



Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan May 2022

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TCL Management Consultants

Beth Ross & Associates

Bibliotechs Inc.

CS&P Architects

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We would like to thank the following individuals for their contribution to this plan.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library - Master Plan Team

Margaret Wallace, Chief Executive Officer

Marcia Friginette, Coordinator of Service Delivery

Kate Scheiers, Coordinator of Community Engagement/Strategic Projects

Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library Board (2019-2022)

Sandra Liaros, Board Chair

Bill Slovitt, Board Vice-Chair

Richard Bartley, Councillor

Anand Daté

Glyde MacLennan

Ray MacNeice

Bob Power

John Relph

Nadine Williams

Consulting Team

Greg Young, TCI Management Consultants

Jon Linton, TCI Management Consultants

Beth Ross, Beth Ross & Associates

Craig Goodman, CS&P Architects

Hamza Alhbian, CS&P Architects

Katherine Slimman, Bibliotechs Inc.

Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville – Auxiliary Team Members

Dwayne Tapp, Director of Development Services

Meaghan Craven, Manager of Planning Policy

Randall Roth, Senior Policy Planner

Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview

The large and rapidly growing Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is served by one large (31,000 square foot) library facility. While well used and highly regarded by the community, it is nevertheless recognized that this single library building will not accommodate the future needs of the growing and evolving municipality (in terms of demographic, socio-economic and cultural change). Accordingly, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library (WSPL) decided the time was opportune to review the level of satisfaction and value attributed by the community to Library services and determine the needs of the system going forward. The broad purpose of this work then was to undertake a values assessment of the current operations of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library (WSPL) and within this context review the future facility needs of the operation, looking a decade into the future.

After a tender process, a consortium led by TCI Management Consultants was selected to undertake the project. Members of the consortium included Beth Ross & Associates (library operations specialist), Bibliotechs Inc. (experts in the use of technology in libraries), and CS&P Architects. The work began in the summer of 2021 and was completed in April 2022.

Activities Undertaken

The work involved several inter-related activities, including:

- a site visit of the existing facility
- review of all relevant background materials
- interviews and consultations with key stakeholders (senior Library staff, elected and administrative officials, and other community representatives)
- a staff survey (featuring a very high level of staff participation)
- a community survey (which elicited a very impressive 480 responses!)
- a benchmarking assessment of library systems in nearby and comparably-sized communities
- a review of trends in library service provision
- a review of the current potential user profiles in the area anticipated for the first new branch (Ballantrae)
- two workshop sessions with Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville Development Services Department personnel
- development of this Report in draft and final form
- presentation of this Report to the Library Board as well as Town Council

Throughout the process several meetings were held with a Working Group consisting of members of the management team of the Library.

Basic Findings

The research revealed very high levels of utilization and satisfaction with the Library, and a strong desire to see resumption of normal activities after the pandemic. WSPL is clearly a well-loved community institution and there is widespread agreement that it will play a key role in the growth and development of the municipality in future. Its programs and services are seen to meet community needs well, and there is an expectation that it will continue to provide innovative programs and services into the future. (The consultation program revealed many enthusiastic suggestions in this regard.)

At the same time, however, the Library has been unable to keep pace with unprecedented growth in the community. As one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Canada, there is an urgent need for more facilities and staff to enable the Library to continue its path of providing innovative and responsive services to the community. This fundamental finding gives rise to the following recommendations.

Recommendations

Recommendations resulting from this Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan are categorized into five areas. These are:

- 1) *Library Facilities (new branches needed in future as well as minor improvements to the existing facility)*
- 2) *Collections*
- 3) *Programs and Services*
- 4) *Technology*
- 5) *Other Operating Considerations*

Facility Recommendations

1. Begin planning immediately for new library facilities in the community: Using library standards, this study has identified a *current deficit* of almost 12,000 sq. ft. of library space in Whitchurch-Stouffville required to serve the population of the municipality. With significant growth expected in the Town in future decades, this existing deficit will only become larger. Accordingly, a two-phase expansion plan for library facilities is recommended over the next ten years, which will bring the municipality into alignment with recommended space provision standards by the end of that period. This recommended expansion plan is:

Phase 1: Ballantrae Branch: between now and the end of 2026 (i.e., the next 5 years), build a new library branch of approximately 10,000 square feet in Ballantrae, to serve the relatively large and growing population in the northern parts of Whitchurch-Stouffville; and

Phase 2: New Main Library: by the end of 2031, construct a new Main Library facility of approximately 40,000 square feet near the Highway 48 corridor in the southeast part of Stouffville, to cater to the large population growth increase anticipated in that area by that time. As well, it will function as the new Main Library including the administrative center of the whole public library system (which by that time will consist of three branches).

With the continuing operation of the existing facility (31,000 square feet) over this period, this will bring the municipality into alignment with recommended standards by the end of the next decade.

This study has identified preliminary functional requirements for both these facilities (including space plans and costs). The anticipated capital cost (measured in terms of current dollars) for the Ballantrae Branch is \$10.3 million and for the new Main Library, approximately \$37.9 million. The suggested timeframe in which to address these new facility recommendations is as follows:

- *Begin detailed planning **immediately** for the new Ballantrae Branch – this should be undertaken with the goal of having a new branch operational by no later than 2026 and preferably before.*
- *Acquire a site in Stouffville that would be suitable for a new Main Library facility of 40,000 sq. ft. – even though the recommended timeframe for construction of the new Main Library facility is not envisaged until sometime between 2027 and 2031, it is recommended that the WSPL and the Town acquire a suitable site as soon as possible to avoid cost escalation and ensure that such a site will be available. The Library should consider installing an interim library use for the site (such as a book trailer) that is functional as well as signals to the community that a longer-term permanent library use is planned for the site.*
- *Detailed planning for the new Library should begin some time after the new Ballantrae Branch is up and running so that the impact of that facility on the entire system is understood and can be factored into the overall planning process. Either Ballantrae or the Main Library could be co-located with a recreation complex should that opportunity arise.*

2. Optimize the Existing Library: The study also identified relatively small improvements that could be made fairly quickly to improve the functionality of the existing library facility at 2 Park Drive. (Although the building is quite new – renovated in 2018 – there are nonetheless some areas in which users in the community survey and interviews had suggested refinements.) These include: devise a way to enhance Library access and dis-engage from the Community Centre operations; refresh the overall space to make it more welcoming; improve the children’s area to enhance separation and privacy; create a children’s play area; improve lighting throughout the facility; expand the maker space; improve directional flow throughout the

space; and implement other changes to align with current facility accessibility design requirements.

Collections Recommendation

3. Continue to Grow the Collection: The study also identified several areas in which collections could be further developed. These included providing more popular fiction; more francophone materials, as well as materials in other languages; non-traditional collections; lendable technology; more materials addressing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects; games; and many more. As well, on-going collections activity will need to recognize the interests and needs of new residents to the community over the coming decade (and beyond) who are expected to have different backgrounds, characteristics and interests than existing residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Accordingly, it is recommended that the on-going collections development be undertaken in light of the suggestions made from the research gathered here.

Program and Service Recommendation

4. Continually Develop, Market and Promote Programs and Services: While the study demonstrated high levels of satisfaction with existing programs and services, there were also several suggestions for new programs and services that residents and users would like to see initiated. However, many of these suggestions were for programs and service that the Library *already offers*, which speaks to the need for a more aggressive marketing approach. These included: establishment of book clubs; Indigenous programs; babies and toddlers programs; increase of digital services; more programs for adults with special needs; greater outreach for newcomers; seminars and webinars; more preteen programs; and many others. As mentioned, the Library offered all of these prior to the pandemic, and intends to do so again once this becomes possible. However, it will at the same time be necessary to ensure that the community is aware of the resumption of these programs and services (as well as any new ones as these are also constantly being developed). Accordingly, there is a strong need for a greater marketing orientation, appropriately staffed, at the Library.

Technology Recommendation

5. Develop a Technology Plan: Our review of the technology environment in which the Library operates (which covers both the internal technology that is used in the day-to-day operation of the Library as well as the external technology that is made available to Library users) suggests that a proactive Technology Plan should be developed to enable the Library to keep pace with the needs of the growing community. There are several specific areas that such a plan should consider, including:

- *ensure long-term technology requirements for a second branch and expansion of the main branch, including best internet resources available, additional self-check stations, AMH (automated materials handling) units and RFID security gates and equipment*

- *develop long-range capital plan for purchase, support and replacement of technology systems, hardware and software to support Library operations*
- *training in basic applications for more customer-serving staff to keep pace with growing demand for these services*
- *development of a dedicated app for the library website*
- *preparation of an RFP for an ILS with multi-branch configuration, and possible discovery layer*
- *consideration of moving the ILS from a local server to a cloud system*
- *re-initiation of the mobile makerspace and support for the makerspace equipment*
- *provision of accessibility tools including specialized computer equipment at new branches*
- *promotion of the library as a digital hub with technology such as augmented reality (AR) for patron learning in the OPAC and mobile devices, and virtual reality (VR) to explore collections in a virtual environment*
- *reduction of staff driven actions and handling using tools such as digital signage, RFID inventory wands*

Other Operating Considerations

The consultation process revealed certain other areas in which operating improvements and adjustments could be made to the overall public library. These give rise to the following recommendations:

6. Hire Additional Marketing Personnel: One of the issues raised in the course of the research, and as indicated above, is lack of awareness as to the range of programs and services available, and the need for more targeted marketing through e-newsletters and social media. (This has always been the case, but will be even more urgent in the post COVID environment as Library operations ‘open up’ again to the public.) Accordingly, a recommendation here is to undertake a more targeted marketing approach. This will require an additional two staff positions: a Marketing Coordinator and a Graphics Designer (to ensure that marketing messages and approaches are developed and implemented in an attractive and compelling manner). As this is a large task, and the Library is a distinct operation with its own public face, these positions should be dedicated to the WSPL and not ‘shared’ with the Town.

7. Finalize Website Refresh: The consultation process revealed that the website is very popular and much used – in fact the number one source of information that people referenced when obtaining information about programs and services. It also generated several comments regarding improvements desired: additional content desired, additional functionality, a library user app that could be downloaded from the website, etc. It is noted that the website is currently in the process of being redesigned to address precisely these points. (It is very likely that most stakeholders and users making these comments had no idea that the website refresh was underway.) Accordingly, it is recommended that WSPL complete the redesign as soon as

possible and at some future point, undertake an independent assessment or audit of the website from a user perspective and implement further recommended improvements.

Costs

This study has identified preliminary functional requirements for both the recommended facilities (including space plans and costs). The anticipated capital cost (measured in terms of current dollars) for the Ballantrae Branch is \$10.3 million and for the new Main Branch, approximately \$37.9 million (excluding any cost of land).

Other costs relating to operational improvements are much more modest in nature and are detailed in the report. They related to some increase or re-allocation of staff time, and some out-of-pocket costs for special studies and reviews.

Operating costs for the new Ballantrae branch including additional costs to operate the library system as a whole are estimated to range between \$855,000 to \$905,000, in terms of current dollars. (At this point, the new Main Library is too far off in the future to meaningfully estimate operating costs.)

Alignment with Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville’s Strategic Plan

Even though it operates under its own and separate legislation, in many ways the WSPL is an ‘agency’ of the municipality. Accordingly, it is important to recognize how the Library’s Master Plan will contribute to and reinforce the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville’s overall Strategic Plan.

The four Pillars of Whitchurch-Stouffville’s Strategic Plan¹ are:

Fiscal Sustainability Working toward a sustainable budget that ensures the protection and maintenance of core services now and into the future.
Expanding the tax base through a growing, diversified economy Building and maintaining a tax base that supports the highest quality program and service delivery.
Service Excellence Supporting a collaborative, timely, customer-focused approach to operations that enhances efficiency, effectiveness, and customer satisfaction.
Asset planning, maintenance and development Successful stewardship of the infrastructure and facilities required to support a growing community and vibrant economy

¹ 2019-2022 Strategic Plan Report, Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, July 2019, prepared by MDB Insight.

The WSPL Master Plan will make a solid and positive contribution to each of the above pillars. Specifically,

Fiscal Sustainability – The Library’s Master Plan is designed to ensure Whitchurch-Stouffville’s library services are provided to the community in the most efficient and sustainable way. It will ensure library services continue to be provided to the community’s current and future population seeking to maximize value for money and the return on investment to the community for its municipal expenditures on the public library.

Expanding the tax base through a growing and diversified economy – A well-functioning and highly-regarded library has been proven to attract residents, skilled newcomers and businesses to the community. These new households and businesses will expect leading edge library services to serve them and to help build the community. Through its collections, activities, resources and partnerships, the public library will serve important municipal, economic development, social and cultural objectives to meet the needs of its growing community.

Service Excellence – The Library Master Plan will ensure that the community’s future library services are ‘community-led’ and meet the needs of a fast growing and changing community. It will continue to provide excellent customer service to its patrons and will serve as a vehicle to help promote service excellence.

Asset planning – This Master Plan has been developed to ensure Whitchurch-Stouffville has the state-of-the-art library services to meet the needs of its current and future population according to industry standards and comparisons with benchmarked communities. The Library facilities developed herein are designed to achieve or be close to achieving net zero building performance. The library collections, services and technology will meet the needs of the growing and vibrant community.

Thus, the Master Plan of the Library is very much aligned with the strategic direction of the entire community. It will clearly help achieve the future vision of a progressive and dynamic Whitchurch-Stouffville as articulated in the plan.

Conclusion

Whitchurch-Stouffville is a large, rapidly-growing, and relatively wealthy community. At present it is served by only one library facility that, while quite new and well-functioning, is too small to serve the community by contemporary library standards due to the unprecedented and very significant growth of the community (one of the fastest-growing in Canada). If unaddressed, this situation will only become worse as a result of the rapid population growth anticipated for the municipality – resulting in a single facility struggling to serve the needs of the now much-larger Town. It is clear that an intentional and proactive plan is needed to

provide for the future needs of Whitchurch-Stouffville; this Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan contains such a plan.

The plan identifies a number of strategic directions for the WSPL to pursue in the short term, but which are clearly aimed at a longer-term future where the library-related needs of the much larger community of Whitchurch-Stouffville (at that time) are provided for in a way that enables the library to continue to meet (and, in fact, exceed) contemporary standards for a progressive and dynamic community.

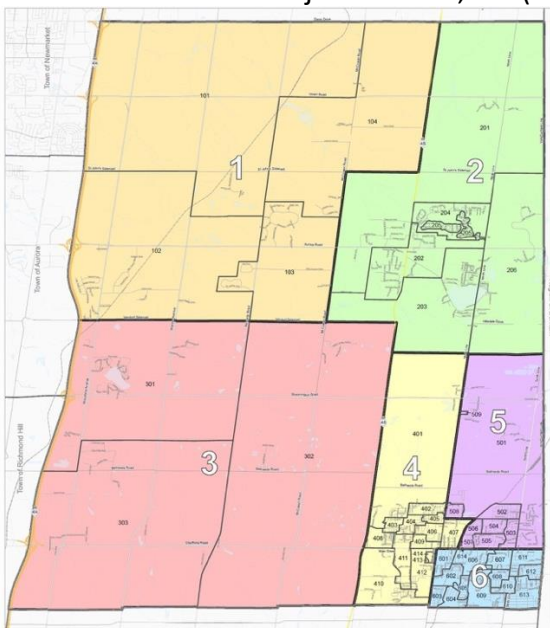
1. INTRODUCTION

This Introductory section of the report provides basic context for the work. First, a brief **overview of the existing operation of the Library** is provided, followed by a statement of the **purpose of the project**. This is followed by an outline of the **activities undertaken** in the course of the work, and finally, a discussion of various key **assumptions and caveats** to be taken into account in reviewing this report is presented.

1.1. Overview of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library is the public library system serving the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville, in York Region, 24 kilometers north of the City of Toronto. The community is currently served by one large central library that was expanded and renovated in 2017, located in Ward 6 (see the Ward map below). The municipality is just over 206 square kilometers and is home to approximately 50,000 permanent residents (as of the recently-released 2021 Census figures.) The population is expected to approximately double by 2051. The Library has a 2021 Operating Budget of \$2.6 million and a staff of nine (9) full-time, and fourteen (14) part-time employees. The total operating hours each week are sixty-two (62).

Basic parameters of its operation include annual circulation of 278,000 of print materials in 2019 (just before the pandemic) and just over 50,000 eBook circulation in the same year. The Library recorded some 236,000 in-person visits in that year. Over 2,300 programs were offered, with total attendance of just over 35,000 (for an average attendance per program of about 15.)



Ward Map for the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville

1.2. Purpose of this Master Plan

Note: Difference between a Master Plan and a Strategic Plan

*Often, the terms 'Strategic Plan' and 'Master Plan' are interchangeable. A **Strategic Plan** outlines future directions for growth and evolution of an organization, which tend to be largely policy directives. The notion of '**Master Plan**' however, often has a more pronounced physical development component to it, and is thus used more when an overall plan is meant to have a major focus upon physical development or facilities component(s) involved. And as will be seen in the development of this particular plan, there are physical elements recommended in the improvement of the existing branch as well as planned future expansion. Accordingly, this document is called a Master Plan, although it does embrace many of the components that would normally be addressed in a Strategic Plan.*

The objectives of this work as they were stated in the Terms of Reference for the project were:

1. Undertake a **values assessment of existing programs and services, facilities and collections**, through a comprehensive and innovative **public consultation process** that identifies the impact of the library system on the community as a whole;
2. Assess the **impact of existing and future growth patterns** and project the anticipated community needs in all areas of library services (collection development, borrower services, information services, programming, technology, facilities and staffing);
3. Develop a **detailed functional plan** for any planned or recommended new facilities, including library services within shared facilities. This functional plan should ensure that the program defines an efficient, flexible and accessible space, and be able to adapt to changing technological opportunities, changing library service demands and projected growth;
4. Undertake a **facility location review** in order to meet community needs and align with existing municipal and library plans and strategies;
5. Identify the **financial implications of proposed recommendations** with respect to the existing and future capital and operational models and budgets; and
6. Submit a **visually pleasing and plain language final report** that adheres to brand standards and effectively positions the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library's capacity to become project ready as funding or partnership opportunities become available.

Key tasks identified in order to meet these objectives were identified as:

Values Assessment: Undertake a values assessment of existing programs and services, facilities and collections through a comprehensive public and professional consultation process that targets users and non-users of all ages. This assessment should also incorporate the Library Board and staff as well as other key stakeholders and partners. This shall include meetings and alternative and innovative engagement strategies such as social media and online surveys.

Impact of Growth: Assess the impact of existing and future growth patterns and project the anticipated community needs in all areas of the library services. This should include:

- a. **Projected growth and catchment areas** for existing and future library locations with a focus on creating “user profiles” of existing and future customers.
- b. A description of the **industry standard for Library service in Ontario** and how the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library currently compares to those standards and to adjacent and comparable library systems. This description should also describe best practices around the world that could be incorporated into the WSPL.
- c. Calculation of Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library’s **overall space requirements** for Library service across the full municipality including a facility model with clear recommendations for the most appropriate service levels at each facility within the proposed model. Recommendations for the best geographic and physical location for each facility within the proposed model should also be provided.
- d. Analysis of the staffing structure of the Library and **recommendations as how to best staff the system** as a whole with a suggested facility model.
- e. Examination of the **role played by technology in service delivery** and community impact while supporting an expansion of technology to address evolving needs and trends. This plan should also account for the “Maker Space”, online databases, children’s programming, special events, workshops, administrative technology and outreach initiatives.
- f. **Detailed benchmarking of past, current and future trends** for our circulation and collection needs. Benchmarking should be based on Library systems of comparable size and geographical location.

Functional Plan for New Facility: Develop a detailed functional plan and timeline for any planned or recommended new facilities, including the provision of library services within shared facilities. This functional plan should ensure that the program defines an efficient, flexible and accessible space, able to adapt to changing technological opportunities, changing library service demands and projected growth. The plan should include:

- a. Specific architectural considerations both interior and exterior*
- b. Specific space requirements with graphical representation, if possible*
- c. Specific outdoor and indoor space requirements*
- d. Major service areas and related functional and spatial requirements*
- e. Adjacency relationships between service areas within shared facilities*
- f. Summary of staff areas and required spaces*
- g. Summary scoping of furnishings required for public and staff spaces*
- h. Summary of public spaces and seating requirements to meet program and service plan*
- i. Information Technology requirements of the program and functional plan*

Financial Implications: Identify the financial implications with detailed cost estimated of proposed recommendations with respect to the existing and future capital and operational models and budgets.

Preparation of a final Master Plan Report and presentation with a minimum of **two** (2) rounds of editing by the Library Project Team. The report should be visually pleasing with the use of infographics and clear and concise plain language. Submission of the final report should be in digital files on an electronic storage device that includes the final report, all appendices, all background information, presentations and raw data in organized folders with easy to find headers. The final presentation for the Board should be in PowerPoint format, with visually pleasing slides and Library branding protocols.

1.3. Activities Undertaken

The activities undertaken in support of meeting these objects and preparing these deliverables were as follows:

- a site visit and community familiarization tour (including a review of sites where potential new facilities might be located);
- a review of all relevant background materials;
- interviews and consultations with key staff, elected and administrative officials;
- a widely-promoted community survey (which garnered a very impressive 480 responses!);

- a detailed benchmarking review of library systems in comparable communities;
- a review of trends in the delivery of library services;
- a review of technology employed in the library – both in terms of equipment and services for staff and internal operations, as well as support for the technology-related needs of users;
- several meetings with Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville;
- Development Services Department personnel to review population growth trends for areas within the municipality, and to agree upon a reasonable growth trajectory over the next decade and beyond;
- several internal team meetings, and regular sessions with the client Working Group to discuss progress and findings; and
- preparation and presentation of this Report in draft and final forms.

1.4. Caveats and Limitations

There are some considerations that need to be kept in mind when reviewing this report:

- **This is a high-level Facility Needs and Master Plan:** A Master Plan is by definition a high-level document, describing broad intentions and areas of action, rather than a specific program of activity at a granular level of detail. It also tends to focus more on the physical facility aspects of service rather than an in-depth review of programs and services provided (although there was certainly much input in the consultation process that would inform a strategic plan update). This plan thus sets the stage for a number of subsequent initiatives and does not (and cannot) by itself answer all questions and address all issues that may be raised. In addition, as is the case with any Master Plan there will be unforeseen challenges and new opportunities that arise over its implementation, and that must be dealt with. While this Master Plan cannot anticipate all of these, it should set the overall context within which the Board and the Library senior management team can make decisions on these new challenges and opportunities.

- **Project entirely undertaken during the pandemic:** This project was undertaken entirely during the pandemic of 2020-21-22. Aside from a one-day site visit (undertaken according to proper distancing protocols) all meetings were held via video conference or telephone. In the opinion of the consultants, while not ideal, this in no way compromised the integrity of the findings or conclusions of the work. As previously mentioned, the great success of the consultation initiatives undertaken (e.g., community and staff surveys) attest to this.

2. DATA COLLECTON AND SITUATION ANALYSIS

This next section of the Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan Report presents the data collection and assessment involved in the project from a number of sources. First, observations from a **site visit** to the existing library as well as location options for future new branches are presented. This is followed by a summary of findings from consultations with **key stakeholders** in the municipality (primarily senior library staff, and key administrative and elected officials). Next, a summary of the results of an extensive **community survey** are presented. Then we present the results from a **benchmarking assessment** looking at how SWPL compares to other similar-sized communities on several relevant dimensions. A review of recent and current **trends** in community libraries is presented. Finally, all of these ‘lines of evidence’ are brought together into an identification of **main themes of the research** that help to inform the plan, using a basic **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)** framework.

The sections below briefly describe the highlights from these various investigations, while the more detailed results are presented under separate cover in the Appendices.

2.1. Site Visit and Observations

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library is located at 2 Park Drive in Stouffville. It is a spacious facility (approximately 31,000 square-feet), originally built in 2001 as part of the Leisure Centre and expanded and renovated in 2017. It is reportedly very well-used (pre-pandemic). In July 2021, the study team visited the facility and made certain observations about the site and facility.

Overall, the team was very impressed with the facility. It has a very welcoming façade and external appearance. There is good visitor flow and the space is easy to navigate. There is a positive feeling to the interior with lots of open space and natural light in most areas that convey a very positive and airy feeling. There are several (19) enclosed study spaces of various sizes that serve the community well.

While naturally some areas for improvement were noted (such as shelving meeting accessibility standards – which were not in place when the facility was originally designed) these are for the most part fairly minor in nature and could be accommodated through relatively inexpensive modernization upgrades to the facility, which is the focus of one of the recommendations made.

2.2. Stakeholder Consultations

Key stakeholders in Whitchurch-Stouffville were invited to contribute to the project, either by means of a personal interview or completing an online survey guide. Individuals invited to participate included Library board members, Councillors and key representatives of community organizations.

Overwhelmingly, the response from these key stakeholders was positive. A typical comment was *“we are very lucky to have such a forward-thinking and engaged staff at the Library who are always helping the community by moving forward with new programs and services.”* All respondents noted the very positive working relationship of the Library with the municipality. Most acknowledged that the very rapid population growth in the community necessitates planning for new library facilities to serve the needs of the community – sooner rather than later.

All felt the programs and services to be very strong and serve core groups in the community. There were some suggestions made for additional types of programs and services to be considered in the Library’s on-going development of new programs and services to meet community need.

2.3. Community Survey Highlights

A community survey was undertaken in August and September 2021. The survey was widely promoted through the Library’s communications channels as well as through Facebook, outdoor signage, word of mouth, etc. A very impressive 480 responses were obtained. It is important to note that this survey was carried out in the middle of the pandemic and many respondents would not have visited the Library for over a year, so some perceptions and comments may not totally reflect the current reality. The survey response was quite reflective of the community in terms of geographical representation (all Wards were well-represented), age groups, household types, etc. A high proportion (just over 90%) had library cards and reported reasonable familiarity with the Library.

Overall, like the stakeholder response, the results were extremely positive. Very high levels of satisfaction with programs and services, and the friendliness and professionalism of staff, were registered. Most saw the Library as a very welcoming space. Most expected that their physical usage of the Library would return ‘to normal’ after the pandemic.

As expected, there were several suggestions for additional collections, programs and services. (Inevitably, when people are asked for suggestions in a survey such as this, they will give them!) These all provide very valuable community feedback to be considered by senior staff.

2.4. Benchmarking and Standards Review

A benchmarking comparison review of WSPL compared to other library systems in similar-sized communities was undertaken (using 2019 data to reflect the more ‘normal’ pre-pandemic situation). This showed that the Library compared well on several key dimensions relating to Library service (e.g., percentage of population having library cards and in-person visitors). Those areas scoring at or below average are largely those where the Library, through no fault of its own, has simply been unable to keep pace with the very rapid growth in the community (which was 21.8% over the 2011 to 2016 period and 8.8% over the 2016 to 2021 period, one of the fastest-growing communities in Canada). This speaks to the need for additional facilities to serve the plan for continued rapid growth over the next decade. These indicators are: provision of library space per capita; financial support per capita; and staff per capita.

A review of space standards also shows a current deficit in the Town in terms of the total amount of library space provided, again as a result of the unprecedented population growth.

2.5. Trends in Community Libraries’ Provision of Facilities Programs and Services

One of the key tasks of the work was to review trends in community libraries’ provision of services to their communities. This review revealed that WSPL was ‘on-trend’ for most of the areas considered, while other trends present significant opportunity areas for the Library.

Areas where WSPL was considered to be ‘on-trend’ (that is, currently responding positively to needs and opportunities in the community) were:

- *responding to diversity considerations through collections as well as staff and Board representation*
- *cooperation with adjacent and surrounding library systems*
- *being mindful of inequities in society and making efforts to reduce economic and other barriers*
- *responding to the huge and growing shift in demand for online and virtual programming*
- *addressing climate change and environmental responsibility (both in terms of the operation of the library itself, as well as educational programs and services) – in this regard we note that the Library is on-trend by operating a LEEDS-standard building*
- *lifelong learning: by providing programs and services for all ages – including intergenerational programming – the Library caters to and inspires the demand for lifelong learning and engagement*
- *encouraging multiple literacies – another on-trend role embraced by the library is to provide tools and programs that encourage multiple literacies – not only knowing how to read, but also financial literacy, self-awareness, etc. – a growing trend seen in other library systems under this theme is media literacy (i.e., discerning truth from false news and misinformation)*

These are all areas where the Library is strongly aligned with current trends seen in other library systems across North America.

Opportunity areas seen in the review of trends for WSPL are:

- *libraries as special places and hubs – the trends clearly show that libraries are seen as safe and welcoming places, in many respects the hub of their communities – which underscores the need to put libraries in locations enabling community and neighbourhood access*
- *libraries increasingly used as community meeting spaces – same as above*
- *libraries needing to be technologically advanced – libraries are increasingly viewed as the ‘go to’ place to learn about socially relevant issues and topics*
- *technological: there is an expectation that staff will be knowledgeable and that equipment (including maker spaces, studios, etc.) to unleash creative potential will be available – this also clearly has implications for the planning of needed new branches in the community, as well as for staff*

2.6. Synthesis of Key Research Themes

2.6.1. SWOT Assessment as a Basis for Strategic Planning

A SWOT analysis can provide the basis for a needs assessment and master plan. Different elements (strengths, weaknesses, and so on) will logically imply different types of strategic actions and initiatives, as shown in the chart below:

	How Defined Strategically?	Strategic Actions
Strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unique or very strong factors that provide current competitive advantage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect an advantage • further develop or capitalize upon an existing advantage
Weaknesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • areas of current competitive disadvantage relative to competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strengthen areas of weakness • reposition to eliminate weakness (in reality, or through the creation of alternative perceptions)
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • situations that present opportunities for future competitive advantage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • feasibility testing • implementation planning
Threats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • situations that present dangers of future competitive disadvantage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • risk assessment • contingency planning

Strengths and Weaknesses Identification

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified through the various data collection activities undertaken. These are represented in the chart below, using a check mark when the theme is represented. **For the interviews and surveys**, a checkmark was only indicated if a significant portion of the respondents indicated the factor. This system was not used for the ‘benchmarking’ and ‘consultant judgment’ columns where a simple ‘yes or no’ (presence or absence of checkmark) indicator was used.

2.6.2. Findings and Conclusions from the SWOT Assessment

<i>SWOT Perspective</i>	User Survey (Section 2.3)	Stakeholder Interviews (Section 2.2)	Bench- marking and Standards Review (Section 2.4)	Consultant Judgment (throughout all sections)
STRENGTHS				
• high levels of visitation and use (pre-pandemic)	✓		✓	✓
• excellent provision of programs and services and high rate of usage	✓	✓	✓	✓
• generally very high regard for professionalism and friendliness of staff	✓	✓		✓
• existing library facility very well used (pre-pandemic)	✓	✓		✓
• central location in the Stouffville community		✓		✓
• high level of in-person visitation and use	✓		✓	✓
• high anticipated population growth rates imply strong user base in future		✓		✓
• significant development anticipated in future implying health development charges budget for new facility development		✓		✓
• nontraditional collections create additional interesting perspectives on what a library is				✓
WEAKNESSES				
• current space deficit in the community; current library too small		✓	✓	✓
• relatively low staffing levels			✓	
• lack of expansion capacity of existing library due to site constraints		✓		
• website could be updated with increased functionality (e.g., download an WSPL app)				✓
• library fines reported to be highly annoying and a potential barrier to use			✓	✓
• no space for food and beverage service				✓
• lack of outdoor space for community programming				✓
• existing space does not completely meet accessibility standards				✓
• some groups perceived to be not well served in community (e.g., marginalized, newcomers)		✓		
• many parts of municipality are quite distant from library facility		✓		✓
• relatively low levels of financial support per capita (as a result of high population growth)			✓	✓
• relatively low staffing levels relative to similar-sized communities			✓	✓
• slightly lower circulation and turnover rates per capita compared to similar-sized and nearby comparables (again, likely reflecting high current population growth)			✓	✓

SWOT Perspective	User Survey (Section 2.3)	Stakeholder Interviews (Section 2.2)	Bench- marking and Standards Review (Section 2.4)	Consultant Judgment (throughout all sections)
OPPORTUNITIES				
• opportunity to improve and refresh the existing branch		✓		✓
• on-going demand for online resources presents opportunity to augment these collections				✓
• space savings from reduced demand for certain materials (and opportunity to use freed-up space more effectively)				✓
• need/opportunity to develop an IT plan				✓
• many opportunities to increase diversity of collections		✓		✓
• opportunity for new branch(es) in future	✓	✓	✓	✓
• opportunity to complete website improvements				✓
• improved and more targeted marketing	✓	✓		✓
• ongoing opportunity for new and innovative program development	✓	✓		✓
• eagerness to return to in-person visits after the pandemic	✓	✓		✓
THREATS				
• users may not return to the library in large enough numbers to demonstrate strong demand		✓		✓
• risk to library budgets if perception that libraries will not be important in future held by key decision-makers		✓		✓

3. VALUES ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Within the context of the synthesis of the main findings from the research, we turn next to the value assessment of existing programs and services. We review in turn, **collections, programs, policies and procedures, and technology**. A concluding section to this chapter summarizes the main themes and their implications for recommendations.

3.1 Collections

The community and staff surveys and interviews indicated generally high levels of satisfaction with the library's physical collection of books and other materials. There was acknowledgement by staff that some physical collections will continue to be reduced (e.g., reference, selected non-fiction, and DVDs²), as virtual collections continue to grow. During the pandemic, many library borrowers started to use online resources such as e-books and e-audiobooks through cloudLibrary, and access to online resources such as Pressreader and cloudLibrary NewsStand. This access is supported by help at Digital Library Academy on the library website. There were 18% of survey respondents who said they would likely reduce their use of online materials after the pandemic ended (and presumably the library returned to normal operations); however, 26% said their use of online resources would increase. Survey respondents wanted more books and more online resources such as ebooks, a more diverse collection to reflect the community, and movie and video streaming.

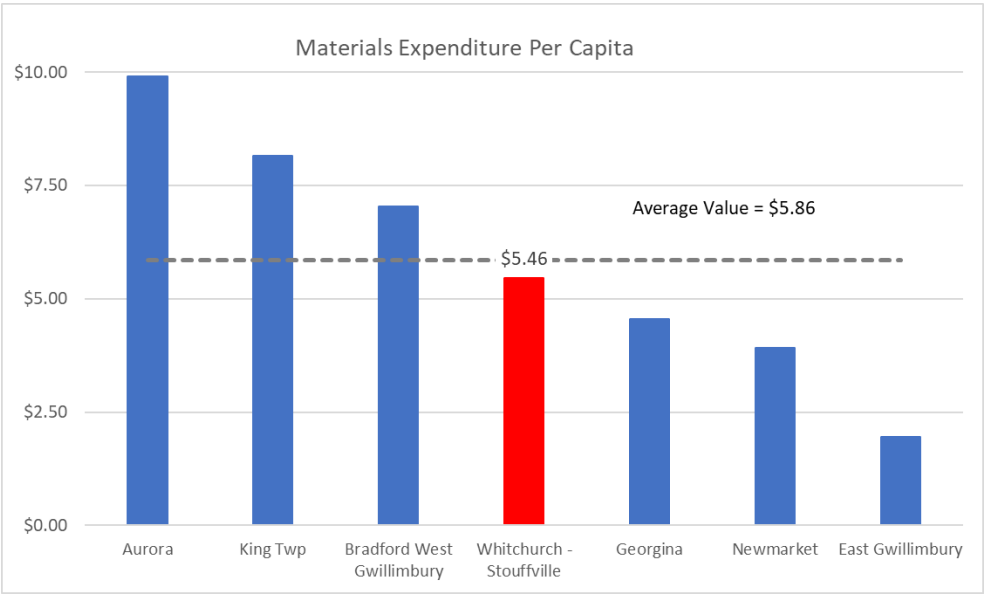
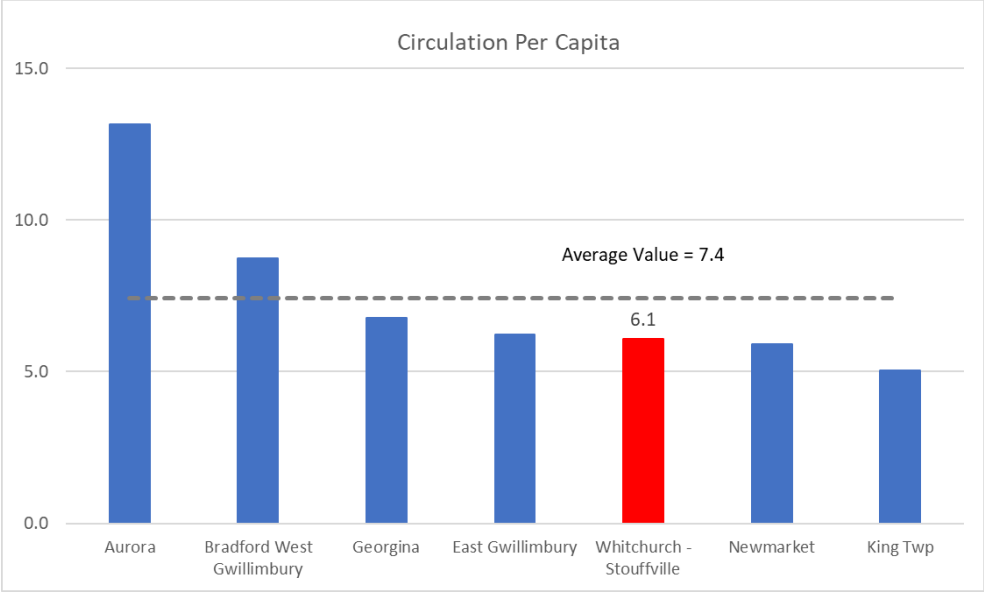
Borrowers can also suggest a purchase through the library website. Interlibrary loan was not available at the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library during the pandemic but will be reinstated. Collection development uses Automatic Release Plans (ARPs) through library vendors supplemented by staff knowledge (about 95% of the collection is developed this way). Collection HQ software is used to assist in weeding the collection.

The WSPL has a small collection of non-traditional materials for lending, including museum passes to the local museum, Chromebooks, WIFI hotspots, walking poles, and snowshoes. (Many other libraries have expanded their non-traditional collections to include small tools and kitchen appliances, which may be an opportunity area here). Non-traditional collections require a lot of space for display and storage, as well as staff intervention for cleaning and charging.

Performance indicators³ for library collections include circulation per capita, measuring the borrowing of materials and materials expenditure per capita (formerly known as the book budget), and turnover rate. On the two metrics, Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library ranks in the midrange compared to its peers and neighbours.

² Still very popular now, but may be phased out as the popularity, affordability and accessibility of streaming services grows.

³ Data used was from 2019, the 'pre-pandemic' year.



3.2 Programs and Services

The Vision of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library in its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan is: *Inspiring curiosity, embracing innovation, and engaging the community.*

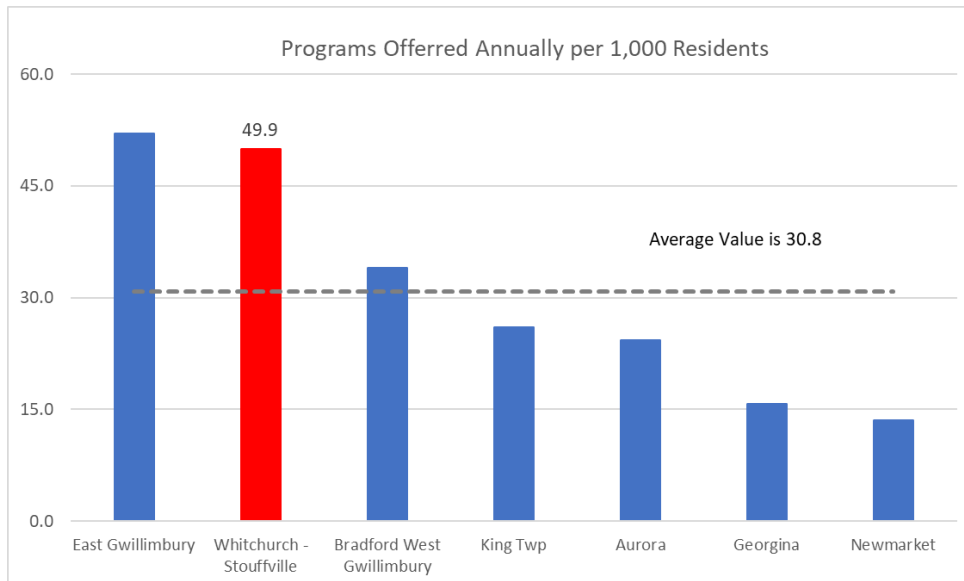
The first strategic priority is:

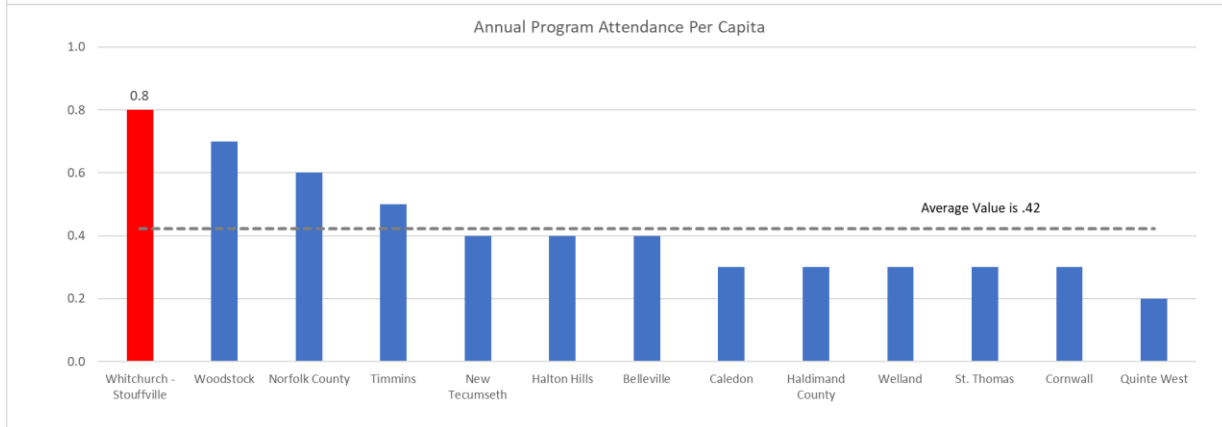
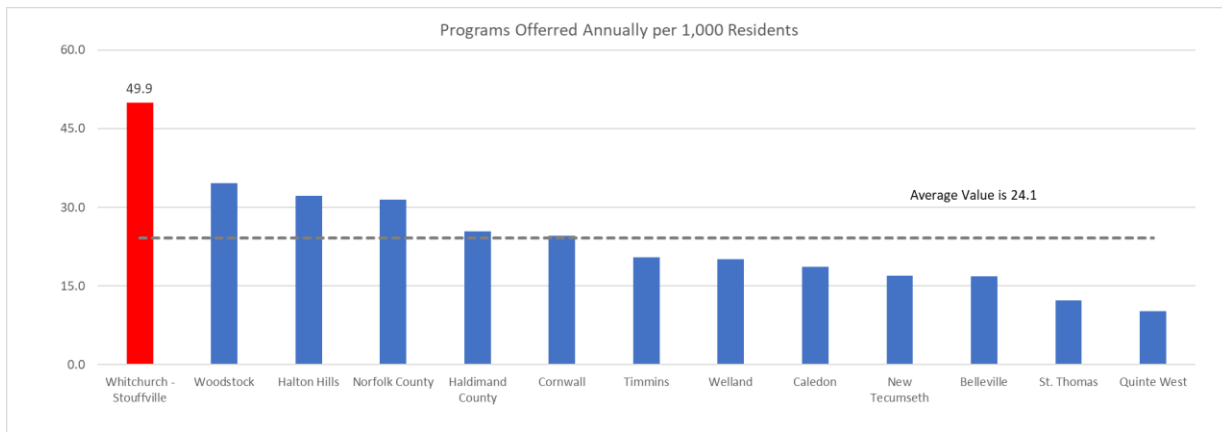
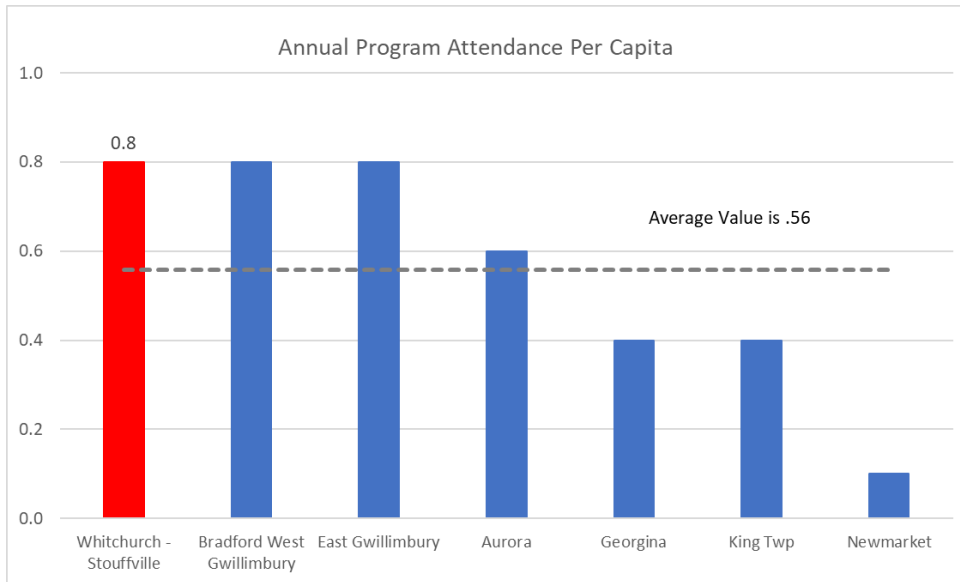
Be known as the most innovative, accessible, and inclusive learning environment:

To this end we will:

- ***Provide high-quality, innovative, forward-looking and creative programs for all ages;***
- ***Rebalance programming to ensure alignment with community needs and target audiences;***
- ***Actively utilize partnerships to increase program offerings that align with our mission and vision;***
- ***Increase community outreach through programing in off-site locations.***

It clearly meets this strategic priority extremely well. It should be observed that even before the 2020-2024 Strategic Plan was adopted, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library excelled at delivering programs compared to the peer group of libraries, as demonstrated in the following graphs.





Then, of course, the pandemic hit and eliminated in-person programs for about two years in public libraries.

Survey respondents appreciated the virtual programs that the library offered during the pandemic and are keen to return to in-person programming at the library. Children’s programs

are very important and successful, especially those that focus on literacy, including grammar and math. Virtual programs were appreciated during the pandemic, but many people now want to get away from screens and back to the library in person.

Desires for new and re-introduced programs and services revealed through the staff and community surveys included:

- *Family programs in the evenings and on the weekends to reach working parents;*
- *More diverse programs to reflect the diversity of the community, more programs for newcomers;*
- *Reaching out to adults without children, young adults (e.g., in their 20s and 30s), people with disabilities;*
- *Using technology such as Virtual Reality or Augmented Reality for programs, e.g., armchair travel;*
- *Makerspace programs and activities for target groups, e.g., parent and child, seniors, businesses;*
- *Teen programs using the recording studio or Makerspace;*
- *Games and gaming, both scheduled and drop-in programs;*
- *Programs moving from content consumption to creation and collaboration;*
- *Take library programs out to parks and other venues (may need a van);*
- *Using the library as a venue for events.*

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library charges fees for many of the programs with the intent of recovering the cost of materials or external resources. However, literacy-based programs are free.

Services

Survey respondents were generally quite satisfied with the library services. Suggested improvements from the community and staff included:

- Increase hours of operation (the library is currently closed Sundays and Mondays due to COVID-related staff issues; prior to the pandemic it was open seven days a week);
- There is no bus stop outside the Library and Leisure Centre;
- The library is already too small for the community;
- Desire for food service, café (in the leisure centre), outdoor programming area;
- Children's area needs to be better defined, controlled, (e.g. toddler escapes);
- Marketing could be improved, both in-house, e.g. face-out displays, and communication to the community;
- Website and library app development is needed (note that this is currently underway);
- As the library moves to a multi-branch system, the infrastructure will need to adapt for staffing, supervision, deliveries, efficiencies.

3.3 Policies and Procedures

The Library's policies are published on the website for review by the general public. They appear to be comprehensive dealing with traditional issues such as Collection Development and new policies such as Respect and Acknowledgment (Truth and Reconciliation).

While the Library has a policy participating in Interlibrary Loan, it currently does not provide this service. (Formerly, the Province of Ontario, through the Ontario Library Service, funded the delivery of Interlibrary Loans across the province but this funding and service were withdrawn in 2019.) A minority of survey respondents requested that this service be reinstated. This, however, would cause an increase in costs for the library.

3.4. Technology Implications

WSPL has a successful history with technology services provided to the public and staff. New options are researched and justified on how they serve the community and prove their value while being fiscally responsible. The Library can take advantage of changes from local population growth and the pandemic, both which encourage a reassessment on the delivery of services both inside and outside library walls.

As the Town grows, there is a need for a technology plan to provide a road map that aligns IT planning with the Library's service goals. The plan can develop a multi-year IT pathway and guide the Library on the connection between the frontend user interface and backend system. WSPL can focus on the development of technology programs and services for maximum impact and community development. Some parts of the technology plan are already in place, such as a hardware replacement plan, support service plans, backups and budget for hardware and software.

WSPL ensures redundancy for its various systems and support. Backups provide continuity for service disruption due to sudden closure, hardware failure, security threats, or absence of technical staff. The Town provides support for the ILS server, network and security and many library specific applications are supported by separate vendors.

Technology services are divided among Library staff in three areas: public facing (ILS and public workstations), marketing (digital, outreach) and infrastructure (hardware, networks). Senior library staff act as IT backup for each other during vacations and leave. With the addition of a Coordinator of Information Technology position, the Library can review the primary roles and skills required for all staff and provide ongoing training for generalists and specialists.

We examined these areas of systems and support:

3.4.1. Technology Available for the Public

- **Training programs:** staff consider the Library's role is to facilitate classes. There are many seniors with devices like iPads who need assistance. WSPL has used New Horizons grants to offer 8-week courses with instruction on iPads for seniors (for the past four years, including throughout COVID). Another program is TechHelp with seniors and third-party providers. There were some intergenerational classes with supervised teens as tech mentors but with COVID, this was moved to virtual instead. Staff plan to offer new training for other software. All customer-facing staff are trained as generalists to deliver introductory technology support as the entry point to other services in the library and community.
- **Workstations and devices:** WSPL should ensure technology requirements for a second branch and expansion of the main branch, including the best internet service available, workstations, and self-check units. There is a need for accessibility tools such as specialized hardware. The library can be promoted as a digital hub with augmented reality (AR) for patron learning through the online catalogue on workstations or mobile devices. The community is mixed urban/rural with different connectivity and areas without Wi-Fi, so loaning of mobile hotspots is popular. Chromebooks are available for lending both inside and outside the library.
- **Virtual library:** the virtual branch is available 24/7 and the use of digital collections and services such as LinkedIn Learning increased during COVID and remain popular. The user survey had comments on adding more content and functionality. Staff would like a dedicated app for the library website for search and program reservation. It is possible to expand after hours reference support with third party chat services available directly on the library website or catalogue.
- **Mobile service:** WSPL has a mobile makerspace for school and community events which is taken to various community events. There was momentum on this service pre-COVID, and staff would like this to continue. There is an opportunity to showcase innovative services and the Library can expand outreach with alternate service delivery, such as a pop-up branch, kiosks, or hold lockers.

3.4.2. Library Technology Systems and Support

- **Integrated Library System (ILS):** WSPL uses Polaris/Innovative which was selected for a single branch system. This is a good time for the Library to review the marketplace with an RFP for an ILS with multi-branch configuration. Additional functionality with a

discovery layer⁴ to enhance virtual services will be going 'live' in early May of this year. Another option is to move to a cloud hosting service which makes the vendor responsible for the hardware, operating system, and upgrades.

- **Office administration and library-specific applications:** Library staff add new resources, and support internally or through the vendor. For instance, WSPL uses Bibliotheca selfCheck with a service contract, and a self-sorter AMH, remotely supported by the vendor. More units will be required with an additional branch and expansion of the main branch, as detailed in Section 4.2., including RFID security gates and equipment. Additional tools such as RFID inventory wands and digital signage will reduce material handling. The Town's ActiveNet is used for self-registration. There is no support from the Town for makerspace equipment.
- **Network and security:** The Town is responsible for the network and security. Library staff contact the Town IT help desk if the problem affects more than one person, such as public stations or photocopier. The Town has a ticket helpdesk: any staff can open a ticket for lower priority issues such as logins or calendar. WSPL has enjoyed the support relationship with the Town and recognizes that its needs are changing as the community grows. The Library is a tech hub with different and unique technology needs. Staff can review requirements to find the best support options for future technology growth and continue to serve its customers well.

3.5. Summary Assessment

Clearly, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library's greatest strength is its programming, which is greatly appreciated by the community.

At present, the collection meets most of the community's needs, but as is the case in any library, this is an on-going process, and there were several suggestions as to how they could be further developed.

While the library was renovated and expanded as recently as 2017, it is acknowledged by staff and by the community that by itself it no longer meets the needs of the rapidly-growing community, let alone for the population growth in the next ten years and beyond.

⁴ This is software that is an enhanced version of the traditional OPAC. It includes the ability to search across multiple sources: OPAC, electronic databases, archival collection, streaming video, etc. Examples are Bibliocommons (used by EGPL), SirsiDynix Enterprise [Toc100053283](#)

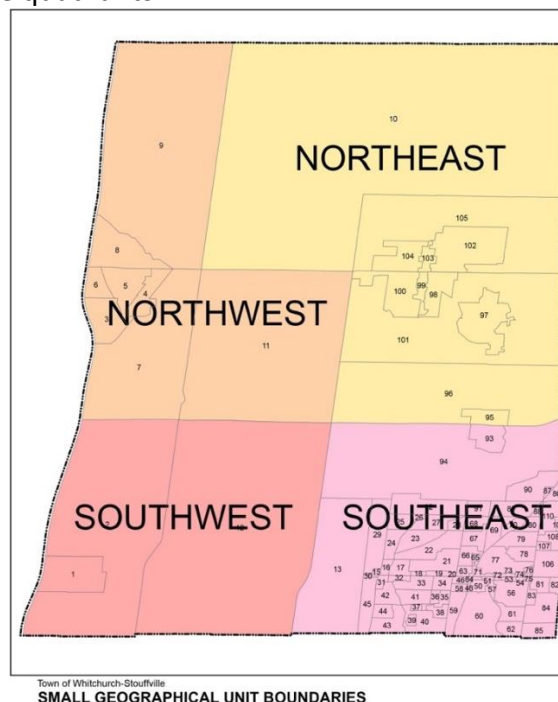
4. FACILITIES PLANNING

This next section focuses upon the facility recommendations contained in the Needs Assessment and Master Plan. First, the **future facility needs** are addressed by looking at projected population growth and the related library space requirements over the next decade and beyond. A **plan to address the growing space deficit** is presented, beginning with the construction of a new branch in the Ballantrae area. A **functional plan and high-level design** for this new branch is presented as well as a proposed new Main Library facility. Next, **locational considerations** for potential new branches beyond the first one are discussed. Finally, high-level considerations concerning the **costs and sources of funds** for the new branch are considered.

4.1. Future Facility Needs

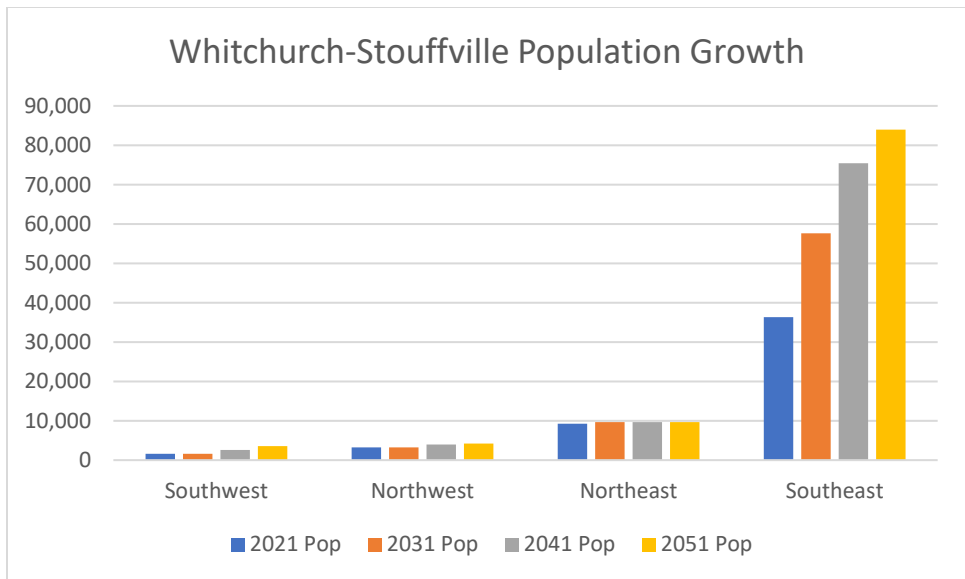
4.1.1. Growth Trajectory for Municipality and Wards

Working closely with staff of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Development Services Department, the population growth projections for each area within the Town were assessed. These were based upon subdivision approvals, by area, for the next three decades (from now to 2031, from 2031 to 2041, and from 2041 to 2051). The information held by the Development Services Department was for 'Small Geographical Units' (SGUs) which are not contiguous with the Town Ward system. Accordingly, a separate quadrant system was developed, where the Town was essentially divided in four zones – the northeast, northwest, southeast and southwest. The map below shows these quadrants.



The table below shows the specific population growth expectations for each quadrant for the years 2031, 2041 and 2051. As the chart shows, the highest growth rate over the period is actually in the southwest, although this is in large part explained by the very small base in the area at present. More significant is the large volume increase anticipated in the southeast, where the bulk of the population is currently located (in Stouffville). As shown in the table and chart below, the southeast will continue to be the zone with the highest share of Whitchurch-Stouffville’s population both currently and in the future.

Quadrant	2021 Pop	2031 Pop	2041 Pop	2051 Pop	Growth, 2031 - 2051	Share of Population 2021	Share of Population 2051
Southwest	1,604	1,596	2,586	3,580	124.31%	3.2%	3.5%
Northwest	3,205	3,216	3,959	4,198	30.53%	6.4%	4.1%
Northeast	9,215	9,634	9,652	9,658	0.25%	18.3%	9.5%
Southeast	36,290	57,663	75,457	84,011	45.69%	72.1%	82.8%
Total	50,314	72,109	91,654	101,447	40.69%	100.0%	100.0%



4.1.2. Overall Space Needs to 2031 and Beyond

At an average of 0.85 square feet per person (an accepted modern standard for library space planning) this implies a significant increase in the amount of library space needed to adequately serve the population of the growing municipality. With a current provision of 31,000 square feet of space at its single branch, it is evident that the space deficit is large at present and will only become larger as the population grows.

Year	(A) Anticipated Population	(B) Recommended Space Provision @ 0.85 SF per capita	(C) Current Space Provision	(D) Deficit GSF (=B-C)
2016	45,837	38,961	31,000	7,961
2021	50,314	42,767	31,000	11,767
2031	72,109	61,293	31,000	30,293
2041	91,654	77,906	31,000	46,906

As the table shows, at the present time (2021) the deficit is nearly 12,000 square feet, projected to grow to just over 47,000 square feet by 2041.

4.1.3. New Branch Development Scenario

Clearly, the space deficit situation facing WSPL is a significant and growing issue, one not easily solved in the short-term. Accordingly, we propose that the Library Board and the Town adopt a two-phase approach to bring the Town to where it should be in the longer term with respect to the provision of library services to the population. The first phase would be devoted to building a small branch in Ballantrae immediately, followed by a second phase where a new Main Library facility is constructed to serve the entire community. These two projects would totally eliminate the space deficit over the next decade (and in fact provide some growing room for the inevitable additional population growth expected in the 2031 to 2041 decade and beyond).

Decade	Development Scenario	Size of New Facility (rounded)	Remaining Deficit (rounded)
Phase 1: <i>Now until 2026 (next 5 years)</i>	- Build a new branch in Ballantrae to serve the relatively large and growing population there	10,000 square feet	15,000 to 20,000 square feet
Phase 2: <i>2027 to 2031</i>	- Build a new Main (flagship) Library facility in the southeast quadrant (e.g., along the highway 48 corridor) - Move main administrative and headquarters functions there	40,000 square feet	0 square feet

Clearly this is a major commitment. One advantage of embracing this two-phase approach is that it does provide plenty of time for planning as well as the opportunity to adjust the strategy to incorporate new opportunities or developments.

4.2. Functional Plan for Recommended New Facilities

Further to the logic outlined above, we present here a functional plan for both a new branch in Ballantrae (which we are recommending be built between now and 2026) and a new Main Library facility in the southeastern part of Stouffville along the Highway 48 corridor (to be built over the 2027 to 2031 period). Each is discussed in turn.

4.2.1. Ballantrae Branch

The plan below shows a proposed plan for the new library branch in Ballantrae. The plan is for a 10,000 square foot library branch. The branch would serve approximately from 10,000 to 13,000 people expected in that area by 2031 from the two northern quadrants and potentially some residents in the northern portion of the southeast zone. (see Section 4.1.1. for maps and population distributions).



Figure 1: Proposed new addition to house a library branch – shown here as a possible option as an expansion of the existing Ballantrae Community Centre

A conceptual rendering is shown below:



Figure 2: Conceptual Impression – as a possible extension of the Ballantrae Community Centre - a single-story library addition with a new entrance

4.2.2. New Main Library Facility

Here we discuss functional requirements for a new Main Library facility, further to the two-phase timeline outlined in Section 4.1.

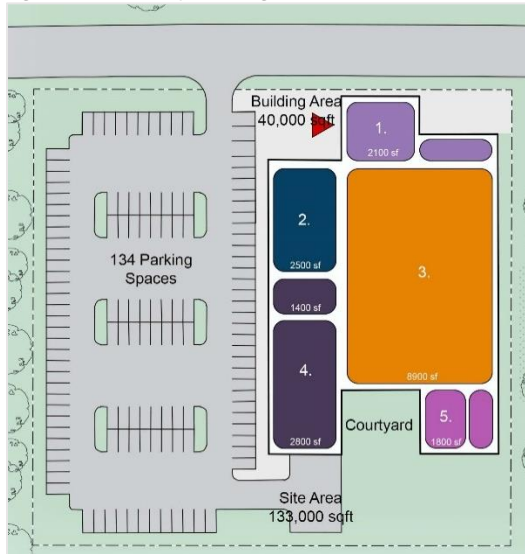
The figure that follows demonstrates proof of concept and provides an idea of the space and site requirements. The new Main Library could be located in many locations within this general area.

Key Site Design Strategies: would include:

- Desire for single story, if site choices allow
- Design so façade is relatively close to road, for enhanced visibility

The diagram below shows a general space program for a facility in this general area, showing the adjacencies of other key elements.

Figure 3: General Space Program Distribution



Location and Site Considerations

- Desire for independent operational capabilities and operations, if the site is shared with other facilities such as a community centre (e.g., having a separate entrance)
- A variety of modal transportation choices ideally would be available (car, bicycle, transit). Added transportation options could offset parking requirements (quantity) and potentially reduce site size
- Emphasis upon street engagement and pedestrian access. Avoid a conventional site organization that requires pedestrians to walk through large parking areas to access the door

Figure 4: Emphasis on engaging with the street and the building having an urban presence

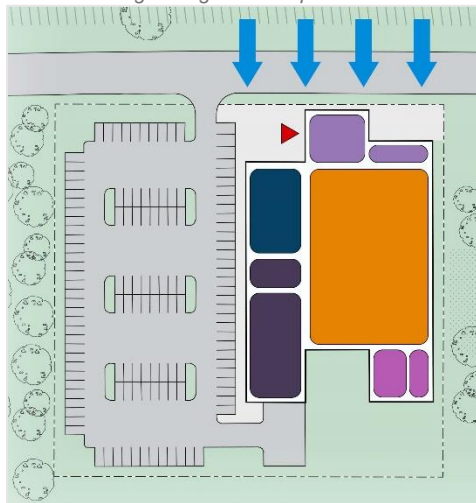
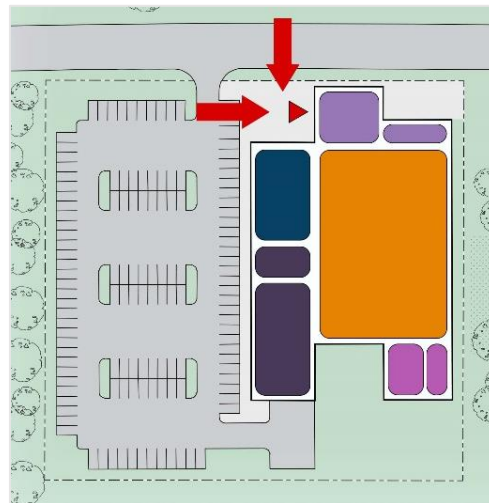


Figure 5: Emphasis on pedestrian access and providing a main entrance feature from the street



- Planning for flexibility to accommodate future growth through site selection that allows expansion, and placement of building on site to account for future additions and construction activities, beyond the initial build of 40,000 square feet
- Arrange the interface of building and site to offer quality landscaped areas that are accessible from the building interior and support outdoor programming

Figure 6: Providing access from a number of locations to outdoor areas specifically designed to support community programs

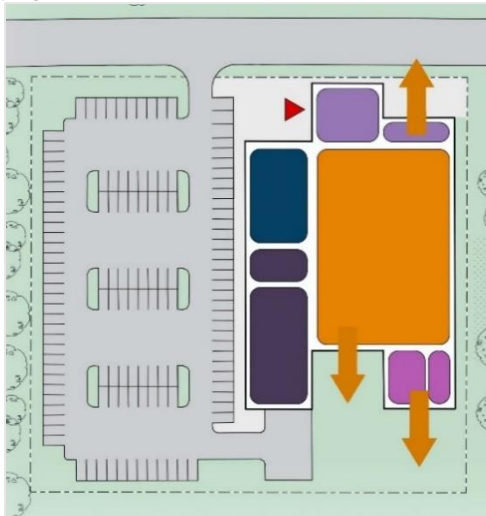
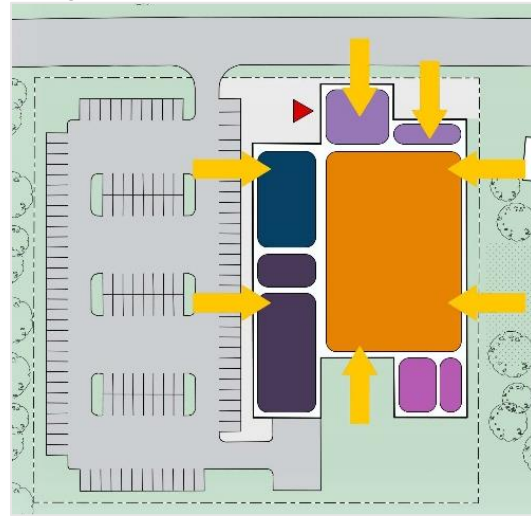


Figure 7: Providing natural daylight to all zones within the building



Building Design Considerations: Principles include:

1. Single story is most desirable if the site is large enough for optimum efficiency
2. Develop a modular structure that can adapt to new unpredicted uses while contributing to the overall character of the space and not be similar to commercial type structures
3. Encourage open and flexible adjacencies between functional areas
4. Articulate building design and layout to maximize access to daylight penetration to all spaces
5. Develop an infrastructure network for power, cabling, and internet provision that is robust and adaptable for changing space layouts that generously serves the entire floor area and building perimeter
6. Include a community meeting space that could operate independently with exterior access, if needed
7. Consider broad user needs, by quality of space, rather than prescriptive program (i.e., noisy/quiet; crowded/intimate; clean/messy; flexible gatherings; adaptable to social distancing; etc.)
8. Carefully review types and extents of spaces that are required to maintain and serve same level of occupants in a pandemic scenario such as the COVID-19 pandemic that has been ongoing since February 2020. For example, designing any of the spaces in the library, such as an open area for computer desks, to accommodate same number of occupants during regular times and in times where physical distancing requirements are more stringent has implications on the required space program areas. These in turn affect capital budget requirements.

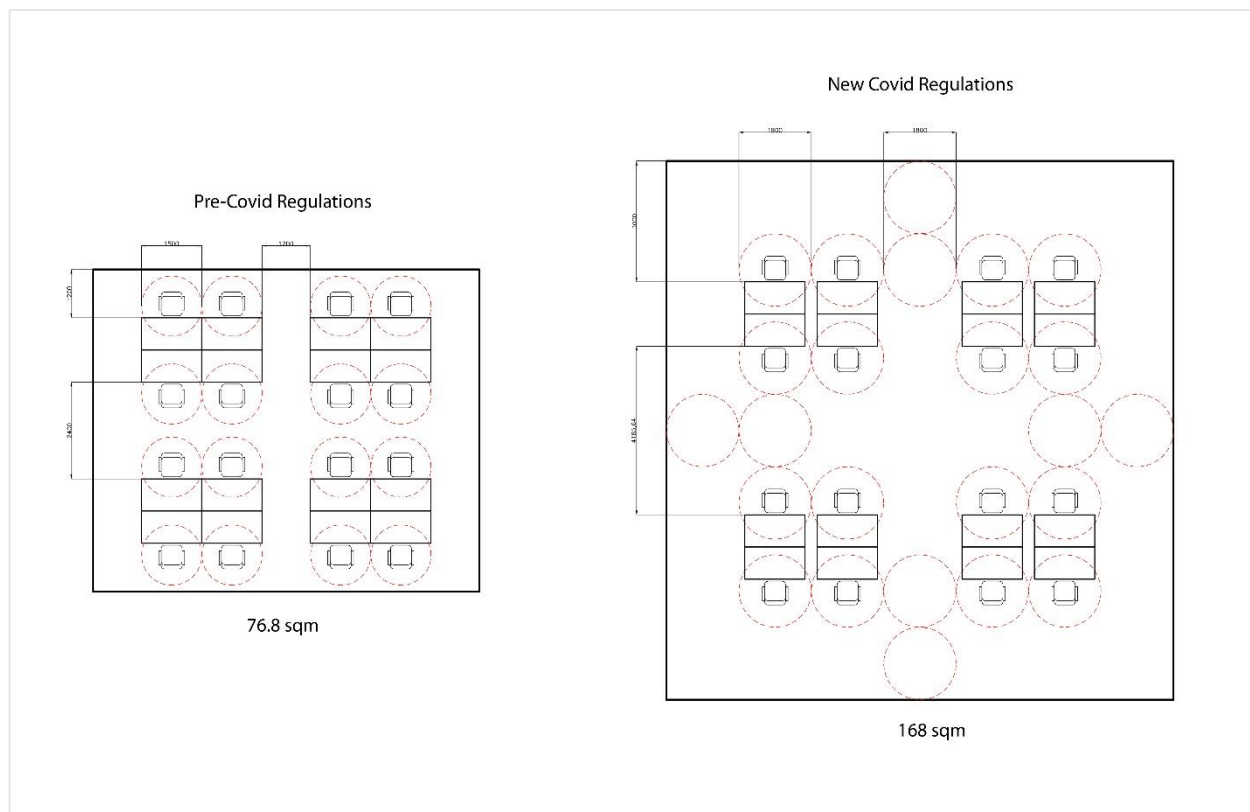


Figure 8: Comparison of space required for an area to support 16 computer stations based on normal space planning standards and building codes and when a 1830mm (6 feet) separation is required for physical distancing

Proposed Space Program:

These calculations are very preliminary estimates from a “bottom-up” approach to determine library space based on the functional component of use. The components approach can be more accurate than the standards approach as it will take into account the actual functional elements planned for the facility.

Below is an example of what the Ballantrae Branch could be based on its components.

Ballantrae Branch	Units	Sq Ft per Unit	Total
Public Service Areas			
Collection (books, CDs, DVDs)	17,200	0.14	2,408
Periodicals (subscriptions)	15	1	15
Non-traditional lending materials	50	1	50
Computer workstations	15	35	525
Reader seating space (mix of tables, chairs, carrels, lounge seating)	40	30	1,200
Small study rooms	2	165	330
Group study rooms	2	200	400
Program room with kitchenette and storage. Seats 75 theatre style.	1	1125	1,125
Storage for program room	1	100	100
Staff/ Support Areas			
Service Desk (includes circulation and information services)	1	500	500
Self-checkout units	3	45	135
Workroom - per staff	4	100	400
Branch Manager office	1	150	150
Storage	1	200	200
Storage for non-trad. Items	100	1	100
Staff room, kitchenette, washroom, lockers	1	300	300
Circulation workroom	1	400	400
Subtotal			8,338
Non-assignable space at 25% (includes washrooms, corridors, building maintenance)			2,085
TOTAL			10,423

For the new Main or Central Library, some assumptions are made, including that there is a public library branch as well as the main administrative center for the library system (relocated from the existing library facility at 2 Park Drive in Stouffville). At this point in the planning process, it is too early to determine exact requirements but an exercise like this would be required. This is an example of what a new Central Library including system-wide support and administrative services might look like based on likely components.

Central Library	Units	Sq Ft per Unit	Total
Public Service Areas			
Collection (books, CDs, DVDs)	39,205	0.14	5,489
Periodicals	30	1	30
Non-traditional lending materials	100	1	100
Computer workstations	25	35	875
Reader seating space (mix of tables, chairs, carrels, lounge seating)	200	30	6,000
Individual study rooms	20	165	3,300
4-person study rooms	6	200	1,200
6-person study rooms	2	250	500
Program room with kitchenette and storage. Seats 75 theatre style.	1	2500	2,500
Meeting room. Sink, counter, storage. Seats 20 theatre style or 10 at tables.	1	500	500
Adult Program room	50	25	1,250
Makerspace/creative lab	1	500	500
Service Desk (includes circulation and information services)	2	500	1,000
Self-checkout units	5	45	225
Workroom - per staff	8	100	800
Branch Manager office	1	150	150
Other professional offices	2	100	200
Check in (materials handling system)	1	200	200
Branch storage	2	200	400
Subtotal - Branch			25,219
Admin & Support Services			
CEO	1	200	200
Managers offices	4	150	
Other professional offices	3	100	300
Workroom - per staff	10	100	1,000
IT & servers	1	150	150
Tech Services, processing	1	2000	2,000
Materials storage	1	1000	1,000
Shipping and receiving	1	300	300
Storage	2	200	400
Staff room, kitchenette, washroom, lockers	1	500	500
Garage, loading bay	1	800	800
Subtotal - Admin			6,650
Subtotal all			31,869
Non-assignable space at 25%			7,967
TOTAL			39,836

D) Sustainable Design:

As a municipal public building that is an important community reference point and a cultural and societal infrastructure anchor, being at the forefront of sustainable design should be an important aspect of all future library building for the Town. With global warming on the rise, and as moving away from dependence on fossil fuels seems increasingly prudent and is environmentally friendly, it is highly recommended that the new Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville library branches strive to integrate as much as possible Zero Carbon Buildings (ZCB) and Net Zero Energy Buildings (NZEB) principles. The following are key principles that are recommended to be considered and evaluated in detail during design stages of each new building/new addition:

1. Incorporate renewable energy systems
2. Design building with passive sustainable principles in mind
3. Design building systems and selecting equipment that reduce the building's overall energy demand
4. Design highly insulated building envelopes that reduce the energy required for mechanical systems while providing better occupant comfort
5. Select equipment that is not reliant on fossil fuels as a primary energy source
6. Prepare site and building designs that can accommodate alternate energy sources such as ground source heating, solar or wind generation
7. Emphasize selection of sustainable building materials with low carbon footprint
8. Incorporate energy storage systems in the building

4.3. Capital Cost Considerations

4.3.1. Development Fee Fundable Costs

There are development charge funds potentially available to the Library from the Town to help finance some of the capital costs. These are:

Reserve Name	Account No.	Dec 31/21 Ending Balance
Library Development Charges	66-80-800-0730	\$822,262.26

Note that these are **current** funds. Between now and 2031, as the Town continues to grow, these development charge reserves will increase so that when the Ballantrae branch is nearer to fruition, larger amounts will potentially be available as well as for the new Main Library.

It is important to note that development charges can be used for other library expenditures such as collections development, additional furniture and equipment as well as technology. Future technology needs will include self-checkout systems, staff and public computers,

automated materials handling systems, etc. Therefore, a portion of the above funds are likely to be allocated to collections development and potentially other library needs.

4.3.2. High-Level Cost Estimates

High-level order-of-magnitude capital costs for the two new facilities proposed in this Master Plan are as shown below. These costs assume adoption of the sustainable design standards previously discussed.

Ballantrae Branch

(2022 \$)	Unit Rate	Quantity (SF)	Costs
Construction cost	\$ 630	10,050	\$ 6,331,000
Contingency (10%)	\$ 63	10,050	\$ 633,000
Total Construction Costs	\$ 793		\$ 6,964,000
Demolition Allowance (if required)	\$ 250,000	1	\$ 250,000
Soft Costs (35% such as permits, fees, equipment, furniture, HST)	\$ 220.50	10,050	\$ 2,216,000
Collections startup			\$ 750,000
Technology startup			\$ 100,000
Estimated Total Project Cost Escalation not included ⁸			\$ 10,280,000

New Central Library Facility

(2022 \$)	Unit Rate	Quantity (SF)	Costs
Construction Cost	\$ 590	40,000	\$ 23,600,000
Contingency (10%)	\$ 59	40,000	\$ 2,360,000
Total Construction Costs	\$ 650		\$ 25,960,000
Soft Costs (35% permits, fees, equipment, furniture, HST)	\$ 206.50	40,000	\$ 8,260,000
Collections startup			\$ 3,300,000
Technology startup			\$ 400,000
Estimated Total Project Costs Escalation not included ⁸			\$ 37,920,000

Notes:

1. A master plan provides an Order of Magnitude cost estimate because the design provided is at a very high-level conceptual stage. As a project develops through the various design stages from schematic design through design development and finally to construction documents, cost estimates progress with every successive design stage and become more accurate as the information provided becomes more

detailed and comprehensive. The final, most detailed costing, called a Class A cost estimate, is usually undertaken at the 90% construction documents stage and is the most accurate.

2. **Order of Magnitude Costing:** (O of M costing) is a high-level estimate of a project's cost to complete. An O of M costing takes place very early in a project's life cycle, during the project selection and capital budgeting period and prior to project initiation in most cases. HST is not included in an Order of Magnitude Cost.
3. **Construction Cost:** means the price of all elements of the project designed or specified by or on behalf of the architect, through their sub-consultants, that define the construction of the building (including mechanical, electrical, plumbing, structural systems, landscape elements, and finishes)
4. **Project Cost:** refers to the construction cost plus all other soft costs associated with the project. They include costs such as permit fees, professional fees, furniture, furnishings and equipment, financing and legal costs, as well as moving costs. Soft costs range between 30-40% of the project's total cost for institutional public buildings depending on their nature, size and complexity.
5. The unit price per square foot used in this O of M costing factors in sustainability systems and strategies that achieve or are close to achieving Net Zero Building Performance. This is assumed to be an important parameter in the building design goals as the project is a municipal public building that could set an example for sustainable design and construction, and because the industry is progressively moving towards that level of sustainability fairly quickly.
6. The unit rate used above includes building and conventional site development costs and excludes costs of purchasing a site. Additionally, it excludes any special costs that could arise from the nature of the site as a specific site for the proposed new central library is not identified at this stage.
7. This O of M costing reflects current construction market trends and prices in the year 2022. As the construction industry has witnessed unprecedented market escalations and fluctuations due to the Covid-19 pandemic since March 2020, it is difficult to predict what the estimated costs of each of the proposed projects could be in the future.
8. It is recommended that a minimum of 6% escalation allowance be added to the above provided costing estimates to determine each project's O of M costing for the year it is intended to be built in.

4.3.3. Collections Costs

Based on an initial population served of 10,000 for the Ballantrae area, ARUPLO standards indicate a collection of 24,000 items. WSPL's current number of volumes is 2.15 volumes per capita of physical items. Retaining this existing level of provision, and assuming an average cost per item of \$35, Ballantrae's 21,500 items will cost \$752,500. In addition to these initial costs, the collection will need to be culled and refreshed on an ongoing basis. These collections costs are further addressed in Section 5: Operating Costs.

It is much more difficult to estimate the collections costs for the new Main Branch – in part because it is expected to be the new administrative center and largest branch and therefore may be expected to have some collections that are unique to the entire municipality but housed in the new Main Branch. Another complicating factor is that it is not expected to be operational until sometime after the Ballantrae branch opens in 2026, so somewhere between five and ten years from now.

A very rough estimate of collections costs could be developed through the following logic:

- At 40,000 square feet, the new Main Branch will be four times the size of Ballantrae, therefore the collections budget should be approximately four times as large
- Another (say) 10% added on to account for unique collections that might only be housed in the Main Library
- = a collections budget of (say) approximately \$3.3 million

These very rough estimates will of course need to be further refined in the planning and construction of both branches.

4.3.4. Technology Costs

A technology start-up budget of \$100,000 has been included to allow for initial purchases of hardware and software items for public and internal use. Items potentially would include public and in-house computers, servers, UPS generators kiosks for public computers, digital resources, makerspace equipment, networking equipment, cabling, etc.

5. OPERATING IMPLICATIONS

Here we discuss the operating implications of the proposed new branch in Ballantrae in terms of **staffing costs**, **non-personnel costs**, and **total costs** incurred. (At this point, costs are not estimated for the new Main Library as this is too far in the future to make such an exercise meaningful.) Costs are estimated for a typical year of operation rather than a year-by-year projection as specific start dates for the construction and opening date for the facility are not known with any certainty. As well, any additional costs to the overall library system implied by these recommendations are commented upon.

5.1. Staffing Cost Implications

Comments received from the staff survey and interviews indicated a heavy workload for WSPL staff, particularly in administration and in program delivery (due to a reduction in programming and cutbacks during the COVID-19 pandemic). Since then, the Library Assistant positions are being filled again for programming, and two new positions have been approved in the 2022 budget: a Coordinator of Information Technology, and a Coordinator of Finance and Business.

In the benchmarking analysis, WSPL rated below average for the comparator libraries with 17.5 FTEs (based on 2019 data). By 2022, this has increased to 19.5 FTEs including the above positions (not including the Latcham Art Centre).

This master plan proposes a new branch in Ballantrae within the next five years. Assuming the population served initially would be 10,000 or more, the following would be recommended by the ARUPLO library guidelines and recommended by WSPL library staff.

	ARUPLO Guidelines	Proposed	Notes
Hours of Operation per week	45	56	Closed Sundays and Mondays
Branch Supervisor	Professional Librarian	Professional Librarian	New position
Total FTE staff including program staff, desk, and pages	5	6.7	

Based on the proposed staffing model, the staffing costs of the new branch would be approximately \$375,000 - \$425,000 per year in 2022 dollars. In addition, the Library system as a whole will require a Marketing and Communications Coordinator and a Graphic Designer with marketing expertise. These positions will have staffing costs of \$137,000⁵.

⁵ Marketing Coordinator in 2022 dollars: \$67,400 and \$17,000 benefits. Graphic designer \$42,500 and \$10,000 in benefits. These are rounded to \$137,000 in the text.

In addition, the library would require a Van Driver (and van) at an approximate operating cost of \$13,000 per year (excluding the costs of the van). Alternatively, the Library could hire a delivery service for approximately the same level of cost. Additional staffing costs in the next five years will therefore be \$525,000 to \$575,000 (rounded).

Also, during the next ten years, the Library should be adding a new manager position, with responsibility for Collections and Information Technology. This position would be approximately \$120,000 in staffing costs using current dollars⁶. Both the Van Driver and the Manager would have system-wide responsibilities.

As the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library prepares for the development of the new Central Library proposed after 2031, detailed calculations for services, programs, and activities would also need to be determined closer to the time.

⁶ Estimated at \$100,000 in salary and \$20,000 in benefits in 2022 dollars.

5.2. Non-Personnel Costs

The WSPL's expense budget for 2022 is shown below (note that this excludes the Latcham Art Centre):

Staffing & Professional	
Salaries & Benefits	\$ 1,683,840.00
Training	\$ 10,000.00
Membership fees/dues	\$ 4,000.00
Legal	\$ 10,000.00
Audit	\$ 5,000.00
Total	\$ 1,712,840.00
Operations	
Office	\$ 19,000.00
Utilities	\$ 15,840.00
Computer Hardware	\$ 10,000.00
Computer Maintenance	\$ 70,780.00
Total	\$ 115,620.00
Library Service	
Collections	\$ 309,750.00
Processing	\$ 36,000.00
Programs	\$ 27,000.00
Advertising	\$ 8,000.00
Total	\$ 380,750.00
Miscellaneous	
Donation Funded	\$ 7,500.00
Grant Funded	\$ 500.00
Contribution to other Accounts	
Total	\$ 8,000.00
Allocations from Town	
Professional	\$ 31,460.00
Insurance	\$ 15,600.00
Building Lease & Maintenance	\$ 418,600.00
Computer Rental	\$ 17,640.00
Computer Maintenance	\$ 21,730.00
Total	\$ 505,030.00
Total Expenses	\$ 2,722,240.00

To project the operating costs associated with Ballantrae branch, the costs per square foot for each of the above non-personnel categories was calculated for WSPL’s current main library of 31,000 square feet. In order to project incremental non-staffing related costs at the Ballantrae branch, the following assumptions were made:

1. Utility costs per square foot will be 75% of those at the current facility due to increased operating efficiencies
2. Professional costs per square foot charged by the Town will be 50% of those currently charged by the Town
3. Computer rental and computer maintenance costs per square foot charged by the Town will be 66.6% of those currently charged by the Town

It is assumed for the efficiency reasons noted above, that the costs per square foot will be somewhat lower in the Ballantrae branch as shown in the table below. The resultant costs of operations, library services, miscellaneous and allocations from the Town are therefore estimated to be \$330,000 (rounded).

	Cost per sq. ft. Existing 31,000 sq. ft. Facility	Estimated Cost per sq. ft. in Ballantrae Branch	Estimated cost in 10,500 sq. ft. Ballantrae branch
Operations	\$3.73	\$3.60	\$37,630
Library service	12.28	12.28	128,964
Miscellaneous	0.26	7.99	2,710
Allocations from Town	16.29	15.36	161,290
Total non-personnel cost	\$32.56	\$31.50	\$330,784

5.3. Summary Operating Costs

The total costs of the new Ballantrae branch including staffing as well as incremental library system costs and other operating costs in 2022 dollars are as shown below:

Ballantrae Staffing costs	\$375,000 to \$425,000
Library System Staffing costs	\$150,000
Total incremental staffing costs	\$525,000 to \$575,000
Other operating costs	\$330,000
Total annual operating costs (2022 dollars)	\$855,000 to \$905,000

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Final section of the report is devoted to articulating the recommendations from this work, and their implementation. First, **specific recommendations** are listed. This is followed by a **timing plan** for implementation of the recommendations. Next, the **resource implications** (in terms of human and financial resource requirements) are discussed. This is followed by a section dealing with **targets and outcomes**. Finally, brief **concluding remarks** are made.

6.1. Recommendations and Rationale

Recommendations resulting from this Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan are categorized into five areas. These are:

- 1) Library facilities (new branches needed in future as well as improvements to the existing facility)
- 2) Collections
- 3) Programs and Services
- 4) Technology
- 5) Other Operating Considerations

Facility Recommendations

1. Begin planning immediately for new library facilities in the community: Using library standards, this study has identified a *current deficit* of almost 12,000 sq. ft. of library space in Whitchurch-Stouffville required to serve the population of the municipality. With significant growth expected in the Town in future decades, this existing deficit will only become larger. Accordingly, a two-phase expansion plan for library facilities is recommended over the next ten years, which will bring the municipality into alignment with recommended space provision standards by the end of that period. This recommended expansion plan is:

Phase 1: Ballantrae Branch: between now and the end of 2026 (i.e., the next 5 years), build a new library branch of approximately 10,000 square feet in Ballantrae, to serve the relatively large and growing population in the northern parts of Whitchurch-Stouffville; and

Phase 2: New Main Library: by the end of 2031, construct a new Main Library facility of approximately 40,000 square feet near the Highway 48 corridor in the southeast part of Stouffville, to cater to the large population growth increase anticipated in that area by that time. As well, it will function as the new Main Library including the administrative center of the whole public library system (which by that time will consist of three branches).

With the continuing operation of the existing facility (31,000 square feet) over this period, this will bring the municipality into alignment with recommended standards by the end of the next decade.

This study has identified preliminary functional requirements for both these facilities (including space plans and costs). The anticipated capital cost (measured in terms of current dollars) for the Ballantrae Branch is \$10.3 million and for the new Main Library, approximately \$37.9 million. The suggested timeframe in which to address these new facility recommendations is as follows:

- *Begin detailed planning **immediately** for the new Ballantrae Branch – this should be undertaken with the goal of having a new branch operational by no later than 2026 and preferably before.*
- *Acquire a site in Stouffville that would be suitable for a new Main Library facility of 40,000 sq. ft. – even though the recommended timeframe for construction of the new Main Library facility is not envisaged until sometime between 2027 and 2031, it is recommended that the WSPL and the Town acquire a suitable site as soon as possible to avoid cost escalation and ensure that such a site will be available. The Library should consider installing an interim library use for the site (such as a book trailer) that is functional as well as signals to the community that a longer-term permanent library use is planned for the site.*
- *Detailed planning for the new Library should begin sometime after the new Ballantrae Branch is up and running so that the impact of that facility on the entire system is understood and can be factored into the overall planning process. Either Ballantrae or the Main Library could be co-located with a recreation complex should that opportunity arise.*

2. Optimize the Existing Library: The study also identified relatively small improvements that could be made fairly quickly to improve the functionality of the existing library facility at 2 Park Drive. (Although the building is quite new – renovated in 2018 – there are nonetheless some areas in which users in the community survey and interviews had suggested refinements.) These include: devise a way to enhance Library access and dis-engage from the Community Centre operations; refresh the overall space to make it more welcoming; improve the children’s area to enhance separation and privacy; create a children’s play area; improve lighting throughout the facility; expand the maker space; improve directional flow throughout the space; and implement other changes to align with current facility accessibility design requirements.

Collections Recommendation

3. Continue to Grow the Collection: The study also identified several areas in which collections could be further developed. These included providing more popular fiction; more francophone materials, as well as materials in other languages; non-traditional collections; lendable technology; more materials addressing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) subjects; games; and many more. As well, on-going collections activity will need to recognize the interests and needs of new residents to the community over the coming decade (and beyond) who are expected to have different backgrounds, characteristics and interests than existing residents of Whitchurch-Stouffville. Accordingly, it is recommended that the on-going collections development be undertaken considering the suggestions made from the research gathered here.

Program and Service Recommendation

4. Continually Develop, Market and Promote Programs and Services: While the study demonstrated high levels of satisfaction with existing programs and services, there were also several suggestions for new programs and services that residents and users would like to see initiated. However, many of these suggestions were for programs and service that the Library *already offers*, which speaks to the need for a more aggressive marketing approach. These included: establishment of book clubs; Indigenous programs; babies and toddler programs; increase of digital services; more programs for adults with special needs; greater outreach for newcomers; seminars and webinars; more preteen programs; and many others. As mentioned, the Library offered all of these prior to the pandemic, and intends to do so again once this becomes possible. However, it will at the same time be necessary to ensure that the community is aware of the resumption of these programs and services (as well as any new ones as these are also constantly being developed). Accordingly, there is a strong need for a greater marketing orientation, appropriately staffed, at the Library.

Technology Recommendation

5. Develop a Technology Plan: Our review of the technology environment in which the Library operates (which covers both the internal technology that is used in the day-to-day operation of the Library as well as the external technology that is made available to Library users) suggests that a proactive Technology Plan should be developed to enable the Library to keep pace with the needs of the growing community. There are several specific areas that such a plan should consider, including:

- *ensure long-term technology requirements for a second branch and expansion of the main branch, including best internet resources available, additional self-check stations, AMH (automated materials handling) units and RFID security gates and equipment*
- *develop long-range capital plan for purchase, support and replacement of technology systems, hardware and software to support Library operations*

- *training in basic applications for more customer-serving staff to keep pace with growing demand for these services*
- *development of a dedicated app for the library website*
- *preparation of an RFP for an ILS with multi-branch configuration, and possible discovery layer*
- *consideration of moving the ILS from a local server to a cloud system*
- *re-initiation of the mobile makerspace and support for the makerspace equipment*
- *provision of accessibility tools including specialized computer equipment at new branches*
- *promotion of the library as a digital hub with technology such as augmented reality (AR) for patron learning in the OPAC and mobile devices, and virtual reality (VR) to explore collections in a virtual environment*
- *reduction of staff driven actions and handling using tools such as digital signage, RFID inventory wands*

Other Operating Considerations

The consultation process revealed certain other areas in which operating improvements and adjustments could be made to the overall public library. These give rise to the following recommendations:

6. Hire Additional Marketing Personnel: One of the issues raised in the course of the research, and as indicated above, is lack of awareness as to the range of programs and services available, and the need for more targeted marketing through e-newsletters and social media. (This has always been the case but will be even more urgent in the post COVID environment as Library operations ‘open up’ again to the public.) Accordingly, a recommendation here is to undertake a more targeted marketing approach. This will require an additional two staff positions: a Marketing Coordinator and a Graphics Designer (to ensure that marketing messages and approaches are developed and implemented in an attractive and compelling manner). As this is a large task, and the Library is a distinct operation with its own public face, these positions should be dedicated to the WSPL and not ‘shared’ with the Town.

7. Finalize Website Refresh: The consultation process revealed that the website is very popular and much used – in fact the number one source of information that people referenced when obtaining information about programs and services. It also generated several comments regarding improvements desired: additional content desired, additional functionality, a library user app that could be downloaded from the website, etc. It is noted that the website is currently in the process of being redesigned to address precisely these points. (It is very likely that most stakeholders and users making these comments had no idea that the website refresh was underway.) Accordingly, it is recommended that WSPL complete the redesign as soon as possible and at some future point, undertake an independent assessment or audit of the website from a user perspective and implement further recommended improvements.

6.2. Timing and Critical Path Considerations

The Gantt chart below presents the recommended timeframe for implementation of the recommendations made in this Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan. Two broad time periods are considered:

Phase 1: considered to be the next five years – from 2022 to 2026

Phase 2: the period from 2027 to 2031

While this is a relatively long span of time, covering the next decade, it is entirely appropriate given the longer horizons necessitated by a facilities Master Plan and the need for strategic land acquisition.

Recommendation	Phase 1 (2022 – 2026)	Phase 2 (2027 – 2031)
1. Plan for new branches:		
1.a. Begin detailed planning for new branch in Ballantrae		
1.b. Acquire site for longer-term Main Library in Stouffville		
1.c. Construct and open new branch in Ballantrae		
1.d. Construct and open new Main Library in Stouffville		
2. Optimize the existing branch		
3. Continue to grow the collection		
4. Continually develop, market and promote new programs and services		
5. Develop a technology plan		
6. Hire additional marketing personnel		
7. Complete website refresh		

Note also that all recommendations after the ‘new facility’ ones (i.e., recommendations 2 through 10) are assumed to be implemented in Phase 1. WSPL will need to further prioritize these into those that will be implemented in each of the years 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025 and 2026; we assume that at this level of detail this will be done by staff working within that timeframe. (See Section 6.4 of this report for suggested targets in this regard.)

6.3. Resource Implications

The high-level costs of implementation of the recommendations are presented below. Human resource (i.e., staff time) and financial resource implications are estimated separately.

Recommendation	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirements
1. Plan for new branches:		
<i>1.a. Begin detailed planning for new branch in Ballantrae</i>	Staff time on part of Library and Town to develop detailed plan	Costs for architects and planners (is contained within cost estimate for 1.c. below)
<i>1.b. Acquire site for longer-term Main Library in Stouffville</i>	Staff time on part of Library and Town to select and acquire site, and determine interim use	To be determined
<i>1.c. Construct and open new branch in Ballantrae</i>	Staff time to be determined (for Library and Town staff)	Estimated as \$10.3 million (in \$2022)
<i>1.d. Construct and open new Main Library in Stouffville</i>	Staff time to be determined (for Library and Town staff)	Estimated as approximately \$37.9 million (in \$2022)
2. Optimize the existing branch	Staff time to work with architect and interior designer	Suggest budget for planning of between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for refresh plan; implementation costs to be determined)
3. Continue to grow the collection	Library staff time to review and revise – estimate 5-10 person days equivalent of time	Minimal
4. Continually develop, market and promote new programs and services	To be determined – will depend upon specific nature of new programs developed	To be determined – will depend upon specific nature of new programs developed
5. Develop a technology plan	Some staff time to develop plan – to be determined	To be determined – will depend upon specific elements of the technology plan

6. Hire additional marketing personnel	1 Marketing Coordinator and 1 Graphic Designer with marketing skills	Marketing Coordinator \$84,400 salary and benefits; Graphic Designer \$52,500 salary and benefits
7. Complete website refresh	Some staff time to works with external website developer	Out of pocket costs for independent audit and evaluation of website, and implementation of recommended improvements – changes already underway and budget committed

6.4. Targets, Milestones and Outcomes

The table below presents suggested targets, milestones and outcomes for the recommendations contained within this plan. These are *suggestions* to consider in terms of tracking and measuring progress in implementing this plan; it is fully expected that staff and the Board will review these and alter them as required to suit changing situations and new opportunities that emerge. Fundamentally, however, they are presented with the view that it will be important to intentionally review progress on each of the recommendations presented here.

Recommendation	Suggested Target, Milestone or Outcome
1. Plan for new branches:	
<i>1.a. Begin detailed planning for new branch in Ballantrae</i>	- have detailed plan in place by 2023
<i>1.b. Acquire site for longer-term Main Library in Stouffville</i>	- identify site in 2022 - acquire site by 2023 and have interim use plan in place by 2024
<i>1.c. Construct and open new branch in Ballantrae</i>	- begin construction in 2024 - aim to have branch operational by 2026
<i>1.d. Construct and open new Main Library in Stouffville</i>	- to be determined within the 2026 to 2031 period
2. Optimize the existing branch	- have optimization plan developed in 2022 - implement in 2023
3. Continue to grow the collection	- have in place by 2023
4. Continually develop, market and promote new programs and services	- aim for at least one new program per year by 2023
5. Develop a technology plan	- have plan in place by end 2022 - begin implementation in 2023
6. Hire additional marketing personnel	- have plan and new hires in place by end 2023; begin implementation immediately thereafter
7. Finalize website refresh	- aim for launch of ‘new’ website by end 2022

6.5. Conclusion

Whitchurch-Stouffville is a large, rapidly growing, and relatively wealthy community. At present it is served by only one library facility that, while quite new and well-functioning, is too small to serve the community by contemporary library standards due to the unprecedented and very significant growth of the community (one of the fastest growing in Canada). If unaddressed, this situation will only become worse as a result of the rapid population growth anticipated for the municipality – resulting in a single facility struggling to serve the needs of the now much-larger Town. It is clear that an intentional and proactive plan is needed to provide for the future needs of Whitchurch-Stouffville; this Facility Needs Assessment and Master Plan contains such a plan.

The plan identifies a number of strategic directions for the WSPL to pursue in the short term, but which are clearly aimed at a longer-term future where the library-related needs of the much larger community of Whitchurch-Stouffville (at that time) are provided for in a way that enables the library to continue to meet (and, in fact, exceed) contemporary standards for a progressive and dynamic community.