



Valuing Ontario Libraries

Public libraries are critical cultural and social infrastructure for the communities they serve. They are integral for building personal, entrepreneurial, and social capacity through access to information, programs, and opportunities for community engagement. To measure the Social Return on Investment (SROI) of library services, the Huron County Library completed the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit which looked at the impact on education, culture, inclusion & well-being, entertainment & leisure, economic development, civic engagement, and space.

The results demonstrate the significant value the library has in the community and supports the library's continued work to bring people, information and ideas together to enrich lives and support a thriving community.



EDUCATION

Libraries play a critical role in providing access to literacy and educational opportunities.

“ I homeschooled my children and always found the materials I needed. Staff were super helpful and welcoming to my children.

The benefit of education services is valued at:

\$1,360,502



CULTURE

Libraries contribute to increasing cultural vitality and cultivating a sense of local identity.

“ The Trash Theatre performances are amazing! They are so great with the kids!

The benefit of culture services is valued at:

\$346,459



INCLUSION & WELL-BEING

Libraries foster social inclusion and well-being by providing equitable access to services.

“ I'm thankful that youth in Huron County can be offered a safe space to connect with others who are part of the LGBTQ2S+ community.

The benefit of inclusion & well-being services is valued at:

\$529,672



ENTERTAINMENT & LEISURE

Libraries expand horizons and build social connections through programs and services.

“ The library was absolutely critical to me as a child and has remained so. Good staff and interlibrary loans are the most important to me.

The benefit of entertainment & leisure services is valued at:

\$10,003,283



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Libraries advance local economic growth through employment, programs and resources.

“ I love the partnerships the library has with community groups, like the Community Volunteer Income Tax Program.

The benefit of economic development services is valued at:

\$3,373,143



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Libraries strengthen community bonds by building social capital and fostering relationships.

“ I am so thankful my son and I have the library to come to. We are new to the country and are trying to meet new people.

The benefit of civic engagement is valued at:

\$26,916



SPACE

Libraries provide spaces for community activities and connections.

“ We love the library. We love the little nook in Clinton, the toys in Brussels, and the space and activities in Seaforth.

The benefit of space provided by the library is valued at:

\$1,916,003

Overall economic benefit to the community:

\$17,555,981

Overall economic benefit per resident

\$286

Overall economic benefit per household

\$596

Every \$1 invested in the library generates

\$4.66 or **465%** SROI

Economic benefit for every hour open to the public

\$413