

Blue Mountains Public Library

Library Service Delivery Alternatives Report Summary



Monteith♦Brown
planning consultants

Background

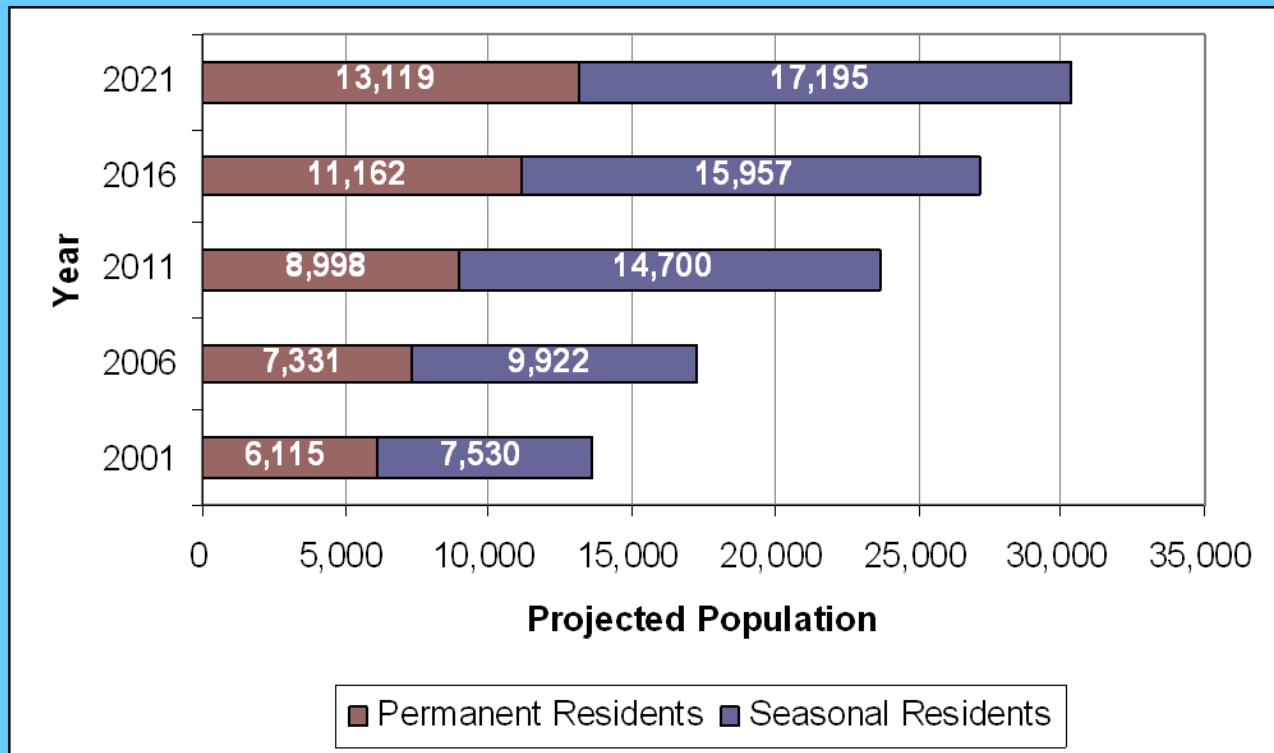
- The Blue Mountains Public Library Board recognized the need to proactively ensure that the Town's library service delivery model continues to meet the demands of both current and future residents.
- The Study is responds to an Objective to the 2007-2011 Strategic Plan to “determine the appropriate service delivery model”.
- The L.E. Shore Memorial Library was constructed in 1995, is located in Thornbury and serves the entire Town.

Demographic Profile

- The Town is characterized by a stable permanent population and a growing semi-permanent population.
- Although considerable population growth has been projected over the next ten years and significant semi-permanent fluctuations in population, the impact of the current economic climate is unknown.
- The Town's population growth is driven primarily by an influx of semi-permanent residents. The semi-permanent population is estimated to account for nearly 60% of the entire Town's population.

Demographic Profile

Projected Populations, 2001-2021



Demographic Profile

- The aging trends is particularly apparent in the Town as the 'baby boomers' continue to age.
- The median age of the Town's residents is 50.6 years, which is significantly older than Ontario's median age of 39 (2006 Census).
- The implications of an aging population on library services are many. Shifting leisure preferences will dictate, for example, how much of the library collection should be devoted to youth versus adult-oriented content.

Demographic Profile

Population Growth (Permanent and Semi-permanent) by Age Cohort, 2006-2021

Age Category	2006	2011	2016	2021	10 Yr. Growth	15 Yr. Growth
Children (0-9)	1,886	1,620	1,829	2,099	-3.0%	11.3%
Youth/Teens (10-19)	2,680	2,187	2,265	2,338	-15.5%	-12.8%
Young Adults (20-34)	2,890	2,923	3,446	3,558	19.2%	23.1%
Mature Adults (35-54)	6,237	5,339	5,328	5,744	-14.6%	-7.9%
Young Seniors (55-64)	4,256	4,275	4,869	5,009	14.4%	17.7%
Mature Seniors (65+)	6,545	7,353	9,381	11,566	43.3%	76.7%

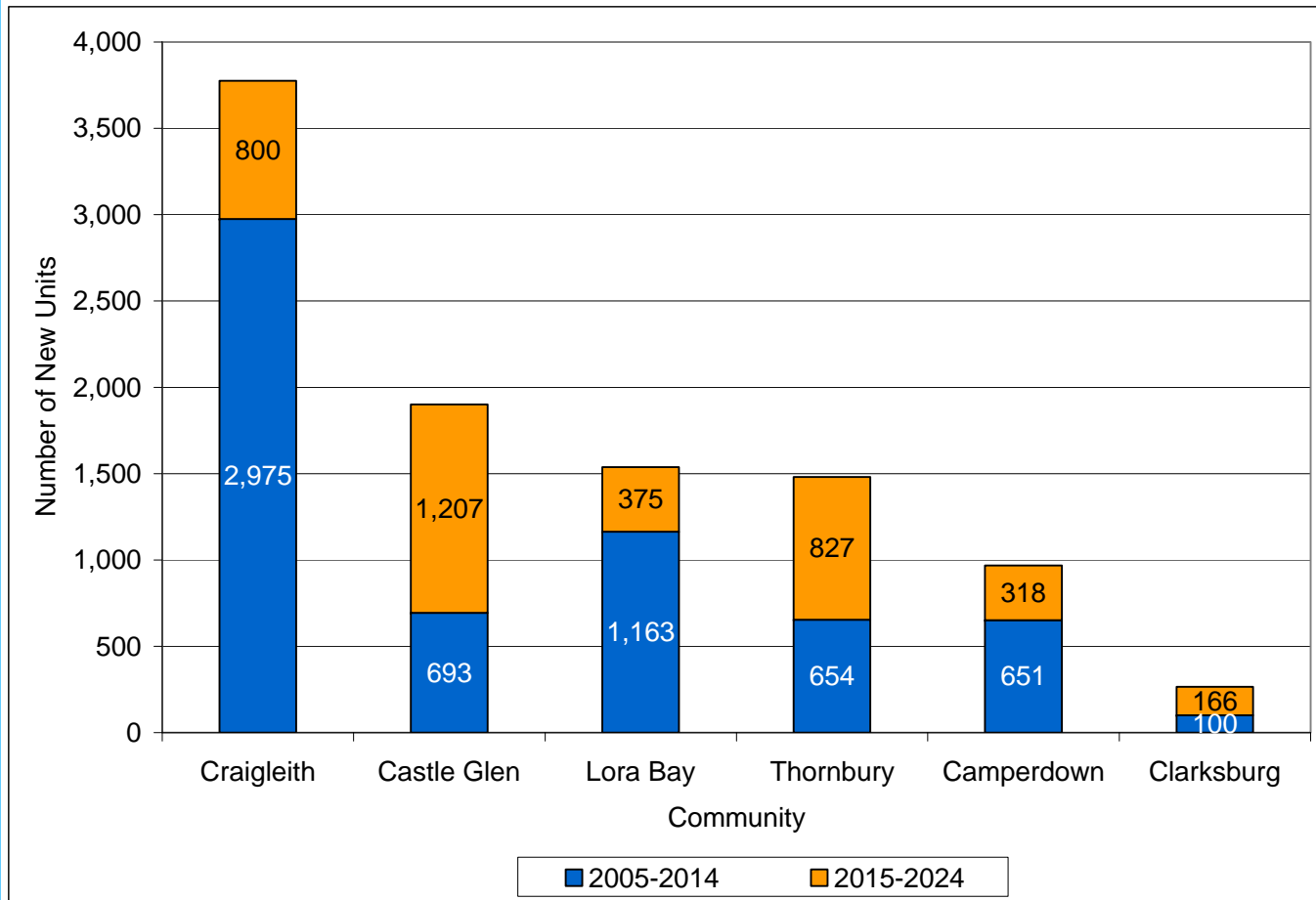
Current & Future Population Distribution

Estimated Population Distribution of Permanent Residents

Community and Surrounding Rural Areas	Permanent Population (estimated)	% of Town-wide Population
Thornbury	1,780	29%
Craigeith, Village at Blue	1,485	24%
Clarksburg	685	11%
Slabtown, Camperdown	408	7%
Ravenna, Kolapore	260	4%
Lora Bay	252	4%
Castle Glen, Osler	189	3%
Gibraltar	185	3%
Banks, Swiss Meadows	177	3%
Victoria Corners, Loree	169	3%
Heathcote	138	2%
Little Germany, Redwing	117	2%
Duncan	80	1%
Other	190	3%
Total Population	6,115	100%
Note: Estimates include both rural and urban populations		

Current & Future Population Distribution

Forecasted Starts for Permanent & Semi-permanent Homes, 2005-2024



Summary of Consultation

- The variety and size of the library collection is good but seems to be keeping up with current needs.
- The library's book collection is the primary draw for patrons, with 93% using the library for borrowing books.
- The Library provides excellent children's programs at an affordable cost.
- Interest in the hours of operation being extended as inconvenient hours was identified as a key barrier.
- The Library is nearing capacity - there is a need to look at surrounding properties to allow for expansion.

Summary of Consultation

- Primary reasons for using facilities other than the Blue Mountain Public Library included shorter travel times and better collection/resources.
- The Library's technology (website, electronic databases, computers and Internet access) was identified as the least adequate part of the delivery model.
- Participants are happy with library staff, but believed the number of staff to be lacking.
- In expanding the Library, users suggested a need to ensure adequate meeting / programming space, and some sort of a food service such as an Internet Café.

Key Trends

- Although lending continues to be the primary function of public libraries, the trend-setting Benton Report suggests that “the library will become more of a civic integrator and a focus of community information on health, education, government, and other local services” ¹.
- Public libraries have become important gathering places.
- Smaller, isolated library branches are gradually being succeeded by fewer but larger library branches in prominent central locations that are highly visible, accessible by public transportation, offer expansion capabilities and barrier-free access to all members of the community (*Ontario Public Libraries Today*, 2005).

¹*Buildings, Books, and Bytes: Libraries and Communities in the Digital Age* (The Benton Foundation, 1996)

Key Trends

- Public libraries continue to move towards open space design and modular fixtures (including partition walls) to provide greater interior flexibility. “Flexible” interior space allows libraries to easily evolve to meet the changing needs of an increasingly diverse community.
- Large, comfortable reading/working areas equipped with private and collaborative study rooms, homework centres, Internet workstations, and wiring for personal computer use and/or wireless Internet access is being provided to accommodate academic researchers, information-seekers, book browsers and readers.

Key Trends

- E-library initiatives are being seamlessly integrated into libraries. Patrons expect a user friendly environment with multiple-source information and skilled library staff that can assist with advanced information queries.
- Although the role of public libraries has changed dramatically in recent years, borrowing books continues to be the primary reason for library use.

Discussion of Alternatives

The following service delivery models were initially discussed with the Library Board and researched to assess the pros and cons of each:

- Bookmobiles
- Storefront Libraries
- Self-Service Library Kiosks
- Permanent Facilities – A Central Library
- Permanent facility - A Central Library with at least one Branch

Discussion of Alternatives

Bookmobiles

Bookmobiles can be used to provide library services to villages and city suburbs without library buildings. They can also service those who have difficulty accessing libraries, with retirement homes being common stops.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides service to remote areas, homebound patrons• Agile and a good marketing tool• Appropriate if future growth will be spread over a wide area• Provide staff with a challenging job opportunity in a dynamic environment• Can attend community events (e.g. Fall Fair, Apple Fest, events at the Mountain, etc.)• Routes are adjustable• Can serve a large rural community because it is mobile	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stops/schedule can be infrequent/inconvenient• Cost – initial, capital, maintenance• Staffing – librarians/drivers• Keeping collection current• Requires a ‘home base’ - a staging area and a parking space• Access and safety during difficult weather• Vulnerable to budget cuts during times of financial crisis

Discussion of Alternatives

Storefront Libraries

Storefront libraries tend to be relatively small library locations that offer a limited collection, a limited number of computer workstations which provide access to a library's entire catalogue, web site, and reference database, and some staffing.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A way to provide <u>some</u> level of service• A way to integrate library service in a busy community• Good marketing tool• Co-operative ventures such as school/public libraries/other municipal facilities have shown success• Small space for reading area, computer services and programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Small collections• Limited hours can be an issue• Expensive to operate – staffing, leasing, utilities, etc. (when weighing cost / benefit)• Access can be an issue• Does not service large geographic areas well• Requires delivery/courier service to ferry materials between locations

Discussion of Alternatives

Permanent Library Facilities

Permanent facilities provide library users with a superior level of service that cannot be matched by the alternate models discussed above. In addition to providing users with a unique and memorable reading/learning environment, permanent libraries serve as an important focal point for social and cultural interactions as well as the dissemination of community information.

A Single Facility Serving as a Central Library

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ability to offer a wide range of reference services and materials• Can offer programming for all ages (auditorium, computer lab, homework help centre, community meeting space, children's programming room, etc.)• Can be a hub for community based projects• Opportunity to provide space for unique services• Tends to be located near population concentration• Buildings can be of significant architectural value in and of themselves – a “place to be”• Communication and team-building is enhanced if all staff is located in the same building• Concentrated resources allow for higher quality of programs, services and collections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single location not always convenient• Parking for a core location can be difficult• Difficult for people to go to the library unless there is public transportation• Different areas often require different services – a central library may not respond to meet specific community needs• Often a misunderstanding of the difference in quality of service, staffing, hours and collections that exists between main libraries and smaller branches• Avoid building a central library unless the community and operating budget can support it• The level of personal service patrons get is not the same as that of a neighbourhood branch that serves the needs of the patrons living in close proximity to the branch

Central Library with at least One Branch

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Central branch acts as a support depot for neighbourhood branch(es)• Patrons have less travel due to multiple locations• “Best of both worlds”• Creation of service points are established to meet demand – transportation, geographical proximity and operating budgets should be the main considerations• Customer satisfaction level is high when they have a “local” branch.• Multi-locations receive more community support• Leasing a location for a branch can be a feasible alternative• Travel convenience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connectivity issues in branch(es) with limited infrastructure• Level of staff required is higher for multiple locations• Small branch(es) near development may reach full capacity and have limited opportunity to expand (unless pre-planned)• Parking can be limited at a small branch(es)• Higher operating costs with branch(es)• Service hours can be limited• Duplication of equipment• Generally the services offered would not be as extensive as a main library• Requires delivery/courier service to ferry materials between locations• Requires more investments in materials compared to other models

Selected Service Delivery Models

Based on the research provided in the initial phase of the Study, the Library Board determined that there were two library service delivery models that should be further explored:

- Permanent Facility – A Central Library Expansion
- Bookmobile Service

Key Considerations for Bookmobiles

Bookmobile Service

The Blue Mountains Public Library indicated an interest in providing a bookmobile service as part of its service delivery to the community. A preliminary estimate of \$300,000 for the acquisition and fitting of a new vehicle was identified by the Library. Generally speaking, this figure will accommodate various bookmobile models, taking into consideration the type of service required, the American-Canadian currency exchange, and several other variables, including:

- Vehicle Size
- Interior Capacity
- Accessibility
- Cost Considerations
- Location Considerations
- Lifespan

Key Considerations for Library Expansion

Library Expansion

Given the Library's interest in providing a bookmobile service to accommodate growing demands and the existing land base to accommodate an expansion at the existing location, an expansion in the range of 5,000 ft² would appear a reasonable in conjunction with a bookmobile service in order to meet current and medium-pressure. An expansion of this size could be used for:

- Increased Computer/Internet Space
- Programming Space
- Multi-purpose Space
- Quiet Study Space
- Group Study Space
- Additional Collections Space

January 28, 2010

The Blue Mountains Public Library

Comprehensive Space Needs Analysis



Prepared by:
Library Planning Consultants
suite 614, 440 - 10816 MacLeod Trail S
Calgary, Alberta T2J 5N8

Telephone: 1-800-387-7879
Fax: 403-258-0490 email: libplan@uls.com

INTRODUCTION

The Blue Mountains Public Library Board engaged the services of ***Library Planning Consultants*** to develop an assessment of The Blue Mountains Public Library facility and determine space needs. The Library is seeking to establish the following information:

1. Space requirements by library function:
 - Collection display and storage;
 - Staff space needs;
 - User facilities and needs;
 - Other i.e. storage, mechanical, means of egress etc.
2. Space required for each of the functions identified based on future projected needs through 2029

STUDY METHODS

This project evolved in three stages:

Planning

The consultant requested a number of documents and various data from library for study in order to develop a detailed work plan and an itinerary for the on-site visit.

Site Visit and Data Collection

An on-site visit was conducted October 13 – 15, 2009. The consultant met with the CEO and staff as well as Library Board members, the Town's CAO and Councilors who made themselves available for interview. Two further interviews were conducted by telephone after the site visit conclusion.

Analysis and Reporting

The documents provided by the Library and the information collected through the many interviews and observations on site; were analysed and distilled into the report.

The Planning Context

In the last decade library users and non-users have indicated that the services they expect from their library, and their expectations of how libraries serve their community are changing. In response to these expectations libraries have experienced a building boom all across North America and continue resurgence in their relevance. Users say that having enough computers and online services for people should be a high priority for their local library. Libraries are seen as an essential component in the effort to increase equity, opportunity and community development in the information age.

Library users are requesting programs that relate to all demographic groups rather than a continuing concentration on the pre-school and early school programs so prevalent in the past. It is this growth area of the library services envelope, which is producing stresses on budgets, staff time, and the realization that the appropriate spaces and storage facilities are missing especially in existing libraries.

It is becoming obvious to library planners and all those involved in library activities that a wider range of services, resources and meeting spaces, will be needed to allow public libraries to retain their already active role in civic life and to meet the changing needs of users.

Establishment of the Design Population Base

The population base served determines service parameters in the library. This in conjunction with population growth rates for a community determines the “design population” from which the following are determined:

- Optimum size of collection
- The number of FTE (full time equivalent) staff needed
- User facilities (lounge, tables and chairs, computer stations)

Exhibit 1: Design Population

Year	2009	2014	2019	2024	2029
Permanent Residents	7,900	10,086	12,873	16,430	20,969
Semi – Permanent Residents	4,740	6,107	7,794	9,947	12,695
Total Design Population	12,640	16,193	20,637	26,377	33,664

Standards Used in this Study

Standards are an established method that Library Boards and CEO’s can use to direct local long range planning efforts. They establish guidelines for future planning initiatives, determining funding levels and set a baseline from which quality of service in response to need can be determined. Standards are important from the standpoint that any community considering the establishment of a new public library or an expansion of existing services should assess its ability to meet them.

Public Library Standards in Ontario

Ontario has not adopted mandatory standards for public libraries but a series of guidelines published by the Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation is intended to represent community-based norms for public libraries and their development in Ontario. The Guidelines allow a library board to strive towards a level — one through four — at which it will provide a particular service. The levels are derived from data collected in Ontario since 1997 when the first edition of the Guidelines was published. The levels are based on percentiles.

- Level 1 – 30th percentile - provides a basic library service
- Level 2 - 50th percentile - builds on the essential service
- Level 3 -70th percentile – more depth and quantity- more staff – more user facilities
- Level 4 – 90th percentile - the best service available in Ontario

The Blue Mountains Public Library is currently closest to a level 1 service overall.

The goal of future development is to move the service to level 2 within the next ten years and, providing the population growth and tax base continue to increase at the projected rate, to level 3 within the twenty-year window of this study.

Planning Indicators for the Blue Mountains Library

Library space analyses are concerned with five space components:

Primary Components:

1. Collection space: to house the current and future collections.
2. Staffing needs: space to accommodate the staff functions including lounge and locker or personal space.
3. User facilities space: space to accommodate a variety of user needs.

The primary components largely depend upon population growth and demographic factors.

Other Components:

4. Multipurpose or special use spaces: sizes are dependent on need and vary from community to community
5. Non-assignable space: is an allowance made for stairwells, washrooms, janitor closets, entry and exit spaces, furnace rooms, storage etc., and is based on a percentage of the gross space occupied by the primary components.

Space required for collection

Collection space required is determined by the following space standards:

- Books 10 volumes per sq. ft.
- Periodicals on display occupy 1.4 sq. ft.
- For non-print materials, 10 items occupy 1 sq. ft.

The ten volumes per square foot figure accounts for an expansion factor and the necessity of a minimum 42 inches wide aisle between stacks for handicap access.

Staff Space Component

The Ontario Guidelines describe staffing on the basis of the same four level system, as is the collection. It is based on full-time equivalent (FTE) per thousand of service population (FTE based on 35 hour work weeks or 1,820 hours per year).

- Level 1 suggests 0.31 FTE per thousand
- Level 2 suggests 0.41 FTE per thousand
- Level 3 suggests 0.47 FTE per thousand
- Level 4 suggests 0.7 FTE per thousand

An average of 175 sq. ft. per FTE staff person is suggested

User Space Component

The almost universal standard for user space is **5 seats per thousand people**, space allowance per user seat is 30 sq. ft. This allows for individual study stations in adult and children's areas as well as informal seating, reference tables, A/V stations etc.

User Computer Space Component

A library should provide a minimum of one public access work station per 1000 population in communities under 5,000 or 1 station per 2,000 population in communities over 5,000 people or a sufficient number of workstations to accommodate users with minimal wait times.

it is recommended that full internet access computer workstations for users require a further 25 sq. ft. per workstation. The space differential is expressed as "*Technology for Users*" in the analysis.

Library Component Space Analyses to 2029

The space analysis of the Blue Mountains Public Library begins by determining what the core library service space is now as compared to what standards suggest should be provided for the various components at existing levels of service.

The analysis continues to determine space required for 2009 through 2029 at five-year intervals. The analyses are concerned with space dedicated to core library service only.

(See following page for summary chart of core service space needs through 2029)

The Current Library Size Related to Guidelines

Overall size of the current library is 10,400 sq. ft. 7,300 sq. ft. is actual core library service space now. Level two recommendations call for minimum core library service space of 9,084 sq. ft. in 2009 and 14,098 sq. ft. within the next ten years.

Multi-Purpose/ Programming Areas and Other Services

The need for multi-purpose/ programming space is essential in the modern public library environment. It is expected that this area of public library service will only continue to grow and evolve as time passes and library services change with ongoing technical advancements.

The space necessary for programs as well as collaborative learning space is additional to the core service needs described in the chart above. The total shown below is also based largely on what it currently available in The Blue Mountains Public Library.

**Recommended Minimum Space Allowance for Program Area = 1,845 sq. ft.
square feet**

Exhibit 5 - Level 2 Space Analysis Summary, including Non-Assignable Space

Library Component	Library at Current Status - Component Sizing (2009)	Size Library Should be For Level 2 guideline at current population (2009)	5 year Space Projection by Components (2014)	10 year Space Projection by Components (2019)	15 year Space Projection by Components, (2024)	Maximum Projection Population 2029 –xx)
Collection: Standard items	3,251sq. ft.	4,212 sq. ft.	4,831 sq. ft.	6,157 sq. ft.	7,870 sq. ft.	9,243 sq. ft.
Collection: Periodicals	98sq. ft.	83 sq. ft.	86 sq. ft.	110 sq. ft.	171 sq. ft.	234 sq. ft.
Total Collection Area	3,349 sq. ft.	4,295 sq. ft.	4,917 sq. ft.	6,267 sq. ft.	8,041 sq. ft.	9,477 sq. ft.
User Seating	2,010 sq. ft.	1,890 sq. ft.	2,430 sq. ft.	3,096 sq. ft.	3,960 sq. ft.	5,040 sq. ft.
Staff Work Area	980 sq. ft.	907 sq. ft.	1,304 sq. ft.	1,640 sq. ft.	2,124 sq. ft.	3,004 sq. ft.
Technology for users	225 sq. ft.	175 sq. ft.	225 sq. ft.	275 sq. ft.	350 sq. ft.	425 sq. ft.
Library service Space needs	6,564 sq. ft.	7,267 sq. ft.	8,876 sq. ft.	11,278 sq. ft.	14,475 sq. ft.	17,946 sq. ft.
25% Non Assignable Space	1,641 sq. ft.	1,817 sq. ft.	2,219 sq. ft.	2,820 sq. ft.	3,619 sq. ft.	4,487 sq. ft.
Total core Library Space recommended	8,205 sq. ft.	9,084 sq. ft.	11,095 sq. ft.	14,098 sq. ft.	18,094 sq. ft.	22,433 sq. ft.

The Blue Mountains Public Library Short Term Objectives

The consultant conducted several interviews with the CEO and Staff at the library; the Library Board members and the CAO and Councilors of the Town of Blue Mountains. An accessibility audit was also completed on site with a representative of the Independent Living Resource Centre. Following are recommendations for short-term library modifications along with the estimated costs based on 2009 dollars.

Exhibit 6 – Estimated Costs for Changes above

Item #	Description	Quantity	Unit Cost	Total
1.1.1. Public Area Changes				
1.	Replace computer monitors with flat screens	11	200.00	2,200.00
2.	Workstation replacement	Space for 10 users	150.00 per station	1,500.00
3.	DVD spinner to match paperback units	1	1,200.00	1,200.00
4.	Shelving under bench seat in reading tower			3,000.00
5.	A signage system			3,000.00
Staff Area Changes				
1.	Removal of built in furnishings and cabinetry		3 days for 2 men @ 50.00 per hour	2,400.00
2.	Modular work stations	5	1,000.00	5,000.00
3.	Storage shelving	20 bays	200.00/bay	4,000.00
Total				\$23,300.00

11.0 Long Term Options for Library Service in Blue Mountains

The interviews with Library Board Members, the CEO and the CAO of the Town and the Councilors revealed a distinct sense of pride in the existing library as an attractive and iconic building in the community. The history of the building as a gift to the people of the Town of Blue Mountains only fifteen years ago by the Shore family almost makes it incumbent on the community to preserve the building and site as a library until there is no other option but to decommission it (as is occurring with many of the Carnegie libraries in North America).

It is recognized that the building is aging at a time when library services are undergoing tremendous changes and at the same time the municipality is experiencing substantial population increases with all of the pressures that these forces entail.

Space issues are becoming apparent in the current building layout) and library services are in need of substantially different configurations than what was once the norm. It is definitely time to begin the change processes to allow the library to continue to provide high quality, 21st century library services to its users.

The preference of the majority of interviewees is that although changes to the building will be necessary, the library should remain on the existing site. Following are the consultants recommendations for long term library services in the Town of Blue Mountains.

The Consultant recommends:

That work on the development of a 5,000 sq. ft. addition to the L.E. Shore Memorial Library commences as quickly as possible.

That modification to the existing structure to update and allow for the changes in library services commence immediately.

That the addition be planned for an expansion beyond 2019 to accommodate expected growth as per the analyses in this report.