking Council members for continued support.
- In May, Board and staff attended the Burlington Chamber of Commerce 2025 Business Awards Gala and BPL was the recipient of the Mayor's Award.

## Provincial Advocacy Initiatives

- On December 18, the CEO presented at the 2025 Provincial Budget Consultations at the Sherwood Community Centre in Milton.
- In March, following the provincial election, the CEO sent emails of congratulations to Burlington Members of Provincial Parliament.
- Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL) Update:
  - FOPL continues to focus on two key funding priorities:
    - Increase provincial operating funding for Ontario's public libraries to address critical shared priorities and community needs.
    - Ontario Digital Public Library: This project would provide critical e-learning support and fair access digital resources for all Ontario public libraries through the creation of an Ontario Digital Public Library. Leveraging the province's significant purchasing power to give all Ontarians access to a universal set of high-quality e-learning & online resources through their local public library. The core suite of highly impactful digital resources accessible by every Ontarian through their local public library.
    - The Chief Executives of Large Urban Public Libraries (CELUPL) sent a letter of support to the Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM) Solve the Crisis campaign (see letter attached as appendix).

## Federal Advocacy Initiatives

- In March, the CEO attended Environment and Climate Change Canada's National Forum on Environmental Literacy.
- In May, following the federal election, the CEO sent letters of congratulations to Burlington Members of Federal Parliament providing copies of BPL's 2024 Annual Report and thanking Council members for continued support.
- Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) updates:

- Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) Spring meeting was held in Kelowna in April. CULC is working on several initiatives including a National Public Library Impact study that BPL is participating in.
- Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) Updates:
  - The CFLA Board continues with their work implementing transformative changes to enhance relevance, maximize value for members, and create a sustainable, thriving organization. CFLA has a new logo and will be launching a new website in the next few weeks. An Interim Executive Director has been hired to support the association through this transformation. Lita Barrie continues to participate as Chair of the CFLA's Climate Action Committee. The Committee grant project work will be launched as part of the launch of the new CFLA website.

## Financial Considerations

Ongoing advocacy with key government stakeholders is part of effective financial stewardship.

## Strategic Implications

This work aligns with all three goals within the current strategic plan under:

- Strategic Goal 1: Enhance community well-being, strengthening relations with community partners to support community needs through programming and other library services.
- Strategic Goal 2: Inspire discovery with diverse collections, services and spaces.
- Strategic Goal 3: Create a workforce culture driven by our organizational values

## Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Considerations

Strong local, provincial and national advocacy positions BPL to better provide equitable service to our customers by safeguarding the stability of the organization and identifying ways by which risks may impact equity and access to library services.

## Sustainability Considerations

BPL's Sustainability Plan focuses on climate change mitigation, adaptation and climate equity considerations. Sustainability and climate change are key areas of focus both municipality and federally.

## Risk Management

The regular review of advocacy work by the Board provides oversight, allowing the Board to assess the effectiveness of activities and use of resources, measure progress towards annual goals and strategic plan implementation.

## Policy

Related policy includes the [Board By-Law](#).

Respectfully submitted: Lita Barrie, Chief Executive Officer

April 2, 2025

Dear Ontario's Big City Mayors (OBCM),

The Chief Executives of Large Urban Public Libraries (CELUPL) support the OBCM's Solve the Crisis project. As leaders of public libraries in Ontario's major urban cities, we recognize the critical importance of addressing the growing homelessness, mental health, and addiction crises.

Within our public libraries, we witness firsthand the devastating impacts of this crisis on our most vulnerable residents. We also hear the concerns of community members who now avoid public spaces and downtown areas due to safety fears related to homelessness and encampments. This is deeply troubling, as it undermines the core purpose of public institutions, like libraries, to create a sense of belonging and inclusion.

Public libraries are uniquely positioned to help. As outlined in the Canadian Urban Institute's [Overdue: A Case for Canada's Public Libraries Report](#), libraries serve as catalysts for connection and community belonging - the "third spaces" that bring people together and create stronger, more resilient cities. We serve as community hubs, offering access to culture, information, civic engagement, socialization, and essential services. In our own ongoing advocacy work, we have asked the province to increase the Public Libraries Operating Grant and fund a core suite of electronic resources so that we can better support and serve the people in our communities.

We commend Ontario's Big City Mayors for leading the Solve the Crisis initiative. We are ready to collaborate and contribute our unique perspectives and resources towards developing and implementing solutions

The time for action is now. We urge the provincial and federal governments to heed the call of OBCM and work swiftly to allocate the necessary funding and policy changes required to solve this crisis. The health, safety, and prosperity of our cities and their residents depend on it.

Please let us know how CELUPL and its overarching organization, the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL), can further support this important work. FOPL Executive Director Dina Stevens ([dinastevens@fopl.ca](mailto:dinastevens@fopl.ca)) would welcome an opportunity to meet with OBCM executives to discuss how libraries can further support these efforts. We are committed partners in this endeavor.

Sincerely,



Alicia Subnaik Kilgour  
[askilgour@nflibrary.ca](mailto:askilgour@nflibrary.ca)  
905-356-8080 ext. 230

Chair, Chief Executives of Large Urban Public Libraries (CELUPL)  
The Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

Signed on behalf of the member libraries of Chief Executives of Large Urban Public Libraries (CELUPL) as follows:

[Ajax Public Library](#)  
[Barrie Public Library](#)  
[Brampton Public Library](#)  
[Brantford Public Library](#)  
[Burlington Public Library](#)  
[Cambridge Idea Exchange](#)  
[Guelph Public Library](#)  
[Hamilton Public Library](#)  
[Kingston Frontenac Public Library](#)  
[Kitchener Public Library](#)  
[London Public Library](#)  
[Markham Public Library](#)  
[Milton Public Library](#)  
[Mississauga Library System](#)  
[Newmarket Public Library](#)  
[Niagara Falls Public Library](#)  
[Oakville Public Library](#)  
[Oshawa Public Library](#)  
[Ottawa Public Library](#)  
[Pickering Public Library](#)  
[Richmond Hill Public Library](#)  
[Sault Ste. Marie Public Library](#)  
[Thunder Bay Public Library](#)  
[Vaughan Public Libraries](#)  
[Waterloo Public Library](#)  
[Whitby Public Library](#)  
[Windsor Public Library](#)  
[Clarington Public Library](#)