



2026 Budget Presentation to the Township of Esquimalt

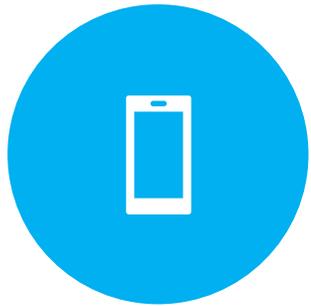
March 9, 2026

A Shared Service Model

- Through a **shared-service model** spanning **10 municipalities** and **12 branches**, the Greater Victoria Public Library (GVPL) delivers equitable, cost-efficient access to learning, culture, and digital inclusion for more than **380,000 residents**.
- GVPL has been recognized as one of **the top circulating public library systems in Canada**, reflecting strong community engagement and consistent demand for both physical and digital collections.



Community Use of Library Services*



2,791,966

Digital Items
Borrowed



3,390,667

Physical Items
Borrowed



1,820,665

Library Visits



2,231,487

Virtual Visits



190,597

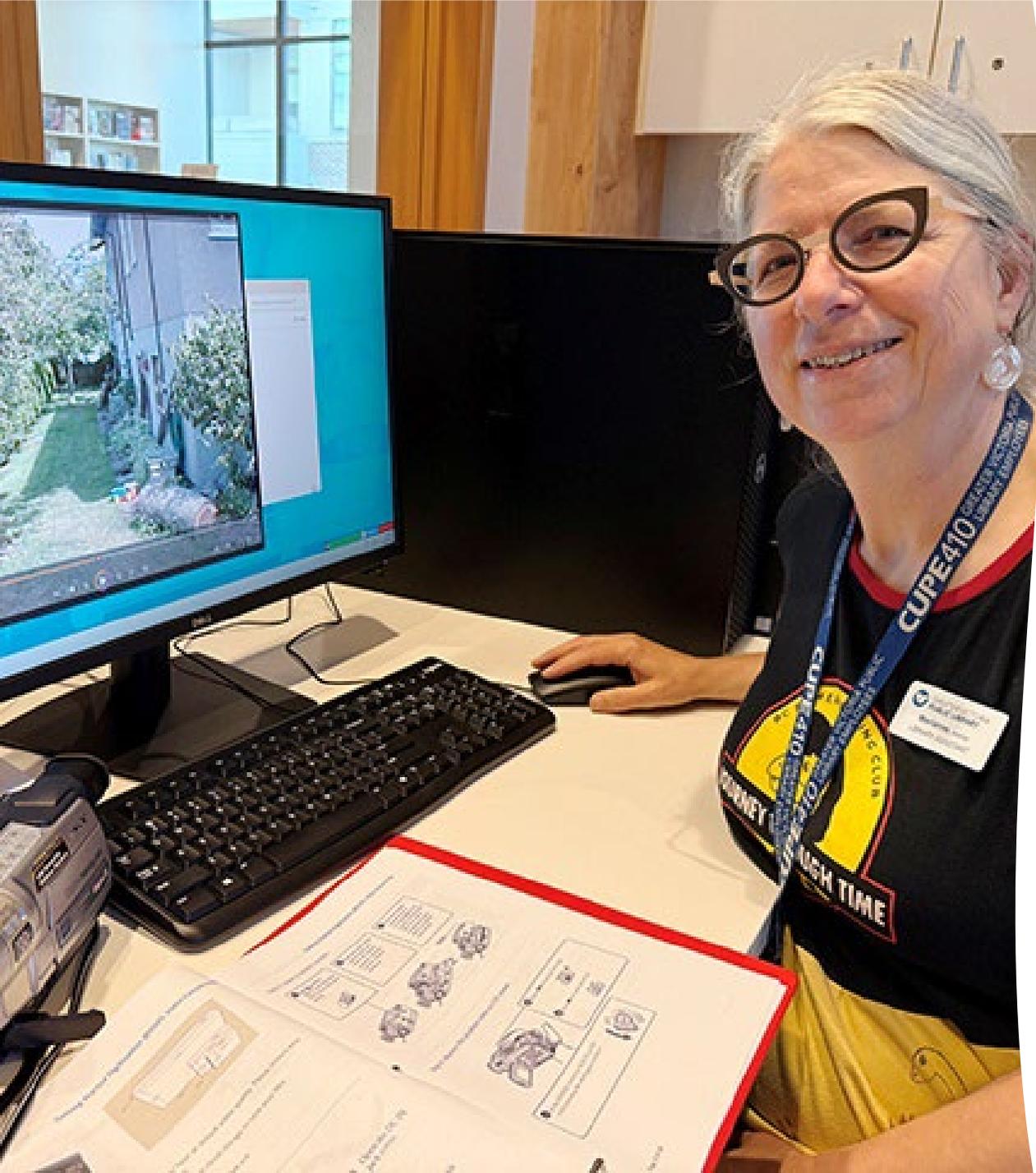
Computer
Sessions

* January 1 to December 31, 2025 data.



Engaging Kids and Families

- **Yoto Players and Read-Along Books:** One of the first libraries in BC to lend screen-free audio players. New read-along collections inspire curiosity, independence, and a lifelong love of stories.
- **Enhanced Early Learning Spaces:** Refreshed children's areas with new play and discovery materials across all branches.
- **More Family Storytimes and StoryWalks:** Expanded Family Storytime, Baby Time with Stay and Play, and indoor/outdoor StoryWalks have welcomed hundreds of families, providing engaging literacy experiences and supporting early learning across BC communities.
- **BC Summer Reading Club:** Delivered another record year of participation and engagement with 9,881 children taking part.



Expanding Digital Access and Innovation

- **Digital Media Lab:** Opened GVPL's first self-serve digitization space, empowering residents to preserve family and community history.
- **Website Redevelopment:** Engaged more than 300 community members to shape the new gvpl.ca, ensuring accessibility and user-centered design.
- **Maximizing Digital Investment:** Reallocated audiobook spending from Hoopla to OverDrive, expanding access while reducing costs per use.
- **Enhanced Cybersecurity and Privacy:** Introduced multi-factor authentication, stronger password protections, and improved verification for online resources.



Libraries as Gateways to Equity, Access, and Community

- **Equity and Inclusion:** Partnered with UVic Pro Bono Students and the Community Social Planning Council to host Trans and Monthly ID Clinics.
- **Dignity and Access:** Sustained system-wide access to free menstrual products. Eliminated overdue fines in 2024, supporting equitable participation for all. Introduced secure virtual ID verification to expand access to library services for residents unable to visit a physical branch.
- **Art, Culture, and Reconciliation:** Celebrated 10 years of Emerging Local Authors. Hosted cultural and reconciliation programs such as the Indigenous Stories Book Club, Literacy Circle for Residential School Survivors, and Hiroshima-Nagasaki Poster Exhibition.

Volunteers from Pro Bono Students Canada led the February Trans ID Clinic, providing free legal help for transgender and gender-diverse people changing their name or gender marker.

Investing in Safety and Organizational Resilience

- **Modernized Policy:** Updated the Responsibilities of Library Users policy to support respectful, inclusive, and safe spaces.
- **Safety Enhancements:** Completed system-wide safety orientations, expanded de-escalation training, and installed HALO air quality sensors and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) to support a safer environment for staff and patrons.
- **Community Partnerships:** Strengthened collaboration with Victoria Police and local security partners to enhance safety.
- **Workforce Growth:** Recruited and trained new circulation assistants, librarians, and senior leaders to build organizational capacity and resilience.



Digital Access Comes at a Premium

Atmosphere by Taylor Jenkins Reid

Retail ebook: **\$14.99**

Library ebook: **\$57.00 (24 months)**

Retail audiobook: **\$30.00**

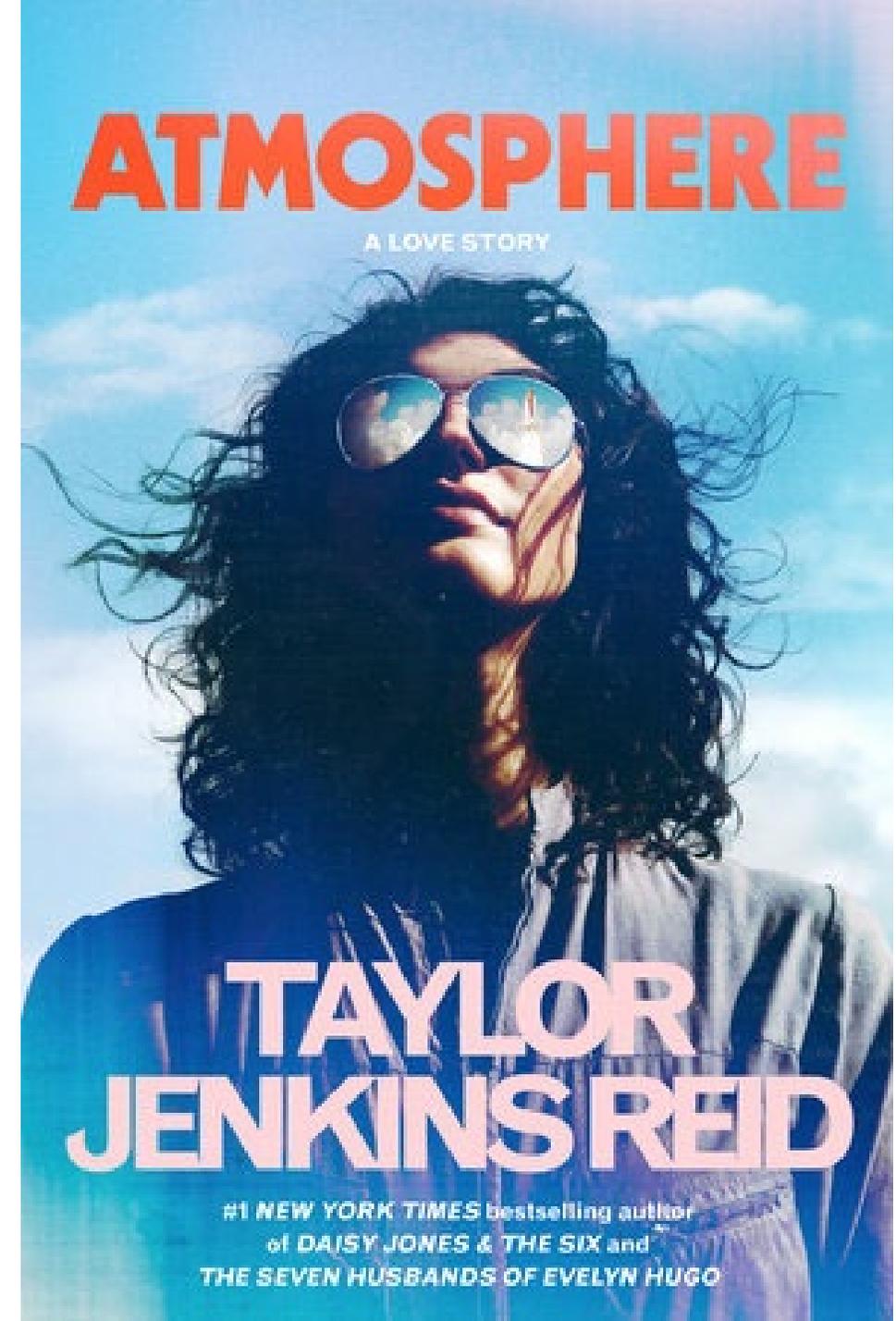
Library audiobook: **\$112.50**

Retail print: **\$26.99**

Library print: **\$16.19**

Libraries pay
nearly **4x more**
for this **eBook**
and **digital**
audiobook.

★ Atmosphere by Taylor Jenkins Reid was released in June, 2025.





Libraries Deliver Measurable Returns

- Every **\$1** invested in **public libraries** returns **\$4–\$6** in **economic and social value**.
- National research from **the Canadian Urban Libraries Council** (The Impact of Canadian Public Libraries, 2026) confirms: **public libraries are essential infrastructure**.
 - **98% of users report a positive impact** on their lives.
 - **90% of users** and **70% of non-users** see libraries as vital community resources.
 - **88% say access to libraries** is more **important than ever**.
 - Libraries **advance municipal priorities**: early literacy, digital equity, social connection, and support for vulnerable residents.

Looking Ahead: Focus Areas for 2026

- **Advance Trust, Safety, and Inclusion:** Foster equitable, welcoming, and culturally informed spaces rooted in reconciliation and respect.
- **Expand Digital Literacy and Access:** Grow virtual services and digital learning.
- **Grow and Demonstrate Impact:** Extend reach through responsive facilities, data-driven planning, and transparent reporting.
- **Partner for Shared Success:** Collaborate with municipalities, Indigenous partners, and community organizations to build sustainable, connected communities.
- **Strengthen Workforce Resilience:** Invest in recruitment, leadership development, and well-being to sustain reliable, high-quality service, including Sunday operations.





2026 Budget Request

2026 Budget Request

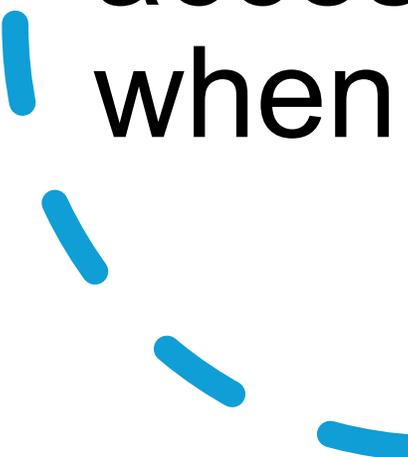
Category	2025 Budget Approved	2026 Budget Request	Change (\$)	Change (%)
Salaries and Benefits	17,486,121	19,194,782	1,708,661	9.8%
Library Materials, Including Capitalized	2,989,215	3,069,988	80,773	2.7%
Supplies, Services and Other	2,815,366	2,557,608	(257,758)	-9.2%
Building Occupancy	1,271,002	1,274,241	3,239	0.3%
Capital Expenses-Other	671,500	656,575	(14,925)	-2.2%
Total Expenditures	25,233,204	26,753,194	1,519,990	6.0%
Transfers to/(From) Reserves/Surplus	(2,012,027)	(1,924,080)	87,947	-4.4%
Branch Start-Up Funding	-	-	-	-
Revenues	(1,374,455)	(1,234,655)	139,800	-10.2%
Municipal Contribution - Operating	21,846,722	23,594,459	1,747,737	8.00%

Township of Esquimalt 2026 Contribution

2025 Share	2025 Requisition	2026 Share	2026 Requisition	Contribution Increase		Per Capita Increase	Per Capita Total
5.19%	\$1,129,124	5.18%	\$1,217,374	\$88,250	7.80%	\$4.57	\$63.07



In difficult economic times, the library becomes a lifeline—a place where people turn for learning, digital access, and a sense of connection when they need it most.





Thank You



**GREATER VICTORIA
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

gvpl.ca