

Service Delivery Review Community Report

2024



Milton
Public
Library
Be Inspired

Purpose



Service Delivery Review:

- Evaluate current services, identify efficiencies, compare with other libraries, and explore sustainability.

Community Engagement:

- Engage the Milton community for feedback on library offerings, needs, and impact assessment.

Work Undertaken



- Reviewed background reports, policies, and statistics.
- Community Telephone Survey – 1,202 responses
- Community Online Survey – 762 responses
- Confidential Staff Survey – 49 responses
- Benchmarking Review – MPL + 10 other library systems
- Focus Groups – 2 with staff, 1 with teens, 1 with seniors 2 with adults
- Stakeholder Interviews – with board, key town staff, and community organizations; also interviews with senior staff
- Site Visit – January 17
- Technology assessment

Benchmarking Review

Milton Public Library was benchmarked against 10 other libraries: Barrie, Burlington, Guelph, Kitchener, Oakville, Oshawa, Pickering, Richmond Hill, Waterloo, and Whitby.



45%

of Milton residents are library cardholders which is 9.7% higher than the average. This is second only to Burlington among the peer libraries but has a lower-than-average borrowing pattern.



5.9

circulation per capita which is slightly lower than the average.



1.3

physical items per capita which is slightly lower than the average. The size of the MPL collection is smaller than most of the other libraries which is in part due to the overall smaller square footage of the library branches.



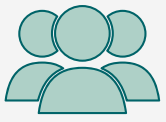
4.5

is the ratio of circulation to physical items held (turnover rate) which is higher than the average. Despite the smaller collection, the use of each item in the collection is high.



5.3%

of our collection is in languages other than English, which is 2% higher than the average. As the Town of Milton is diverse, it is important to ensure that the collection reflects the languages read in the community.



82.6

in-person visits per week per 1000 capita, which is 4.5 visits higher than the average.



8.2

programs per 1000 capita, which is slightly lower than the average.



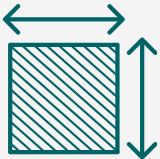
226.8

program attendance per 1000 capita, which is 39.1 higher than the average.



\$47.09

operating expenditure per capita, which is lower than the average.



0.45

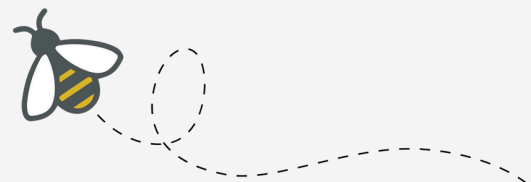
square footage of all facilities per capita, Milton has one of the smallest footprints of library facilities among the peer libraries.



184

total hours open per week across three branches. This is lower than average, however some comparator libraries have many more branches.

Benchmarking was completed using the Ontario Public Library statistics (2022) gathered through the Annual Survey of Public Libraries (ASPL).



Telephone Survey



Thoughts about Programs and Services

- 96% - overall satisfaction with MPL's program and services with high satisfaction for library staff and core services, but identifies room for improvement in specialized programs for teens, adults, and special needs groups.

Thoughts on Facilities

- 95% - satisfaction with the welcoming nature and signage, but shows significant concerns with the availability of quiet work and study spaces.

Use of MPL Branches and Services

- 50.5% - of the surveyed population has used the Milton Public Library branches or services in the last 24 months, with 65% considering the Main Library as their home branch.

Reason for not using the library:

- 31% - feel that not needing it was the main reason for not using the library, while 20% of respondents felt being too busy and 15% preferred digital resources as the reasons for non-use.

Online Survey

Thoughts on Programs and Services:

- Main Library – 97% of respondents rated staff helping with information or research requirements with the highest satisfaction whereas programs and activities for special needs groups were rated lowest.
- Beaty Branch – 92% of respondents rated the assistance and technical support with the highest satisfaction whereas programs and activities for special needs groups were rated lowest.
- Sherwood Branch – 95% of respondents rated friendliness and helpfulness of staff with the highest satisfaction whereas programs and activities for special needs groups were rated lowest.

Thoughts on Facilities:

- Main Library - 95% of respondents rated signage and visibility and wireless access and connectivity at the Main Library with the highest satisfaction whereas availability of quiet work and study spaces were rated lowest.
- Beaty Branch - 96% of respondents rated overall safety and security library with the highest satisfaction whereas hours of operation and range and variety of newspapers were rated lowest.
- Sherwood Branch - 97% of respondents rated overall safety and security library with the highest satisfaction whereas public transit access and children's technology were rated lowest.

Use of MPL Branches and Services – Online Survey

- 93% of respondents used the Milton Public Library services in the past 24 months, with the Main Library being the preferred 'home branch' for 61% of users.

Reason for Not Using the Library:

- 44% of respondents felt being too busy was the primary reason for not using the library, whereas 19% and 16% felt programs and collections didn't align with their interests which is the reason for non-use.

Conclusions



- MPL has a very high level of utilization relative to the benchmark set (cardholders, turnover, visits, program attendance.)
- High level of community satisfaction with programs, facilities, and customer service.
- Overall hours of operation, parking, signage, and visibility are good.
- Significant growth opportunity exists in the area of circulation per capita, opportunity to grow card holders, and opportunities with a rapidly growing community.
- MPL is not as well resourced as compared to other library systems.
- Technology improvements need to be invested in to meet current and future needs.
- Greater community awareness of programming is needed.
- More non-traditional collections and services are needed.

Recommendations



- Invest in staffing for front-line, community engagement, and information technology support.
- Continue to align and work with the municipality to maximize efficiencies.
- Continually Review MPL Policies and Procedures.
- Enhance collections based on community demands, areas identified include “Library of Things”, multilingual collections, activity kits, and access to professional software and technology.
- Continue to enhance programming and community partnerships and outreach.
- Develop a comprehensive and future-focused Technology Plan.
- Continue to invest in and improve existing facilities.
- Review alternative service delivery options such as hold lockers and outreach and develop business case to select preferred option(s)

What's Next?



- Final Report was endorsed by the MPL Board in April, 2024.
- Staff will begin to implement recommendations and develop a work plan for Board Approval.
- Milton Public Library's Strategic and Master Plan work will begin in the summer of 2024 and will be informed by the community consultation and findings outlined in the Service Delivery and Organizational Review Final report.