2025 VIRL Budget

Adopted September 14, 2024
By Vancouver Island Regional Library Board of Trustees

Vancouver Island Regional Library
Administration

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2025 VIRL Budget

Background

VIRL delivers tremendous economies of scale and significant returns on investment, by working with 38 local governments across a 42K km^2 service area. Our collective services are a demonstrable commitment to livability and affordability in the region and are enjoyed by nearly a third of residents overall. These services include free access to dynamic programming and events, bookable meeting rooms, and 39 branches that are essential Third Spaces in communities large and small. VIRL has the third-largest public library collection in BC, featuring downloadable e-books, audiobooks, digital news, streaming services, children's materials, and much more.

Entering its 89th year as a public library shared-service provider in 2025, VIRL continues to benchmark well in delivering on its mandate, at scale. In 2024, VIRL's overall local government funding per library branch was the lowest in our comparator cohort (8 B.C. systems/138 branches serving populations of 200K+). Based on 11 subset cohort analyses conducted in-year, VIRL's local government members are providing funding below, at or very near the cohort averages for the library system's robust, high-impact collective services.

Budget 2025 has developed in context of VIRL's foundational documents – including the 2023 Strategic and Facilities Master Plans – and Board approved budget 2025 guiding principles. In Q1 2024, a new Audit and Finance Special Committee (AFSC) was established. With respect to budget development, the AFSC Terms of Reference says in part that the AFSC oversight committee will "…ensure the organization is operating with the financial resources it needs to provide its services to member communities [and will] Review the annual forecasts, operating and capital budgets recommended by staff and either suggest changes or recommend adoption at the Q3 Executive Committee and Board meetings."

Discussion

VIRL is funded primarily (95%) through levies from 38 member local governments, with remaining revenue (5%) from grants and other income. The annual budget is constrained by the availability of revenues, which fund the annual operating expenditures.

For the 2025 budget process, staff developed preliminary expenditure estimates on a modified "needs based" approach for all operating expenses. This approach involved examining the year's variance reports, as well as historical spending patterns, inflation and market inflation integration, to project 2025 expenditure budget requirements. All department heads were involved in this participative budgeting model. This method provides a global picture of VIRL's cost pressures and allows for detailed discussion of where to prioritize spending.

Wages and benefits budgets for 2025 have been modelled based on 2024 approved positions, with budget lifts where there are known impacts on wage levels such as collective agreement negotiated changes, step progressions, or relevant federal or provincial regulatory changes. The proposed budget reflects refined wage and benefits calculations within the overall envelope, considering the Standardized Schedule and Operating Review – scheduled to complete in 2024 - and necessary restoration of frozen vacancies.

Inflation is a key factor in the budget development process. The most recent inflation data published by BC Stats as of July 2024 shows a 12-month average inflation rate of 2.8%. Statistics Canada concurs. Levelling is projected, though not with market inflation. Therefore, the high-level budget generally includes an allowance of 3% for inflation to the end of 2025, unless agreed upon contractual terms indicate price increases will be more or less than this amount.

Revenue - Preliminary Assumptions

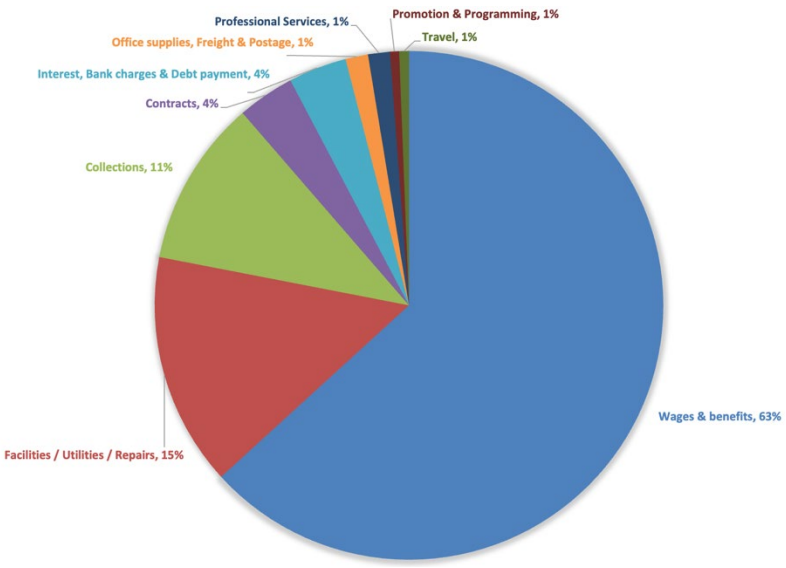
VIRL anticipates receiving approximately 95% of its revenue from member levies and approximately <5% from government and foundation grants. The remaining <1% is made up of ancillary revenues such as interest income and miscellaneous fees (photocopiers, sale of promotional items, room rentals, etc.). In Q3 2024, VIRL's revised donations policy will come into effect, and we are working to develop our capacity in this area to further defray pressures on valued local government members – a modest (15%) lift in donations revenue is anticipated in 2025, the first year under the new policy. VIRL has strategic ambitions to pilot mobile infrastructure in a logistically supportable location in 2025, yet no revenue or expenditures are projected in budget for this initiative for now.

Operating Expenditures - Preliminary Assumptions

Overall, projected top level expenditure categories as a percentage of total operating expenditures remain unchanged from 2024. Chart 1 summarizes these categories and their relative percentages.

The cost of operating library facilities continues to be a significant component of VIRL's overall budget at 15%. Cost pressures greater than inflation are expected in lease fees primarily related to the rental of space for library operations. The projected budget increases are a combination of continuing and projected renegotiated lease terms.

Utilities and other facilities related costs (such as security, janitorial, landscaping and telecom) are also projected to rise by more than inflation in 2025 given fixed contracts and required maintenance.



Wages and benefits are the largest component of the overall expenditures budget at 63% of total operating expenses. Assumptions inherent in the wages budget modelling include collective agreement uplifts for BCGEU (Collective Agreement expires December 31, 2024), CUPE and exempt employees. The wage increase for pages reflects the most recent increase in the B.C. minimum wage, and another expected in 2025. Statutory changes in the employers' portion of CPP and EI first became effective in 2024, and these will impact the benefits rate in 2025.

VIRL manages perennial and changing demand on its collections. A core and strategic service offering, collections expenditures represent 11% of our operating budget, and the expenditure is comparable to VIRL's cohort. 38% of our collection usage in now digital, and VIRL works at scale, within regional, provincial and national consortia to secure favourable licensing terms for digital and physical collections, and to support the insatiable content, format and accessibility demands of the communities we serve.

Included in the draft 2025 high-level operational budget are expenditures greater than 10% variance in the following areas:

- Lease fees: the projected budget increases are a combination of continuing and projected renegotiated lease terms.
- Professional services: the projected budget increases are a combination of continuing engagements and renewals of legacy systems in support of business continuity.
- Promotion and programming: the projected budget *decrease* reprioritizes initiatives in other expenditure categories.
- Repairs and maintenance: the projected budget increases are a combination of fleet costs and required HVAC maintenance in a few locations.

Reserves Contributions and Withdrawals

Recent conversations have surfaced continuing Trustee desire for a second reserve restructuring, insofar as the approach yields a higher degree of transparency. Recalling the purpose of a reserve fund - to tell financial statement users about internal or external restrictions on a public sector's resources: given there are insufficient underlying resources currently, there is a continuing concern that reserve fund designations may be misleading to a current user of the financial statements.

In this context, the draft 2025 budget projects limited contributions and draws to reserves in 2025, in anticipation of a second reserve restructuring, reported separately.

Impact on Total Member Levy

The total member levy will increase by $1.9M or 5.97% over 2024.

- Combining all factors, the operating levy is projected to increase by $1.9M or 7%.
- The Board previously approved a capital levy increase of 1.37% for each of 2024, 2025 and 2026, based on the 13-year capital levy average. Within this envelope, a series of continuing or in-year maintenance, deferred maintenance and information technology initiatives are projected in 2025. Two Facilities Business Cases – Tahsis and Tofino - are also included in the draft budget, emerging from the Facilities Master Plan prioritization process. There is more pressure within the capital pipeline than the levy can maintain, and staff have worked diligently to find more than $180K in savings to balance priorities.

- In 2025, staff will research and develop options with respect to capital levy modelling for 2027 forward. The objective is to socialize a proposal in Fall 2025.

Conclusion

Staff are grateful for the input of the AFSC and Executive Committees in June and July. This budget is recommended for approval by the Committees.

Business Case

Topic: Tahsis Branch

Purpose: Provide business case and options to continue library service in a new location.

Recommendation

That the plans to transition into public sector lease at Captain Meares Elementary/Secondary School be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Background

The Tahsis branch is situated on the traditional territories of the Nuu-chah-nulth peoples. VIRL leases the current 900 ft^2 branch from the Village of Tahsis (VoT), and the branch is categorized by VIRL as Small/Rural (<1,000 population). The branch has been in its current iteration since 1983 and the building dates from 1970. Village of Tahsis requested a new location in 2021, following a stalled VIRL refurbishment effort in 2017. Here is a select timeline:

2016 & earlier: Structural improvements to the collocated Municipal Hall, and for the library to stay at its current location, were unfeasible economically for VoT. VIRL consults with VoT staff and School District #84 to identify Captain Meares Elementary/Secondary School (CMESS) collocation as alternative location.

2017: Negotiations are completed on the costs for a ten-year lease at CMESS. Construction tender documents finalized and posted publicly for bidder responses, and geotechnical work completed. Site meeting held with potential contractors, yet tender cancelled due to new WorkSafeBC regulations on employer responsibilities for locations with hazardous materials that came into effect May 1. New regulatory variables were expected to increase budget significantly, and the project was aborted.

Discussion

Appendix B: Population, Demographics, and Usage Analysis - demonstrates Tahsis has a high percentage of active cardholders and steady in-branch usage. As in Haida Gwaii, the rates of childhood vulnerability in the community and region are troubling, and the library is an essential and demonstrable commitment of community infrastructure in this context.

In 2023, the Board approved VIRL's Facilities Master Plan (FMP), inclusive of prioritized branch rankings. In 2024, Tahsis ranks 1st on both the FMP's Appendix III – Final Branch Ranking, and Appendix IV – Conditions Assessment Summary. It ranks 3rd on Appendix V – Capital Projects – Member Requests.

The facility condition assessment completed March 2023 notes that "the building appears to have been in desperate need of maintenance for some time and now appears entirely past its serviceable life span. New metal roof over a questionable structure."

The assessment concludes that the "overall condition of the Tahsis Library is poor, there are significant life safety and costly deterioration that require addressing."

It should be noted that status quo is no longer an option given the facility condition assessment completed in 2023. Staff explored a few service options for Tahsis, yet only one option is recommended, as below.

Staff explored closing the branch and offering service through Books-By-Mail (BBM). BBM is VIRL's mail service for people who live in a particularly remote location within our service area. In addition to servicing particularly remote residential addresses, BBM is a service to those living in lighthouses, research centres, fishing camps, and supply outposts. Library users request materials via phone or online, and receive scheduled mailouts via Canada Post. BBM is currently being reviewed in context of our mobile infrastructure and associated, strategic commitments. Transitioning Tahsis users to BBM service is not recommended. While isolated, Tahsis addresses are not considered remote for the purposes of BBM eligibility, and existing service levels would be negatively impacted by the removal of in-branch browsing, programming, public space, public computers, printing/photocopying, and WiFi.

The FMP makes provisions for Alternate Service Designation (ASD)[1], and two ASD approaches were also explored by staff:

1. While the size and population of Tahsis might indicate it as a good candidate for mobile service delivery, geographic isolation and challenging road conditions leaves it disconnected from any reasonably workable mobile service base, logistically.

2. Transitioning Tahsis to a Self-Service Holds Pickup Service location. Such a location would feature a "smart locker," providing library users with an easy-to-use and customizable holds pickup, browsing, account management, and returns self-service locker experience. Given the collocated partner agencies at CMESS school, it could be a reasonably convenient self-service holds pickup location, offering a modicum of library services.

   Specialized equipment in this model would require capital investment and ongoing licensing, and operational costs associated with shipping and resupply would also be ongoing. Isolation and road conditions represent significant logistical challenges for a reliable service model with this approach, and ultimately, transitioning Tahsis to a self-service location is also not a recommended approach.

[1] For more information on Alternate Service Designations, see Appendix D.

Recommendation: Transition to Public Sector Lease at Captain Meares Elementary/Secondary School (CMESS)

A public sector lease opportunity in the existing CMESS exists. Built in 1972 with a wing added in 1976, CMESS is currently undergoing renovations to consolidate the used classrooms into one wing of the building: a former 1,855 ft^2 classroom, adjacent to what may become VoT offices, is large enough to accommodate library branch space, including an accessible washroom, staff room, telecommunications and network closet, and janitor closet.

Featuring a gymnasium, playground, sports fields and adjacent recreation centre, a StrongStart centre, a public daycare maintained by VoT, and the Tahsis Seniors Society, CMESS is a focal point for community events as well an intergenerational hub and education centre in Tahsis. Transitioning to a public sector lease at CMESS is the only option that maintains current library service levels in Tahsis, while also aligning with VIRL's foundational documents, including its Vision, Mission and Values. Collocating the library with aligned community partners also presents the best opportunity for strengthened literacy impact in the community.

Financial Considerations

Using a unit price methodology developed for VIRL's most recent projects, the total one-time lease-transfer costs for Tahsis are estimated at $327K with annual facility operating costs (lease, maintenance, janitorial, health & safety, etc.) estimated at $81K ($43.58/ft^2) vs. $9K ($10.22/ft^2) in 2024. This unit price differential reflects the proposed larger branch size (from existing 900 ft^2 to 1,855 ft^2) and the new lease aligning more closely with typical commercial terms, whereas current costs represent favourable legacy rates in effect since 2011. Incremental labour costs associated with expanded space and services would accrue starting in 2026, yet are forecasted to be modest.

One Time Costs	Amount
Construction estimate (2024)	$237,751
Construction Price Index forecast for 2025 (assumed at 8%)	$ 19,020
Construction estimate (2025)	$256,771
Furniture and Moving Costs	$ 70,000
Total Project Cost (2025)	**$326,771**

Annual Costs	Rent, tax inclusive	Utilities & Custodial	Maintenance	Total
New, 1,855 sq ft space	$52,248	$27,266	$1,336	**$80,850**

Appendix A: Tahsis Branch Photos April 2024

Tahsis branch sits above the municipal offices.

Appendix B: Population, Demographics, and Usage Analysis

- Tahsis population increased by 58% from 2016 to 2021: total population is 393.
- 37% of the population has a library card and 87% of cardholders are 20 years or older.
- On average, the population is 53, with the median age of 58.
- 39% of the Tahsis population lives in single-detached houses, with 1% living in an apartment or flat in a duplex. 1% of Tahsis residents live in households that have 5 or more persons, with 22% in households with 2 persons.
- 49% of children are vulnerable on one or more scales of the Early Development Instrument's (EDI) Wave 8 data (2016-2019). The provincial average is 32.9%.

	Branch Average	Branch Performance
Percent of Pop with card	37%	37%
Circ/Cardholder	22.49	24.51
Circ/Open Hour	27.15	3.57
Staffing Cost/Circ	$ 5.54	$ 9.85
Staffing Cost per cardholder	$ 123.91	$ 241.51

An analysis of branch performance metrics uses five criteria to determine the operational usage performance of a branch relative to other branches in the system. The overall branch performance score is the sum of the variance between Branch Performance and the threshold target. Tahsis scores acceptable in 3/5 criteria and ranks 35th in the overall branch performance score. Tahsis meets the minimal acceptable systemwide threshold targets.

An analysis of Tahsis borrowing behaviour indicates that while Tahsis users pick up the most holds at their branch as compared to the overall system, the split between in-person collection browsing versus requesting and picking up holds is nearly 50/50. Library users are making good use of the branch in the community.

Appendix C: At a Glance – Current Branch Programs and Services

With the support of partner relationships, Tahsis branch offers programs and services in the community to all ages:

- Community Support Technician from Campbell River visits branch monthly to delivery technology support by appointment.
- Monthly children's craft activity targeting children under 12 with their caregiver, featuring a different artform.
- In partnership with the Tahsis Literacy Society and offered by a local resident, Stop Motion Club occurs every Wednesday evening February-June, targeting ages 7-17 and supporting digital literacy and creative skill development.
- Local author readings sponsored by the Tahsis Literacy Society.
- Promotion of system-wide virtual programming including Learning with Syeyutsus and the Virtual Gardening Series.
- Spring Break puppet show and Summer Reading Club programming.
- Maintains the "Tahsis Community Calendar," a monthly event listing of all Tahsis community events including those offered by the Tahsis Literacy Society, Tahsis Seniors Society, VoT (including council meetings, Recreation Centre activities, and economic development activities), Good Food Box Food Security Program dates, CMESS - sponsored events, as well as Strathcona Regional District Emergency Services events.

Features include:

- 1 public computer, printer/photocopier, and high-speed WiFi
- A study table and limited seating capacity throughout the branch
- A small, dedicated children's area

In-branch Collection size:

- 5,500

Hours of Operation (Open 20 hours a week):

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	Closed
Wednesday	1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Thursday	10:00 am – 12:00 pm, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Friday	10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Saturday	10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Sunday	Closed

Appendix D: Alternate Service Designation

Alternate Service Designation (ASD) is a service model that provides public library service to people who may not have access to a "bricks and mortar" library branch, or where there is a physical barrier which makes getting to a library more challenging. ASDs can be used to fill gaps and augment services, particularly when undertaken in partnership with other community resources. Examples of ASDs include bookmobiles (land or sea), self-service kiosks like lending machines or holds pickup lockers, pop-up libraries, deposit collections, and embedded partnership models. Funding frameworks include operational budgets, grants, endowment, and government services partnerships.

Characteristics of ASDs:

- Diverse, flexible, and embrace partnerships to respond to community need.
- Allow libraries to respond to service demands and promote equity.
- Delivered off-site to connect with the community through services, programs, events, and collections.
- Recognize local and regional ecologies, including hub and spoke service delivery in a community or in multiple communities in a region.
- Create places that facilitate community connection and social cohesion, and contribute to the economic, environmental, and cultural wellbeing of a community.
- Contribute to the reduction of fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions in the region.
- Provide access to underserved or isolated communities with a focus on vulnerable populations.

Criteria for ASD Consideration:

- There is no existing branch in community, or FMP flags existing branch as below standard and recommends a replacement facility.
- Existing branch has very low usage overall and replacing a facility in the existing community would represent a major Capital investment. Usage is indicated by analyzing branch operational usage performance criteria relative to other branches in the system and an acceptable threshold target.
- Community population falls Small/Rural (1K-8K) or Small/Rural (<1K) as designated by the FMP.
- Opportunity to partner with other values-aligned service agencies operating in community to leverage service delivery.

Appendix E: The Case for Rural Libraries

As rural communities re-envision and reposition themselves, the library plays a key role in revitalizing communities, contributing to quality of life of residents, spaces to connect, and programs and services for all ages. The services and connections that happen in libraries contribute to social, economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability within a community.

Challenges for rural communities include declining and aging populations, higher cost of living, problems with youth retention, limited economic and social opportunities for residents, depleting natural resources/climate change, and loss of local services.

Across Canada, libraries in rural and northern communities are investing in new services and partnerships directly tied to poverty reduction, language preservation, youth development, job development, tourism, health, food security, broadband connectivity, and education.

Infrastructure

Challenges associated with aging library buildings include safety, comfort, and technology requirements for a 21st century library. Emerging library services and programs are limited in aging facilities and present barriers to provide essential community services. In Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civil Life (2018), Klinenberg chronicles the innumerable benefits of social infrastructure investments in communities large and small. Shared spaces like Public Libraries are leading examples in his analysis, and have increasingly complex operating and regulatory environments, owing to their unique mandate, shifting community needs, intersecting crises, and the responsive and evolving Collective Services they deliver[2].

Investing in library infrastructure in rural and remote communities contributes to:

- Capacity building in the community: building partnerships and networking opportunities
- Creating people focused spaces that support community gathering, learning, connection and transformation
- Bridging the digital divide by offering a variety of media, tools, resources, and services
- Flexible gathering spaces that build community partnerships, networking opportunities and foster collaborations
- Increasing social inclusion and build stronger communities
- Improving physical environment and fostering common experiences that express a sense of place
- Rural revitalization, increasing community participation and dialogue
- Creating a space that draws people together who would otherwise not be engaged
- Anchoring and refuge for community
- Supporting local tourism and tourism initiatives

[2] Read or listen via the libby app and your VIRL card!... eBook | audiobook | hard copy

- Youth engagement and connection
- Providing a welcoming space for all and providing a "third place" for the community

Select resources:

- https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/rural/en/rural-opportunity-national-prosperity-economic-development-strategy-rural-canada
- https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/rural/en
- https://www.oecd.org/regional/rural-development/
- https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/rnc-crn-eng.html

Business Case for Decision

Topic: Tofino Branch

Purpose: Provide business case for a lease transition into a new mixed-use building.

Recommendation

That the plans for a lease transition into a new mixed-use building be approved by the Board of Trustees.

Background

There are three Nuh-cha-nulth First Nations whose territories encompass Clayoquot Sound: the Hesquiaht, Ahousat and Tla-o-qui-aht. The Tofino branch is situated on the unceded territories of the Tla-o-qui-aht people. VIRL leases the current 1,000 ft^2 branch from the Royal Canadian Legion Clayoquot Branch #65, and the branch is categorized by VIRL as Small/Rural (1K-8K population). The branch has been in its current iteration since 2006 and the building dates from 1970. District of Tofino requested a new location in 2013 and again in 2017. Here is a select timeline:

2013-2015: "…Council direct[s] staff to advise VIRL that the District is soon to be undertaking a Civic Centre feasibility study, and that the District is hoping to include a library as a consideration in that plan." VIRL participates in needs assessment exercise, and final study / design includes library as part of mixed-use facility that also collocates theatre, municipal, public, and leasable office space.

2016-2018: VIRL staff present to Tofino Council regarding VIRL's facility decision process. Council makes a resolution "that staff identify and evaluate potential locations on municipally owned land, for the Tofino branch of the VIRL…" following which community consultation verifies preference for a mixed-use building. VIRL receives an official member request for an updated location and commits to revisiting project in 2018. Council makes a resolution "that the District of Tofino Council's preference for a new VIRL site is 385 & 391 Main Street." The District, Clayoquot Biosphere Trust, and VIRL explore the feasibility of a mixed-use building that would combine a biosphere centre, a library, and attainable housing.

2019-2021: Catalyst Community Developments Society prepares a draft report on viability of a mixed-use building. Project abandoned, and VIRL and District discuss opportunities for stand-alone prototype branch.

2023: VIRL receives notification in April that the current branch landlord is now under trusteeship, raising serious concern about service continuity.

Discussion

In 2023, the Board approved VIRL's Facilities Master Plan (FMP), inclusive of prioritized branch rankings. Tofino ranked 6th on the FMP's Appendix III – Final Branch Ranking, 8th on Appendix IV – Condition Assessment Summary, and 2nd on Appendix V – Capital

Projects – Member Requests. In 2024, Tofino ranks only below the cohort that includes Masset, Tahsis, and Campbell River, and ahead of all other high-priority, currently viable prospects.

There is potential for public sector lease transition to a new mixed-use build in the vicinity of Tofino's District Hall, with the possibility of shared amenities. The main drivers to proceed on this project are:

- Landlord under trusteeship, with no identifiable lease options available: serious risk to service continuity
- Condition Assessment findings - building exterior: accessibility and drainage issues
- Condition Assessment findings - building interior: insufficient fire protection, no accessible public washroom or HVAC; presence of asbestos, and seismic and BC Building Code issues
- Underserved community given the limitations of the current facility, significant seasonal population fluctuations and anticipated population growth
- District-led, mixed-use facility opportunity emerging, with space for VIRL
- Availability of Capital Project funds to commence planning with the District in 2025: remainder of funds to be committed in 2026, pending emergent opportunity

Financial Considerations

While building-specific details are pending, the emerging model is a lease or co-contributed approach in a mixed-use facility. Preliminary one-time costing uses 2,100 ft^2 as a minimum branch size baseline for a Small/Rural (1K-8K) VIRL branch designation. Using a unit price methodology developed for VIRL's most recent Capital projects, the total one-time project cost for Tofino is estimated at $1.7M, inclusive of a projected 8% increase in Construction Price Index in 2025. 2025 Budget v.2.0 commits 10% of the Tofino project funding in 2025 for planning purposes, leaving 90% of the project funding to Budget 2026.

Annual operating costs (lease, maintenance, janitorial, health & safety, etc.) estimated for a new branch are expected to increase from $40K ($40/ft^2) to $88K ($41.10/ft^2) because of the proposed larger branch size (from existing 1,000 ft^2 to 2,100 ft^2). This unit price differential reflects the proposed larger branch size and a new lease aligning more closely with typical commercial terms, whereas current annual operating costs represent favourable legacy lease terms in overhold status since 2011. Incremental labour costs associated with expanded space and services would accrue starting in 2027, yet are forecasted to be modest.

One Time Costs	Amount
Construction estimate (2025)	$1,628,141
Furniture and Moving Costs	$ 80,000
Total Project Cost (2025 estimate)	$1,708,141
2025 Capital Plan Component (10%)	**$ 170,814**
2026 Forecast, pending 2026 adjustment (90%)	$1,457,327

Annual Costs (2027 forward)	Rent, tax inclusive	Utilities & Custodial	Maintenance	Total
New, 2,100 sq ft space	$TBC	$TBC	$TBC	**$88,000**

Appendix A: Tofino Branch Photos 2024

Appendix B: Population, Demographics, and Usage Analysis

- Tofino population increased 27.91% from 2016 to 2021: total population is 2,516.
- 35% of the population has a library card and 88% of cardholders are 20 years or older.
- On average, the population is 38, with a median age of 36.
- 19% of the population lives in single-detached houses, with 3% living in an apartment or flat in a duplex. 3% of Tofino residents live in households that have 5 or more persons, with 13% in households with 2 persons.
- 34.4% of Tofino's children are vulnerable on one or more scales of the Early Development Instrument's (EDI) wave 8 data (2016-2019). The provincial average is 32.9%.

	Branch Average	Branch Performance
Percent of Pop with card	37%	36%
Circ/Cardholder	22.49	16.14
Circ/Open Hour	27.15	14.61
Staffing Cost/Circ	$ 5.54	$ 2.73
Staffing Cost per cardholder	$ 123.91	$ 44.13

An analysis of branch performance metrics uses five criteria to determine the operational usage performance of a branch relative to other branches in the system. The overall branch performance score is the sum of the variance between Branch Performance and the threshold target. Tofino scores acceptable in 5/5 criteria and ranks 14th in the overall branch performance score. Tofino exceeds the minimal acceptable systemwide threshold targets.

Appendix C: At a Glance – Current Branch Programs and Services

Tofino branch offers the following programming and services in the community:

- Promotion of system-wide virtual programming including Learning with Syeyutsus and the Virtual Gardening Series
- Spring Break and Summer Reading Club programming
- Weekly Storytime as of April 2024

Features include:

- 2 public computers, printer/photocopier, and high-speed WiFi
- A study table and limited seating capacity throughout the branch
- A small, dedicated children's area

In-branch Collection size:

- 9,500

Hours of Operation (Open 20 hours a week):

- Monday Closed
- Tuesday Closed
- Wednesday 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
- Thursday 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm, 5:00 pm – 8:00 pm
- Friday 1:00 pm – 5 pm
- Saturday 10:00 am – 2:00 pm
- Sunday Closed

Appendix D: The Case for Rural Libraries

As rural communities re-envision and reposition themselves, the library plays a key role in revitalizing communities, contributing to the quality of life of residents, spaces to connect, and programs and services for all ages. The services and connections that happen in libraries contribute to social, economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability within a community.

Challenges for rural communities include declining and aging populations, higher cost of living, problems with youth retention, limited economic and social opportunities for residents, depleting natural resources/climate change, and loss of local services.

Across Canada, libraries in rural and northern communities are investing in new services and partnerships directly tied to poverty reduction, language preservation, youth development, job development, tourism, health, food security, broadband connectivity, and education.

Infrastructure

Challenges associated with aging library buildings include safety, comfort, and technology requirements for a 21st century library. Emerging library services and programs are limited in aging facilities and present barriers to provide essential community services. In Palaces for the People: How Social Infrastructure Can Help Fight Inequality, Polarization, and the Decline of Civil Life (2018), Klinenberg chronicles the innumerable benefits of social infrastructure investments in communities large and small. Shared spaces like Public Libraries are leading examples in his analysis, and have increasingly complex operating and regulatory environments, owing to their unique mandate, shifting community needs, intersecting crises, and the responsive and evolving Collective Services they deliver[1].

Investing in library infrastructure in rural and remote communities contributes to:

- Capacity building in the community: building partnerships and networking opportunities
- Creating people focused spaces that support community gathering, learning, connection and transformation
- Bridging the digital divide by offering a variety of media, tools, resources, and services
- Flexible gathering spaces that build community partnerships, networking opportunities and foster collaborations
- Increasing social inclusion and build stronger communities
- Improving physical environment and fostering common experiences that express a sense of place
- Rural revitalization, increasing community participation and dialogue.
- Creating a space that draws people together who would otherwise not be engaged
- Anchoring and refuge for community

[1] Read or listen via the libby app and your VIRL card!... eBook | audiobook | hard copy

- Supporting local tourism and tourism initiatives
- Youth engagement and connection
- Providing a welcoming space for all and providing a "third place" for the community

Select resources:

- https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/rural/en/rural-opportunity-national-prosperity-economic-development-strategy-rural-canada
- https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/rural/en
- https://www.oecd.org/regional/rural-development/
- https://www.infrastructure.gc.ca/plan/rnc-crn-eng.html

2025 VIRL Budget: High Level

	2025 Budget	$ Change	% Change	2024 Budget	2023 Actuals
Revenues					
Grant Revenue	1,774,370	416,370	31%	1,358,000	2,861,252
Levies Revenue	30,321,592	1,884,592	7%	28,437,000	23,450,033
Other Revenues	155,152	15,152	11%	140,000	468,587
Total Revenues	**32,251,114**	**2,316,114**	**8%**	**29,935,000**	**26,779,872**
Expenses					
Collections	3,419,600	99,600	3%	3,320,000	2,850,360
Contracts	1,171,635	82,635	8%	1,089,000	899,064
Debt Repayment	742,000	-	0%	742,000	765,713
Freight and Postage	247,000	-	0%	247,000	182,833
Interest and Bank Charges	453,000	2,000	0%	451,000	624,850
Lease Fees	2,678,466	297,466	12%	2,381,000	2,173,975
Office Supplies	214,440	7,440	4%	207,000	247,563
Professional Development	126,101	3,101	3%	123,000	55,767
Professional Services	447,702	161,702	57%	286,000	182,437
Promotion and Programming	186,100	(51,900)	-22%	238,000	82,426
Repairs and Maintenance	318,028	65,028	26%	253,000	472,567
Travel	199,500	10,500	6%	189,000	253,297
Utilities and Facilities related costs	1,783,295	33,295	2%	1,750,000	1,637,513
Wages and Benefits	20,264,247	843,247	4%	19,421,000	17,640,866
Total Expenses	**32,251,114**	**1,554,114**	**5%**	**30,697,000**	**28,069,231**
Net income (loss) from operations	**(0)**	**762,000**	**-100%**	**(762,000)**	**(1,289,359)**
Capital					
Capital Levies	4,135,896	55,896	1%	4,080,000	4,051,743
Capital Expenditures	(4,135,896)	(1,953,104)	-32%	(6,089,000)	(1,025,288)
Net income (loss) from capital	**(0)**	**2,009,000**	-100%	**(2,009,000)**	**3,026,455**
Net Income (loss) - TOTAL	**(0)**	**2,771,000**	-100%	**(2,771,000)**	**1,737,096**

2025 VIRL Budget: Operating Budget - High Level

Appendix A

	2025 Budget	$ Change	% Change	2024 Budget	Variance analysis >10%
Revenues					
Grant Revenue	1,774,370	416,370	31%	1,358,000	Masset grants; MUNI Year 2/2
Levies Revenue	30,321,592	1,884,592	7%	28,437,000	
Other Revenues	155,152	15,152	11%	140,000	Fundraising, fees & merch, interest
Total Revenues	**32,251,114**	**2,316,114**	**8%**	**29,935,000**	
Expenses					
Collections	3,419,600	99,600	3%	3,320,000	
Contracts	1,171,635	82,635	8%	1,089,000	
Debt Repayment	742,000	-	0%	742,000	
Freight and Postage	247,000	-	0%	247,000	
Interest and Bank Charges	453,000	2,000	0%	451,000	
Lease Fees	2,678,466	297,466	12%	2,381,000	Parksville & Port Alberni projected renewals; contract lifts for all others
Office Supplies	214,440	7,440	4%	207,000	
Professional Development	126,101	3,101	3%	123,000	
Professional Services	447,702	161,702	57%	286,000	Continuing engagements & renewals of legacy systems in support of business continuity
Promotion and Programming	186,100	(51,900)	-22%	238,000	Reallocated to align with strategic priorities
Repairs and Maintenance	318,028	65,028	26%	253,000	Fleet & facility maintenance set at 2023 actuals; AED batteries
Travel	199,500	10,500	6%	189,000	
Utilities and Facilities related costs	1,783,295	33,295	2%	1,750,000	
Wages and Benefits	20,264,247	843,247	4%	19,421,000	
Total Expenses	**32,251,114**	**1,554,114**	**5%**	**30,697,000**	
Net Income (loss) from operations	**(0)**			**(762,000)**	

2025 VIRL Budget: Capital Budget - High Level

Appendix B

	2025 Budget	$ Change	% Change	2024 Budget	Variance analysis >10%
Total Capital Revenues (levies)	**4,135,896**	**55,896**	**1.37%**	**4,080,000**	
Capital Expenditures					
Information Technology - Public computing lease	200,000	-	0%	200,000	
Information Technology - Staff computing lease		-			
Information Technology - End user computing	292,704	(107,297)	-27%	400,000	Reduced to maintain levy
Information Technology - Network refresh	-	(260,000)	-100%	260,000	Prior year project - complete
Information Technology - People counters	50,000	50,000	100%	-	Prior year project at tender: yr 1 of 4
Information Technology - Self check lease	104,000	104,000	100%	-	Reserve funded in 2024: ongoing lease
Information Technology - Managed print renewal	80,000	80,000	100%	-	End of life replacements
Facilities - Furniture & Equipment	193,048	(25,952)	-12%	219,000	Inlcudes 4 tailgates / OH&S; reduced re: levy
Facilities - Nanaimo HVAC refresh	-	(890,000)	-100%	890,000	Prior year project - complete
Facilities - Masset	-	(2,420,000)	-100%	2,420,000	Prior year project
Facilities - Tofino Business Case	170,814	170,814	100%	-	10% of project funding in Part 1 of 2
Facilities - Tahsis Business Case	326,771	326,771	100%	-	Per business case
Facilities - Harbourfront Roof	966,000	966,000	100%	-	Critical deferred maintenance
Finance - Ammortization	1,752,560	52,560	3%	1,700,000	
Total Capital Expenditures	**4,135,896**	**(1,953,103)**	**-32%**	**6,089,000**	$2M less than previous year via complete projects & realized savings
Facilities - Campbell River upgrade	**-**	(1,200,000)	-100%	1,200,000	Prior year funding via debt
Net Income (loss) from capital	**(0)**			**(2,009,000)**	

2025 VIRL Budget: Reserve Fund Continuity

Appendix C

	Year End 2023	2024 Budget Reserve Contributions (approved)	2024 Budget Reserve Expenses (projected)	2024 Budget Reserve Adjustment	2025 Budget Reserve Contribution (proposed)	2025 Budget Reserve Expenses (proposed)	Year End 2025 (projected)
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G=A+B+C+D+E+
Internally Restricted Funds							
(External) Friends of the Library	17,508	-	-	(1,311)	-	-	**16,197**
(External) Fundraising	509,002	-	(262,223)	-	-	-	**246,779**
Computer Systems & Network	1,219,276	250,000	(660,000)	(809,276)	726,704	(726,704)	**-**
Integrated Library System	150,003	50,000	-	(200,003)	-	-	**-**
Long-term maintenance	333,451	1,018,585	(1,040,000)	(312,036)	966,000	(966,000)	**-**
Furniture & Equipment / renewal	94,040	200,000	(200,000)	(94,040)	143,048	(143,048)	**-**
New branches	3,024,995		(2,420,000)	5	-	(605,000)	**-**
Vehicles / replacement	27,833	30,000	-	(57,833)	50,000	(50,000)	**-**
Strategic Planning	21,458	-	-	(21,458)	-	-	**-**
	-	-	-	-	-	-	**-**
Reserve Activity	**5,397,566**	**1,548,585**	**(4,582,223)**	**(1,495,952)**	**1,885,752**	**(2,490,752)**	**262,976**
	Opening Balance				**Contributions**	**Withdrawals**	**Closing Balance**

2025 VIRL Budget: Member Levies by Apportionment **Appendix D**

Municipalities	2024 Total Levy	2025 Population	Converted Land Value	Apportionment per $100 of Shared Cost	Operating Levy	$ Change	% Change	Capital Levy	$ Change	% Change	TOTAL Levy	$ Change	% Change
Campbell River	$ 2,222,144	38,658	$ 1,249,874,256	$ 6.89	$ 2,088,486	$ 145,169	7%	$ 284,872	$ 6,044	2%	$ 2,373,357	$ 151,213	7%
Comox	$ 949,691	15,902	$ 536,094,471	$ 2.89	$ 875,174	$ 44,648	5%	$ 119,375	$ 210	0%	$ 994,549	$ 44,858	5%
Courtenay	$ 1,907,348	31,242	$ 1,143,895,800	$ 5.89	$ 1,785,781	$ 117,761	7%	$ 243,582	$ 4,254	2%	$ 2,029,363	$ 122,016	6%
Cumberland	$ 293,758	4,901	$ 168,310,698	$ 0.90	$ 271,988	$ 15,090	6%	$ 37,099	$ 240	1%	$ 309,088	$ 15,329	5%
Daajing Giids	$ 50,141	1,033	$ 21,529,339	$ 0.16	$ 47,119	$ 3,269	7%	$ 6,427	$ 135	2%	$ 53,546	$ 3,405	7%
Duncan	$ 318,504	5,513	$ 172,559,431	$ 0.97	$ 293,677	$ 15,138	5%	$ 40,058	$ 93	0%	$ 333,734	$ 15,231	5%
Gold River	$ 62,660	1,296	$ 26,103,275	$ 0.19	$ 58,451	$ 3,653	7%	$ 7,973	$ 110	1%	$ 66,424	$ 3,763	6%
Ladysmith	$ 578,184	9,690	$ 329,750,086	$ 1.77	$ 535,546	$ 29,911	6%	$ 73,049	$ 500	1%	$ 608,595	$ 30,411	5%
Lake Cowichan	$ 218,416	3,748	$ 115,730,899	$ 0.65	$ 198,496	$ 7,486	4%	$ 27,075	$ (331)	-1%	$ 225,572	$ 7,155	3%
Lantzville	$ 299,871	4,099	$ 209,695,425	$ 0.92	$ 277,938	$ 15,693	6%	$ 37,911	$ 284	1%	$ 315,849	$ 15,977	5%
Masset	$ 37,850	766	$ 16,788,545	$ 0.12	$ 35,543	$ 2,443	7%	$ 4,848	$ 99	2%	$ 40,391	$ 2,541	7%
Nanaimo	$ 6,520,790	108,438	$ 3,815,894,098	$ 20.07	$ 6,085,204	$ 382,623	7%	$ 830,028	$ 11,819	1%	$ 6,915,232	$ 394,442	6%
North Cowichan	$ 2,136,007	34,546	$ 1,279,183,120	$ 6.55	$ 1,985,115	$ 117,128	6%	$ 270,772	$ 2,752	1%	$ 2,255,887	$ 119,880	6%
North Saanich	$ 1,153,995	13,198	$ 928,795,732	$ 3.56	$ 1,080,565	$ 71,370	7%	$ 147,390	$ 2,590	2%	$ 1,227,955	$ 73,961	6%
Parksville	$ 998,303	14,710	$ 669,840,747	$ 3.09	$ 936,898	$ 63,858	7%	$ 127,794	$ 2,530	2%	$ 1,064,691	$ 66,388	7%
Port Alberni	$ 1,072,702	20,264	$ 529,718,747	$ 3.31	$ 1,002,922	$ 64,819	7%	$ 136,800	$ 2,200	2%	$ 1,139,722	$ 67,020	6%
Port Alice	$ 32,972	700	$ 14,525,865	$ 0.11	$ 31,883	$ 3,048	11%	$ 4,349	$ 212	5%	$ 36,232	$ 3,260	10%
Port Clements	$ 14,828	267	$ 7,942,379	$ 0.05	$ 13,919	$ 952	7%	$ 1,899	$ 38	2%	$ 15,818	$ 990	7%
Port Hardy	$ 214,449	4,552	$ 83,700,210	$ 0.66	$ 199,455	$ 11,914	6%	$ 27,206	$ 297	1%	$ 226,661	$ 12,212	6%
Port McNeill	$ 127,271	2,591	$ 58,839,927	$ 0.40	$ 121,727	$ 10,425	9%	$ 16,604	$ 634	4%	$ 138,331	$ 11,059	9%
Qualicum Beach	$ 715,243	9,663	$ 498,145,219	$ 2.17	$ 657,999	$ 32,503	5%	$ 89,752	$ 5	0%	$ 747,751	$ 32,508	5%
Sayward	$ 16,584	305	$ 7,508,970	$ 0.05	$ 14,756	$ 253	2%	$ 2,013	$ (68)	-3%	$ 16,768	$ 185	1%
Sidney	$ 1,020,577	12,951	$ 769,254,206	$ 3.15	$ 956,275	$ 63,757	7%	$ 130,437	$ 2,378	2%	$ 1,086,712	$ 66,135	6%
Sooke	$ 1,009,489	16,866	$ 582,186,138	$ 3.09	$ 938,179	$ 55,358	6%	$ 127,969	$ 1,301	1%	$ 1,066,148	$ 56,659	6%
Tahsis	$ 15,673	277	$ 7,945,563	$ 0.05	$ 14,225	$ 519	4%	$ 1,940	$ (26)	-1%	$ 16,166	$ 492	3%
Tofino	$ 268,167	2,653	$ 257,801,944	$ 0.89	$ 269,258	$ 34,740	15%	$ 36,727	$ 3,078	9%	$ 305,985	$ 37,818	14%
Ucluelet	$ 205,897	2,309	$ 156,254,221	$ 0.61	$ 184,478	$ 4,416	2%	$ 25,163	$ (672)	-3%	$ 209,641	$ 3,744	2%
Zeballos	$ 5,625	121	$ 2,505,589	$ 0.02	$ 5,507	$ 588	12%	$ 751	$ 45	6%	$ 6,259	$ 633	11%
	$ 22,467,141	**361,259**	**$ 13,660,374,900**		**$ 20,966,567**			**$ 2,859,861**			**$ 23,826,428**		
Regional Districts													
Alberni-Clayoquot	$ 655,737	8,624	$ 477,724,698	$ 2.02	$ 611,510	$ 38,053	7%	$ 83,411	$ 1,131	1%	$ 694,921	$ 39,184	6%
Capital	$ 394,593	4,473	$ 315,970,920	$ 1.21	$ 367,080	$ 21,999	6%	$ 50,070	$ 558	1%	$ 417,150	$ 22,556	6%
Central Coast	$ 77,260	1,459	$ 38,203,080	$ 0.24	$ 72,257	$ 4,691	7%	$ 9,856	$ 161	2%	$ 82,112	$ 4,852	6%
Comox Valley	$ 1,837,761	25,992	$ 1,248,902,726	$ 5.62	$ 1,703,279	$ 96,114	6%	$ 232,329	$ 1,732	1%	$ 1,935,608	$ 97,846	5%
Cowichan Valley	$ 2,780,396	37,614	$ 1,923,337,268	$ 8.41	$ 2,549,798	$ 118,278	5%	$ 347,795	$ (1,081)	0%	$ 2,897,593	$ 117,198	4%
Mount Waddington	$ 197,345	2,143	$ 162,451,151	$ 0.61	$ 183,975	$ 11,392	7%	$ 25,094	$ 332	1%	$ 209,070	$ 11,724	6%
Nanaimo	$ 3,299,919	45,308	$ 2,324,584,772	$ 10.15	$ 3,077,092	$ 191,237	7%	$ 419,719	$ 5,655	1%	$ 3,496,811	$ 196,892	6%
North Coast	$ 63,538	1,145	$ 36,488,180	$ 0.20	$ 61,469	$ 5,904	11%	$ 8,384	$ 412	5%	$ 69,854	$ 6,315	10%
qathet	$ 36,614	510	$ 24,821,986	$ 0.11	$ 33,653	$ 1,633	5%	$ 4,590	$ (4)	0%	$ 38,243	$ 1,629	4%
Strathcona	$ 706,756	10,898	$ 497,355,750	$ 2.29	$ 694,912	$ 76,837	12%	$ 94,787	$ 6,105	7%	$ 789,699	$ 82,942	12%
	$ 10,049,921	**138,166**	**$ 7,049,840,531**		**$ 9,355,025**			**$ 1,276,035**			$ 10,631,060		
TOTALS	$ 32,517,000	**499,425**	**$ 20,710,215,431**		**$ 30,321,592**			**$ 4,135,896**			**$ 34,457,488**		**5.97%**

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