Pickering Public Library Facilities Plan – 2023 Update

Table of Contents

Summary

Pickering Public Library (PPL) is an award-winning, busy library and community asset. The Library offers its services through three locations, outreach activities and virtually through pickeringlibrary.ca.

PPL is proactive in assessing the community's space needs and taking corrective steps to improve client experiences.

This document was developed by PPL staff and was reviewed by City of Pickering staff in the Community Services & Operations department and is intended to:

1. Provide the Library Board with updated information about the condition and services of each facility in our library system with a focus on client experiences.
2. Articulate the design principles that influence new and renovated library facilities.
3. Report the successes and challenges with achieving exceptional client experiences in our facilities.
4. Provide branch profiles that highlight the features of each branch, its catchment area and population size served.
5. Keep a record of completed and planned capital projects.
6. Monitor population growth to ensure new and existing buildings satisfy community demand for library services.

This document is intended to be updated on an annual basis and shared for information with the Library Board Building Committee and Library Board.

Capital Projects: 2013 to Present Day

The Library works closely with the City of Pickering's Facilities Maintenance and Facilities Capital Projects departments on maintenance, renovation, and new building projects. The City maintains a database of all the City facilities with recommended lifecycle replacement timelines and budgets. The list below captures projects included in the annual capital budgets. It does not include small-scale furniture replacements (valued at $5,000 or less) which are captured in the operating budget.

Projects (based on year of completion)

2023		
Claremont	Renovation to public space and addition of accessible public washroom. Addition of Extended Access features.	$170,000 (including $60,000 grant rec'd for washroom)

2019		
Central	Skylight replacement (over main lobby)	$190,000

2018		
Central	Maker Space	$100,000
George Ashe	Lighting upgrade (public space)	$82,000

2017		
Central	Creation of Collaboration rooms	$61,000
George Ashe	Addition of Reading Garden	$108,000
George Ashe	Exterior wood panel repair	$22,000

2015		
Central	Elevator upgrades	$68,000

2014		
Central	External Brick Repair	$111,000
Central	Carpet Replacement 2nd floor	$39,000
George Ashe	Roof Replacement	$228,000

2013		
System wide	RFID upgrade	$206,000
Central	Carpet replacement 1st floor	$42,000

Approved Projects – not yet completed.

2023			Expected timeline
George Ashe	Consulting for Renovation	$110,000	2024
Central	Lobby Renovation	$110,000	2024
Central	Virtual programming space	$53,000	2024
George Ashe	Public Telework space	$30,000	2024
System wide	Outreach vehicle	$220,000	2024

Planned Projects – budgets not yet approved.

			Expected timeline
PHCC	Construction	$6.602,000	Begin 2024
Claremont	Furniture	$40,000	2024
Central	Public Telework space – grant funded	$97,000	2024
Central	Public Washrooms renovation (first floor)	$157,000	2025
Central	Building envelope retrofit	$1,550,000	2026
Central	Public washrooms renovation (second floor)	$97,000	2026
George Ashe	Renovation	$1,570,000	2026

Library Spaces Design Principles

Whereas public libraries of the past hundred years were built for books, a 21st Century Library is built for people. The transition to virtual environments, access to technology, and community demand for social connection makes the public library a vital gathering place for residents. These library space principles have been developed to guide designs for new and renovation projects in PPL libraries.

Library spaces are designed to ensure that:

1. Clients experience spaces that are accessible, inclusive, attractive and that celebrate our community.
2. All accessibility standards and code requirements are achieved or exceeded, and universal design principles are incorporated into all new builds and renovations.
3. Furniture, fixtures, and equipment are durable and can withstand public use; finishes, fabrics and materials are also easy to maintain.
4. Each library location is designed to maximize opportunities for flexibility and can adapt to changing community needs over the life of the building. For example, easy to move sectional or modular furniture and fixtures. Large pieces of millwork should be used sparingly.
5. Library facilities should include built-in redundancies for key systems and areas to future-proof against potential needs, including designing for climate resiliency.
6. Where practical, new library locations will be co-located with other services provided by the City of Pickering or community partners.
7. Environmentally friendly and energy-efficient designs and materials are prioritized. Biomorphic design and natural elements will be used whenever possible with the goal of increasing wellness by bringing building visitors closer to the natural world.
8. Public art is featured in and around all libraries.
9. Interior design outlines zones that support the unique needs of diverse user groups and library services and considers how to optimally locate these zones in the building to achieve positive client experiences. Acoustics are designed to limit sound travel.
10. Opportunities to blend the in-person branch experience with the digital branch experience are optimized.
11. Library buildings include passive security design features that deter threats while remaining largely invisible to clients. Passive security design creates a safer environment through openness, visibility, transparency and building organization.
12. Library buildings have street presence, prominent signage, and a clearly visible entrance.

13. Parking is available for vehicles and bicycles, and libraries are located on transit routes.
14. A new or redesigned library offers an opportunity to enhance the client experience with new programs, services, and spaces. The designs are influenced by the community through consultation and design charrettes. Most new services and experiences are tested with the community before they are confirmed for a new building.
15. A new or redesigned library considers inclusion issues and ensures that barriers to participation for equity-seeking groups are minimized. The Library should be perceived (and function as) a welcoming space for all.
16. Library technologies maximize self-service, improve security, and minimize materials handling.
17. Libraries serving growth areas need to be large enough to serve anticipated growth in their catchment areas.
18. All full-service locations should be at least 15,000 square feet.
19. Libraries should be spaced throughout the City so that residents do not need to travel by vehicle more than 15 minutes to reach a library.
20. The Pickering Public Library will have a variety of service models with consistent services:

	Central	Community	Small	Mobile
Catchment	City-wide	Urban neighbourhoods	Rural settings	City-wide with a focus on underserved communities
Services	a. Collections b. Holds pick-up c. Program space (enclosed, open or outdoors) d. Public wifi			
	e. Access to computers & photocopier/printers f. Children's Area			
	g. Maker Space h. Teen Area i. Quiet study j. Outdoor spaces			

City of Pickering Guiding Plans and Reports

2017 RECREATION AND PARKS MASTER PLAN
Note: a new Master Plan is being developed beginning in 2023 (not yet available)

The City's Recreation and Parks Master Plan was created in 2017 to guide "decision-making for matters related to the provision of recreation and parks facilities, programs, and services in Pickering over the next 10 years." Community Services has a shared purpose with the Library in the way that they use their services - recreation and the parks system - to enhance the well-being of residents in Pickering. Research in this document indicates that "communities with a larger market of children and youth tend to be faced with greater demands for minor sports and active activities such as soccer, hockey, figure skating, and skateboarding. On the other end of the spectrum, municipalities with a substantial number of older adults and seniors often have stronger interests in health and wellness opportunities, arts and culture programs, and activities that encourage social interaction and cognitive stimulation." Pickering overall is aging, and the downtown hub will host many older adults even as the population intensifies. On the other hand, Seaton will attract families with children which will create different service needs. Co-habiting a community centre that meets the needs of families is important for the Library in Seaton. Also, different service needs ultimately impact Library design.

This plan recognizes barriers to participation, particularly financial barriers, accessibility concerns and inclusion barriers for immigrants and minority populations. There is a need for "Safe Spaces" for the LGBTQ2 community. The Library is not immune to these issues.

This report also noted a new trend towards participation in non-programmed (spontaneous) outdoor activities such special events. Parks and outdoor spaces may be viewed as "outdoor community centres" that can be used for formal programs and non-programmed uses. The Library already uses outdoor spaces for registered or drop-in events. In future planning, exterior spaces need to be considered in the planning of Library facilities because it provides additional service opportunities. This plan recognizes urban squares as a park form along with more traditional park areas and outlines basic requirements. It also indicated the importance of community gardens.

For the City, the greatest needs moving forward are a Youth and Seniors Centre in the south and a multi-use recreation facility in Seaton. Libraries that are co-located with these new facilities will benefit.

2017 CITY OF PICKERING MEASURING SUSTAINABILITY REPORT

The Pickering Public Library is focused on achieving the City of Pickering's sustainability goals which are grounded in 5 broad sustainability objectives as outlined in the report:

- Healthy Environment
- Healthy Economy
- Healthy Society
- Responsible Development
- Responsible Consumption.

Under Responsible Development, the City promotes buildings designed to use resources efficiently, such as energy, water, and building materials, and "produce lower emissions of greenhouse gases in their construction and use".

2019 – 2024 CITY OF PICKERING CORPORATE ENERGY MANAGEMENT PLAN

This plan reinforces the City's focus on conservation and continuous energy improvement. In line with these expectations, the City has a goal that new buildings be 15% more efficient than the Ontario Building Code. The City acknowledges that they are a leader in sustainability and recognizes the impact of climate change. This plan states that the new Pickering City Centre buildings and future buildings in Seaton will provide an opportunity to" test behavioural and technical energy management measures, thus advancing community resilience." Community resilience is the reduction of, and preparation for risk as a result of climate change. City of Pickering will improve resiliency through energy management, green building design and sustainable procurement policies. The city has a Building Automation System (BAS) which will integrate all buildings to enhance "evaluation, measurement and verification".

"In 2018, it was forecasted that the Seaton Community in will require up to 180 megawatts (MW) of new supply capacity over the next 15 years. In 2017, Pickering Council passed a resolution that all future municipal facilities built in Seaton include systems complete with a rooftop solar array, electric vehicle charging stations and integrate energy storage."

This plan also mentions the need for "using drought-tolerant flora in civic landscaping". This needs to be considered when planning new Library green spaces.

2021 INTEGRATED TRANSPORTATION MASTER PLAN

"The ITMP was developed to help manage Pickering's growing population and corresponding increasing demand for transportation." This report covers four main growth areas in Pickering, including the City Centre and Seaton. The vision for this plan includes improved public transit, encouraging active transportation, and safe transportation for all ages and abilities to prevent traffic congestion. This report states that car use dominates in Pickering. This has implications for Library parking needs if

this trend does not change. The plan states clearly that it supports reduced parking options to encourage Pickering residents to choose alternate transportation options. The City would like to see more residents use transit for shorter trips or car sharing or a ride hailing option via cellphones. Here the Library should encourage the City to place nearby transit options and provide temporary parking for ride hailing vehicles. The City is focused on improved active transportation which includes walking, cycling, and skateboarding.

To support the Library becoming a destination for active transportation, the Library will need safe pedestrian walking spaces, especially for those with mobility aids, bicycle parking and should encourage the City to pilot their proposed bike share program near library facilities. This plan expresses support for electric vehicles and the Library parking lots could include power charging parking spots to support this initiative. The report encourages City staff to use ride sharing or active transportation too. To encourage cycling by Library staff, showers, lockers, and bicycle parking is required or closely located.

Pickering Community Consultation about Library Spaces

Engagement completed in 2018:

Overlap Associates delivered a series of trends and insight reports based on community consultation to support the development of the 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. Feedback trends heard from the community connected to Library spaces have been captured below:

- We're flexible and make our space work for us and our community
- We have a lack of space, especially for teens
- We are constrained by our buildings' limitations (space, layout, etc.)
- We lack public space
- We need to update facilities
- We have furnishings and decorations that are time worn
- We need to be a more visibly safe and accessible space
- We are running out of physical space
- We are operating in older buildings

Engagement completed in 2021:

The Library and the City completed an extensive community consultation project around the City Centre project. This process is a vital component of building facilities that are used and valued by the community.

Note: these responses relate directly to the original proposed designs for the City Centre Library.

The community strongly supported the following features of the City Centre Library:

1. Outdoor spaces
2. Café
3. Bright, open spaces
4. Maker Space
5. Meeting rooms of various sizes

The ideas and areas to be addressed raised by the community were:

1. Furniture needs to have back support (stools and benches to be used sparingly).
2. Add more colour and greenery to the spaces.
3. Ensure that the spaces are accessible to as many people as possible.
4. Quiet spaces must be offered and should be as quiet as possible.

5. Offer protection from the sun: outdoor spaces require shade structures and indoor spaces near windows need covering or window treatment.
6. Public art that reflects the community should be included in the library.
7. Parents and caregivers would appreciate having a family washroom, nursing area and stroller parking in the children's area.
8. Ensure enough electrical outlets for charging devices.
9. Offer curbside pickup service.
10. Provide solutions to support clients who work-from-home/telework.

Engagement around the new Strategic Plan and City Centre design scheduled in 2023 – results not yet available.

Accessibility & Inclusion

The Pickering Public Library is committed to accessibility and inclusion. We use the principle of universal design (designing functionality for as many people as possible) when designing a new library, maintaining our facilities and developing new services. This helps to ensure that the needs of people with disabilities, their families and their caregivers are reflected in our spaces.

Our Central Library has a passenger elevator. The Claremont and George Ashe libraries provide service on one floor, at ground level. Service desks are accessible to persons who use a wheelchair or scooter. Self-service checkout kiosks help to improve speed, privacy and reduced material handling. The Library also welcomes all types of service animals.

Depending on the site, parking, washrooms, doors and ramps are barrier free. Assistive devices such as handheld magnifiers and accessible keyboards and headphones are available at all locations. All Library computers are equipped with NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA), an open-source screen reader which was recommended us by the CNIB. A Text Enlarger is available at the Central Library. New and improved accessible workstations were installed at Central and George Ashe in 2023.

The Pickering Public Library is on a journey to becoming both an inclusive workplace and a welcoming community space for all members of our community. We are focused on initiatives for both internal stakeholders (i.e., staff, volunteers, Library Board) and the community at large. Some of this work is guided by the Library's Anti-Black Racism Working Group who is reviewing current practices and community feedback and making recommendations to address systemic discrimination and exclusion in our spaces.

In 2023 the Claremont Library was renovated in part to provide a public bathroom that is accessible.

Branch Profiles

Central Library

One the Esplanade, Pickering, ON L1V 6K7 (Ward 3)   905-831-6265

Open Hours

Monday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Tuesday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Wednesday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Thursday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Friday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Saturday	9:30 am – 5:00 pm
Sunday	12:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Total Weekly Service: 70 hours

Facility Information

- 34,000 square feet
- 2 floors
- Auditorium with stage and piano
- 34 public computer desktop stations. Plus 11 laptops to be used in library.
- Children's Area:
  - Open space for programs
  - Play fixtures
- Teen Area:
  - Gaming area
- 3 self-checkout terminals
- Parking: shared municipal parking lot with accessible parking, plus on-street parking and 5-minute drop-off/pick-up in roundabout

- Maker Space and Fab Lab:
  - 3D Printers
  - Recording Studio / Sound Booth
  - Adobe Creative Cloud workstations
  - Analog to Digital Conversion Station
  - Vinyl Cutter
  - Heat Press
  - Large Format Printer
  - Carvey Carving Station
  - Button makers
  - Sewing machines
  - Binding machine
  - Graphics drawing tablet
  - Laminator
  - Electronic music kit

Loanable Tech at Central Library	
o Online meeting kit o Go pro camera o Telescope o Cannon SLR camera o Vlogging kit	

Recent Annual Statistics

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021*	2022
Client Visits	379,429	382,968	372,000	363,778	99,839*	77,765	186,069
Circulation	561,700	525,984	488,871	444,606	180,713	239,896	339,614
Collection size					120,000 items	125,100 items	126,000 items

*years affected by pandemic closures.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
· Maker Space · Collab rooms · Telework pods (in early 2024) · Good location · Free parking · Zoned by sound levels (silent, quiet and conversation zones)	· Shelving on first floor is too tall; creates barriers and bad sightlines. · Lobby desk is imposing and oversized for the functions it serves. · Interior looks outdated and worn-out
Opportunities	**Threats**
· City Centre Library expansion · Virtual programming studio included in 2022/23 budget · Lobby renovations funds (2023 budget)	· Increasing demand for seating means collections will have to shrink or be warehoused.

About the Branch
The Pickering Central Library opened in 1990 as part of the new downtown Civic Complex. It was the first Library in Pickering to serve the whole community through its services and collections as well as acting as a popular materials branch for the local area. It has the highest customer traffic and circulation in the system. Public transit access is well supported at this location but there are also many residents in the immediate area who can walk to this location.

Claremont Library

4941 Old Brock Road, Claremont, ON L1Y 1A9 (Ward 3)   905-649-3341

Open Staffed Hours – as of November 2023
Monday	1:00 pm – 5:00 pm
Tuesday	4:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Thursday	4:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Saturday	1:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Total Weekly Staffed Hours: 16 hours

Extended Hours – as of November 2023 – branch is open for registered clients outside of the staffed hours above.
Monday	10:00 am – 8:00 pm
Tuesday	10:00 am – 8:00 pm
Wednesday	10:00 am – 8:00 pm
Thursday	10:00 am – 8:00 pm
Friday	10:00 am – 8:00 pm
Saturday	10:00 am – 5:00 pm

Total Weekly Service: 57 hours

Facility Information

- 1,666 square feet
- Claremont Extended Access Service with remote assistance pilot 2023 / 2024
- 2 public computer stations for public use
- Joint library/community centre owned by the City of Pickering and operated by Claremont Lions Club.

- Shared parking lot with Community Centre with accessible parking.
- Accessible public bathroom added in 2023.

Recent Annual Statistics

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 *	2021*	2022
Client Visits	3,178	3,520	3,244	3,262	851	507	1,790
Circulation	9,546	11,359	11,057	8,275	4,018	6,811	8,579
Collection size					7,500 items	7,000 items	5,700 items

*years affected by pandemic closures.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
· Only location serving north Pickering and rural communities · Accessible public washroom · New service model allows for increased self-service hours · Self-checkout	· Size does not allow for defined quiet spaces
Opportunities	**Threats**
· New FF&E (budgeted for 2023/24) · New service model	· Septic system may be reaching its limit

About the Branch
The Claremont Library started out as The Mechanic's Institute in 1891 and it was renamed the Claremont Association Library in 1895. It became part of the Pickering Township Library system when Pickering was incorporated in 1967. This library was housed in different locations but opened in its current location in 1997 when the Claremont Community Centre (now known as Dr. Nelson F. Tomlinson Community Centre) opened.

George Ashe Library

470 Kingston Road, Pickering ON L1V 1A4   (Ward 1)   905-420-2254

Open Hours:

Monday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Tuesday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Wednesday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Thursday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Friday	9:30 am – 9:00 pm
Saturday	9:30 am – 5:00 pm
Sunday	12:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Total Weekly Service: 70 hours

Facility Information
- 12,000 square feet
- Event Room/Quiet Study Room
- Seasonal Reading Garden
- Fireplace
- 16 public computer stations plus 5 laptops for in Library use
- 2 Self-checkout terminals
- Joint-use facility with the City of Pickering
- Parking: shared parking lot with Community Centre with accessible parking, pick-up/drop-off roundabout

Recent Annual Statistics

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020*	2021*	2022
Client Visits	141,234	159,837	140,151	131,602	37,678	30,578	65,878
Circulation	258,574	236,308	211,348	192,820	80,090	121,036	158,056
Collection size					49,000 items	46,926 Items	45,077 items

*years affected by pandemic closures.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
· Large windows, high ceilings make the space bright and open · Outdoor reading garden · Quiet study room	· Collection is too large for the footprint · Millwork shelving is inflexible and cannot be resized · Staff desk is too large · FF&E is original and looks dated · Layout of library is impractical and not flexible. · Lack of defined space for teens
Opportunities	**Threats**
· Renovation funds requested for 2026 alongside lifecycle upgrade for entire community centre facility.	· Branch currently undersized for community served (see below); developing communities (i.e. Seaton may add more demand on the space)

About the Branch

This Library is situated in a community centre and opened in 2001 to serve the southwest area of Pickering. It replaced the Rouge Hill Library which was located close by. It was initially called the Petticoat Creek Library but was renamed the George Ashe Library in 2017, along with the Community Centre. This branch was initially designed to serve families with children up to grade 8 and adults. Teens were re-directed to the Central Library which housed the physical collections for youth. However, physical collections have reduced importance today and youth enjoy using this local community branch to study, read, use the computers, or just hang out. Since this branch has been popular with all ages in its catchment area, the physical layout needs to provide more physical space for local residents.

Summary of Computer and Wireless Hardware

Location	Bandwidth	# Public Computers	# Staff Computers	Wireless Access Points	Maker Space technology?
Central	1 Gbps	34	40	13	Y
George Ashe	1 Gbps	16	13	3	N
Claremont	100 Mbps	2	1	1	N

Overview of Digital Technology Infrastructure

PPL's digital technology infrastructure is key to supporting the wide range of collections, programs and services offered by the Library. Technology solutions must be innovative and anticipate and respond to the changing needs of Library clients and staff. As part of the Library's commitment to accountability, the Library must ensure that the public and staff computing services are vital and relevant.

The Library's Virtual Environment is updated annually with industry leading virtualization software and concepts. Including open-source Proxmox VE enterprise virtualization servers. The Library uses Proxmox Backup Server, and a 3-2-1 backup strategy to protect its data and server infrastructure, it allows quick recovery in the event of sudden hardware failure, and robust data protection including onsite and offsite incremental backups and deduplication. The Library predominately hosts Windows Servers, and utilizes cloud-based and hosted platforms where practical. The Library uses Office 365, with a full range of communication tools.

The Pickering Public Library workstation infrastructure supports more than 120 Staff and Public workstations in separate and isolated network environments. The Library also provides VPN services for staff and unthrottled WiFi for client devices.

The Pickering Public Library is predominantly a Microsoft environment, with Windows on most workstations, but does include MAC, Chromebooks and Linux workstations as well.

Software Applications - The Library's Integrated Library System is SirsiDynix's Horizon platform. Library clients access the catalogue through the BiblioCommons discovery layer. Libki software manages the Library's public computer terminals and print management is run through Papercut to the Library's photocopiers from Xerox. The Library uses iPayment software in conjunction with the City of Pickering as the point of sale solution managing the collection of funds.

Website & Intranet - The Library's website was redesigned in 2020 and uses the Biblioweb interface from BiblioCommons. The new website is fully responsive and compliant with current accessibility legislation. The Library utilizes Microsoft SharePoint as the platform for the staff Intranet.
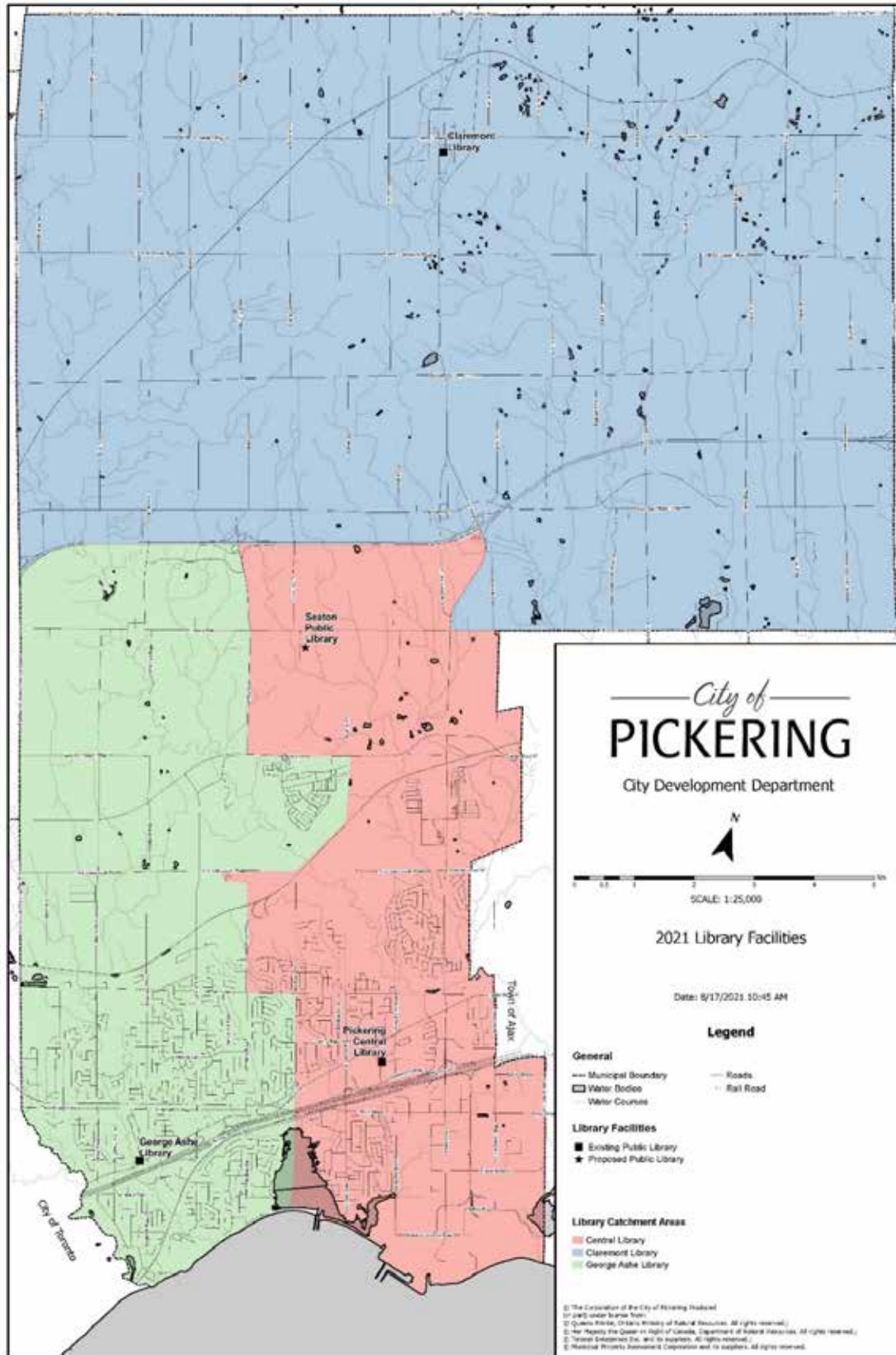
Catchment Map for Branches
Note: This section uses the data from the previous report.

A catchment map depicts the service area for each of the three PPL libraries. It is helpful to build ongoing understanding of community size, community needs and demographics so that library services can be continuously improved.

Method for creating catchment areas:

- Mobile analytics reports establish the estimated but anonymized home postal codes for unique visitors to the Central and George Ashe libraries for the year 2019.

- The unique visitors captured in the reports would have location-enabled mobile devices. It does not include all unique visitors to these libraries. This data does not capture visitors who do not visit a library with a smartphone (e.g. children).

- Maps based on the postal codes of unique visitors were created for each branch and boundary lines were drawn to create the catchment areas. Neighbourhoods that saw strong use of both branches were assigned based on which branch saw greater use.

- The map below shows the catchment areas for all three branches with the population served.

Catchment Population – 2022		
Central Library	**George Ashe Library**	**Claremont Library**
45,590	45,734	3,268

City of
PICKERING
City Development Department

N

SCALE: 1:25,000

2021 Library Facilities

Date: 8/17/2021 10:45 AM

Legend

General

--- Municipal Boundary
☐ Water Bodies
— Water Courses
— Roads
-- Rail Road

Library Facilities

■ Existing Public Library
★ Proposed Public Library

Library Catchment Areas

☐ Central Library
☐ Claremont Library
☐ George Ashe Library

Planning Future Library Needs and Population Projections

City of Pickering's [Detailed 20-year Population Forecast](#) (2022)

The City is poised for rapid growth:

According to the City's Detailed 20-year population forecast (based on data from December 2022)

- Pickering population will increase in the next 20 years by 90% from 96,998 in 2022 to 183,834 in 2042
- Residential units are expected to increase by 107% – from 34,646 in 2022 to 71,575 in 2042
- Pickering is also anticipated to grow at the highest municipal population rate in the Region of 3.3% annually over 30 years (the average growth rate since 2006 has been 1.1% annually).

According to the Detailed 20-Year Population Forecast report, in the period of 2022 to 2042, the majority of population growth is assigned to the following areas:

- Seaton community: 44%
- Duffin Heights 10%
- City Centre: 30%
- Other urban neighbourhoods: 16%

Projected Population increase 2023 – 2042

Year	Total Projected Population
2022	96,998
2027	117,002
2032	138,341
2037	162,213
2042	183,834

Public Library Square Footage per Capita Benchmarks: Current and Targets

One important metric used to assist libraries with future facilities planning is the square footage per capita. It is important to note that the limitation of this calculation is that it uses per capita as the denominator and does not account for library users outside the municipality. Based on the data collected to develop the catchment map, residents of Scarborough and across Durham Region are strong users of Pickering's library facilities.

	Targeted sq. ft. per capita
Barrie Public Library	0.7
Burlington Public Library	0.7
Oakville Public Library	0.6
Pickering Public Library	0.7

The square footage targets are based on guidelines from the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario.

Square Footage per Capita for Existing Library Branches

	Square Footage	Population Served	Sq. Ft per capita
Central Library	33,000 sq. ft.	45,590	0.72
George Ashe Library	12,000 sq. ft.	45,734	0.26
Claremont Library	1,666 sq. ft.	3,268	0.51
TOTAL	**46,666 sq. ft**	94,592	**0.49**
		Overall: Does not meet target of 0.7	

Projected Square Footage per capita for 2030 and 2040 (with new libraries and population projections)

Assumptions:

- The population projections were based on the City of Pickering's 20-Year Population Forecast
- Assumes that by 2030, the City Centre Library, Seaton Library and Pickering Heritage and Community Centre will open and there will be no expansion to the George Ashe or Claremont Libraries. No additional libraries have been budgeted beyond these buildings. This may not be a valid assumption.
- The City Centre Library may change the catchment areas and draw more users from across the system than the current Central Library does. There is no data to support this theory so we will continue to use the population served from the 2022 data.
- Targets for square footage per capita may need adjustment based on the changing footprint of physical collections.

Population projection by year 2032

	Square Footage	Population Served	Sq. ft. per capita
City Centre Library	39,000 sq. ft.	50,525	0.89
George Ashe Library	12,000 sq. ft.	41,932	0.29
Seaton Library*	30,000 sq. ft.	27,568	0.91
Pickering Heritage & Community Centre (PHCC) **	1,200 sq. ft.	4,395	0.65
Claremont	1,666 sq. ft.		
TOTAL	**83,866 sq. ft**	**124,420**	**0.67**
			Does not meet the target of 0.7
			Square Footage Deficiency: 3,230 sq. ft

Population projection by year 2042

	Square Footage	Population Served	Sq. ft. per capita
City Centre Library	39,000 sq. ft.	54,924	0.82
George Ashe Library	12,000 sq. ft.	43,575	0.28
Seaton Library*	30,000 sq. ft.	50,375	0.50
Pickering Heritage & Community Centre (PHCC) **	1,200 sq. ft.	4,526	0.63
Claremont	1,666 sq. ft.		
TOTAL	**83,866 sq. ft**	**153,400**	**0.54**
			Does not meet the target of 0.7
			Square Footage Deficiency: 23,514 sq. ft

*Population projection taken from the Ward Boundary Review for this area was adjusted to remove the north Pickering community population (used 2020 figure). Calculation: 54,360 – 3,268 = 51,092
Square footage for the Seaton Library is an estimate.

**As PHCC and Claremont will serve North Pickering, the square footage has been combined.

Conclusion:

Based on a projected population of 153,400 residents above, the library system will require an additional facility of 23,500 square feet in the next 10-20 years.

Additional Implications and Recommendations

Population Projections, Future Facilities Projects

a) Future population projections and calculation should influence the square footage for future library branches.
b) An additional branch of approximately 23,500 square feet will be required for a population above 150,000 residents.
c) The current George Ashe Library is undersized for the population served and will continue to be despite the addition of new libraries in North Pickering (PHCC, Seaton). Recommendation for improving use of space:
    i. Redesign of the public space to reduce collection size and improve flexibility of other spaces (individual and group work, children's area, teen area, etc.)
    ii. Resize (decrease) staff work area and service desk
    iii. Add small Maker Space
    iv. Redesign outdoor space

Library Design and Pandemics

Lessons learned from the Covid-19 pandemic should be incorporated into the design, services, and operations of current and future libraries.

a) *Library Services:*

New services introduced during the pandemic included:
    i. Curbside/contactless pickup—Staff retrieve materials and deposit outside the library closed to where clients are parked. This can be paired with:
        a. Browsing just for you—staff select titles based on client preferences
        b. Book bundles—preselected package of titles with different genres or topics
    ii. Home delivery—Library volunteers deliver materials to clients who are unable to visit the Library in-person.
    iii. Virtual events – Use of a production studio to film, broadcast and edit content.

b) *Library Spaces:*

    i. Drive-through windows and/or curbside laneways
    ii. Flexible spaces that can be easily configured to keep people apart if needed. This includes moveable shelving and walls
    iii. Service desks that are smaller and mobile and have the advantage of being moved against a wall to keep staff safe in the event of another pandemic.

iv. Smaller public tables with outlets. These tables are no longer hard-wired so they can be moved.

v. Provision of community and social services, including social workers on staff to assist with social issues.

vi. Telework support for clients.

vii. Outdoor spaces with power outlets, adjustable shading, and greenery.

c) Staff Workspaces

As a result of the pandemic, there is a move towards hybrid work arrangement. The need for physical office space won't disappear but it will adapt to support employee collaboration and social engagement. There will be mixed use workspaces which could include shareable desks, special rooms to conduct video calls, movable tables, and dividers to hold meetings of various sizes. Flexible work schedules can reduce the number of staff in a workspace. There is a need for mobile technology that allows telework (cameras, microphones).

d) Operations

The community expects the public library to be a safe environment during a pandemic. The following elements must be considered in facility planning in the future:

i. Use of touchless technology, like sinks and soap dispensers, intelligent toilets antimicrobial buttons.

ii. Hand soaps and sanitizers, paper towels, and other surface cleaning products should be high-quality, eco-friendly, and readily available to anyone who needs them.

iii. Better air filtration systems to ensure that the air is free of viruses and contaminants.

iv. Walkways, corridors, and common spaces designed with wider dimensions to eliminate overcrowding.

v. Sensors to monitor visitor traffic.

vi. User centric building systems which allow staff and clients to control building systems with their phone. This could include touchless processes such as booking meetings, opening doors, scheduling times to work in the office or at home, turning on televisions, controlling communication technology, changing the lighting or window blinds.

Off-site Physical Collections

Balancing the physical layout of a library branch between physical collections and "people spaces" is an ongoing exercise. As use of certain physical collections wains (i.e., audio-visual materials, paperbacks), there are opportunities to remove shelving

and replace it with furniture that satisfies demand from clients for spaces to learn, read, study, play and gather.

Additionally, there are some materials that due to seasonality (i.e. holiday books), duplicate copies of the same title or niche topics, do not need to reside on the library shelves year round.

The Library has created an offsite storage solution for material that has lower demand. Adult books that have enduring value but minimal use were moved to the former Greenwood Library in 2020. Clients can still view these items in our online catalogue and can place holds on them. Library staff retrieve the items regularly and clients can pick up the items from one of the three branch locations.

The current storage collection consists of about 1,000 items and circulation in 2022 was 481. A reasonable circulation for an offsite storage collection. The collection is regularly weeded and items are moved from our active collections as required.

If in the future, the Greenwood Library reaches its storage capacity or is repurposed by the City, a longer-term solution could be considered. Perhaps a small, offsite warehouse could be leased by the library. Alternatively, if demand for physical collections decreases – followed by a decrease in shelving requirements - an offsite storage solution may no longer be needed.