

Goal

The Ajax Public Library's collection development is driven by popular demand while recognizing the unique nature of the diverse Ajax communities as well as the need to provide core reference services.

This policy is intended to provide guidance for collection development staff to achieve consistency in the selection of relevant materials for the collection; to define for staff, customers, Board members and the public, the scope of the existing collections, and to inform the public of the principles upon which decisions are made.

Objective

Ajax residents shall have access to library collections, provided in an efficient, effective and professional manner within comfortable facilities and with responsible fiscal planning. These collections will:

- Provide the materials needed to meet the community's recreational and cultural needs;
- Support life-long learning;
- Enable the community to find and use information in a variety of formats; and,
- Evolve in relation to customer needs.

1. Scope of the Library's Collections

The Ajax Public Library is a community library for people of all ages who live, study and/or work in the Town. It is the Library's objective to acquire materials of wide-ranging interest to meet the needs of the general public.

General interest materials are collected on at least a basic information level. Basic information level collections serve to introduce and define a subject or author, to indicate the varieties of information available elsewhere, and to support the needs of general library users.

Basic information level collections are frequently and systematically reviewed for currency of information, and superseded editions and titles containing outdated information are withdrawn. Classic or standard retrospective materials may be retained.

Materials are purchased in the most appropriate format for library users within the Library's budgetary guidelines and constraints. The Library monitors the development of new and emerging formats, and considers the feasibility and usefulness of new technologies when making selection decisions.

2. Policies Guiding Materials Selection

2.1. Responsibility for Materials Selection

Responsibility for the selection of all library materials is vested in the Chief Librarian who may delegate this function to members of staff.

In order to achieve greater levels of efficiency in acquiring materials, selection may be outsourced. If outsourced, the vendor and its selectors will be provided with a copy of this policy

and shall be bound by the selection criteria as outlined and as further defined by the Library's collection development staff.

2.2. Intellectual Freedom

The selection of materials for the Ajax Public Library is based on the belief that community members have the right of access to expressions of knowledge, opinion, and creativity of some value or significance. Such freedom of access to information is essential to the well-being and development of a democratic society.

For this reason, the Library has the responsibility to acquire and make available a wide range of books and materials, including those which express controversial or unpopular beliefs.

This responsibility means that the Library, while recognizing the right of individuals and groups to question material selections, must not allow the freedom of choice within the Library to be limited by the personal views of any group or individual.

Therefore, basic to the Library's *Collection Development Policy* is the Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual adopted by the Ontario Library Association. The Ajax Public Library accepts without reservation this statement:

- 2.2.1. That the provision of library service to the public is based upon the right of the citizen, under protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion, and morality.
- 2.2.2. That intellectual freedom requires freedom to examine other ideas and other interpretations of life than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general, and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional or unpopular.
- 2.2.3. That freedom of expression includes freedom for a creator to depict what is ugly, shocking, and unedifying in life.
- 2.2.4. That free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen, and view is fundamental to such free traffic.
- 2.2.5. That it is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and to implement it consistently in the selection of books, periodicals, films, recordings, other materials, and in the provision of access to electronic sources of information, including access to the Internet.

- 2.2.6. That it is therefore part of the library's service to its public, to resist any attempt by any individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view, and listen, by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to library information sources in any format.
- 2.2.7. That it is equally part of the library's responsibility to its public to ensure that its selection of material is not unduly influenced by the personal opinions of the selectors, but determined by the application of generally accepted standards of accuracy, style, and presentation.

2.3. Governing Legislation

The Library abides by all laws, including the prohibitions in the Criminal Code of Canada against sedition, hate propaganda, and obscenity and the Film Content Information Act, 2020 which restricts access to video games. Information related to Library item loaning can be found in LIB-AP-072 Membership and Circulation Policy.

It is acknowledged that the definition and interpretation of these terms and decisions on application rest with the courts.

2.4. Customer Responsibility

The Library recognizes that many materials are controversial and that any given item may offend some members of the community. The materials selected for the Library's collection will be varied to suit the needs of different parts of the community. Not all materials selected, therefore, will be suitable for every customer or community member. While Library staff will attempt to assist individuals and groups to locate materials suitable for their use, the ultimate responsibility for the choice made by the customer rests with the customer.

2.5. Responsibility for Children's Reading

The Library believes in the freedom of the individual and the rights and obligations of parents/guardians to instill their own code of values in their children. As such the responsibility for the choice of library materials used by children rests with their parents/guardians.

No item will be excluded from the library collection because it may come into the possession of a child.

Library users, regardless of age, have unrestricted access to the library's varied and diverse collections, except as outlined in 2.3.

2.6. Labeling of Collections

Library materials will not be marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents, except as outlined in 2.3. No catalogued book or other item will be placed on closed shelves except due to space limitations or to protect the item from damage or theft.

2.7. Suggestions for Purchase

The Library welcomes suggestions from customers for materials to be purchased by the Library and added to the Library's collection. Customers should submit purchase requests online or to staff at any one of the customer service points at any of the Library's branches. Titles that have been requested by customers may not fit the scope of the Library's collection and may be inconsistent with this Policy; and thus, may be candidates for interlibrary loan. Customer suggested purchases are not guaranteed to be acquired.

2.8. Gifts and Donations

The Library, as a publicly-owned institution, is for the use and enjoyment of all residents. Interest and support are greatly appreciated. Gifts of money for the purchase of materials are welcome. On occasion gifts of materials may be accepted, but are not encouraged.

Materials which are not needed for the collection may be sold, redistributed to other agencies, recycled, or discarded. The Library is not responsible for informing the donor of such dispensation.

Unsolicited materials from authors and publishers are treated as donations and as such any accompanying invoices shall not be honoured.

3. Materials Selection

To build collections of merit and significance, materials must be measured by objective guidelines.

Materials, whether donated or purchased, will be examined and evaluated with regard to the following standards. An item need not meet all of the criteria to be acceptable.

3.1. General Criteria

1. Relevance to community needs.
2. Suitability of subject, style, format and reading level for intended audience.
3. Insight into human and social conditions.
4. Reputation and/or significance of author.
5. Demand for material.
6. Positive reviews by critics and professionals.
7. Reputation of the publisher or producer.
8. Availability and accessibility of materials on the same subject or genre.
9. Clarity, accuracy, and logic of presentation.
10. Canadian, Ontario, or Ajax content.
11. Date of publication.
12. Price.

3.2. Selection by Levels

Adult Materials

Adult collections must satisfy the informational, recreational, educational, and cultural reading needs of a wide range of customers with varying reading levels. Adult materials are provided in a variety of formats, in English, French, and other select languages.

Children's Materials

The Library seeks to build a children's collection of high quality, broad ranging materials for children from babies to 12 years old. The Library provides the best of new materials and selected older works of lasting value. While the general selection criteria are used, additional attention is paid to reading level, quality of illustrations, suitability of format, bias, and age-appropriateness of content. The collection has an emphasis on fiction for children's – board books, picture books, and easy readers. It also includes non-fiction selected to support children's personal interests as well as their studies. Children's materials are provided in a variety of formats, in English, French and other select languages.

Young Adult Materials (YA)

Young Adult collections are intended to appeal to youth 12 to 16 years of age. Quality is the foremost selection criterion with a strong emphasis on popular and recreational items. The YA collection is largely paperback, although hardcover titles are also purchased. The collection consists of fiction, graphic novels, comic books, and magazines. Information needed to support the studies of young adults will be found in the adult non-fiction collection. YA materials are available in a variety of formats and in English only.

3.3. Selection by Material Type

Fiction

- the primary purpose of the fiction collection is to satisfy the demand from recreational readers for popular, new titles
- the collection reflects the diverse interests of the public
- selections are made in many genres of fiction: romance, mystery, etc.
- book reviews are used as a selection tool but selection is also based on customer demand. Popular titles are duplicated as necessary to meet demand

Non-Fiction

- material is selected on a wide variety of topics
- significant points of view are represented
- popular items are duplicated
- accuracy of content and authority are considered important criteria, but opinion, hypothesis, and theory are as important to providing a good non-fiction collection
- some materials are designated as reference so they are consistently available

Audiobooks

- the audiobook collection consists of both fiction and non-fiction materials
- the fiction titles include contemporary and classic fiction with an emphasis on contemporary works
- works of best-selling authors are represented primarily in unabridged versions
- the non-fiction collection covers a range of subject areas including bestsellers, instructional, and self-improvement titles

- audiobook can be in multiple formats, such as CD and Playaway.
- some children audiobooks are pre-packaged set containing a book and CD or with a ready-to-play audiobook, such as Vox Books and Wonderbooks.
- most titles are available only in English

Canadiana & Local History

- the Library endeavours to maintain a collection of Canadiana and local history materials
- works by local authors and works about the local area are of particular interest
- works by Canadians and about Canadians/Canada are chosen based on the selection criteria

Films

- the DVD/Blu-Ray collection contains adult and children's feature titles as well as informational/non-fiction films
- the collection consists of a varied selection of feature films, including current high interest, old classics, and foreign films
- informational/non-fiction titles include such popular subjects as travel, sports, health and wellness, parenting, cooking, documentaries, and home repair
- when available, popular feature titles will be selected for the multilingual collections
- most of the collection is currently for home use only
- items for home use are restricted to individual or family viewing

Electronic Resources/Internet

- through its website, the Library directs users to informational resources on the Internet that complement, enhance, and in some cases, parallel resources in the Library's traditional collections; these links may be to in-house databases, commercial research databases, downloadable collections, or other Internet sites that may satisfy the informational and/or reading needs of Ajax's residents
- factors in selection include reference value, availability of print equivalent, subscription cost, availability of remote access, and customer demand
- technical considerations/requirements must be a factor in selection
- the Library's public website includes links to Internet sites that are of a credible, timely and relevant nature
- emphasis is made on selecting sites created by governmental, educational, and non-profit entities although for-profit sites are included when they meet selection criteria and informational needs
- links to sites will be deleted or removed when they are outdated or superseded by newly identified sites

French Language

- as the Library recognizes the need to provide information in both of Canada's official languages, informational and recreational materials are provided in the French language
- multimedia formats: CDs and DVDs are also included
- most of this collection is housed at the Main Branch with children's French materials also available at McLean and Audley Branches

Government Documents

- Most government documents are accessible online
- the Library maintains a small collection of current interest municipal (Ajax) and regional (Durham) documents
- selection is based on the importance of the publication, its usefulness, and public interest
- the publication may be available in either print or electronic format depending upon availability and currency

Large Print

- the large print collection is primarily a duplication of titles already owned by the Library in standard-sized print
- Selection will be similar to the regular print collection.

Magazines

- collections focus on publications that will provide current information on a wide variety of popular topics
- criteria for purchase may include reviews of the publication, existing coverage of the subject area, availability in Canada, and price
- magazines are selected for all audiences: adult, children, and young adult
- all copies, other than the most current, are circulating items
- the needs to serve diverse ethnic communities are addressed by the inclusion of multilingual titles in the collection
- back copies are maintained for 6, 9 or 13 months depending upon the publication frequency of a title.

Multilingual

- the Library maintains small collections of materials in Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Farsi, Gujarati, Hindi, Punjabi, Spanish, Tamil and Urdu.
- these collections consist popular fiction and some non-fiction and are intended for the recreational reading of customers fluent in the languages represented
- multimedia formats: CDs and DVDs are also included in some languages
- the collection is housed at three locations and maintained as separate browsing collections arranged by language; not all branches, however, have the same language.
- selection for these collections is made by the Library's book jobber as the Library does not have staff proficient in these languages.

Newspapers

- a selection of local, regional, national and international newspapers is available at the Main Branch
- community branches receive only local/regional newspapers
- the local Ajax newspaper is microfilmed
- back issues are maintained for three months before being recycled

Video Games

- the Library selects video games which are of interest to adults, young adults, and children
- games are selected for multiple platforms

- video games are rated by the Entertainment Software Rating Board. The Library shall not lend video games rated “Adult Only” to a person who is under 18 years of age. The Library shall not lend video games rated “Mature” to a person who is under 17 years of age.

3.4. Emerging Formats

The Library will evaluate emerging formats annually to determine appropriateness to Library collections

3.5. Materials Not Collected

Due to finite resources, there are certain materials that the Ajax Public Library does not collect:

Rare Books

- since it is the public library’s function to make materials available to all users, the Library does not collect rare or unusual materials that require special handling
- special consideration will be given to materials relating to Ajax history

Genealogy Materials

- the Library collects basic materials on genealogical research, but does not collect more specialized publications such as family histories, etc.
- special consideration will be given to materials relating to Ajax

Textbooks

- the Library does not buy textbooks used by local schools, colleges, or universities
- material complementary to textbooks may, however, be purchased in those subject areas where there is little or no material in any other format or in those instances where they substantially add value to the collection

4. Collection Management

4.1. Weeding

Weeding, or de-selection/withdrawal, is a very important part of the collection management process. It results in a vital and useful collection that can provide the information and recreational reading needed by the community.

The systematic withdrawal of materials no longer useful is necessary to maintain up-to-date and relevant collections. The same criteria are used for withdrawing materials from the collection as are used in their selection. The decision to withdraw library materials shall be based on the physical condition, use of the material as determined by the last date of loan or by the number of loans in a designated time period, the age of the material, and the outdated content.

4.2. Retention Guidelines

The Ajax Public Library considers current usefulness as the determining factor in how long material is kept. There is no attempt to be complete in terms of historical coverage. Old editions are withdrawn when new ones are received or when the contents are incorrect or out of date.

The amount of use that an item receives in the present outweighs the possibility that someone may use it someday. No extraordinary effort is made to preserve or protect the last copy of any title in the collection. Local History materials will be retained in the Local History collection but even this collection may undergo periodic evaluation and reassessment.

4.3. Weeding Criteria

Weeding/de-selection decisions may be made, in part, under accepted library principles known by their acronyms of CREW (Continuous Review Evaluation and Weeding) and **MUSTIE** (**M** = **M**isleading (and/or factually inaccurate), **U** = **U**gly (worn and beyond mending or rebinding), **S** = **S**uperseded (by a truly new edition or by a much better book on the subject), **T** = **T**rivial (of no discernible literary or scientific merit) , **I** = **I**rrelevant to the needs and interests of the community **E** = The material may be obtained expeditiously **E**lsewhere)

Usage/Age

- frequency of use/potential use
- in-house use
- age: publication, imprint, copyright or accession date
- duplicate

Value/Quality

- subject matter
- historical importance
- cost
- availability of other materials in the fields
- physical appearance/condition relative to other factors
- superceded

Deterioration

- worn/damaged
- aged, dirty

4.4. Reconsideration of Library Materials

The Library will review the selection of any specific materials upon written request from any member of the community. A completed copy of form LIB-031 - *Request for Reconsideration of Library Material* is reviewed per LIB-OP-312 - *Reconsideration of Library Material*, and in light of the criteria outlined in this *Collection Development* policy.