

SECTION 10: LIBRARY FACILITY ASSESSMENT

This section contains an analysis of public library space needs, as well as a facility provision strategy for Vaughan Public Libraries (VPL) to the year 2031. This strategy is guided by a number of factors, including population growth and trends, public and staff input, geographic distribution, and space standards. Efforts have been made to ensure that future plans are appropriate and strategic in nature, representing facility provision that is responsive to the needs of existing and new residents.

Strong library systems are the cornerstones of strong communities and community surveys indicate that public libraries are important to the large majority of Vaughan residents. There is a great deal of research that highlights the importance of public libraries as an accessible, universal, and primarily free benefit to residents.

10.1 Current Situation

Public Libraries		Inventory	
Municipal Supply		Provision Levels	
2008	2013	2013	Recommended Target
120,603sf (7 locations)	120,603sf (7 locations)	0.39 sf per capita	0.61 sf per capita
<p><i>Comments:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there have been no new libraries built since prior to the 2008 ATMP; two facilities (North Thornhill Branch and Civic Centre Resource Library) are currently in the design/tender process 			

Vaughan Public Libraries is frequently commended for its programs, services, collections, facilities, and staff, all of which have garnered high ratings from local residents. VPL is a valued service provider (72% of households reported visiting Vaughan Public Libraries within the past 12 months) and continues to be a leader in meeting the changing needs of an ever-growing community. One of these changes, which is reflected in the City and Library's policy documents, is creating a stronger link between libraries, community centres, schools, and the various cultural/ethnic communities in Vaughan.

At present, VPL has seven library service locations with a combined floor space of 120,603 square feet. The VPL system accommodated more than 2 million visits in 2011 – a 29% increase since 2007. Two of its facilities are resource libraries (with an average size of 34,750 square feet and are intended to serve the entire City), while the average size of the other five branch libraries is approximately 10,220 square feet. Three of the branches are attached to Vaughan community centres. A virtual library system is also available through the Internet.

Table 27: Inventory of Vaughan Public Libraries (2012)

Library Facility	Community	Location/ Association	Classification	Year Built	Facility Size (sf)
Ansley Grove	Woodbridge	Chancellor CC	Branch	1990	10,487
Bathurst Clark	Thornhill	Stand-alone building	Resource Library	1994	36,500
Dufferin Clark	Thornhill	Dufferin Clark CC	Branch	1988	12,516
Kleinburg	Kleinburg	Stand-alone building	Branch	1966/75	5,500
Maple	Maple	Maple CC	Branch	1991	13,000
Pierre Berton	Woodbridge	Stand-alone building	Resource Library	2004	33,000
Woodbridge	Woodbridge	Stand-alone building	Branch	1981	9,600
TOTAL					120,603

Source: Vaughan Public Libraries, 2012

Aligning facility development with the City’s dramatic growth has been a challenge for VPL; the most recent branch to be constructed was the Pierre Berton Resource Library in 2004, when the City’s population was approximately 30% less than it is today. This lengthy period with no library development is affecting the City’s ability to meet its space provision target and to leverage Development Charges to help in funding future branches.

Presently, Vaughan Public Libraries are working toward the development of two new service locations: (1) a branch library located in the North Thornhill Community Centre (estimated at 7,500 square feet); and (2) the Civic Centre Resource Library (estimated at 36,000sf).

10.2 Facility Model

In many communities across Ontario, the average size of a branch library is increasing and smaller branches are being succeeded by larger branches in more prominent locations that offer greater visibility, expansion opportunities, and barrier-free access to all members of the community (new accessibility requirements are estimated to require a 10% increase in space requirements). Conversely, some communities are developing smaller, more conveniently located library branches. In larger urban communities, a neighbourhood-level branch ranges from 7,000 to 12,000 square feet, while district or area libraries ranges from 12,000 to 35,000 square feet. Some recent examples include in the GTA:

- Burlington: 7,000sf (Aldershot) and 11,400sf (Alton, shared with high school and community centre)
- Markham: 25,000sf (Cornell) and 20,000sf (Southeast, planned)
- Mississauga: 9,300sf (Churchill Meadows, shared with school); planning a 17,000 to 22,000 sf branch to serve intensification area
- Richmond Hill: planning 16,000sf (Oak Ridges; Library Master Plan underway)
- Milton: 30,000sf (Central, with possible second phase) and 11,300sf (Beaty, branch)
- Brampton: 8,000 (Mount Pleasant, 2nd phase to add 12,000+sf) and 35,000sf (Gore Meadows)
- Hamilton: 24,000 (Turner Park)

Each of these communities and the circumstances around their library development are unique. For example, the City of Vaughan's new Official Plan is built on a philosophy of creating "complete communities" that support transit service and promote walking, cycling, and healthy living; a more compact urban form is anticipated, particularly in intensification areas. In Vaughan, it will be important that future library branches are large enough to accommodate books, quiet study, computer areas, and program space to provide the greatest level of service possible to residents.

Libraries are increasingly being integrated with multi-use community facilities to improve operating efficiencies and cost sharing through the sharing of common areas, storage space, programming rooms, parking, and facility management services. More importantly, libraries within recreation centres provide added convenience to residents through cross-programming and "one-stop shopping" opportunities. VPL has had success with this model at the Maple, Ansley Grove, and Dufferin Clark branches, all of which are co-located with community centres.

As VPL has done in the past, it is strongly recommended that library development be coordinated with community centres and civic facilities as this not only generates economies of scale, but also improves customer service. This is supported by Section 7.2.4.4 of the City's new Official Plan states that it is the policy of Council: "To encourage and support the development of joint or co-located library facilities such as community centres, schools, or other appropriate facilities."

Despite the increased prevalence of technology in our lives, public libraries continue to experience very high levels of circulation amongst print materials (VPL's borrowing exceeding 2.8 million items in 2011, representing a 27% increase since 2007 despite little change to its collection size), although e-book circulation and other technologies are generating growing demands. The 2012 household survey found that the most common reasons for using VPL are: reading and/or borrowing books/e-books (70%), study / do research (30%), borrow DVDs or Blu Rays (15%), borrow CDs or audio tapes (4%), and use the internet/computers (4%). The variation in use, combined with the evolving role of public libraries as community hubs and gathering spaces, is creating additional space demands, not less.

The demand for places for customers to connect their personal devices and larger group study areas are two more reasons why demand for public library floor space is increasing. Additional space dedicated to children and teens, art exhibits, comfortable reading areas with cafés, flexible programming space for community activities, wide aisle ways, and accessible book stacks to accommodate individuals with physical disabilities are some of the other factors that have contributed to an overall increase in library space across Ontario. Because these features are highly desirable amongst modern library users, it is most likely that public libraries will strive to continue offering them. As a result, the demand for more public library floor space is not expected to decrease in the near future. In fact, there is every indication that larger libraries are here to stay.

As a result, it is recommended that the design of Vaughan's libraries continue to evolve in line with trends and best practices, including the provision of more space and resources for programs and activities, independent and group study, and new media and technologies.

On this point of larger libraries, it is notable that the household survey found support at a ratio of more than 2:1 for "large-sized libraries with a wide range of services and materials" over "small-sized libraries that provide a narrower range of services and materials". This is different from the finding of the 2008 ATMP which found that 47% preferred smaller libraries and only 38% preferred larger libraries. It should also be noted that the latest survey found greater support for larger libraries from younger

residents/families, while older adults seemed to prefer smaller libraries. The most visited locations tend to be the City’s larger libraries (resource libraries).

To better understand facility sizing and functions, it is helpful to consider potential facility models. A library facility model defines the sizes, roles, relationships, and key service characteristics of the different buildings in the overall library system. It can also be used to determine how the total required space would best be distributed among future library facility developments. Facility models differ slightly from community to community, based on factors such as local needs, system-wide goals, and community characteristics.

Since the 1980s, Vaughan Public Libraries has endorsed a tiered decentralized facility classification model consisting of resource libraries and branches (both community and neighbourhood). The following table illustrates the differences between these typologies.

Table 28: Vaughan Public Libraries: Current Facility Classification Model

Targets	Resource Libraries	Branch Libraries (Community and Neighbourhood)
Population served	100,000	10,000 to 30,000
Catchment	2.4 to 4.8 km	1.6 to 2.4 km
Floor Space	30,000 to 40,000 sf	6,000 to 15,000 sf
Collection size (items)	100,000 to 125,000	30,000 to 80,000
Hours of Operation per week	60 to 85	25 to 60
Program/meeting room space	85 people	35 people
Parking Spaces	50 to 75	20 to 30

Source: Vaughan Public Libraries, 2013

With a series of medium to large branches that are distributed amongst established and growing communities, we would consider VPL’s facility model to be a modern representation. Some communities are served by a series of smaller neighbourhood branches that were established decades ago to serve historic settlement areas; however, due to their era of construction, these typically do not respond well to changing trends. The VPL system has only one such facility (Kleinburg); the remainder of its facilities are generally 30 years old or less. As a result, Vaughan Public Libraries are well positioned to meet changing demands, although substantial space challenges persist.

Vaughan’s high growth forecast requires a facility model that allows for substantial library space provision in a cost-effective manner that is sufficiently nimble to respond to rapid population changes. Rather than waiting ten years between facility construction cycles, VPL must be able to react more swiftly. Although smaller libraries may be a better fit with the desire to create more walkable communities, larger libraries can provide more amenities and specialized services and are generally more efficient to operate. The VPL facility model must strike the proper balance between financial sustainability and the defined City of Vaughan direction to create “complete communities” that support transit service and promote walking, cycling, and healthy living. Continued co-location with community centres and within proximity to key populations will ultimately provide the greatest value to Vaughan and its residents.

The library facility model should be implemented with some flexibility, depending on community-specific needs, funding, and partnership opportunities. As such, there may be instances where it is

reasonable for the Library to deviate slightly from this recommended threshold if not doing so would otherwise negate an opportunity to deliver improved library services in a cost-effective manner.

10.3 Space Needs

Demographic characteristics and population forecasts are a significant influence on the usage of – and requirements for – library space and services. The City is still very much in the growth stage and will continue to expand at a rapid pace for many years to come. As such, Vaughan Public Libraries will require a building programme involving the creation of new library buildings – as well as the expansion of library services within existing but intensifying communities – that will be spread over the next twenty years and possibly beyond.

A benchmarking exercise was undertaken to provide a simple comparison of Vaughan Public Libraries with select library systems in the Greater Toronto Area.

Table 29: Library Space (SF) per Capita, 2012/13

Library System	Population	Library Total Square Footage	Square Feet per Capita
Burlington	175,800	94,384	0.54
Mississauga	738,000	395,166	0.54
Brampton	523,900	166,552	0.32
Richmond Hill	195,119	99,600	0.51
Markham	323,804	153,241	0.47
Average	--	--	0.46
Vaughan	311,200	120,603	0.39

Sources: 2011 Canadian Public Library Statistics (Canadian Urban Libraries Council); Richmond Hill space figure from Development Charges Background Study; Markham space figure includes new Cornell branch opened in late 2012; Brampton space figure includes new Gore Meadows branch opened in early 2013; Population data from 2011 Census(Statistics Canada) and York Region Population Estimates for December 31, 2012

Note: Because this information represents a snapshot in time, it may not accurately reflect the space standards employed by the library systems for planning new buildings/expansions.

The previous table indicates that the average per capita library space provision for the benchmarked communities is 0.46 square feet; if the highest (Burlington) and lowest (Brampton) ratios are removed, this average becomes 0.52 square feet per capita. At this time, Vaughan is providing approximately 0.39 square feet of library space per capita, considerably lower than the average of the listed library systems. It is notable that 77% of Vaughan households support additional public spending on public libraries, tops amongst a list of 23 different facility types.

The 2008 ATMP supported a provision target of 0.61 sf/capita for library space. Although the City is currently well below this threshold, it remains a relevant target to work towards as it represents a measure of an effective and responsive library system in Ontario – the “industry standard” that continues to be used as a planning objective by many communities is 0.60 sf/capita. The benchmarking exercise yielded an average level of provision of 0.46 sf/capita; however, most of these systems are striving to achieve a higher provision rate. Vaughan Public Libraries is currently below this range. When

the combined 43,500 square feet from the proposed North Thornhill Community Centre and Civic Centre libraries are accounted for, it is estimated that the provision rate will peak at 0.50 sf/capita (2016 population estimate), bringing it more in line with the average, but still well below the provision target.

Given the high level of importance that Vaughan residents place on library services, further improvements will be needed. As library space needs are very closely linked with growth forecasts and associated Development Charges funding, it would be to the Library’s advantage to continue to expand the level of service provision into the future in order to maximize the fiscal contribution of development charges to new facility construction and, in turn, to expand its service to the community.

The approach of using per capita standards continues to be a reasonable methodology for projecting needs at the "master planning level". Despite the recent evolution of library holdings and roles (such as an increasing emphasis on electronic resources and the library as a community gathering place), library usage levels have remained strong and the use of a standards-based approach remains relevant.

Population growth will continue to place increasing demands on library space requirements. The following table provides the space requirements for library provision based on the population projections and the Library’s 0.61 square foot per capita target.

Table 30: Projection of Library Space Needs based on Recommended Provision Target, 2013-2021

Year	Forecasted Population	Existing Library Space (sf)	0.61 sf per capita	
			Library Space Needs (sf)	Deviation from Current Supply (120,603sf)
2013	311,200	120,603	189,832	69,229
2021	360,380		219,832	99,229
2031	416,573		254,110	133,507

Application of the 0.61 square feet per capita target indicates that the current library space shortfall is approaching 70,000 square feet. By 2031, approximately 133,500 square feet of additional library space will be required to serve the forecasted population of 416,573. This need will be experienced incrementally over time as new residents move to Vaughan, as will corresponding demand for additional library collections (digital and print).

10.4 Library Distribution and Community-Specific Assessment

In addition to the overall space allocation, geographic distribution is a fundamental consideration in the establishment of a library building programme as there is an expectation that – to the greatest degree possible – branch libraries be accessible to all Vaughan residents. 50% of survey respondents felt that the maximum reasonable distance to a library in Vaughan is 5 kilometres or less, a distance that is substantially larger than recommended. The VPL’s current Facilities Development Plan states that a service radius of 3.6 kilometres should be applied to resource libraries, 2.4 kilometres for larger library branches, and 1.6 kilometres for smaller library branches. These distances are similar to what is being used in other growth communities and are a reasonable starting point for the analysis. **Map 7** on the following page illustrates the location of library branches and their theoretical service radii page. Existing library locations (as well as the facilities proposed for North Thornhill and the Civic Centre campus) have been mapped to show their current distribution.

The distribution analysis illustrates that Vaughan Public Libraries have excellent geographic coverage. 58% of household survey respondents agree that libraries in Vaughan are equitably distributed. Geographic gaps in library distribution (within residential areas) include:

- The majority of the Vellore area – this is also supported through the household survey
- Block 11/12 (smaller gap at City’s eastern edge)
- Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (future gap)
- Vaughan Mills area (potential future gap)

As the mapping cannot adequately illustrate the number of people served by libraries in each community, a more detailed assessment is required. The following analysis examines the distribution, population, and potential synergies for library development within each community. Although the 0.61 sf/capita provision target is used as a guideline, it is not practical or feasible to stringently apply it to each community – it is intended as a City-wide target.

Carrville

The branch at the North Thornhill Community Centre will be the community’s first library. As of 2011, there were 43,800 residents in this area without coverage. If the City-wide target of 0.61 sf/capita was to be achieved in this community, approximately 40,100 square feet of space would be required by 2031. The 2008 ATMP recommended that a 15,000 square foot branch be developed in Carrville; if this space target is to be achieved, it will have to be done so at two facilities, as the branch library located in the North Thornhill Community Centre is proposed to be 7,500 square feet. There is an opportunity to co-locate a second branch in this area with a community centre proposed for Block 11. A second branch would assist in meeting needs and, even though Carrville’s service level would still be well below the City-wide provision target, the proposed Civic Centre Resource Library is nearby and would help to mitigate this shortfall.

Thornhill/Concord

With two library locations (including one of the City’s two resource libraries), this area has good geographic coverage. Currently, this area is being served at a rate of approximately 0.7 sf/capita; future population growth will make use of this capacity and the 2031 provision level is forecasted to drop to 0.58 sf/capita by 2031 (or lower if anticipated intensification targets are reached). If the City-wide target of 0.61 sf/capita was to be achieved in this community, a minimum of 2,700 square feet of additional space would be required by 2031.

Maple

This area has a considerable population that is currently only being served by one branch, resulting in a ratio of 0.2 sf/capita at present. A resource library (36,000 square feet) is currently proposed for the area (Civic Centre), which will boost its overall provision, but will also create a geographic overlap of service (despite their different functions). A decision has not yet been made regarding the Maple Library’s future – further study and monitoring of usage at Maple Library is recommended to determine if changes to its function and services will be required. Longer-term partnership potential may exist should a neighbourhood hub be developed in north Maple (Block 27).

Vellore

There are presently no libraries within this community of 35,700 residents (2011 Census); the closest library is the Pierre Berton Resource Library to the southwest. If the City-wide target of 0.61 sf/capita was to be achieved in this community, approximately 35,800 square feet of space would be required by 2031. The 2008 ATMP recommended that a branch be developed at the Vellore Village Community Centre and co-location opportunities exist for a second branch with the community centre proposed for Block 41.

Woodbridge

With three library locations (including one of the City's two resource libraries), this area has excellent geographic coverage. Currently, this area is being served at a rate of approximately 0.7 sf/capita. Existing space is predicted to be sufficient to meet long-term needs.

Kleinburg

This area is served by one branch library, which currently translates into a provision rate of 0.9 sf/capita. Future population growth at the periphery of this area may result in some small service gaps, but the larger issue is that the provision ratio is forecasted to decline to 0.22 sf/capita by 2031 based if the current supply is maintained. If the City-wide target of 0.61 sf/capita was to be achieved in this community, approximately 15,200 square feet of space would be required by 2031. There is no potential for significant expansion of the existing Kleinburg Library to meet future demand, nor would a second service location be justified in this community. The possibility of establishing a neighbourhood hub (i.e., smaller community centre presence) in the longer-term has been identified and opportunities to move the public library to this facility should be explored.

Intensification Areas (e.g., VMC, Vaughan Mills)

A future primary growth centre for the City is the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre, which is forecasted to accommodate approximately 25,000 to 30,000 residents by 2031. Based on a provision target of 0.61 sf/capita, this translates into a need for approximately 17,100 square feet of library space by 2031, based on current forecasts. However, this area is also expected to be a significant employment centre and become the "downtown" for Vaughan – both of these factors justify a more substantial presence for the library and the development of a resource library in this community has been recommended previously. Co-location opportunities may exist with a community centre proposed for the VMC.

The Vaughan Mills area is another community that may emerge over the longer-term as this area undergoes redevelopment pressures. The City's "Where and How to Grow" report (June 2009) identified a preliminary population target of nearly 13,000 for the area east of Highway 400; currently, a secondary plan is being developed for this area to more closely define development options. The possibility of establishing a neighbourhood hub (i.e., smaller community centre presence) in the longer-term has been identified and opportunities to develop a library branch within this facility should be explored. Based on the current population forecast, a 7,500 square foot branch would meet the 0.61 sf/capita provision guideline.

10.5 Recommended Provision Strategy

The following facility provision strategy is recommended based on the information presented in this report. Any changes to the City's population forecasts or the VPL's facility model may require this strategy to be updated. The proposed timing and sizing is consistent with the City's Development Charges Study.

Table 31: Recommended Library Development Program (listed in expected order of implementation)

Recommendations	Approximate Square Footage	Approximate Timing*
1. Continue to develop a Library Branch in the North Thornhill Community Centre	7,500 sf	2013-14
2. Continue with plans to develop a Resource Library at the Civic Centre	36,000 sf	2014-15
3. Develop a Library Branch in the Vellore Village Community Centre	7,500 sf	2014-15
4. Assess the viability of retaining Maple Library once Civic Centre Resource Library opens	n/a	2015-16
5. Develop a Library Branch in the community centre proposed for Block 11	7,500 sf	2016-17
6. Develop a Library Branch in the community centre proposed for Block 41	7,500 sf	2017-18
7. Explore opportunities to secure land/space to house a Resource Library in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre	36,000 sf	2013-14 (land) 2021 (constr.)
8. Explore opportunities to relocate the Kleinburg Library to create a larger Library Branch (possible co-location with a neighbourhood hub)	12,000 sf (6,500 sf net increase)	post-2021
9. Explore opportunities to develop a Library Branch in the neighbourhood hub proposed for the Vaughan Mills area	7,500 sf	post-2026
10. Address future service gaps with the development of 2 to 3 Library Branches (e.g., Block 27, etc.)	17,500 sf	post-2026
Total Net Increase	133,500 sf	

* timing and location may be dictated by population growth, funding and/or timing of joint municipal building projects

Note: The recommended provision strategy does not account for the expansion or closure of any existing libraries; should either of these options be contemplated, this analysis should be revisited.

In terms of existing libraries, similar to community centres, there is a need to ensure that existing facilities offer a comparable level of service to newer ones. As a result, existing libraries may need to be retrofitted or renewed, particularly those that are in highest use, those requiring lifecycle maintenance, and those that are in proximity to areas proposed for residential intensification. The City has recently begun the development of a Corporate Asset Management Strategy, which will be a critical piece in understanding the status and long-term requirements associated with its library infrastructure.

Public Libraries	Recommendations
75.	Giving consideration to the recommendations of this Active Together Master Plan, refresh the Library's Facilities Development Plan , with a continued focus on accessibility, equity, integration with other civic facilities, flexible design, and customer service.
76.	Continue to develop a Library Branch in the North Thornhill Community Centre in 2013-14.
77.	Continue with plans to develop a Resource Library at the Civic Centre in 2014-15.
78.	Develop a Library Branch at the Vellore Village Community Centre in 2014-15.
79.	Undertake a study in 2015-16 (once the Civic Centre Resource Library has been open for a period of time) to determine future uses for the Maple Library .
80.	Develop a Library Branch in the community centre proposed for Block 11 in 2016-17.
81.	Develop a Library Branch in the community centre proposed for Block 41 in 2017-18.
82.	In 2013-14, seek to secure land/space for a Resource Library in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre . Timing of construction will depend on a number of factors, but is currently recommended around the year 2021.
83.	Explore opportunities to relocate the Kleinburg Library to create a larger Library Branch (possible co-location with a neighbourhood hub) beyond 2021.
84.	Explore opportunities to develop a Library Branch in the neighbourhood hub proposed for the Vaughan Mills area beyond 2026.
85.	Address future service gaps with the development of 2 to 3 Library Branches beyond 2026 (e.g., Block 27, etc.).