A new community space for Parrsboro!

Preliminary Project Plan

- Preferred location – current municipal service centre site, 209 Main Street
- Project Scope – building expansion and renovation including vault removal
- Estimated costs - $3.3 million
    - Estimated costs will likely increase with inflation
    - Furniture, furnishings and equipment costs not included
- Preliminary financing plan
    - $2.475 million in municipal borrowing.
        - Debt service for the municipal share would be paid from the general tax rate NOT the Parrsboro area rate
        - Based on current cost, financing plan and 20-year borrowing, first year debt service would be about $235,000
        - Grants or federal/provincial funding received will reduce the municipal share of costs
    - $825,000 from a combination of local fundraising and Parrsboro area rate
        - This represents a 21% community contribution similar to that used in the financing of the recently constructed Pugwash facility .
        - Parrsboro area rate will only be charged for any shortfall in local fundraising below the $825,000.
- Timeline – 2028 construction season

Parrsboro Library Options Study



RFP-MCC-2418

February 2025

a Report from

TCI Management Consultants

in association with

Beth Ross & Associates

Parrsboro Library Options Study

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APPENDIX A. Architecture49 Report on Service Centre Site.....45

Executive Summary

In June of 2024, TCI Management Consultants in association with Beth Ross & Associates was retained by the Municipality of the County of Cumberland to investigate the options for future library branch services in the community of Parrsboro. TCI engaged Architecture49 to review the preferred site including the provision of preliminary concept drawings for future library services. The conclusions of this assessment are as follows.

1. **Parrsboro needs a new and expanded library branch facility.** This conclusion is supported by several lines of evidence. A comparison of the existing 1,500 sq. ft. facility with commonly accepted standards for libraries elsewhere in smaller and rural communities points to the need for a branch of about 4,000 sq. ft. Benchmarking comparisons with similar communities also shows that a larger facility is needed. The results of a community survey (with a response of well over 200 respondents!) showed that over 80% said that a new and expanded facility was 'essential'. Supporting all of this is the fact that the community of Parrsboro is growing at over 5 times the rate of the County overall.

2. **Key additional community functions should be contained in an expanded facility.** Beyond simply additional adequate space for collections, an expanded library branch should have areas for programs to be held that are somewhat separate from the main space; sufficient space for individual computer workstations, community meeting room space; and sufficient room for essential administrative functions such as the circulation desk, processing area, and office space. Our 'bottom up' assessment of the amount of space required for these essential functions also points to the need for about 4,000 sq. ft.

3. **The preferred site for a new and expanded library branch is on the existing Parrsboro Service Centre site**. Some 15 potential sites (including the current location) were suggested through the consultation process (considering sites in the public domain as well as some key privately owned sites). An objective and evidence-based evaluation of these sites showed that on the basis of several criteria, including the availability of adequate parking space, the Parrsboro Service Centre site at 209 Main Street was the optimal site for a larger library facility.

4. **The existing Service Centre building will need to be modified to accommodate the needs of the new library branch.** Preliminary analysis suggests that a footprint of 4,000 sq. ft on the Service Centre site would be possible. The site itself (approximately 16,000

sq. ft.) is large enough to accommodate the new branch, with even room for future expansion, but the existing building would need to be modified. The interior would need to be reconfigured, and some addition would need to be put on to the structure to achieve approximately 4,100 sq. ft.

5. **The cost of retrofitting the existing Service Centre would likely be on the order of $2.3 M to $3.3 M, depending on whether the existing footprint is used or whether expansion is also undertaken.** While a detailed architectural design and rendering was beyond the scope of this study, high-level preliminary assessment was undertaken, which suggests the cost would be in the range of $2.3 M to $3.3 M (excluding the interior furnishings, fittings and equipment [FF&E]). As the site is large enough to accommodate an expanded library branch with a smaller Service Centre, the municipality would have the option of adding a smaller Service Centre function to an expanded library. (This is the model of the new library / Service Centre operation in Pugwash.) Alternatively, the entire Service Centre facility could be relocated elsewhere in the community. This possibility should be considered in the next step in the process, which would be to undertake the development of a more detailed design and costing**.**

6. **The community is willing to get involved in fundraising efforts:** The Municipality is very interested to see a clear display of community involvement in fundraising efforts for the new branch (This is the model that was followed in the development of a new branch for Pugwash where approximately 21% of the total capital cost was raised through local fundraising efforts). The community survey indicated that 40% of the respondents would be prepared to get involved in fundraising effort and 34% would be prepared to donate. Moreover, this needs assessment study itself served as a catalyst for a 'Friends of the Parrsboro Public Library' group that was formed with the explicit purpose of helping raise funds for a new library facility. All this bodes very well in terms of support and resource development for the new facility.

7. **Next Steps:** Based on the foregoing, the recommended next steps in pursuing the development of a new facility in Parrsboro are:

    a. Municipal Council should review this report (and an accompanying staff report) and endorse the intention to develop a new branch library in Parrsboro, of approximately 4,100 sq. ft.;
    b. An architectural firm should be retained to undertake a more detailed design and cost estimate of a new branch according to the specifications herein, on the Service Centre site. This should include consideration of whether or not the existing Service

Centre operation could be accommodated as an adjunct to the new branch operation;

c. A construction plan should be developed for the new branch on the Service Centre site;
d. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be developed with the new Friends' Group regarding the transfer of funds raised, recognizing gifts to the Municipality will be eligible for tax receipts
e. The Municipality should work with the Friends group and Cumberland Public Libraries to determine possibilities and protocol for naming rights and acknowledgement of sponsors of rooms and spaces in the expanded facility; and
f. Construction of the new branch should occur as soon as possible after the above activities have been undertaken.

This analysis has clearly demonstrated the need for a new and expanded library branch in Parrsboro. The ample evidence for this is shown through comparison with library standards for small communities, and a benchmarking assessment of other similar small communities that shows that Parrsboro is currently deficient in the space and functionality provided by the existing facility. A survey of the local population, which elicited a very large response for a community of its size, showed that residents are dissatisfied with existing library facilities and feel that a new and expanded branch is essential to their needs. Moreover, the community is growing rapidly – at about five times the rate of the Municipality overall – and so these needs will only increase with time. In addition, there is considerable evidence that the local community is prepared to back their wishes for a new branch with action, and is quite willing to become involved in fundraising efforts to assist in raising a share of the capital required, thus further demonstrating need.

This investigation has shown that there is a preferred candidate site (the current Service Centre) where a new branch would be feasible, and has provided 'proof of concept' that a new branch of the size and functionality envisaged would fit the site at a cost that is deemed to be reasonable.

The process of undertaking this study itself has been something of a catalyst to stimulate interest and enthusiasm regarding a new branch. Since the work began, an active 'Friends' group has formed, and appears to be busy spreading the word, raising money and advocating for this new facility. In the view of the independent consultants retained to undertake this objective assessment, all the signs are positive and point to a successful outcome in achieving a vibrant new and expanded library branch for Parrsboro. This report also maps out the next steps to help the Municipality and the local community achieve this goal.

1. Introduction and Context

This introductory section to the Report outlines the **purpose of the work**, and the **planning context** underlying this study. Next, it presents the **key activities undertaken** in the project and finally outlines various **caveats and assumptions** that should be kept in mind when reviewing the analysis and recommendations.

1.1. Purpose and Planning Context of this Study

The vibrant Cumberland Public Libraries system in northern Nova Scotia consists of seven library locations throughout the Municipality (a main branch in Amherst [Four Fathers Memorial Library] and smaller branches in Advocate, Oxford, Parrsboro, Pugwash, River Hebert and Springhill). With an annual budget of approximately $1.3 million, the enterprise employs 30 people (including full time and part-time summer students). In 2023/24 the library system hosted nearly 67,000 visits; had nearly 178,000 items borrowed; was open to the community over 10,000 hours; and hosted nearly 580 programs throughout its network, attended by approximately 7,800 persons.

The Municipality provides and maintains the "bricks and mortar" for 3 out of the 7 public library branches of the Cumberland Public Libraries, and the library system provides collections, programs, and staff resources.

One of the smallest (1,500 sq. ft.) and oldest (built in the 1960s) branches in the system is Parrsboro, and it has long been acknowledged that this branch is crowded, unattractive and largely unsuited to the needs of the local community. Accordingly, the Municipality decided in 2024 to review the library-related needs of Parrsboro and area and determine what sort of facility would be optimal to meet that need.



Exterior view of the Parrsboro branch library



Interior view of the Parrsboro branch library

Specifically, in the Request for Proposals for the study (August 2024) the overall purpose of the project was expressed as follows:

"In 2024, the Municipality passed a resolution to conduct a review of library infrastructure needs in the community of Parrsboro. The objective of the review is to provide a report to staff and Council that will identify the needs of the community and the viability of options, including proposing the scope and location of a new library in Parrsboro."

The review was to be fact- and evidence-based, as well as to cast a wide net over the community to provide all residents with an opportunity to express their views. Following a public tendering process, the Toronto-based firm TCI Management Consultants, in association with Beth Ross & Associates (specialists in strategic planning for libraries and other cultural facilities), was retained to undertake the project. The work was begun in August 2024 and the draft report was completed in early 2025. During the study process, TCI engaged Architecture49 (who had designed the Pugwash library), to help with an evaluation of the preferred library solution(s) on the recommended Parrsboro site.

A key contextual element underlying this work in Parrsboro was the recent development of the new library in Pugwash (opened in August 2023). Here the very cramped older library branch in the community (housed in the train station) was replaced with a much larger, spacious and attractive facility. At 3,700 sq. ft. it features ample shelving space for the collections, a spacious community meeting room, a children's play area, and study spaces. Also associated with the Pugwash facility (as a separate room, not part of the library) is a municipal Service Centre where community residents can pay taxes, obtain municipal information, etc. for a total space of 3,900 sq. ft.

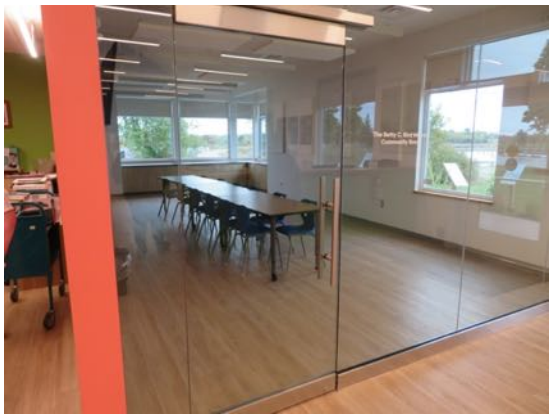


Exterior view of the new Pugwash branch library


Interior view of the Pugwash branch library



Quiet spaces in the Pugwash branch library



Community meeting room in the Pugwash branch library

A key aspect of the development of the new Pugwash branch was the involvement of the local community in fundraising efforts. The total capital cost of the facility was approximately $2.4 million, of which the local community raised approximately $500,000 – nearly 21%. It is broadly assumed that the same community support model might apply in Parrsboro as well, with the community pledging to raise a similar portion of whatever the capital costs may be.

1.2. Activities Undertaken

In undertaking this study, a number of key activities were undertaken. These were:

- ⇒ a site visit and start-up meeting in late September, 2024 (as well as visiting the Parrsboro branch, a side trip to the Pugwash branch was also undertaken)
- ⇒ on-site inspection of alternative sites for a potential new library in Parrsboro
- ⇒ a community survey (which elicited over 250 responses, an excellent response rate for a community the size of Parrsboro)
- ⇒ key interest group interviews with community representatives and stakeholders
- ⇒ a review of the provision of library space and services in Parrsboro against standards for smaller and rural communities
- ⇒ benchmarking Parrsboro's library branch operation against comparable libraries in other communities
- ⇒ hosting a well-attended evening public meeting of more than 80 participants (held November 13, 2024)
- ⇒ a determination of the appropriate size for library facilities for a community of Parrsboro's size
- ⇒ a detailed review of alternative sites in Parrsboro according to objective criteria and a comprehensive methodology, and selectin of a preferred site on this basis

⇒ an architectural review of the preferred site, and creation of a high-level schematic drawing and cost estimate on the basis of that assessment

⇒ a detailed implementation plan outlining next steps, timing and critical path, and resource implications

⇒ preparation of this report in draft and final form, and presentation to Council

1.3. Assumptions and Caveats

In undertaking this study, a number of key assumptions and caveats should be borne in mind. These include:

- **this is a high-level assessment:** The purpose of this project was to determine the need for library facilities and related services in the community of Parrsboro over the next decade and beyond, and to recommend a site and building solution to the Municipality, along with the resource implications inherent in this direction. It was not to develop a detailed design or schematic of any new or expanded facility, which would be a subsequent step in the planning of a new or expanded facility.
- **this work was not primarily a service review:** While inevitably certain suggestions were made for additional services that could be provided by the library as a result of the consultation process, this work was not primarily a review of the collections, programs or services provided by the library. Rather, the emphasis was on the library **facility** in Parrsboro, and to determine what the parameters of that facility should be in order to deliver to the community the types of services and programs that the community wanted and would need in future. Accordingly, there are not detailed recommendations contained in this plan that relate to collections, programs or services.
- **not a fundraising strategy:** Also, the plan developed here does not contain a fundraising strategy per se. While the ability to raise funds from the community is definitely an assumption underlying this work, this study does not attempt to quantify the amount that may be raised, or to recommend a detailed plan to approach the community to raise such funds.
- **specific private sector sites not identified:** The site selection component of this project identified a number of sites, some of which were in private ownership. However, because this is a high level review, and the owners of these sites have not been contacted, these privately held sites have been identified anonymously in this report, as Site A, Site B, etc. The full evaluation of these sites is, however presented to demonstrate that the process was thorough and comprehensive. Sites in the public domain are specifically identified. (This point is somewhat moot, as it is a public-sector site, owned by the Municipality, that has emerged as the preferred site.)

2. Findings and Analysis

This second section of the Report outlines the findings and implications from the various lines of investigation involved in the project. First an **overview of the demographic situation** of the community of Parrsboro is presented (this is significant as the population of Parrsboro is growing quickly and is markedly different from that of Cumberland County overall). Next the top-line results from the **community survey** are presented. This if followed by a review of the key themes discerned through the personal **interviews with staff and key stakeholders** and the results of the **public meeting** held in November 2024. Next is presented the results of the **benchmarking assessment** of other communities and a review of the Parrsoboro branch against generally accepted community **standards for smaller and rural libraries**. With all this by way of context, the **consultants' assessment** of the current facility and future opportunities in a number of dimensions is presented. Finally, a review of **alternative potential sites** for a new and expanded facility is presented, and a **preferred site recommended**.

2.1. Demographic and Population Growth Overview

The demographic context within which the library needs of Parrsboro are being assessed is shown below. While overall the Municipality of the County of Cumberland is growing slowly, Parrsboro is growing at a much faster rate – over 5 times that of the County overall. (This is corroborated by anecdotal evidence from the interviews as well.) Like the County, there is a fairly high proportion of seasonal residences (i.e., cottages and camps) which expands the population of users of a new branch significantly in the summer season.

	Parrsboro[1]	Cumberland County
Population, 2021	1,327	30,538
Population, 2016	1,205	30,005
Population Growth, 2016-2021	10.1%	1.8%
% Seasonal Households (camps, cottages), 2021	17%	23%
% of population 14 and under	11.7%	12.8%
% of population 65 and over	30.9%	28.6%
Median total household income, 2020	$47,600	$58,800

[1] *In 2016 at the time of the Census, Parrsboro was its own municipality (a Town) but by 2021, the time of the most recent Census, had been amalgamated into the Municipality of Cumberland. Nevertheless, census data for the former Town was still collected in 2021 and reported on (as a dissolved Census division) in that year. As the geographic area considered as 'Parrsboro' in the 2021 Census was that same as in 2016, the information is directly comparable.*

In terms of the age structure of the population, the composition is very similar to that of the County overall, albeit showing a slight tilt towards an older demographic. The percentage of permanent residents that is aged 14 and under is slightly less than that of the County overall, while the percentage of seniors is slightly higher. On economic dimensions, Parrsboro may be slightly disadvantaged relative to the County, with median total household income slightly lower than in the County overall. While not an overly significant difference, this factor may have an impact on fundraising efforts.

2.2. Community Survey Results

From mid-October to mid-November 2024 a community survey was undertaken to provide all members of the Parrsboro community, and indeed all residents of Cumberland County overall, with an opportunity to weigh in on the question of the adequacy of existing facilities, and the need for new or expanded library facilities in the community. In total, 253 responses were received, which is a very high rate of return for a community the size of Parrsboro[2]. The survey was extensively promoted within Parrsboro, on the Municipality's website and social media, as well as in all Cumberland Public Library branches and their library website.

Detailed community survey results are submitted under separate cover. The most significant highlights from the perspective of this assessment are show below (and the most significant of these are highlighted in bold):

- in addition to showing very strong representation from the local community, all age ranges (from 18+ to 75+) responded, as well as good representation in terms of gender, household type, employment status, length of time in Parrsboro (from less than a year ([7%] to over 20 years [23%])
- 75% of respondents had a library card

[2] *In total, 205 respondents indicated that they lived in Parrsboro itself (District 8 of Cumberland County) representing approximately 18% of the adult population (15 years of age and older) living there. This is generally considered to be an excellent response rate for a survey of this type.*

- ratings of the existing library and site on a variety of dimensions showed the community feels it to be deficient on a number of dimensions:

Aspect of Existing Library Rated	% of respondents rating existing library as 'not very good' or 'poor'
• adequacy of community meeting space	**68%**
• amount of space available for programming	**61%**
• amount of space for collections	**47%**
• attractive and welcoming environment	24%
• suitability of washrooms	22%
• parking	21%
• accessibility	16%

- **nearly 80% of respondents felt a new and expanded library facility for Parrsboro was 'essential'**; 13% felt it would be 'nice to have but not essential'; only 5% of respondents felt a new facility was 'not needed' (2% indicated that they just 'didn't know')
- **75% of respondents indicated that if a new facility were developed, their usage of the branch would increase**; 43% felt usage would increase by 2 or 3 visits a month, and 39% felt usage would increase by 3 or more times a month
- **40% of respondents suggested that they would be prepared to assist in fundraising efforts for a new branch; 34% indicated that they would be prepared to donate to the capital fund**

2.3. Perceptions from the Staff and Stakeholder Interviews

Approximately 20 key stakeholders provided their insights and perspectives over the duration of the project. Stakeholders included municipal councillors, senior municipal staff, library staff, community organizations and members of the Friends of the Library group. Stakeholders were given a choice of participating either by engaging in an interview with the consultants or by completing an online list of interview questions.

As with the community survey, stakeholders were strongly supportive of the need for a new library branch in Parrsboro.

- **Deficiencies of the current branch** identified included building condition issues such an aging facility with poor heating, ventilation and air quality; accessibility issues with ramps, doorways and the interior layout; poor aesthetic and functionality of the washrooms. Space constraints were also noted including limited space for programming or meeting, forcing events outdoors in summer due to heat. Its location is not ideal

being in a hilly area with insufficient parking especially for seniors and those with mobility issues. It is not central or easily visible.

- **There was strong desire for a new facility** with the majority favouring a new site in the downtown including the Service Centre as a potential site. Priorities for a new library branch included community meeting spaces, expanded programming areas, room for collections, improved parking including specialized areas potentially including a maker space or gallery space. Other considerations included outdoor space, storage space and lessons from the Pugwash library.
- **Desired characteristics of a new library** included the desire for visually appealing spaces (e.g., potentially views of the water), partnership opportunities (e.g., the YMCA for a childcare centre), need for more privacy, quiet areas and space for group activities. Programming needs were identified for children, autistic youth and community groups. There was support for potentially collocating with another facility especially childcare facilities or the Service Centre.
- **Suggested fundraising for a new library** included the Pugwash financing model involving a combination of tax funding, use of reserves, temporary borrowing, government grants (at all levels) and local community-based fundraising was identified as a possible model. Many respondents said they would help with fundraising opportunities, advocate with political representatives and some would be willing to contribute to a capital campaign.
- **Conclusions** – Stakeholders agreed on the need for modern, accessible and central library facility in Parrsboro. Addressing space, accessibility, and infrastructure challenges is critical to increasing community engagement and utilization, particularly to service the needs of a growing community with evolving needs. The library needs to remain relevant and adaptable to support the community.

2.4. Public Meeting




Public meeting at the Legion, Thursday November 21, 2024

On Thursday November 21, a public meeting was held at the Royal Canadian Legion in Parrsboro, from 7 to 9 p.m. The meeting was widely promoted by the Municipality, as well as the newly formed Friends of the Parrsboro Library group. As a result, some 87 attendees participated, which was agreed by all to be a very high turnout and indicative of strong support for the project. After a brief presentation explaining the purpose of the study and some of the key findings to date, participants were divided into 14 discussion groups, asked to take notes, and identified a group spokesperson to report back to the rest of the room. The discussion questions asked were:

1. What is your group's opinion (or range of opinions) regarding the need for a new and expanded library facility?
2. Where might it be located? (what site options would you like to see considered?)
3. What additional functions (beyond what is currently available in the existing branch) should it offer?
4. What are your thoughts or suggestions regarding community fundraising for the branch?
5. Any other suggestions or considerations?

A summary of the main consensus points emerging from the groups on these points is as follows. Note that not all suggestions made are necessarily feasible; the purpose of the study was to determine this, so all of the suggestions made below are simply items for consideration.

Need for a new facility

- universal agreement that a new and expanded library was needed
- with the growth rate Parrsboro is experiencing, planning for a population of 2,000 is appropriate
- 3rd space for everyone
- would enhance attractiveness of overall community – more people would move here

Location of a new facility

- consensus that a central location was necessary
- some thought that current site was not appropriate: too small, too close to school
- should have ample parking
- should be accessible
- options mentioned included:

  - *Municipal Service Centre (old CIBC building) – potential second floor?*
  - *Old post office (heritage building) – would need elevator?*
  - *Trinity United Church*
  - *Collaboration with Ship's Company Theatre*
  - *New location overlooking water*
  - *Old firehall (when new firehall gets built)*

- *Adjacent to Fundy Geological Museum*
- *Old city hall site*
- *Relocate tennis courts and put there*
- *Old mill site by the Aboiteau*
- *Ottawa House Museum site (co-located)*
- *Some thought current location would be OK for a new facility*

Additional functions that should be housed in a new library

- expanded range of daily programs
- meeting room(s) with audio-visual capabilities
- classroom space (could double as meeting space)
- children's reading room
- teen space
- makerspace
- quiet spaces
- community archives
- professional and personal development opportunities
- expanded computer workstations and comfortable seating (10 workstations mentioned as ideal)
- café
- space to display local art
- comfortable seating
- access to outdoor space
- daycare centre
- kitchen facilities
- display cases for historical artifacts
- guest speakers, guest authors
- income tax clinics
- health workshops
- warming centre
- fitness centre addition? (River Herbert model)
- showers
- indigenous programming / Indigenous area
- musical instrument rental or lending
- artist studios
- integrated into a trails network
- winterized spaces
- adjacent to swimming pool
- computer literacy classes
- programming for seniors
- games tables

Thoughts regarding community fundraising

- should be dedicated fundraising group
- combine fundraising efforts with museum, theatre

- some said community would have no problem raising $500K
- should have donation wall
- dinner banquets, gala, raffles, craft sales
- sell naming rights
- explore business sponsorships
- explore all possible grant opportunities
- fundraising game night
- approach former residents of Parrsboro who may be interested in 'giving back'
- buy a brick campaign
- bottle drive
- community BBQ
- involve the schools
- solicit bequests in wills
- contributions for services clubs
- Friends group could play a role in fundraising – issue charitable receipts

Other comments

- time is important or momentum will be lost
- current hours of operation need to be maintained if not expanded
- would like to see it open evenings

2.5. Results from the Benchmarking

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. Generally, in Nova Scotia, the public library board provides books and materials, staffing, and administrative services, and the municipality provides and maintains the library facility. 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 community and stakeholder surveys and the findings from the public meeting.

The library branches selected for this survey include:

Cumberland Public Libraries
- Parrsboro
- Oxford
- Pugwash
- Springhill

Annapolis Valley Regional Library
- Middleton

Western Counties Regional Library
- Shelburne

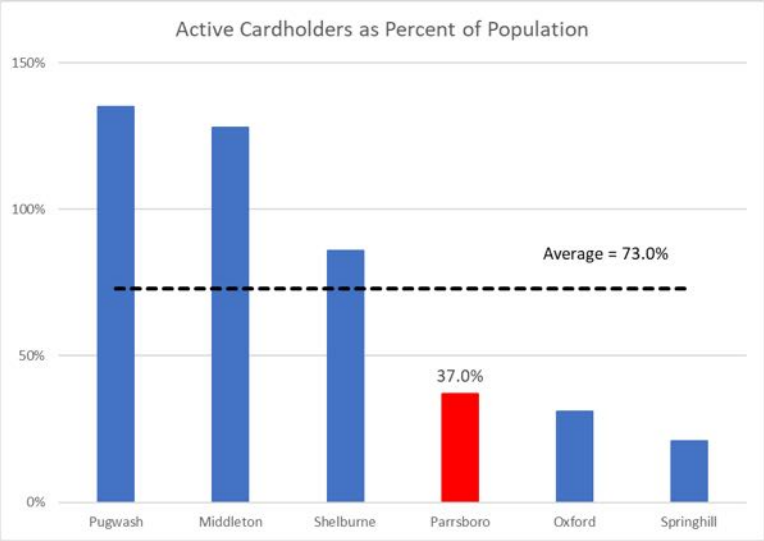
The above libraries are similar in size of community, configuration, or are located nearby. Some of the metrics are related; for example, the size of a branch library can limit the number of books and other materials in it, affecting the circulation of materials, or the number of chairs or user seating affects visits and programs.

Library Resources	Parrsboro	Pugwash	Oxford	Springhill	Shelburne	Middleton
Net library space (s.f.)	1,500	3,700	very small	3,400	6,000	2,850
Hours of operation per week	31	38	25	35	30.5	41
Number of days per week	5	6	4	5	5	5
Number of branch staff (FTE)	1	1.2	0.85	1.1	1.71	2.3
Number of items in collection	7,801	5,558	2,637	8,815	12,817	16,197
User seating	6	16	3	15	28	23
Number of computers for public use	3	2	2	3	4	4
Library use by Community						
Population (2021 census)	1,321	746	1,170	2,743	1,644	1,429
Population (2016 census)	1,205	736	1,190	2,978	1,330	1,391
Estimated population served	2,000	3100	2245	2743	3,860	5,000
Number of active cardholders	493	1,006	365	574	1,408	1,835
Library visits (2023-2024)	6,220	19,824	3,879	9,440	11,235	26,902
Material circulation	11,246	14,335	11,716	9,959	26,773	67,782
Computer Use	2,252	676	513	3,017	760	1,690
Number of programs	31	124	26	105	83	166
Program attendance	460	1,900	266	1,001	866	1,356

General 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.

The reported census population for all rural libraries is often much smaller than the actual population served by the libraries.

The visual display of quantitative information is an effective way to demonstrate the relative activity of the public libraries as demonstrated in the following charts.

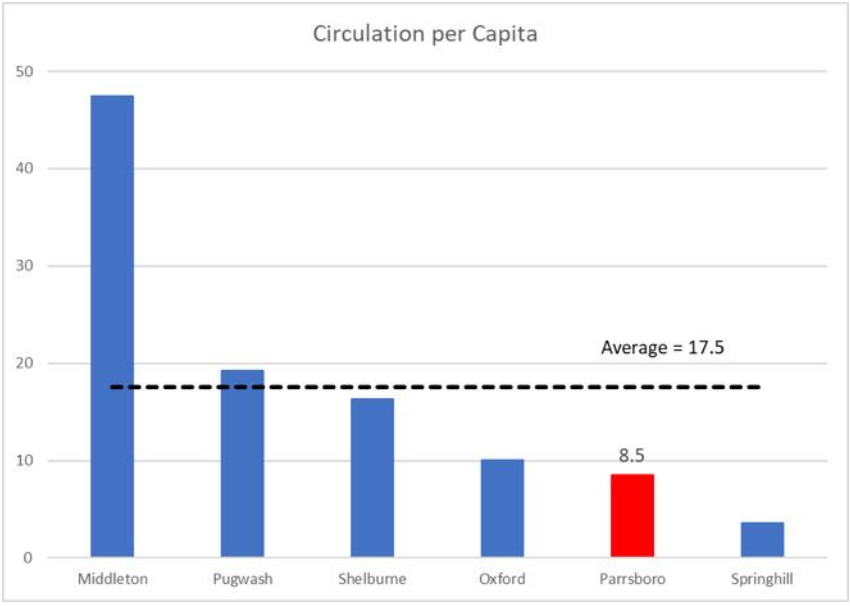


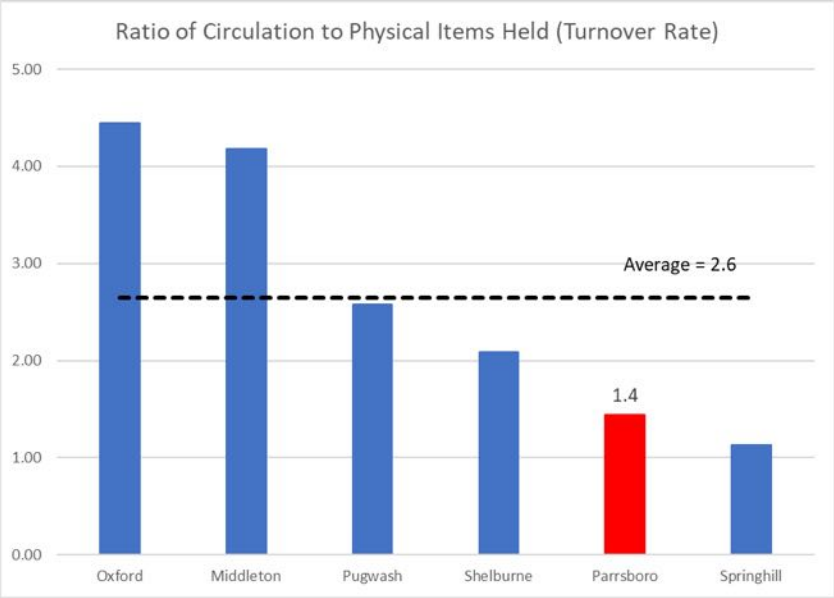
Library cards are required to borrow online materials such as e-books and e-audiobooks, which are reported at a system level in addition to books and other materials borrowed from the local branch library.

Parrsboro ranks quite a bit lower than a few of the comparator libraries.

Branch level circulation is books and materials borrowed from the physical "bricks and mortar" public library.

Again, Parrsboro is low among the libraries, at almost half the average per capita.



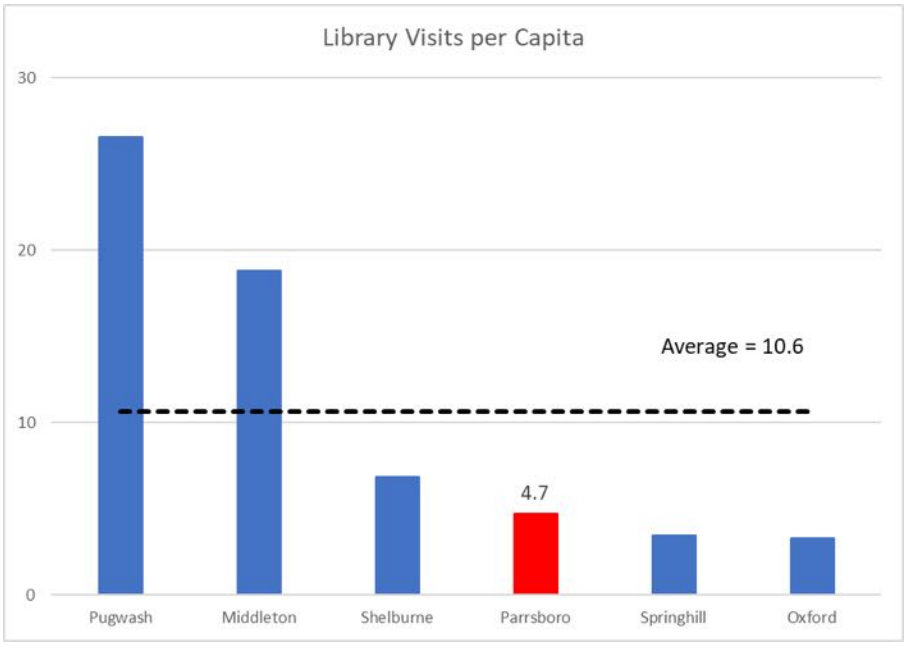


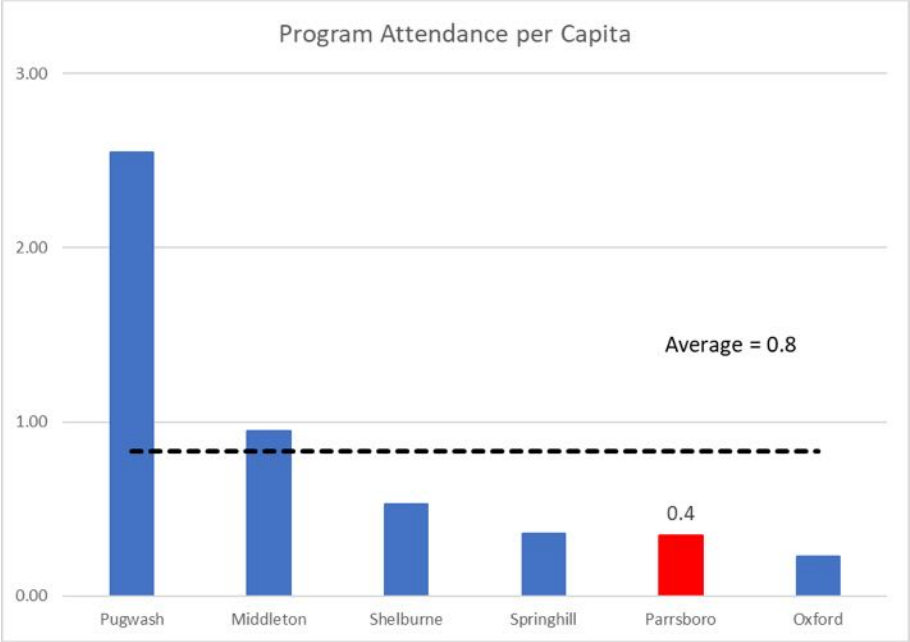
The turnover rate measures the number of times a book or item circulates on average in a year, essentially a measure of the popularity of a collection.

A high turnover rate can be an indicator of a small collection which is heavily used, and a low turnover rate can indicate a large collection that needs weeding or more attractive display.

People visit libraries to borrow materials, participate in programs, or for individual use.

The lack of seating in Parrsboro has a direct effect on people's ability to participate in programs or just enjoy some quiet activity in the library.





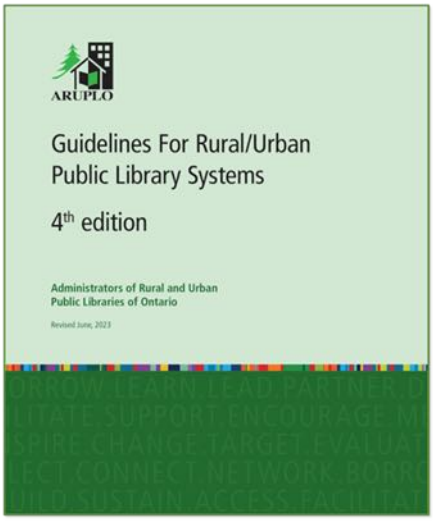
As above, the lack of space and public seating severely limits a library's ability to provide programming space for the community.

The success of the Pugwash library can be attributed to the significant increase in space in the new library.

It should be noted that the librarians reporting the statistics for the comparator libraries (with the exception of Pugwash) all indicated that their libraries were severely undersized and would be further impacted as shelving for the collection will be adjusted (shortened) to accommodate accessibility.

2.6. Assessment Against Library Standards

Standards and guidelines offer a method for libraries to measure their resources and activities against widely accepted norms. These often vary from one jurisdiction to another, so examples are used here. Fundamentally, a public library needs to be responsive to its community and meet the community needs with resources available. In most cases, meeting the standards is voluntary.



Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems

The Guidelines for Rural/Urban Public Library Systems are developed and administered by the Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO). They were developed for multi-branch rural library systems. Nova Scotia does not have a current set of guidelines for public libraries, and the multi-branch library systems in Nova Scotia fit the model for the Ontario guidelines. The edition used for this study is the 4th edition, published in June, 2023.[3]

General Guidelines for Branches Serving up to 5,000 population – Parrsboro and Pugwash Comparison

Guideline	Range		Parrsboro Current	Pugwash Current
Net library space (s.f.)	2,500	5,000	1,500	3,700
Hours of operation per week	20	25	31	38
Number of days per week	4	4	5	6
Number of branch staff (FTE)	1	2.5	1	1.2
Number of items in collection	6,000	12,000	7,801	5,558
Number of seats for the public	12	30	6	16
Number of computers for public use	3	3	3	2

Components Approach

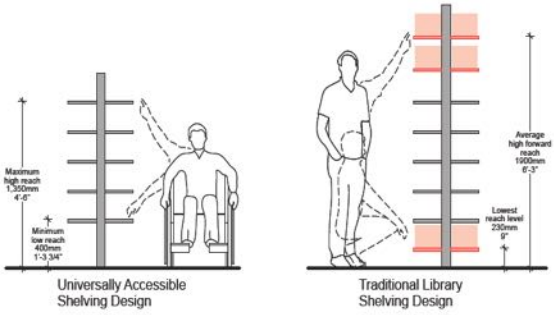
Another approach to determining the required size of the library is a Components Approach or Bottom-Up determination of how much is space is required for each component or function of the library. The following chart is an example for a branch library serving approximately 2,000 people, using the guidelines above and widely accepted architectural space standards.

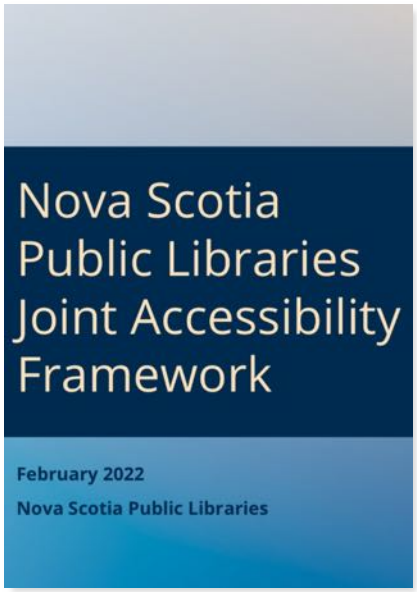
[3]https://aruplo.weebly.com/uploads/2/8/3/7/2837807/aruplo_guidelines_4th_edition_final_-_accessible_web_version.pdf

Component	Square Feet per Unit	Number of Units	Branch Library (sf)
Collections	0.14	8,000	1,120
Public Service Areas			
Adult seating	35	12	420
Children's seating	30	8	240
Public computers	35	4	140
Program Room	600	1	600
Study Room(s)	100	1	100
Total Public Area			**2,620**
Staff and Service Areas			
Service/circulation desk	200	1	200
Storage	150	1	150
Staff break room and lockers	150	1	150
Staff washroom	100	1	100
Total Staff and Service Area			**600**
Components total			**3,220**
Non-assignable space 27%			869
Total GSF required			**4,089**

Barrier-Free Access to the Library

In addition to barrier-free requirements for new buildings, such as access to the building, universal washrooms, elevators, and the provision of accessible workstations and furniture, clear aisle space and the height of book shelves are important elements of an accessible public library in the spirit of making the space welcoming to everyone, such as families with strollers and individuals with mobility challenges. This results in a larger space requirement for the collection. It also has the benefit of making the library more attractive, open, and easier to supervise.





This initiative of the Municipality of Cumberland to improve library service in Parrsboro is consistent with the Nova Scotia Public Libraries Joint Accessibility Framework.

Built Environment

Nova Scotia Public Libraries will lobby, advocate, and act on behalf of their users, employees, and stakeholders to ensure that libraries and their partners who own/have control of the physical spaces in which libraries operate are committed to necessary upgrades to remove/ prevent barriers.[4]

The above needs assessment concludes that the Parrsboro Library needs more space to:

- Meet accessibility guidelines for access to the collection and ease of movement through the library;
- Provide adequate seating and meet the need for study rooms and small meeting rooms;
- Provide new space for technology and non-traditional collections.

2.7. Assessment of Existing Facility

The consultants visited the Parrsboro Library on October 1, 2024 escorted by Chris Douglas, Facilities Co-ordinator for the Municipality of Cumberland.

Exterior

The location of the Parrsboro Branch Library is close to downtown and to two schools. The Library has good directional signs from the streets and faces the street with a visible sign on the front of the building. There is adequate on-site and street parking for approximately six vehicles. The entrance has a steep ramp in addition to stairs leading to the front door. The porch at the front door is partially obstructed by the book drop making it difficult to navigate the doorway with a mobility device or stroller. There is not an automatic door opener.

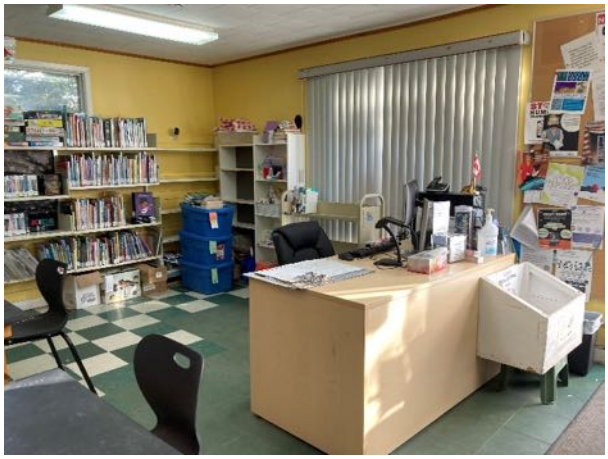
[4] https://novascotia.ca/accessibility/docs/Nova-Scotia-Public-Libraries-Joint-Accessibility-Framework.pdf



Interior

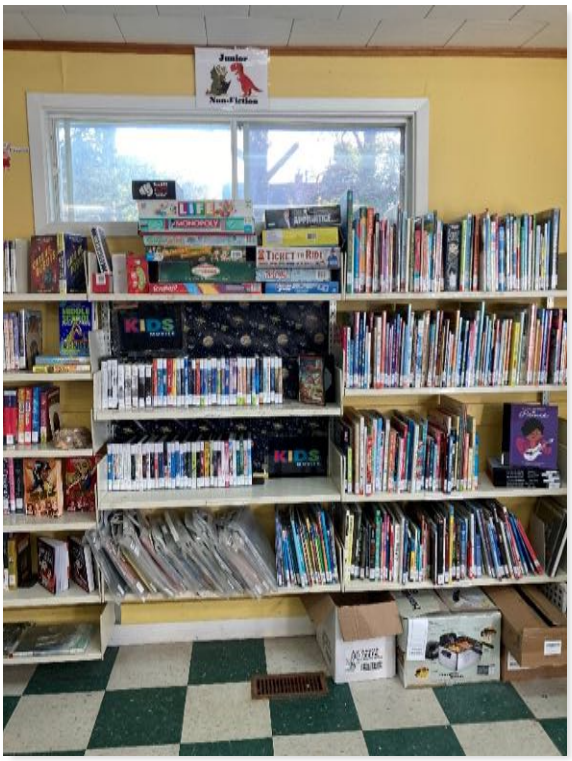
The interior space was estimated to be approximately 1300 square feet (by counting ceiling tiles) not including the small washroom and adjacent hallway leading to the basement. Therefore, for this study's purpose, 1,500 net square feet is the estimated space.

The service desk is immediately adjacent to the main entrance, with a book drop box in front of it. This results in congestion as borrowers sign out materials in the same space as visitors are entering or exiting the building. A small staff workspace is located behind the desk for inter-branch deliveries, holds, and supplies. The service desk should be at standing height (with a stool) for efficient movement around the workspace and library. The location of a couple of chairs for the public are nearby, causing a distraction to both staff and library visitors.



Interior wayfinding is indicated with signs on the walls, on the shelving units, and hanging from the ceiling. The shelving is too high for contemporary library purposes, including in the children's area. This is probably with the intention of offering the maximum number of books in a limited space.





The furniture for public seating consists of folding chairs and a stained table in one area, and two small tables and chairs near the service desk.

Three computers for public use are also available.

There is no furniture suitable for children's activities.



There is one small washroom which is not accessible, and a second exit from the building with is also not accessible.

During the site visit, the consultants were shown around the Parrsboro community by Mr. Douglas in order to explore other potential locations for the library. The next day, the consultants visited the new Pugwash Branch Library, which was observed to be an excellent example of a small branch library.

2.8. Review of Potential Sites

This section of the report identifies potential sites identified for a new library facility. These sites were identified through a combination of methods: staff of the Municipality suggested some; the consultation process suggested others; and the consultants' own visit to the community suggested still others. In total, some 15 sites were identified and evaluated.

Some of the sites suggested are in the public domain, and are listed below. Others, however, are privately owned sites and thus were not identified in this public document. As it happens, however, the preferred site emerging from this process was in the public domain, and therefore can be identified. To show the objectivity of this process, three privately held sites are identified below as Site A, Site B, and Site C.

Separately, municipal council has been provided with the complete list, specifying all sites: those in the public domain as well as those privately held.

2.8.1. Alternative Site Configurations Identified

As mentioned, the consultation process identified 15 site configurations, including possibilities on the present site (i.e. simply retrofitting and using the present building, vs. demolishing the library on the present site and building anew). The 15 site possibilities identified were:

1. Current Site – Expansion of Existing Building
2. Current Site – Demolition of Existing Building and New Construction
3. Service Centre Site – Reconfiguration of Existing Structure (within existing footprint)
4. Service Centre Site – Expansion of Existing Structure
5. Playground at North Corner of School St. and Queen St.
6. Old town hall site (at Main and Eastern)
7. Old mill site by the Aboiteau
8. Co-locate with Fundy Geological Museum
9. Old Firehall (when new firehall gets built)
10. Co-locate with Ship's Company Theatre
11. Co-location with Ottawa House Museum
12. Tennis Court Site
13. Site A (in private ownership)
14. Site B (in private ownership)
15. Site C (in private ownership)

2.8.2. Evaluation Criteria and Process for Alternative Sites

Sites Evaluation Criteria

Each site was evaluated on the basis of six criteria. These were:

- **Centrality:** proximity to the centre of Parrsboro (considered to be the intersection of Main St. and Victoria St.)
- **Ownership** – sites that are within County ownership will be preferred
- **Size** - sites that are able to accommodate 4,000 sq. ft. on one floor are preferred
- **Expansion Potential** – sites that would enable future expansion are preferred
- **Adaptive Re-Use Potential** – sites with buildings that have some potential to re-use existing or historic sites are preferred
- **Estimated Cost** – sites that likely would require new builds, or extensive renovations, are less desirable than site configurations that can relatively easily be adapted to library needs

Evaluation Process

A simple rating system is used to evaluate each site on each criterion. This ensure4s that any one criterion does not dominate the selection process. The scale used is:

0 – site does not meet the criterion at all
1 – site may meet the criterion to some extent
2 – site fully meets the criterion

Specific criteria use to assign points on this 0 to 2 scale were:

Criterion	Points Assigned
Centrality	0 if location more than 0.5 km. from centre of Parrsboro (considered to be the intersection of Main St. and Victoria St.) 1 if location between 0.25 and 0.5 km. from centre of Parrsboro 2 if location less than 0.25 km. from centre of Parrsboro
Ownership	0 if site is privately held (meaning negotiations with owner to acquire site may be complex) 1 if site is held by another public or not-for-profit agency (meaning negotiations with owner to acquire site may be less complex than with a private owner – *but not necessarily*) 2 if site is already owned by the Municipality (the least complicated situation)
Size	0 if the site is too small to accommodate the recommended footprint of 4,000 sq. ft. without requiring a second floor (and implying that there would be no on-site parking) 1 if site is large enough to accommodate the footprint on one story, but would not have much additional room for greenspace around the building or parking 2 if site is large enough to accommodate the footprint plus have ample room around the site
Expansion Potential	0 if after a new library facility is developed, there is no further room to accommodate additional expansion on the site (should this be warranted or required in future) 1 if there appears to be some expansion room on the site 2 if there appears to be ample expansion room on the site

Criterion	Points Assigned
Adaptive Re-Use Potential	0 if site is greenfield or would require tear-down, and thus present no potential for adaptive re-use of an existing building 1 if location presents some opportunity for potential cost savings through adaptive re-use of an existing building 2 if location presents some opportunity for potential cost savings and adaptive re-use of a historic structure
Estimated Cost	0 if site need to be acquired through commercial means and/or if a new construction would be required or a complex renovation to an existing structure required 1 if negotiation with another public agency or not-for-profit required in order to acquire site or if a new construction would be required or a complex renovation to an existing structure required 2 if site is already in municipal ownership and therefore likely to cost nothing and/or if there is an existing structure that is likely to require minimal alteration

2.8.3. Identification of Preferred Site

The evaluation of the fifteen site possibilities on each criterion is shown below:

Site Configuration	Centrality	Municipal Ownership	Size	Expansion Potential	Adaptive Re-Use Potential	Estimated Cost	TOTAL SCORE
1) Current Site – Expansion of Existing Building	2	2	1	1	1	0	**7**
2) Current Site – Demolition of Existing Building and New Construction	2	2	1	1	0	0	**6**
3) Service Centre Site – Reconfiguration of Existing Structure (within existing footprint)	2	2	1	2	1	1	**9**
4) Service Centre Site – Expansion of Existing Structure	2	2	2	2	1	0	**9**
5) Playground at North Corner of School St. and Queen St.	2	1	2	2	0	1	8
6) Site adjacent to NAPA Auto Parts store	2	0	0	0	0	1	**3**
7) Old mill site by the Aboiteau	0	0	2	2	0	0	**4**
8) Co-locate with Fundy Geological Museum	0	1	2	1	0	0	**4**
9) Old Firehall (when new firehall gets built)	1	2	2	2	1	0	**8**
10) Co-locate with Ship's Company Theatre	0	2	1	1	1	0	**5**
11) Co-location with Ottawa House Museum	0	2	2	2	0	0	**6**
12) Tennis Courts site	0	2	2	2	0	0	**6**
13) **SITE A** (privately owned)	2	0	1	0	2	0	**5**
14) **SITE B** (privately owned)	2	0	2	1	2	0	**7**
15) **SITE C** (privately owned)	2	2	2	2	0	0	**8**

As this evaluation shows, the top two site configuration possibilities relate to the Service Centre site, at 209 Main Street (the old CIBC building), currently being used as the Parrsboro Service Centre). However, if this possibility falls through for whatever reason, there are several other sites scoring an '8' on the evaluation process, showing that there are clearly other candidate possibilities in the municipality.

2.9. Architectural Assessment of Preferred Site

Based on the site assessment, the consulting team decided to further evaluate whether the Service Centre site could be reconfigured or expanded to accommodate the new library function. To assist with this, the architecture firm Architecture49 was retained. Having designed the new library facility in Pugwash, Architecture49 was well-suited for the task. Additionally, they were already familiar with the Service Centre site, having conducted a Building Conditions Assessment of the facility in 2022 in collaboration with WSP Canada.

At 3,528 sq. ft. (gross) the existing Service Centre is just 15% too small for the ideal size calculated for a new branch for Parrsboro (4.089 sq. ft. (gross). As this is not a huge gap however, Architecture49 considered four options:

Option 1: Renovation of the interior of the Service Centre space to accommodate the library functions on a priority basis (and not requiring any expansion of the existing footprint). In order to repurpose the interior space, the only item that is problematic and relatively expensive is the removal of the vault and the subsequent reconditioning of that space. Accordingly, there were two versions of this option considered:

Version a: leaving the vault as is; and

Version b: removing and repurposing the vault space

Option 2: Expansion of the existing footprint to the rear of the building to add space for a program room and a Service Centre office space function (similar to the Pugwash facility). Again, two versions of this scenario were considered: one keeping the vault and the second removing it and repurposing the space. The version that considers removing and repurposing the vault also shows an alternative configuration for the municipal Service Centre and staff space.

The chart following summarizes the sizes of the space for each option. Appendix A contains preliminary concept drawings for each scenario.

	Option 1: Renovation of Interior Space		Option 2: Expansion of Building	
	A. Retain the Vault	**B. Remove the Vault**	**A. Retain the Vault**	**B. Remove the Vault**
Total Space Available (gross sq. ft.)	3,528	3,528	4,614	4,790
Total Public Area (sq. ft.)	2,620	3,620	2,684	2,630
Staff and Service Area (sq. ft.)	562	600	547	562

2.10. Preliminary Cost Estimates

The Pugwash branch with 3,817 square feet[5] was completed and opened in August 2023 at a completed cost of $2,398,466 representing a cost per gross square foot of $638. A review of the Statistics Canada non-residential construction cost index for Halifax from Q2 2023 and projecting to end of Q4 2024 shows an increase of 3.5% which would imply the Pugwash facility would cost approximately $650 per square feet if constructed in today's costs. These costs are consistent with the 2024 Altus Canadian Construction Cost Guide which shows library construction costs completed for libraries in the Halifax area ranged from $410 to $670 per square foot.

To estimate construction costs for the Parrsboro library options, we have assumed capital construction costs would range from $650 to $670 per square foot in current dollars. The higher allowance recognizes there may be additional costs to refurbish an existing building compared to building a new facility on a greenfield site. We have also included an allowance of $100,000 in the two options that involve removing the vault and repurposing some of the interior space associated with the vault. The cost of the vault removal may vary considerably based on the vault rating and age. Vaults are rated based on the time to break in. Older vaults are poured in place and have high ratings. Newer vaults may be modular and easier to take out. There is a lot of heavy material and dust involved in the operation. The resultant high level cost estimates for each option are summarized in the table following.

[5] *Consisting of 3,700 square feet of library space and the remainer for the municipal service centre.*

	Option 1: Renovation of Interior Space		Option 2: Expansion of Building	
	C. Retain the Vault	D. Remove the Vault	C. Retain the Vault	D. Remove the Vault
Total Space Available (gross sq. ft.)	3,528	3,528	4,614	4,790
Total Public Area (sq. ft.)	2,620	3,620	2,684	2,630
Staff and Service Area (sq. ft.)	562	600	547	562
Estimated capital costs	$2.3 M - $2.4 M	$2.4 M - $2.5 M	$3.0 M - $3.1 M	$3.2 M - $3.3 M

Depending on the option chosen, costs will range from a low of $2.3 M to $3.3 M. These costs are high level estimates and exclude the cost of furniture, furnishings and equipment or the need for purchase of additional collections if that is necessary. They should be reviewed by a cost consultant when detailed design work is undertaken.

The take-away message from this architectural work is essentially that the selected site (the Service Centre site) is entirely feasible and workable as a location for a new library branch for Parrsboro. (Moreover, at an estimated total area of over 16,000 sq. ft. the site appears to have ample room for parking as well a potential future expansion.) The architectural drawings contained in Appendix A are not necessarily the final word on what the interior space of library might look like; a number of alternative configurations and layouts are possible, which will be the subject of the next phase of more detailed design work. More detailed cost estimates should also be undertaken at that time.

3. Recommendations

This third section of the Report is devoted to outlining the recommendations from the study. These are in contained in five areas:

1) Recommendations relating to the **functional requirements** of the library (the size, types and nature of spaces that should be provided);
2) Recommendations relating to the **preferred site** of the library (the size, types and nature of spaces that should be provided);
3) Recommendations relating to the **operational implications** of a new and expanded library branch in Parrsboro;
4) Recommendations relating to **community mobilization and fundraising**;
5) Recommendations relating to **next steps and implementation.**

The recommendations outlined here are numbered in sequence for ease of reference only. Their numbering does not reflect their overall priority or sequencing.

3.1. Functional Requirements and Size of a New and Expanded Facility in Parrsboro

The requirements for a small branch library were identified in Section 2.6 above and some of the components are repeated here and were used by Architecture49 to assess the Municipal Service Centre for a possible library location.

The following chart is an example for a branch library serving approximately 2,000 people, using the guidelines above and widely accepted architectural space standards.

Component	Square Feet per Unit	Number of Units	Branch Library (sf)
Collections	0.14	8,000	1,120
Public Service Areas			
Adult seating	35	12	420
Children's seating	30	8	240
Public computers	35	4	140
Program Room	600	1	600
Study Room(s)	100	1	100
Total Public Area			**2,620**
Staff and Service Areas			
Service/circulation desk	200	1	200
Storage	150	1	150
Staff break room and lockers	150	1	150
Staff washroom	100	1	100
Total Staff and Service Area			**600**
Components total			**3,220**
Non-assignable space 27%			869
Total GSF required			**4,089**

The above allocations can be adjusted according to local community needs, keeping in mind the space required for each.

In addition to the actual space required, the following are best practices for good functioning of a small branch library (these can also be expressed as a bubble diagram and can be developed in consultation with an architect):

- ✓ On one floor for efficient use of staff supervision, no need for an elevator;
- ✓ One accessible public entry within easy view from the service/circulation desk, accessible public washrooms, bulletin boards, etc. Desirable to have the program room adjacent so it can be used after library hours;
- ✓ Service desk at standing height with a lower section to serve people in wheelchairs and children,
- ✓ Open space design for flexible use in the future, supervision. Use furniture, shelving, displays, to separate areas;
- ✓ High use areas such as children's collections and some computers for ease of supervision and assistance by staff;
- ✓ Quiet areas farthest from the service desk, e.g. adult fiction, periodicals, casual seating;
- ✓ Staff workroom located behind service desk, exterior door for deliveries, separate staff breakroom, lockers, and washroom;

- ✓ Variety of seating and tables for study, relaxed reading, children, teens;
- ✓ Variety of shelving to meet accessibility guidelines no more than 60 inches high, as well as shelving for children's materials, and other specialized collections.

Key functional recommendations:

- **An expanded library branch should be built in Parrsboro, designed for 4,000 sq. ft. on one floor, with open concept for flexible use of the space.**

- **The expanded branch should be located in the downtown core of the community.**

3.2. Preferred Site

As outlined in Section 2.8 of this Report, after a comprehensive review of alternative sites suggested through the consultation process as well as the consultants' own review of site possibilities, it is concluded that the site of the existing Service Centre site, at 209 Main Street (the old CIBC building), currently being used as the Parrsboro Service Centre is preferred as being the most advantageous. The investigation showed that this site was large enough to accommodate the recommended size and configuration of the expanded library facility. Accordingly, the site recommendation is:

- **The existing municipally owned Service Centre site, at 209 Main Street, is the best available location for the new expanded library. This site also has the possibility of incorporating the existing Service Centre operation, thus creating a strong 'community hub' presence in the downtown.**

The subsequent architectural investigation into the suitability of this site for the expanded library option showed that there are design options that could also include a smaller service centre operation on the site, creating more of a 'community hub' presence to the operation. (This is essentially the model followed in the relatively new Pugwash Library.)

3.3. Operational Requirements

The scope of this study was to assess options for the Parrsboro Library ***facility***, rather than the operations of the library service. The Municipality has direct responsibility for the provision and maintenance of the facility and the Cumberland Public Libraries has responsibility for the collections, staffing, programs, and service. The scope of this study did not include a detailed assessment of the library collections and services. Nonetheless, a new or different library facility will have an impact on the library service. This has been demonstrated by the experience of the new Pugwash Branch Library and its impact on the community.

Key recommendations for the facility:

- **Ensure adequate heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems, which are essential to meet current requirements;**

- **Consult library management in subsequent facility planning of the new branch.**

3.4. Community Mobilization and Fundraising

Early indicators suggest that there is strong support from the community to undertake and help with fundraising. As noted, an active Friends group has been formed which is willing to actively engage in fundraising efforts. The Friends group was also instrumental in encouraging residents to attend the public meeting.

The community survey showed strong support for fundraising initiatives to help construct a new library. Specifically, 40% said they would assist with fundraising activities; 32% would donate to the capital fund; and 35% would advocate with political representatives. While a smaller sample size than the community survey, the overall turnout and the response at the public meeting to the idea of fundraising also received enthusiastic support. People indicated they would be willing to help and many said they would donate.

The CAO of the Municipality has indicated the proposed model for raising capital for the new branch would likely follow the fundraising model used for construction of the Pugwash branch. The Pugwash library branch project was a design-build project. The original RFD estimate was $2 M less any fundraising, which was not specified at the time. Final costs were $2,398,466 with $500,000 being fundraised by the community, representing 20.9% of the total budget.

We understand fundraising efforts in Pugwash were very well organized and quite successful and that the funds came together quite quickly. We would concur that the Pugwash fundraising model worked well and should be successful in Parrsboro, particularly given the initial energy, enthusiasm and efforts of the Friends' group.

Key recommendations for the library service:

- **Establish an official liaison with the Friends' group and assist their efforts on an ad hoc basis wherever possible.**

- **Initiate discussions with the Friends' group regarding an expected and realistic target for their fundraising.**

3.5. Next Steps

The foregoing has established a recommended site and building program, and determined the cost of the facility at a high level. It also points to the fact that there is a strong degree of local support and willingness to become involved in raising the resources necessary to construct the facility. Given all this, the recommended next steps for the municipality to consider are the following:

- **Municipal Council should review this report (and an accompanying staff report) and endorse the intention to develop a new branch library in Parrsboro, of approximately 4,100 sq. ft.**
- **An RFP should be issued for a design/build for the new branch on the Service Centre site; or**
- **An architectural firm should be retained to undertake a more detailed design and cost estimate of a new branch according to the specifications herein, on the Service Centre site. This should include consideration of whether or not the existing Service Centre operation could be accommodated as an adjunct to the new branch operation. Following the detailed design, a construction plan should be developed for the new branch on the Service Centre site.**
- **A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be developed with the new Friends' Group regarding the transfer of funds raised, recognizing gifts to the Municipality will be eligible for tax receipts.**
- **The Municipality should work with the Friends group and Cumberland Public Libraries to determine possibilities and protocol for naming rights and acknowledgement of sponsors of rooms and spaces in the expanded facility.**
- **Construction of the new branch should occur as soon as possible after the above activities have been undertaken.**

4. Implementation Plan

The final section of the Report focusses upon implementation of the recommendations. First the sequencing of the recommendations in terms of **suggested timing and critical path** is presented. Next, the **resource implications *(human and financial resources)*** are outlined. Finally, suggested **targets and outcomes** for each of the recommended initiatives is presented, followed by a brief **conclusion** from the consulting team.

Recommendations from this study are fairly straightforward; a preferred site has been identified, and a functional program outlining the key components of the space articulated. A preliminary budget for the space has been developed as well. The recommendations are thus primarily to do with the *process* involved in moving this project into reality.

As with any implementation plan, however, it is understood that, once initiated, it may well not roll out exactly as anticipated: new opportunities may arise, unforeseen issues may develop, people come and go, etc. Accordingly, this implementation plan should be considered as a guide to action, not necessarily 'written in stone'.

4.1. Timing and Critical Path

A three-year implementation plan is proposed, covering the period from now to the opening of the new expanded branch. This timeframe shows what is feasible and achievable within what is most likely the quickest and most optimistic timeframe; it may well be that, as mentioned above, actual events take somewhat longer. However, in the experience of the consultants it should be possible for this timetable to be achieved.

This timeline is contained in the chart overleaf (note that the suggested periods in the chart overleaf represent **calendar years**):

Suggested Timeline and Critical Path of Activities

Recommendation	Year 1 (2025)	Year 2 (2026)	Year 3 (2027)
(1) Municipal Council should review this report (and an accompanying staff report) and endorse the intention to develop a new branch library in Parrsboro.			
(2) An expanded library branch should be built in Parrsboro, designed for approximately 4,100 sq. ft. on one floor, with open concept for flexible use of the space.	Part of Council endorsement (See #1, above)		
(3) The expanded branch should be located in the downtown core of the community.	Part of Council endorsement (See #1, above)		
(4) The existing municipally owned Service Centre site, at 209 Main Street, is the best available location for the new expanded library. This site also has the possibility of incorporating the existing Service Centre operation, thus creating a strong 'community hub' presence in the downtown.	Part of Council endorsement (See #1, above)		
(5) An RFP should be issued for the design/build of a new library branch at the Service Centre. Or, an architectural firm should be retained to undertake a more detailed design and cost estimate of a new branch according to the specifications herein, on the Service Centre site. This should include consideration of whether or not the existing Service Centre operation could be accommodated as an adjunct to the new branch operation. A construction plan should then be developed for the new branch on the Service Centre site.	Part of Council endorsement (See #1, above)		
(6) Initiate discussions with the Friends' group regarding an expected and realistic target for their fundraising.			
(7) A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be developed with the new Friends' Group regarding the transfer of funds raised, recognizing gifts to the Municipality will be eligible for tax receipts.			
(8) Establish an official liaison with the Friends' group and assist their efforts on an ad hoc basis wherever possible.			
(9) Ensure adequate heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems, which are essential to meet current requirements.	Incorporate into detailed design specifications		
(10) Consult library management for draft design			
(11) The Municipality should determine possibilities and protocol for naming rights and acknowledgement of sponsors of rooms and spaces in the expanded facility.			
(12) Construction of the new branch should occur as soon as possible after the above activities have been undertaken.			

4.2. Resource Requirements

The implementation of the recommendations contained here will have some resource requirements in terms of the time of staff involved, as well as the out-of-pocket costs to the municipality. The table below estimates these costs at a high level. Again, as with all aspects of this implementation plan, they may be subject to some variation once activities get underway.

Regarding human resource requirements, the terms 'small', 'moderate', 'significant' and 'major' are used. While it is very difficult to specify these with any precision, they may generally be thought of as follows:

- 'small' = a few hours; less than a day in total
- 'moderate' = 1 to 2 days in total
- 'significant': 3 to 5 days in total
- 'major': more than a week in total

Recommendation	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Resource Requirements
1) Municipal Council should review of this report (and an accompanying staff report)	• Council time to review documentation and debate motion (estimated 1-2 hours per Council member)	• essentially none
2) An expanded library branch should be built in Parrsboro,	• part of #1	• part of #1
3) The expanded branch should be located in the downtown core of the community.	• part of #1	• part of #1
4) The existing municipally owned Service Centre site, at 209 Main Street, is the best available location for the new expanded library.	• part of #1	• potential implications in terms of costs of relocation of existing Service Centre function
5) An RFP should be issued for the design/build of the new library branch at the Service Centre. Or an architectural firm should be retained to undertake a more detailed design and cost estimate of a new branch according to the specifications herein, on the Service Centre site. A construction plan should then be developed for the new branch on the Service Centre site.	• moderate staff time involved in tender process (if required)	• no cost for RFP option • if choose architect, cost could range between $30,000 and $40,000

Recommendation	Human Resource Requirements	Financial Resource Requirements
6) Initiate discussions with the Friends' group regarding an expected and realistic target for their fundraising.	• small amount of staff time	• minimal
7) Develop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Friends' Group	• moderate amount of staff time	• minimal
8) Establish an official liaison with the Friends' group and assist their efforts on an ad hoc basis wherever possible.	• small amount of staff time	• minimal
9) Ensure adequate heating, air conditioning and ventilation systems, which are essential to meet current requirements.	• contained in #5	• contained in #5
10) Consult library management for draft design	• likely significant amount of municipal staff time involved in working with selected contractor	• contained in #5
11) The Municipality should determine possibilities and protocol for naming rights and acknowledgement of sponsors of rooms and spaces in the expanded facility.	• likely moderate amount of municipal staff time	• (possibly) small cost for external consultation
12) Construction of the new branch should occur as soon as possible after the above activities have been undertaken.	• likely major amount of municipal staff time involved in tendering process as well as working with selected contractor	• budget for new construction to be determined (from #5)

4.3. Targets and Milestones

Key targets and milestones for this project are relatively simple and are not necessarily tied to each of the strategic actions proposed above. Fundamentally, they are:

- Council approval in principle of this plan and direction to staff to proceed with the fundamental recommendations contained herein;
- Establishment of a relationship, dialogue and agreement with the Friends' group, and development of an MOU with that organization relating to funding;
- Retention of an architect to develop a more detailed design, costing and construction schedule;
- beginning of the construction project, and ultimately completion and opening of the new expanded library branch.

4.4. Conclusion

This analysis has clearly demonstrated the need for a new and expanded library branch in Parrsboro. The ample evidence for this is shown through comparison with library standards for small communities, and a benchmarking assessment of other similar small communities that shows that Parrsboro is currently deficient in the space and functionality provided by the existing facility. A survey of the local population, which elicited a very large response for a community of its size, showed that residents are dissatisfied with existing library facilities and feel that a new and expanded branch is essential to their needs. Moreover, the community is growing rapidly – at about five times the rate of the Municipality overall – and so these needs will only increase with time. In addition, there is considerable evidence that the local community is prepared to back their wishes for a new branch with action, and is quite willing to become involved in fundraising efforts to assist in raising a share of the capital required, thus further demonstrating need.

This investigation has shown that there is a preferred candidate site (the current Service Centre) where a new branch would be feasible, and has provided 'proof of concept' that a new branch of the size and functionality envisaged would fit the site at a cost that is deemed to be reasonable.

The process of undertaking this study itself has been something of a catalyst to stimulate interest and enthusiasm regarding a new branch. Since the work began, an active 'Friends' group has formed, and appears to be busy spreading the word, raising money and advocating for this new facility. In the view of the independent consultants retained to undertake this objective assessment, all the signs are positive and point to a successful outcome in achieving a vibrant new and expanded library branch for Parrsboro. This report also maps out the next steps to help the Municipality and the local community achieve this goal.

APPENDIX A. Architecture49 Report on Service Centre Site

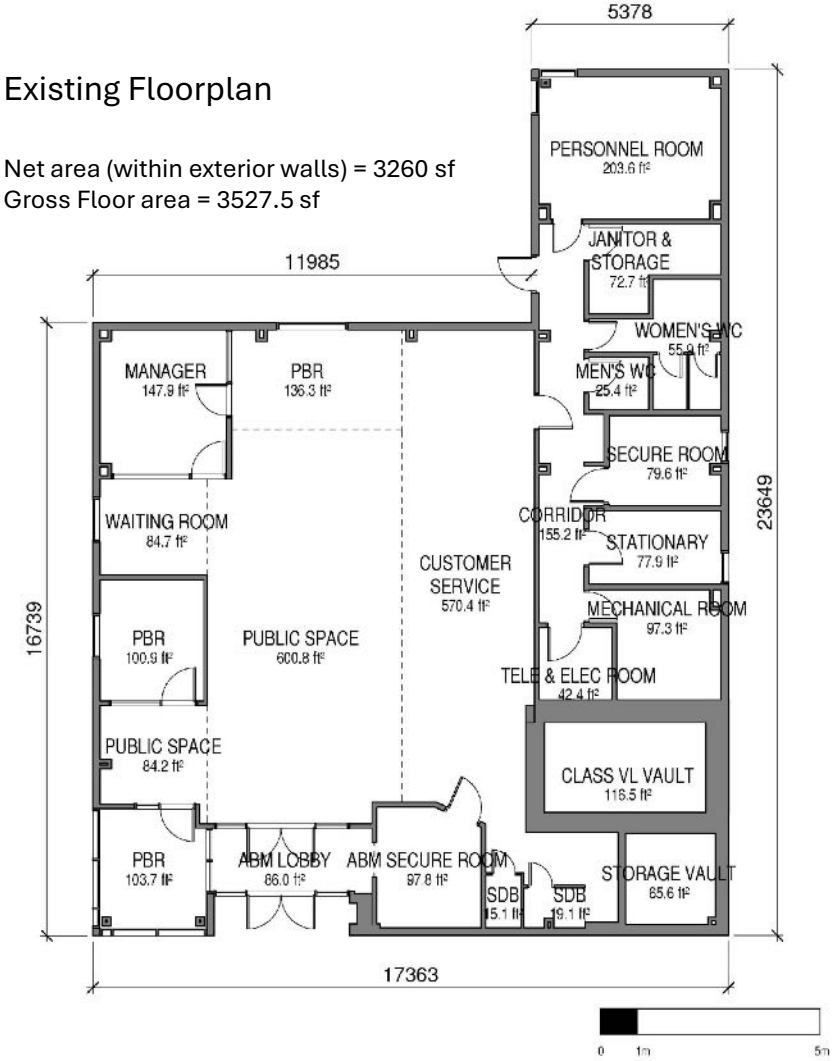
ARCHITECTURE 49

PARRSBORO LIBRARY FEASIBILITY STUDY

2025-01-17

Existing Floorplan

Net area (within exterior walls) = 3260 sf
Gross Floor area = 3527.5 sf



Deliverables

- Option 1, 2
  - Renovate the interior of the service building to be a library in keeping with given program (adjusted to approximately 70% of the square footage)
  - Option 1 Keeps the vault and Option 2 Removes the vault
- Option 3, 4
  - Renovation and addition to the building to be a library to meet the given program and include a civic services space
  - Option 3 Keeps the vault and Option 4 Removes the vault
- Maximum site coverage
- Recent costing information
- Risks and considerations
- Design goals
  - Open, flexible space, that can be supervised from the service desk
  - Universal accessibility
  - All on one floor with one main entry
  - Foyer with public washrooms, program room and washrooms can be accessed after hours
  - Approximately 500 sf of civic services space in Options 3 and 4

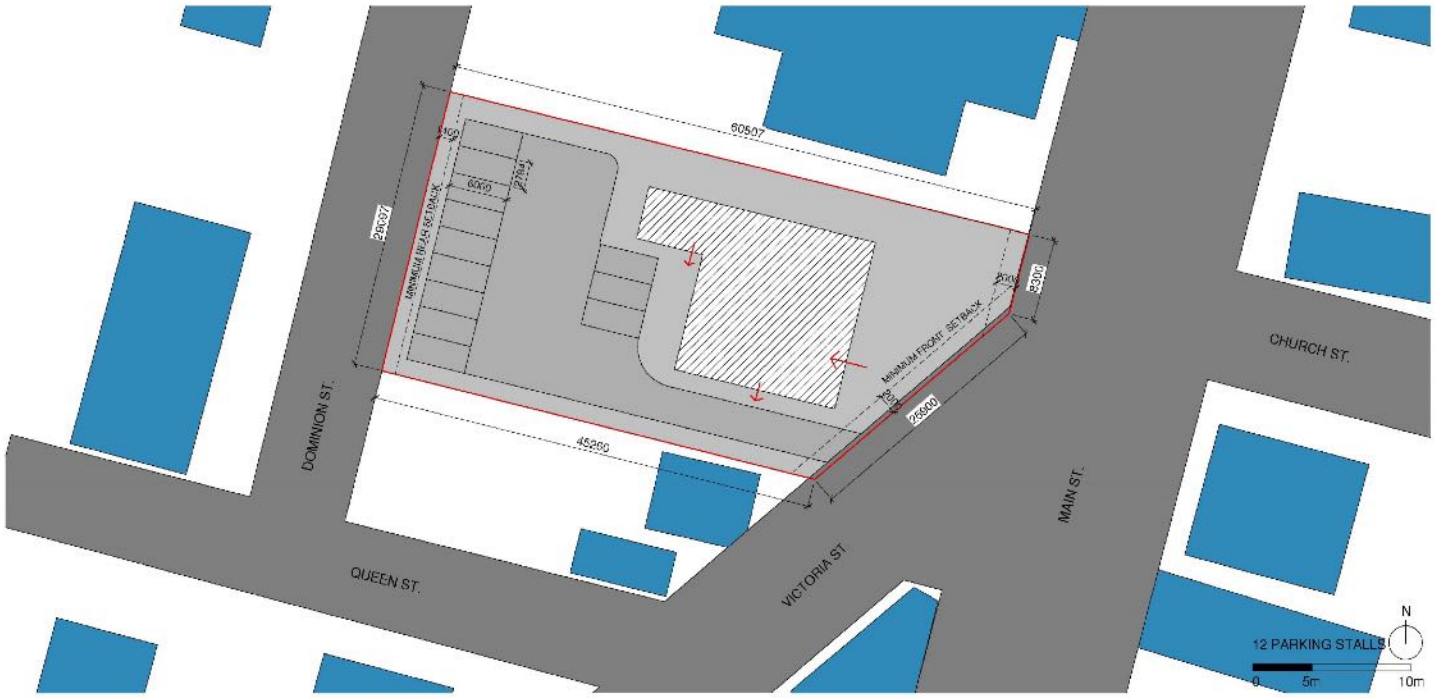
Given Program

EXISTING - Design Population	2,000					
Component	**Square Feet per Unit**	**Number of Units**	**Branch Library (sf)**	**Area (m2)**	**NBC area/pp (m2)**	**Occupants**
Collections	0.14	8,000	1,120	104.1	46	2
Public Service Areas						
Adult seating	35	12	420	39.0	1.85	21
Children's seating	30	8	240	22.3	1.85	12
Public computers	35	4	140	13.0	1.85	7
Program Room	600	1	600	55.7	1.85	30
Study Room(s)	100	1	100	9.3	1.85	5
Total Public Area			**2,620**	243.4		
Staff and Service Areas						
Service/circulation desk	200	1	200	18.6	9.3	2
Storage	150	1	150	13.9		
Staff break room and lockers	150	1	150	13.9	1.2	12
Staff washroom	100	1	100	9.3		
Total Staff and Service Area			**600**	55.7		
Components Total			3,220	299.1		
Non-assignable space 27%			869	80.8		
Total GSF required			**4,089**	379.9		
TOTAL OCCUPANTS						91

Required Water Closets

Total Occupants	91	
divided by two (male/female)	45.5	
Number of WC required by code	male	female
nbc 26-50 people	1	2

Option 1 Floor Plan – Renovation within Existing Footprint, **Keeping** the vault

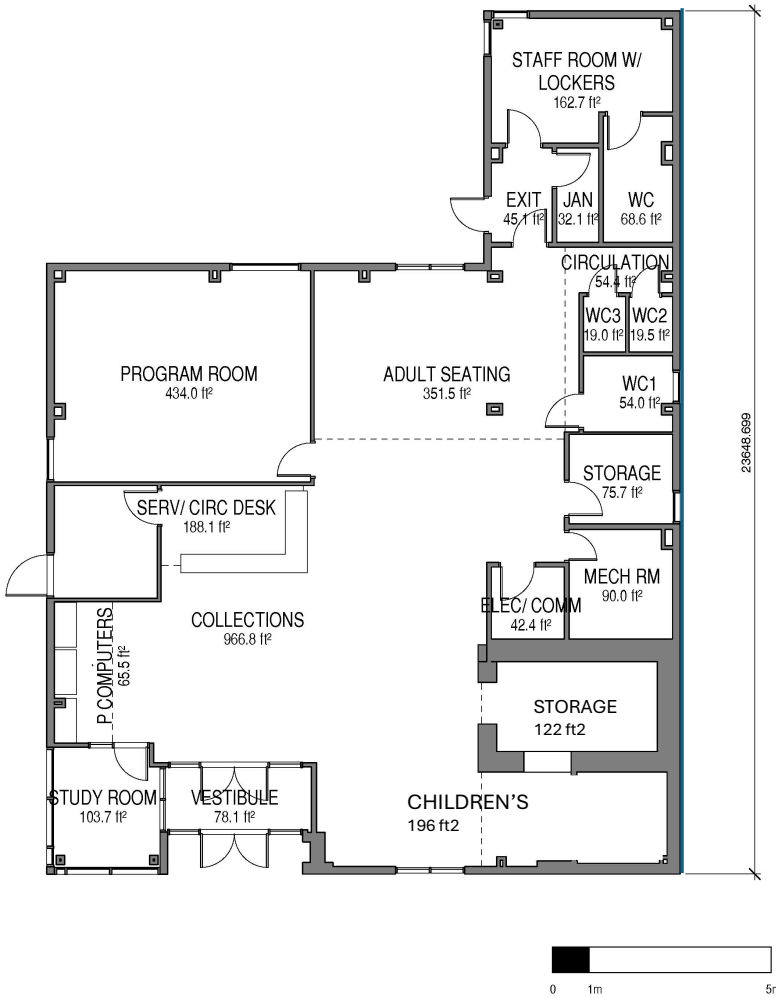


OPTION 1 - SITE PLAN

PARRSBORO LIBRARY STUDY

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Option 1 Floor Plan – Renovation within Existing Footprint, **Keeping** the vault

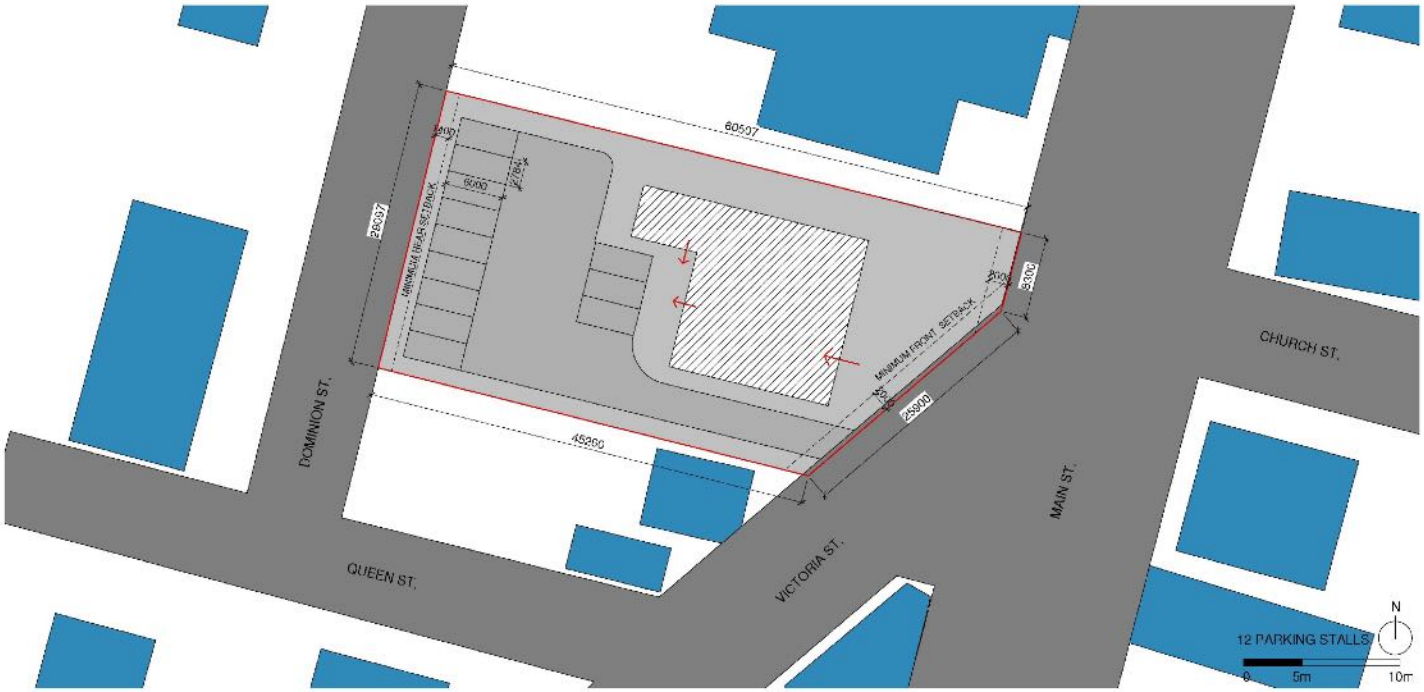


OPTION 1 - Reno Keeping Vault				
Option 1 - Reno within Existing Building Footprint				
Component	**Square Feet per Unit**	**Number of Units**	**Requested Area**	**Design Area**
Collections	0.14	8,000	1,120	967
Public Service Areas				
Adult seating	35	12	420	352
Children's seating	30	8	240	196
Public computers	35	4	140	66
Program Room	600	1	600	434
Study Room(s)	100	1	100	104
Total Public Area			**2,620**	**2,119**
Staff and Service Areas				
Service/circulation desk	200	1	200	188
Storage	150	1	150	142
Staff break room and lockers	150	1	150	163
Staff washroom	100	1	100	69
Total Staff and Service Area			**600**	**562**
Components Total			3,220	2,681
Entry Vestibule				78
Exit Vestibule				45
Elec / Comm				42
Mech				90
WC1				54
WC2				20
WC3				19
Janitor				32
Circulation				54
Non-assignable space 27%			869	434
Total GSF required			**4,089**	**3,528**

Limited Renovation

- Vault remains – door removed, and hole cut through for children's nook
- Study room, storage, elec, mech spaces remain
- Plumbing changes limited
- All fenestration and doors remain, two additional windows added
- Delivery to circulation desk from driveway
- Program reduced to approximately 70-80%

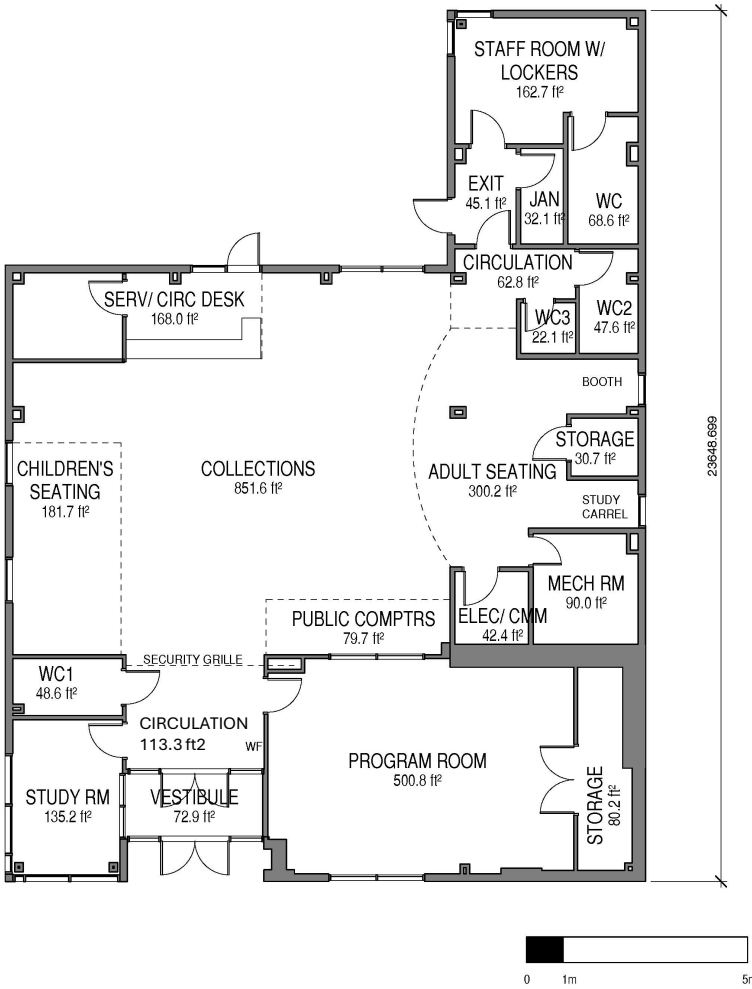
Option 2 Floor Plan – Renovation within Existing Footprint, **Removing** the vault



OPTION 2 - SITE PLAN

PARRSBORO LIBRARY STUDY

Option 2 Floor Plan – Renovation within Existing Footprint, **Removing** the vault

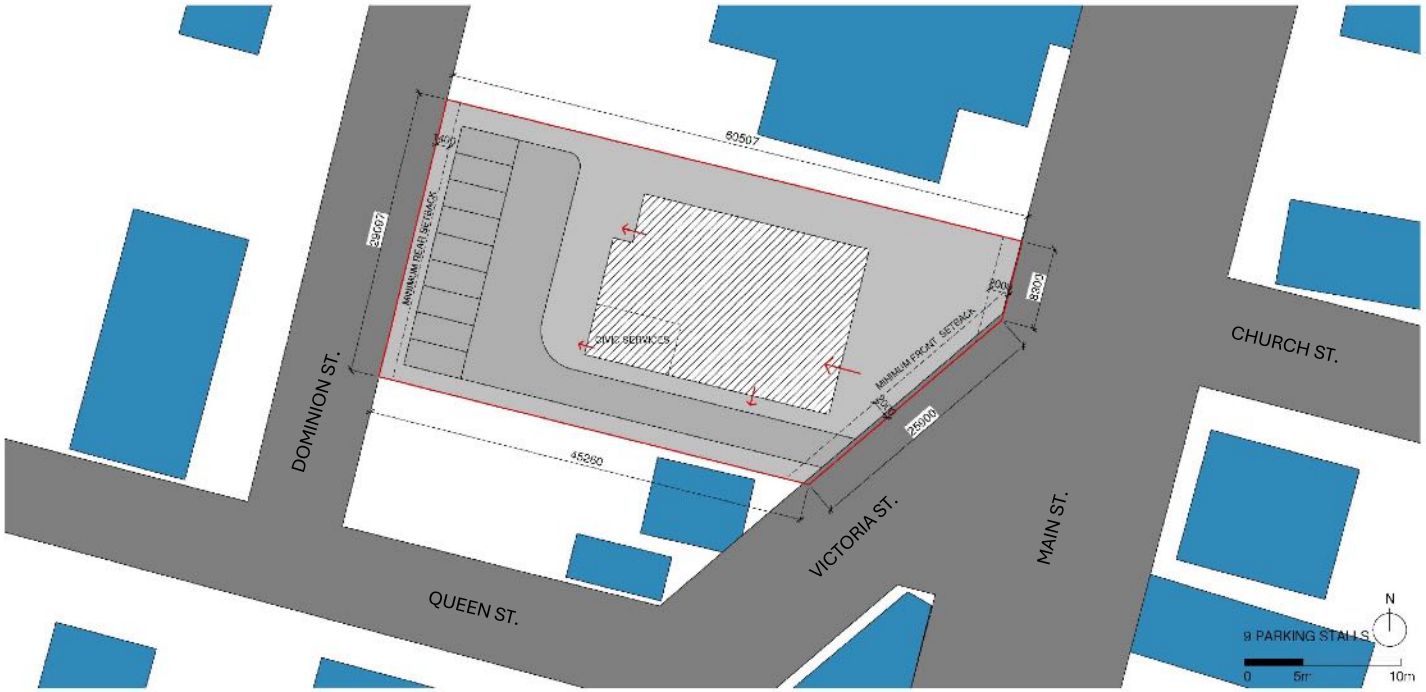


OPTION 2 -Reno Removing Vault				
Option 1 - Reno within Existing Building Footprint				
Component	**Square Feet per Unit**	**Number of Units**	**Requested Area**	**Design Area**
Collections	0.14	8,000	1,120	852
Public Service Areas				
Adult seating	35	12	420	300
Children's seating	30	8	240	182
Public computers	35	4	140	80
Program Room	600	1	600	501
Study Room(s)	100	1	100	135
Total Public Area			**2,620**	**2,050**
Staff and Service Areas				
Service/circulation desk	200	1	200	168
Storage	150	1	150	121
Staff break room and lockers	150	1	150	163
Staff washroom	100	1	100	69
Total Staff and Service Area			**600**	**521**
Components Total			3,220	2,571
Entry Vestibule				73
Exit Vestibule				45
Elec / Comm				42
Mech				90
WC1				49
WC2				48
WC3				22
Janitor				32
Circulation				176
Non-assignable space 27%			869	577
Total GSF required			**4,089**	**3,528**

Renovation

- Vault removed
- Elec, mech spaces remain
- Plumbing changes more extensive due to WC1
- All fenestration and doors remain, two additional windows added
- Delivery to circulation desk from driveway
- Program reduced to approximately 70-80%
- Program room, washroom, study room available after hours from front door

Option 3 Floor Plan – Renovation and Addition, **Keeping** the vault

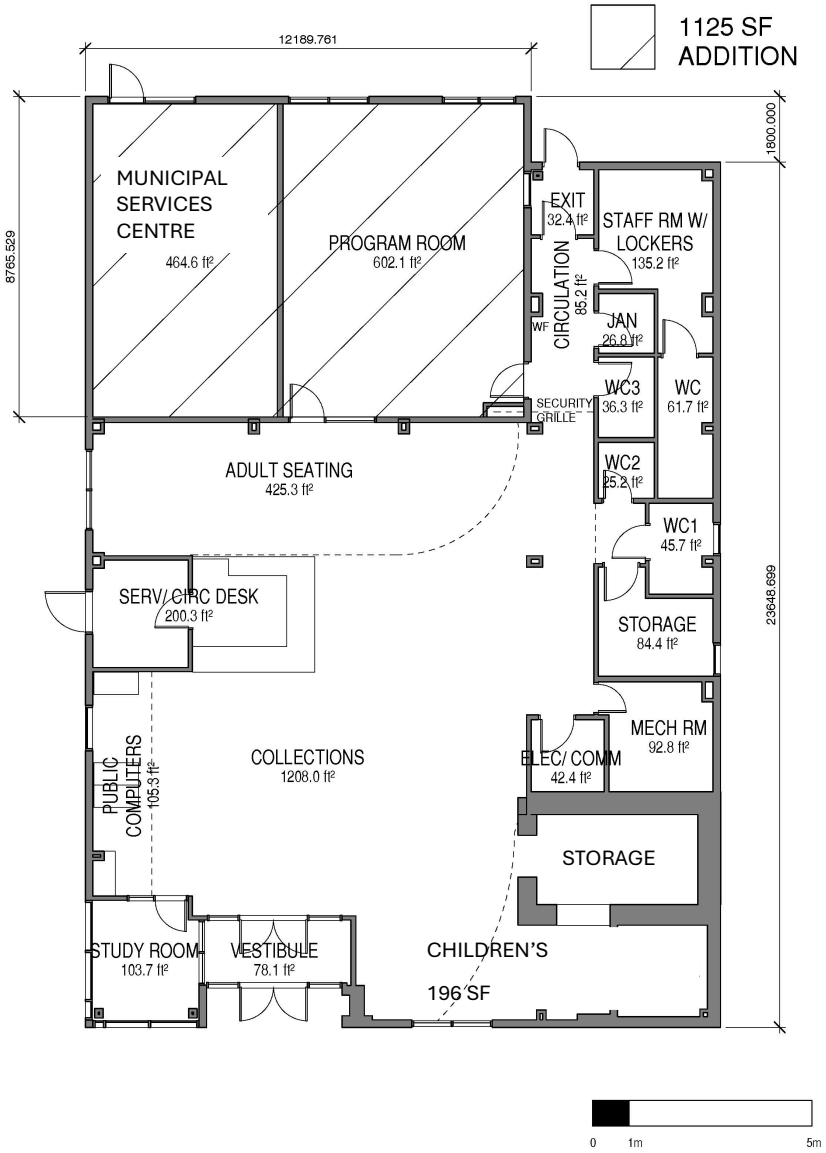


OPTION 3 - SITE PLAN

PARRSBORO LIBRARY STUDY

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Option 3 Floor Plan – Renovation and Addition, **Keeping** the vault

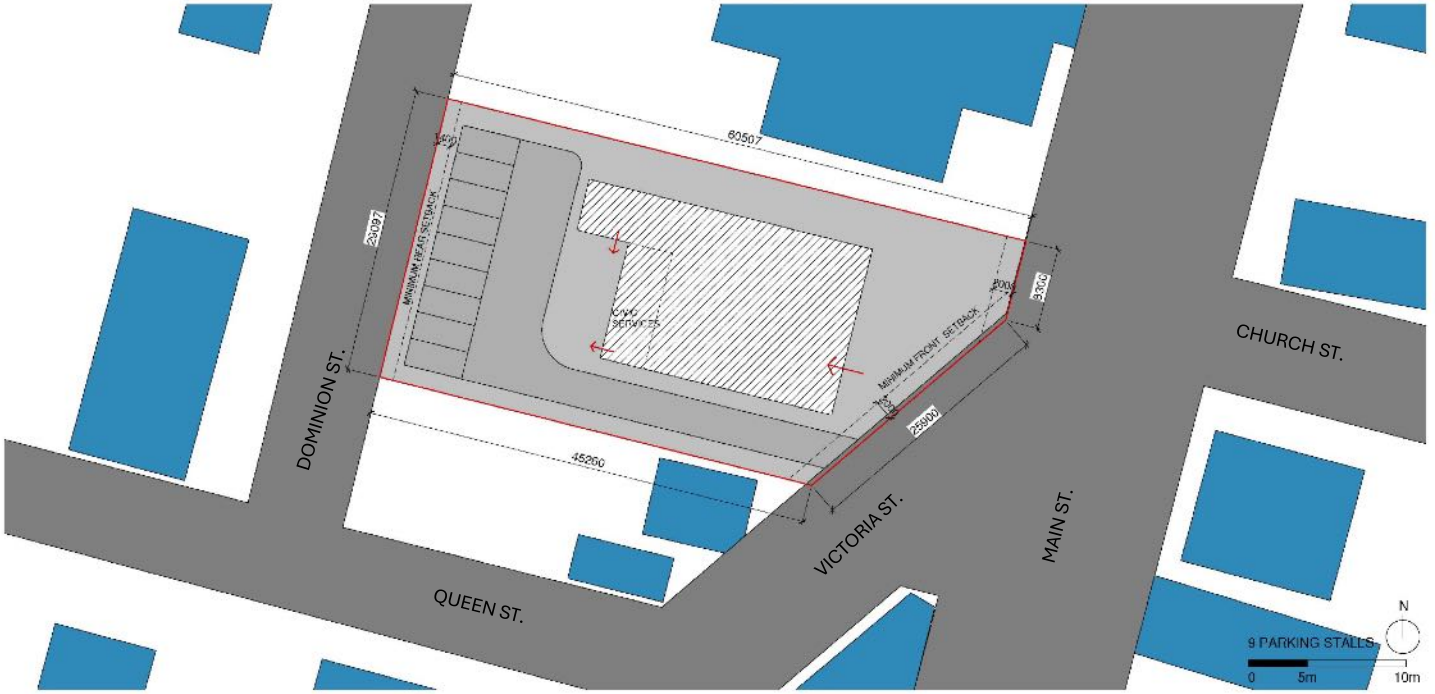


OPTION 3 - Reno + Addition Keeping Vault				
Option 1 - Reno and Addition to Building Footprint				
Component	**Square Feet per Unit**	**Number of Units**	**Requested Area**	**Design Area**
Collections	0.14	8,000	1,120	1,208
Public Service Areas				
Adult seating	35	12	420	425
Children's seating	30	8	240	240
Public computers	35	4	140	105
Program Room	600	1	600	602
Study Room(s)	100	1	100	104
Total Public Area			**2,620**	**2,684**
Staff and Service Areas				
Service/circulation desk	200	1	200	200
Storage	150	1	150	150
Staff break room and lockers	150	1	150	135
Staff washroom	100	1	100	62
Total Staff and Service Area			**600**	**547**
Components Total			**3,220**	**3,231**
Entry Vestibule				78
Exit Vestibule				32
Elec / Comm				42
Mech				93
WC1				46
WC2				25
WC3				36
Janitor				27
Circulation				85
Non-assignable space 27%			869	464
Civic Services				465
Total GSF required			**4,089**	**4,614**

Renovation + Addition

- Vault kept
- Elec, mech spaces, study room, and storage remain
- Plumbing changes limited
- Limited changes to doors and fenestration
- Delivery to circulation desk from driveway
- Program meets given program
- 1125 sf Addition
- Civic Services space 465 SF
- Program room, washroom available after hours from back exit

Option 4 Site Plan – Renovation and Addition, **Removing** the vault

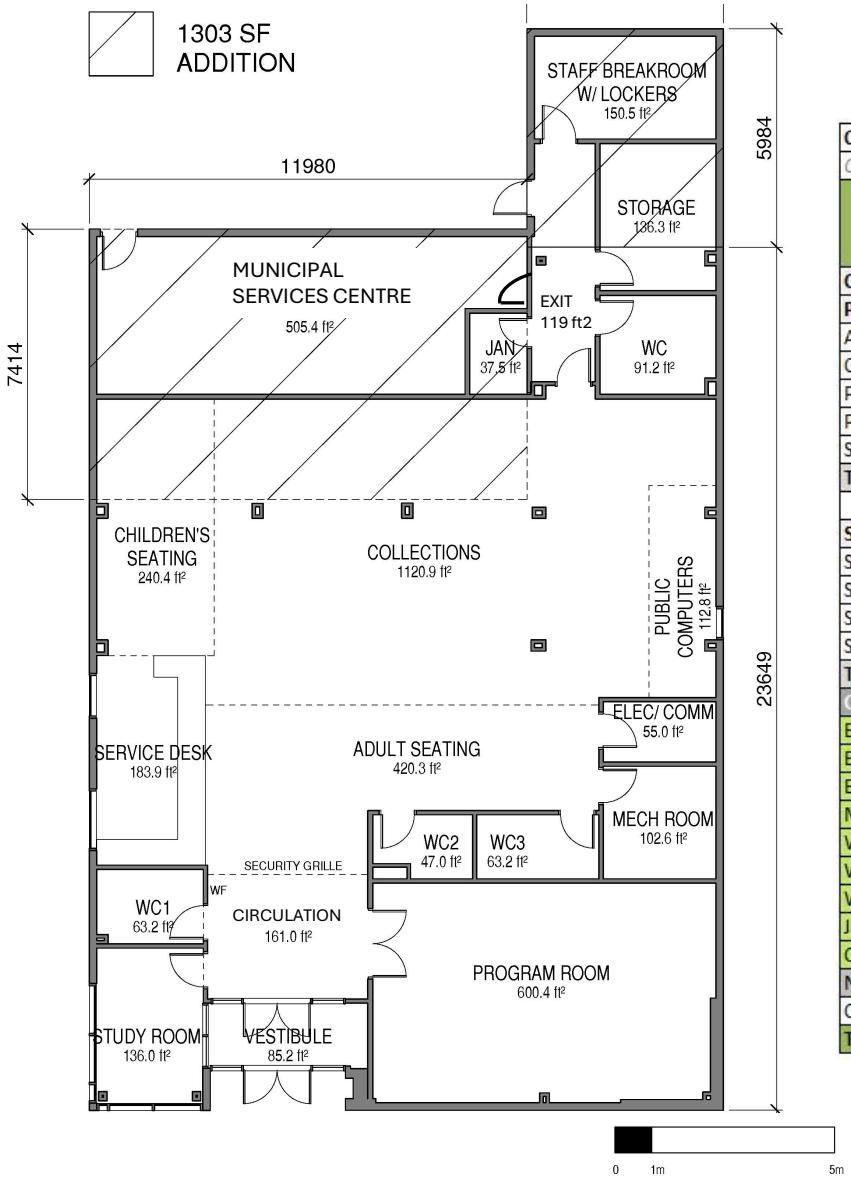


OPTION 4 - SITE PLAN

PARRSBORO LIBRARY STUDY

A 49

Option 4 Site Plan – Renovation and Addition, **Removing** the vault



OPTION 4 - Reno + Addition Removing Vault				
Option 1 - Reno and Addition to Building Footprint				
Component	**Square Feet per Unit**	**Number of Units**	**Requested Area**	**Design Area**
Collections	0.14	8,000	1,120	1,121
Public Service Areas				
Adult seating	35	12	420	420
Children's seating	30	8	240	240
Public computers	35	4	140	113
Program Room	600	1	600	600
Study Room(s)	100	1	100	136
Total Public Area			**2,620**	**2,630**
Staff and Service Areas				
Service/circulation desk	200	1	200	184
Storage	150	1	150	136
Staff break room and lockers	150	1	150	151
Staff washroom	100	1	100	91
Total Staff and Service Area			**600**	**562**
Components Total			**3,220**	**3,192**
Entry Vestibule				85
Exit Vestibule				119
Elec / Comm				55
Mech				103
WC1				63
WC2				47
WC3				63
Janitor				38
Circulation				161
Non-assignable space 27%			869	734
Civic Services				505
Total GSF required			**4,089**	**4,790**

Renovation + Addition

- Vault removed
- Delivery to circulation desk possible from driveway
- Program meets given program
- 1303 sf Addition
- Civic Services space 505 SF
- Program room, washroom, study room available after hours from front door

Max Capacity of Site

Zoning: CDwn – Downtown Commercial

Permitted uses: cultural use, office, among others

Cultural use defined as "… the use of land, buildings, or part thereof, for the promotion of art, culture, and learning and without limiting the generality of the foregoing includes art galleries, **libraries**, museums, theatres, visual arts centres, and other similar uses.

Max building height 15m

Max lot coverage – tbd

Parking requirements – tbd

Costing

Recent Pugwash library has a GFA of 3817 sf, and was completed for

$2,398,466.00 which equals approx. 628/sf. This was a new build.

Risks and considerations

- Hazardous materials to be removed
- Fire truck requirements, potential access from both streets
- By-law parking requirement to be confirmed
- By-law maximum lot coverage to be confirmed
- Cost of removing vault
- Unknown site conditions

