



**fort erie**  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

# ANNUAL REPORT 2025





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# Organizational Overview

## Vision

*To be the trusted heart of the community. A safe haven where curiosity thrives and everyone feels welcome.*

## Mission

*Create learning and leisure experiences that engage, enrich, and empower our community members.*

## Library Trustees

<b>Larry Graber</b> .....	<i>Chair</i>
<b>Barbara Ruegg</b> .....	<i>Vice Chair</i>
<b>Joan Christensen</b> .....	<i>Council Representative</i>
<b>Andrew Caird</b> .....	<i>Member at Large</i>
<b>Daniel Turner</b> .....	<i>Member at Large</i>
<b>Maria Brigantino</b> .....	<i>Member at Large</i>
<b>Samantha MacLean</b> .....	<i>Member at Large</i>
<b>Stan Sauer</b> .....	<i>Member at Large</i>
<b>Tricia-Lynn Pascia</b> .....	<i>Member at Large</i>

Library trustees are appointed by the municipal council, through a formal application and selection process. Trustees serve as volunteers and are responsible for governing the library, ensuring it meets the needs of the community. Their duties include setting policies, overseeing the library's budget, advocating for library services, and supporting the library's mission to provide accessible resources and programs. We thank them for their commitment, which helps guide the library's growth and impact in Fort Erie.

To learn more about the Town of Fort Erie's Boards and Committees, visit <https://www.forterie.ca/town-hall/boards-and-committees/>

## Centennial Branch



136 Gilmore Road  
Fort Erie ON L2A 2M1  
Mon – Thurs: 9:30 am – 8 pm  
Fri – Sat: 9:30 am – 5 pm

## Crystal Ridge Branch



89 Ridge Road South  
Ridgeway ON L0S 1N0  
Mon – Thurs: 9:30 am – 8 pm  
Fri – Sat: 9:30 am – 5 pm

## Stevensville Branch



2508 Stevensville Road  
Stevensville ON L0S 1S0  
Mon & Sat: 9:30 am – 2 pm  
Wed & Thu: 3:30 pm – 8 pm

# LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

Dear Friends, Patrons, Partners, and Community Members,

It is with great pride that I present the 2025 Annual Report for the Fort Erie Public Library. This report captures a year of remarkable growth, innovation, and community impact, a testament to the dedication of our staff, volunteers, trustees, and, most importantly, the residents we serve.

## Highlights of 2025

- **Program Expansion:** We offered over 120 programs across our three branches, drawing in more than 9,700 participants, including a 234% increase in youth-focused offerings. Signature events such as the Fort Erie Ukes concert, monthly STEAM workshops, and a K-Pop Demon Hunters Party drew enthusiastic crowds and reinforced the library's role as a cultural hub.
- **Circulation Surge:** Physical circulation rose 28%, and is at the highest level since 2019. Digital usage remained robust, highlighted by Overdrive's 45,704 circulations (75% of all digital activity).
- **Facility Improvements:** Energy-efficient lighting retrofits and ongoing adjustments of seating and study spaces have made our branches greener and more welcoming.
- **Community Partnerships:** Collaborations with the Crystal Ridge Dream Centre, Salvation Army, local schools, and cultural institutions broadened our reach and deepened the relevance of our programs.

## Looking Ahead to 2026

- Developing a new Strategic Plan to guide the library over the next five years.
- Expanding technology resources and digital literacy workshops.
- Launching new skill-building series in coding, financial literacy, and wellness.
- Strengthening partnerships with schools, businesses, and cultural organizations to co-create programs that reflect the diverse interests of our community.

These initiatives will build on the momentum of 2025 and ensure the library continues to be a vibrant, inclusive space for learning, creativity, and community connection. None of these achievements would be possible without your unwavering support. Your trust fuels our mission to inspire curiosity, foster inclusion, and empower every individual who walks through our doors.

I invite you to explore the full report for detailed statistics, stories, and financial statements. Your feedback and ideas are vital as we evolve together.

Thank you for being an essential part of the Fort Erie Public Library family.

Sincerely,  
Larry Graber  
Chair, Board of Trustees



# LETTER FROM OUR CEO

As we close another remarkable year, I am pleased to present the 2025 Annual Report for Fort Erie Public Library. This report reflects the collective effort, dedication, and enthusiasm of our staff, volunteers, board, and our community members who make our library a vibrant hub of learning, creativity, and connection.

2025 was a year of growth and innovation. We expanded our program offerings and added thousands of new titles, both of which contributed to the rapid increase in visits and circulation. Our commitment to equitable access continued with the provision of thousands of hours of free computer and internet access, supporting job seekers, students, and seniors alike. In partnership with local organizations, we delivered outreach workshops, helping community members learn more about what the library has to offer.

Our facilities also saw important improvements. We swapped out old fluorescent bulbs for energy efficient ones, and we have begun assessing how we can better foster a gathering place for study groups and community events.

Looking ahead to 2026, our focus will be on expanding our impact within the community of Fort Erie. We plan to expand offerings, introduce new skill-building workshops, and deepen partnerships to co-create programs that reflect the diverse interests of our patrons.

None of these achievements would be possible without the unwavering support of our patrons, donors, volunteers, and municipal partners. Thank you for trusting us as a cornerstone of knowledge and community life.

Please explore the full 2025 Annual Report attached for detailed statistics, stories, and financial statements. We welcome your feedback and ideas as we continue to evolve together.

Warm regards,

Jen Kendall, MLIS  
Chief Executive Officer

# Key Statistics



**100,896**  
circulations

**18,192**  
program  
attendees

**6,949**

total Library  
members



**4,231** new items added  
to the collection

**3.2%**

increase  
in visits

**4,108**



social media  
followers

**19%**

increase  
in members

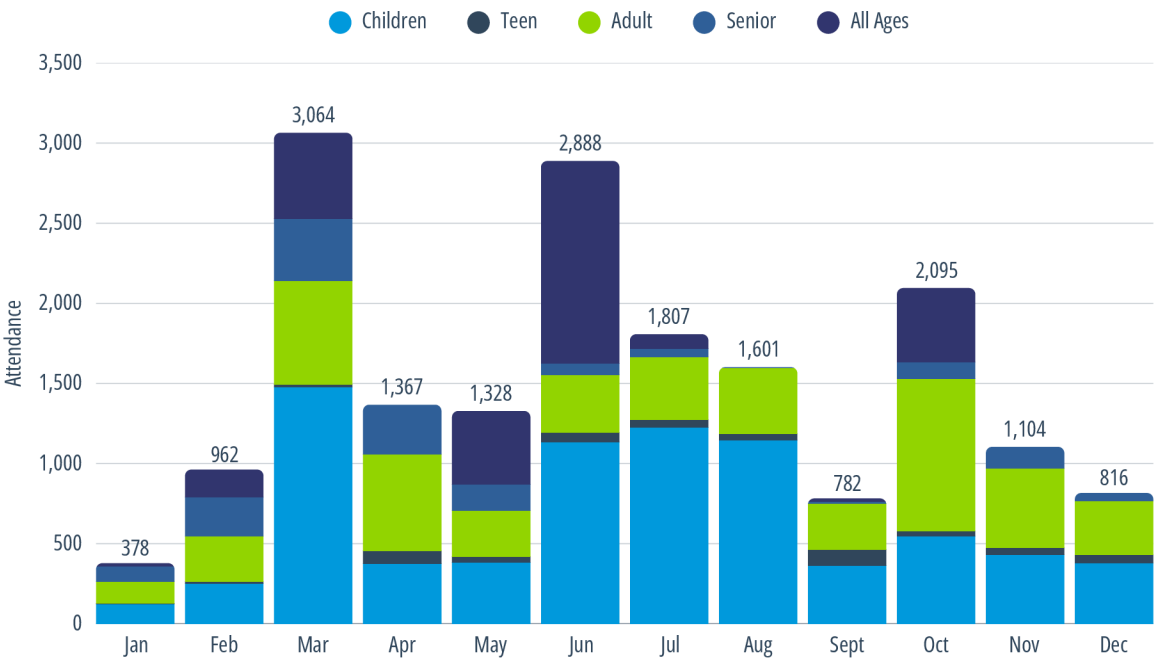
**20%**

Increase in  
Circulation

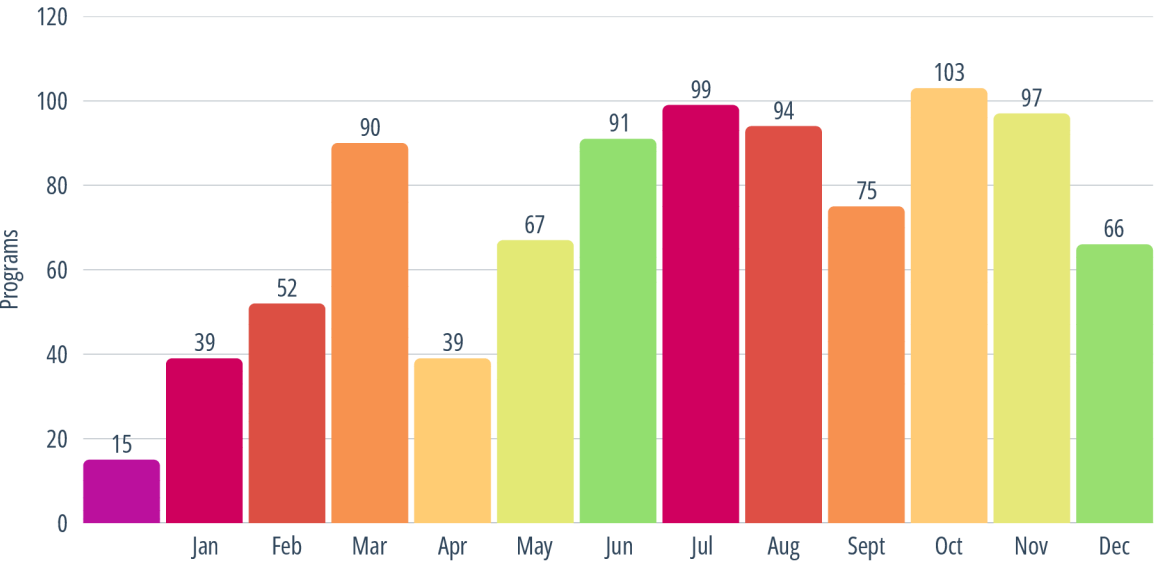
# Program Statistics

“  
Staff and programs are  
always excellent!  
”

Program Attendance



Total Programs



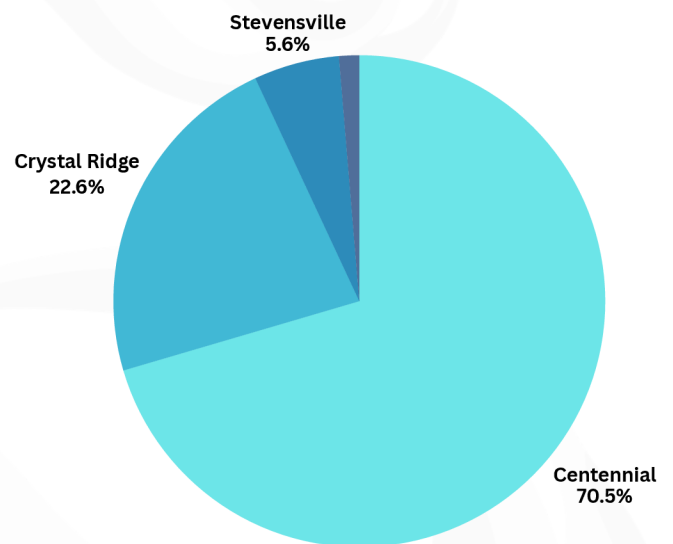
# Adult Programs

In 2025 we offered over **360 programs for adults and seniors** including: adult learning programs, job skills workshops, newcomer social groups, digital literacy programs and many more.

**We had 4,979 attendees at adult programs in 2025!**

Standout programs included the Fort Erie Ukes concert, a painting class guided by the Fort Erie Arts Council, & our popular monthly card making class.

Programs per Location



**Our genealogy/local history events were attended by 103 people.**

**Fun Fact:** In a recent survey from 2025, 35% of respondents were in the senior category (55+). Of these respondents, 100% listed that programs for seniors were **“Very Important”** to the community.

# Kids & Teens



“ I love the library. I find it a very important part of the community. ”

- 234% increase in programs for children and teens.
- 71 teen-specific programs with 394 attendees.
- 9,239 attendees across children and teen programs. A **355% increase!**

## Standout programs this year were:

K-Pop Demon Hunters Party, our monthly STEAM workshops, TD Summer Reading events, and weekly Art Party.

Total attendance for our 29 school visits was 1205!



## Registration for 2026 starts on June 15th!



- In 2025 we had **5,148** attendees for TD Summer Reading programs and events! This is an increase of **189.5%** in attendance compared to 2024.
- **471** children and teens signed up and read **6,604** books between June-August.

# Youth Drawing Contest

We had 17 amazing entries vying for an Indigo Gift Card from the Friends of the Fort Erie Library!

The submissions were incredible- take a look for yourselves!



## Mitten Tree

We received 7 boxes of items for our Mitten Tree which benefited Strong Fort Erie Neighbourhoods, Casa El Norte and the Fort Erie Multicultural Centre! Items included more than just mittens; we received hats, scarves, and even home-made knit items!



## YLA: Teen Impact on the Library



The Youth Library Association (YLA) ran many fundraising events, programs, and outreach activities this year. The group applied for the Youth Opportunities Fund Grant for teen programs and new furniture for the teen section. They raised over \$250 to support teen programming. They also ran other charitable events including a clothing swap, a park cleanup, and a successful Angel Tree event. This amazing group of 15 teens accomplished a lot!

To learn more, follow them on Instagram @YLAFortErie or scan the QR code

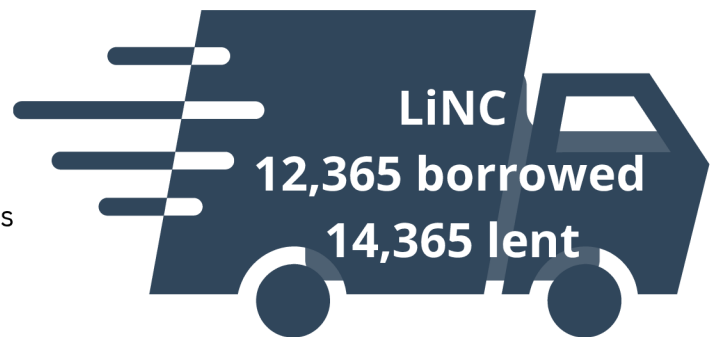
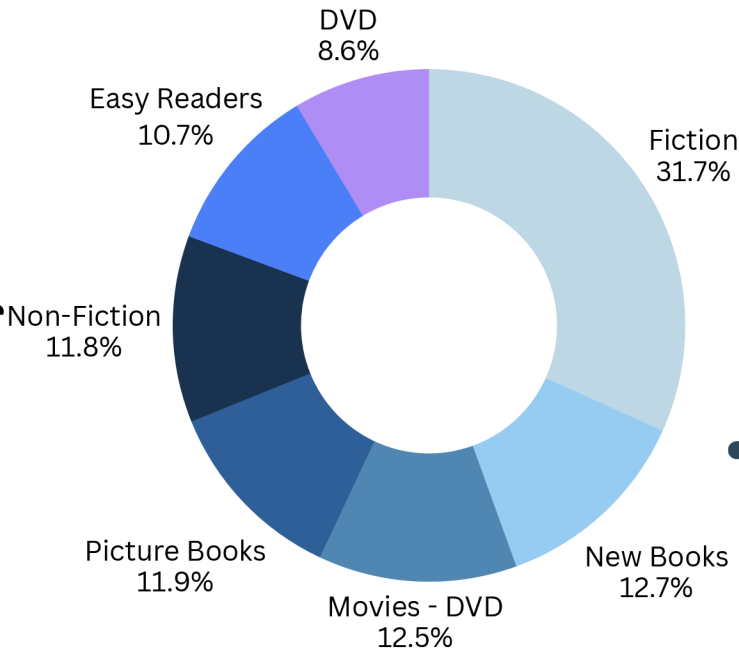
# Circulation Stats



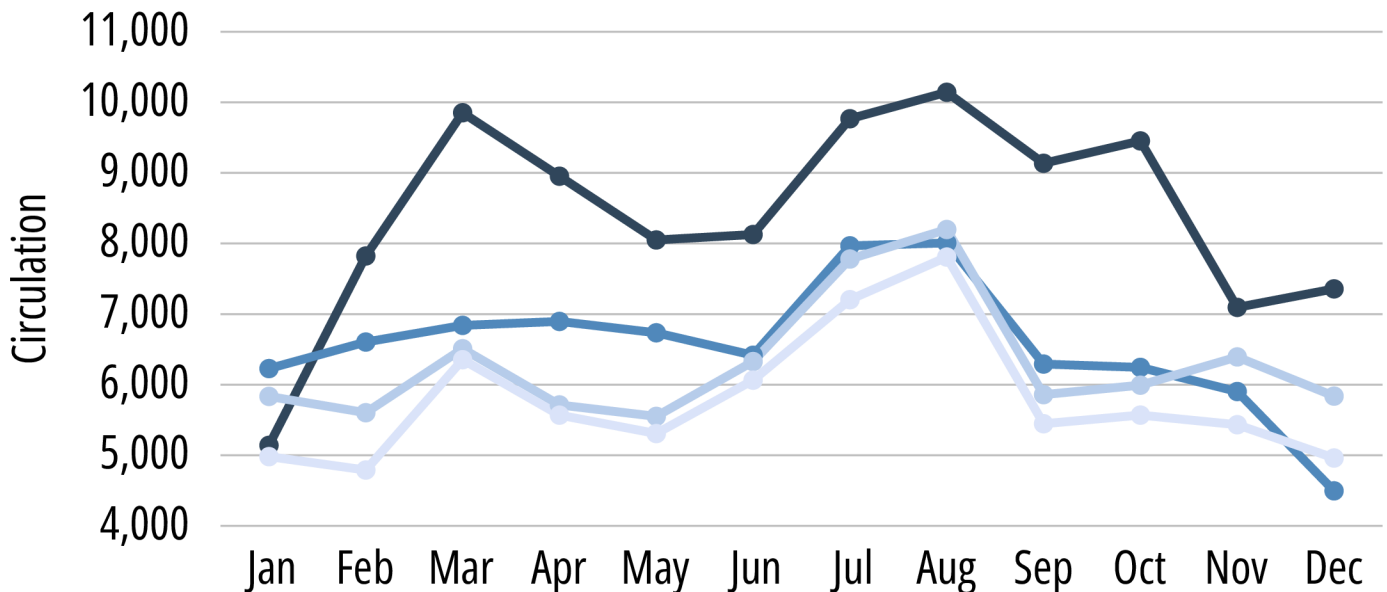
## Did you know?

Overdrive is our most popular digital resource with 45,704 circulations (75% of digital circulations)

circulation by collection



● 2025 ● 2024 ● 2023 ● 2022



In 2025 there was a 28% increase in physical circulation, the highest levels since 2019!

For two years in a row, the highest percentage increase was at our Stevensville branch, with a 72% increase! Digital circulation also increased, despite the rising costs of materials impacting our ability to meet demand.

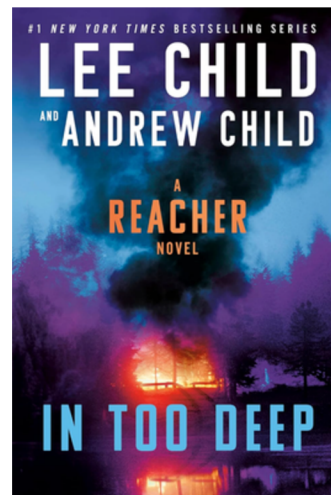
# Your Favourite Items



Most Popular Digital Download



Borrowed 50 Times



Borrowed 42 times



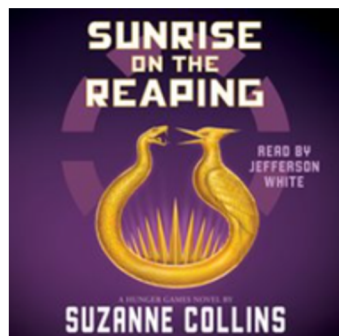
Borrowed 29 times



Most Popular Magazine



Borrowed 17 Times



Top Digital Audio

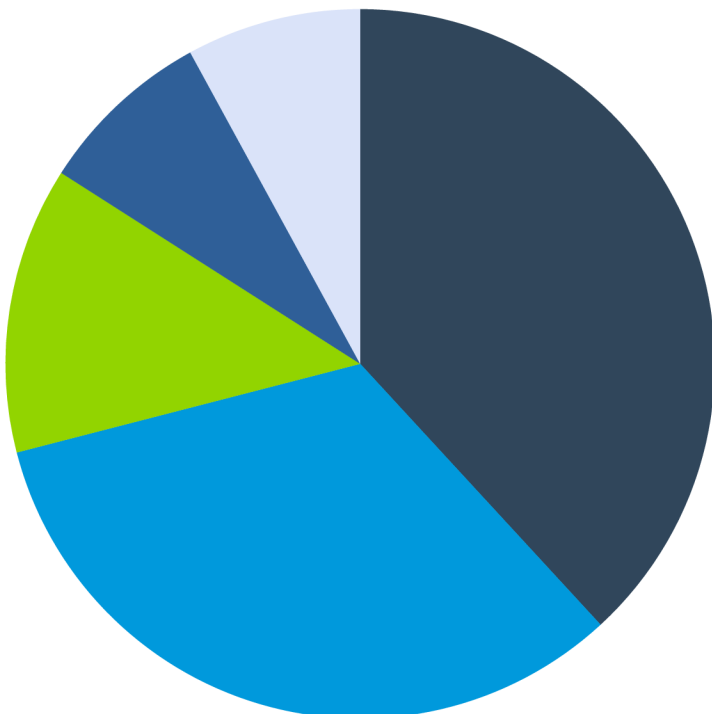


# Centennial Branch



## Largest Collections

- Non-Fiction
- Fiction
- Magazine
- Kids Fiction
- Movies - DVD



“ I think the library system in Fort Erie is wonderful... The staff are friendly and helpful, and the facilities are great too —especially Centennial. ”



# Crystal Ridge Branch

CIRCULATION



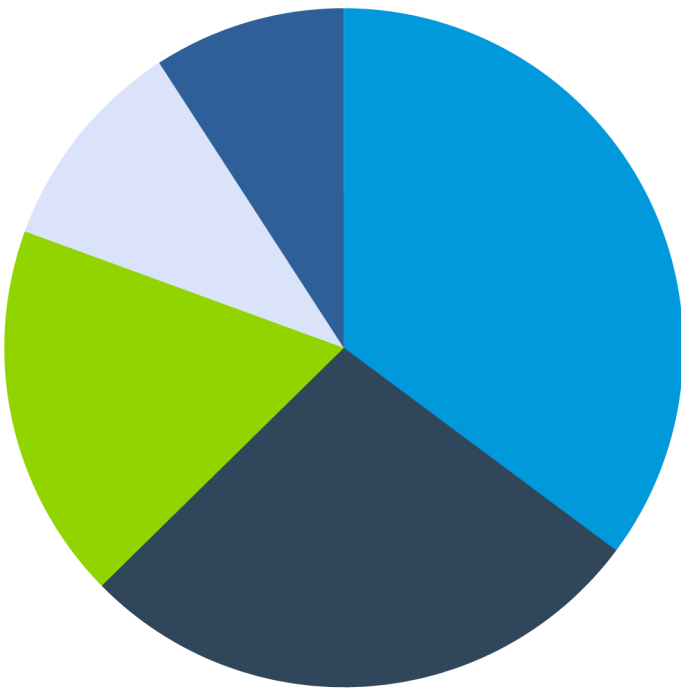
35,401

29 %  
INCREASE

35,401 Visits!

## Largest Collections

- Fiction
- Non-Fiction
- Magazine
- Movies - DVD
- Kids Nonfiction



7.9  
Patron satisfaction  
score

“  
Crystal Ridge Library is a welcoming community hub that brings people together through programs, resources, and a friendly atmosphere.  
”

203 programs



3415 attendees

# Stevensville Branch

CIRCULATION



**7,051**  
72%  
INCREASE

**3,704 Visits!**

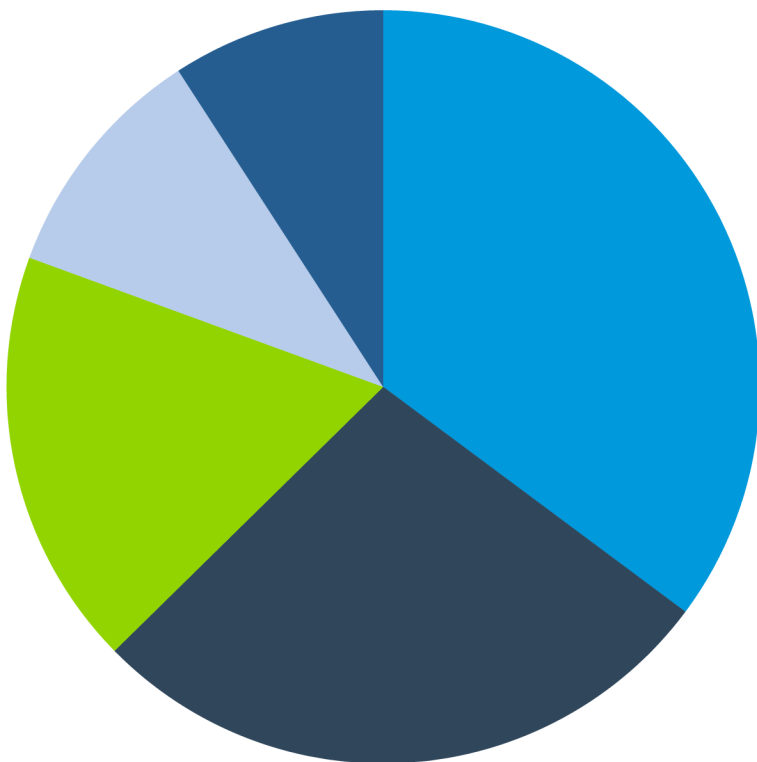


**7.9**  
Patron satisfaction  
score

“  
I think that you are  
doing a very good  
job!!  
”

## Largest Collections

- Fiction
- Non-Fiction
- Magazine
- Movies - DVD
- Kids Nonfiction



**46 programs**

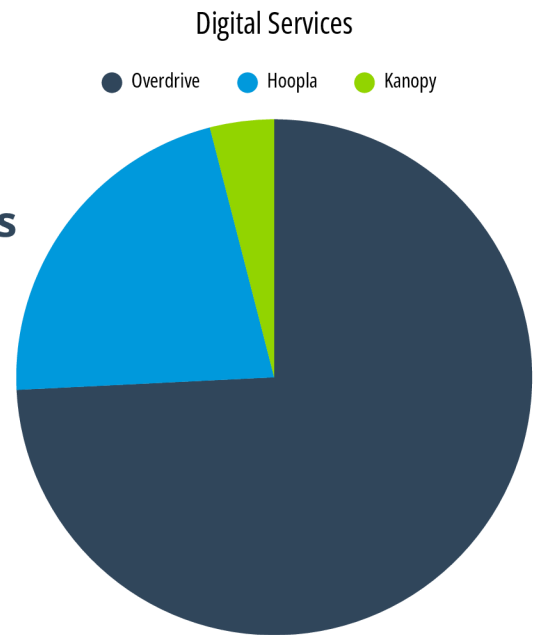


**467 program attendees**

# Technology

## Improvements, enhancements, and additions

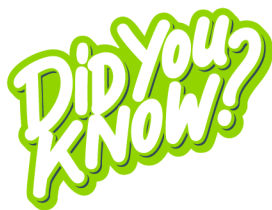
- Larger touchscreen OPACs
- New 3D printer with renewed public use
- Upgraded staff computers to improve efficiency and internal communications.
- Updated web pages and layouts to improve navigation and accessibility.
- Improved wi-fi speeds at Centennial
- Catalogue updates to accessibility: improving keyboard navigation, colour contrast, screen magnification support and form usability.
- Added *Accessibility Request Form* to website



50% increase



140% increase



We offer a French e-book platform called Cantook??

## Website Statistics

City	Visits 2025	Weekly Average
Fort Erie	6,721	129
Toronto	5,970	114
Niagara Falls, ON	1,221	23
Columbus, OH	1,047	20
St. Catharines	462	9

# Financial Statements

This is an excerpt from the 2025 Audited Financial Statements prepared by Doane Grant Thornton LLP

	Budget 2025	Actual 2025	Actual 2024
<b>Revenues</b>			
Municipal Contribution	\$1,702,699	\$1,703,301	\$1,647,538
Government Contribution	\$60,682	\$60,682	\$64,027
Other	\$79,623	\$88,795	\$34,275
	\$1,843,004	\$1,852,778	\$1,745,840
<b>Expenses</b>			
Administration	\$93,250	\$114,572	\$160,968
Amortization	\$164,377	\$164,377	\$172,462
Electronic Resource Maintenance	\$21,300	\$34,304	\$29,060
Electronic Resources	\$41,400	\$66,705	\$73,384
Programs	\$7,500	\$4,702	\$5,258
Repairs and Maintenance	\$75,350	\$117,294	\$138,253
Salaries, wages, and benefits	\$1,430,904	\$1,357,519	\$1,263,186
Supplies <i>(includes supplies for Programs)</i>	\$21,900	\$40,993	\$18,116
Supplies and Materials associated with donations	--	\$529	\$20,800
Utilities	\$60,400	\$50,081	\$50,243
	\$1,916,381	\$1,951,076	\$1,931,730
		-\$98,298	-\$185,890

# Partner Recognition

Thank you to our generous sponsors and partners!!



Friends of the Fort Erie Public Library



Community Volunteer  
Income Tax Program



Giving Hope Today



# Contact Us



905-871-2546



136 Gilmore Rd Fort Erie, L2A 2M1



info@fepl.ca



www.fepl.ca

Find out about upcoming programs and registration dates right away - sign up at [fepl.ca/newsletter](https://fepl.ca/newsletter)

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