



**Elgin County Council
Committee of the Whole Meeting
Orders of the Day**

**Tuesday, July 8, 2025, 9:30 a.m.
Council Chambers
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas ON**

Note for Members of the Public:

Please click the link below to watch the Meeting:
<https://www.facebook.com/ElginCounty>

Accessible formats available upon request.

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Elgin County Council
Committee of the Whole Meeting
Minutes

June 24, 2025, 9:30 a.m.
Council Chambers
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas ON

Members Present: Warden Grant Jones
 Deputy Warden Ed Ketchabaw
 Councillor Dominique Giguère
 Councillor Mark Widner
 Councillor Jack Couckuyt
 Councillor Andrew Sloan
 Councillor Todd Noble
 Councillor Mike Hentz
 Councillor Taraesa Tellier

Members Absent: Councillor Richard Leatham (with notice)

Staff Present: Blaine Parkin, Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk
 Nicholas Loeb, Director of Legal Services
 Brian Masschaele, Director of Community & Cultural Services
 Jennifer Ford, Director of Financial Services/Treasurer (virtual)
 Peter Dutchak, Director of Engineering Services
 Mat Vaughan, Director of Planning and Development
 Emily Waldick, Manager of Human Resources
 Katherine Thompson, Manager of Administrative
 Services/Deputy Clerk
 Diana Morris, Senior Planner
 Jenna Fentie, Legislative Services Coordinator
 Stefanie Heide, Legislative Services Coordinator

1. Meeting Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 11:08 a.m. with Warden Jones in the chair.

2. Approval of Agenda

Resolution Number: CW25-34

Moved by: Councillor Noble
Seconded by: Councillor Sloan

RESOLVED THAT the agenda for the June 24, 2025 Committee of the Whole Meeting be approved as presented.

Motion Carried.

3. Adoption of Minutes

Resolution Number: CW25-35

Moved by: Councillor Noble
Seconded by: Councillor Hentz

RESOLVED THAT the minutes of the meeting held on June 10, 2025 be adopted.

Motion Carried.

4. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

None.

5. Members' Motions

None.

6. Reports of Council, Staff or Outside Boards

6.1 Director of Engineering Services - Gillets Bridge (B27) Rehabilitation – Contract Award

The Director of Engineering Services presented the report seeking Council's approval to award the contract for the rehabilitation of Gillets Bridge to Vandenburg Construction Inc.

Resolution Number: CW25-36

Moved by: Councillor Noble

Seconded by: Deputy Warden Ketchabaw

RESOLVED THAT Vandenburg Construction Inc. be selected to complete the Gillets Bridge (B27) Rehabilitation located on Sparta Line, Tender No. 2025-T25 at a total price of \$315,900.00 inclusive of a \$75,000 contingency allowance and exclusive of H.S.T.; and

THAT the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer be directed and authorized to sign the contract.

Motion Carried.

6.2 Senior Planner - Official Plan Amendment No. 39 in the Municipality of Bayham 92 Edison Drive

The Senior Planner presented the report recommending that Council approve Official Plan Amendment No. 39 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Bayham.

Resolution Number: CW25-37

Moved by: Deputy Warden Ketchabaw

Seconded by: Councillor Couckuyt

RESOLVED THAT the Council of the Corporation of the County of Elgin approves Official Plan Amendment No. 39 to the Official Plan of the Municipality of Bayham; and

THAT staff be directed to provide notice of this decision in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act*.

Motion Carried.

7. Adjournment

Resolution Number: CW25-38

Moved by: Councillor Widner

Seconded by: Councillor Tellier

RESOLVED THAT we do now adjourn at 11:16 a.m. to meet again on July 8, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.

Motion Carried.

Blaine Parkin,
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk.

Grant Jones,
Warden.



Report to Committee of the Whole

From: Jennifer Ford, Director of Financial Services
Mike Hoogstra, Manager of Procurement & Risk
Jason Warren, Manager of Information Technology

Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: Wide Area Network Services

Recommendation(s):

THAT the contract for wide area network services be extended with Bragg Communications Inc. (Eastlink) for a three-year period; and

THAT the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk be authorized to sign the contract extension; and

THAT the Request for Proposal be issued in 2028 for wide area network services.

Introduction:

This report provides details on a contract extension with Eastlink for providing high-speed wide area network (WAN) connectivity between existing facilities and seeks Council's approval to authorize the contract extension through a single-source procurement.

Background and Discussion:

The County currently operates a high-speed wide area network that connects thirteen locations to one central location (county administration building) in a hub and spoke configuration. The current contract with Eastlink provides fibre WAN connectivity between the administration building, provincial offenses courthouse and the three long-term care homes.

The library branches all route through a centralized network design back to the server room at the administration building and utilize various service providers (NFTEC, Rogers, Bell) available in each local community.

The County has issued Request for Proposals in the past looking for service providers capable of providing high-speed wide area network services. A summary of the last three, five-year contracts is provided below:

Contract Term	RFP	Proposals Received	Provider	Cost / Year
2010 – 2015	Yes	One (1)	Eastlink	\$48,000
2015 – 2020	Yes	One (1)	Eastlink	\$43,200
2020 – 2025	Yes	One (1) + one partial	Eastlink	\$54,000

Prior to the expiration of the existing contract, staff reached out to Eastlink to inquire about extending the current contract for a short period of time due to the onboarding of the new Information Technology Services Manager. It was decided that this would be the best course of action, given that we would want the input of the new Manager prior to issuing a new RFP process.

During Eastlink's review of the existing contract, Eastlink made an offer to the County to extend the existing contract for either one-year at a 10% increase or extend for three-years at the current rate with no increases over the term of the extension.

The County's Purchasing Policy allows for single-source procurement under section 4.7c (iii). Staff are recommending that the wide area network services contract be extended to Eastlink for the three-year term based on the following considerations:

- Eastlink has been the successful provider of high-speed WAN services for over fifteen years.
- During the last three RFP processes, only one other partial proposal response has been received.
- The cost for services will remain at the same 2020 rate, until June 2028, providing cost guarantees to the County.

A review of similar high-speed WAN services was conducted. It was found that the cost for high-speed fibre in the 1-2 Gigabit range with TLS and GRE connections and dedicated synchronous internet services for each facility was consistent with the rates being charged by Eastlink.

After the three-year contract extension is completed, a new RFP process will be completed in 2028.

Financial Implications:

No financial impacts anticipated as the current amount of the contract extension is within the existing budget. Further to this, no interruption of service due to changeover will be experienced.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

Strategy 3: Service Excellence and Efficiency
Supporting Goal 1: Leverage Technology to Enhance Service Delivery

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

We will advise those LMPs that are within our infrastructure about the continuance of service.

Communication Requirements:

None as service will continue uninterrupted.

Conclusion:

The proposed three-year contract extension with Eastlink will continue to provide high-speed wide area network (WAN) connectivity between existing facilities and will provide cost guarantees to the County for the next three years.

During this time, current services will be reviewed relative to best practices by the Information Technology Department and any service changes or enhancements to the current configuration that have or will include additional opportunities for redundancies to reduce downtime and service interruption will be incorporated into the new RFP process planned for 2028.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Jennifer Ford
Director of Financial Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

Mike Hoogstra
Manager of Procurement & Risk

Jason Warren
Manager of Information Technology



Report to Committee of the Whole

From: Nicholas Loeb, Director of Legal Services
Mike Hoogstra, Manager of Procurement & Risk

Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: Purchase of Decontamination Trailer

Recommendation(s):

THAT the report titled “Purchase of Decontamination Trailer” from the Director of Legal Services dated July 8, 2025 be received and filed; and

THAT staff be authorized to purchase of one (1) Decontamination Trailer, to be used by local fire departments across Elgin County, using grant funding provided by the Province of Ontario through the Legacy Oil & Gas Well – Collaborative Action Plan; and

THAT the Decontamination Trailer be purchased from Canadian Safety Equipment, in the amount of \$136,000 plus HST, through a single source supply, which meets the required specifications of the project.

Introduction:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to for a sole/single source supply purchase arising out of a collaborative opportunity with the County of Essex, County of Norfolk, Haldimand County, County of Lambton, Regional Municipality of Niagara, County of Oxford, Municipality of Chatham-Kent and the County of Brant to purchase (1) Decontamination Trailer.

Background and Discussion:

In a report to County Council dated September 24, 2024, County staff provided Council with information regarding the Province, through the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry, leading the development of a comprehensive action plan to help address risks from legacy oil and gas wells and subsurface gas migration hazards in Southwestern Ontario.

The County of Brant coordinated the submission of a Collaborative Project proposal (the “Proposal”) in coordination with, and on behalf of, the following municipalities: County of Essex, County of Elgin, Haldimand County, County of Lambton, Norfolk

County, Regional Municipality of Niagara, County of Oxford and Municipality of Chatham-Kent. Along with the County of Brant, these municipalities will be collectively referred to herein as the “Collaborating Municipalities”.

The Collaborating Municipalities identified building municipal and regional capacity to properly manage and triage injuries, provide field decontamination, and provide emergency response to a large-scale hazardous gas release events that can be associated with a legacy oil and gas wells. To address this need, each Collaborating Municipality will purchase an Emergency Response Trailer (“Trailer”) either for decontamination (“Decon”) or providing first aid to affected first responders and members of the public (“Triage”).

Elgin County’s participation in the application process of the Collaborating Municipalities was endorsed by Council on September 24, 2024.

The Collaborating Municipalities application for funds to purchase emergency response trailers was approved by the Ministry, including the purchase of a Decon trailer by Elgin County, with the approved funding being \$136,000.

A working group was formed to source the required decontamination trailer. The working group involved subject matter experts in emergency response from the Collaborating Municipalities. Only one (1) company was identified as a supplier that was capable of meeting or exceeding all necessary CSA and other compliances for Ontario. Another potential supplier was reviewed in the United States but it was not certain whether the CSA compliances could be obtained. The supplier capable of building the trailers is Canadian Safety Equipment.

Each of the Collaborating Municipalities has either authorized or is in the process of authorizing a trailer purchase on behalf of their respective municipality.

The County’s Procurement Policy allows for single source and sole source purchases. Given that this purchase was a collaborative opportunity, led by the County of Brant and funded by the Province, staff are requesting approval to proceed based on section 4.7(b) and/or 4.7(c)(v).

The reason that staff are recommending relying on both provisions is that more than one supplier was explored. The Collaborating Municipalities identified only one source that could meet the requirements with certainty, resulting in a sole source pursuant to section 4.7(b).

To the extent that another source may have been available, the County is also able to rely on section 4.7(c)(v). Section 4.7(c)(v) states that procurement may be conducted using a single source process if the goods and/or services are available from more than one source, but there are valid and sufficient reasons for selecting one supplier in particular, as follows:

- v. Another organization is funding or substantially funding the acquisition and has determined the supplier and the terms and conditions of the commitment into which the County will enter are acceptable to the County.

Financial Implications:

As outlined within the report, Elgin County has been approved for a grant in the amount of \$136,000 from the Ministry of Natural Resources as part of a collaborative project submission coordinated by the County of Brant. The associated transfer payment agreement was recently executed by the County and the Ministry.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

The purchase of decontamination trailers to support emergency management responses to hazardous events advances Elgin County's strategic plan related to:

Strategy 1: Collaborative Engagement and Communication – the project strengthens relationships with LMP fire services, regional municipal partners and the Ministry.

Strategy 5: Community Well-being – the project creates a safer community for both the public and emergency responders.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

The availability of a decontamination trailer will support local emergency responses to hazardous events.

Communication Requirements:

Council's decision will be communicated to the Collaborating Municipalities and the supplier.

Conclusion:

This report recommends the approval and purchase of a decontamination trailer, with the purchase being funded by the Province of Ontario, to support the County's emergency preparedness to hazardous events including legacy oil and gas wells.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Nicholas Loeb
Director of Legal Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

Mike Hoogstra
Manager of Procurement & Risk



Report to Committee of the Whole

From: Peter Dutchak, Director of Engineering Services
Mike Hoogstra, Manager of Procurement & Risk

Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: Administration Building – Cladding, Window and Door Replacement (Tender No. 2025-T27) – Contract Award

Recommendation(s):

THAT Alpeza General Contracting Inc. be selected to complete the Administration Building Cladding, Window and Door Replacement project, Tender No. 2025-T27 at a total price of \$2,790,000.00 exclusive of H.S.T.; and

THAT the County accept the separate prices identified in the Tender, estimated at \$205,600.00 exclusive of H.S.T.; and

THAT the Warden and Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk be directed and authorized to sign the contracts.

Introduction:

As part of the 2025 Capital Budget, tenders were issued as per the County's Procurement Policy for the Administration Building Cladding, Window and Door Replacement project.

Background and Discussion:

As approved by County Council at their February 25th meeting, staff has issued a construction tender for pre-qualified contractors to rehabilitate the exterior of the County Administration Building. The project scope includes: an overclad of the existing brick with aluminum composite panels (ACP), aluminum double glazed windows and hollow metal doors with polystyrene infill.



Fishburn Sheridan London Inc. was contracted by the County through RFP No. 2024-P25 to complete the engineering, detailed design and provide contract inspection services for this project.

Bidders were previously pre-qualified by the County through RFPQ No. 2025-PQ18. The pre-qualification process allows the County to evaluate all potential bidders based on experience, references, safety and other factors. The pre-qualification process received thirteen (13) responses of which eight (8) contractors were selected by the County and invited to submit a bid for this tender.

All eight (8) contractors submitted electronic bids which closed on June 20, 2025. Bids were received as follows:

Bidder	Bid Price (exclusive of HST)
Alpeza General Contracting Inc.	\$2,790,000.00
PK Construction Inc.	\$2,983,500.00
Elgin Contracting & Restoration Ltd.	\$3,091,000.00
J. McBride & Sons Ltd.	\$3,444,530.00
2387986 Ontario Inc. O/A CPM Group Inc	\$3,620,000.00
Limen Group Const. Ltd	\$3,775,400.00
Maresco Limited	\$4,079,750.00
Tritan Inc.	\$4,358,500.00

Alpeza General Contracting Inc. submitted the lowest compliant bid for the project at a total price of \$2,790,000.00 exclusive of HST.

In addition to the base tender amounts indicated above, Bidders were also required to submit a price for three separate items, noted below:

1. Roller Window Shades
2. Remove existing penthouse metal cladding and replace with Aluminum Composite Panel system
3. Re-coat existing EIFS to match ACP colour

The total cost from Alpeza General Contracting for the additional work is \$205,600 (excluding HST). Staff recommends adding these items to the scope of work to complete the project.

Financial Implications:

The following summary of projected estimated costs is provided for review and will be confirmed throughout the project:

Construction Tender Value:	\$ 2,790,000.00
Separate Prices	\$ 205,600.00
Consulting (Engineering, Detailed Design)	\$ 97,230.00
<u>Net HST (1.76%)</u>	<u>\$ 54,433.81</u>
Total Project Costs	\$ 3,147,263.81
 2025 Capital Budget Allocation	 \$ 5,300,000.00
 Forecast Budget Surplus (Deficit)	 \$ 2,152,736.19

The construction tender did not specifically include a project contingency allowance, and therefore final project costs are anticipated to be slightly higher than the total project costs identified above.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

This investment has an anticipated 40-year design life and extends the service life of the County administration building that coincides with other recent investments (i.e. elevators, HVAC). The project scope also represents the lowest lifecycle cost solution to ensure the 86-year-old facility continues to meet the County's needs.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

None.

Communication Requirements:

Council, Staff and Tenants will be advised of the project and will be provided construction progress updates throughout the duration of the construction, including advance notice of any facility access or temporary service disruptions.

Conclusion:

Staff recommend award of this project to Alpeza General Contracting Inc. Work on the project is scheduled to begin in September 2025 with substantial completion anticipated to be achieved by November 2026.

As per the County's Procurement Policy, if change orders are required and the cost increases above the tender amount approved by Council by less than 10%, and the amount is within the overall budgeted project amount, work will proceed upon authorization by the Director. However, if the cost increases above the tender amount approved by Council by more than 10%, the Director shall prepare a further report to Council outlining the expenditures.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Peter Dutchak
Director of Engineering Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

Mike Hoogstra
Manager of Procurement & Risk



Report to Committee of the Whole

From: Brian Masschaele, Director of Community and Cultural Services

Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: Response To Aylmer Town Council's Letter of Intent Regarding Aylmer Library Expansion at Old Town Hall Location

Recommendation(s):

THAT the correspondence titled "Letter of Intent – Town of Aylmer - Elgin County Library Branch Construction Policy" from the Town of Aylmer dated May 22, 2025 be received and filed; and

THAT Aylmer Town Council be requested to confirm the approximate size of the area to be designated for Aylmer Library use in a future expansion to the Old Town Hall, along with a proposed date to commence construction at that location, in order to be considered a "Letter of Intent" under the County of Elgin's Library Branch Construction Policy; and

THAT copies of this report be circulated to the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Township of Malahide.

Introduction:

At the June 10, 2025 meeting, Elgin County Council directed staff to respond to Aylmer Town Council's "Letter of Intent" regarding expansion of the Aylmer Library at its current Old Town Hall location. This report recommends that County Council seek further clarifications to Aylmer Town Council's initial resolution in order to be considered a "Letter of Intent" under the County's Library Branch Construction Policy.

Background and Discussion:

Aylmer Town Council endorsed the following resolutions at their May 21st, 2025 meeting:

"That Council approve in principle the construction of an 8000 square foot building to be leased to the County of Elgin for library purposes; and,

That a "letter of intent" as required by the County of Elgin be sent; and,

That the County of Elgin be asked for a long-term lease of 20 years; and,

That the County of Elgin be asked to establish a fundraising committee for this building; and,

That Council single source the design of the new library to the Town's appointed engineering firm (GEI Consultants) to proceed as soon as possible in 2025; and,

That GEI be directed to place priority upon a design that connects the Old Town Hall on both floors and is in keeping with the existing character and design of the Old Town Hall; and,

That GEI also be directed to examine costing for a standalone library build in close proximity to the Old Town Hall; and,

That interior design considerations be in collaboration with the County of Elgin; and,

That a 2025 budget amendment of \$250,000 be approved by Council towards the detailed engineering and architectural design sufficient to meet grant requirements and that this amount be funded through the Council Initiatives Reserve."

Responses for County Council's Consideration

The "Letter of Intent" endorsed by Aylmer Town Council is a positive development in terms of meeting County's Council's identified space needs for the Aylmer Library. Aylmer Town Council is now proceeding with an engineering study, design and costing analysis for an expansion at the current Old Town Hall location. The next step in this process would then be a formal commitment from the Town to proceed with the project with timelines associated at which time County Council can then affirm its support to lease the facility. From the County's perspective, the Town should continue its process to assess the feasibility, cost and timelines for such a project as soon as possible given County Council's current direction to explore re-location to the East Elgin Community Complex. County Council has a long history of being a willing partner on library expansion and building projects with local municipal partners and the same can be expected with this proposed project should the results of this study lead to a firm commitment to build at that location. However, the process is not yet at that point so any firm commitment to a long-term lease by County Council remains pre-mature.

The Town's "Letter of Intent" contains several resolutions, some of which require an analysis and response from Elgin County Council as follows:

That [Aylmer] Council approve in principle the construction of an 8,000 square foot building to be leased to the County of Elgin for library purposes

Elgin County Council has endorsed space needs of a minimum of 10,000 square feet of assignable library space in considering any proposal to expand, relocate or construct

new premises for Aylmer Library. The construction of an 8,000 square foot building if connected to the Old Town Hall has the potential to meet these identified space needs, assuming the library's existing 3,081 square feet is incorporated into the plans. **Such an addition would satisfy the County's requirements on future space needs for the branch. However, further clarification on total space allocations is required from Aylmer Town Council.**

That a "letter of intent" as required by the County of Elgin be sent

Aylmer Town Council is referencing the County's "Library Branch Construction Policy" last updated in 2015 in proceeding with this "Letter of Intent". The policy is attached to this report. The current resolution does not fully meet requirements under the policy to be deemed a "Letter of Intent" at the present time. First, under section 2.03, it does not specify the total square footage that would be encompassed for library usage, instead referencing only an 8,000 square foot building. Second, under section 2.05, it does not state the proposed date to commence construction on an expanded facility at the current Old Town Hall location. Therefore, it is premature to consider the Town's resolution as a formal "Letter of Intent" under the policy. Rather, it is more of a positive intention to take the necessary steps to issue that letter of intent as stipulated under the policy.

Staff recommend that County Council communicate to Aylmer Town Council the need to clarify the approximate size of the area designated to be for Library use in a future expansion at the Old Town Hall location of the Aylmer Library under Section 2.03 of the County's "Library Branch Construction Policy". Furthermore, staff recommend that County Council communicate to Aylmer Town Council the need to provide a proposed date to commence construction under Section 2.05 of the policy. Should this information be provided by Aylmer Town Council, County Council can then consider the proposal as a "Letter of Intent" for further consideration under Section 4.0 of the policy.

For County Council's information, further insight into a potential timeline for a future expansion at the current Old Town Hall location is provided in a report from the Town's CAO to the Town of Aylmer's Finance Committee which was received at the committee's meeting on June 18th, 2025. This report can be viewed under Section 6.2.2 by clicking [here](#). This report states that; "At this stage, staff believe it is appropriate to begin planning for the new library to begin construction in 2028." The report further alludes to the service disruption that will result if such a build takes place, speaking to the need to consider temporary library space in the community while the project unfolds. If construction were to proceed as soon as 2028, it is not unreasonable to expect it to last for up to two years, taking completion and the establishment of a new lease with the County to 2030 at the earliest. The above timeline also brings this proposed project into a new term of Aylmer Town Council and will likely be a major issue during the 2026 municipal election which could also impact the commitment and/or timeline for a new build. County Council is reminded that the current lease at the Old Town Hall expires at the end of 2027.

Staff recommend that County Council continue the path of stabilizing Aylmer Library's space and service needs when the current lease expires in 2027 through

potential re-location to the East Elgin Community Complex on either a temporary or permanent basis. The branch will require stable quarters in the short-term regardless of the commitments made by Aylmer Town Council to build on to the current location for the long-term based on current information and timelines.

That the County of Elgin be asked for a long-term lease of 20 years

The County's standard "Elgin County Library Municipal Library Lease", which currently applies to all ten branches that are owned by local municipal partners and the Port Stanley Festival Theatre, already contains a renewal clause (in five-year terms) which has resulted in long-term accommodation well beyond twenty years at the majority of the library's branch locations. A commitment to a longer-term lease could always be considered when the Town completes construction on an expanded facility at the current location but there is no need to make such a commitment at the present time as a longer-term arrangement is already implied in the current framework. **Staff recommend that no formal action be taken on this matter.**

That the County of Elgin be asked to establish a fundraising committee for this building;

The County's capital fundraising efforts have traditionally been focused on facilities directly owned and operated by the County. A recent example is the successful fundraising campaign on behalf of Terrace Lodge. Any expansion to the Old Town Hall to facilitate an expansion to Aylmer Library would be owned by the Town of Aylmer. **Therefore, the Town should lead any fundraising efforts**, with the County providing support to those efforts similar to the approach taken during the last capital campaign for a library expansion at the Shedden branch. Those efforts were led by the Township of Southwold, with County staff serving in an advisory capacity. Similar support could be offered to the Town of Aylmer but the committee itself should be led by the Town. There may also be impediments under Canada Revenue Agency rules regarding use of the library's charitable status in fundraising efforts for a facility that is not under the County's auspices. **Staff recommend that no formal action be taken on this matter.**

That interior design considerations be in collaboration with the County of Elgin

Elgin County Library staff have played an active role in past designs for an expanded library facility for Aylmer, including extensive input into the design and tendering of a proposed downtown library between 2012 and 2014 and proposed re-location to the East Elgin Community Complex in 2017. The Director of Community and Cultural Services, Manager of Library Services and Supervisor for the Aylmer Library will provide similar support to the Town's current study. The County's CAO will determine an appropriate level of support for these efforts. **No formal action is required at the present time by County Council on this matter.**

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

Strategy #5 – Community Well-being and Inclusivity

Goal 3: Future expansion of the Aylmer Library will increase utilization of the County's library system.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

It remains pre-mature for County Council to make a formal commitment to an expansion at the current Old Town Hall location of Aylmer Library at the expense of considering other options such as re-location to the East Elgin Community Complex. However, this lack of formal commitment at the present time should not dissuade the Town of Aylmer from proceeding with an engineering study, design and costing analysis to determine feasibility of proceeding with an expansion project to accommodate the Library over the long-term.

Communication Requirements:

It is recommended that a copy of this report be circulated to the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Township of Malahide.

Conclusion:

Aylmer Town Council's "Letter of Intent" is certainly a positive development in terms of meeting Aylmer Library's endorsed space needs over the long-term. Regardless of how that proposed project plays out, completion and occupancy will likely not take place until 2030 at the very earliest according to the Town's budgetary planning projections. In the interim, staff recommend that the process to re-locate the Aylmer Library to the East Elgin Community Complex continue to ensure that the Library has stable quarters out of which to operate for the short to medium term (at the very least) beyond the expiration of the current lease at the Old Town Hall location on December 31st, 2027.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Brian Masschaele
Director of Community and
Cultural Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk



LIBRARY BRANCH CONSTRUCTION POLICY

SCOPE

The following shall constitute the policy of the County of Elgin to be followed in considering any participation it will have with any Municipality represented on County Council in the renovation, relocation or expansion of Library facilities anywhere in the County.

This policy applies to capital construction or relocation of library facilities only. Operational issues and related costs pertaining to each facility are addressed in respective leases signed for each facility. New, expanded or relocated branches will require a new operational lease based on the standard “Elgin County Library Municipal Library Lease” with no exceptions.

FACILITY SIZE

The square footage of new, expanded or relocated library facilities will adhere, wherever possible, to “Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems”, as amended from time to time by the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO) in which the Elgin County Library is a voting member. The following are current guidelines for the assignable size of library facilities (excluding utility rooms):

- Small Branches: Branches serving catchment areas of 1,000-5,000 population: Minimum 2,500 sq. ft. or 1 sq. ft. per capita in the library’s catchment area, whichever is greater;
- Medium Branches: Branches serving catchment areas of 5,000-10,000 population: Minimum 5,000 sq. ft. or 1 sq. ft. per capita in the library’s catchment area, whichever is greater;
- Large Branches: Branches serving catchment areas of 10,000-35,000 population: Minimum 10,000 sq. ft. or 1 sq. ft. per capita in the library’s catchment area, whichever is greater.

LOCATION

Locations on main thoroughfares or “downtown” locations in population centres will be preferred. Co-location with other community services will be preferred.



ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

In all cases, Municipalities shall strive to set the highest standards in terms of public accessibility, including compliance with provincial accessibility legislation.

An Interest Free Loan from the County for renovation, relocation or expansion of library facilities is available up to the following amounts: Small branches, \$100,000; Medium branches \$200,000; Large branches, \$400,000. The loan must be repaid within ten years. All requests for new libraries, expansion of libraries or relocation of libraries in the following year must be received by Council no later than December of each year for budgeting purposes. Any request received after December 31st will be considered for the following year. County Council reserves the right to deny such a loan for financial reasons.

ACTIONS INITIATED BY THE MUNICIPALITY AND THE COUNTY

- 1.0 The Municipality shall determine if, in the opinion of their Council, there is a need for a new Library, expansion of a Library or a relocation of a Library. A review of ARUPLO guidelines and input of the County's Director of Community and Cultural Services (or designate) is strongly encouraged in this process.
- 2.0 If the answer is yes, the Municipality shall issue a "Letter of Intent" to the County C.A.O. and Director of Community and Cultural Services, outlining the following information:
 - 2.01 The address and description of the proposed site and building to be constructed, expanded or relocated.
 - 2.02 The approximate interior gross area of the new building, expanded building or relocated building.
 - 2.03 The approximate size of the area designated to be for Library use.
 - 2.04 Approximate loan requested from the County.
 - 2.05 The proposed date to commence construction.
- 3.0 The Director of Community and Cultural Services shall forward the proposal to County Council.



- 4.0 County Council shall consider the proposal (Letter of Intent) and notify the Municipality of its decision. If acceptable, and County Council determines that it wishes to participate in a new Library facility, expanded Library facility, or relocated Library facility, a Letter of Intent detailing the arrangements will be signed by the C.A.O. of the County of Elgin and the Municipality.
- 5.0 The Municipality, at its expense, shall cause plans and specification of the Library premises to be prepared and sent to the Director of Community and Cultural Services who will forward to County Council for approval. The plans and specifications must include the information set out in this policy and if required may include a request for an Interest Free Loan.

The plan and specifications must include:

- 5.01 The address and description of the proposed site and building to be constructed, expanded or relocated building.
- 5.02 The interior gross area of the new building, expanded building or relocated building.
- 5.03 The size of the area designated to be for library use.
- 5.04 Construction timetables.
- 5.05 Approximate move in date for library staff.
- 5.06 Cost of construction or renovation including mechanicals.
- 5.07 Confirmation of interior fittings required for library use (such as custom millwork). These fittings are to be included in construction costs and are to be paid by the municipality. Additional furnishings for library use are the responsibility of the County.
- 5.08 Architect's fees (if applicable).
- 5.09 Interim financing cost (if applicable).
- 5.10 Source of funding for project.
- 5.11 Request for an Interest Free Loan indicating when the loan will be required. The loan must be repaid within ten years of being issued.

County of Elgin
450 Sunset Drive
St. Thomas, Ontario
N5R 5V1 Canada
Phone: 519-631-1460
www.elgin-county.on.ca



- 5.12 The Director of Community and Cultural Services shall forward the proposal to County Council with a recommendation on acceptance. At such time, the Director shall recommend that a new “Elgin County Library Municipal Library Lease” be established, outlining the anticipated costs of said lease to the library’s annual operating budget and establishing a deadline to execute the lease. Should an interest-free loan be requested and approved, the Director of Financial Services shall be authorized to issue a loan agreement up the maximum allowable in each category with terms stating that the loan is payable within a ten year period upon execution and subject to the provision of actual invoices. County Council reserves the right to deny such a loan for financial reasons.
- 6.0 Both Parties shall be responsible for their own legal costs in the negotiation and/or drafting of any Lease or Loan Agreement.
- 7.0 The Municipality shall be the owner or leaser of the land and/or building.



Report to Committee of the Whole

From: Brian Masschaele, Director of Community and Cultural Services

Date: July 8, 2025

Subject: Analysis of Consultation Process on the Relocation of Aylmer Library to East Elgin Community Complex

Recommendation(s):

THAT the report titled “Analysis of Consultation Process on the Relocation of Aylmer Library to East Elgin Community Complex” from the Director of Community and Cultural Services dated July 8, 2025 be received and filed; and

THAT Elgin County Council request a commitment as soon as feasible from the Board of Management of the East Elgin Community Complex to accommodate the Aylmer branch of the Elgin County Library based on County Council’s identified space needs to take effect as soon as January 1, 2028; and

That County Council engage in further discussions with the Board of Management of the East Elgin Community Complex should such a commitment be received on matters such as capital renovations and a leasing agreement to accommodate the Aylmer branch of the Elgin County Library; and

THAT copies of this report be circulated to the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Township of Malahide.

Introduction:

At the March 11, 2025 meeting of Elgin County Council, staff were directed as follows:

“THAT Elgin County Library staff be authorized to lead a community consultation process regarding future accommodation of the Aylmer branch of the Elgin County Library at the East Elgin Community Complex before the end of May 2025 as outlined in the March 11, 2025 report titled “Community Consultation Process for Relocation of Aylmer Library Branch” from the Director of Community and Cultural Services and in response to the resolution on this matter approved by Township of Malahide Council.”

This report fulfils this staff direction by providing an analysis of the results of this consultation process.

Background and Discussion:

Elgin County Library staff led a community consultation process over the month of May 2025. [Engage Elgin](#) was utilized to facilitate this process which involved the following components:

- Weekly advertisements in the Aylmer Express and through the County's social media accounts promoting the public meeting and survey.
- A public presentation and meeting on May 6th, 2025 at the East Elgin Community Complex (EECC). 56 individuals attended this session (not including staff). This included the County Warden and some members of Aylmer and Malahide Councils. The presentation slides and ensuing recording can be viewed on the [Engage Elgin site](#).
- A public survey that was made available on-line and in hard copy at the Aylmer Library from May 6th to 28th. There was a total of 224 responses to this survey, including 49 in paper format that were then entered into Engage Elgin so the results could be analyzed in tandem with on-line submissions.
- A survey conducted by Aylmer Library staff between April 10th and May 5th that asked customers how they travelled to the library, i.e. walking versus driving.

Survey Analysis

- Of the 224 total responses, 118 (52.7%) indicated support for re-location to EECC; 106 (47.3%) indicated they were opposed to such a move.
- Aylmer residents were slightly opposed to such a move and Malahide residents were slightly in favour.
- There were noticeable variations in support based on the age of respondents, with the highest support for re-location being amongst those individuals who identified as being between the ages of 25 and 54 (62% in favour). Respondents aged 55 and over were more opposed to re-location (60% opposed). Respondents who indicated that they have children in the home indicated 56% support for re-location.
- 66% of respondents indicated that they drove to the library and 34% indicated that they walked. The in-branch survey solicited 1,553 responses and is likely a more accurate reflection on this issue. This survey revealed that 1,260 respondents (81%) drove to the branch and 293 walked (19%). One conclusion is that the vast majority of users drive to the branch.
- Frequency of use of the library generally did not influence overall results. For instance, those who indicated that they use the library at least weekly were slightly in support of re-location (54%).

The slides attached to this report provide a more detailed snapshot on the feedback received from the survey.

Financial Implications:

Not applicable.

Advancement of the Strategic Plan:

Strategy #5 – Community Well-being and Inclusivity

Goal 3: Future expansion of the Aylmer Library will increase utilization of the County's library system.

Local Municipal Partner Impact:

The consultation process indicates that there is modest support for re-locating the Aylmer Library to EECC. Staff are recommending that this option now be pursued with the EECC Board to solicit a formal commitment to accommodating the branch at the complex. Once such a commitment is confirmed, discussions between County Council and the EECC Board can then proceed regarding matters such as the level of capital renovations that will be required to accommodate the branch and the terms of a leasing agreement, with the goal of occupancy as soon as January 1st, 2028.

Communication Requirements:

It is recommended that a copy of this report be circulated to the Councils of the Town of Aylmer and Township of Malahide.

Conclusion:

The County's consultation process on re-locating the Aylmer branch of the Elgin County Library reveals that there is slight support for such a move but it is fair to conclude that opinions are divided which is in keeping with the long-standing debates and discussions on this issue. It may seem that the general sentiment is that residents are strongly opposed to such a move based on recent media coverage and attendance at a separate public meeting convened in April by the Aylmer Express. The County's consultation process reveals that is not the case. County Council can draw from the results of this consultation process that there is a solid base of support for re-location to EECC which is being expressed in much more subtle ways. Furthermore, there is a strong base of support from members of the community who represent the library's current and future users who tend to be less vocal on this issue.

There is a path forward that may involve shorter and longer-term solutions. In the shorter term (beyond the expiration of the current lease at the Old Town Hall location on December 31st, 2027), the Aylmer branch can be re-located to EECC while the Town of Aylmer fundraises, designs and builds an expansion at the downtown site. This also assures that the library has stable premises from which to operate while a construction project proceeds downtown for completion in 2030 at the very earliest. Staff recognize that such an approach will impact the level of capital renovations that the EECC Board will be willing to make to accommodate the library if it is not a longer-term commitment

and that certainly needs to be part of County Council's decision-making process on this issue. It is also within County Council's sole jurisdiction to make re-location to EECC a longer-term solution.

All of which is Respectfully Submitted

Approved for Submission

Brian Masschaele
Director of Community and
Cultural Services

Blaine Parkin
Chief Administrative Officer/Clerk

[Aylmer Library Survey Results]

July 8, 2025

Agenda

1

Background

2

Public Open House

3

Engage Elgin

4

Promotional Materials

5

Survey & Survey Results

6

Questions & Comments

COUNCIL DIRECTION

At its meeting on March 11, 2025, Council directed staff to engage the community in the Aylmer Library Relocation process and to seek feedback regarding the move to the East Elgin Community Complex.

WHY IS PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN THE AYLMER LIBRARY RELOCATION PROCESS IMPORTANT?

Public engagement is important to ensure that the voices of Aylmer and Malahide residents are heard, helping Elgin County Council better understand community needs, concerns, and expectations around the proposed relocation. This input will help shape a solution that reflects both current challenges and future opportunities for the Aylmer branch.

Public Open House

May 6, 2025 - East Elgin Community Complex

OPENING THE BOOK TO POSSIBILITIES:
[Relocating the Aylmer Library Branch to the East Elgin Community Complex]

Help shape the services that a new and bigger library space can provide our community!

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE

JOIN US

East Elgin Community Complex
Tuesday, May 6, 2025 | 7:00 PM
531 Talbot Street W, Aylmer, ON (Imperial Hall)

ElginCounty

A Public Open House was held on May 6, 2025, to share information about the proposed relocation of the Aylmer Library to the East Elgin Community Complex.

The event provided an opportunity for residents to learn from staff about the plan, ask questions, and offer feedback to help ensure the new library space reflects community needs.

56

Attendees to the Open House

Online Engagement Website



Featured Projects

Aylmer Library

We're opening the book to possibilities 📖 — and we want YOUR input!

[View Project](#)

Transportation Master Plan

The Transportation Master Plan outlines the future of Elgin's transportation network.

[View Project](#)

St. George Street Reconstruction

Project Description
In 2024, the County of Elgin in partnership with the Municipality of...

[View Project](#)

WEBPAGE : EngageElgin.ca/AylmerLibrary

The project page outlines the proposed relocation of the Aylmer Branch Library to the East Elgin Community Complex.

It includes:

- Background information
- Concept plans
- Public engagement details
- Opportunities for community feedback
- Key supporting documents to keep residents informed and involved.

WEBPAGE RESULTS:
MAY 6, 2025 - MAY 28, 2025

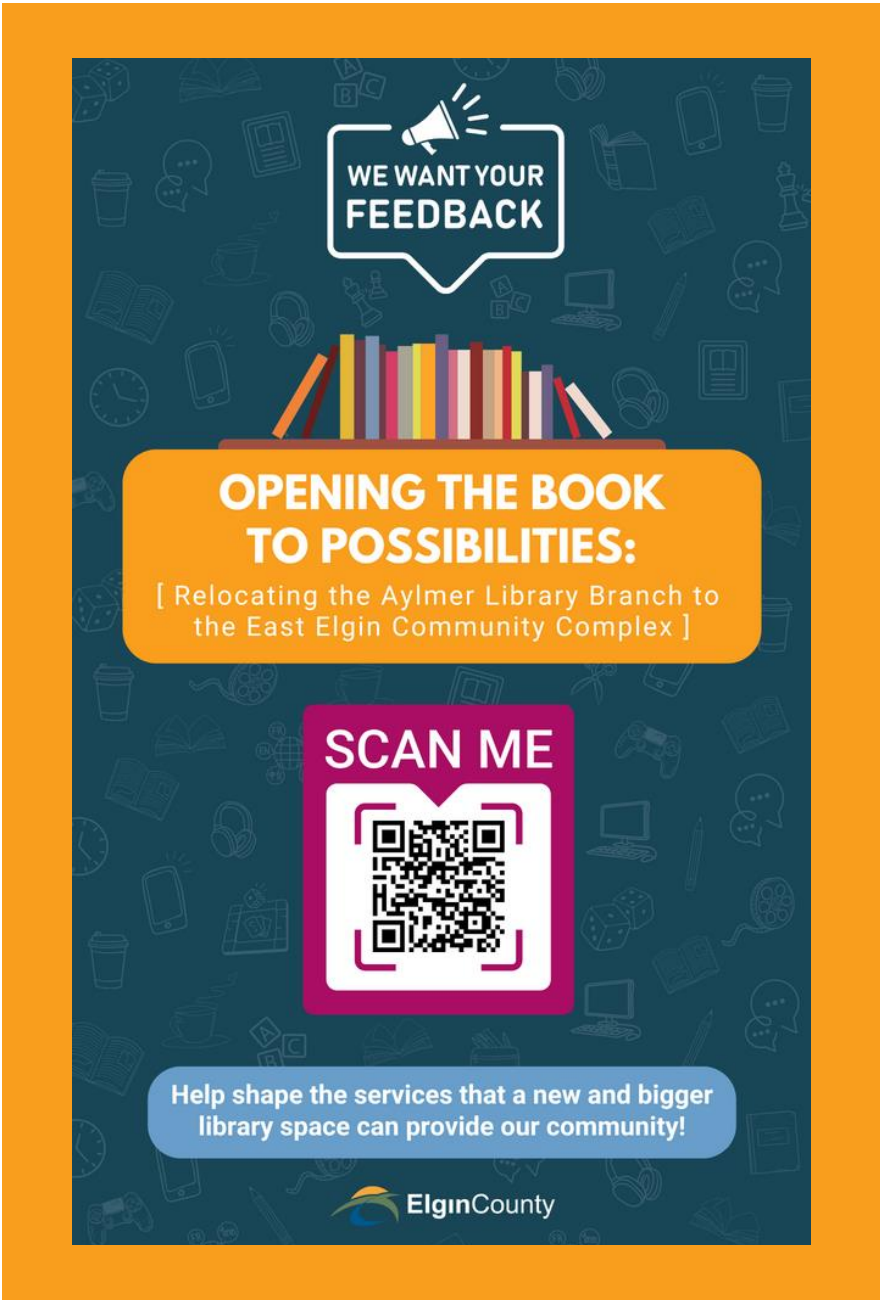




1.2K

Total Webpage Visits

Promotional Materials

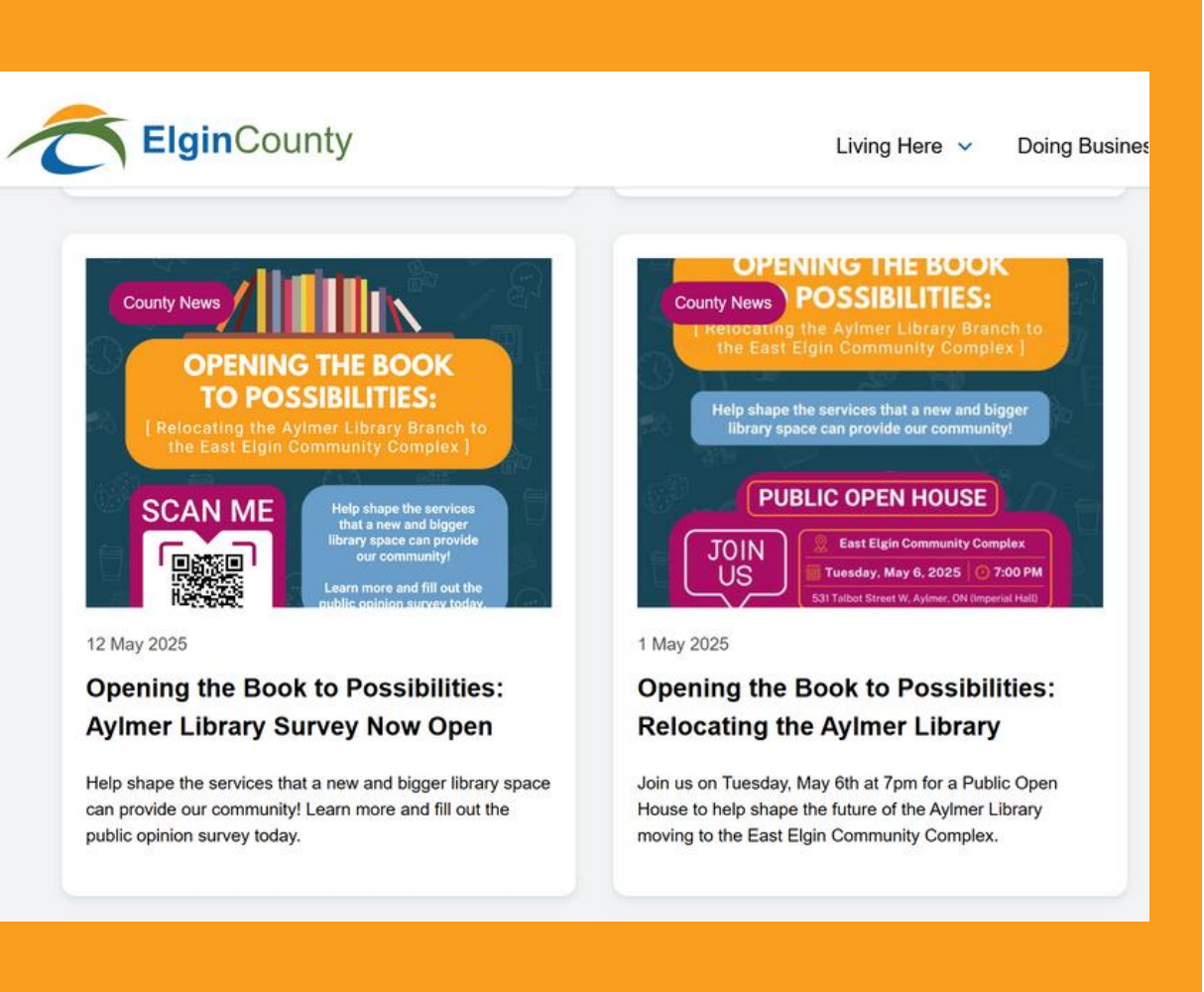
Print Communication Materials



	Posters placed within the Branch
	3 Ads in the Aylmer Express

Promotional Materials

Digital Communication Materials



Added to the County’s website in the news section (May 12)



Included in the Aylmer & Area Chamber Of Commerce’s E-Newsletter (May 20)



Included in the Aylmer Library’s E-Newsletter

Promotional Materials

Elgin County Facebook



3 posts on the County Facebook Page

Total Views*: 67,195

Total Reach*: 18,064

Total Link Clicks: 675



Shared by the Elgin County Library Facebook Page (May 8)

- * Total Views: The number of times your content was played or displayed.
- * Total Reach: This metric counts reach from the organic or paid distribution of your post, including if it was boosted.
- * Total Impressions: Views when the post is at least 50% on screen, or when it is clicked, whichever comes first.

Survey & Survey Results



224 Surveys Completed

A full list of survey questions and comments received are linked in the Council Report as well as at the link below.

<https://www.elgincounty.ca/resources/aylmer-library-2025-survey-results/>

[Aylmer Library Survey Results]

July 8, 2025

Survey Results

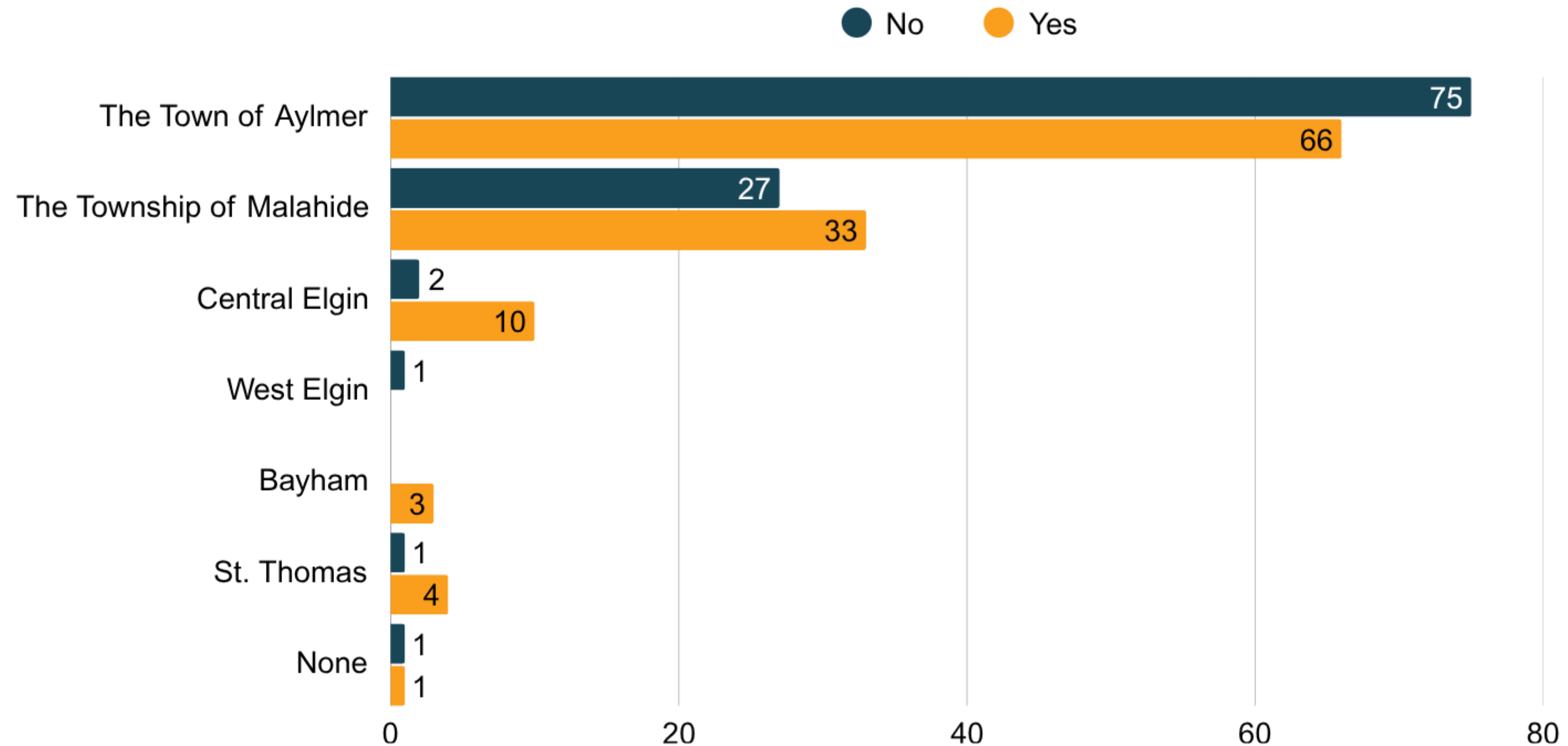
Do you support moving to the complex?

224 Surveys Completed



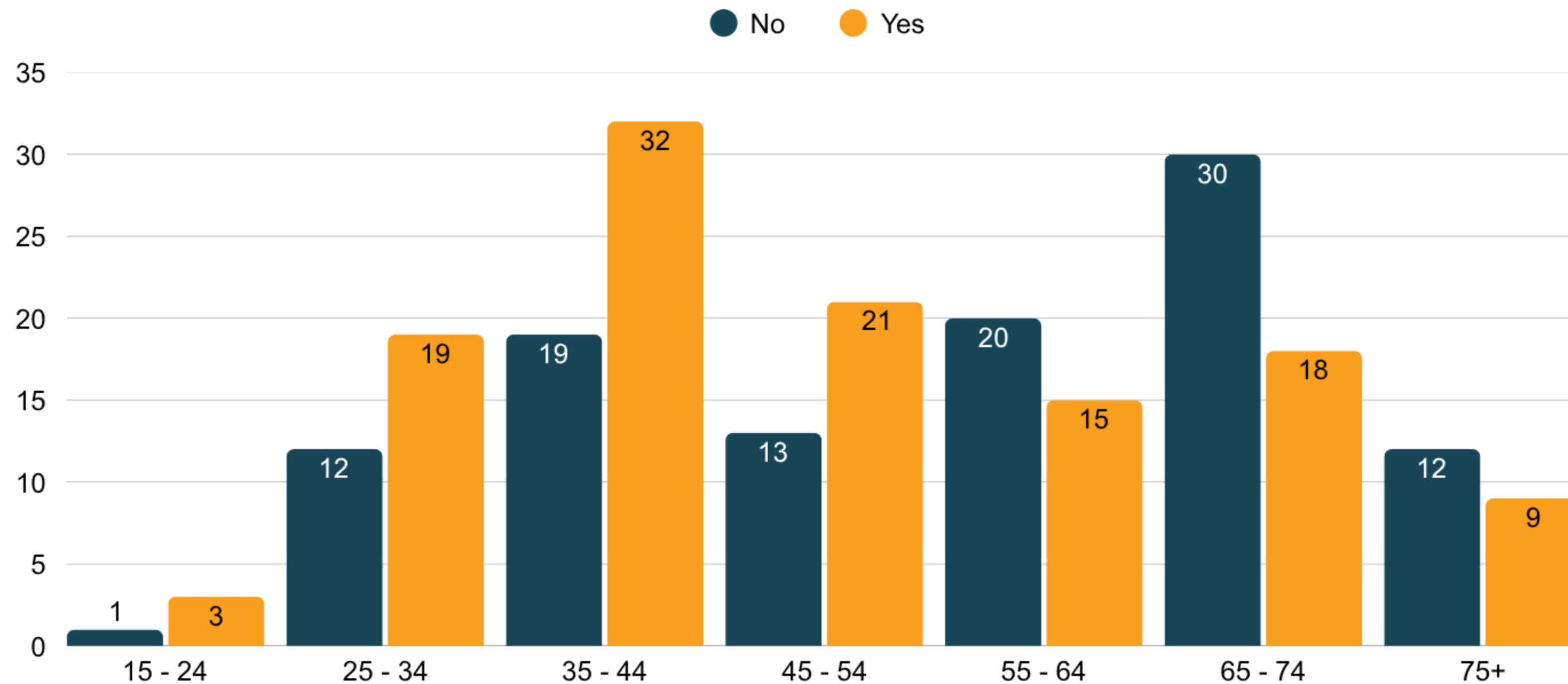
Survey Results

Do you support moving to the complex? - By Municipality



Survey Results

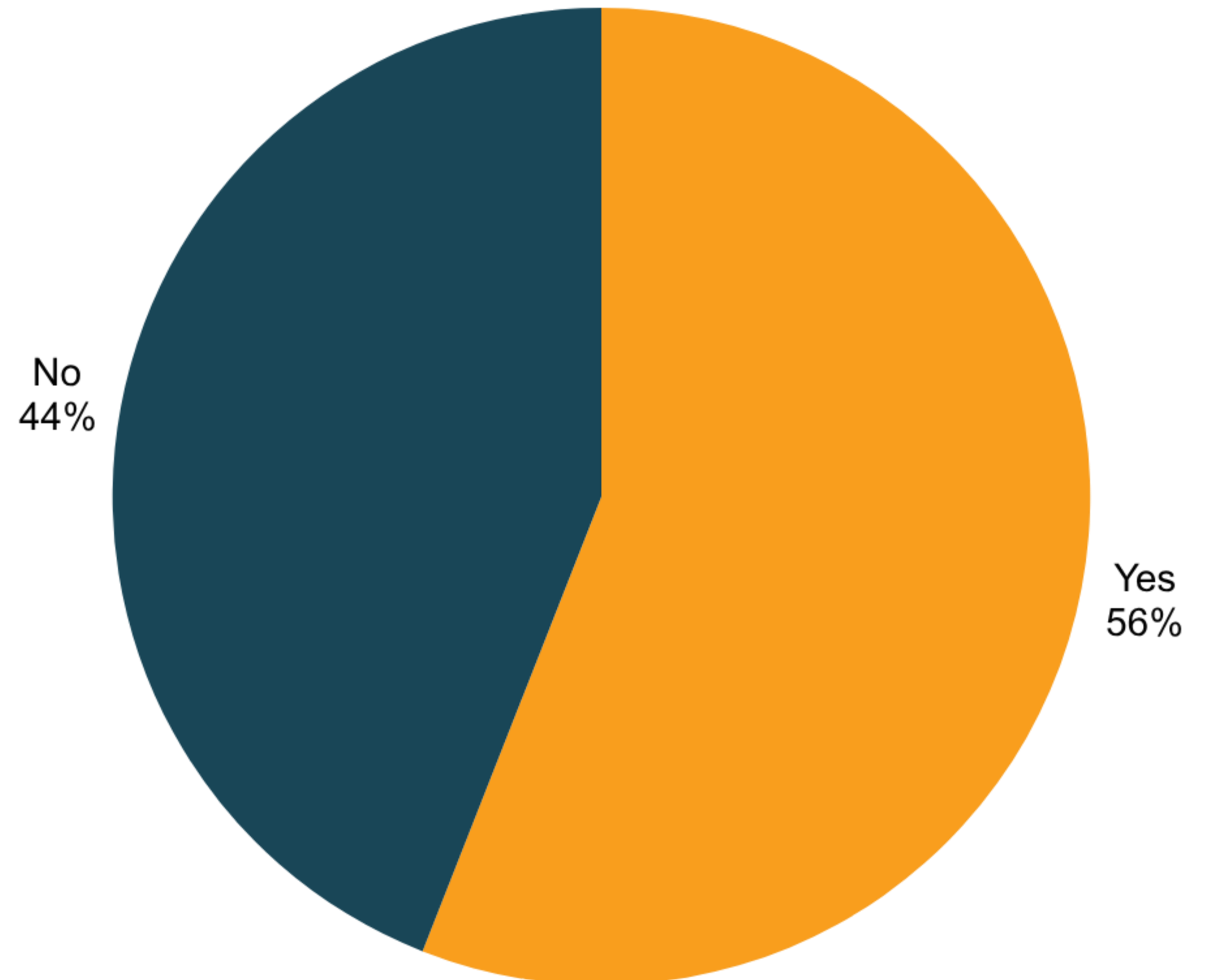
Do you support moving to the complex? - By Age



Survey Results

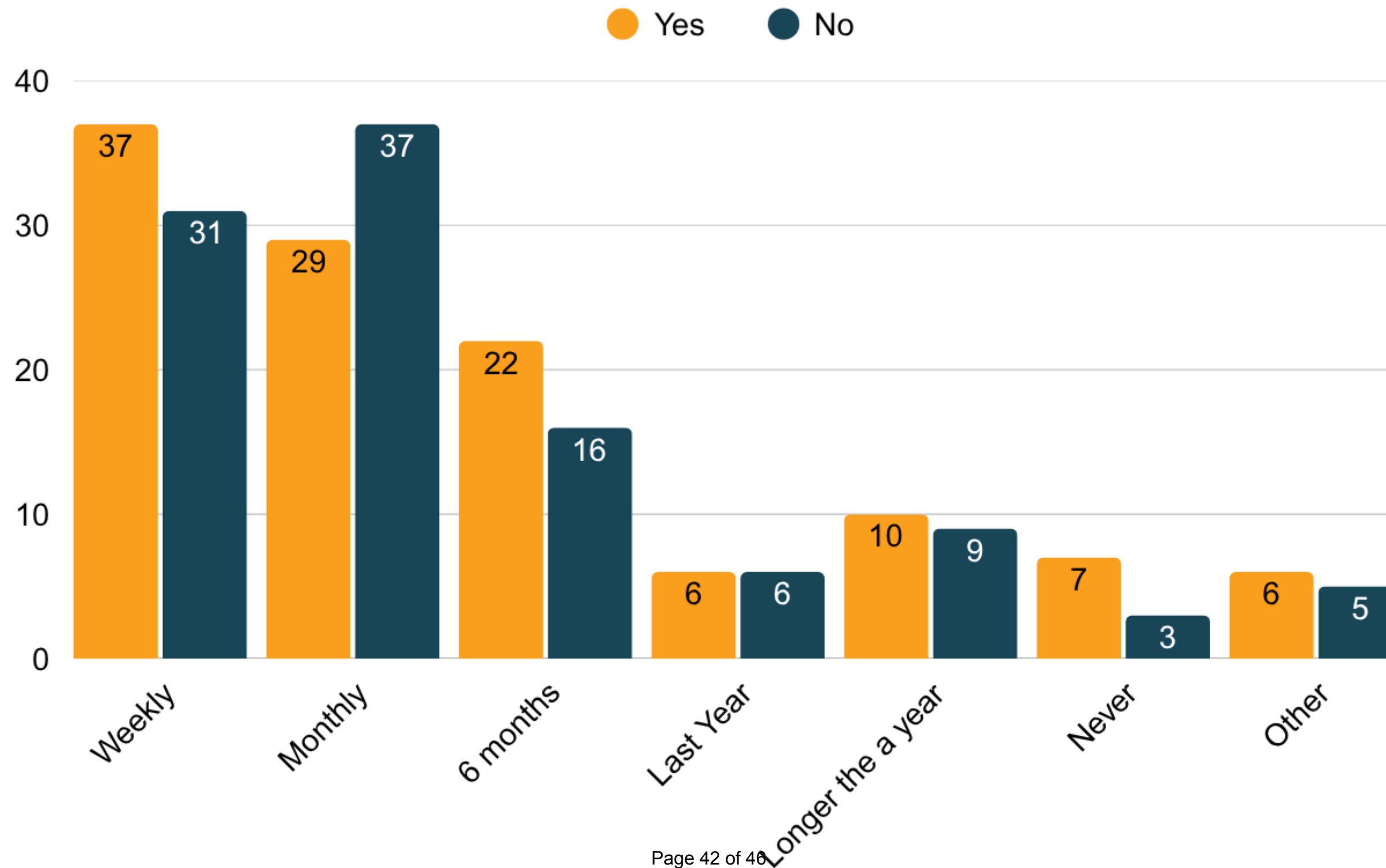
Do you support moving to the complex? - By Responders with Children

109 respondents have children, 61 of them support moving the Library to the complex



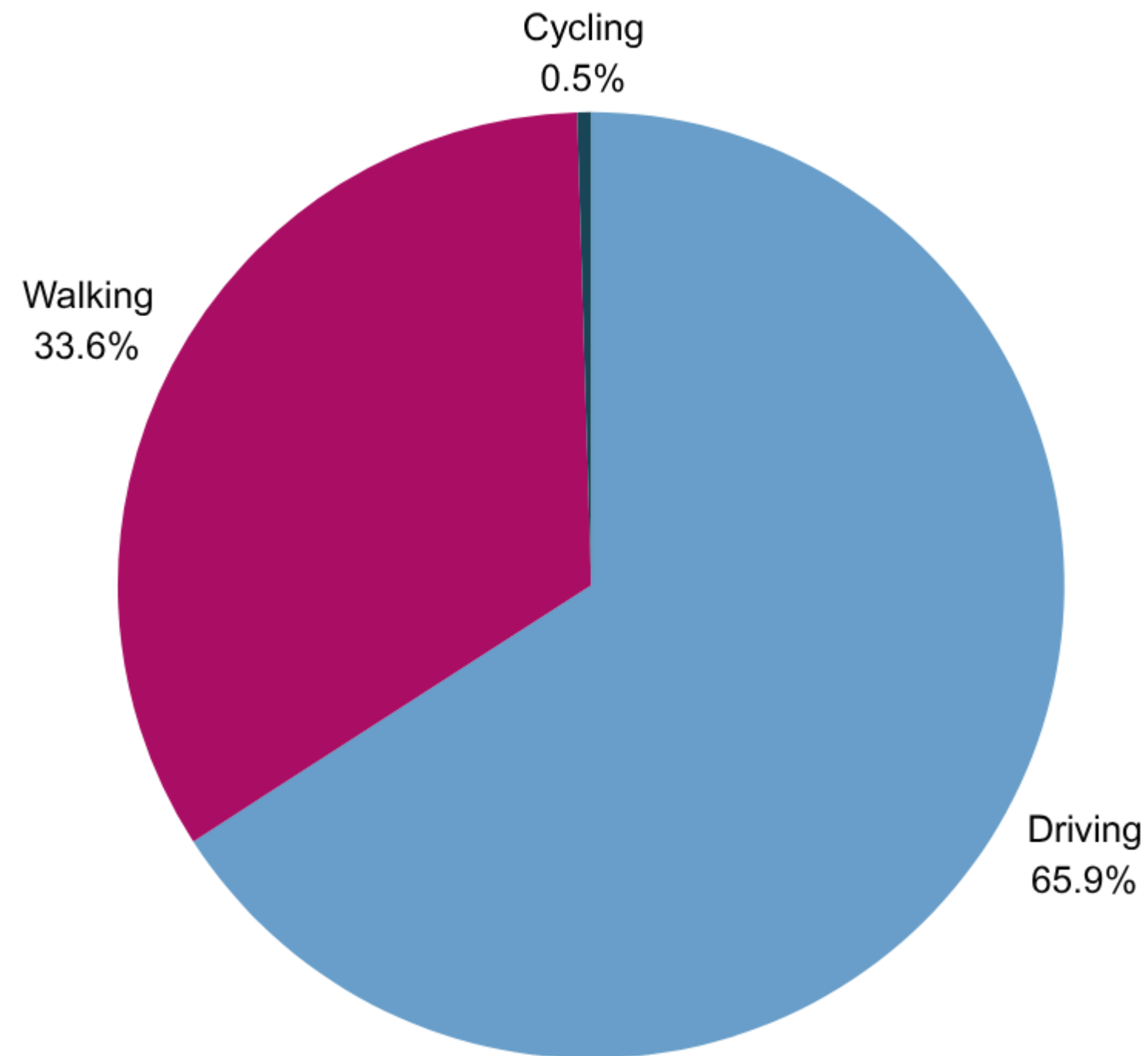
Survey Results

Do you support moving to the complex? - By How Often they Visit the Aylmer Library

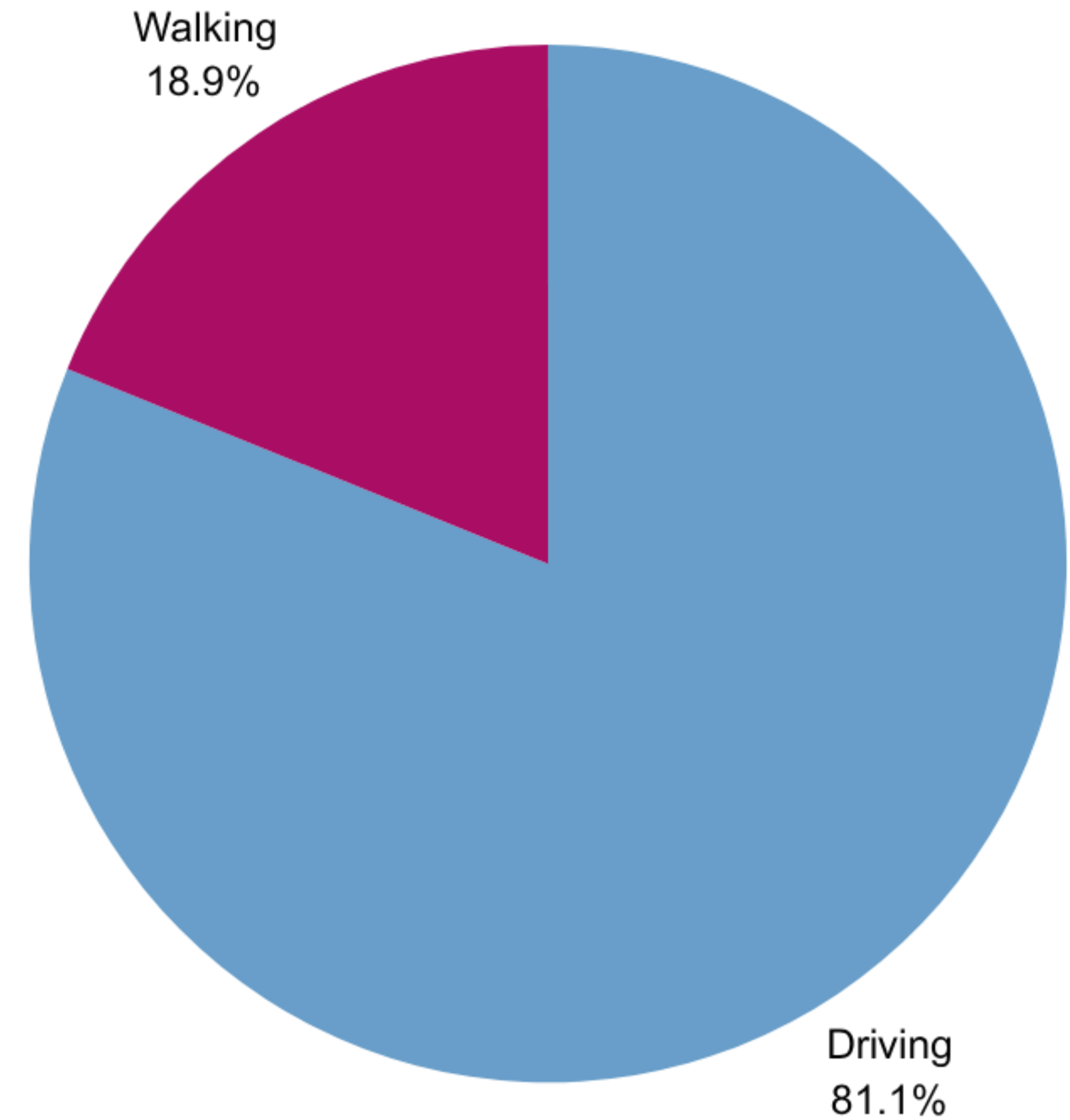


Survey Results

If you visited the Aylmer Library within the last year, how did you get there?



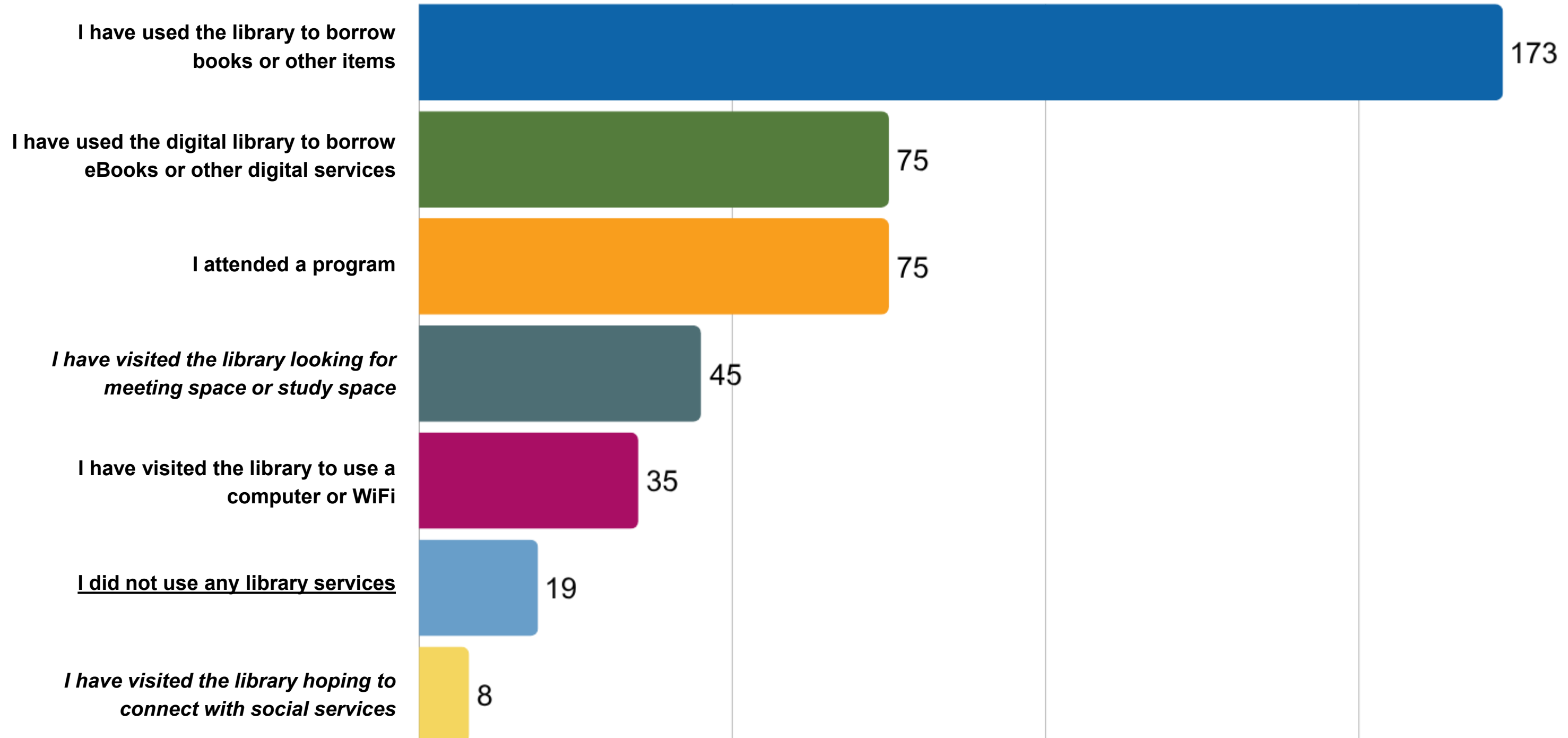
How did you get to the Aylmer Library today?



Survey conducted by Aylmer Library
staff from April 10 - May 5

Survey Results

Services Accessed at the Aylmer Library in the Last Year



Survey Results

The service I was looking for at the library wasn't there:

Looking for more children activities

Programming for seniors

Early on programs, maker space, general programs and events lacking

Programs during the evenings

I often have to go to the St Thomas Library because they have a large selection of books and we use their maker space

Just a quiet space to browse but its cramped and noisy because the space is too small

Attend theatre

Children's programs in a larger space

Questions & Comments

