
Service Delivery Review for the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Library



December 2022



in association with

**Beth Ross & Associates
Bibliotech Inc.**



TCI Management Consultants

12 Lawton Blvd., Toronto, Canada, M4V 1Z4 • Fax: (416) 515-1255 • web: <http://consulttci.com>

December 8, 2022

Karen Franklin, MLIS, APLL
Director of Library Services
SDG Library
26 Pitt Street, Suite 106
Cornwall, ON K6J 3P2

Dear Karen:

Re: SDG Public Library – Service Delivery Review

We are pleased to submit our Service Delivery Review Report. It is evident that the SDG Library is much appreciated by the residents of the United Counties and that staff and the Board are committed to the Library's success. The Library's mission is to connect communities through innovative services, literacy resources, independent learning, creative expression, leisure, and civic engagement.

We are confident the recommendations contained herein will allow the Board and staff of SDG Library to achieve its mission in a more efficient and effective manner.

We appreciate the considerable help you have given us on this project and look forward to its successful implementation.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Greg Young'.

Greg Young
Director: Tel: 416-515-2705
c.c. J. Linton, B. Ross, K. Slimman

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Executive Summary

Purpose of the Service Review

Earlier this year (2022) the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Library (SDG Library) undertook the development of a Strategic Plan to guide its activities over the next five years (2023 – 2027). Several of the key strategic actions identified pointed to the need to undertake a subsequent Service Review study to examine: the organization of the Library, succession planning, the delivery of programs and services, the adequacy and utilization of facilities, and other key aspects of the operation that affect the services delivered to users.

The specific purpose of the work was articulated in the Request for Proposal to be:

“This request for proposal (RFP) is an invitation by the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Library – doing business as the SDG Library – to prospective firms to submit proposals for the provision of consulting services for a service review – with an emphasis on the organizational structure – which is to include an evaluation of the current service delivery model. Recommendations of this review are expected to identify opportunities to enhance and improve overall effectiveness and efficiency within the Library, and to suggest improvements to the Library’s staffing requirements.”

In September 2022, TCI Management Consultants, in collaboration with Beth Ross and Associates and Bibliotechs was retained to undertake the work.

Activities Undertaken

As an extensive stakeholder review had just been undertaken in support of the recently completed Strategic Plan, there was no need to undertake a community survey for this project. This work provided excellent background material showing community support for the Library as well as areas for improvements. With this as context, several other data collection activities were undertaken: a site visit tour of all branches; review of background documents, policies and procedures; a staff survey; consultations with key stakeholders; and a benchmarking assessment of comparable Library systems. Several meetings with the consulting team and the Director of Library Services took place.

Recommendations

Twenty recommendations in seven areas were developed. These were: A) Organization, Staffing and Succession; B) Public Programs and Services; C) Policies and Procedures; D) Networking and Communications; E) Branches and Facilities; F) Technology; and G) Governance. These recommendations were as follows (in some cases additional supporting text is provided as further rationale for the recommendation; full details are presented in the Report itself).

A) Organization, Staffing and Succession

Recommendation 1: Streamline the current organizational structure.

Recommendation 2: Revise the Systems Librarian into an Information Services Librarian position. Reinstate the Systems Support Coordinator.

Recommendation 3: Reinstate the Communications & Marketing Coordinator position.

Recommendation 4: Develop a specific Succession Plan: Certain senior staff may be retiring in the foreseeable future (probably within the timeframe of the current Strategic Plan). Accordingly, a specific succession plan needs to be put in place as an immediate priority. The specific details of such a succession plan are not within the remit of this Service Review, but the components contained within it would be: **a)** review of the job description of senior positions, with a view to making any changes deemed necessary by this Service Review and the recent Strategic Plan; **b)** determination of remuneration and related benefits in light of any change in scope or responsibilities; **c)** articulation of the process to be followed in terms of announcing the opportunity, decisions as to whether internal and external candidates will be entertained, whether a search firm will be employed, etc.; **d)** determination of the likely or ideal timeframe for decision-making; and **e)** communications to staff and public around the replacement process. This is a major responsibility of the Board and should be a top priority.

B) Public Programs and Services

Recommendation 5: Continually develop new programs and services.

Recommendation 6: Review hours of operation at all branches.

Recommendation 7: Develop more active but targeted marketing program.

C) Policies and Procedures

Recommendation 8: Review all policies through a customer-focused lens: As part of the 'Community Outreach' component of the new Strategic Plan, all policies should be reviewed from the perspective of the customer. This would entail a review of all policies from five perspectives: 1) How is the experience of the Library user affected, positively or negatively, by this policy? 2) Is the Library user aware of the policy and how it affects them? 3) What changes need to be considered (or just made) to the policy to improve the user experience? 4) Should any changes made be communicated to Library users, and if so, how? and 5) How will we measure any positive change (or is it even important to do so)?

Recommendation 9: Conduct an audit comparing the SDG Library policies with the ones included in the Ontario Public Libraries Guidelines.

Recommendation 10: Prepare an online policy and procedure manual for all staff access: This should include an alert/sign off mechanism to ensure that all staff are up to date with policies and procedures.

Recommendation 11: Review the overdue fines policy with a goal of reducing barriers to Library use.

D) Networking and Communications

Recommendation 12: Increase the frequency of staff communications and networking events.

E) Branches and Facilities

Recommendation 13: Review highest relative cost branches to determine ways to reduce costs.

Recommendation 14: Review lowest relative cost branches to determine ways to increase utilization.

Recommendation 15: Conduct facility review process: At the end of the 'trial period' referenced above, and in reviewing the results of the specific plans and targets for the highest and lowest relative costs groups, the SDG Library should consider implementing over time, a facility review process, possibly to reduce the number of branches or increase the size of particularly well-used branches. It is suggested that this be phased in over a three-year period after the four-year period of the current Strategic Plan.

Municipality	Current Branches in Municipality	Possible Longer-Term Solution
North Dundas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winchester Chesterville South Mountain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain South Mountain branch retain Chesterville branch consider closing Winchester branch
South Dundas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iroquois Morrisburg Williamsburg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Iroquois branch consider closing either Williamsburg or Morrisburg
North Stormont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crysler Avonmore Finch/MakerLab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Avonmore branch consider closing either Chrysler or Finch MakerLab
South Stormont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ingleside Long Sault St. Andrews West Express Depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Long Sault branch consider closing Ingleside or St. Andrews West Express West
North Glengarry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maxville Alexandria Dalkeith Express Depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Alexandria and Dalkeith branches consider closing Maxville branch
South Glengarry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Williamstown Lancaster Glen Water Express Depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (likely) expand Lancaster and close Williamstown

Recommendation 16: Consider County acquisition of Library facilities: After any rationalization of the system as a result of the previous recommendations, the SDG Library should encourage the County to acquire the properties that constitute the system at that point (where this is possible and makes sense, recognizing that several are in facilities that are shared with other uses). This will ensure a level of consistency with respect to the ongoing maintenance and care of the facilities.

Recommendation 17: Consider alternative services in remote and rural locations.

Recommendation 18: Consider central or main branch.

F) Technology

Recommendation 19: Develop a Multi-Year Technology Plan: This plan should incorporate both the 'internal' and 'external' aspect of technology as previously discussed and incorporate the following components:

- Provide adequate staffing levels for administration, support, and backup of Library technology services.
- Provide additional training resources for staff and patrons.
- Investigate functional and financial benefits of moving the ILS from a locally hosted system to a cloud service.
- Include capital and operating costs of planned implementation in the Technology Plan.
- Investigate and implement resources for self-service and after-hours options.
- Review and install remote support tools for Library systems staff.
- Investigate Polaris ILS modules for operational efficiencies.
- Continue work with the County on access to a broadband solution.

G) Governance

Recommendation 20: Encourage Board Diversity.

Implementation

A detailed Implementation Plan was developed that contained for each recommendation: timing and critical path considerations; resource requirements (human and financial); and suggested targets and outcomes.

Conclusion

The SDG Library system is clearly a strong and well-loved institution throughout the United Counties. Its central position as a community resource and activity hub has been validated and reinforced through its recent Strategic Planning process. It is, however, weak on some key service indicators when compared to similar-sized Library systems (e.g., visits per capita, program attendance, circulation). In large part this is caused by the fact that the system is characterized by many small branches in rural locations and exacerbated by lower resourcing (funding and staff) than seen in other comparable Library operations.

Moreover, the SDG Library system is on the cusp of change. Staff turnover at the senior levels within the next few years is a virtual certainty. Key functional positions remain unfilled.

This Service Review and its recommendations are designed to address this situation. A tightening of the organizational structure; the development of a succession plan; filling key positions; a hard look at the efficiency of the branches and development of plans to improve this; and an eventual decision to close some branches and possibly expand others (with possibly the development of a central administrative branch) are key elements of a plan to ensure that the system continues to be a relevant and meaningful resource to the community, and can achieve even greater success in the future.

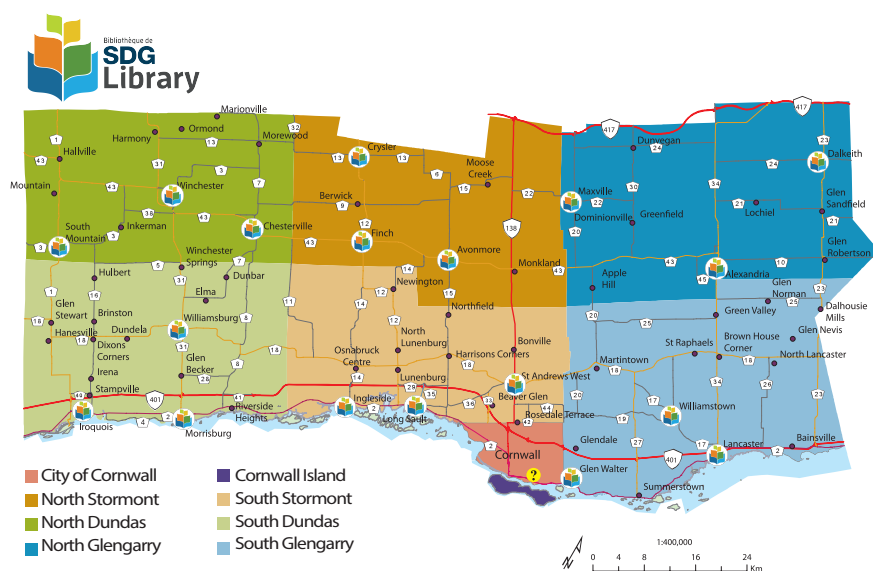
1. Introduction and Background to the Project

In this **Introduction and Context** section of the Report, we first provide a high-level overview of the **current operations** of the SDG Library, followed by a summary of the **background and context** to this service review and the **specific objectives** of the work. This is in turn followed by an explanation of the **format and structure** of the review. The **activities undertaken** over the course of this review are next described and finally, some **cautions and caveats** that should be borne in mind when interpreting this review.

1.1. Overview of the Current SDG Library System

The regional municipality of the United Counties of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry (SDG) is located along the St. Lawrence River at Ontario's south-eastern border. The community has 65,000 residents serving a large, primarily rural geographic area of 3,300 square kilometres. The community has a rich cultural heritage and quality of life, is extremely scenic and proudly describes itself as "Where Ontario Began".

The Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Library County (SDG Library) provides Library services throughout the region (United Counties). Its administrative offices are in the County Administration building. Library services are provided from its 15 branches and 3 express depot locations in partnership with local municipalities and businesses. It also supports 3 "little free Library" stands and provides outreach services to underserved areas. These branches include 5 resource branches and 10 neighbourhood branches spread throughout the six local municipalities that make up the SDG United Counties. The Library leases its branches from the local municipalities. A map of the branch locations is shown below.



SDG Library has a 2022 budget of \$2,822,000 of which 91% is funded by the regional municipality. The Library has 42 non-union staff including 11 FTEs and 31 part-time staff. The SDG Library Board is made up of 3 citizens and 4 County Councillors.

1.2. General Background Context to this Service Review

At the commencement of the assignment, the CEO provided additional background and context to the Service Review. The following summarizes some key issues:

- Because of its geography and history, SDG Library contains a large number of relatively small branches, many of which were originally established to serve rural communities and hamlets with small populations. In 2016, to achieve efficiencies, SDG Library closed three branches which naturally encountered some resistance and protests in the affected communities.
- Fourteen of the fifteen branches are owned by the local municipalities and are leased to the Library. In 2022, the Library's budgeted expenses for building rent and utilities are \$191,000 and facilities costs are an additional \$137,000. With six local municipalities, the level of support provided and the size and quality of each facility are quite variable. Many branches are very small. The County has little incentive to expand facilities when the need arises or to meet Library facility space standards.
- SDG Library has had difficulty filling some of its staff positions. The Community Librarian and Systems Librarian positions are currently vacant.
- The arrival of the pandemic which affected operations at the beginning of 2020 has made it more difficult to recruit these positions. The difficulties in recruiting positions have added to the responsibilities and workload of the CEO who has taken over responsibility for collections development and other duties that were intended to be carried out by other staff.
- With its relatively large number of branches, staff are usually alone in the branches and it is difficult for staff to have many opportunities to communicate with each other and to build a team environment except through video communications.

1.3. Specific Purpose and Objectives of this Service Review

The broad and general purpose of this project was stated in the Terms of Reference to be as follows:

“This request for proposal (RFP) is an invitation by the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Library – doing business as the SDG Library – to prospective firms to submit proposals for the provision of consulting services for a service review – with an emphasis on the organizational structure – which is to include an evaluation of the current service delivery model. Recommendations of this review are expected to identify opportunities to enhance and improve overall effectiveness and efficiency within the Library, and to suggest improvements to the Library’s staffing requirements.”

Within this overall framework, specific goals of the Service Review were stated to be:

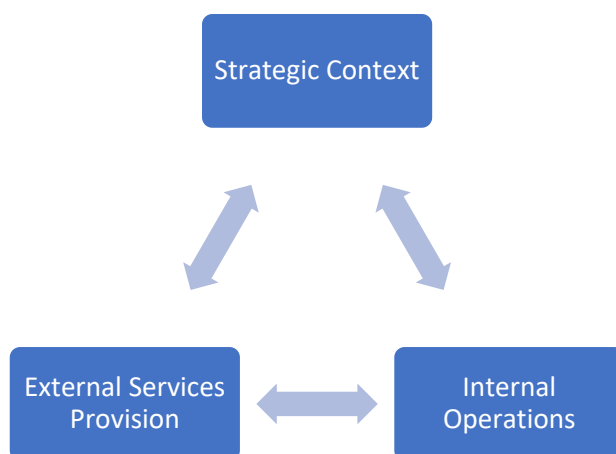
1. To recommend an appropriate organizational structure to meet future needs and expectations;
2. To identify public Library best practices and make recommendations for their possible application;
3. To identify areas for development of human resources, and to help with succession planning;
4. To consult with the following resources as part of the process, which includes, but is not limited to:
 - *ARUPLO Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems, 3rd edition, 2017* (<http://aruplo.weebly.com/guidelines.html>)
 - *Ontario Public Library Guidelines (latest version)*
 - *SDG Library. Moving Forward: Strategic Plan, 2018-2022* (<https://www.sdglibrary.ca/about-us/Library-board/Library-mission-statement>)
 - *Stakeholder Engagement Report, 2022 (Laridae Communications) – part of current Strategic Planning work (available by request to the Director of Library Services)*

It was also noted that a new Strategic Plan had recently been approved and that this document should inform the current study (to the extent possible) over the course of the work.

This mandate gave rise to the specific work plan developed (and which is further described in Section 1.5 of this Report). Appendix B of this Report contains a high-level summary of this Strategic Plan.

1.4. Structure of this Service Review

Our approach to undertaking a Service Review recognizes that there are **external** programs and services provided to the public which need to be examined, as well as **internal** policies, processes and practices, not seen by the public, that also need to be assessed. And all of this should take place within a **strategic context** of servicing the community and responding to its needs, most often expressed in the form of the Strategic Plan of the Library operation. This is 'form follows function': the 'form' of the Library organization and the services it provides, should follow the function (i.e., the strategic purpose) of the Library.



The logic of this approach is as follows:

- **Strategic Context:** This provides the overall grounding for the service review in terms of articulating the purpose and function of the Library system, its overall operations in the community, etc. The strategic context sets out the fundamental basis for the Library system operating in the community. In the case of the SDG Library, the new Strategic Plan was completed in 2022; this service review is thus very opportune.
- **External Services Provision:** In many respects, the most important aspect of a service review lies in the review of services provided to the public which is, after all, the fundamental purpose of the Library. This aspect of the review examines the operation of the Library as it provides services to the public, and thus considers not only programs and services intentionally offered to the community, but also other aspects of how users interact with the Library including matters such as visitor flow through the building, interaction with staff, etc.
- **Internal Service Operations:** This aspect of the service review considers the 'behind the scenes' aspects of Library operations. This relates to internal operations that are not directly seen by the public, but that may critically affect the efficiency and effectiveness with which services are able to be offered. Matters such as workflow, internal

communications, job responsibilities, policies, the organizational efficiency, etc. are all considered under this aspect of the service delivery review.

This tripartite framework thus covers all aspects of operations that should be included in an integrated service review. This framework was used as an overall guide in the research and analysis activities of our proposed workplan. In accordance with the Terms of Reference, specific focus was given to matters related to the organization structure and related human resource policies and procedures, as well as best practices

1.5. Activities Undertaken

A number of activities were undertaken in the course of this service review. These were:

- initial start-up meeting with Library CEO
- on-site visits to each of the 15 Library branches in the community
- review of all relevant background materials, including performance and related data for each of the 15 branches
- review of community Library trends and issues
- review of the previous (Spring, 2022) community consultation, undertaken as part of the background preparation for the new Strategic Plan
- staff survey (to which all staff responded)
- consultations with key stakeholders in the community
- consultations with key municipal officials
- preparation of this report in draft and final forms
- presentation to Library Board.

The project began in September of 2022 and concluded in December of that year.

1.6. Assumptions and Caveats

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

- **This is a high-level Strategic Service Delivery Review:** A Service Review is by definition a high-level document, describing broad intentions and areas of action, rather than a specific program of activity at a granular level of detail. This plan thus sets the stage for a number of subsequent initiatives and does not (and cannot) by itself answer all questions and address all issues that may be raised. In addition, as is the case with any Service Review there will be unforeseen challenges and new opportunities that arise over its implementation, and that must be dealt with. While a Service Review plan cannot anticipate all of these, it should set the overall context within which the Board and senior Library management team can make decisions on these new challenges and opportunities.

- **Review covers a five year+ timeframe:** This review is intended to cover a five-year time horizon, after which point it should be refreshed and updated. The implementation plan (contained in Section 5 of this Report) accordingly looks to the five-year period from 2023 to 2027. However, despite being time-limited in this manner, the Strategic Service Delivery Review should set an overall tone and direction that will carry the institution forward beyond the period of the plan itself.
- **Project entirely undertaken during the pandemic:** This project was undertaken largely during final quarter of 2022, when the pandemic was subsiding but still deeply influencing meeting behaviour. Aside from the site visit to all branches (undertaken according to proper distancing protocols), all meetings were held via video conference or telephone. In the opinion of the consultants, while not ideal, this in no way compromised the integrity of the findings or conclusions of the work.

2. Data Collection and Situation Analysis

This **Data Collection and Analysis** section of the report describes all the data gathering activities undertaken. First a review of **relevant policies and background reports** is presented. Next, we review the **relevant findings and conclusions of a community stakeholder consultation process** that was undertaken earlier this year as input to the development of the new Strategic Plan. Then, specific data collection activities undertaken in support of this service review are discussed: a **staff survey** (to which most staff responded); and a **benchmarking assessment** of other comparable Library systems. Finally, all of these various lines of evidence are combined into a **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) synthesis**, that then forms the basis for the recommendations subsequently developed.

2.1. Review of Relevant Policies and Reports

Key documents relevant to this study included:

- Stakeholder Engagement Report by Laridae Consulting (2022), based on surveys and interviews with over 270 community members;
- SDG Library 2022-2026 Strategic Plan (see Appendix B);
- Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry County Library Facility Model Report (2012);
- Lease agreement template for branch leases;
- Operational and Board policies retrieved from the Library's website;
- Job descriptions, organizational chart;
- Various reports and files provided by the Director of Library Services;
- Statistics retrieved from the Province of Ontario's open data website.

The new Strategic Plan includes three strategic directions:

1. Physical and digital infrastructure;
2. Community outreach;
3. Organizational strength.

This review is primarily a result of the third strategic direction, Organizational Strength, "with the goals of clarifying roles and expectations, balancing responsibilities and capacities, and potentially creating efficiencies through centralization and/or partnerships."

The Library's Facility Model Report from 2012 identified a significant deficit in Library space and recommended a facility model with six expanded resource branches in the six local municipalities, Winchester (North Dundas), Morrisburg (South Dundas), Avonmore (North Stormont), Ingleside (South Stormont), Alexandria (North Glengarry), and Lancaster (South Glengarry), as well as neighbourhood branches. Currently, Alexandria, Ingleside, Lancaster,

Morrisburg, and Winchester function as resource branches but the recommended expansions have not taken place. The space deficit has increased significantly. The SDG Library leases the Library branches from the local municipalities on a square foot basis with the amount adjusted for inflation. The SDG Library has been able to expand hours of operation at most branches, also a recommendation of the Facility Model Report. While this is not a facility study, the number, quality, and size of branch facilities has a significant impact on Library services.

While following the Public Libraries Act, the SDG Library functions as a department of the County, and Board policies have directed responsibility for areas such as human resources, payroll, financial services, and information technology to the County. The Library pays a service charge for these support services. Many other county libraries function this way.

2.2. Review of Previous Stakeholder Engagement Report (April 2022) Results

In February to March of 2022 a community survey was undertaken by Laridae Communications Inc. to obtain thoughts from the general public regarding the Strategic Plan. Several of the findings from that exercise are relevant to this service review. The main findings were:

- 250 responses were obtained
- of these, the majority of respondents described themselves as ‘member patrons’ (70%); ‘visitors’ were the next most frequent response category (15%) followed by ‘staff’ (8%)
- Respondents indicated that Ingleside was the most commonly-used branch – while no respondents indicated usage of Glen Walter Express or Dalkeith Express; the specific utilization of each branch by respondents was:

Branch	% of Respondents Indicating Use
Ingleside	24%
Long Sault	18%
Winchester	14%
Morrisburg	13%
Alexandria / Succursale Alexandria	13%
Chesterville	9%
South Mountain	9%
Williamsburg	8%
Iroquois	8%
Lancaster / Succursale Lancaster	7%
None – do not use any branches	6%
Crysler Branch / Succursale Chrysler	5%
Williamstown	5%
Finch Branch / Makerlab	4%
Avonmore	4%

Maxville	3%
St. Andrews Express Depot	1%
Glen Walter Express Depot	0%
Dalkeith Express Depot	0%

- of member patrons, 29% had visited a Library branch or accessed online services more than once a week, with a further 28% indicating 'about once a week' (so nearly 60% in the two categories); about 14% had not visited a Library branch or accessed online services at all in the previous year
- most (about 75%) member patrons indicate that they have a good understanding of what the SDG Library does; only 1 respondent (of 174) indicated that they 'do not understand what SDG Library does'
- the major sources of information about the Library (from all users, not just member patrons) were:
 - *from staff or volunteers: 57%*
 - *from social media: 36%*
 - *from the website: 30%*
 - *from email: 17%*
 - *from newsletters: 11%*
 - *by word of mouth: 10%*
- services and programs that all respondents were most aware of were:
 - digital eBooks and Audiobooks: 86%
 - print collection: 77%
 - printing and copying services: 73%
 - emagazines, digital newspapers and research database: 72%
 - free museum passes: 67%
 - author visits: 65%
 - 3-D printing 55%
 - Book club meeting nights: 52%
 - Library of Things: 49%

All other programs and services scored less than 50%. Also bear in mind that these responses were for all respondents including staff and Board members (10% of the total sample) who presumably would have greater knowledge of programs and services than the general users, so these percentages may not be fully representative.

- respondents were asked to select which word was most descriptive of the positive aspects of the SDG Library; responses were:

- *helpful: 58%*
- *community focussed: 38%*
- *respectful: 31%*
- *resourceful: 29%*
- *responsive: 20%*
- *inclusive: 15%*
- *understanding: 12%*
- *adaptive: 10%*
- *relevant: 9%*
- *all other responses scored less than 10%*

- next, respondents were classified as either 'promoters' or 'detractors' of the Library, based on their response to a question of how likely they would be to recommend the Library to a friend or colleague. The responses, by category of respondent, were:

Respondent Category	% of Respondents 'Promoters'	% of Respondents 'Passive'	% of Respondents 'Detractors'
Staff Members	100%	0%	0%
Volunteers	100%	0%	0%
Partner Organizations	75%	25%	0%
Board Members	60%	40%	0%
Member Patrons	75%	17%	8%
Visitors	55%	22%	23%
Municipal Stakeholders	38%	24%	38%

- Satisfaction with Collections

Service	Number of Respondents Rating Satisfaction	% of Total Respondents (250)	Number of Respondents Indicating 'Very Satisfied'	% of Total of All Respondents Rating Services Who Are 'Very Satisfied'
Physical book collections	190	70%	95	50%
InterLibrary Loans	160	64%	80	50%
DVDs	130	52%	55	42%
eBooks	120	48%	50	42%
Other digital content	80	32%	40	50%
eAudiobooks	75	30%	30	40%
Library Depots	65	26%	35	54%
Books on CD	60	24%	20	33%
Library of Things	35	14%	15	43%

- Satisfaction with Children's Programming

Service	Number of Respondents Rating Satisfaction	% of Total Respondents (250)	Number of Respondents Indicating 'Very Satisfied'	% of Total of All Respondents Rating Services Who Are 'Very Satisfied'
Children's Story Time	52	21%	28	54%
Summer Reading Club	42	17%	23	55%
March Break Programming	20	8%	10	50%
STEM Programming	17	7%	8	47%
Lego Clubs	14	6%	9	64%

- Satisfaction with Youth and Adult Programming

Service	Number of Respondents Rating Satisfaction	% of Total Respondents (250)	Number of Respondents Indicating 'Very Satisfied'	% of Total of All Respondents Rating Services Who Are 'Very Satisfied'
Author visits	50	20%	37	74%
Book Club Meetings	32	13%	26	81%
Read for 15 SDG Challenge	27	11%	19	70%
Book Club Kits	25	10%	17	68%
Annual Summer Reading Club	19	8%	16	84%
Craft club meet-ups	18	7%	15	83%
Knitting club meet-ups	13	5%	10	77%
Ancestry club meet-ups	9	4%	8	89%
Game nights	7	3%	2	29%

- Overall Satisfaction with SDG Library Services

Service	Number of Respondents Rating Satisfaction	% of Total Respondents (250)	Number of Respondents Indicating 'Very Satisfied'	% of Total of All Respondents Rating Services Who Are 'Very Satisfied'
Printing & Copying Services	76	30%	64	85%
Computers & Internet	72	29%	53	74%
Museum passes	61	24%	40	66%
Meeting rooms and reservations	39	16%	30	77%
3-D Printing	29	12%	14	48%
Visiting Services	12	5%	9	75%
Commissioner of Oaths	7	3%	6	86%
CEL Collections	4	2%	3	75%
Exam Invigilation	3	1%	2	67%
Homework Helpers	2	1%	2	100%

Reaction to Mission and Vision: Specific comments on the Vision and Mission statements are not recapped here as they resulted in changes that have already been implemented to the plan. However, several open-ended comments were made that are directly relevant to this service review. These are:

- continue if not expand programs in French
- every branch should be a functional, useable Internet hub
- better technology should be available in each branch (e.g. colour printers)
- consider more resources available for small local business
- bricks and mortar presence in local communities is vital
- Morewood needs a branch or equivalent service
- more local history
- greater awareness of what is available is needed – particularly interLibrary activities
- more connection with local schools desirable
- longer hours at the smaller branches to make them more accessible
- greater connections with non-users needed

Highest-Priority Recommendations (all respondents):

- broader range of Library collections (53%)
- improved hours of operation (52%)
- longer loan periods (23%)
- more virtual programming and events (16%)

- Library programming that better suits my needs (?) (12%)
- shorter loan period for popular items (10%)
- improved facilities, amenities and layout (5%)

2.3. Key Stakeholder Consultations

A few key stakeholders were invited to complete a stakeholder survey. Responses were received from the Chief Administrative Officer of the United Counties of SDG, a Consultant with the Ontario Library Service, the Chair of the Library Board and the Director of Library Services. Most respondents were very familiar with the SDG Library system. Following are some perspectives shared by the stakeholders.

- **Most programs are working well** – There are good public hours at the branches; there is a good array of online subscriptions and services; staff are helpful and pivoted well during the pandemic; outreach has worked well; growth of both digital and hard copy collections has proceeded well; the Director of Library Services has a good working relationship with the Board.
- **A few programs are not working as well** – Issues identified included that the Library is short staffed; the website requires an overhaul; WiFi at the branches requires a password; some branches are small and in poor condition; the Library is at the mercy of landlords and there is a need to increase the number of people using the branches.
- **Strengths of the Library** – good coverage across the County for in-person and digital; staff provide good customer service; the Library is fiscally responsible and is a good community partner.
- **Weaknesses of the Library** – a large geographic area makes it hard to get the message out about Library services; facilities are too small and there are lots of branches; staff turnover and burnout, website is dated and needs to be fully accessible; internet speed at branches; several branches are inadequate; system needs to be rationalized.
- **Comments on the branches** – Chesterville is small and dated, has accessibility issues; Finch is small and has no storage space; Iroquois is a dated location and more space for programming would be desirable; Lancaster is a dated building with not enough space for programming or a resource branch and is also underutilized; Maxville is too small, underutilized and dated; Williamsburg is set far back from the road with no signage currently and is likely underused; Williamstown is privately owned and has air quality issues.
- **Barriers to Use** – Stakeholders believe the branches are welcoming for diverse groups based on culture, ethnicity, income, sexual orientation etc. Other barriers identified

included time limits on use of computers; password on wifi; not all branches are fully accessible; website not fully accessible; hours of operation, and unappealing spaces.

- **Groups well served** – groups identified as being well served included children 12 or younger; middle adults, seniors and families with young children. Groups identified as somewhat well served included teens, young adults, newcomers, New Canadians, LGBTQ2+ and BIPOC individuals.
- **Comments on marketing and communications** outreach is frustrating especially with vacant positions; consider public champions where each person tells someone about the Library, website needs updating; social media being done by different individuals; Library lacks ability to make its own videos; many do not know about or use the Library.
- **Keep Library as is or change it** views of stakeholders were mixed – one believed it is fine as it is; another would like an organization structure that makes sense with the right people in the right jobs including an improvement in internal communications; there was a suggestion to get younger people on the board; another stakeholder would prefer to see the branches rationalized down to six with County ownership. There were mixed views on the future of the branches with two believing fewer branches were needed and one comment that better facilities were needed in the areas where they already are.
- **Increasing community engagement** – a suggestion was made to have the SDG Library connect with new community members in new housing developments; also have pop-up Library kiosks at community events throughout the year. Various partnerships were suggested to increase engagement including partnerships with youth groups, and better communication with the various municipalities around events.
- **Relationship with County and municipalities** – Respondents believe the Library has a very good relationship with the County. Relationships with the municipalities are also good – further marketing and partnership opportunities should be explored. There was also a perspective that local municipalities who own the buildings do not value the Library.
- **Alternative service delivery** – The Library has considered mobile services in the past. It would require determining what the mobile service would look like, how it would be staffed and funded. The possibility of self-serve kiosks that would allow open hours outside of staffed hours has also been discussed. If obtained they should be located at the busiest branches, i.e., Alexandria and Long Sault.
- **Other comments** – This is an ideal time for the operational review. Before filling positions, we need to know if the jobs, job descriptions, services provided and reporting structures are aligned. We also need to provide with opportunities to grow and move

within the organization (succession planning). Overall the Library does a great job with the resources provided.

2.4. Staff Survey Findings and Implications

The confidential staff survey was completed by all staff. Following are the highlights.

- **About Job conditions, supervision, job descriptions, support, training, communication** – Perspectives raised by staff included the need to have comprehensive job descriptions to cover all tasks; there is lack of support with the job vacancies in administration leading to a heavy workload
- **Enjoy most about the job** – Staff enjoy most the patrons and working with people; the community; promoting books, readers advisory and solving tech problems; the variety of work and working with their colleagues
- **Enjoy least about the job** – Staff enjoy least rude or difficult patrons; inability to help patrons; keeping up to date with technology; lack of communication from outside my branch; working alone; especially at night in remote branches; changes in procedures with no opportunity for input; lack of consequences when staff ignored covid restrictions; short shifts; and need for more training
- **Electronic resources we should make available** – Staff would like to see more resources for children and teens; Consumer Reports; video games; CreativeBug, Active Reading, HOOPLA. Staff also need to ensure they are knowledgeable on how to use these resources.
- **Size of branches** – there were some comments that the branches were too small and there is no room for programming, study rooms or meeting rooms; many say the size of their branches is fine
- **Strength of your local branch** – (branch not identified) location, welcoming quaint, beautiful; friendly, helpful staff; diverse collection
- **Weaknesses of your local branch** – (branch not identified) worn, needs updating; little programming for teens; difficult to connect with other organizations; lack of space for programming; too small, no meeting rooms or study spaces
- **Accessibility issues In your branch** – (branch not identified) branch is accessible but washrooms are not; exterior doors; need larger, accessible parking spots; automated door opener for interior doors; parking lot and snow removal; size of elevator.

- **Welcoming spaces for diverse groups/individuals** – Staff believe their spaces are welcoming but one staff mentioned there is no space for them to meet
- **Barriers to use** – barriers to usage mentioned included washroom accessibility; fines; hours, cards for seasonal/short-term residents; parking, size of branch and aisle width.
- **Changes suggested** – A variety of changes to the way space is used at their branch were identified including circulation desk area is cramped; public computers should be separated more; need more space; more dedicated space for district supervisors; outdoor space at the branches; dedicated program space; more electric outlets; storage space and specific suggestions about their branches.
- **What's been learned with COVID** – Staff have learned to be adaptable, flexible, resilient, to work more cooperatively and to take care of each other. Various online capabilities have been improved including online training and meetings; online programming and communication with patrons. Staff also mentioned the ability to help individual patrons and believe the patrons learned how important the Library is.
- **Recommended changes beyond COVID** – Staff would recommend continuing with plexiglass screens; physical distancing; and having higher sanitization standards.
- **Recommendations for internal communications** – Staff would like to see more opportunities to learn together and share information; having more district meetings; more Teams (online) meeting and updates. There is a perception that casuals are often 'left out of the loop'. It was suggested there should be more searchable procedures, forms and information; branch tours; training at the MakerLab to understand and promote what is there. There was also a suggestion of having a full staffing complement to help with communications.
- **Safety** – All but 3 staff feel safe and secure in their work environment. There were a couple of mentions of concerns about feeling safe when working after dark.
- **Satisfaction with the work environment** – 75% of staff are 'very satisfied' and 21% 'somewhat satisfied'. One person was 'somewhat dissatisfied'. Suggestions to improve funding included providing more IT and supervisory support; providing more staffing time; more hours open; more dedicated office space to manage staff; more space; more communication; filling vacant positions; have one or two staff in each district who can help with running branches when the DS is busy.
- **Comments on marketing and communications** – There needs to be greater promotion of the Library on social media, YouTube and have more staff involved. There needs to be another position to help with marketing. It is challenging to reach out to new people,

but communications are good with existing patrons. Fill the Community Librarian position and improve the website.

- **Keep Library as is or change it?** Need a Program Coordinator so branches can share programs, or fill the Community Librarian position. Use branch staff to take pressure off administration. An additional District Supervisor could do social media or redistribute the branches to 4 district supervisors and move makerspaces to the branches. Other suggestions included double staff resources at the branches; merge some branches, have bigger spaces, update or provide new branches. One suggested having 6 branches, one in each municipality.
- **Branch specific comments** – Specific comments included providing an accessible washroom at Chesterville; providing storage and taking advantage of the potential at Finch MakerLab; providing parking for seniors at Iroquois; expanding the space at Lancaster; improving the lighting at Long Sault; providing more programming at South Mountain; and planning for a growing community at Winchester.
- **Branches no longer needed?** – One staff suggested there should be one branch for each municipality; other comments: North Stormont doesn't need 3; some branches are poorly used and close to better ones; Chesterville (problems with building plus close to Winchester); Williamsburg (location and proximity to Morrisburg); and Avonmore.
- **Future Branches?** – have a central branch including Admin offices near S&N Stormont boundary; Glen Walter; Hallville, Martintown, Moose Creek; combine Lancaster-Williamstown in a new branch
- **Ways to increase community engagement?** – More Library pop-ups – events, busy locations, workplaces, arenas, high schools; regular newsletters to patrons; reach out to groups, have demographic-specific programs
- **Community groups or organizations to partner with?** – Suggestions included local schools; encourage ad-hoc groups at local branches, e.g. puzzles, knitters; organizations helping people struggling with financial stability, safety; Early Years Centres; Seniors' centres; fundraising efforts with local service clubs; environmental groups; LGBTQ2SIA+ groups; newcomers; literacy groups; Tourism and Economic Development
- **Comments about relationship with the County** – most think it is good, several don't have an opinion; question why in basement of County building, have to follow County policies; some desire for more separation, separate space for Admin
- **Comments about relationship with local municipalities** – Different based on the municipality, some are better than others at facility management and maintenance; not

always prompt dealing with maintenance requests, snow removal; Library could help with municipal services, e.g. sell dog tags, garbage tags, if distant from township office

- **Alternative library services? (e.g. express depots, holds lockers, book kiosks) Where? –** Express depots – Morewood, Newington, Moose Creek, Dalkeith, Brinstone, Glen Robertson, Riverside Heights, Ault Island, Apple Hill, Jean Coutu strip mall, other small communities; Lockers at branches with few open hours; Little free libraries, community pantries; mobile service to homebound seniors, hospital
- **Final comments** – Love my job, colleagues, we have a great Library system (several); would like good change for cohesive system, set standards, shared services; would like diversity, equity training to serve marginalized communities; Library needs to raise profile in community, use of campaigns; need to fill Admin positions; thanks for asking our opinion, should do it more often.

2.6. Benchmarking Assessment

Ontario's public libraries report usage and related statistics to the Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries on an annual basis, which allows for some comparisons that are of interest to libraries and their funders. As public libraries' response to the pandemic has varied widely since 2020 according to the requirements of their local health units and their ability to respond to service changes, the data set used here is from 2019¹.

Many factors can affect the variation in library data, such as the size and condition of the library building, which can affect both costs and ability to provide programming and accessible space. Some municipalities provide in-kind services such as financial, facility, and IT services, which may or may not be accounted for in the costs. Low investment by the funders, affecting staffing levels, hours of operation, and materials budget, will result in commensurately low outputs of material circulation and program attendance. Quantitative measures are just one way that a library can demonstrate its value. Qualitative measures are indicated elsewhere in this report through the stakeholder interviews and staff surveys.

The "per capita" measure uses the population of the municipality and does not include residents of other municipalities who may use the libraries through reciprocal borrowing agreements.

For many county libraries, the lower-tier municipality owns and operates the local branch facility, and the financial arrangements range widely for this partnership in providing library service to the local community. For example, in Wellington County, the County owns and operates all the branch facilities, while in some cases, the local branches are entirely the

¹ Data from Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, Ontario Public Library Statistics, see: <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/statistics.shtml>

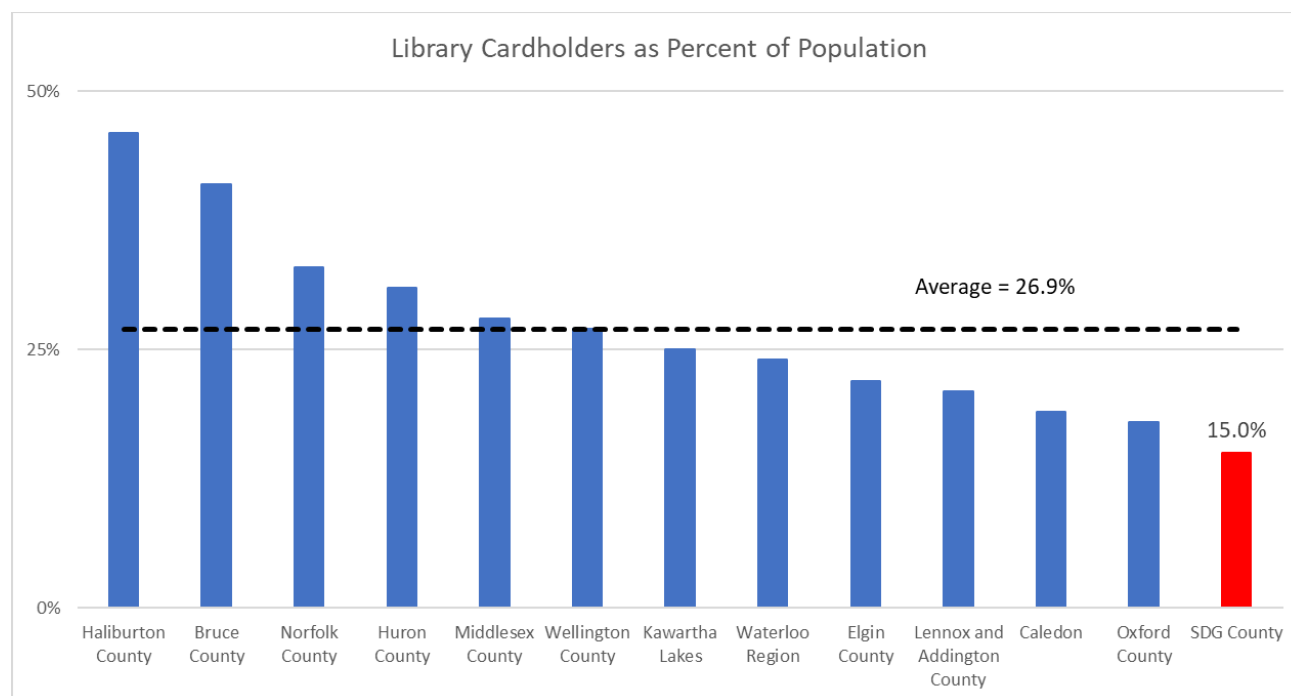
responsibility of the lower-tier. Many county library systems pay some rent, maintenance, or lease to the lower-tier municipality or a third party for the branch space, including SDG Library.

The public libraries selected as comparators include:

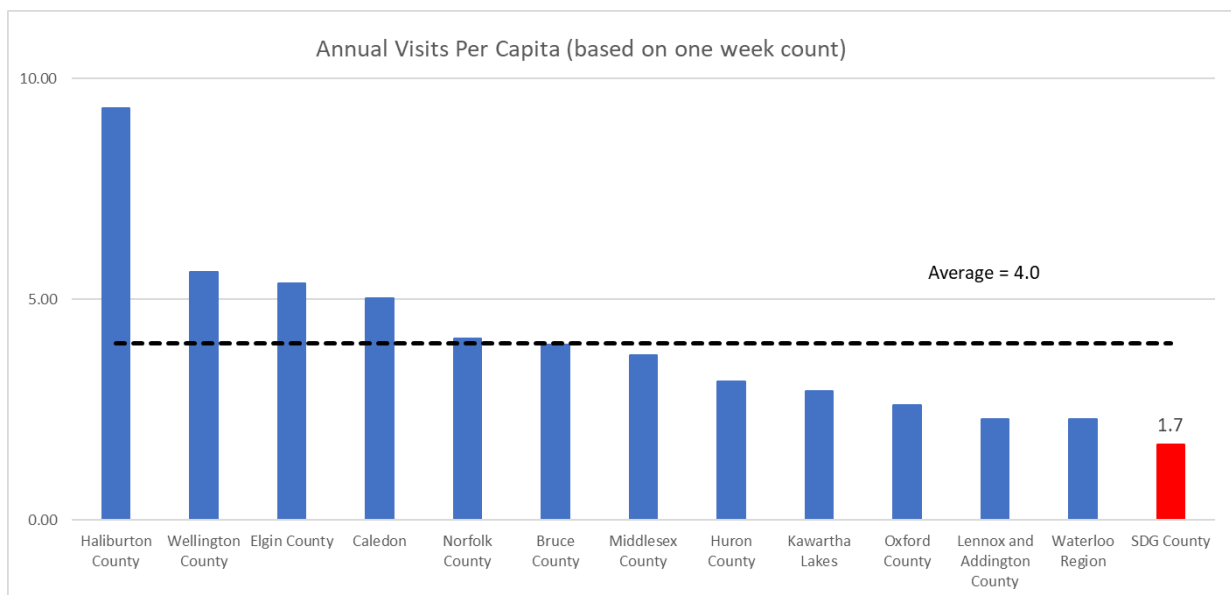
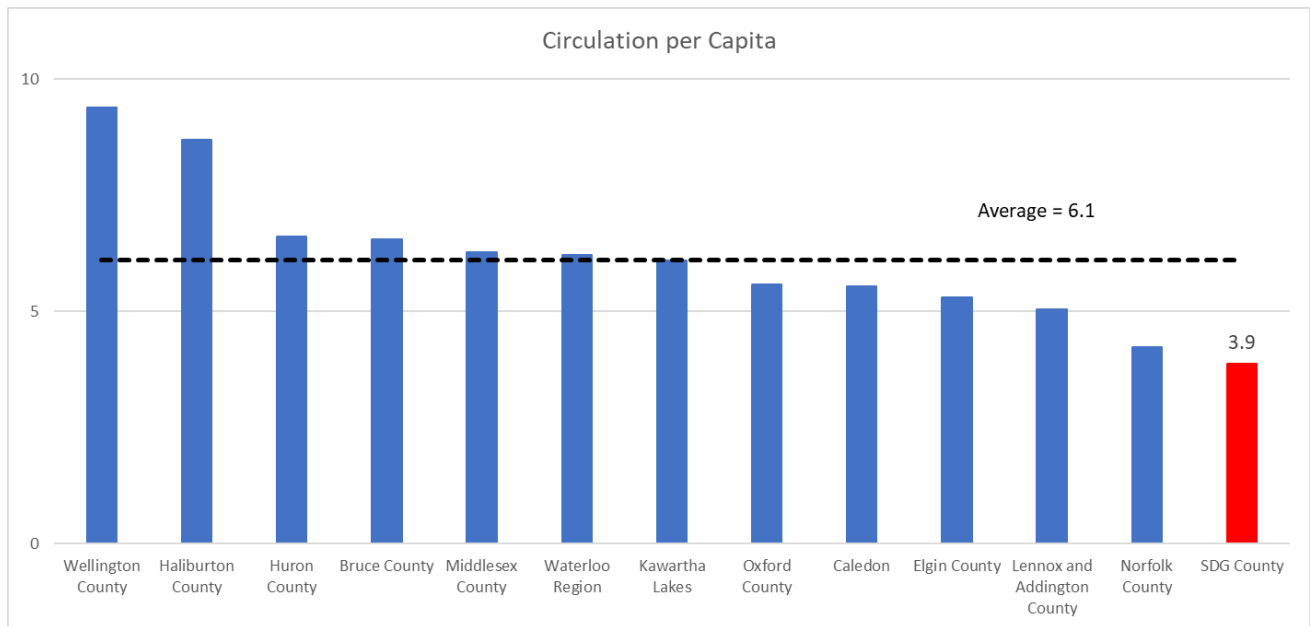
Bruce County Library	Lennox & Addington County Library
Caledon Public Library	Middlesex County Library
Elgin County Library	Norfolk County Library
Haliburton County Library	Oxford County Library
Huron County Library	Waterloo Regional Library
Kawartha Lakes Public Library	Wellington County Library

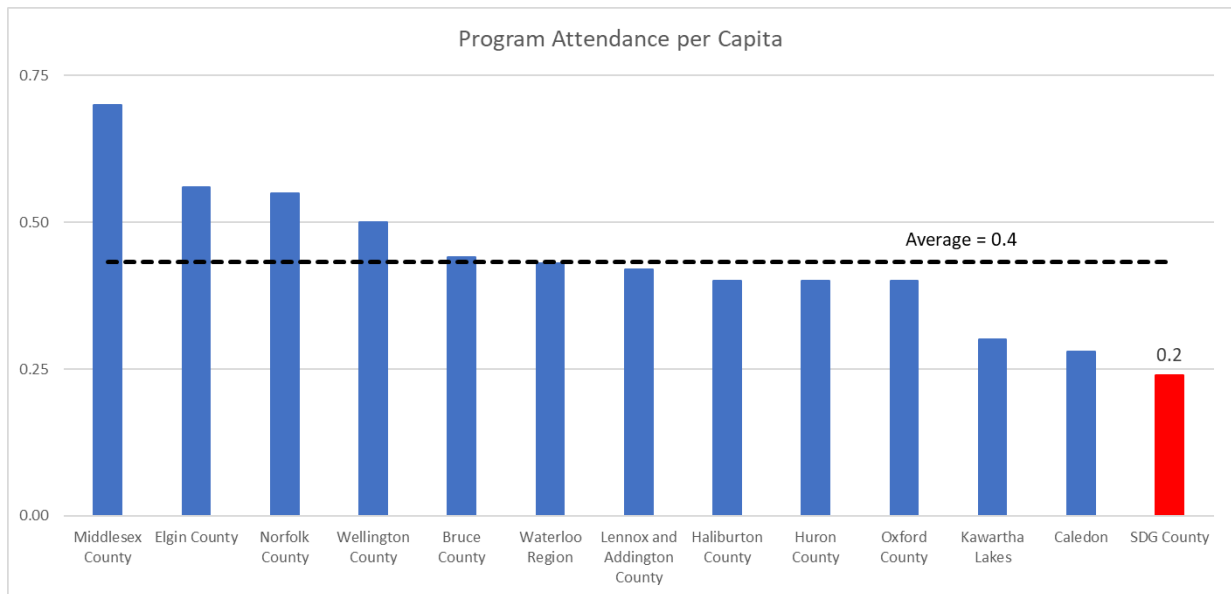
They were selected by the SDG Library as similar in size or configuration. Many of them have a city library adjacent to or within the library’s service area such as Cornwall is to SDG library, but not part of the county library system.

Generally, benchmarking compares community use of the libraries, as demonstrated by the percentage of the residents who have active library cards, as defined by used within the past two years, and the visits to the library. Charts use “per capita” to allow for variations in population by standardizing the measures.



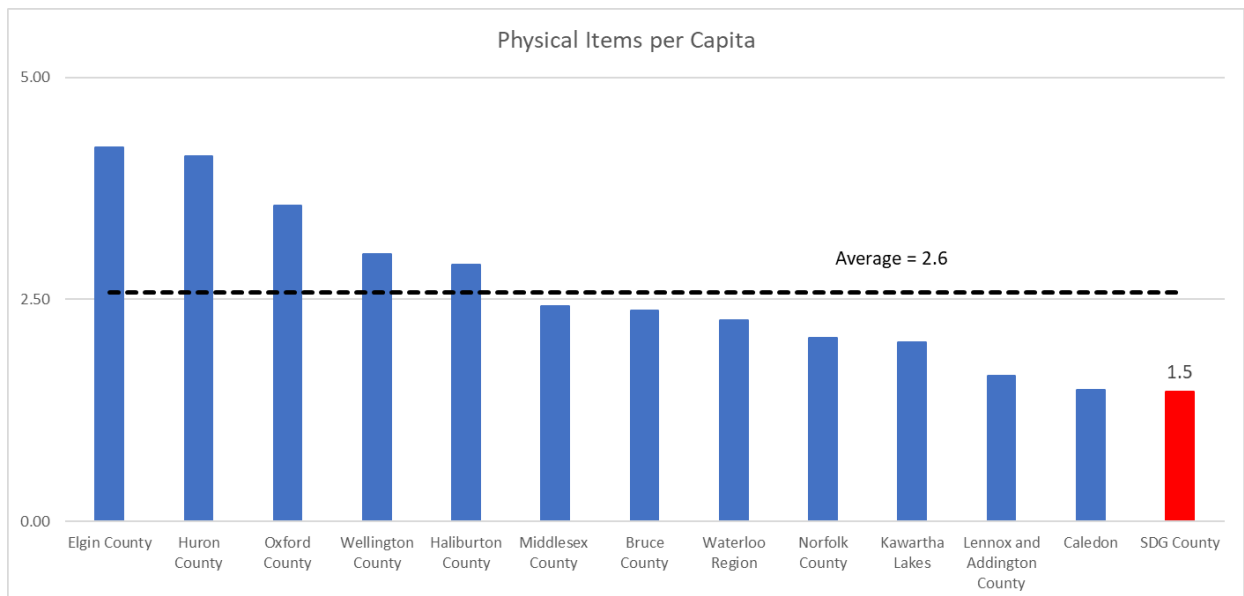
Note that libraries vary in how they manage card renewals. Some have automatic renewals.



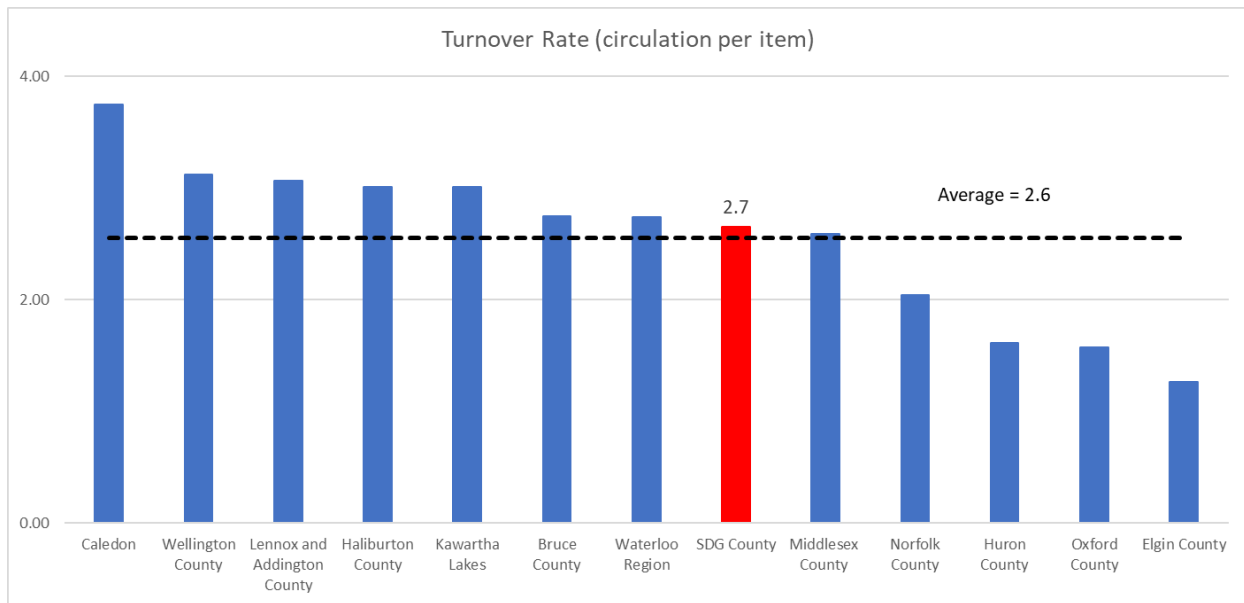


The above charts indicate that SDG Library lags far behind its peer library systems in Library use by the community.

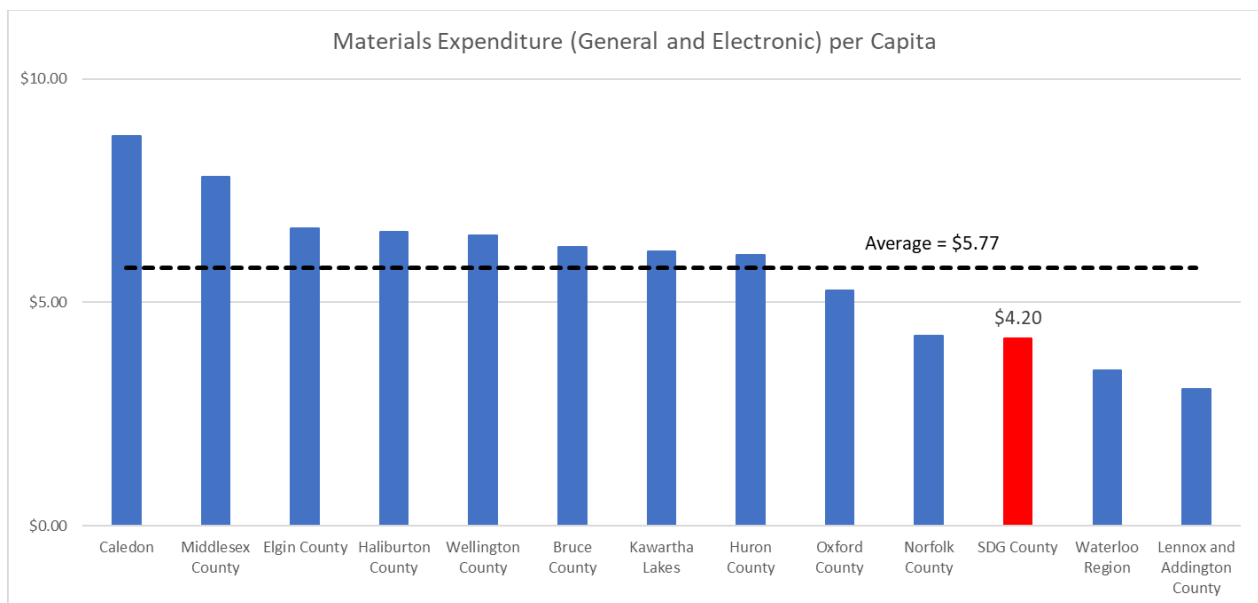
The following two charts are reflective of the Library's collection of materials, specifically the physical collection of books, DVDs, and CDs, which are the browsing collections at the branch libraries.



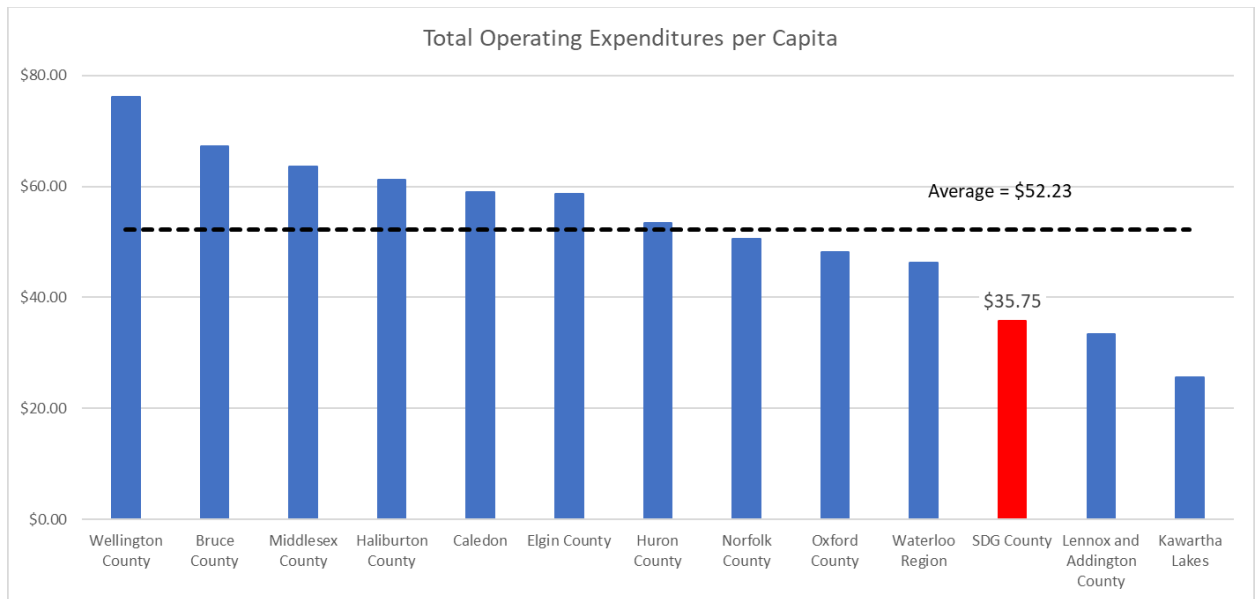
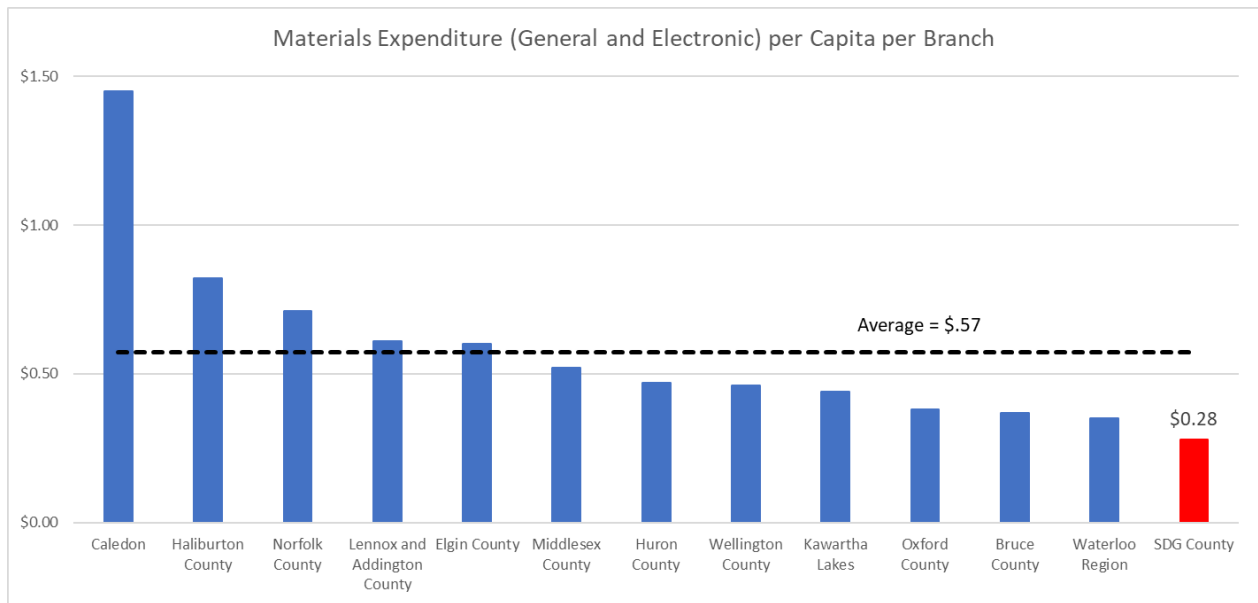
The low number of items per capita can be a reflection of a low materials budget or lack of space to keep an extensive collection.



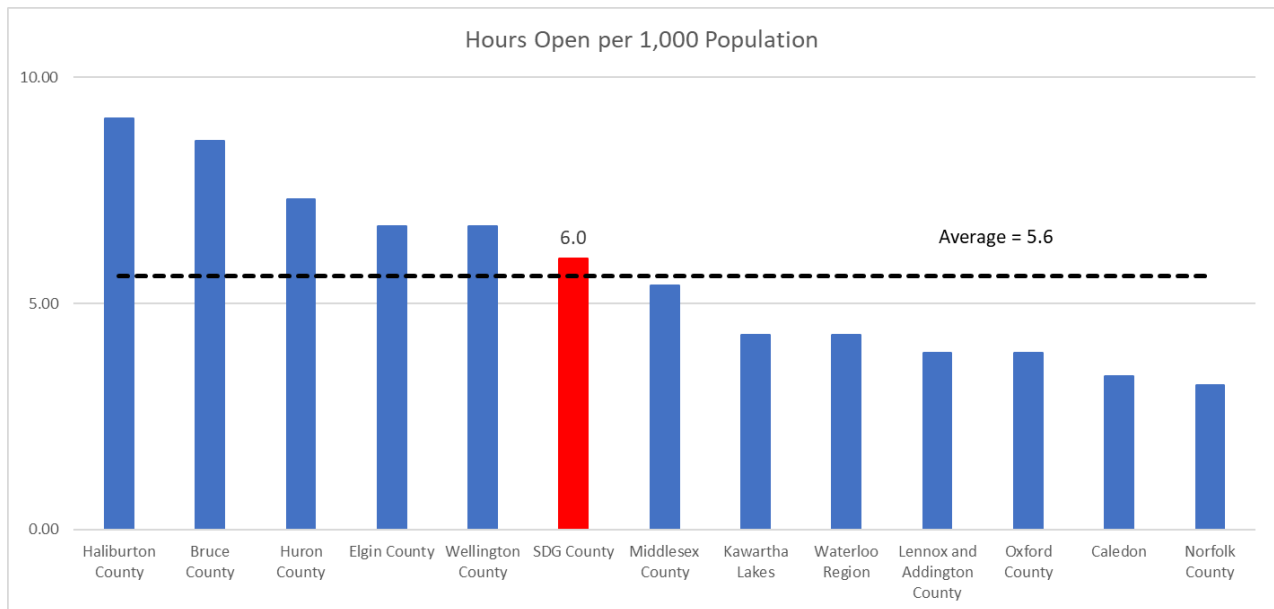
Turnover rate is often considered a measure of the popularity or quality of the collection. This is the only metric where SDG Library is above the average of its peer libraries.



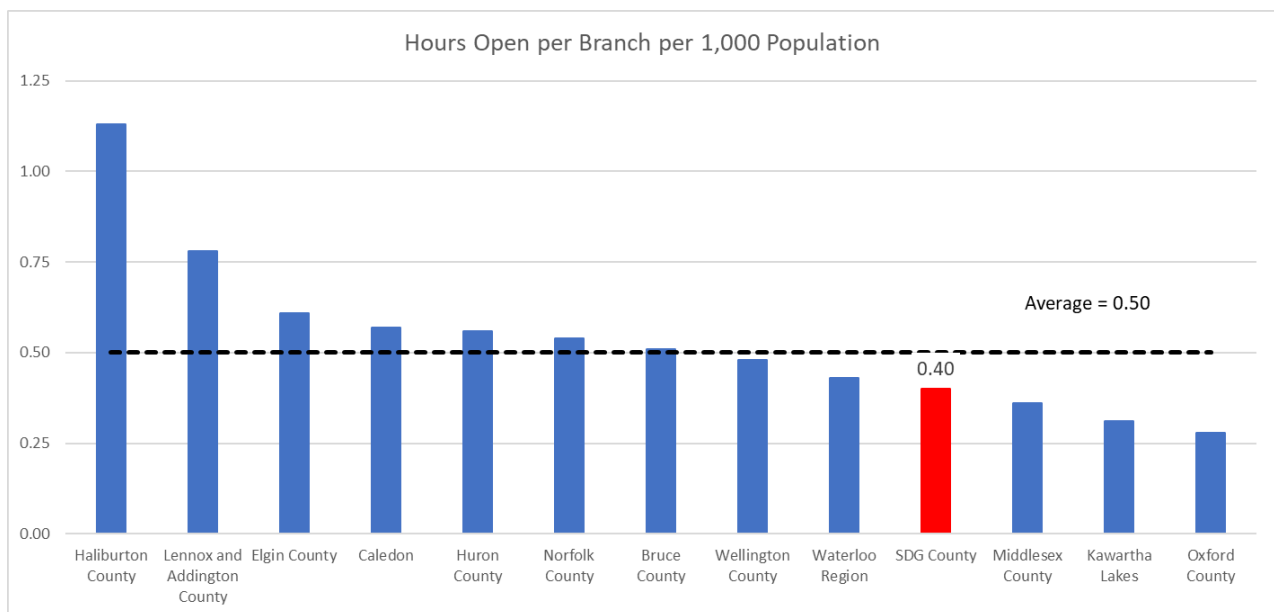
The number of branches in a library system also has an impact on the materials expenditure as the more branches, the wider the selection of materials and need for multiple copies of popular materials. This can be somewhat mitigated with a frequent courier and delivery system between branches to move holds of materials around (as SDG Library has), and all of these multi-branch library systems have that, too.

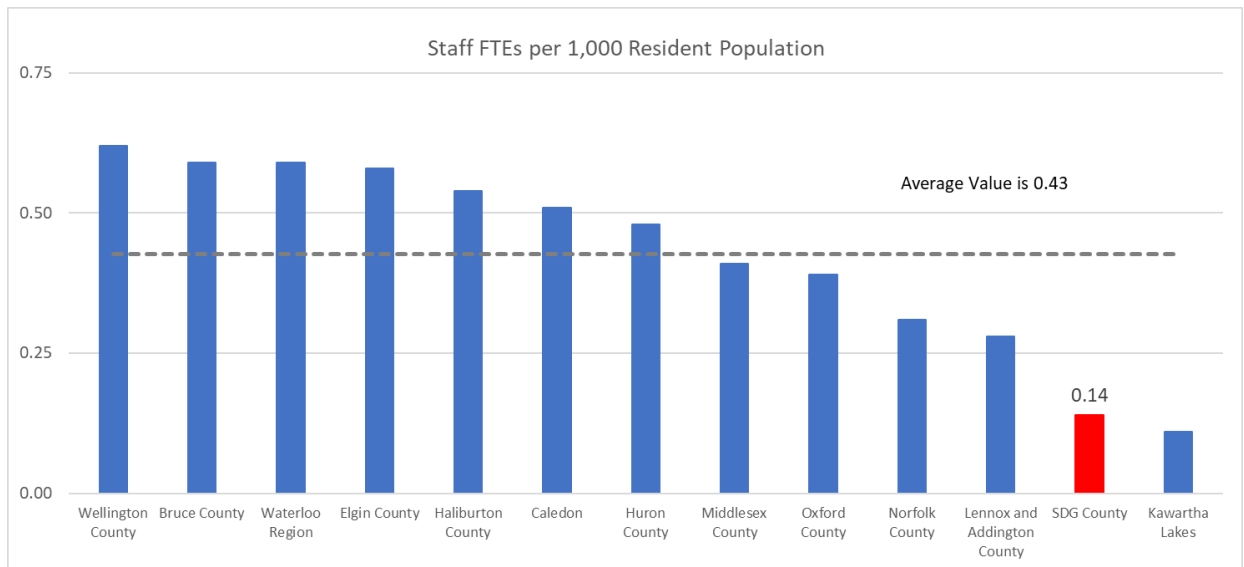


It should be acknowledged that some libraries bear the full cost of the branch facilities and in some cases, the local municipality bears some or all of the facility costs. SDG Library pays market value for leased facilities from the local municipalities.

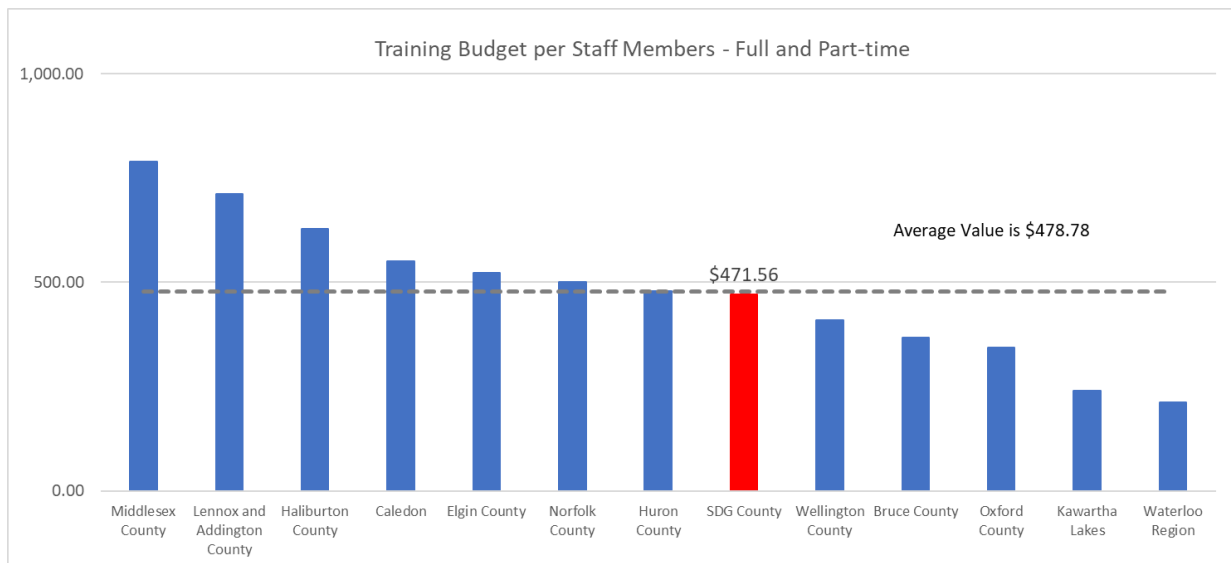


SDG Library is slightly above average in the number of hours open to the public overall, but if one considers the number of branches (below), the hours are spread thinly among the branches.





Again, SDG Library is significantly below its peer libraries in staffing numbers. This can have an impact on staff available to offer programming, and on staff burnout and recruitment issues.



SDG Library is slightly below average on expenditures on staff training. It is important to remember that staff are trained individually, not as full-time equivalents. Compared to all the other metrics above, staff training investment and quality of the library collections are the most successful of SDG's indicators.

ARUPLO Guidelines

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. The third edition (2017) was used for the

following exercise. A fourth edition is in development and early findings suggest that there will not be many changes.

While this Library Service Review is not a facility review, the branch libraries are a key component of SDG Library and need to be assessed for their role in library service.

The ARUPLO Guidelines assign branches based on catchment area and population served. This can be determined by census data, planning department information, and information collected by library boards. In addition, some branches may have additional roles, such as being a resource library for a wider area, hosting a MakerSpace, or a local history collection.

The following is the definition for branch libraries, according to the ARUPLO Guidelines.

Small branches	Generally serve catchment areas of up to 5,000 population
Medium branches	Generally serve catchment areas of 5,000 – 10,000 population
Large branches	Generally serve catchment areas of 10,000 – 35,000 population
Urban branches	Generally serve catchment areas 35,000 or more population

For this service review, rather than start from the size of the Library, the local community's use of the Library was used to determine the catchment population of the branch library.

Admittedly, the size of the library can affect its use, for example, if the library is too small to house an adequate collection of materials, borrowing will be low.

The allocation of population which follows was based on the percentage of active Library cardholders and percentage of circulation of physical materials at each branch. Highlighted branches are the Resource Branches.

Branch	Size (sf)	Approximate Population Served
Alexandria	2,565	10,634
Avonmore	1,170	2,788
Chesterville	1,123	3,670
Crysler	906	3,014
Finch	1,036	1,576
Ingleside	2,551	6,462
Iroquois	1,128	3,715
Lancaster	959	5,092
Long Sault	1,631	5,620
Maxville	1,353	2,081
Morrisburg	2,010	6,408
South Mountain	1,417	2,925
Williamsburg	851	2,221
Williamstown	1,500	2,290
Winchester	2,304	6,503

Using the ARUPLO definition of branches above, the branches of the SDG Library would be classified as follows based on population served:

Small	Avonmore Chesterville Crysler Finch Iroquois Maxville South Mountain Williamsburg Williamstown
Medium	Alexandria Ingleside Lancaster Long Sault Morrisburg Winchester

In the following table, the branches are measured against the ARUPLO guidelines for the category. Note that the Guidelines are provided as a range so that a library system can adjust their service levels for branches close to the edge of the category. Also, branches may require additional resources if they have a special role in their library system, e.g., local history, MakerLab, Resource Branch, supervisory staff.

Small Branches compared with ARUPLO Guidelines

	Space 2,500 – 5,000 sf.	Hours of Operation 20-25 per week	Collection Size 6,000 – 12,000 items
Avonmore	1,170	18	5,555
Chesterville	1,123	17	6,492
Crysler	906	20	6,328
Finch	1,036	18	2,155
Iroquois	1,128	20	7,160
Maxville	1,353	16	6,570
South Mountain	1,417	16	5,832
Williamsburg	851	16	4,036
Williamstown	1,500	17	5,442

Of SDG's small branches, none meet the space guideline, two meet the hours of operation guideline, and four meet the collection size guideline.

Medium Branches compared with ARUPLO Guidelines

	Space 5,000 – 10,000 sf.	Hours of Operation 25-45 per week	Collection Size 12,000-24,000 items
Alexandria	2,565	44	14,348
Ingleside	2,551	44	9,212
Lancaster	959	44	6,825
Long Sault	1,631	30	8,320
Morrisburg	2,010	44	7,837
Winchester	2,304	44	9,929

Five of the Medium Level branches (Alexandria, Ingleside, Lancaster, Morrisburg, and Winchester) also have a role as Resource Branches for the SDG Library system. All of the Medium branches meet the guideline for hours of operation, one meets the collection size guideline, and none meet the space guideline.

Earlier in this section, the comparisons of the SDG Library with similar library systems across Ontario indicated that SDG Library lags far behind on many factors, such as percentage of the population with library cards, circulation, program attendance and number of materials.

The comparison with the ARUPLO Guidelines above show that the size of the library facilities is a serious weakness in the Library system, and a disconnect between the local municipalities responsible for providing library space and the County, responsible for providing the materials, programming, and staffing.

2.7. Situation Analysis

2.7.1. SWOT Assessment as the Basis for a Situation Analysis

A Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis can provide the basis for a service review. Different elements (strengths, weaknesses, and so on) will logically imply different types of strategic actions and initiatives, as shown in the chart below:

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

Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were identified through the various data collection activities undertaken. These are represented in the chart below, using a check mark when the theme is represented. **For the interviews and surveys**, a checkmark (✓) was only indicated if a significant portion of the respondents indicated the factor. This system was not used for the 'benchmarking' and 'consultant judgment' columns where a simple 'yes or no' (presence or absence of checkmark) indicator was used. (The 'consultant judgment' is based on the collective experience of the consultant team from having examined industry trends, the input from all of the avenues previously outlined in this section, and having worked in dozens of other library systems.)

2.7.2. Findings and Conclusions from the SWOT Assessment

Major 'consensus themes' discovered throughout the consultation process are shown in the rows on the chart below (these are grouped according to 'strengths', 'weaknesses', 'opportunities' and 'threats'). The main 'lines of evidence' (i.e. the sources of information where these themes came from, represented by the columns on the chart) were the sources of information previously described in this section: the review of background information; the community stakeholder engagement process (undertaken as preparation for the Strategic Plan); the interviews undertaken for this service review; the staff survey; the benchmarking assessment; and finally, the judgment of the consulting team. A check mark (✓) in the table indicates that the particular theme was heard or seen in that line of evidence.

SWOT Perspective	Background Materials	Stakeholder Engagement from Strategic Plan	Stakeholder Consultations	Staff Survey	Benchmarking	Consultant Judgment
STRENGTHS						
• generally very positive attitude of the community to programs and services offered		✓	✓	✓		✓
• new programs and services constantly being developed		✓	✓	✓		✓
• staff generally seen and friendly and helpful		✓	✓	✓		✓
• generally high staff morale				✓		✓
• good collections					✓	✓
• local branches seen as strong sign of community		✓	✓			✓
• generally strong organization structure						
• all policies and procedures in place, but need updating and cross-checking with OPL Guidelines			✓	✓	✓	✓
WEAKNESSES						
• structure of system: large geographic area with small local branches	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• most facilities too small, crowded, non-accessible	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
• WiFi weak or problematic in several branches		✓	✓			✓
• below average in comparison to similar systems on key metrics					✓	✓
• staff interaction suffers because of number of branches and lack of communication				✓		✓
• no succession plan in place for a system on the cusp of change			✓	✓		✓

<i>SWOT Perspective</i>	Background Materials	Stakeholder Engagement from Strategic Plan	Stakeholder Consultations	Staff Survey	Benchmarking	Consultant Judgment
• community awareness of programs and services available is weak – no Communications and Marketing Coordinator position in place	✓	✓	✓	✓		
• perception that hours of operation in many branches are insufficient		✓	✓	✓		
• separation of administrative HQ from system			✓	✓	✓	✓
OPPORTUNITIES						
• potential to review branches to determine opportunities for efficiencies, closure, better service, expansion			✓	✓		✓
• opportunity for a central administrative presence in a branch			✓	✓		✓
• opportunity for more targeted marketing			✓	✓		✓
• all policies need to be updated on a regular basis		✓	✓	✓		✓
• opportunity to reduce / remove fines as many other library systems have done			✓	✓	✓	✓
• opportunity to update / modernize the traditional and digital collections		✓				✓
• great interest in provision of more virtual programming		✓				✓
THREATS						
• branch closure in smaller communities is seen as a threat		✓	✓	✓		✓

3. Service Review Findings

This **Service Review Findings** section of the report assesses the results and implications resulting from analysis of the various lines of evidence described in the previous section. The structure of this section follows that of the service review itself: looking first at **external services**. This encompasses a **detailed analysis of branch distribution and utilization** and then turns to an analysis of the **collections**. **Programs and services** offered to the public are next examined followed by a review of **technology services** (as offered to the public). **Internal operations** covers **staffing and organization structure, policies and procedures, training and communications**, and, again, **technology** (from the perspective enabling staff to do what they need to do, rather than having an outward, public-facing focus). Finally, **strategic considerations** of all of the above are discussed.

3.1. External (Public Oriented) Perspectives

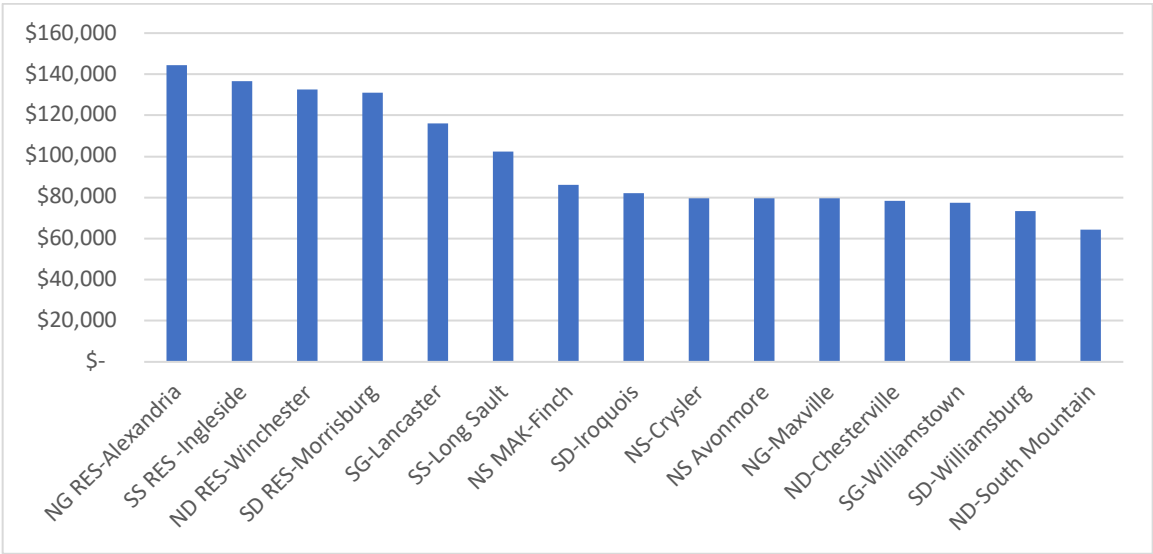
3.1.1. Branch Distribution and Utilization

The table below shows a profile of key statistics for each of the 15 branches. There is considerable variation in statistics and performance when the various branches are compared. (See also Appendix 1.)

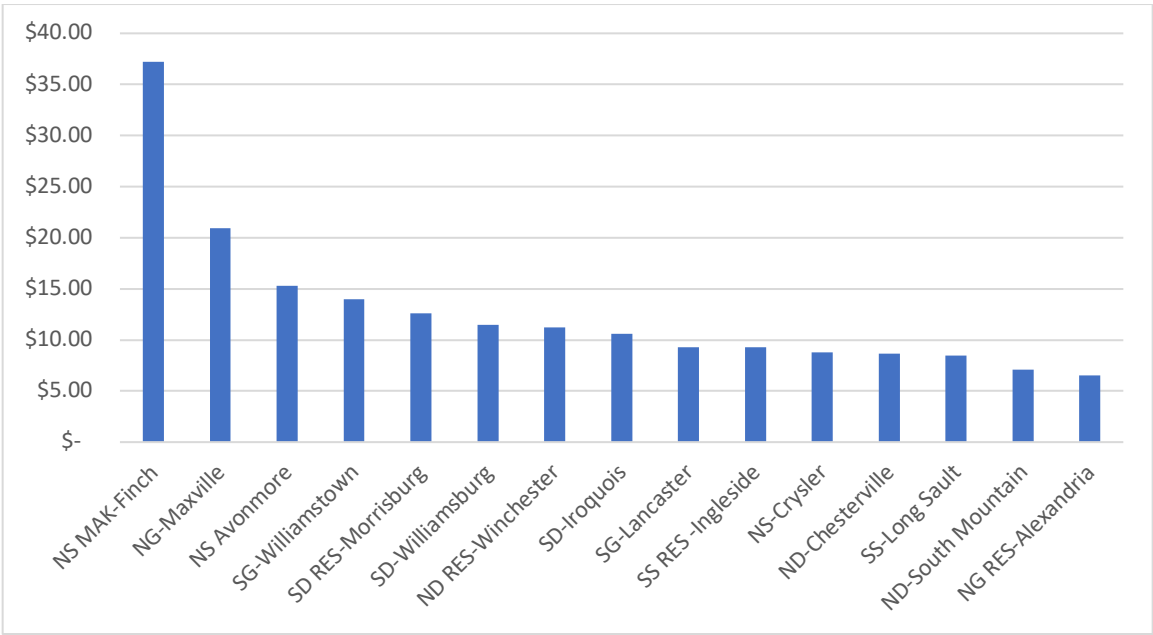
- Branch sizes range from a high of 2565 square feet (Alexandria) to a low of 851 square feet (Williamsburg)
- Cost per item circulated at each branch range from \$37.21 (Finch which is the MakerLab) and \$20.92 (Maxville) to \$6.50 (Alexandria).
- Cost per active member ranges from \$287.37 (Finch) and \$253.41 (Maxville) to \$80.44 (Alexandria)
- Cost per visitor ranges from \$138.16 (Finch) and \$71.49 (Maxville) to \$23.91 (Alexandria)

	NG RES- Alexandria	NS Avonmore	ND- Chesterville	NS-Crysler	NS MAK- Finch	SS RES- Ingleside	SD-Iroquois	SG-Lancaster	SS-Long Sault	NG-Maxville	SD RES- Morrisburg	ND-South Mountain	SD- Williamsburg	SG- Williamstown	ND RES- Winchester	Total
SF	2,565	1,170	1,123	906	1,036	2,551	1,128	959	1,631	1,353	2,010	1,417	851	1,500	2,304	22,504
Accessible	Yes	Yes	Bathrooms are not	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	automatic door or bathroom	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	door; washrooms not accessible	Yes	
Members	1,796	443	568	410	300	1,073	559	868	847	314	1,054	382	284	326	1,019	10,243
Circulation	22,226	5,205	9,055	9,059	2,317	14,769	7,763	12,478	12,110	3,804	10,373	9,051	6,388	5,550	11,790	141,938
Visitors	6,041	1,289	2,005	1,246	624	8,073	2,368	3,789	3,977	1,113	4,433	1,246	1,647	1,341	4,126	43,318
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS	\$ 114,378	\$ 49,576	\$ 48,394	\$ 49,632	\$ 56,123	\$ 106,674	\$ 51,994	\$ 86,105	\$ 72,408	\$ 49,482	\$ 100,919	\$ 34,261	\$ 43,313	\$ 47,450	\$ 102,546	\$ 1,013,254
TOTAL COSTS	\$ 144,467	\$ 79,666	\$ 78,484	\$ 79,722	\$ 86,212	\$ 136,763	\$ 82,083	\$ 116,194	\$ 102,497	\$ 79,572	\$ 131,008	\$ 64,350	\$ 73,402	\$ 77,539	\$ 132,636	\$ 1,464,595
COST/CIRC!!	\$ 6.50	\$ 15.31	\$ 8.67	\$ 8.80	\$ 37.21	\$ 9.26	\$ 10.57	\$ 9.31	\$ 8.46	\$ 20.92	\$ 12.63	\$ 7.11	\$ 11.49	\$ 13.97	\$ 11.25	\$ 10.32
COST/ACTIVE MEMBER	\$ 80.44	\$ 179.83	\$ 138.18	\$ 194.44	\$ 287.37	\$ 127.46	\$ 146.84	\$ 133.86	\$ 121.01	\$ 253.41	\$ 124.30	\$ 168.46	\$ 258.46	\$ 237.85	\$ 130.16	\$ 142.99
COST/VISITOR	\$ 23.91	\$ 61.80	\$ 39.14	\$ 63.98	\$ 138.16	\$ 16.94	\$ 34.66	\$ 30.67	\$ 25.77	\$ 71.49	\$ 29.55	\$ 51.65	\$ 44.57	\$ 57.82	\$ 32.15	\$ 33.81
COST/SF	\$ 56.32	\$ 68.09	\$ 69.89	\$ 87.99	\$ 83.22	\$ 53.61	\$ 72.77	\$ 121.16	\$ 62.84	\$ 58.81	\$ 65.18	\$ 45.41	\$ 86.25	\$ 51.69	\$ 57.57	\$ 65.08

The chart below shows the total costs for each branch sorted from high to low.



The chart below shows the cost per item circulated for each of the branches sorted from high to low.



Using data from the 2021 Ontario Library Statistics, it is possible to compare various indicators from SDG Library to a number of other County library systems. The table below shows a number of indicators for 8 County library systems elsewhere in Ontario, the average of each indicator, and a comparison with SDG Library. We recognize that each County system is to some degree unique and that comparisons are not perfect. Also with financial data, we caution that library systems sometimes have different ways of accounting for their facility costs. For example, some County systems own their libraries, others like SDG lease them from the municipality or other owners. Notwithstanding these differences, the following comparisons provide directional indicators of how SDG Library is similar to or differs from other county systems.

	Cardholders / capita	Physical Circulation / capita	Digital circ/capita	Program attendance / capita	Branches	Branches / 10,000 capita	Local funding / capita	Total expenditure s / capita	Cost / physical circ	Cost / total circ (physical and dig)	Cost / square feet	Cost / branch	Cost / cardholder	Square feet / capita	Square feet / branch
Brant County	68%	6.2	2.4	0.64	5	1.6	\$ 72.74	\$ 72.09	\$ 11.55	\$ 8.32	\$ 108.24	\$ 443,792	\$ 107	0.67	4,100
Bruce County	40%	5.1	2.4	0.41	17	2.8	\$ 65.89	\$ 72.28	\$ 14.16	\$ 9.62	\$ 83.48	\$ 259,871	\$ 182	0.87	3,113
Huron County	29%	3.0	1.7	0.07	13	2.2	\$ 47.60	\$ 51.37	\$ 16.85	\$ 10.75	\$ 65.35	\$ 234,332	\$ 177	0.79	3,586
Lambton County	13%	2.6	3.3	0.08	25	2.0	\$ 54.71	\$ 58.81	\$ 22.28	\$ 9.91	\$ 89.47	\$ 297,911	\$ 450	0.66	3,330
Lennox and Addington County	16%	2.8	1.9	0.12	5	1.2	\$ 39.00	\$ 39.20	\$ 14.23	\$ 8.36	\$ 93.34	\$ 336,271	\$ 251	0.42	3,603
Middlesex County Library	23%	1.6	2.1	0.45	15	2.0	\$ 42.24	\$ 66.37	\$ 40.49	\$ 17.98	\$ 72.98	\$ 326,904	\$ 292	0.91	4,479
Norfolk County	36%	1.8	1.0	0.19	5	0.8	\$ 41.66	\$ 52.23	\$ 29.03	\$ 18.34	\$ 65.60	\$ 668,994	\$ 144	0.80	10,198
Oxford County	24%	4.0	2.7	0.05	14	2.1	\$ 58.67	\$ 66.23	\$ 16.77	\$ 9.90	\$ 98.26	\$ 322,038	\$ 272	0.67	3,277
Average of 8 County Libraries	31%	3.4	2.2	0.3	12.4	1.8	\$ 52.81	\$ 59.82	\$ 20.67	\$ 11.65	\$ 84.59	\$ 361,264	\$ 234	0.72	4,461
SDG Library	14%	1.3	3.6	0.02	15	2.2	\$ 40.18	\$ 40.05	\$ 31.61	\$ 8.22	\$ 108.84	\$ 182,442	\$ 286	0.37	1,676

Key findings include:

- SDG has a lower level of cardholders as a percentage of its population (14%) than the average for the other county systems (31%).
- SDG's physical circulation per capita (1.3) is lower than the average for the other 8 county systems (3.4)
- Digital circulation per capita, which includes e-books, e-audio books, music, video and magazine downloads is higher (3.6) than the other county systems (2.2) – it is likely that many SDG users are taking advantage of the digital offerings as a priority which may contribute to lower circulation of physical materials
- SDG's program attendance per capital is lower (0.02) than the other counties (0.3), likely caused by the lack of space to run programs in many SDG branches.
- SDG's number of branches is higher (15) than the average for the other county systems (12.4).
- The number of branches per 10,000 capita is higher (2.2) than the average (1.8)
- Local funding per capita is lower (\$40.18) than the average of the other county systems (\$52.81)

- Similarly SDG's total library expenditure per capita (\$40.05) is lower than the average (\$59.82)
- Cost per physical item circulated (\$31.61) is higher than the average (\$20.67)
- Cost per square foot of library space is higher (\$108.84) than the average (\$84.59)
- SDG's cost per branch is lower (\$182,442) than the average of the other County libraries (\$361,264).
- The total cost per SDG cardholder (\$286) is higher than the average (\$234)
- The square feet per capita of library space (1,676) is lower than the average (4,461) for the other county systems.

The above data shows relative to other county libraries, SDG has a large number of small branches. It lacks space to do programming. Its library space is relatively expensive. With small collections in many branches, it would appear that users are taking advantage of SDG's digital offerings (more so than users of other library systems).

While not the focus of this study, it is possible that SDG should have fewer, better libraries serving larger numbers of people. It would benefit from a more robust study of SDG's Library facilities with a view to providing more efficient and effective services.

3.1.2. Collections

The physical collections (books, DVDs, CDs) are highly valued by library borrowers as indicated in the stakeholder findings. Specifically mentioned is the interbranch courier service which delivers requested materials between branches. Materials are refreshed to remove items from each branch which haven't been borrowed in three years. These are either reassigned to another branch or removed from the collection if they are deemed out of date. The statistics also indicate that SDG Library has a good turnover rate of its collection, which is a measure of the number of circulations per item. This is an indicator of the popularity of the collection.

The benchmarking statistics indicate that SDG Library has the lowest number of physical items per capita (1.5) of the thirteen libraries compared with Elgin County the highest (4.2) and an average of 2.6. This can sometimes be a result of inadequate space. SDG also has a low materials budget per capita, especially when the number of branches is taken into account.

When the study team visited all the branches of the SDG Library, they observed that the collections were tidy and attractively displayed. Book club kits, Homework Helpers Curriculum Kits, and Ready to Read backpacks offer curated added value to the collections. Express Library depots provide direct delivery of materials in three small remote communities.

Like many other libraries, SDG has a broad collection of electronic resources. Unlike the physical materials above, they are available to everybody who has good Internet access at home or work, and do not require branch physical space or travel to branches. This was particularly appreciated by the community during lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some examples of the electronic resources available are:

- cloudLibrary – eBooks and e-audiobooks – over 200,000 titles
- Flipster and Pressreader – 30 online magazines and over 7,000 newspapers
- Kanopy – video streaming
- Mango Languages
- Several other reference resources.

3.1.3. Programs and Services Offered to the Public

Like many other libraries, programs were greatly affected by the pandemic at the SDG Library. Virtual or on-line programming was offered via YouTube and social media. Recovery of in-person programs at the branches has been gradual. The SDG Library is continuing to offer virtual programs via Zoom which are popular among remote residents across the region. Again, the lack of space at the Library branches affects the programming available. For example, some branches are unable to host class visits as their occupancy load is less than a class size.

The SDG Library also offers a broad range of services, including a MakerLab and Library of Things. Particularly popular are the wifi hotspots, with a waiting list to borrow the 30 units. Other non-traditional items include musical instruments, energy meters, and exercise kits. The MakerLab and Library of Things are located at the Finch Branch and have dedicated “maker expert” staff. 3D printers are located at three other branches, and some programming with the MakerLab equipment takes place at various branches as well on a mobile basis. Basing the MakerLab at the Finch Branch was an effort to revitalize an underutilized branch central in the Counties.

Library staff also provide services such as Commissioner of Oaths, exam invigilation, and computer training. All branches have computers with Internet and iPads available for the public and wifi for people to use their own devices.

Library programs, services, and collections are promoted via the Library’s website, social media, and an excellent quarterly publication, The Navigator, which is available in print at the branches and online.

3.1.4. Technological Resources Offered to the Public

During challenging times from pandemic restrictions, SDG Library management applied creative and nimble solutions to continue the delivery of its programs and services and is openminded to future possibilities offered by technological change. The Library can explore the use of technology to add service and showcase cutting edge technologies while promoting access, digital literacy and equity.

CURRENT TECHNOLOGY – SDG Library offers popular programs and services to the public and its branches act as community hubs and bulletin boards.

Services include new computer workstations, print/copy/scan service, wireless internet access, online membership/renewal, 3D printers at four branches, new iPads at resource branches, Library of Things with musical instruments, mobile hotspots, makerspaces, in-branch video gaming devices, and three Express Library Depots for holds pickup.

SDG Library launched a YouTube channel with “how to” videos, information services, and a soft launch for digital services cloudLibrary. It was advertised with a link on social media and provided virtual support during the pandemic.

The **BiblioCore** discovery layer <https://sdglibrary.bibliocommons.com> includes user ratings and reviews, display of booklists and promotions, and direct downloading of digital media including cloudLibrary ebooks and audiobooks, Flipster magazines, Press Reader newspapers. It serves as a virtual branch open 24/7 and more services can be added to enhance the SDG Library user experience. Support for the website <https://sdglibrary.ca> ends in 2023, and the Library will implement BiblioWeb as its integrated website.

Training continues to be an important part of promoting digital literacy. Some patrons need help with online forms, booking and downloads. SDG Library offers front-line training with a “train the trainer” model, and Library users can book one-on-one sessions with the District Supervisors at the branches. For new services like cloudLibrary, and where staff work alone at the branch, the District Supervisors oversee the schedule and provide supplemental staff. "Tech Tuesday" is a program for random drop-ins. Some training is offered by the vendor either inhouse or webinar. There is some classroom training, but tech help is more successful one on one.

Staff technology training incorporates three different skill sets. Network and hardware support are provided by County IT Services. Polaris ILS system administration and in-house support are provided by the temporary Systems Support Coordinator. Public-facing support is supplied by the Coordinator and District Supervisors and includes assistance with mobile devices and marketing of services.

Internet connectivity has some dead zones in rural areas, including a few branches, and the County and City of Cornwall are working on delivery of a broadband fibre network.

FUTURE TECHNOLOGY SERVICE MODELS – The SDG Library Strategic Plan has a goal to expand its digital infrastructure and collection, community hub and accessibility. The pandemic accelerated the growth for on demand delivery of Library resources, and mobile access. SDG Library can invest in innovative technology that serves local needs in an area with few local alternatives and promotes its value with an active marketing program.

Technology plan – a formal plan can provide SDG Library with a road map to align Library service goals with IT planning for maximum impact and community development. The Library’s mission and vision will shape technology programs and services and keep it on track and on task. The formal plan should assess user needs and expectations so that the technology service is used effectively. The plan provides a multi-year IT pathway and connects the frontend user interface and supporting backend systems. It can include:

- an inventory of existing technology assets
- assessment of staff skills with a plan to develop expertise
- support agreements with vendors and/or municipal departments
- annual plan and budget to add technologies to meet service goals
- disaster preparedness plan
- life cycle plan for disposal of dated or broken technologies, and their replacement
- periodic review and revision of technology needs and plans

Emerging technologies and generational change point to an increase for on demand service, quick response from providers, and mobile 24/7 library delivery.

- Self service options offer convenience for patrons and reduce wait time. Options include ILS apps on mobile devices for checkouts/renewals/checkins, self-check stations in the branch, charging stations, online registration for Library programs, wireless printing from mobile devices. Online assistance and quick response to queries are available to patrons with third party chat services.
- After hours access to branch - Open Access offers secure card access to Library collections after hours, a successful solution for smaller branches in rural areas. It extends opening hours for hold pickups, quiet study spots and computer workstations.

Digital collections can be expanded to include innovative technology collections. If smaller branches share space with patrons who want quiet areas, then loaning some of these collections could be a better solution than keeping as in-house use.

Ongoing training is necessary for staff as front-line service. If the Library provides basic service to patrons from trained branch staff, then partnerships can be formed with organizations such as colleges or community-based literacy centres to offer expanded courses. Training could be provided by high school volunteers after formal training by Library staff. Additional content can be added to video channels and tutorial services.

Outreach options can promote technology beyond Library walls with a pop-up library at community events, mobile makerspace, or pop-up learning lab.

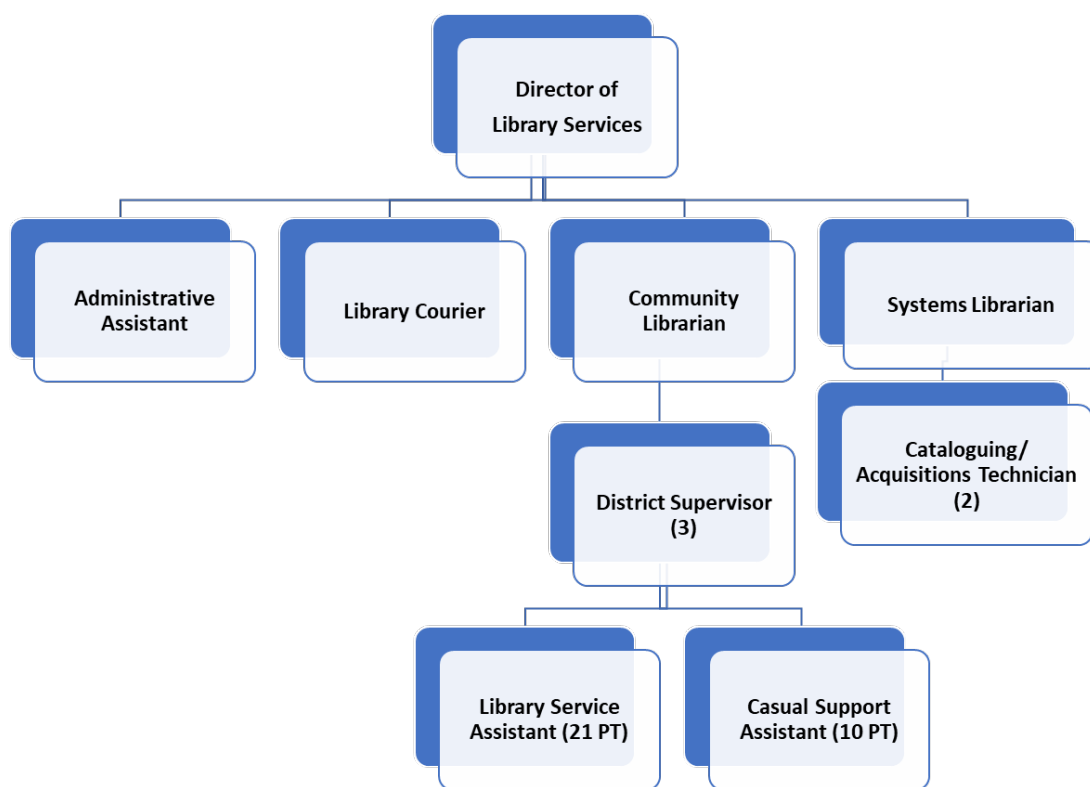
Marketing and promotion can showcase SDG Library’s technology programs and services to patrons and the community. Personalized marketing provides a customized selection of material and services and increases patron engagement.

3.2. Internal Perspectives

3.2.1. Organization and Staffing

The Director of Library Services reports to the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry County Library Board, in accordance with *The Public Libraries Act*. Additionally, the SDG Library also functions as a department of the County. As such, the Director is a member of the Senior Management Team of the County, and the County provides support services such as human resources, payroll, financial services, and information technology. For many libraries, this is a desirable model, positioning the Library well in the structure of the funding agency.

The Library's current organizational structure is as follows:



The fifteen branches are grouped geographically into three districts and the branch staff are supervised by a District Supervisor in each, who work in the branches themselves. District meetings of their teams are held regularly. This is a good team model for branch library operations. Many branch staff work alone, especially in the smaller branches.

As the branches at SDG Library are already in the small- medium range, all front-line staff are already generalists, in that they provide assistance to Library visitors including reader's advisory, reference service, and programming. This is an emerging trend and challenge for

larger public libraries but SDG and many county library branches have had this service model for a long time.

Likewise, collection development is done at many levels, including front-line branch staff right up to the Director of Library Services, based on their expertise and areas of interest. This is supported by Automatic Release Plans (ARPs) and leased best sellers, managed by the Cataloguing/Acquisitions Technicians.

At the time of this study, the key positions of Community Librarian and Systems Librarian were vacant and had been for some time. Both positions have been challenging for recruitment and retention. This may be in response to the current job market, the level of remuneration at SDG Counties, the remote location, or workload. The Library will need to address these issues. Remuneration is a challenge with pay equity compensation plans. One response can be an adjustment of the workload.

Currently, the Library is addressing the vacancies by leaving the Community Librarian position vacant until after this service review, and the Director assuming the supervisory and collection development responsibilities in addition to her own responsibilities and workload, which is unsustainable. The outreach responsibilities of the Community Librarian position have largely been dropped, or been downloaded to the District Supervisors.

The Systems Librarian responsibilities have been, to some extent, delivered by a temporary Systems Support Coordinator, a position filled through the secondment of a District Supervisor. This position is “keeping the lights” on for all the technical services. Both the Systems Librarian position and Systems Support Coordinator positions have been difficult to fill in the current job market.

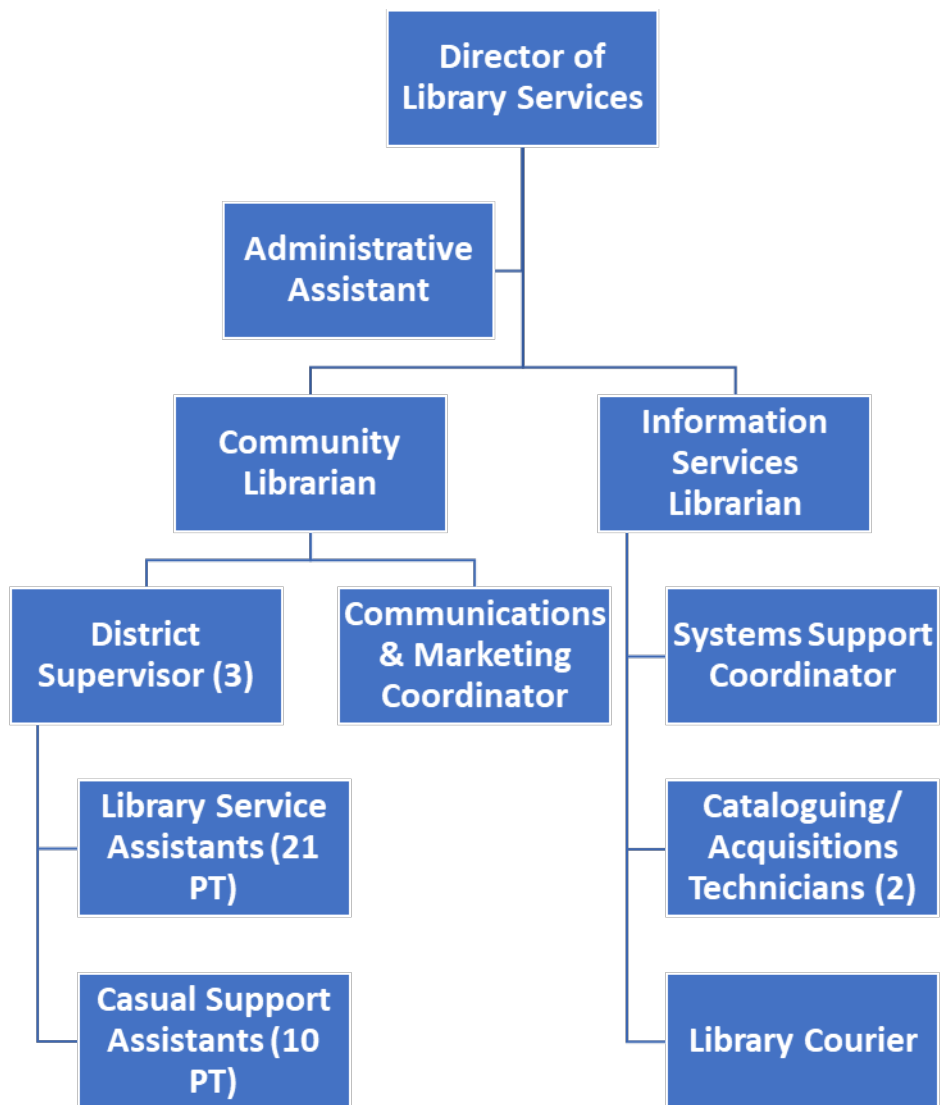
Both the Community Librarian position and Systems Librarian have the responsibility of “acting as the in-charge person as required,” though neither position is identified as Deputy Director, or second-in-command to the Director in her absence. Either of these positions could be designated as Deputy Director, based on the competencies and experience of the incumbents.

Former positions included a Systems Support Coordinator, which looked after system-wide library technologies. (Network and general IT services are provided by the County IT department.)

It is recommended that the Systems Librarian position be renamed Information Services Librarian, with responsibilities for emerging technologies, electronic resources, technical services, and the overall Library technology portfolio. It is further recommended that the Systems Support Coordinator position be reinstated. The System Support Coordinator will handle the day-to-day operations and troubleshooting of the Library’s systems. Together, the two positions will ensure continuous support for this essential infrastructure.

A former temporary position was the Communications & Marketing Coordinator, with responsibility for various marketing strategies, community relations, internal communications, social media, website, and the media. **It is recommended that this position be reinstated to ensure that the Library's programs and services are well publicized to the community.** Outreach should continue to be performed by the Community Librarian at the county-wide level and the District Supervisors (and Library Service Assistants) at the local branch level.

PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



3.2.2. Policies and Procedures

Functioning as a department of The Counties, the SDG Library has adopted many of the County's operational policies and procedures, such as Human Resources, Financial, and IT. Specific to library services, policies include:

- Library governance policies – such as advocacy, succession planning, financial control;
- Library operational policies – such as facilities, collection development, internet use, rules of conduct.

A high-level review of the policies indicate that they are reflective of the broader public library sector.

Recently, during the COVID-19 pandemic, many libraries removed their policy to charge overdue fines for overdue materials, and have since cancelled all fines as a way of reducing a barrier to library service. SDG Library does not charge overdue fines for children's materials, and all materials can be returned to any branch of the Library system. Each November, the Library holds a "Food for Fines" amnesty week in which borrowers with overdue materials can clear their account by donating non-perishable food.

One way of ensuring that the policies meet widely accepted community expectations is to review all policies to ensure they align with the Ontario Public Library Guidelines.

Recommendations:

1. Review the overdue fines policy with a goal of reducing barriers to Library use, i.e., consider dropping overdue fines for all materials;
2. Review all policies through a customer-focused lens;
3. Do a preliminary audit comparing the SDG Library policies with the ones included in the Ontario Public Libraries Guidelines.

Again, at a high level, procedures were assessed as follows:

- The SDG Library functions as many of Ontario's county libraries do:
 - Refreshing branch library collections through exchanges, filling patron requests, and acquiring materials by staff with expert knowledge in particular collections, delivered through a frequent courier service and supplemented by Automatic Release Plans (ARPs) and lease of best sellers;
 - programs are delivered as resources permit and within the constraints of the undersized Library branches.
- It is a challenge to ensure that all staff are up to date with policies and procedures.

Recommendations:

1. Prepare an online policy and procedure manual for all staff access;
2. Develop an alert/sign off mechanism to ensure that all staff are up to date with policies and procedures.

3.2.3. Internal Technological Resources

CURRENT TECHNOLOGY - The County IT Services department supports SDG Library's hardware, network, security settings, data backups, and provides research, advice and purchasing for the Library's IT budget. This includes the local hosting of the Library's Polaris ILS servers and Telephony, an automatic dialler. Separate vendors support printer and photocopy equipment, and County IT also reviews those contracts to benefit the Library.

The IT collaboration fosters a good municipal relationship. Library management is part of the County's IT Steering Committee, ensuring a seat at the table and knowledge about upcoming projects.

However, SDG Library struggles with inadequate staffing levels to maintain and develop technology services within the Library. If the temporary Systems Support Coordinator is absent, there is inadequate backup for software and local hardware support. At least one full-time position is needed for Library system administration and support, as well as staff to act as backup during absences. Support hours are unavailable from County IT evenings and weekends which impacts branch staff. For example, some system passwords expire every 6 weeks, requiring District Supervisors to be on call for Saturday staff.

FUTURE TECHNOLOGY SERVICE MODELS

Systems staff - establish full-time coverage of ILS and application support, plus backup staff. This ensures operational continuity during absence of technical support staff, emergency preparedness, service disruption due to sudden closure, and hardware failure. Succession planning should be considered for transfer of systems knowledge and skillset.

Alternative support options can secure redundancy for technology systems and support.

- ILS vendors offer cloud-based service. SDG Library can investigate the financial and functional benefits of moving its locally hosted Polaris ILS to a cloud service. The advantages are provision of 24/7 support, vendor responsibility for backups, software and hardware upgrades, plus contingency plans for server failure and security.
- Remote support can expand hours of troubleshooting service to the branches. The Systems Support Coordinator and District Supervisors can use remote support tools to diagnose problems at the branch libraries when County IT are unavailable.
- Polaris has additional modules to increase functionality. Offline Circulation provides circulation service if the system is unavailable. A web-based application provides access to the system from mobile locations, allowing mobile staff to register new users and provide service outside Library branches.
- Shared services with other libraries or consortia can be explored. Agreements with other Polaris libraries or consortia can offer additional support and cost efficiencies.

3.2.4. Training and Communications

In a widely dispersed workplace such as a rural library system, it is a challenge to keep all staff informed and trained. Most front-line staff at SDG Library are part-time and often have no overlapping shift with other employees, i.e., they work alone. It is important to acknowledge that employees are trained on an individual basis, not in full-time equivalents.

The ARUPLO Guidelines best practices recommend that 1% of the staff wages and benefits budget be allocated to staff training. The SDG Library meets this guideline.

While system-wide administrative and support staff positions require education and competencies such as Master of Library and Information Science degrees, Library Technician diplomas, and computer technical skills depending on the position, many front-line branch staff do not have or require these levels of education.

Front-line branch staff should be encouraged to participate in the EXCEL certificate program in small library management delivered by the Ontario Library Service. In order to foster a culture of internal succession and advancement, as well as excellence in leadership, senior staff should be encouraged to participate in the Advanced Public Library Leadership (APLL) Institute. (It is noted that the current Director has already completed this program.)

In-service workshops are held annually where all branches are closed for a day so that all Library staff can participate. This not only provides an opportunity for Library staff to learn something new from outside presenters, but gives them an opportunity to network with their colleagues and share ideas. This is also done at regular district meetings. Library staff also have the opportunity to meet virtually via Zoom.

The staff survey and interviews indicated a desire for more frequent meetings, Library tours, and training on emerging technologies and electronic resources.

Communications were identified as a challenge due to part-time shifts and the dispersed workplace. One suggestion was an online procedures manual and process for identifying changes and updates.

3.3. Strategic Considerations

As previously mentioned, the SDG Library just recently completed its Strategic Plan in April of this year. This set the stage for many of the areas considered in this Service Review. And in turn, this Service Review follows through or fits all the areas of focus of the Strategic Plan. This correspondence is shown in the following table:

Strategic Direction	Specific Elements of the Service Review that Address Strategic Action Area
1. Physical and Digital Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• this plan endorses the need for a facility review of the various branches in each municipality, ensuring a string but efficient presence in each municipality• technology plan component of the service review addresses digital infrastructure issues
2. Community Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• continual development of new programs and services with strong input from the community• exploration of avenues for provision of services through non-traditional means that do not require bricks-and-mortar construction• strong new marketing orientation with accompanying staff resource
3. Organizational Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• revise organizational structure recommended, with filling in of new and previously vacated positions• succession plan a key recommendations with components of plan outlined• enhanced internal communications and networking advocated

4. Recommendations and Implementation Plan

This final Implementation section first **summarizes all recommendations** developed over the course of the analysis. Next, a proposed **timeframe** (in the form of a Gantt chart) is presented. **Financial and human resource requirements** are next outlined, followed by suggested **targets and milestones** for each recommendation to ensure that progress can be measured and tracked. Finally, various **concluding remarks** are presented.

4.1. Summary of All Recommendations

(The Recommendations are listed below in terms of their overall priority and logical sequence, and not necessarily in terms of their order of occurrence in the text.)

Recommendation are discussed in 6 categories:

- A) Organization, Staffing and Succession
- B) Public Programs and Services
- C) Policies and Procedures
- D) Networking and Communications
- E) Branches and Facilities
- F) Technology
- G) Governance

A) Organization, Staffing and Succession

Recommendation 1: Streamline the current organizational structure: One of the key objectives of this study was to review the existing organizational structure. The review found that overall, the district system worked well and should be retained. However, there is some scope for streamlining the organization by reducing the number of direct reports to the CEO and consolidating some functions. A slightly revised organization structure is presented in the Report and should be implemented.

Recommendation 2: Revise the Systems Librarian position into an Information Services Librarian position: This revised position would have responsibilities for emerging technologies, electronic resources, technical services at the Administration Office, and the overall Library technology portfolio. This will enhance the 'Organizational Strength' pillar of the new Strategic Plan. **Reinstate the Systems Support Co-ordinator position.**

Recommendation 3: Reinstate the Communications & Marketing Coordinator position: It is recommended that this position be reinstated to ensure that the Library's programs and

services are well publicized to the community, which, again, is a critical pillar of the new Strategic Plan.

Recommendation 4: Develop a specific Succession Plan: Certain senior staff may be retiring in the foreseeable future (probably within the timeframe of the current Strategic Plan). Accordingly, a specific succession plan needs to be put in place as an immediate priority. The specific details of such a succession plan are not within the remit of this Service Review, but the components contained within it would be: **a)** review of the job description of senior positions, with a view to making any changes deemed necessary by this Service Review and the recent Strategic Plan; **b)** determination of remuneration and related benefits in light of any change in scope or responsibilities; **c)** articulation of the process to be followed in terms of announcing the opportunity, decisions as to whether internal and external candidates will be entertained, whether a search firm will be employed, etc.; **d)** determination of the likely or ideal timeframe for decision-making; and **e)** communications to staff and public around the replacement process. This is a major responsibility of the Board and should be a top priority.

B) Public Programs and Services

Recommendation 5: Continually develop new programs and services: The consultation process revealed very high regard overall for the public programs and services offered by SDG Library. (There were, naturally, some specific suggestions made for improvements to existing programs). The community appears to respond well to new programs and services that cater to community need, and thus the recommendation here is simply to continue to innovate and provide programs and services that respond to community need. This is an ongoing process of consultation with Library users and the general public regarding what programs are desired, and then determining how and where programs and services are most desired.

Recommendation 6: Review hours of operation at all branches: The stakeholder consultations undertaken as part of the Strategic Plan revealed several comments at specific branches that indicated that the hours of operation offered were thought to be insufficient, or not optimal for that particular location. A review of hours of operation each branch with a view to: a) determining whether or not the existing hours were best for the community (or whether some other configuration of the same number of hours might be more desirable); and b) whether there is a compelling case to be made for more hours to be offered at each branch, should be undertaken.

Recommendation 7: More active but targeted marketing program: As is the case with other library systems, 'lack of awareness of programs and services' is often cited as an issue by the general community, and even very frequently by Library users. However, rather than just 'more marketing', the recommendation here is to be highly selective in the use of marketing resources where they are most likely to be of greatest benefit. Key target segments should be: newcomers to the community (which could imply, for example, working with real estate agents to identify newcomers to the community); new Canadians; recent retirees (who might also be

volunteers); new mothers and young families; etc. Also, in terms of targeted marketing, social media is increasingly effective over 'traditional' marketing avenues. As well, direct marketing to the target groups identified (over general broadcast methods) is preferred. Finally, any special events or activities that are likely to generate free (and positive) media publicity are advantageous. The development of a marketing plan incorporating these elements will be a key focus of the previously-recommended reinstated Marketing Coordinator position.

C) Policies and Procedures

Recommendation 8: Review all policies through a customer-focused lens: As part of the 'Community Outreach' component of the new Strategic Plan, all policies should be reviewed from the perspective of the customer. This would entail a review of all policies from five perspectives: 1) How is the experience of the Library user affected, positively or negatively, by this policy? 2) Is the Library user aware of the policy and how it affects them? 3) What changes need to be considered (or just *made*) to the policy to improve the user experience? 4) Should any changes made be communicated to Library users, and if so, how? and 5) How will we measure any positive change (or is it even important to do so)?

Recommendation 9: Conduct an audit comparing the SDG Library policies with the ones included in the Ontario Public Libraries Guidelines: As a matter of good practice, all policies should be reviewed against the Guidelines. It is suggested that this be carried out simultaneously with the review of policies from the customer experience focus, discussed earlier.

Recommendation 10: Prepare an online policy and procedure manual for all staff access. This should include an alert/sign off mechanism to ensure that all staff are up to date with policies and procedures: Following the policy review process, discussed previously, all policies should be name easily available and accessible online for all staff. As well, some sign off mechanism to show that staff have read and agreed to (i.e., 'signed off upon') policies should be incorporated. As well, the general public should be able to access this policies and procedures resource, if appropriate.

Recommendation 11: Review the overdue fines policy with a goal of reducing barriers to Library use: Increasingly, library fines (which often only generate a very small proportion of overall revenues) are seen as a barrier to use, especially for lower-income and remote users. As a component of ensuring accessibility (a key strategic direction in the Library's new Strategic Plan) strong consideration should be given to elimination of overdue fines for all materials for adults.

D) Networking and Communications

Recommendation 12: Increase the frequency of staff communications and networking events:

A particularly difficult issue for a library system in a large geographical area with a number of small branches is the ability of staff to connect with one another and build a sense of togetherness and teamwork. Unlike a system with fewer and larger branches, where staff have more opportunity to interact informally on a day-to-day basis, for a smaller and more spread-out system, such opportunities for collegiality need to be intentionally created. While such opportunities do exist now, the feedback from staff through the consultation process was that they were not frequent enough for effective engagement. Accordingly, the recommendation here is to have more opportunities for staff interaction: for example, district meetings (by Zoom or equivalent) once a month and entire staff networking and learning sessions perhaps 3 to 4 times per year. At least one of these total staff events should be in person (obviously, as health regulations permit).

E) Branches and Facilities

Recommendation 13: Review highest relative cost branches to determine ways to reduce costs:

The analysis identified one group of 'highest cost' branches, where per user costs were significantly higher than the average trend seen in other branches. These five 'highest cost' branches - Winchester, Lancaster, Finch/Makerlab, Maxville and Williamstown – should be assessed with a view to identifying ways to either decrease costs, or increase utilization (within the existing cost envelope). It is recommended that a specific plan be developed for each of these branches (with target utilization) for improvement over a 4-year period (the period of the Strategic Plan) to identify barriers to success at the branches. If targets cannot be met, or if cost per user ratios dip further, it is recommended that closure of the Branch be considered. (It is noted in passing that Williamstown and Lancaster are only 7 km. distant from each other, so a refinement on this recommendation in this specific case would be to close one – likely Williamstown which has lower utilization – and keep the other or even expand it².

Recommendation 14: Review lowest relative cost branches to determine ways to increase utilization:

On the other hand, there is a group of high-performance branches where the utilization is somewhat higher than the per user cost trend would suggest. These branches could benefit from additional investment which could then see a payoff in terms of additional return. This group of five branches includes Long Sault, Iroquois, Avonmore, Chesterville, and South Mountain. These might be the logical focal points for new programs and services. As with the 'highest cost' branches, a four-year plan, co-incident with the term of the Strategic Plan, could be developed for each branch.

² It is noted as well that in Summer of 2021 a plan for the expansion of the Lancaster Branch was developed by Raymond Labossiere Architects for an approximate doubling of the space. The cost of this (at the time, it would undoubtedly be higher now) was approximately \$830,000.

Recommendation 15: Conduct facility review process: At the end of the ‘trial period’ referenced above, and in reviewing the results of the specific plans and targets for the highest and lowest relative costs groups, the SDG Library should consider implementing over time, a facility review process, possibly to reduce the number of branches or increase the size of particularly well-used branches. It is suggested that this be phased in over a three-year period after the four-year period of the current Strategic Plan.

Municipality	Current Branches in Municipality	Possible Longer-Term Solution
North Dundas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winchester Chesterville South Mountain 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain South Mountain branch retain Chesterville branch consider closing Winchester branch
South Dundas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Iroquois Morrisburg Williamsburg 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Iroquois branch consider closing either Williamsburg or Morrisburg
North Stormont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Crysler Avonmore Finch/MakerLab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Avonmore branch consider closing either Chrysler or Finch MakerLab
South Stormont	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ingleside Long Sault St. Andrews West Express Depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Long Sault branch consider closing Ingleside or St. Andrews West Express West
North Glengarry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maxville Alexandria Dalkeith Express Depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> retain Alexandria and Dalkeith branches consider closing Maxville branch
South Glengarry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Williamstown Lancaster Glen Water Express Depot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (likely) expand Lancaster and close Williamstown

Recommendation 16: Consider County acquisition of Library facilities: After any rationalization of the system as a result of the previous recommendations, the SDG Library should encourage the County to acquire the properties that constitute the system at that point (where this is possible and makes sense, recognizing that several are in facilities that are shared with other uses). This will ensure a level of consistency with respect to the ongoing maintenance and care of the facilities.

Recommendation 17: Consider alternative services in remote and rural locations: The consultation process (especially the Stakeholder survey undertaken as part of the Library’s Strategic Plan) revealed that some in the Morewood area in North Dundas felt that a branch was needed in that location. While not recommending a new branch, it is possible that some form of service could be extended to that relatively unserved area – perhaps a holds locker, book kiosk or self-serve extended access. As well, there may be other areas in the United Counties where alternative service delivery could be considered. A mobile service or bookmobile may also be a possibility). And, if closure of any branches becomes a reality these could be a means of providing service to those locations as was done with Express Depots in some communities.

Recommendation 18: Consider central or main branch: Several comments in the staff and stakeholder surveys related to the desirability of having a larger ‘main’ or ‘central’ branch for the Library system. This is always difficult in a geographically spread-out system (such as SDG Library) but should be considered in any consolidation (or expansion) of Library branches that might occur as a result of the previous recommendations. The Library’s administrative office could be relocated there is a purpose-built facility more suited to a delivery system than the basement of the County’s Administrative Centre.

F) Technology

Recommendation 19: Develop a Multi-Year Technology Plan: This plan should incorporate both the ‘internal’ and ‘external’ aspect of technology as previously discussed and incorporate the following components:

- Provide adequate staffing levels for administration, support, and backup of Library technology services.
- Provide additional training resources for staff and patrons.
- Investigate functional and financial benefits of moving the ILS from a locally hosted system to a cloud service.
- Include capital and operating costs of planned implementation in the Technology Plan.
- Investigate and implement open access resources for self-service and after-hours options.
- Review and install remote support tools for Library systems staff.
- Investigate Polaris ILS modules for operational efficiencies.
- Continue work with the County on access to a broadband solution.

G) Governance

Recommendation 20: Encourage Board Diversity: The consultation process revealed some comments relating to the diversity and representativeness of the Board (not suggesting that there is any current problem or issue, but just that over time the Board should be aware of its own diversity and representativeness. Specific suggestions in this regard are that the Board should attempt to include: younger people; representatives of specific communities (e.g., LGBTQ+); newcomers to the community; etc.). This is a matter that should be considered in on-going Board recruitment.

4.2. Timing and Critical Path

Below is a suggested timeline for implementation of the recommendations. The highlighted cells indicate that action would take place on that recommendation in that year.

Recommendations that are black across the row' indicate that the recommendation would be on-going throughout that span of time. Note that this is a *suggested* timeline; it will very likely need to be adjusted as time goes by to take unforeseeable circumstances and new opportunities into account as they arise.

Recommendation	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027
Recommendation 1: Revise the current organizational structure					
Recommendation 2: Revise the Systems Librarian position into an Information Services Librarian position, reinstate the Systems Support Coordinator position					
Recommendation 3: Reinstate the Communications & Marketing Coordinator position					
Recommendation 4: Develop a specific Succession Plan					
Recommendation 5: Continually develop new programs and services					
Recommendation 6: Review hours of operation at all branches					
Recommendation 7: More active but targeted marketing program					
Recommendation 8: Review all policies through a customer-focused lens					
Recommendation 9: Do an audit comparing the SDG Library policies with the ones included in the Ontario Public Libraries Guidelines					
Recommendation 10: Prepare an online policy and procedure manual for all staff access					
Recommendation 11: Review the overdue fines policy with a goal of reducing barriers to Library use					
Recommendation 12: Increase the frequency of staff communications and networking events					
Recommendation 13: Review highest relative cost branches to determine ways to reduce costs					
Recommendation 14: Review lowest relative cost branches to determine ways to increase utilization					
Recommendation 15: Conduct facility review process					
Recommendation 16: Consider County acquisition of Library locations					
Recommendation 17: Consider alternative services in remote and rural locations					
Recommendation 18: Consider central or main branch					
Recommendation 19: Develop a Multi-Year Technology Plan					
Recommendation 20: Encourage Board Diversity					

4.3. High-Level Resource Requirements (Human and Financial)

The chart below outlines, at a high level the anticipated resource requirements for the implementation of these recommendations.

Recommendation	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirements
Recommendation 1: Streamline the current organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• minimal – some senior staff time to communicate new model to staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• assume done within existing staffing resources envelope
Recommendation 2: Revise the Systems Librarian position into an Information Services Librarian position. Reinstatement the Systems Coordinator Position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• small – some small amount of senior staff time to revise job descriptions	
Recommendation 3: Reinstatement the Communications & Marketing Coordinator position		
Recommendation 4: Develop a specific Succession Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• will require some senior management and Board time (estimate 3-5 person-days of effort)• some time on part of Board members to review, question and endorse plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• likely minimal, although some external professional expertise may be required to comment on succession plan (particularly if Board decides to go outside the organization)
Recommendation 5: Continually develop new programs and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to be determined, but will be within existing staff time allocations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to be determined – presumably any additional costs will come out of already-established program budget, so no additional cost
Recommendation 6: Review hours of operation at all branches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• moderate amount of staff time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• none
Recommendation 7: More active but targeted marketing program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to be determined – will be within job description of Marketing and Communications Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• likely a larger marketing budget will be required (1.5 to twice times present)
Recommendation 8: Review all policies through a customer-focused lens	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• estimated 2-3 days of senior staff time per year	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• minimal
Recommendation 9: Do an audit comparing the SDG Library policies with the ones included in the Ontario Public Libraries Guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• estimated 1-2 days of senior staff time, one time	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• minimal
Recommendation 10: Prepare an online policy and procedure manual for all staff access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to be determined (whether done in-house or through external provider)
Recommendation 11: Review the overdue fines policy with a goal of reducing barriers to Library use	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• moderate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• small (cost = foregone revenue)

Recommendation	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Requirements
Recommendation 12: Increase the frequency of staff communications and networking events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant staff-time requirement: maybe 3-5 person days per staff person, per year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no incremental cost unless additional staff hired to replace regular staff during absence
Recommendation 13: Review highest relative cost branches to determine ways to reduce costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moderate amount of staff time to review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimal
Recommendation 14: Review lowest relative cost branches to determine ways to increase utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moderate amount of staff time to review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimal
Recommendation 15: Conduct facility review process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moderate amount of staff time to review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimal
Recommendation 16: Consider County acquisition of Library locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be determined
Recommendation 17: Consider alternative services in remote and rural locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • could be significant depending upon technology: up to \$30K - \$50K per location
Recommendation 18: Consider central or main branch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be determined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be determined
Recommendation 19: Develop a Multi-Year Technology Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • moderate staff time at all levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to be determined – will be dependent upon plan developed • possibly external expertise will be required
Recommendation 20: Encourage Board Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • small 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • none to minimal

4.4. Suggested Targets and Outcomes

The chart below outlines suggested targets and outcomes associated with each of the recommendations as outlined earlier to measure and demonstrate progress. As with the timing considerations, these are *suggested* outcomes for discussion with the Board and staff of SDG Library.

Recommendation	Milestones, Targets, Outcomes
Recommendation 1: Streamline the current organizational structure	New structure in place by end 2023
Recommendation 2: Revise the Systems Librarian position into an Information Services Librarian position. Reinstate the Systems Support Coordinator position	New positions in place by end 2023. (Hire Librarian first, who can then participate in hiring Systems Support Coordinator – might take into 2024 for full complement.)
Recommendation 3: Reinstate the Communications & Marketing Coordinator position	Begin recruitment in 2023; have new position in place by end 2023
Recommendation 4: Develop a specific Succession Plan	Have plan articulated and approved by Board in 2023
Recommendation 5: Continually develop new programs and services	Aim for 1 new (innovative) program or service in place in each district, each year (at one branch)
Recommendation 6: Review hours of operation at all branches	Have review complete and any changes in place by end 2024
Recommendation 7: More active but targeted marketing program	Revise marketing efforts in 2024 (once Coordinator position filled) and implement on on-going basis
Recommendation 8: Review all policies through a customer-focused lens	Set target to revise/refine all policies over a three year period; aim for 1/3 of policies reviewed each year over 2023, 2024, 2025
Recommendation 9: Do an audit comparing the SDG Library policies with the ones included in the Ontario Public Libraries Guidelines	Undertake overall review in 2023 to set context for review of all policies. Then review policies simultaneously with review of customer service review (Recommendation #8)
Recommendation 10: Prepare an online policy and procedure manual for all staff access	Have in place and all staff 'signed off' by end 2024
Recommendation 11: Review the overdue fines policy with a goal of reducing barriers to Library use	Review and make decision by end 2023
Recommendation 12: Increase the frequency of staff communications and networking events	Implement accelerated communications and networking schedule by early 2023 and continue throughout period
Recommendation 13: Review highest relative cost branches to determine ways to reduce costs	Have plans for each affected branch in place by end 2024 and implement over next 2 years
Recommendation 14: Review lowest relative cost branches to determine ways to increase utilization	As with Recommendation #12
Recommendation 15: Conduct facility review process	Begin assessment in 2027
Recommendation 16: Consider County acquisition of Library locations	Undertake assessments and begin negotiations in 2027
Recommendation 17: Consider alternative services in remote and rural locations	Identify potential locations and have remote service plan in place by end 2024; begin implementation as appropriate in 2025
Recommendation 18: Consider central or main branch	Consider in concert with Recommendation #14; Board to have made firm decision on this by 2027
Recommendation 19: Develop a Multi-Year Technology Plan	Develop plan and begin implementation in 2023

Recommendation	Milestones, Targets, Outcomes
Recommendation 20: Encourage Board Diversity	Have plan in place to potentially increase diversity by 2026 (next Board, following next municipal election) – meantime avail of diversification opportunities as they arise

4.5 Conclusion

The SDG Library system is clearly a strong and well-loved institution throughout the United Counties. Its central position as a community resource and activity hub has been validated and reinforced through its recent strategic planning process. It is, however, weak on some key service indicators when compared to similar sized library systems (e.g., visits per capita, program attendance, circulation). In large part this is caused by the fact that the system is characterized by many small branches in rural locations and exacerbated by lower resourcing (funding and staff) than seen in other comparable library operations.

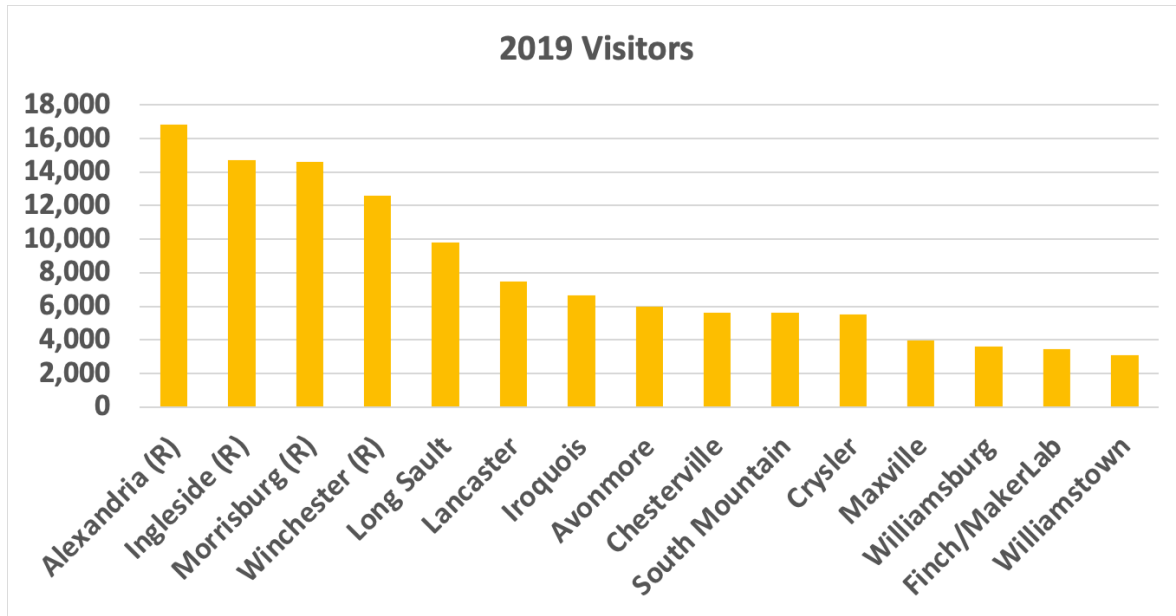
Moreover, the SDG Library system is on the cusp of change. Staff turnover at the senior levels within the next few years is a virtual certainty. Key functional positions remain unfilled.

This Service Review and its recommendations are designed to address this situation. A tightening of the organizational structure; the development of a succession plan; filling key positions; a hard look at the efficiency of the branches and development of plans to improve this; and an eventual decision to close some branches and possibly expand others (with possibly the development of a central administrative branch) are key elements of a plan to ensure that the system continues to be a relevant and meaningful resource to the community, and can achieve even greater success in the future.

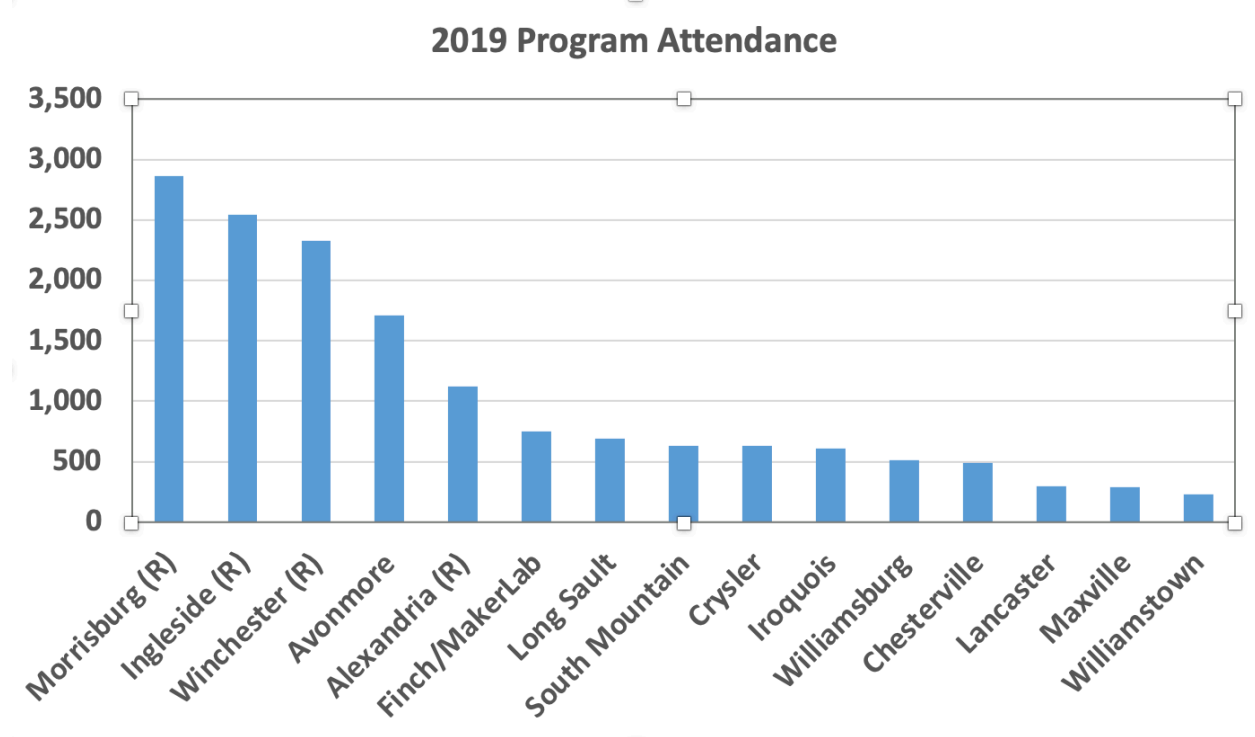
Appendix A: Profile of the Branches

Basic Data

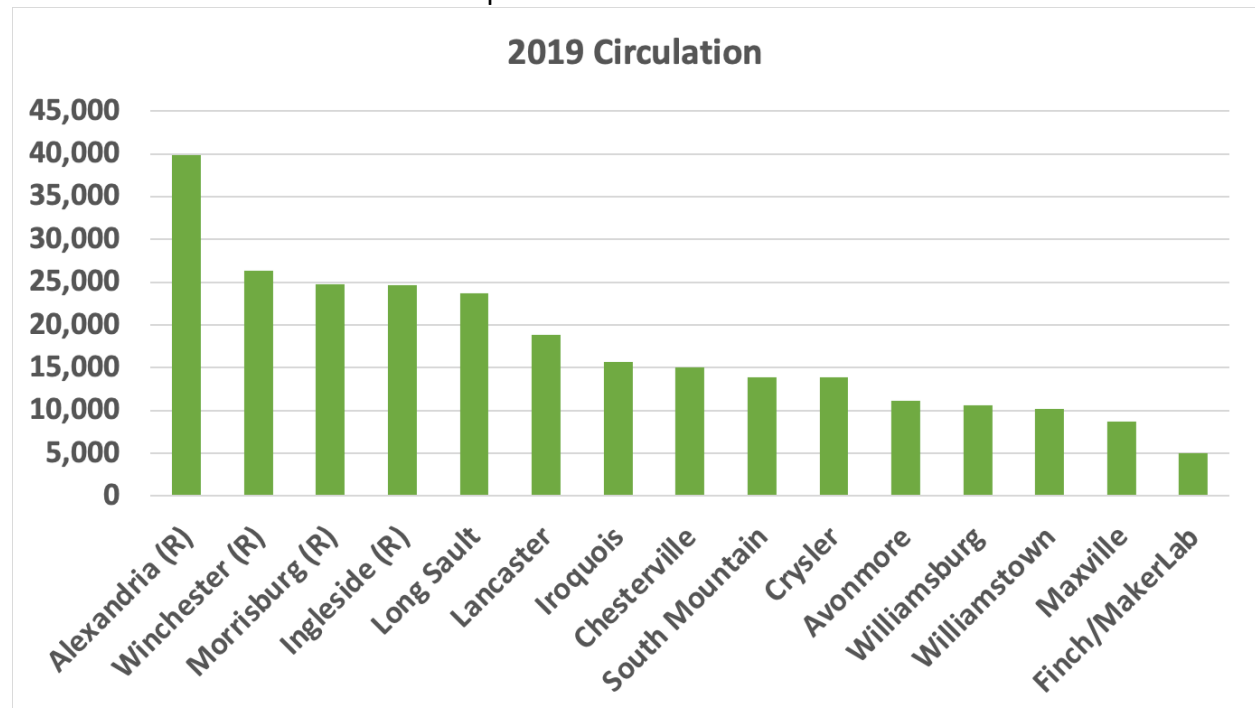
The following charts show some basic parameters of the 15 branches in the SDG Library system. Data from 2019 (the last 'normal' year of operations of the Library) is used for comparison purposes, with the exception of the budget, which is current (2022).



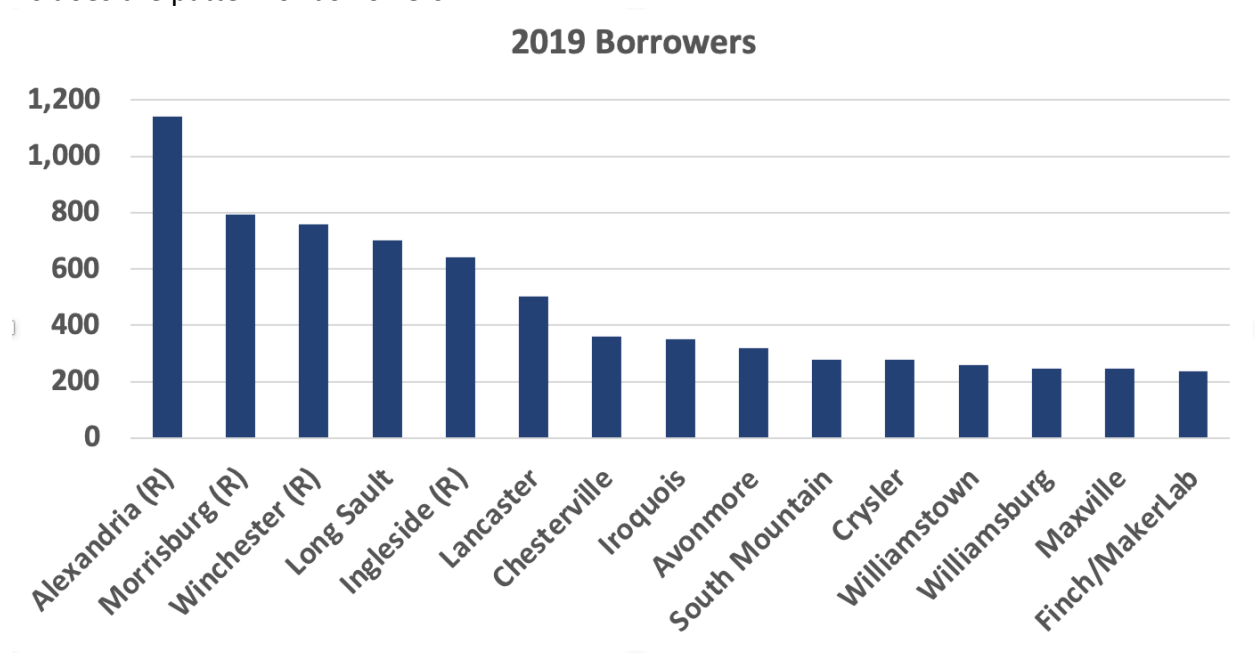
To a large extent, program attendance at the branches follows this same pattern:



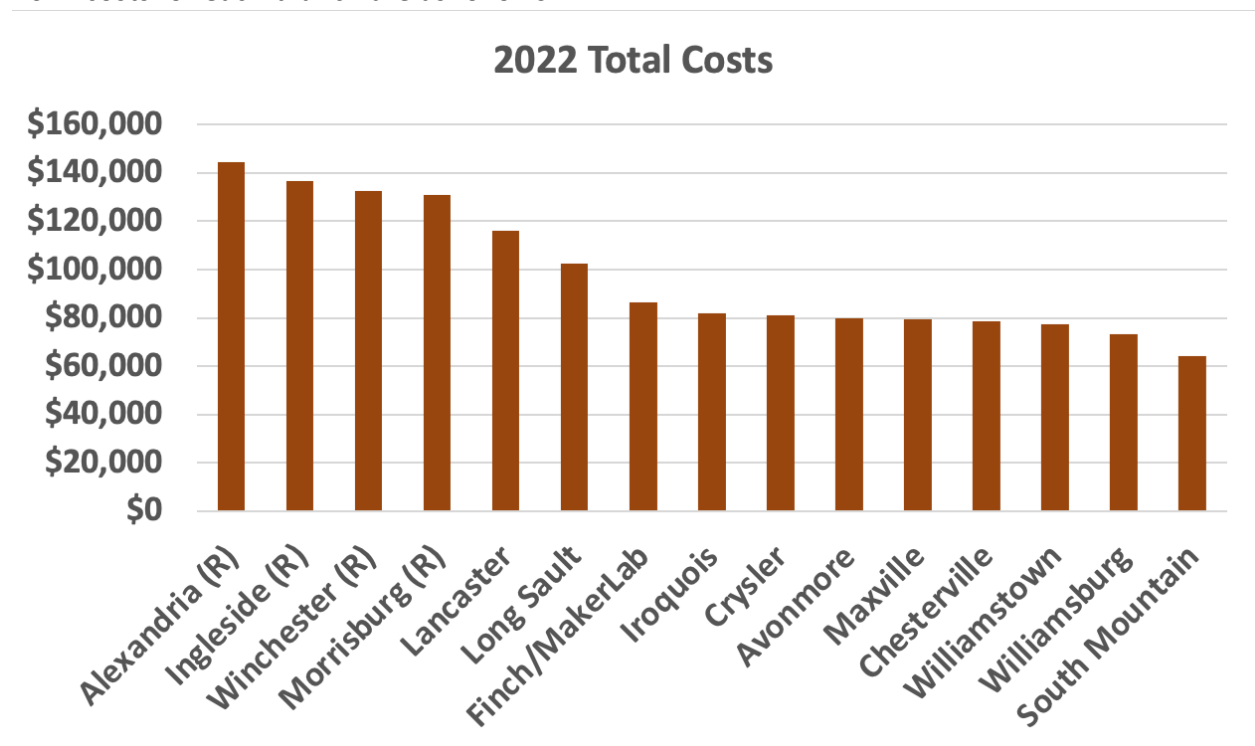
Circulation as well mirrors this basic pattern:



As does the pattern of borrowers:



2022 costs for each branch are as follows:



Another representation of costs is:



Analysis of Individual Branch Utilization and Cost

An analysis of the costs of each branch relative to the utilization (as measured by visitors) is shown in the graph below. (Note that because 2019 was the last full 'normal' year prior to the pandemic, the 2019 figures for visitation are used, whereas the 2022 budget figures – the most recent available - are used. Thus the results discussed here should be considered indicative and not necessarily exact. Nonetheless, in our view they provide a representative view of the likely current relative performance of each branch.)

The chart plots the cost of each branch against its utilization, as measured in terms of visitors (in 2019). A upwards-sloping trend line shows the general relationship of cost to utilization, which makes general sense – the higher the utilization, the greater the cost. Branches that are significantly above (higher) than the trend line are those that have a higher cost than what might be expected relative to their utilization; those significantly below the line are ones that appear to be most 'efficient' – having greater than expected utilization relative to their cost.

Based on this analysis, two clusters of branches can be identified. The first is those branches above the line, where costs relative to utilization are comparatively high, and where measures to reduce costs or, conversely, increase utilization, might be considered. A second group of high-performing efficient branches are those falling under the trend line (see page 71); these

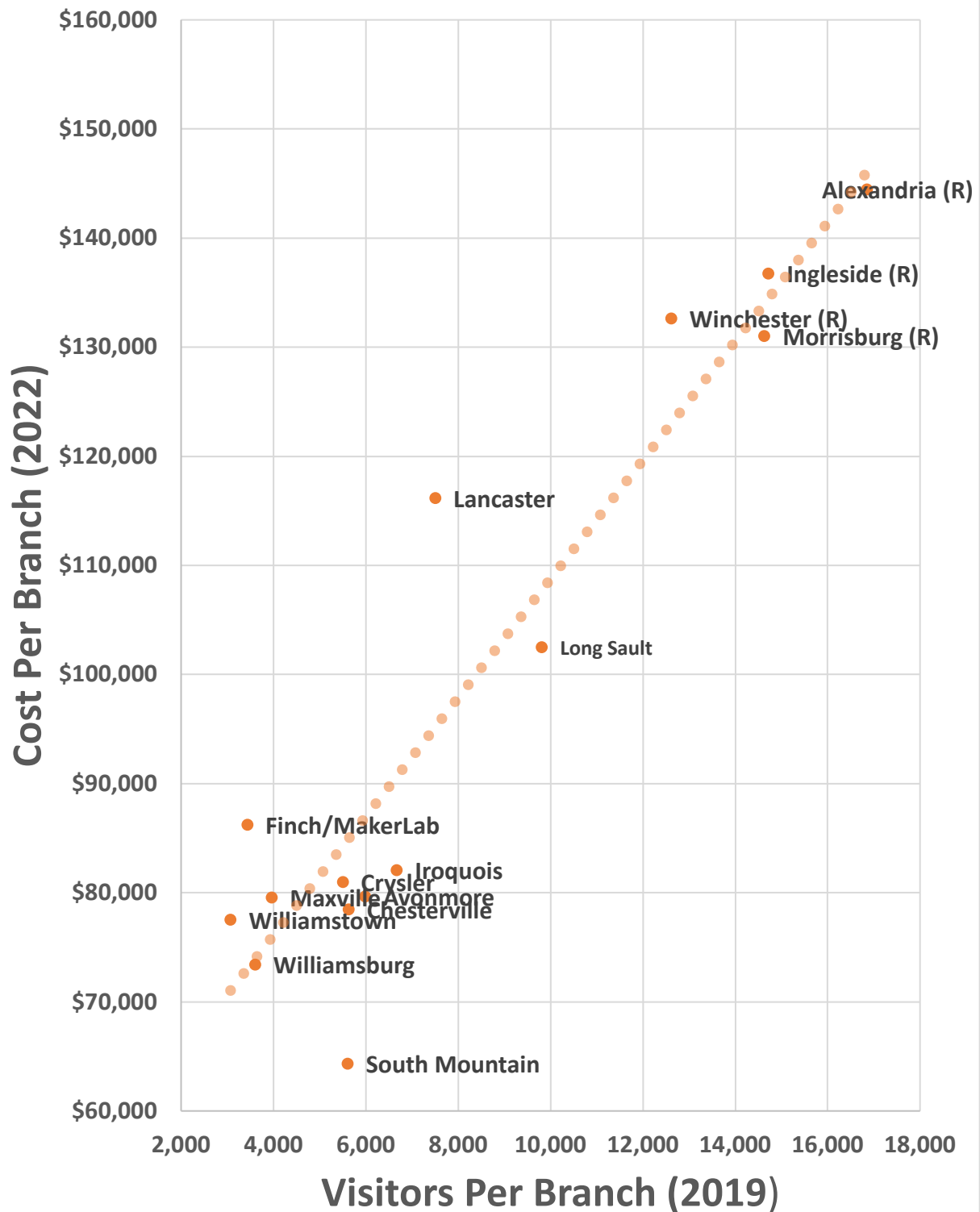
are ones where possibly even greater utilization would result from increase budget expenditure.

The branches in both these groups are:

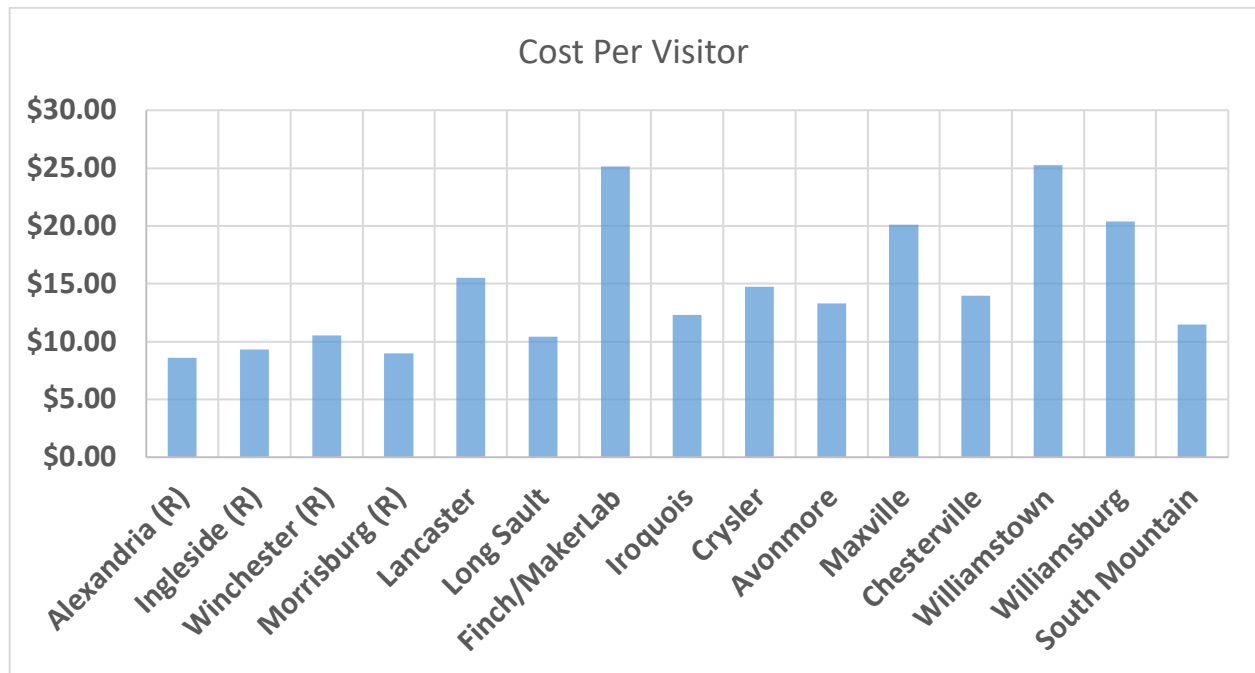
Group	Branches	Implied Service Area Action
"Above the Line" – high cost relative to utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Winchester• Lancaster• Finch/MakerLab• Maxville• Williamstown	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• examine ways to reduce costs and/or increase utilization
"Below the Line" – low cost relative to utilization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Long Sault• Iroquois• Avonmore• Chesterville• South Mountain	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• examine whether increased budget in these branches could enhance utilization even further

Note that none of the branches in the SDG Library system appear to be so far off the line that significant remedial action is warranted (e.g. closure of a branch).

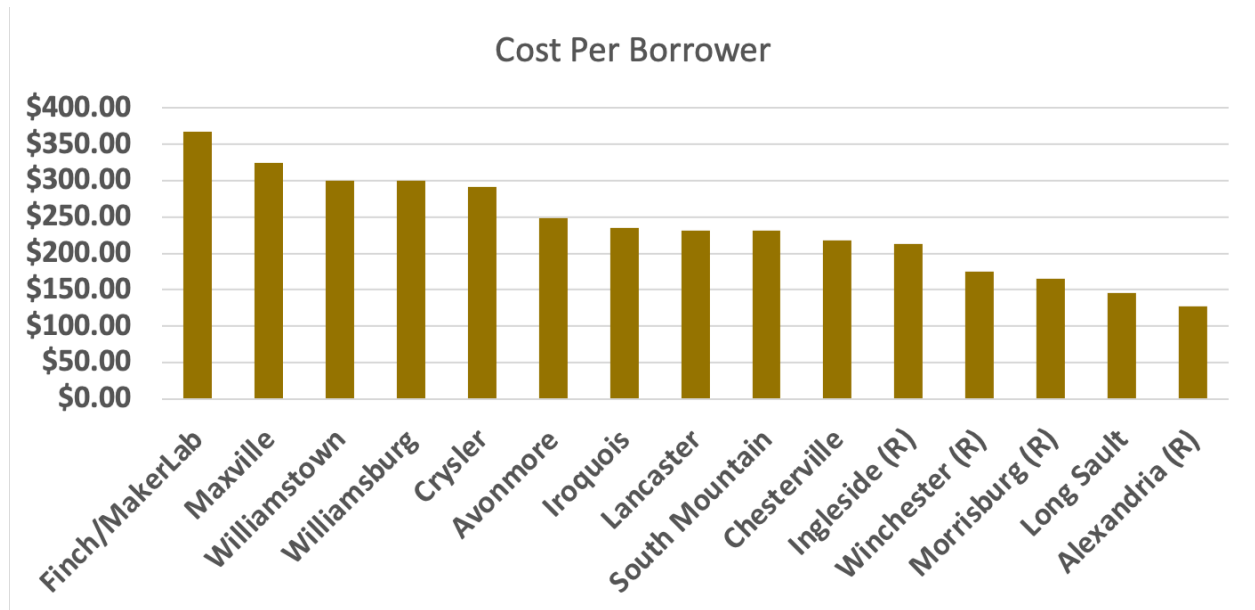
Cost vs. Visitors, All Branches



Another perspective on use is afforded by looking at the cost per visit....



... and the cost per borrower:



This analysis shows the Finch/Maker Lab, the Maxville Branch, the Williamsburg Branch, and the Williamstown Branch to all be in the highest cost categories in terms of both costs per user as well as cost per item borrowed. Lancaster were in the highest cost per user category, but had a more reasonable cost per borrowed item.

Appendix B: 2022 – 2026 Strategic Plan Summary

Mission: To connect communities through innovative services, literacy resources, independent learning, creative expression, leisure, and civic engagement.

Vision: To be “the Place” in SDG for learners, seekers, and explorers.

Values:

Accessible: We strive to continually identify and reduce barriers to service and be responsive to the diverse needs of residents of all ages, backgrounds, abilities, sexual orientations, gender identities, or levels of socioeconomic status.

Equitable: We seek to provide an inclusive, non-judgmental environment in which everyone in the community feels safe, welcome, and comfortable, by focusing on building trusting, supportive connections.

Open: We commit to being honest and authentic in all our interactions, listening intently and supporting the development of genuine connections.

Strategic Directions: The Plan has a four year timeline with three fundamental strategic directions. These are listed below, along with more specific strategic actions and success indicators.

Strategic Direction	Specific Strategies	Indicators of Success
1. Physical and Digital Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• invest in the growing digital collection• ensure print collection keeps pace• each branch should strive to become a community hub• undertake facility improvements (including creation of central administrative branch)• ensure accessibility throughout branches	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop clear communications strategy• increase in active members• asset management plan developed
2. Community Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• develop messaging that showcases Library’s role as community and knowledge hub• more outreach and related communications activities• explore innovative means of community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• growing rate of new membership development• increased partnerships in community
3. Organizational Strength	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• undertake organizational review (i.e., this service review)• ensure SDG Library continues to be seen as a great place to work• gather regular feedback from staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• all key staff positions are filled• communications and marketing priorities established• opportunities for professional development have been accessed by staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure professional development opportunities in place for staff • ensure succession plan in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quarterly staff 'pulse surveys' undertaken • succession plan for senior management in place
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