

Merrickville Public Library VOLT Impact Report

September 2025



Developed by the Ontario Library Services, Nordik Institute and Algoma University, the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT) helps Ontario public libraries measure and demonstrate their value and impact within their community

Algoma
UNIVERSITY

Ontario 

Northern Ontario Research, Development, Ideas and Knowledge
NORDIK
INSTITUTE 

ONTARIO | LIBRARY SERVICE
Stronger libraries. Stronger communities.

What is VOLT?

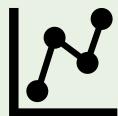
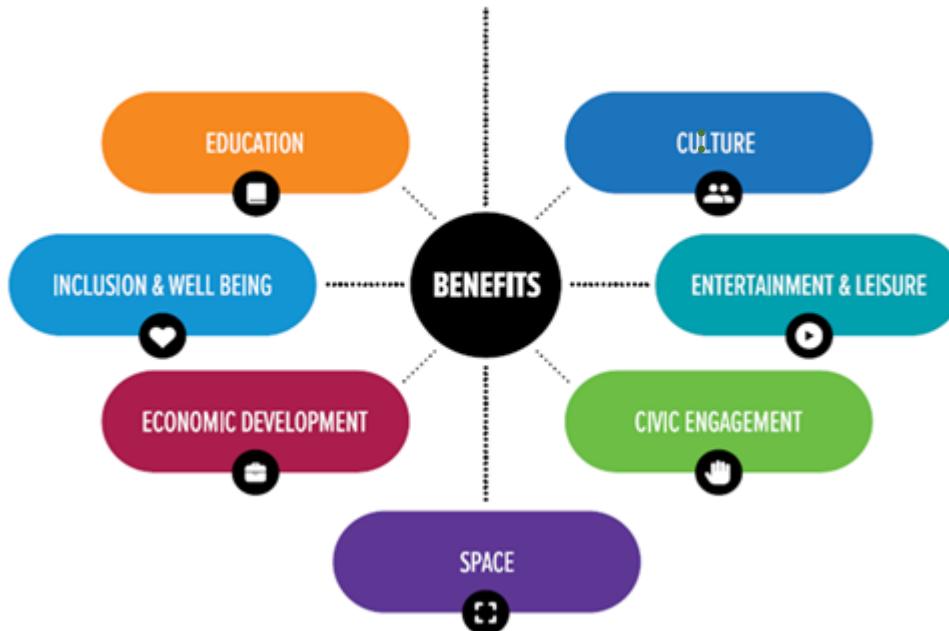
- ▶ Two elements to VOLT:
 - ▶ A Library Value Report, which calculates the **Social Return on Investment (SROI) of your library in dollar figures**. It reflects the dollar value of benefit that is created for each dollar that is invested in the public library by local councils
 - ▶ **The community profile:** A narrative based on the public's stories of their experience with the public library and the integral role it plays in the community. The community profile is intended to provide an overview of your library's impact in the community

What is VOLT?

Part 1: Library Impact Report



The Library Value Report measures the benefits of the library in seven domains:



DATA SOURCES

Data is from the 2021 Census, the Annual Survey of Public Libraries (Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming), and collections and usage data from the Merrickville library catalogue

Merrickville Library By The Numbers*

CIRCULATION

21188	Physical Checkouts
8213	E-Book & E-Audio Book Downloads
2369	Video Downloads
2132	E-Magazine Downloads
1078	Shared Pools and Interlibrary Loans

SPECIAL COLLECTIONS CIRCULATION

243	Board Games & Puzzles Borrowed
1106	Seed Packets Distributed
129	Museum Passes Borrowed
29	Radon Kits Borrowed

PROGRAMS & VISITS

393	Programs Held
3877	Programs Attended

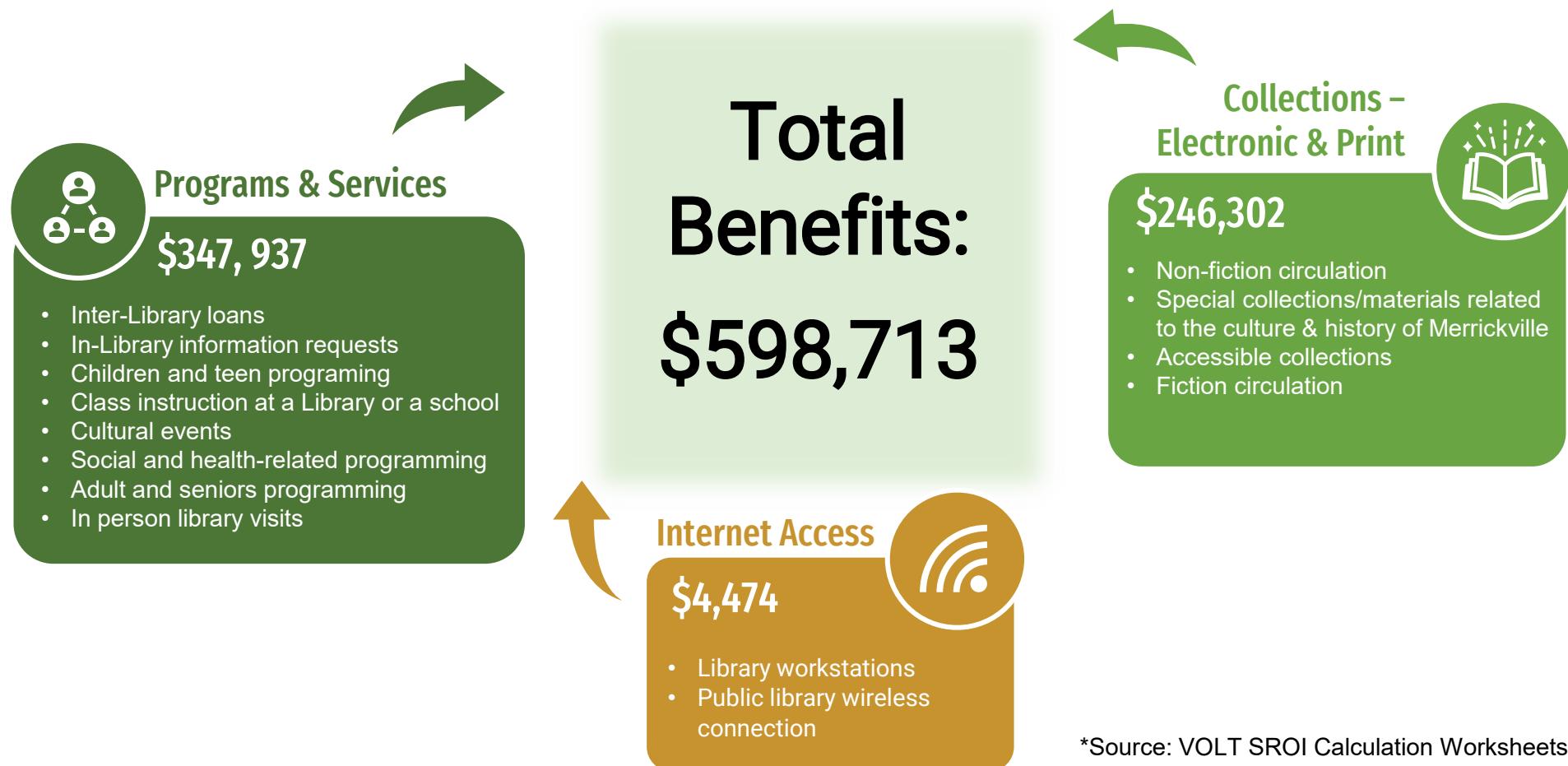
*Source: Annual Survey of Public Libraries

Merrickville Library - Impact Results By Domain of Impact*



*Source: VOLT SROI Calculation Worksheets

Economic Benefits of Programs, Services, and Collections



Summary: Social Return on Investment



Every hour the library is open,
the community benefits by

\$17,609.23



Each
Merrickville
resident
benefits by

\$389.72



Each
household
benefits by

\$947.42



For every \$1.00
invested by the
town, residents
receive

\$11.53
of economic
benefit

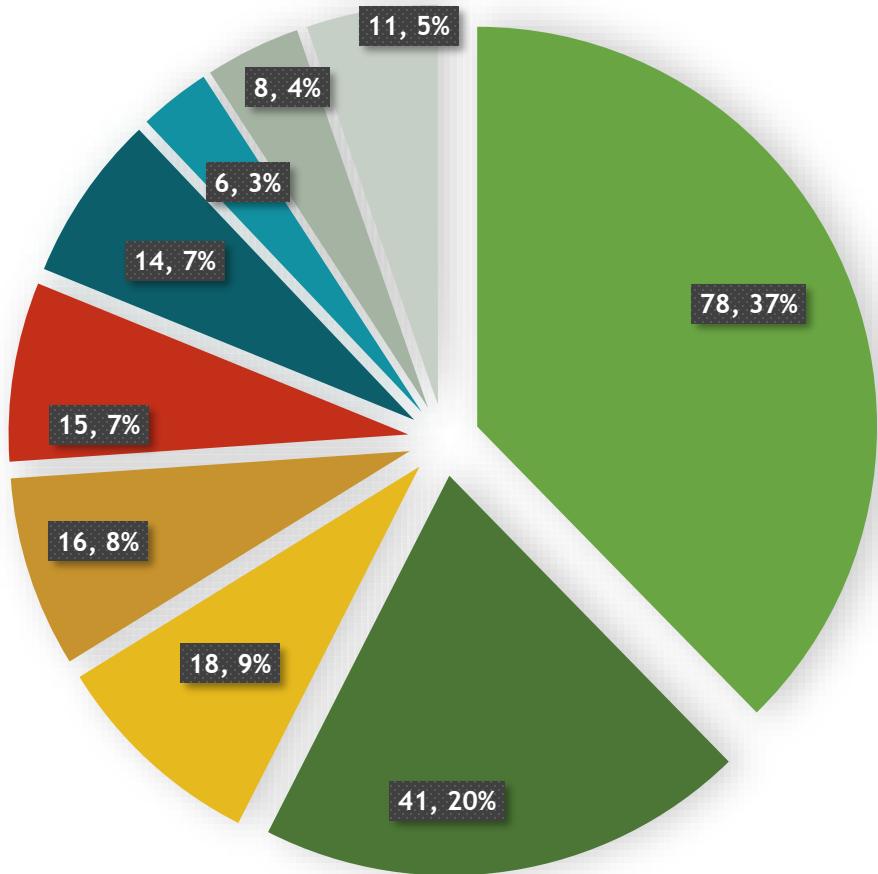
Part 2: Community Impact Report



- ▶ Information was collected in two phases:
 - ▶ A formal survey conducted by library staff in early 2025
 - ▶ Informal feedback gathered by email and post-it notes in August and September 2025

Community Feedback

What People Value Most About the Library



- Excellent Staff/Librarians
- Diverse Programs and Services
- Welcoming and Comfortable Space
- Extensive Book/Media Selection
- Community Engagement
- Accessibility and Convenience
- Technology/Printing Access
- Interlibrary Loan Service
- Overall Appreciation

Survey Results – Client Satisfaction

Library Programs

91%

Library Collections

90%

Library Technology

91%

Overall Satisfaction

96%

Our Patrons Say

We love the library and the staff. This library punches well beyond its weight.

The staff have made many good recommendations and the contribution to the local book clubs has been fantastic! Thanks so much.

I love the library. I have participated in clubs/groups, I take out books regularly, use the Kanopy streamer for documentaries, and use the online platform for audiobooks

I love the direction libraries are going these days, with puzzles, audiobooks, videos, & of course books (otherwise so expensive) and community educational opportunities.

Very capable and helpful staff, along with a warm atmosphere in the Library.

Merrickville's Library is the most accomodating one I have ever used (at 76 years of age)

Excellent librarians, helpful, knowledgeable, they make it so easy to bring in books from interarea libraries, it is the hub of our community

"If you (ever) lived elsewhere in Canada, you would know how this library & staff are amazing. Exceptionally helpful staff & volunteers"



Impact - Education

(This) little incentive to read through the summer has been phenomenal. She asks to go to the library so she can read instead of it being a chore at home.

We are fortunate to have a room where we can meet for a monthly book club.

The librarian brings in the books through inter library loan so that we each have a copy of the book of the month. This saves us money by not having to buy each book. It allows me to read genres and authors I might not have encountered before, and to share those that I love to read with others.



The TD summer reading club is a family fav! It encourages a love for reading which you can see by the end of the summer in the kids' reading growth. Can't wait until next year!



I'm a member of Merrickville's Men's Book Club which uses the facility to source our annual book reading list through the provincial inter-library loan program. We are an eclectic group of retired doctors, diplomats, soldiers, policemen, contractors, pilots and men of industry. Our requests for books is sometimes quite a challenge but our librarian sources all our requests and does so with aplomb and a great sense of humor. We could not be so well read without our local library.

Staff are extremely helpful in locating titles of not-available-on-the-shelf titles pertaining to culture and acquiring them through the inter-library loan service. I am extremely grateful for this service in allowing me to enjoy hard-to-find titles that support my love of language, art and a better appreciation of Canadian indigenous culture.

Impact: Entertainment and Leisure

The DVDs & movies [Kanopy] are awesome because it saves me money not having to subscribe to 10 different movie apps. And you guys have all the best shows & movies!

Thanks!

I am a keen reader and read 60-70 books per year. Many of them are from the Merrickville Public Library: I certainly couldn't afford to buy that many books!



Covid also introduced Jigsaw Puzzles to all of us stuck at home and this has continued as a welcome pastime for many of us. Our library has developed a great collection of Puzzles to borrow.

The Merrickville Public Library offers a reader's advisory service that I often take advantage of, with the librarian offering a selection of books I will probably enjoy based on my past reading

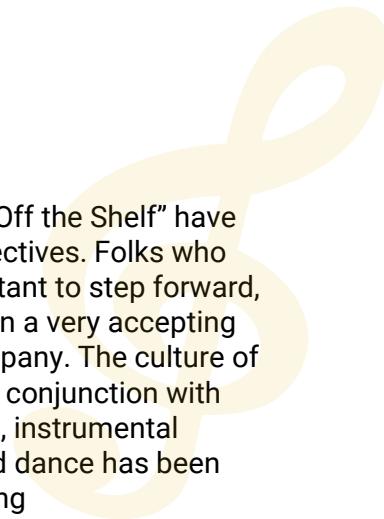
Access to books for entertainment, research when needed and online services

"Whenever we are looking for a book, 100% of the time, the librarians find it for us"

Impact - Culture



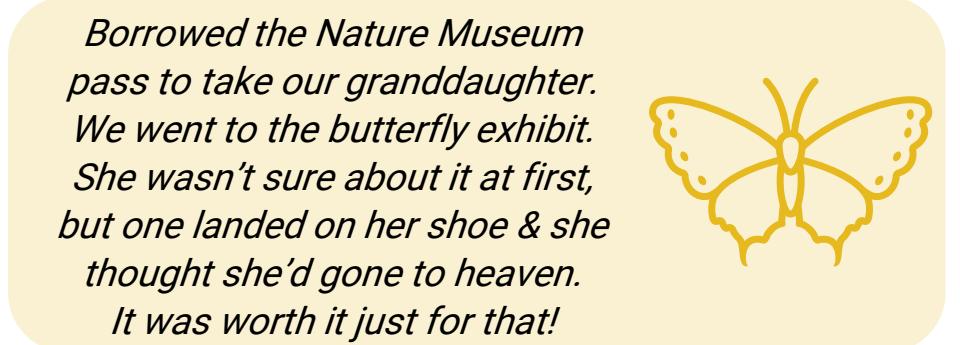
During COVID, through the Merrickville Library, the adult art group continued with on-line sessions to create Artist Trading Cards, with a grand gathering in the meeting room, once the all-clear to mix once again was sounded. What a celebration of people coming together to admire and trade our art, and to share our isolated experiences. Therapy through culture.



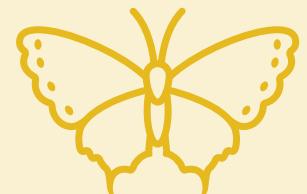
The adult evenings of “Off the Shelf” have offered cultural perspectives. Folks who otherwise would be reluctant to step forward, have more confidence in a very accepting circle of like-minded company. The culture of aural presentations, in conjunction with smattering of song, instrumental accompaniments , and dance has been enriching



The Library's local history collection, whether in its catalogued books on the shelf or in the local history reference room, is a much-needed addition to Merrickville-Wolford. The library provides easy access to historical resources in a central location during daytime and evening hours that make it easy for me to drop by and do original historical research. I particularly appreciate access to the Alice Hughes Collection which provides information on people as well as places and the built heritage of Merrickville-Wolford.



Borrowed the Nature Museum pass to take our granddaughter. We went to the butterfly exhibit. She wasn't sure about it at first, but one landed on her shoe & she thought she'd gone to heaven. It was worth it just for that!



Space & Civic Engagement

Because of its role in the community, I get to meet with various people casually just as with a coffee house. This means that I can make connections there. Furthermore, because of the key role in the community the library has, staff also aid in making connections between people/organizations

It feels like a centre of the community. I always run into someone I know there. I know I can get help with anything from the librarians. I really enjoy the programs. And most of all, I get all the books and magazines I want.



“Every time I am at the library I see kids and teens using it as a safe place after school, and find it to be a staple building in the community”



The library has provided meeting space for me as a member of the local theatre group, both for when the full executive has been moved out of our regular location and as a convenient spot for subcommittees to meet.

I can see evidence of the library being partners with other community organizations that I am not part of, such as youth groups, and I feel more in touch with the community at large because of the various displays

I like to come after school and calm my body down
- [middle schooler]



Inclusion & Wellbeing

I think it's great that (technology's) there for people that don't have them at home, or when my computer or printer at home breaks down



I use the printer regularly and greatly appreciate the opportunity to do so. I always donate more than I use and would be extremely disappointed if this service went away

This fall I will be going in for a session on how to use all the features on my iPhone and may take in my old radio for the Repair Day!

INCLUSION

I have participated in the knitting group and the seed library. I look forward to the children's programs when we have our baby this spring!"

AND

I love playing Mah Jong at the library with my friends. The room is so bright. The staff are so accommodating. It makes my day!

WELLBEING

"As we are both seniors our major participation is the "Off The Shelf" program. It is a delightful way to pass an evening meeting new folks and making new friends and learning more about the people and resources living in our village"

As I age, I especially appreciate the company of others - the stimulation that the book club and the special events the library hosts. I've learned a lot and am quite sure I'll continue to do so - you're helping me stay young and sort-of sharp!

Economic Development

Staff enabled me to write online exams here at the library. It saved me from a trip to Renfrew to write these exams, and the library here was a perfect location to concentrate and successfully complete exams for my university program. Thanks for bringing me one step closer to my degree.

The library helped me with some relevant nonfiction books when I started a new job in an area adjacent to my previous employment. Through them I found significant information that helped me to reframe some of my approaches at work.

The library had a book that I was able to use as a significant part of a work presentation I did. I was particularly excited to have found the book as it had a different point of view than most professional literature and most popular literature but was still science based.