

AGENDA

OXFORD COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD BOARD MEETING

Wednesday, March 25, 2026, 4:30 p.m.
Oxford County Administration Building - Room 222

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA
3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF
4. DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS
5. CONSIDERATION OF DELEGATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS
6. REPORTS
 - 6.1 2026-10 Proposed Mount Elgin Branch
7. NOTICE OF MOTIONS
8. NEW BUSINESS / ENQUIRIES / COMMENTS
9. CLOSED SESSION
10. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS ARISING FROM CLOSED SESSION
11. ADJOURNMENT

REPORT TO LIBRARY BOARD

Proposed New Mount Elgin Branch

To: Oxford County Library Board

From: CEO / Chief Librarian

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Library Board accept Report 2026-10 for information and discussion;
2. And further, that the Library Board endorse the continued inclusion of a library branch within the proposed new municipal facility in Mount Elgin;
3. And further, that the Library Board supports discussions between South-West Oxford Township and Oxford County Library regarding the development of a Memorandum of Understanding for the proposed new library space;
4. And further, that the Library Board recommends to County Council that the future library space in the new South-West Oxford Township Municipal Building be considered as part of upcoming budget planning and long-term service planning for Oxford County Library.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- To provide an update on the proposed relocation of the Mount Elgin Branch to a new integrated Municipal Building being developed by South-West Oxford Township.
- To outline anticipated facilities needs and financial implications of the proposed relocation.

IMPLEMENTATION POINTS

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact to the current year's approved operating budget.

Major budget impacts would be anticipated in 2028 or beyond based on anticipated occupancy dates.

Report 2026-10
CORPORATE SERVICES
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Budget Impacts

Item	One Time	Yearly
Rent		\$26,000*
Furniture	\$115,000	
IT Equipment	\$5,000 to \$10,000	
Opening Day Collection	\$25,000	

*Rental rates to be determined through lease negotiations.

Communications

Library staff will liaise with partners at the County and Township level based on the Library Board's direction.

2024-2028 LIBRARY STRATEGIC PLAN

Oxford County Library Board approved the [2024-2028 Library Strategic Plan](#) on February 20, 2024. The Plan outlines three key goals to advance the Library's vision to "Connect, discover, share, become." These goals are: (1) *Sustain service excellence*, (2) *Grow engagement and member relationships*, and (3) *Innovate access to service*.

The information in this report supports the following strategic goals.

Strategic Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1	GOAL 2	GOAL 3
 <p>Sustain service excellence</p>	 <p>Grow engagement and member relationships</p>	 <p>Innovate access to service</p>
<p>Strategy 1.1 – Develop and implement a long-term facilities plan to meet changing demands and create enjoyable and dynamic spaces for our communities.</p>		<p>Strategy 3.1 – Plan, design, and implant a Programs and Services Accessibility Strategy to make OCL inclusive and accessible to all residents.</p>

See: [Oxford County Library 2024-2028 Strategic Plan](#)

DISCUSSION

Background

Mount Elgin Population

The Village of Mount Elgin has experienced notable population growth over the last five years driven by new development occurring between Mount Elgin Road and Plank Line. Based upon updated unit counts and person-per-unit (PPU) estimates, the Oxford County Planning Department provided population estimates found in Table 1.

Table 1

Year	Estimated Population
2021	608
2022	702
2023	809
2024	900
2025	909

The Oxford County Growth Analysis and Land Needs Assessment Report, prepared by Watson and Associates Economists Ltd., was adopted by Oxford County Council at the March 11, 2026 meeting as part of Report CP2026-08. Though not part of the official report, Watsons and Associates provided analysis of sub-municipal growth and forecasts for serviced villages in each municipality. The Oxford County Planning Department has provided growth estimates for Mount Elgin Village in Table 2 based on the work done by Watsons and Associates.

Table 2

Year	Estimated Population
2026	1,373
2031	1,882
2036	2,156

Mount Elgin Branch Library

The Mount Elgin Branch, constructed in the 1970s, is the smallest facility in the Oxford County Library system at 676 square feet. The Township of South-West Oxford currently leases this space to the Library for \$4,685 annually.

Currently located at 333204 Plank Line, the branch provides 13 hours of service per week. In 2025 Mount Elgin Branch usage included:

- 6,729 items checked-out (10.8 items per hour)
- 1,668 visits (2.7 customers per hour)
- 510 uses of the branch Wi-Fi or public computer (0.8 uses per hour)
- 231 readers advisory requests (0.4 requests per hour)
- 354 visitors engaging in passive programs
- 167 visitors attending active programs

In 2023, the Library Board passed the Oxford County Service Delivery Model as part of report 2023-31(Attachment 3). This model established a minimum standard of 2,500 square feet for Village Branches, in alignment with the 4th edition of the ARUPLO Guidelines (Attachment 4).

The 2025 Oxford County Library Facilities Plan (Attachment 2) identified the Mount Elgin Branch as a priority for replacement or expansion. The plan recommended a facilities size between 4,000 and 5,000 square feet. However, library staff noted that a smaller footprint may be more appropriate given the branch's designation as a Village Branch and its proximity to both of the system's larger Resource Branches.

Comments

Using the future population estimates provided by the Oxford County Planning Department, the current Mount Elgin Branch will be under the 0.6 per capital space guideline provided by the ARUPLO Guidelines (Attachment 4) this year. Should the village meet the estimated 1,373 population, the branch will sit at 0.5 per capital space. The branch will fall even further behind should growth estimates continue over the next ten years.

With growth in mind, South-West Oxford Township has invited the Oxford County Library Board to participate in the development of a new library space within the Township's planned Municipal Building. The facility will integrate Township offices, the Library, and a childcare centre, and will be located on the west side of Plank Line, off Mount Elgin Road, in the new Mount Elgin Heights subdivision. Township staff currently anticipate the space will be ready for occupancy by 2028.

According to current architectural plans (Attachment 1), approximately 2,000 square feet has been allocated for the library component, with another 500 square feet designated for library and archival storage. The new branch would be situated within an integrated municipal facility and would more than double the space of the existing location, staff anticipate that lease costs will increase and will need to be negotiated between the County and the Township. Based on a review of comparable lease agreements with other municipalities and private landlords, staff

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estimate a potential lease rate of \$13.00 per square foot, or approximately \$26,000 annually. This represents an increase of \$21,315 per year compared to the current lease.

A larger branch would also require expanded collections, additional shelving, updated furnishings and potentially new IT equipment and infrastructure. At this stage, library staff estimate the following capital requirements:

- \$115,000 for shelving and furniture
- \$25,000 for new / increased collections
- \$5,000 to \$10,000 for IT equipment / infrastructure

These budget projections may require further review to support inclusion within the County's Asset Management Plan and future budgets.

CONCLUSIONS

Library staff propose that the Oxford County Library Board endorse the continued inclusion of a library within the new South-West Oxford Municipal Building. With this endorsement, the CEO/Chief Librarian will represent the Library throughout the detailed design phase.

With Library Board Approval, the CEO/Chief Librarian will collaborate with Township staff to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The final MOU draft will be presented to the Library Board for approval and recommendation to County Council.

Finally, upon approval by the Library Board, Library staff will work with County Facilities and Finance teams on a recommendation to County Council to include the new library space as part of upcoming budget and long-term planning.

SIGNATURES

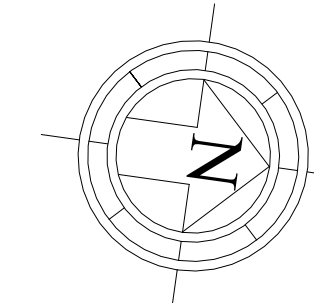
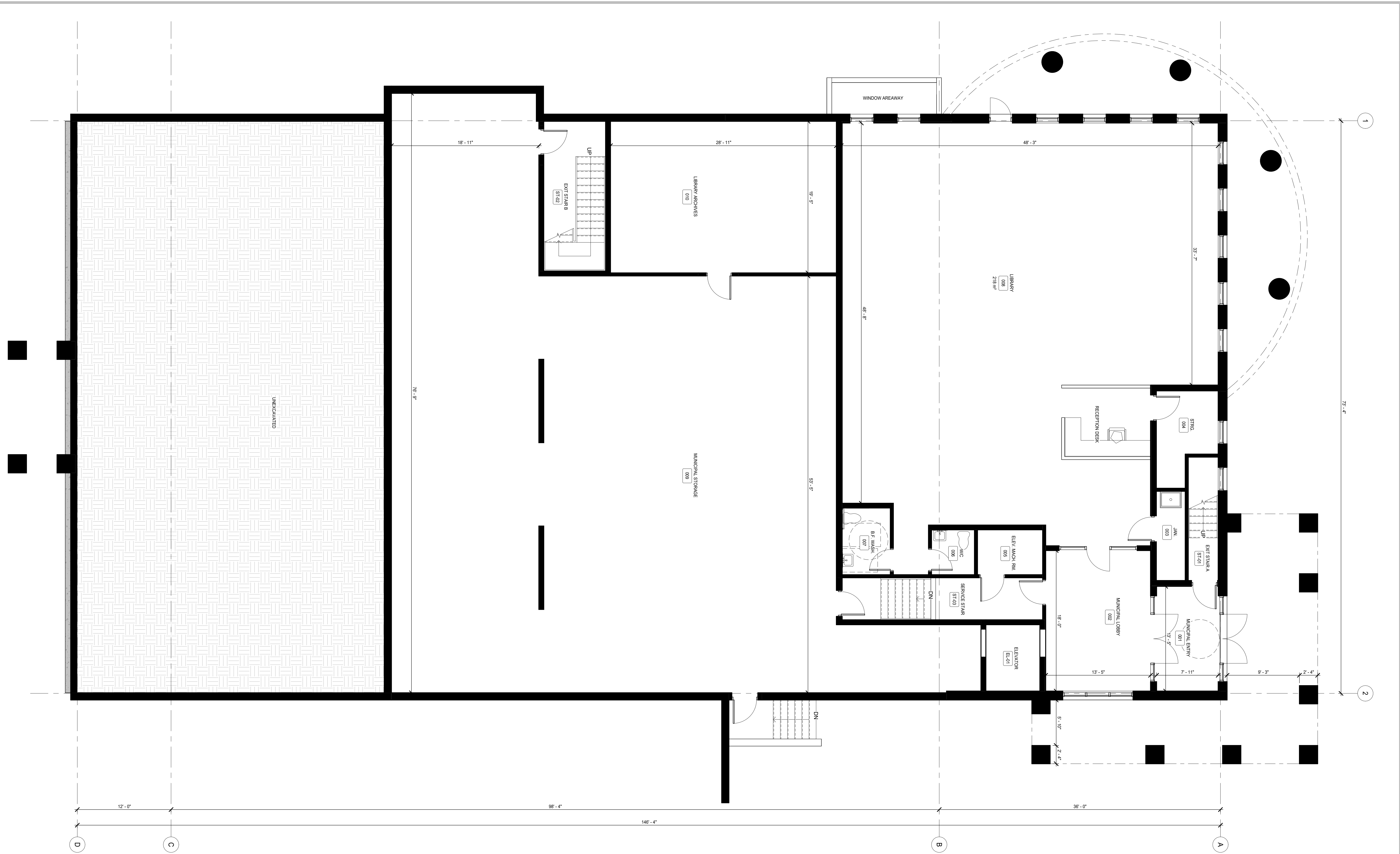
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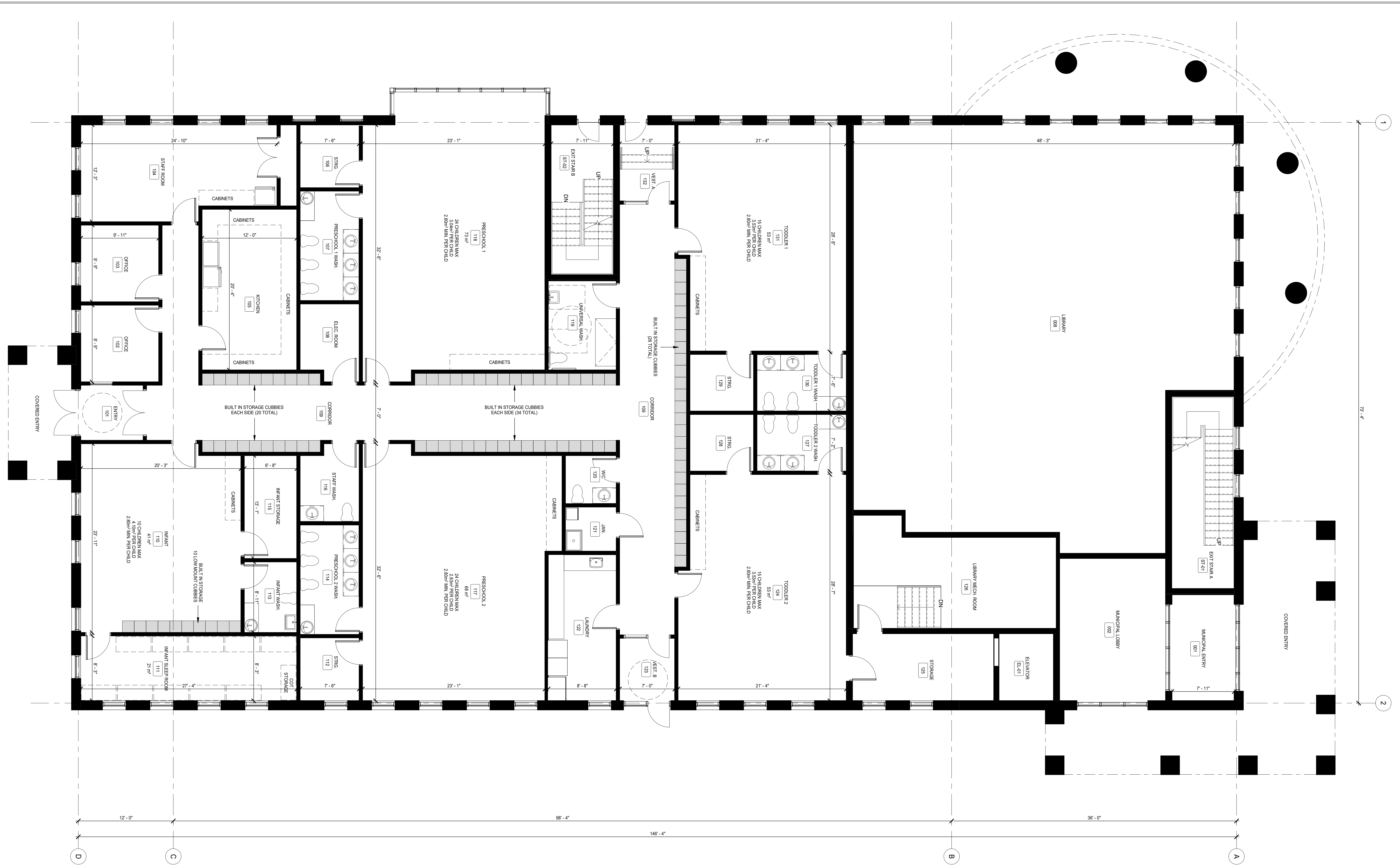
Original signed by

Lisa Marie Williams
 CEO / Chief Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 South-West Oxford Concept Building Design, October 2025
 Attachment 2 Oxford County Library Facilities Plan, May 2024
 Attachment 3 Oxford County Library Service Delivery Model, December 2023
 Attachment 4 ARUPLO Guidelines, 4th Edition, June 2023.

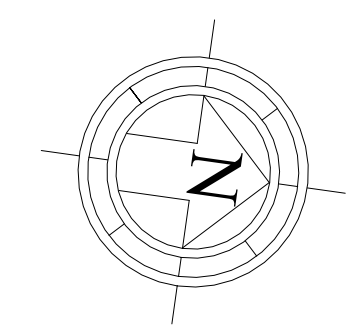


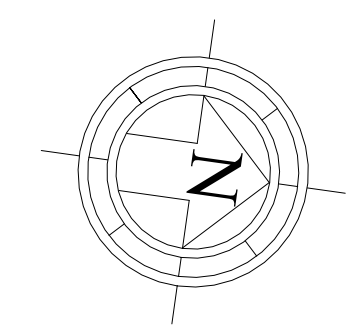
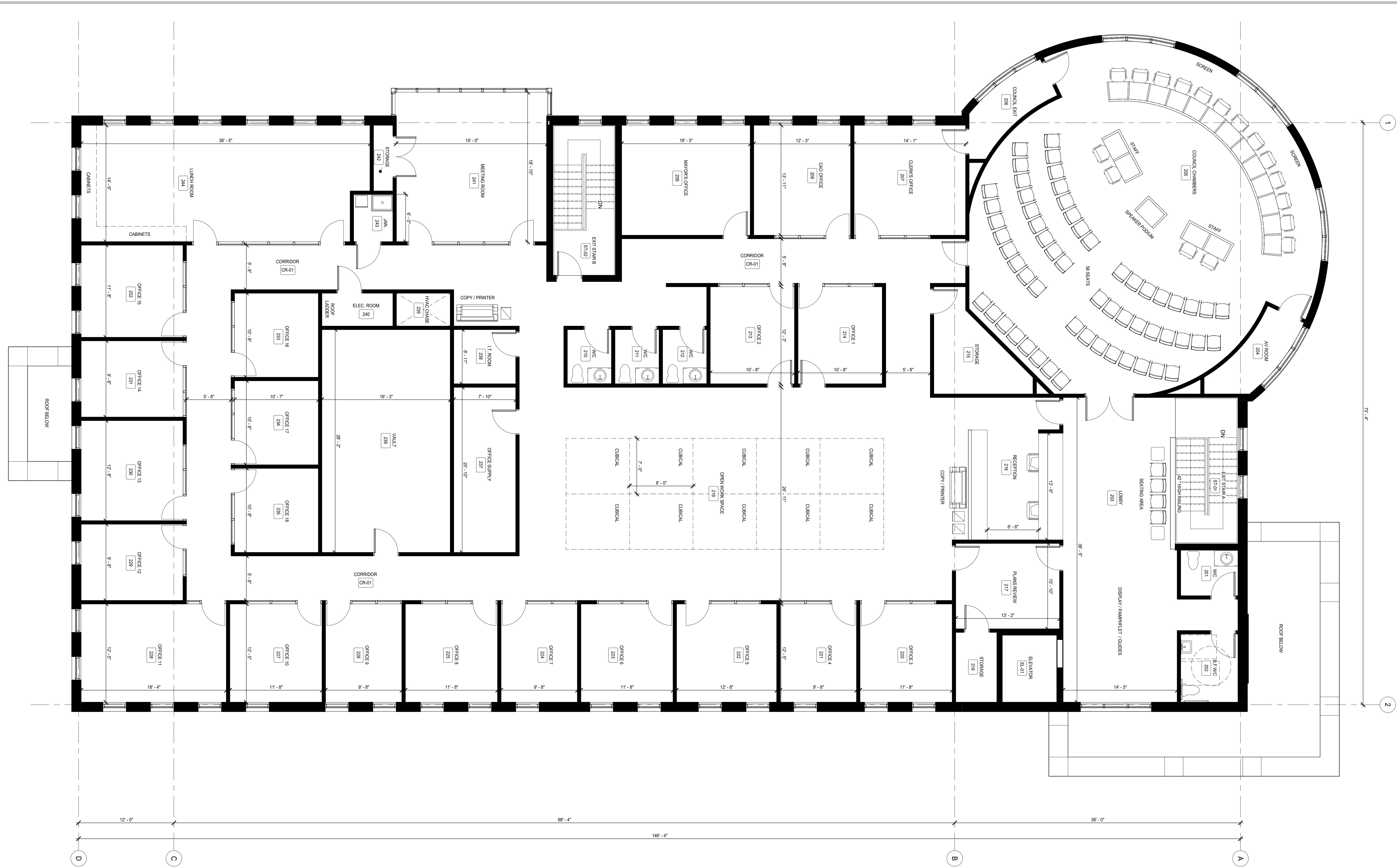


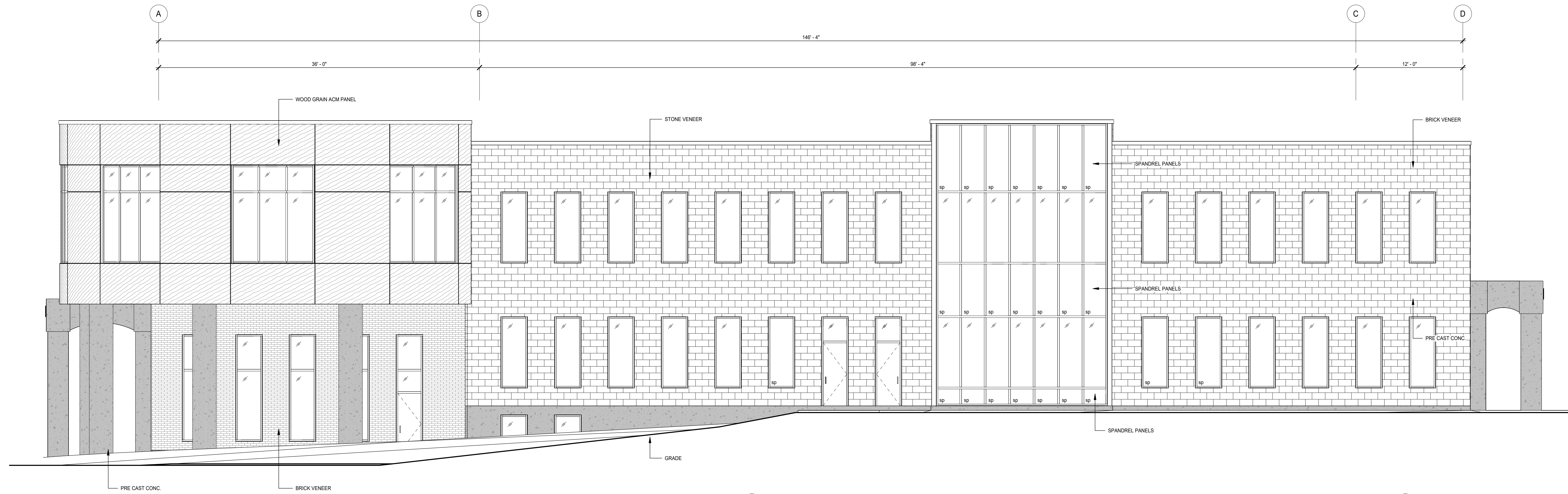
**SOUTH WEST OXFORD
MAIN FLOOR PLAN (DAYCARE)**

322 ONTARIO STREET
STRATFORD, ONTARIO
N5A 3H8 (519) 271-4603

OCTOBER 24, 2025
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0" (24x36)

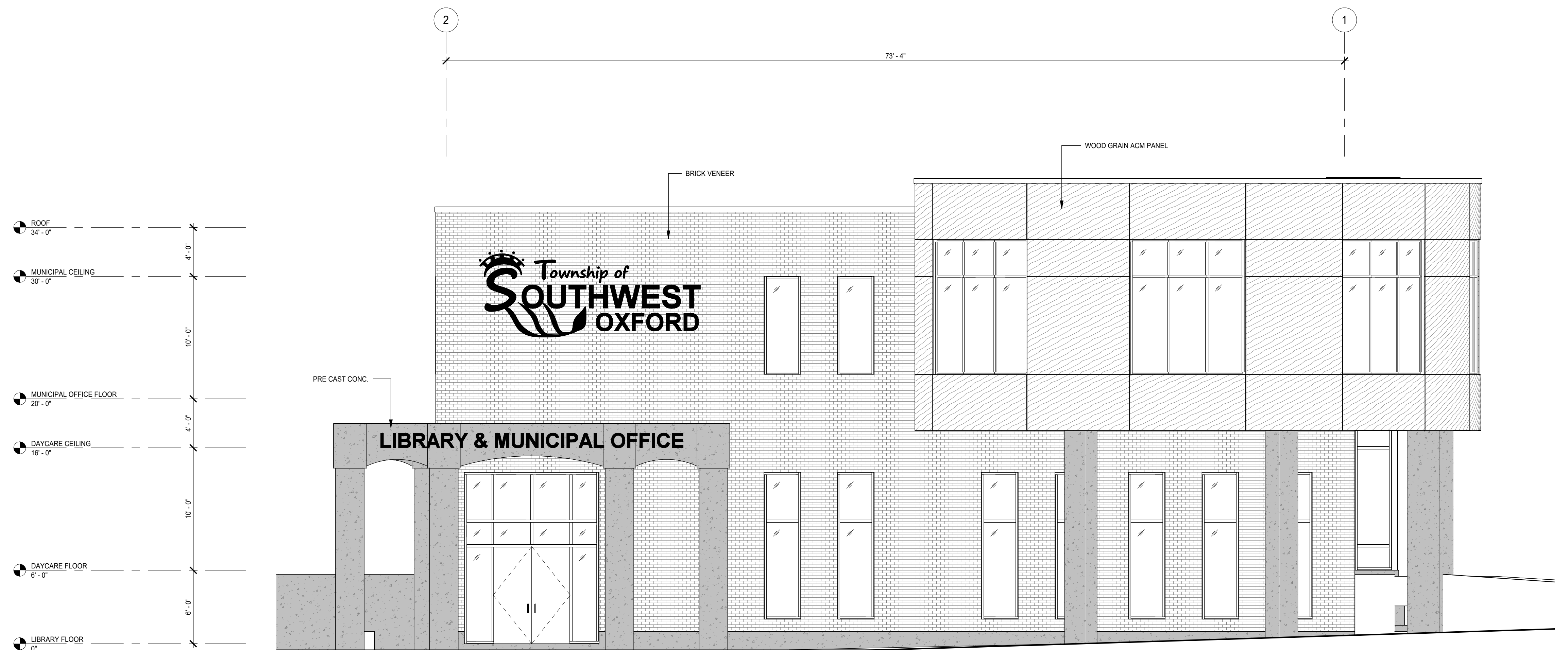






WEST ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



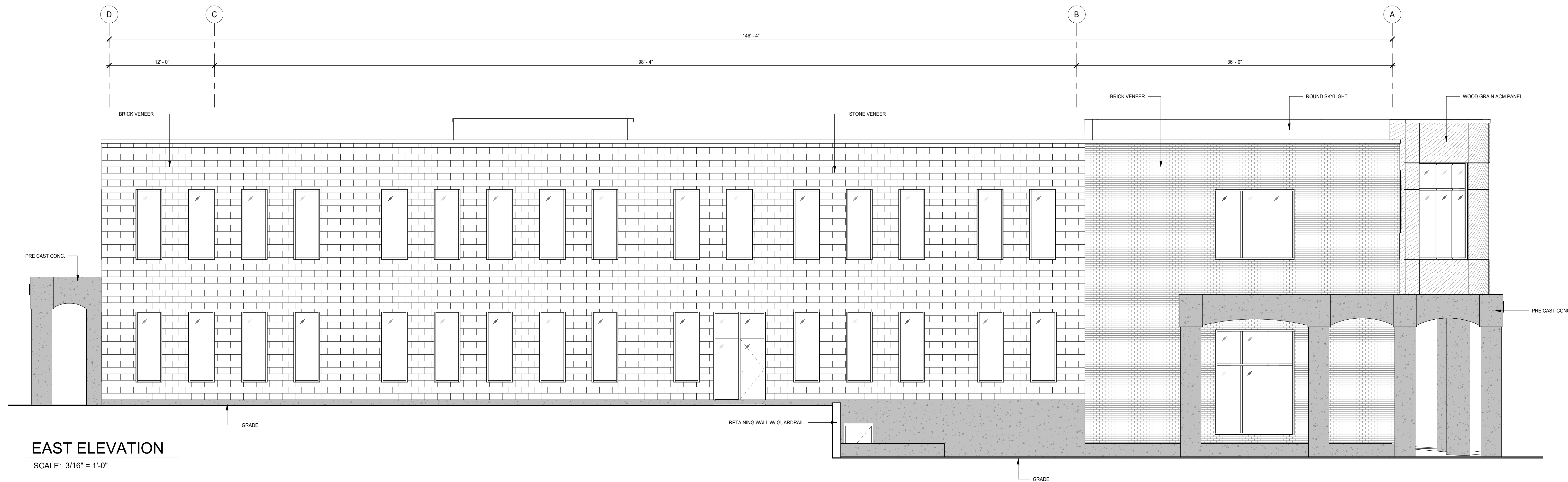
NORTH ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

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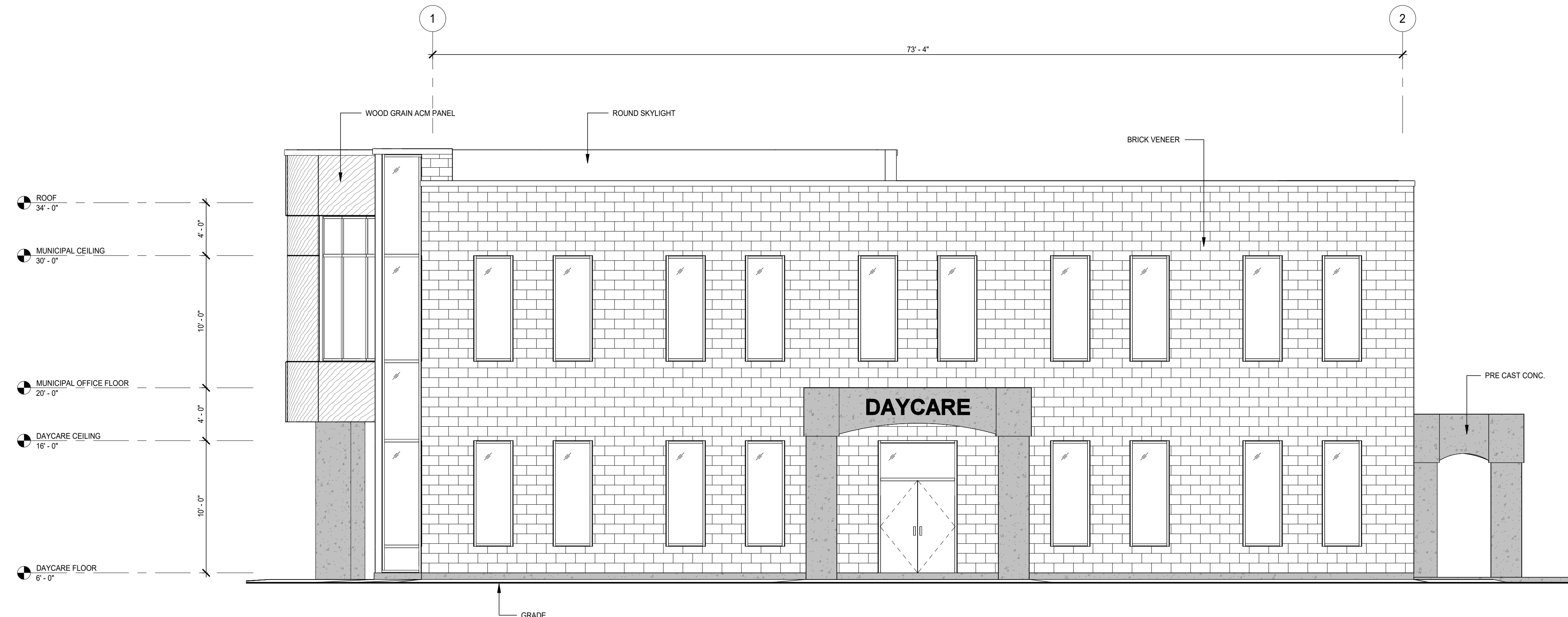
**SOUTH WEST OXFORD
 ELEVATIONS**

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EAST ELEVATION

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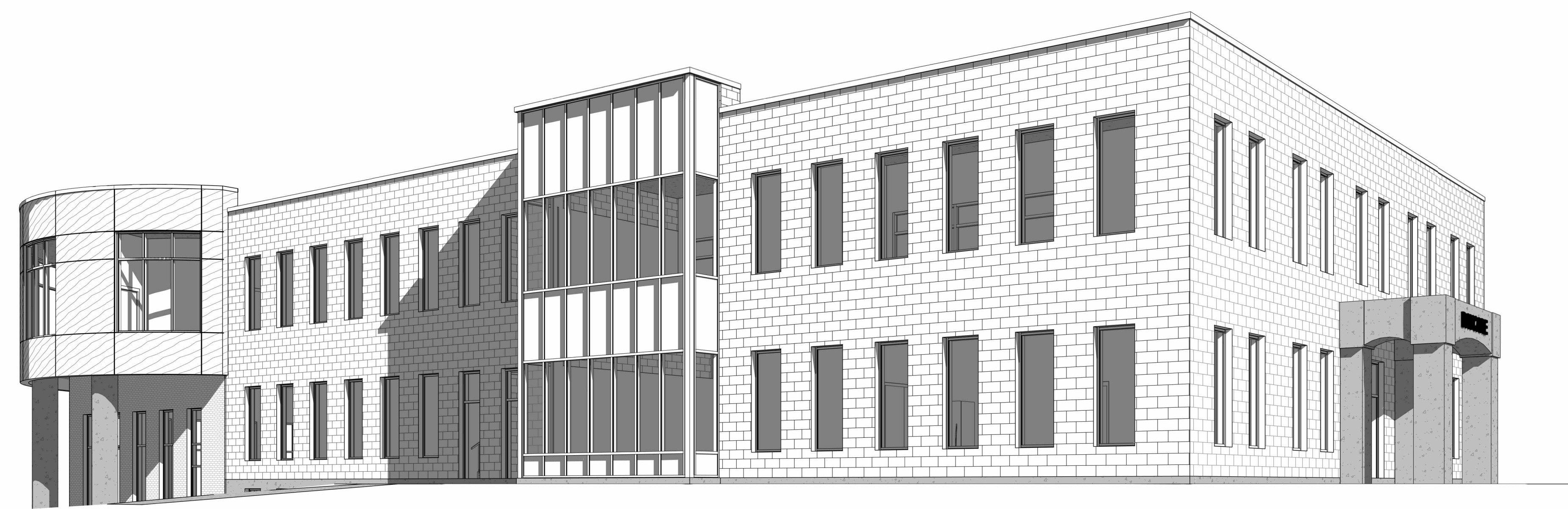
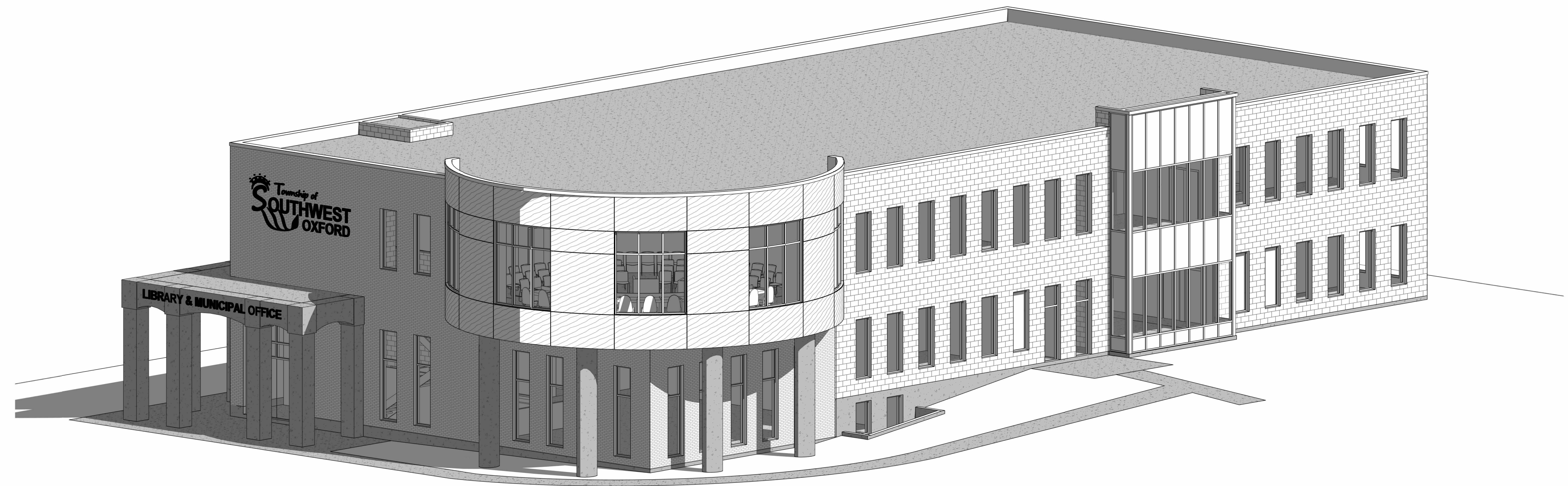
SOUTH ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

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**SOUTH WEST OXFORD
ELEVATIONS**

OCTOBER 24, 2025
SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0" (24x36)



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**SOUTH WEST OXFORD
 BUILDING PERSPECTIVES**

OCTOBER 24, 2025
 SCALE: (24x36)



SECTION AT MAIN ENTRANCE LOBBY & BASEMENT

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



SECTION AT ELEVATOR

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

Mount Elgin Library

Address:	333204 Plank Line
OCL Classification:	Village Branch
Library Type:	Integrated with Community Centre
Ownership:	Municipal
Net Floor Area:	676 ft ²
Weekly Visits:	33
Hours Open:	13 hours per week
2024 Circulation:	8,093 items / 12.0 items per ft ²

Built in the 1970s, the Mount Elgin Library is the smallest branch in the OCL system and is co-located with a community centre, park and playground. Mount Elgin Library received the fewest number of in-person visits in 2024 and circulation was below the Village Branch average. While libraries that are integrated with community centres often benefit from higher levels of foot traffic, this does not appear to be the case in Mount Elgin. In addition to its small size limiting capacity and collections, it is not readily apparent that a library exists alongside the community centre but OCL will be updating window signage with the hopes of drawing greater attention from those driving along Highway 19. The exterior entrance to the library is situated to the side of the building which can also limit visibility. Once inside, the floor space is nearly entirely occupied by collections, seating, and a small customer service desk while washrooms are located within the broader community centre.

The Township of South-West Oxford purchased land in Mount Elgin and is presently contemplating the development of a new Municipal Office and childcare facility.¹⁵ With the lowest per capita rate of library space in Oxford County and a sizeable deficit of library space in the Township, OCL should engage the Township in discussions that would replace the current library branch with a new library as part of the institutional hub. Doing so would leverage efficiencies already exemplified in Ingersoll where a library is integrated with Town Hall as well as in Norwich where a branch is successfully co-located with a childcare centre.

A new Village Branch in Mount Elgin should be designed between 4,000 and 5,000 square feet in size which is generally consistent with the template in Norwich. It should contain sufficient area to house collections, seating areas, and ideally a dedicated program room at a minimum. Being centrally located in the Township with access to Highway 19, this type of library would position South-West Oxford well into the future. Assuming a 5,000 square foot library is constructed, the Township would attain a provision rate of 0.6 square feet which would put it in line with provincially accepted standards and meet OCL's recommended target.

¹⁵ Township of South-West Oxford. Media Release: Purchase of land for potential 88-space Child Care Facility & South-West Oxford Municipal Office in Mount Elgin. Dated November 6, 2024. Accessed on March 25, 2025 at <https://www.swox.org/news/posts/>

Figure 27: Mount Elgin Library Site Plan



Main Entrance



View of Library



Workspace

Service Delivery Model



Service Delivery Model

Oxford County Library's Service Delivery Model will help the Library envision the future of library service through ongoing investment in the library's infrastructure and service delivery. The Model is both practical and aspirational, outlining a future-oriented and systemic approach to planning all aspects of library service.

The Service Delivery Model:

- Drives service excellence, innovation and efficiency by anticipating current and future needs;
- Provides scalable service options and planning guidelines for service development, while being flexible and responsive to changing community needs;
- Guides decision making for future services, resource allocation and staffing deployment;
- Makes a commitment to engage residents, communities, users, staff and other key stakeholders to understand and meet their needs;
- Ensures that the Oxford County Library's mission, vision and values are central to service delivery planning;
- Aligns with the Library and County Strategic Plans and other County and Area Municipal priorities.



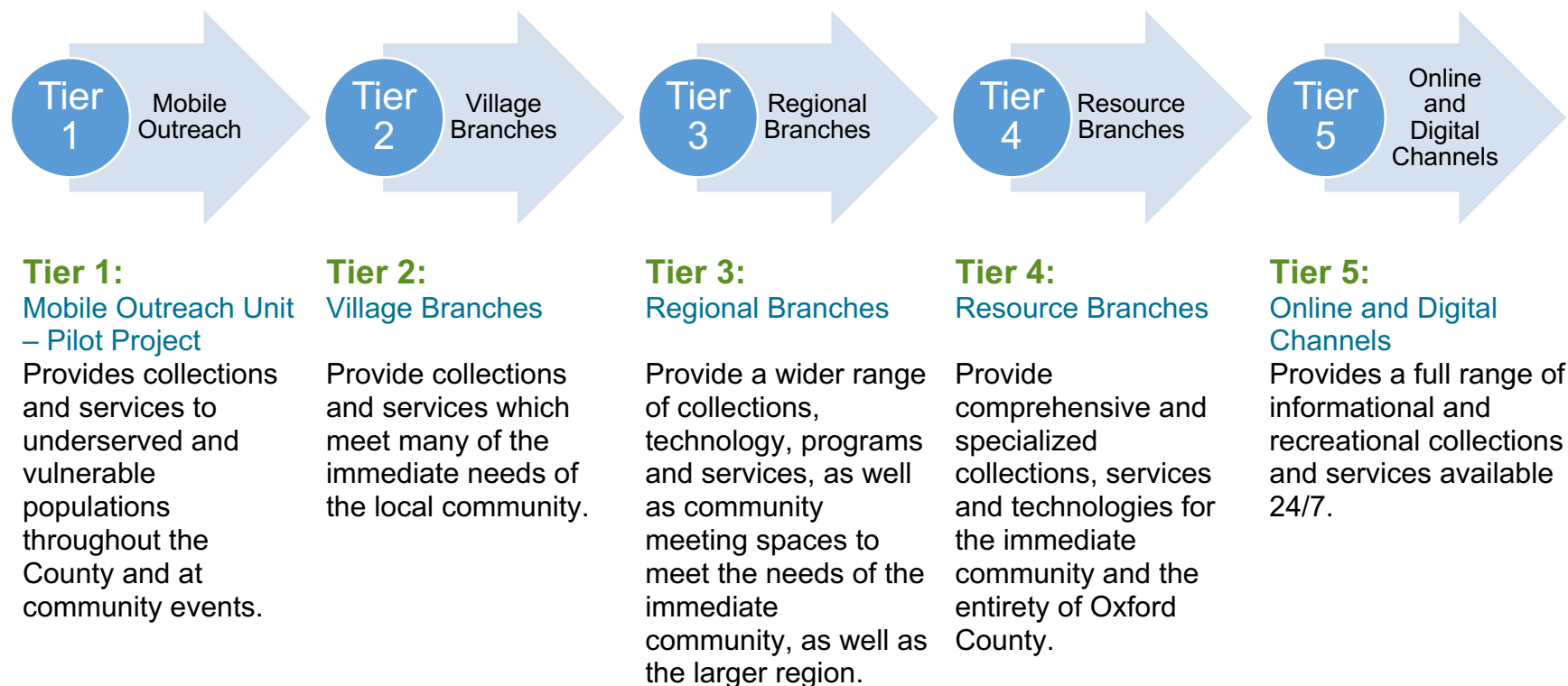
The library will use this document, in conjunction with the Library Strategic Plan, to advance library operations to the seven area municipalities currently served by the Oxford County Library. This document, and the current state appendix, is updated as required to reflect the library priorities. Some of the guidelines and standards within have been met, while others envision a preferred future based on areas of growth and development.

Four Tiers of Library Service

The Oxford County Library aims to provide customers with a seamless experience in person and online. The Library aims to ensure that every resident of Oxford County has the opportunity to use the library in ways that are convenient and responsive to their needs. The library provides service through four tiers of service to provide equitable access.

Libraries contribute to the economic and social vitality of their communities and support community development and social wellbeing. Libraries are Community Hubs that connect residents to each other and to the services and resources offered by the library and other agencies throughout the County.

The Oxford County Library's network is currently made up of:



Appendix A provides service guidelines and current state information for all tiers of service



Tier 1: Ox on the Run – Library Mobile Outreach Unit Pilot

As part of the 2023 Library Business Plan, the Ox on the Run Year-Round Mobile Outreach Pilot has been planned for 2023 and 2024. Utilizing a decommissioned ambulance, the two-year pilot will provide services year-round to provide:

- Popular collections and access to item holds;
- A range of library technology, programs and services to underserved and vulnerable communities and neighborhoods.

Throughout the pilot, Ox on the Run will make scheduled stops at a wide range of locations, including communities without a library branch, community halls and other gathering places, community events, affordable housing areas, retirement communities and participating local businesses.



The pilot program is tied closely to Future Oxford's *Reducing Poverty Together Strategy 2022-2024* with aims to:

- Provide Access to Services/Information by:
 - Year-round access to library programs, collections, technology and services to underserved and vulnerable communities across Oxford County;
 - Connect county residents with information on county initiatives and services. Connect residents with information from their Area Municipality;
 - Increase the number of active library cardholders.
- Provide Access to Education by:
 - Introducing the community to the free resources available through the Oxford County Library, including:
 - eBooks/eAudioBooks for residents of all ages and reading abilities;
 - eLearning platforms such as Universal Class, Signing Savvy, Transparent Language and Creative Bug;
 - eTutoring services such as Brainfuse;
 - Maker Kits for STEM learning;



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- Other available services located at the library's 14 branch locations.
- Provide Access to Food by:
 - Working with local organizations and the library's Teen Advisory Committee to help provide healthy snacks and care kits to those in need during the Mobile Unit's stops;
 - Introducing kids and teens to the library's Seed Library through planting and growing programs that help kids learn about container gardening while teaching food literacy skills;
 - Introducing kids and families to other food literacy skills using the tools and equipment found in the Kitchen Library.

Tiers 2 – 4: Branch Network

Tier 2: Village Branches

Village Branches currently serve the following communities:

- Brownsville
- Burgessville
- Embro
- Harrington
- Innerkip
- Mount Elgin
- Otterville
- Princeton

These branches support the unique nature and needs of the village communities of Oxford by providing:

- Limited browsing collections for recreational reading and non-print materials for readers of all ages;
- Information resources to support local families, individuals, schools and community groups and businesses;
- A local service point for select area municipal and county services and resources;
- Access to technology via computers, wi-fi and basic printing services;
- Limited co-sponsored programs, in-branch activities and passive programming opportunities.





Tier 3: Regional Branches

Regional Branches currently serve the following communities:

- Norwich
- Plattsville
- Tavistock
- Thamesford

These branches build upon the services provided at Tier 1 by providing:

- A wider range of print and non-print materials, as well as alternative collections;
- A range of library and co-sponsored programs for all ages based on local and regional community needs;
- Access to study and meeting spaces both within the library space and as rentable meeting rooms;
- Further access to technology, including dedicated Teen Tablets, Library-run Technology Programs, and proposed addition of Curiosity Cabinets.



Tier 4: Resource Branches

Resource Branches are currently located within the following communities:

- Ingersoll
- Tillsonburg

These branches continue to build upon the services provided at Tier 1 and 2 by providing:

- Large and comprehensive collections of print and not-print materials for all ages, and increased access to larger alternative collections;
- Special collections that are relevant to the County as a whole, including genealogy and local history collections, as well as multilingual collections and resources;



- Regular programming for all ages, including co-sponsored programs and events with community agencies and local partners;
- System-wide support for larger programming initiatives such as the TD Summer Reading Program, 1000 Books Before Kindergarten and Forest of Reading;
- Increased access to technology, including dedicated Makerspaces, dedicated Teen Tablets/computers, Local History computer station with access to a microform reader/printer, and printing/copying/scanning options with both Black and White and Colour options.

Branch Hours of Service

The Library Board works with Library Administration to set branch service hours based on needs, available resources and maximum convenience of residents of local communities. The Library Board supports the Ontario Public Library Guidelines (OPLG) which states that all library branches should be open 12 hours or more per week. Oxford County Library supports and strives to meet the following Administrators of Rural Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO) Guidelines for minimum branch hours, while recognizing that opportunities to improve and enhance branch hours may not always meet these Guidelines.

- Village Branches: Minimum of 20 hours over 4 days per week
- Regional Branches: Minimum of 25 hours over 5 days per week
- Resource Branches: Minimum of 45 hours over 6 days per week

Branch hours will be reviewed each year in preparation for potential service level increases to be included in the next year's budget. Library Administration will also conduct community needs surveys every 3 years to determine if hours are sufficient for local community requirements.

The Library Board authorizes the Librarian Team to close a branch in the event of an emergency. All emergency closures will be reported to the Deputy Chief Librarian and reported to the Board via the monthly Librarian Report. In the event of an emergency, staff resources may be reallocated to give priority to Regional and Resource branches.



Tier 5: Online and Digital Channels

The library exists in an increasingly digital world, thanks in part due to the swift changes brought about due to the pandemic. Customers have grown to expect that library services should be available online at any time and accessible through any device. Customers expect convenient ways to access their library accounts, as well as services, programs and collections across multiple channels – online, in-branch, and through mobile technology and apps.

To this end, the library's website and online catalogue are major service points, supporting customers through:

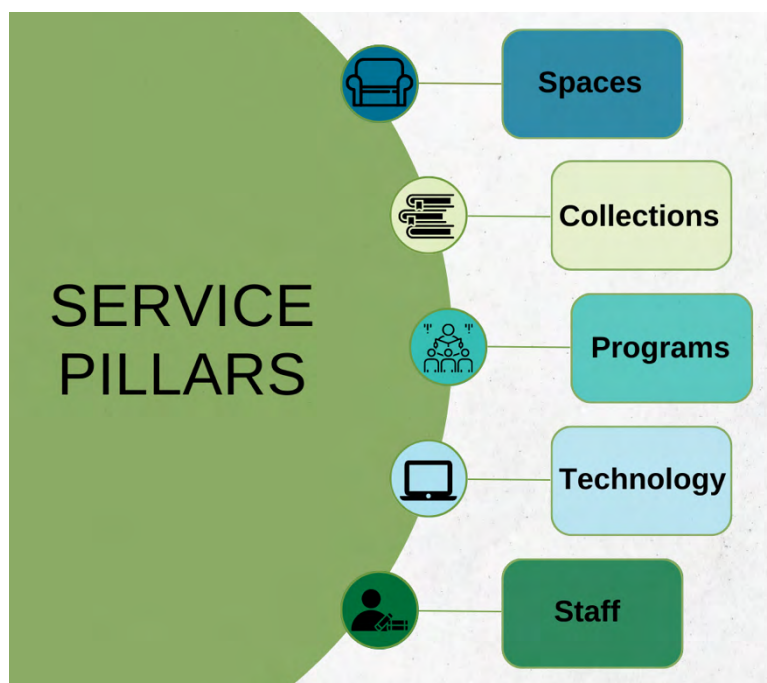
- discovery of services, programs and collections;
- placing holds or requesting titles for purchase;
- determining branch locations and hours.

The library's social media networks, e-Blasts and online communications offer:

- information and marketing of library resources, programs and events;
- customer support and engagement;
- awareness opportunities for new and returning library customers.

The library's online and digital channels should offer user-centred and accessible services through its online channels to:

- complement and extend access to in-branch services such as borrowing, account management; and discovery of programs, services and material;
- Deliver digital collection services such as eBook / Digital Audiobook lending, eLearning platforms and staff made tutorials, online research;
- Extend access to library programming through video and virtual programming;
- Increase the number of access points to the library's collections and content.



Spaces

Oxford County Library is committed to providing residents with excellent services in vibrant, welcoming and inclusive spaces. Branch libraries are currently housed in free standing and multi-purpose buildings, with preference given to multi-purpose builds for new locations. The Library Board works in collaboration through agreements and partnerships with the County of Oxford, local area municipalities, and other agencies and boards to operate branch libraries that meet the needs of the communities and function with maximum efficiency.

Branch Size

Oxford County Library supports and strives to meet the following Administrators of Rural Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO) Guidelines for minimum facility size, while recognizing that opportunities to improve and enhance branch libraries may not always meet these Guidelines.

- Village Branches: Minimum of 2,500 square feet
- Regional Branches: Minimum of 5,000 square feet
- Resource Branch's: Minimum of 10,000 square feet

Branch Signage

All library branches will have signage with the Oxford County Library Logo, branch name and website. Signage will adhere to a design standard where possible. Signage should be strategically placed to help identify branch locations and maximize exposure to car and/or pedestrian traffic. Those branches that do not have sufficient space will have signage affixed to the buildings.

All branches will have book returns featuring the Oxford County Library Logo if said returns are free standing.



Accessibility

Oxford County Library strives to minimize barriers to access for users. The Library Board recognizes that many Village Branches may not meet accessibility standards due to limitations of buildings. Accessibility of Village Branches housed in facilities owned by local municipalities or by private lease holders are the responsibility of said facility owners. Library Administration will support local municipalities in their attempts to address accessibility issues through grant applications and other opportunities as they occur. The Library Board will further look for opportunities to relocate Village Branches that cannot be made accessible through funding opportunities.

Where possible, the library will work with the County Public Works department to maintain Facility Accessibility Design Standards (FADS) as adopted by Oxford County in 2007 (https://www.oxfordcounty.ca/en/your-government/resources/Accessibility/FADS_2007_final.pdf).

Within library spaces shelving will be designed for Universal Accessibility with shelving being no more than 60 inches in height. Library staff will also maintain collections at a minimum of 15 3/4" above floor level. Aisle widths should be a minimum of 43 1/4".

Tier 2 – Village Branches

Village Branches will be located in either stand-alone or multi-purpose locations. In multi-purpose locations, common spaces will be shared with lease or MOU agreements in place regarding the use of space within the building for library services and/or programming.

Village Branches operate in single room configurations that provide the following spaces:

- Defined service areas / staff workspaces with ergonomic and accessible design;
- Adult collections areas with flexible seating options;
- Technology spaces for computers, tablets or laptops;
- Children's collections areas with appropriate height shelving and seating;
- Community bulletin board spaces and/or display space for community information.

The library will work with local area municipalities for continued options to expand current Village branch spaces to meet minimum space considerations and offer optimal space allocations as outlined in **Appendix A**.



Tier 3 – Regional Branches

Regional Branches will be located in multi-purpose locations when possible. As with Village Branches, multi-purpose locations will include shared common spaces covered via lease or MOU agreements. Regional Branches will include dedicated programming / meeting room spaces that will be managed by the library’s Meeting Room Policy.

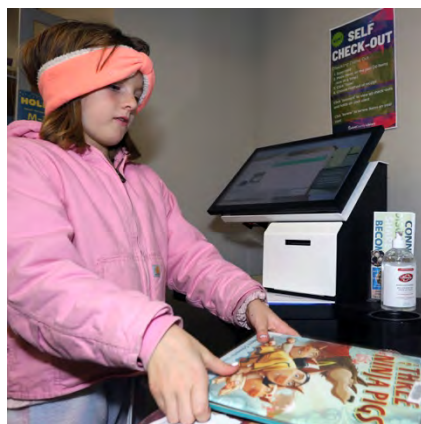
Building upon Tier 2 space requirements, Regional Branches will feature the following:

- Defined Children’s and Teen Spaces with seating options, collections and technology to meet the needs of the targeted age group;
- Back-office space for staff to complete administrative tasks;
- Enhanced technology spaces to meet technology guidelines found in **Appendix A**.

Tier 4 – Resource Branches

Resource Branches will be located in stand-alone or multi-purpose locations and provide enough usable library space to meet the growing demands of a modern full-service library. As with other branch tiers, multi-purpose locations will include shared common spaces covered via lease or MOU agreements. Resource Branches will include dedicated programming / meeting room spaces that will be managed by the library’s Meeting Room Policy, as well as study room spaces that will be managed by the library’s Study Room Policy.

Building upon Tiers 2 and 3 space requirements, Resource Branches will feature the following:



- A defined Local History space that will contain local history collections from across the County, as well as a dedicated computer workstation with microform reading/printing options and adequate study space for those doing research;
- Retail style display spaces near entrances to the library and throughout the space;
- A “community living room” space with lounge seating and newspaper / magazine collections close by;
- Collaborative study space and flexible seating options;
- Check-Out Kiosks for self-service options;
- Comprehensive technology spaces, including dedicated Makerspaces, to meet technology guidelines found in **Appendix A**.



Collections

All collections of the Oxford County Library are governed by the Collection Development Policy. The policy outlines the selection, maintenance and deselection of library materials, while also providing the process for residents of Oxford County to submit requests for purchase or reconsideration of library materials.

The library collects and curates information resources in all relevant formats to add value to the community and to reflect the diversity of community interests. The library strives to provide a balanced collection and maintain intellectual freedom, while providing current and accurate information.

The Service Delivery Model outlines the scope and focus of collections for each tier. However, the library also recognizes and values the unique nature of each branch community and attempts to respond to community needs based on demonstrated usage trends and/or requests.

Collections are available at all tier levels in either physical or digital formats. These collections are promoted through a variety of services and strategies, including:

- Through physical and digital displays in branch locations and through the library's website and catalogue to promote discoverability and browsability;
- Through the library's Mobile Outreach Unit with physical materials where possible and wi-fi access / mobile technology for access to digital collections in underserved or vulnerable communities across the County;
- Through the library's Home Delivery Service for residents unable to attend a branch in person due to ongoing health issues or ability;
- Through the Book Deposit Service that provides small collections of large print materials to care homes and other institutions.

Digital Collections

The library will maintain a large selection of digital collection options for all customers, free of charge. The library will use the guidelines, as outlined in the Collection Development Policy for the selection, maintenance and deselection of digital collections and services.

Digital collections should include the following types of resources:



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- eBook and digital audiobook platforms
- digital music, movies, and series in streaming or downloadable formats
- Digital newspaper and magazine platforms
- Online learning tools / eTutoring options for lifelong learning
- Databases and digital reference materials

Reference Collections

While the library will prioritize digital reference materials for availability across branch tiers and 24/7 outside the library, the Regional and Resource Branches may maintain modest print reference collections as needed. The library will strive not to duplicate offerings between print and digital reference materials as a cost saving measure.



Local History and Genealogy Collections

Resource Branches maintain collections of County-wide local history and genealogical materials that meet the needs of customers/researchers. Digitization of historically significant documents is undertaken in-branch and made available on the library website. Each Resource Branch also maintains a collection specific to the Town in which they are located.

Regional and Village Branches maintain small local history collections that pertain to their local communities and that do not require archival storage.

Unpublished, original works are considered for digitizing and/or copying and subsequently donated to the County Archives or other suitable repository.

Express Collections

To ensure that all branches provide easy access to popular bestsellers, an express collection is provided at all branch locations. These items are non-holdable, non-renewable and are available for a shortened loan period.



Alternative Collections

The library maintains an eclectic collection of “Cool Things to Borrow” curated based on community needs, interests and availability of resources. These collections will also be supported through programming that introduces customers to the items and how they should be used.

Hold System

The library maintains a hold system to make all loanable materials available to all customers on an equal basis. This system treats all pick-up locations equally, and guarantees that customers not within easy walking/driving distance to a Resource Branch will be able to borrow materials held by that location. The library will also maintain a hold ratio to determine when more copies of an item should be purchased to meet the hold demand.

Collection Size

Collection size in each location will be governed by available space and the need to balance all branch functions. Collections will be adjusted as required to allow for effective operation of all library functions and to accommodate the introduction of new services, technologies and collaborative space needs.

Oxford County Library supports and strives to meet the following Administrators of Rural Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO) Guidelines for collection size, while recognizing that opportunities to improve and enhance branch collections may not always meet these Guidelines.

- Village Branches – 6,000 – 12,000 items
- Regional Branches – 12,000 – 24,000 items
- Resource Branches – 24,000 to 50,000 items.

Floating Collections

Oxford County Library collections “float” between branches. When an item is returned to a location, said location becomes the item’s “home” location. With floating collections, branches with high volume circulation can become overcrowded. Collection balance is maintained by branch staff in consultation for exchanges and maintenance with the library’s professional staff.



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Programs

All programs and outreach events hosted by the Oxford County Library are governed by the Programming and Outreach Policy. The policy outlines the library's commitment to life-long involvement in cultural, educational and recreational activities that are inclusive and community-based.

The Oxford County Library engages the community through programs and outreach opportunities that support life-long learning, social and community development, creativity and innovation. Library staff develop program plans that meet or exceed community needs where possible. When developing or reviewing requests for new programs, staff review offerings within the community by other service agencies before committing library resources. Where possible, the library works with partner organizations to co-sponsor programs within library spaces. Programs that are co-sponsored enable the library to expand community access to high quality programs outside of the scope of branch staff.

Programming Framework

Tier 1 – Mobile Outreach Unit

The Ox on the Run Mobile Outreach Unit will provide programming for all ages at events and scheduled stops during the two-year pilot project. As with the Village Branches, Ox on the Run will work with community partners for co-sponsored programs as possible. Library programs will have a technology or literacy focus.

Programs may include:

- Technology Bootcamps and One-on-One Tech Help
- Mini Robotics and/or Maker Fairs
- Family Storytimes, kids craft programs
- Demonstrations of the Library's Alternative Collections such as STEAM Kits or Kitchen Equipment



Tier 2 – Village Branches

Village Branches will provide basic programming to families, children and teens during and outside of regular operating hours of the branch and subject to the availability of resources.

Passive programs will be offered regularly based on space requirements. These passive programs may include:

- Community puzzle building
- Scavenger Hunts
- Colouring or quick crafts
- Craft and Connect Kits for in branch or home use

Opportunities for co-sponsored programs with outside agencies or organizations will be pursued using a community-led approach.

A limited program budget will be provided to each branch for acquiring specialized supplies and/or external presenters. The use of external presenters will be planned collaboratively with other branches and/or other organizations to minimize costs where possible and in accordance with the library's *Programming and Outreach Policy*.

Tier 3 – Regional Branches

Regional Branches may provide programs both during and outside regular operating hours using branch program rooms and community space within the branch, subject to the availability of staffing and resources. Preference will be given to hosting programs during regular operating hours where possible.

Building on tier 1, Regional Branches will offer programs for all ages and a broader range of family and children's programs, including passive and co-sponsored program opportunities.

Tier 4 – Resource Branches

Resource Branches have system-wide responsibilities for larger event programming, including:

- TD Summer Reading Program
- 1000 Books Before Kindergarten
- Forest of Reading
- March Break Programming
- Family Literacy





Specialized programming staff plan, deliver and evaluate a wide range of library and co-sponsored programs for all ages on a year-round basis. Staff also work with the local community to offer Local and Family History programming, partnering with Oxford County Archives and other community agencies as possible.

Resource Branches also offer a wide range of technology, equipment and provide support for said technology through program offerings for all ages.

Tier 5 – Online & Digital Channels

The library will offer a limited number of virtual programs using live streaming, interactive media and audio/video recording options. Virtual programs will be evaluated with clear outcomes and service standards. Programs that do not meet said standards will be discontinued. Virtual programs will be subject to the availability of staffing and other resources.

Programs delivered via a virtual platform will:

- Abide by any copyright restrictions specific to sharing materials in a virtual and/or recorded format;
- Ensure that appropriate security protocols are followed;
- Not be recorded without prior knowledge and consent of all participants and/or parents/caregivers.



Technology

Technology at the Oxford County Library is overseen by the Internet Access and Technology Policy. The policy expresses the library's commitment to open and equitable access to technology.

Ongoing review of technology trends by Library and County staff enable the library to provide proactive, innovative and responsive technology service to customers.

Public access to technology is a key driver in a community's prosperity. The library plays a key role in advocating for and providing equitable access to technology to help bridge the digital divide and advance the goal of digital inclusion.



Technology Assistance

Library staff at all tiers will be trained to provide basic assistance with technology. Village branches may refer more complex issues to Regional or Resource branches, and may recommend other resources such as e-Learning opportunities provided by the Library.

One-on-one training, group training and technology coaching will be made available in Resource branches, Regional and Village branches will provide such opportunities where resources permit and/or utilizing volunteers.

Ox on the Run, the Library's Mobile Outreach Unit, will specialize in technology resources and training; offering services more commonly found at the Resource branch level to those in underserved areas and to vulnerable populations.

Printing / Scanning / Copying

All branches provide public access computer workstations with access to good quality printing, faxing, and scanning capabilities. Branches also offer mobile printing capability where documents can be sent to a Library printer from a mobile device, tablet or laptop. Fees are charged per printed/faxed page, depending on page size, single/double sided, and black and white or colour ink selections. There are a limited number of free exceptions for job seekers.



Computer Workstations and Public Wi-Fi

Computers, wi-fi access and high-speed internet services are available in all branches of the Oxford County Library. The number of computer workstations is normally assessed based on demand and available space. **Appendix A** includes Technology Guidelines that provide minimum numbers of computer workstations that should be found at each branch tier.

Public wi-fi should be offered at branch locations 24/7 with access reaching as far outside the building as possible for convenient use of the wi-fi system during closed hours.



Children's Literacy Stations

Children's digital literacy stations are available in select Village Branches determined by community need and space availability, and all Regional and Resource Branches. Children's digital literacy stations may include a desktop computer or tablet device, with or without touchscreen capability. These devices introduce younger children to computers and literacy-based applications.

Teen Computers / Tablet Stations

Dedicated areas for teen use at the Oxford County Library include access to technology (desktop and/or tablet devices), homework and study table space, teen-specific collections, and social areas with comfortable seating. Regional and Resource Branches will provide teen-specific areas as possible to encourage social growth and academic development for community youth.

Maker Culture / STEAM Learning

Technology Guidelines, found in **Appendix A** outlines Oxford County Library's dedication to Maker Culture and STEAM Learning. The guidelines provide base level services that OCL will strive to meet over the next five years.

Dedicated makerspace facilities will be available for individual and small group use at Resource Branches, as possible. These spaces support maker activities that reflect community interests and needs, lifelong learning and innovation through access to new technologies and services.

Oxford County Library makes STEAM activities available through relevant programs and collections for all branches. Ox on the Run will provide access to technology and STEAM activities through events and regular stops. The library maintains a collection of technology tools, including iPads, tablets, coding and robotics equipment for STEAM-based programming at branches.

Online & Digital Channels

The Oxford County Library maintains a website with relevant content and access to the Library's secondary websites (Oxford Reads), online catalogue, research and learning databases, digital download resources, and social media channels. The Library's social media channels serve to provide quick updates to the public about changing services, promotion of library resources and programs, awareness of County news and services, and assisting in the call for candidates to Library hiring. The Library's website also provides access to limited virtual programming and staff made technology training videos.





Staff

The Oxford County Library's priorities for succession planning and staff development are guided by three documents that lead the Library's organizational strategies for building and maintaining an effective staff team and service excellence:

- Oxford County Library's Strategic Plan
- Oxford County Library Values Statement
- County of Oxford's Competency Framework

These documents provide the guiding principles for staff recruitment and selection, performance management, and training and professional development. In-house training opportunities are offered quarterly through staff development days. Outside training is offered through courses, conferences, and web-based training sessions.

Values provide the base for identifying competencies. When emphasized and reinforced, values become part of the organization's culture. Enduring values should reflect the Library's vision, goals, strategic directions and give structure to its plans moving forward. Values-based organizations are well-equipped to anticipate and adapt, to embrace opportunities and to manage change.

Core competencies of the organization include:

- Strategic Thinking
- Fostering Innovation
- Service Excellence and Teamwork
- Accountability and Integrity

The Oxford County Library Board recognizes and strives to meet the ARUPLO guidelines and best practices for library staff. This includes staff complements and qualifications at each branch level. **Appendix A** provides optimal staffing guidelines and current state information.





Succession Planning

Library Administration will work to provide continual succession planning for key positions within the organization with an eye to both emergency / non-planned and long term opportunities. Said planning will look toward the potential future needs of the library with technological needs, community growth, staff safety and service delivery changes in mind.

Training and Skills Assessment

Within the past 20 years, libraries and the services offered have been changing at a rapid pace. Customer expectations now lean heavily toward increased technology needs, along with traditional library services. As such, library staff need to be well skilled to fulfill a variety of roles within a modern public library setting.

In order to meet these growing needs, library administration will look to create basic skills and training requirements for each role within the organization. Regular training opportunities will be provided to staff to help each individual meet their training goals and to provide increased training opportunities to individuals interested further development opportunities within the organization.

The library budget will meet ARUPLO best practice for training by including not less than 1% of the total staffing budget for training and professional development.

Administrative Staffing

Administrative staff will provide oversight and support services roles for service delivery. Some administrative positions may be called upon to assist at branch locations when needed.

Staffing at Tiers

Tier 1 – Mobile Outreach Unit

Library staff with the Ox on the Run Mobile Outreach Unit will provide Readers' Advisory, and reference information services at the same level as Village Branch staff. Ox on the Run Mobile Outreach Unit staff will offer more in-depth technology assistance than the Village Branches, limited only by the technology devices, resources and connections available in person at the time. Ox on the Run Mobile Unit staff teams will include one Specialist position and one Clerk position. Larger stops may require support by an additional person(s). Special events and outreach will be supported by services and staff from other tiers.



Tier 2 – Village Branches

Library staff at Village Branches will be trained to provide basic assistance with technology and will refer complex technological issues to Resource Branch staff or will recommend other resources, including free technology courses available through the Library's website subscription services. Village Branch staff will provide tailored Readers' Advisory services to customers of all ages, matching readers with materials that meet their reading, listening, viewing, or activity interests. This involves collection knowledge, readers' services skills and good conversation. Village Branch staff will provide reference and information service to all customers including those without Oxford County Library cards. In-depth or complex questions will be referred to Resource Branch staff. Branch Pages will refer all reference questions to Branch Supervisor or designate. Village Branch staff teams will include one Supervisory position. Depending on usage and traffic, the branch may also include a Page or Clerk position.

Tier 3 – Regional Branches

Regional Branch staff will be trained to provide an elevated level of technology assistance, Readers' Advisory, and reference information services in comparison to Village Branch staff. Staff at Regional Branches will be professionally trained with subject expertise in service areas allocated to address community needs. Regional Branch staff will provide leadership and management to support services at Village Branches. Regional Branch staff teams will include one Supervisory position, which may be a Librarian, and one or two Page positions. Depending on usage and traffic, the branch may also include a Clerk position.

Tier 4 – Resource Branches

Resource Branches have system-wide responsibilities for service delivery and support to staff teams. Resource Branch staff will be trained to provide an elevated level of technology assistance, Readers' Advisory, and reference information services in comparison to Village and Regional Branch staff. Staff at Resource Branches will be professionally trained with subject expertise in service areas allocated to address community and population needs. Resource Branch staff will provide support to village and regional branches, collections technical support, and access to materials and information. Resource Branch staff teams will include one Supervisory Librarian position, at minimum one Technician, and one Program Specialist. Usage and traffic of the branch will determine needs for Clerk and Page staff.



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Tier 5 – Online and Digital Channels

Online and Digital Channels are maintained by System Support staff and staff at all other tier levels. As the need for greater care in the online and digital spaces grow, the library will look to determine if specialized positions should be added. Library staff are also supported by Oxford County staff in the Strategic Communications and Information Systems departments.





Appendix A: Service Guidelines

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Spaces	1 Outreach Vehicle *Pilot (2023/2024)	8 branches	4 branches	2 branches	Websites, Apps, Catalogue, social media
Service Area	Entire Oxford County Library service area	Maximum of 3,000 residents in regular catchment area.	Maximum of 7,000 residents in regular catchment area.	Maximum of 20,000 residents in regular catchment area.	Entire Oxford County and surrounding area
Location	Provides access to underserved and vulnerable populations Stops will be located at convenient community focal points	Village and surrounding area Walking traffic & those within 10–15-minute drive	Village and surrounding area, including those across area municipality Walking traffic & those within 20–25-minute drive	Town and surrounding area including those across Oxford County. Walking traffic & those within 30- 35-minute drive	Maximum access and user convenience w/ 24/7 access Available anywhere with an internet / data connection
Population Served	75,000+	Up to 5,000	5,000 – 10,000	10,000 – 35,000	N/A
Population Estimates (2021 Census Data, County of Oxford Profile & Statistics w/ preliminary correction of 2.7% provided by Planning)	OCL Service Area: 77,100	SWOX Twp: 7,785 ○ BRO: 520 ○ MTE: 700 NOR Twp: 11,450 ○ BUR: 505 ○ OTT: 1,445 ZORRA Twp: 8,860 ○ EMB: 1,000 ○ HAR: 145 EZT Twp: 8,050 ○ INN: 1,600 B-B Twp: 7,770 ○ PRI: 610	NOR Twp: 11,450 ○ NOR: 4,330 EZT Twp: 8,050 ○ TAV: 3,380 B-B Twp: 7,770 ○ PLA: 1,840 ZORRA Twp: 8,860 ○ THA: 3,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ING: 14,065 • TIL: 19,120 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County: 125,065+



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	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Optimum Size	N/A	2,500-5,000 square feet	5,000-10,000 square feet	10,000-35,000 square feet	
OCL Branch Sizes *sq. ft.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRO: 750 • BUR: 800 • EMB: 800 • HAR: 1,200 • INN: 1,038 • MTE: 676 • OTT: 2,080 • PRI: 1,100 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOR: 5,400 • PLA: 3,000 • TAV: 4,500 • THA: 4,000 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ING: 12,160 • TIL: 8,400 	N/A
Optimum Weekly Hours	N/A	20-25 over 4 days	25-45 over 5 days	45-65 over 6-7 days	N/A
Weekly Hours of Operation	May to Sept → full year pilot (2 years)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRO: 12 hrs. over 3 days • BUR: 15 hrs. over 4 days • EMB: 12 hrs. over 4 days • HAR: 9 hrs. over 3 days** • INN: 12 hrs. over 3 days • MTE: 12 hrs. over 3 days • OTT: 12 hrs. over 3 days • PRI: 15 hrs. over 4 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOR: 35 hrs. over 5 days • PLA: 25 hrs. over 4 days • TAV: 35 hrs. over 5 days • THA: 35 hrs. over 5 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ING: 51.5 hrs. over 6 days • TIL: 54 hrs. over 6 days 	24/7

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Optimal Space Allocation	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix seating with 10 to 20 user seats. • Defined Children's area with space for children's seating / table options. • Accessible and universal/non-gendered washrooms that include a change table for children. • Strive for Universal Accessibility thorough design of shelving and aisles. • Shelving should be no more than 60 inches in height. • Separate programming space / meeting room. • Flexible space for technology / maker equipment for public use 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix seating with 30 to 50 user seats. • Defined Children's and Teen spaces with seating options to meet needs of targeted age group. • Accessible and universal/non-gendered washrooms that include a change table for children. • Strive for Universal Accessibility thorough design of shelving and aisles. • Shelving should be no more than 60 inches in height. • Separate programming space / meeting room • Space for technology / maker space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix seating with 50 to 60 user seats. • Defined Children's and Teen spaces with space with seating options and technology to meet needs of targeted age group. • Accessible and universal/non-gendered washrooms that include a change table for children. • Strive for Universal Accessibility thorough design of shelving and aisles. • Shelving should be no more than 60 inches in height. • Separate programming space /meeting room space. 	N/A



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<p>Optimal Space Allocation (continued)</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined and ergonomic staff work space. 	<p>equipment for public use.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defined and ergonomic staff work space. • Back-office space for staff to complete administrative tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study rooms or quiet study space options. • Defined local history area with microform viewing / printing options and dedicated workspace for genealogical research. • Comfortable living room style space near adult collections. • Defined space for technology / maker space equipment for public use. • Self-check kiosks. • Defined and ergonomic work spaces for staff. With dedicated work space for full-time staff and shared desk options for part-time staff. • Defined service desks with accessibility options for the public. 	
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	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Optimum Program Room Size *sq. ft	N/A	400	400	500	N/A
Available Program Room Space *denotes fee charged for library use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilizing Outdoor Spaces (weather permitting) Rental of Community Spaces as needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BRO: *use of Hall (~1,150) BUR: basement (~350) EMB: Green Room (480) HAR: *use of Hall (868) INN: *use of Hall (~1,500) MTE: *use of Hall rooms (800 & 2,400) OTT: N/A PRI: *use of Theatre (~360) & Foyer (~400) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NOR: program room (420) PLA: program room (~350) TAV: program room (374) THA: program room (~150) THA - *use of Beauty Room (1,204) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ING: program room (~450) TIL: program room (485) 	N/A
Optimal Program Offerings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs based on needs at each location. Provide co-sponsored events where available. Technology / Literacy Focus. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs based on local community needs & interests. Provide co-sponsored programs where available. Limited Paid Performer options. Exhibit Space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Programs based on local community needs & interests. Mix of Adult and Children's programs. Provide co-sponsored programs where available. Paid Performer options. Exhibit Space. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broad range of library programs and events for all ages. Provide co-sponsored and partnership programs. Paid Performer options. Exhibit Space. Outreach to vulnerable populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Virtual programming options & events.



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	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Current Average Annual Program Attendance:	N/A	715 per branch (5,700 combined)	1,800 per branch (7,200 combined)	7,100 per branch (14,000 combined)	N/A
Collection Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On Board Collection Size: 500 – 1,000 items. • General interest, popular collections based on interest. • Children / Teen offerings. • Holds available for pickup. • Loanable technology resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size: 6,000 – 12,000 items • General interest, popular collections based on local interest. • Children / Teen collections should be a minimum of 1/3 of collection • Limited alternative collections (ex. Maker kits). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size: 12,000 – 24,000 items. • General interest, popular collections based on local interest. • Limited local history, reference and special collections. • Children's / Teen collections should be a minimum of 1/3 of collection. • Limited alternative collections (ex. Maker kits). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size: 24,000 – 50,000 • General interest, popular collections based on local interest. • Larger local history, reference and special collections. • Children / Teen collections should be a minimum of 1/3 of collection. • Larger alternative collections (ex. Maker kits). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Digital Collections including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ eBooks ◦ Digital Audiobooks ◦ Streaming Video & Music ◦ Digital Newspapers & Magazines ◦ Online Learning ◦ Databases ◦ Digitized Local History Collections
Current Collection Size *based on Annual Survey stats 2022.	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRO: 2,934 • BUR: 6,064 • EMB: 3,130 • HAR: 3,392 • INN: 6,041 • MTE: 3,635 • OTT: 6,587 • PRI: 4,629 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOR: 12,077 • PLA: 8,175 • TAV: 8,609 • THA: 8,457 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ING: 26,960 • TIL: 21,217 	N/A

	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Technology Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tech Toys • STEAM-based activities. • Tablets and Chromebook options for discovery and training. • Reliable wi-fi through mobile devices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 3 computer workstations. • Children's Literacy station / Tablet. • B/W Printing and Mobile Printing. • Public wi-fi • STEAM-based in-branch activities. • Coding online & gadget devices. • Maker kits (holdable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 4 computer workstations. • Minimum of 2 children's literacy stations / tablets. • Laptop or Chromebook lending options. • B/W and Colour print options with Mobile Printing. • Public wi-fi • STEAM-based in-branch activities. • Coding online & gadget devices. • Curiosity Cabinets for Maker options. • Library-run Tech Programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum of 6 computer workstations. • 1 Local History dedicated workstation with microform viewing/printing. • Minimum of 3 children's literacy stations / tablets. • Minimum of 7 Teen computer / tablet stations. • Laptop or Chromebook lending options. • B/W and Colour printing options with Mobile Printing. • Public wi-fi • STEAM-based in-branch activities and programs. • Coding online & gadget devices. • Dedicated Makerspaces with up-to-date technology. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Virtual Technology Programs and/or recorded videos • Online Learning options for Technology, STEAM activities and creation.



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	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Current Technology	ChromeBooks iPads Printing Options: - B/W Printing Mobile Wi-Fi Cubelets Robotic Blocks	Public Computers: • BRO: 2 • BUR: 2 • EMB: 2 • HAR: 2 • INN: 2 • MTE: 1 • OTT: 4 • PRI: 2 Children's Literacy Stations: • BRO: 1 • BUR: 0 • EMB: 0 • HAR: 0 • INN: 1 • MTE: 1 • OTT: 1 • PRI: 1 Printing Options: • All branches – B/W Printing w/out Mobile Option.	Public Computers: • NOR: 6 • PLA: 3 • TAV: 5 • THA: 4 Children's Literacy Stations: • NOR: 2 • PLA: 2 • TAV: 3 • THA: 1 Chromebooks: • NOR: 2 Printing Options: All branches – B/W Printing w/ Mobile Option.	Public Computers: • ING: 6 • TIL: 11 Children's Literacy Stations: • ING: 3 • TIL: 2 Teen Stations: • ING: • TIL: Chromebooks: • ING: • TIL: Local History Station: • ING: 1 + Microform Reader/Printer • TIL: 1 + Microform Reader/Printer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mobile Printing for select Branch. • Limited Virtual Programming / Staff Made Technology Training videos. • Online Learning Options including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Brainfuse Tutoring ○ ArtistWorks ○ Chilton Auto Repair Library ○ Creative Bug ○ Sign Savvy ○ Transparent Language ○ Universal Class
Optimal Staffing Complement (FTE)	2 – 4 (including Seasonal Student positions)	1 – 2.5	2.5 – 5	5 – 17.5	N/A



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	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4	Tier 5
	Mobile Outreach Unit	Village Branches	Regional Branches	Resource Branches	Online & Digital Channels
Current Staffing Complement (FTE)	2.33 for Pilot Project *Includes a Seasonal Student Position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BRO: .37 • BUR: .86 • EMB: .40 • HAR: .34 • INN: .72 • MTE: .40 • OTT: .66 • PRI: .54 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NOR: 2.62 • PLA: 1.17 • TAV: 1.98 • THA: 2.09 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ING: 8.91 • TIL: 8.02 	N/A
Optimal Qualifications of Supervising Staff	Professional Librarian	Library competency, e.g. post-secondary education + EXCEL Courses (OLS)	Professional Librarian	Professional Librarian	Professional Librarian

*Items in green represent current state and for planning only.



Guidelines For Rural/Urban Public Library Systems

4th edition

**Administrators of Rural and Urban
Public Libraries of Ontario**

Revised June, 2023



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Oxford County Library, Tillsonburg branch

1. Introduction

The Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems are a developmental tool for rural/urban and county libraries. The Guidelines are expressed as targets for a library to provide an appropriate level of service for its community. They have been developed by the library administrators of ARUPLO public libraries based on:

- Their considerable collective expertise;
- Comparative data and research regarding other jurisdictions;
- Trends and changes in rural/urban Ontario.

Guidelines are generally regarded as quantifiable and can be benchmarked. They are recommendations as to how things should be done. *Best Practices* represent what is well done by peers and what should be an aspiration by those looking to be a site of excellence.

Municipal libraries must conform to provisions of the *Public Libraries Act*, the *Municipal Act*, *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, and other relevant legislation and are accountable to the communities they serve. (The term “municipal libraries” herein references interchangeably county, union, and municipal libraries.)

Reports on general efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery are annual requirements for all municipal libraries. However, there is also a need for more specific guidelines and best practices relevant to rural/urban public libraries in Ontario.

These guidelines build on and are supplementary to the [Ontario Public Library Guidelines](#).

The Intended Use of the Guidelines

ARUPLO Libraries have made the following commitments with respect to the guidelines:

- The guidelines and best practices describe an appropriate level of service for ARUPLO libraries;
- The guidelines and best practices will be used on a regular basis by ARUPLO libraries to evaluate current and plan future library services;
- While the guidelines and best practices will be used in conjunction with other similar products, including the Ontario Public Library Guidelines, they are considered most applicable to the multi-branch rural/urban nature of the ARUPLO library systems.



The work of the Fourth Edition took place during a period of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Significant service changes were made in reaction to the closures and public health restrictions imposed during the pandemic. The extent to which these changes will be retained, adapted, and incorporated in established service delivery models remains to be seen.

The pandemic forced public libraries to pursue innovations, many of which created new ways for existing library clientele and new user populations to access library services, thus breaking down barriers.

2. Trends and Changes in Rural/Urban Ontario

The Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems identify appropriate service levels that reflect the changing nature of municipalities and public libraries serving rural and rural/urban Ontario. Rural/Urban Ontario refers to those communities that are close to larger urban centres and that have integral service, schooling and shopping relationships with urban areas.

Rural Sustainability

Changing demographics are placing increasing pressures on the sustainability of rural communities, including the ability to provide an array of services, such as public libraries. The face of rural communities is changing rapidly as a result of increased urbanization across Ontario, an aging and increasingly diverse population, and the impact of technology and remote work and education on rural lifestyles. Rural communities need to find creative ways to sustain themselves and ensure that services can meet growing needs and expectations.

Factors affecting rural sustainability include:

1. Rural life is based on much more than agriculture; only a small percentage of rural residents work in agriculture. Much of modern agriculture is industrialized, intensified and automated.
2. Dominant rural employment is small to medium-sized manufacturing and services.
3. The ability to provide high-speed connectivity and communications infrastructure supports rural employment in knowledge-based, cultural, and creative occupations, increasingly through telecommuting and working from home. While highspeed Internet is becoming more readily available in rural areas, issues of affordability remain a serious barrier for low-income residents.
4. Many rural residents commute to a city for work, work from home, or are self-employed. Rural entrepreneurship is on the rise.
5. The influx of ex-urbanites to rural areas in search of more affordable housing and/or desirable lifestyle change is intensifying due to the post-pandemic rise in work-from-home arrangements. New residents to rural areas bring increased diversity and broader service level expectations reminiscent of what they enjoyed in larger urban communities.
6. While many ARUPLO member municipalities are experiencing rapid growth, others are not, with some seeing declining population numbers, thus creating a disparity in availability of growth-related funding.
7. Out-migration continues as young people leave rural areas for post-secondary education and tend not to return due to greater employment opportunities in larger urban centres.
8. Escalating housing costs and lack of affordable supply are impacting rural residents' housing choices.
9. Cottages and seasonal residences are being renovated to become permanent and retirement homes. The growth in work-from-home arrangements has intensified this trend.
10. Part-time and seasonal residents, particularly in high tourist areas, require access to library services and should be accounted for in population calculations, regardless of how Ministries or Census Canada counts these residents.
11. There is increased focus and investment in outdoor and tourism-based economic and social activities (eco-tourism, culinary/agri-tourism, trails systems, outdoor sports amenities).
12. Needs of an older adult population require investment in infrastructure for age-friendly housing, social and recreational services, long-term care, and health services.
13. Lack of public transit options creates car dependency and mobility problems for lower income, student, and other populations experiencing barriers to accessing services.
14. There is a shortage of recreational opportunities for children and teens.
15. There is increasing rates of homelessness, precarious housing, and mental health issues, senior isolation, food insecurities, and the need to support vulnerable populations in rural communities.
16. Traditional rural society was based on social gatherings and relationships, community involvement and volunteerism. Fewer community connections and declining volunteerism are threatening traditional rural social institutions.



Building a sense of connection to the community for residents is challenging, given that it requires involvement and investment, and it is not always clear how to start or where to go. The social constructs for community participation, including public library service, have to be able to understand, appeal to and fit with residents' interests and lifestyles.

The public library has a role in bridging social capital. As a shared and accessible public space, the library can bring together diverse people, facilitate civic engagement, and help create a stronger community.

Libraries' Role in Rural Sustainability and Community Wellbeing

The library system contributes to municipal strategic initiatives through a strategic plan which:

- Reflects the vision in the municipalities' planning documents;
- Contains strategies that are complementary to those contained in the municipalities' strategic plans;
- Positions the library as an integral partner in community development.

The key to rural development and rural sustainability is a more informed, innovative, and inclusive community. The Ontario Public Library Guidelines state "The library has established partnerships with other organizations in the community in order to coordinate resources and actions, thereby jointly improving service to the community (e.g. with schools, literacy programs, chambers of commerce, heritage groups, government offices, and advocate groups)."

To help address the factors affecting rural sustainability, the library needs to:

1. Provide all residents with equitable access to quality information through connectivity and a comprehensive range of online resources and databases.
2. Facilitate the delivery of government services, as a local access point in the community providing trained staff, connectivity, and navigational assistance.
3. Locate library facilities in existing village and town clusters or rural service centres in order to maximize opportunities for co-locations and community hub models.
4. Practise community-led librarianship to develop and maintain relationships, understand needs, and share resources. Participate in community organizations and events.
5. Work with community agencies in the delivery of programs and resources that build and strengthen literacies and innovation.
6. Arrange for reciprocal borrowing arrangements with neighbouring city, town, and county library systems in order to serve residents who commute outside of their home community to work.
7. Form partnerships with local schools and post-secondary institutions, including reciprocal borrowing arrangements, to support student success and promote the use of public library services.
8. Provide services to those pursuing education through home schooling, distance education, and on-line learning.
9. Provide the technological tools and a climate of discovery to ensure that rural communities have access to new and emerging technologies and a place to learn, explore and collaborate.
10. Build relationships with local business communities and organizations. Provide access to business information resources and promote library spaces and services to home-based businesses and local entrepreneurs.
11. Facilitate the use of library spaces by community agencies to address the needs of vulnerable populations.
12. Effectively communicate the library's impact to local government leaders and partners.



Kingston Frontenac Public Library, Sharbot Lake branch

3. Definitions

Guidelines define a level of service or a preferred manner of delivering a service that can be measured and is adopted as a minimum target appropriate for all ARUPLO libraries. Guidelines are expressed as targets for a library to provide an appropriate level of service for its community. Examples of guidelines include size of library space, open hours per week, and number of items in a collection. It is important to note that what is presented here are guidelines and not standards. Standards are mandatory and imply active monitoring and some form of sanction for not meeting them. Guidelines are discretionary and outline recommended ways to provide service within measurable categories.

Application of these guidelines is important for internal planning purposes and also to serve as a benchmarking tool relative to other systems.

Best practices describe an optimal level of service or manner of providing services that may or may not be measurable. In addition, it is acknowledged that unique local circumstances may affect the validity or importance of a best practice and they may not apply to all library systems in every circumstance. Examples of best practices include space and staff allocations for services to special groups.

In earlier editions of the ARUPLO Guidelines, Guidelines and Best Practices were listed separately in the document. In this version they are combined within each guideline section for easier reference.

***Both Branch Definitions and Catchment Areas are recognized as problematic, and local circumstances and rationales that fit the community's unique situation can override strict adherence to the guidelines.**

Branch Definitions

Many multi-branch systems serving rural areas seek creative ways to provide service to a variety of different communities. Service delivery options may be known locally as deposit stations, satellites, bookmobiles, book lockers, kiosks, among others. Service locations which fall significantly below guidelines may still be referred to locally as "public libraries" or "library branches", in recognition of their long-standing status as such within the community. However, it is neither feasible nor desirable to try to create guidelines for solutions that attempt to address unique and local circumstances. Every library system will have to address its own rationale for the existence, creation, or "grandfathering" of such local solutions. **As a best practice, it is highly recommended that any such options be dealt with in the context of the system's strategic planning process and articulated in a service delivery plan.**

For purposes of this document, four types of branches have been identified:

- Small Branches;
- Medium Branches;
- Large Branches;
- Urban Branches.

Each type can be determined by attributes including population size, local economic activity, and seasonal demand. It is up to each system to determine which branches it wishes to classify as small, medium, large or urban based on the strategic role that each branch plays within the system as a whole. Inability to meet one or more of the guidelines does not preclude it from being considered in a certain category if it meets most other guidelines.

Further, libraries may assign particular roles to specific branches, for example: functioning as a resource library to other smaller branches or a broader catchment population; hosting a makerspace or local history collection; or offering space for community partners' outreach programming.



Catchment Area / Population Served

The catchment area is the area from which users are drawn to a particular library service point. Catchment areas and the population contained therein can be determined by branch library surveys, census data, information from county or municipal offices, Canada Post postal code areas, and the information collected by school boards. Some libraries apportion the catchment population based on percentage of library cards affiliated with each branch, percentage of circulation of physical materials per branch, acknowledging that many borrowers use more than one branch or may use online resources exclusively.

The following are the general guidelines for branch catchment areas/population served:

Small branches

Generally serve catchment areas of **up to 5,000 population** as determined by each system.

Medium branches

Generally serve catchment areas of **5,000-10,000 population** as determined by each system.

Large branches

Generally serve catchment areas of **10,000-35,000 population** as determined by each system.

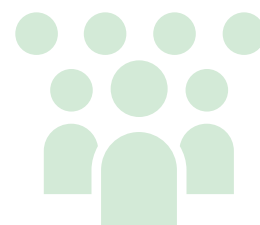
Urban branches

Generally serve catchment area of **35,000 or more population** as determined by each system.

Local considerations are a critical component of determining catchment area/population served and whether a branch is considered small, medium, large or urban.

Examples of Local Considerations

- A branch may serve an immediate population of less than 10,000 people, thereby putting it in the medium category, but be considered a large branch by the system because it serves a strategic role such as having a larger collection, hosting system-wide functions such as inter-library loan or providing space for enhanced programming opportunities, Makerspaces, or non-traditional collections.
- Branches located in high tourist areas have an influx of visitors, whose needs must be supported, therefore their numbers need to be considered.
- Branches located in cottage country or popular rural areas may also have seasonal or weekend residents, who are not tourists, who also use the public library.
- Tie-ins between the library and economic development factors, e.g residents of neighbouring municipalities may in fact identify your branch's community as their "Community of Interest".
- A multi-branch system may have a mixture of types of branch within its member municipalities, with the strategic roles of each branch articulated in a service delivery model. The catchment area/population served of each branch therefore becomes less relevant against its unique strategic role and the relationships between branches within a "community of communities".





Huron County Library, Bayfield branch

4. Guidelines and Best Practices

4.1 Facilities

4.1.1 Guidelines

Library facilities should be developed to meet local community needs, library service strategies, projected populations and compliance with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, building standards, other regulations and municipal policies. The following is a general guideline for the range of size for each library type:



	Small	Medium	Large	Urban
Net library space square footage (s.f.)	2,500 – 5,000	5,000 – 10,000	10,000 – 35,000	35,000+

Branch size is also affected by components such as programs, special collections, and other add-on functions attributed to the branch by the library system, for example an enhanced role as a resource library to other branches or service areas. Space may also be shared space such as library and gallery, or library and arena, or library and system storage/administration. In these cases, net library space is the space allocated for library services including programming spaces in the library, collections, gathering areas, seating, staff areas, and library storage, etc.

Additional non-assignable space is required for public washrooms, utilities, stairwells, elevators, corridors, foyers, custodian, closets, mechanicals, etc., which will vary based on the type of building. This is generally allocated at 27-30% in addition to the above net space required.

4.1.2 Best Practices

Space Allocation by Function

- User Seating: 5 user spaces per 1,000 capita @ 35 s.f. per user space
- Children's Area: self-contained area of 20 – 30% of the library's assignable area
- Teen Area: 10% of the library's assignable area
- Staff work space: 15% of the library's assignable area

Generally, the facility should be large enough to provide at least 1 s.f. of assignable space per population served or is projected to serve beyond minimum guidelines (e.g. if the catchment area is or will be 20,000 people, the facility should be 20,000 sq. ft. minimum).

Additionally, this calculation accounts for flexibility of type of space and seating, as well as providing more buffer space between individuals.

Branch Location

Members of the public travel no more than 30 minutes in a motorized vehicle under normal driving conditions to access basic library services offered by their municipal library system or by another municipal library system with reciprocal borrowing.

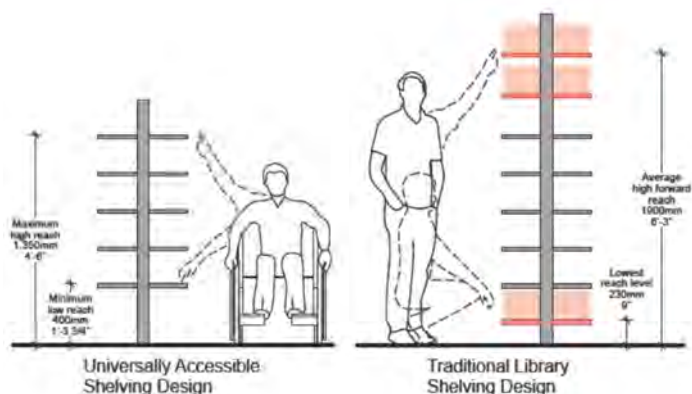
Flexible spaces

With the growing need for meeting spaces and creative and collaborative spaces, library spaces should be as flexible as possible to allow for reconfigurations as needed. This should guide the choice of furnishings and equipment (e.g. mobile shelving which can be moved by staff for programming flexibility) as well as space design.



Universal Accessibility

Branch libraries should strive to be as accessible as possible, not only to meet the requirements of the the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, but in the spirit of providing welcoming space for everyone, such as families with strollers, individuals with low vision, mobility issues, etc. The following diagram demonstrates enhanced accessibility in shelving design.



Libraries can also address ease of access with sloped lower shelves as illustrated in the following photo.



Shelving should be no more than 60 inches high and have electrical wiring on end caps for enhanced wayfinding/ installation of OPACs.

4.2 Hours of operation

4.2.1 Guidelines

Public libraries operate in a 24/7 environment. The hours of operation for a system, including virtual hours, have to begin to approximate a 24/7 model to meet public expectations. Improved 24/7 service can be accomplished through virtual library services, online resources, and outdoor access to Wi-Fi at library locations.

The single greatest barrier to library use as reported in community needs assessments is open hours of operation. Staffed library hours of operation must be available in order for a library to provide an enhanced mandate of government services provision, information and technology assistance, literacy-based programming, and community gathering place. Library hours should be allocated to meet community needs. Minimum hours of operation by library type for a staffed “bricks and mortar” library are as follows:

	Small	Medium	Large	Urban
Hours of operation per week	20-25 over 4 days per week	25-45 over 5 days per week	45-65 over 6-7 days per week	65 + over 7 days per week

4.2.2 Best Practices

The library will consider creative ways of increasing hours (for example, after-hours enabled access using self-serve technology) for people whose needs cannot be served during traditional open hours.

4.3 Staff

4.3.1 Guidelines

With increasing public expectations, technology-based services and operations, and the rapid pace of change in library services, all library staff positions require formal library education and training. The guidelines indicate both the minimum number of staff and their professional qualifications. These guidelines are based on the organizational, communication and operational challenges of staffing a multi-branch system and ensuring a professional team is in place to deliver and manage all functional requirements of a library system providing a full range of library services. In addition to meeting public service needs, consideration must be given to staff safety concerns such as working alone and the need to provide off-desk administrative time.

Definitions:

Professional librarians are defined as having a Master’s degree in library/ information science from an accredited university.

Library technicians are defined as having a diploma in library techniques from a community college.

The EXCEL Certificate in Managing a Small Public Library is an online program for library workers without formal library training who wish to acquire core skills in all areas of public library service. It is administered by the Ontario Library Service.

The Advancing Public Library Leadership (APLL) Institute is a combination of in-person and virtual sessions for library CEOs, managers, and aspiring leaders who wish to expand their organizational leadership capacity. It is administered by the Ontario Library Service.

FTE = Full-time equivalent. (35 hours per week)

Each library system has professional librarians that are used on a system-wide basis. This helps ensure that branches receive equitable access to resources, reduces duplication, and relieves workspace pressures by centralizing some functions.





Haliburton County Public Library

	Small	Medium	Large	Urban
Staff complement (FTE)	1 – 2.5	2.5 – 5	5 – 17.5	17.5 +
Qualifications of Branch Supervisor	Library competency, e.g. post-secondary plus EXCEL, Library Techniques	Professional Librarian and APLL or other public administration certification	Professional Librarian and APLL or other public administration certification	Professional Librarian and APLL or other public administration certification
Qualifications of other staff		Paraprofessional qualifications relevant to the requirements of the position	2 additional professional librarians or a combination of additional professional librarians and/or appropriate paraprofessionals, relevant to the requirements of the positions	2 additional professional librarians or a combination of additional professional librarians and/or appropriate paraprofessionals, relevant to the requirements of the positions

4.3.2 Best Practices

Given the complexities of managing multi-branch library systems, it is recommended that the CEO hold an MLIS degree or equivalent, and in addition to that, further training such as APLL and/or other public administration certification is highly valued.

In accordance with the service levels of each category of branch, administrative time should be included in the staffing FTE, to allow for the completion of duties not able to be accomplished while providing direct public service during branch open hours. As an example, for every 20 hours scheduled on-desk, up to an additional 20% (or 4 hours) is allotted for branch administrative duties.

The library encourages and provides opportunities for continuing education and training for its staff and makes provision for this in its policy, its long-range plan, and in its professional development budget to an amount not less than 1% of the total staff budget (e.g. by providing any of in-house training programs, financial or other support for staff to enroll in the EXCEL Certificate, APLL, and to attend library conferences and other training programs and events). Staff wages for training are not included in the professional development budget. Cross functional, system-wide training is recommended for all staff.

4.4 Collections

4.4.1 Guidelines

An appropriate collection is a broad and diverse variety of materials offering equitable access to ideas and information. Each library's collection practices remain responsive to specific community needs.

Collection materials include a variety of physical, print and digital formats, and system-wide electronic resources. Resources are shared among branches:

- Every library system has a delivery system in place to move items from one location to another.
- Every library system has Collection Exchange procedures to refresh branch collections for browsing. This may consist of regular exchanges, or floating or rotating collections.

Collection size:

Many libraries are decreasing the size of their physical collections. Reasons for this include but are not limited to:

- growing use of and demand for digital resources;
- downward trends in use of print and A/V collections;
- publishing trends including rising costs of print materials;
- need to repurpose collection space for other library functions;
- replacement of shelving to comply with accessibility standards resulting in decreased capacity.

In spite of these trends, physical or print publications will continue to be an important component for ARUPLO communities.

Alternate collections (e.g. Library of Things) are not included in this Guideline given their larger space requirements and the common practice of storing such items centrally. However, each branch and central location should be prepared to store, promote, and grow their Library of Things with content and collections specific to their local communities' needs and interests. As a growing trend in library services, these needs should be monitored locally and be included within Strategic Planning.

The guidelines refer to the number of Print and A/V items located at each branch.

Small	Medium	Large	Urban
6,000 – 12,000	12,000 – 24,000	24,000 – 50,000	50,000 +



Region of Waterloo Library, Elmira branch



Elgin County Library, Dutton branch

4.4.2 Best Practices

- **Adult/Children mix of Print and A/V:** In general, two-thirds of a branch library collection consists of adult material with one-third consisting of children's and young adult material.
- **Online and Alternate Collections:** A minimum of 25% of the acquisitions budget is spent on non-print formats including E-Collections, online databases and multi-media.
- **Acquisitions:** Each branch has an up-to-date collection, with a minimum of 50% of the materials purchased or published within the last five years.
- **Shared or Consortial Collections:** In order to provide the best possible access to digital resources, libraries participate in shared or consortial E-Collections.
- **Resource Sharing:** Library users receive requested items identified as available within another branch in the library system within 3 – 5 working days.

4.5 User Seating

4.5.1 Guidelines

User seating should be flexible and interchangeable to meet community needs. This includes seating for reading and independent work as well as collaborative activities, and seating for computer use, both library workstations and seating for Wi-Fi-enabled use of patrons' devices. Seating for separate meeting/conference rooms is not included in this guideline.

A general rule of thumb for barrier-free seating is that all libraries should provide some barrier-free seating of at least two units up to 80 seats, and 3% of the seating capacity with over 80 seats.

The guideline for the number of seats, including computer seating, is an intentionally broad range, in recognition of the fact that specific branches will have different roles and service levels within their library system. In general, a branch may offer:

- fewer user seats if the branch encourages shorter visits for browsing; with a greater proportion of floor space required for collections;
- additional seats if the branch offers spaces for long-term uses such as individual and group study.

Number of seats, including computer seating:

Small	Medium	Large	Urban
12 – 30	30 – 60	60 – 200	200+



Oxford County Library, Tillsonburg branch

4.6 Technology

4.6.1 Guidelines

Every library system should provide:

- access to an Integrated Library System which includes a public access catalogue of library holdings;
- an Internet presence that provides access to Web-based information sources (e.g. information about the library, library catalogue, virtual reference services, government and municipal information, community information, links to other library collections, on-line databases, etc.), and trained staff to assist the public in the effective use of these information sources;
- an active social media presence;
- access to emerging technologies and maker technology;
- digital literacy education programs to develop staff's and the public's digital competencies.

Each library branch should provide:

- the very best Internet service that is available;
- in-branch access to workstation hardware appropriate to that branch's needs;

- indoor and outdoor Wi-Fi for public use;
- access to training in how to use the electronic resources, technology, and alternate resources offered by the library;
- the ability for the user to duplicate (copy, print, etc.) from the Internet or online content or images;
- appropriate technical infrastructure to support the full range of staff operations;
- access to reliable telephone service (e.g. cellular or landline).

4.6.2 Best Practices

As a minimum threshold, each branch should have three public access workstations or a combination of PAC workstation and device stations.

The number of public access computers/device stations required will depend on each branch community's level of access to computer technology and Internet service, and the prevalence of patrons' use of their own devices in the branch.

5. Summary of Guidelines by Branch Type

	Small Minimum Range		Medium Minimum Range		Large Minimum Range		Urban Minimum Range
Net library space	2500 s.f.	5,000 s.f.	5,000 s.f.	10,000 s.f.	10,000 s.f.	35,000 s.f.	35,000 s.f.
Hours of operation per week	20	25	25	45	45	65	65+
Number of days per week	4	4	5	5	6	7	7+
Staff Complement	1 FTE	2.5 FTE	2.5 FTE	5 FTE	5 FTE	17.5 FTE	17.5+ FTE
Qualification of Branch Supervisor	Library competency, e.g. post-secondary plus EXCEL, library techniques.		Professional librarian and APLL or other public administration certification		Professional librarian and APLL or other public administration certification		Professional librarian and APLL or other public administration certification
Qualification of Other Staff			Paraprofessional qualifications relevant to the requirements of the position		2 additional professional librarians or a combination of additional professional librarians and/or appropriate paraprofessionals, relevant to the requirements of the positions		2 additional professional librarians or a combination of additional professional librarians and/or appropriate paraprofessionals, relevant to the requirements of the positions
Number of items in physical collection	6,000	12,000	12,000	24,000	24,000	50,000	50,000
User seating	12	30	30	60	60	200	200
Computers	3		3		3		

Appendix A • Sample of Branch Space Guidelines

Branch Space Guidelines

1. This spreadsheet can be used for planning purposes for new or renovated branch libraries and adjusted to meet local needs.

Component	Small		Medium		Large		Urban
	Minimum Range		Minimum Range		Minimum Range		Minimum Range
Collections							
Collections @ 7 vol/s.f. (.14 per vol.)	840	1,680	1,680	3,360	3,360	7,000	7,000
Local history		100	100	200	200	400	400
Public Service Areas							
User seating* @ 35 s.f. ea.	420	1,050	1,050	2,100	2,100	7,000	7,000
Public computers* @ 35 s.f.	105	105	105	105	105	105	105
Program Room(s)		450	450	750	750	1,500	2,000
Meeting Room(s)				200	200	400	400
Study Room(s)		100	100	200	200	400	400
Maker Space(s)		100	150	300	300	500	500
Staff Service Areas							
Service/circulation desk(s)	175	250	250	350	350	500	500
Work room	200	300	300	500	500	800	800
Storage	100	150	150	200	200	300	300
Branch Manager's office			150	150	150	150	150
Other Professional offices						100	200
Staff lunchroom and lockers	100	100	100	200	200	350	350
Staff washroom (barrier-free)	150	150	150	150	150	150	150

Areas highlighted refer directly to ARUPLO Guidelines.

* Program rooms and meeting rooms can be variously configured with dividing walls, and should include kitchenette facilities and their own storage areas for furniture and A/V equipment.

Components total	2,090	4,535	4,735	8,765	8,765	19,655	20,255
"Per-capita approach, for comparison (net)"	2,500	5,000	5,000	10,000	10,000	35,000	35,000

Both the Components Approach and Per Capita Approach would require 27 - 30% additional space for non-assignable use.

Reference Sheet for Branch Space Guidelines

	Small		Medium		Large		Urban
	Minimum Range		Minimum Range		Minimum Range		Minimum Range
Number of items in physical collection	6,000	12,000	12,000	24,000	24,000	50,000	50,000
User seating	12	30	30	60	60	200	200
Computer seating	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Branch Space Guidelines

Libraries should consider their specific needs when developing or assessing the requirements for each branch library. The space requirements (unit sizes) used are the consultants' and architect's recommendations based on experience and barrier-free access. They were originally taken from the book, *Making the Case for Your Library Building Project*, published by the Southern Ontario Library Service in 2010, https://resources.olservice.ca/ld.php?content_id=34842770 and subsequently updated to reflect current library trends and barrier-free requirements and goals.

Area	Unit Sizes (s.f.)	Notes
Collections	0.14	Blended collections. Accessible shelving.
User seating	35	Blended seating, assuming a mix of lounge and desk. Some might need 40 s.f. for barrier free.
Program Room	15 per user	Minimum to accommodate a class of 30 students. May also include kitchenette and storage.
Group study room	165	1 table and 6 chairs
Additional spaces	Unit Sizes (s.f.)	Also to consider Library Café, Friends' book shop, literacy centre, maker spaces, etc.
Staff service/circ	175 per staff	Emerging trend for a smaller service desk, roaming staff, self check-out stations.
Workrooms	100	Assumes some tech and support services provided by admin offices elsewhere. Includes private offices as required.
Staff lunchroom	35 per staff	Branch libraries may have several part-time staff, need to plan for not just FTE.
Non-assignable spaces	27%	Corridors, foyer, waiting areas, public washrooms, including universal. Loading areas, garbage, recycling, custodian, storage, closets. Wall thicknesses, building services, chases, mechanical. Assumes single storey building, FADS standards.



Wellington County Library, Hillsburgh branch

Appendix A • Additional Resources

Planning documents are available to assist with ensuring public libraries meet their local needs. Some examples of these documents follow, in no particular importance or order. Documents retrieved April 2023.

Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council. *Ontario Public Library Guidelines*. Updated annually. <https://ontariopubliclibraryguidelines.ca/>

Southern Ontario Library Service. *Making the Case for Your Library Building Project*. 2010. https://resources.olservice.ca/ld.php?content_id=34842770

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Wellington County Library, Hillsburgh branch

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“Wellington County prides itself on its beautiful library spaces. The ARUPLO guidelines have proven to be a key resource to us whether we are renovating an existing building or building a new one.”

Wellington County Library Board

