PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to outline the principles which guide Vaughan Public Libraries' (VPL) in developing and maintaining robust and diverse collections to best serve our public. It provides guidance on the selection of materials for the collection and informs customers of the principles with which collection decisions are made at VPL.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all collections regardless of format at VPL.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Intellectual Freedom

Collection development and maintenance is guided by VPL's Intellectual Freedom Policy as well as the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries and the Ontario Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Intellectual Rights of the Individual.

VPL's Intellectual Freedom Policy applies to all materials for all ages, in all formats both print and digital, including materials that are purchased, streamed, or shared from or with other institutions.

VPL supports all expressions of knowledge and intellectual creativity, providing access to a wide variety of information sources and ideas. VPL supports the right of individuals to access information, express their thoughts, and form opinions without censorship or interference.

VPL will defend and advocate for unfettered access to Library resources and services. Customers are responsible for what they choose to read, view, or listen to, and have a right to privacy about these choices. VPL recognizes the right of any individual to object to using certain library materials for personal use, however VPL does not accord to an individual the right to restrict freedom of others to make use of that same material (see Intellectual Freedom Policy).

Diversity Equity and Inclusion

VPL's collection is an unbiased and diverse source of information representing as many viewpoints as possible. The collection is developed to be proactively inclusive, and it strives to broadly and equitably represent the community it serves in all its diversity.

The collection promotes literacy and enhances the community's business, culture and heritage, while supporting the learning and leisure needs of a diverse community. VPL provides collections that include popular materials, diverse collections of general knowledge, and materials to support literacy and lifelong learning for all ages. Materials selected will meet anticipated and expressed individual and community needs.

VPL collects English and French language materials as well as materials in the languages most relevant to the Vaughan community. Materials in languages other than English and French are provided in accordance with the information needs and reading interests of the community. Decisions to establish or discontinue language collections is based on Census data, community recommendations and other supporting statistical evidence.

Access to Collections and Formats

Collections are provided in physical and digital formats. New formats and collections may be added as community needs arise. Formats may also be removed from the collection as they become obsolete or experience limited use.

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (2005), Integrated Accessibility Standards, the Library provides access to materials in alternate formats where they exist. The Centre for Equitable Library Access provides VPL members who have print disabilities with access to books, magazines, newspapers, and described videos.

Children are entitled to borrowing privileges and have ready access to most materials and facilities provided by VPL. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for monitoring and limiting the use of library materials by their children. No item will be excluded from the collection solely because it may come into the possession of a child.

Customer-Driven Collections
VPL's collections are customer driven and feedback about collections from community members and staff is welcomed. Most collections float between VPL locations in accordance with customer demand.

Fiscal Responsibility
VPL must balance the demand for availability of popular and recreational materials with the responsibility of building appropriate collections to meet the varied information needs of our customers. The collection budget is maximized through coordinated and controlled expenditure strategies.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

Responsibility for Selection
Responsibility for the selection of materials is vested in the office of the Chief Executive Officer, which delegates this professional activity to qualified and knowledgeable staff.

Selection of materials for the collection does not indicate endorsement by VPL, the VPLB, or VPL employees of either the content or viewpoint.

Selection Criteria
VPL curates collections that are inclusive, relevant, and accessible to the community. These collections are designed to:

- serve readers of all ages and literacy levels;
- provide materials in a variety of formats; and
- include languages most commonly spoken within our community.

A range of objective measures and standards, including the policies of the Board, are applied when selecting collections. Some or all of the following criteria may be taken into consideration during the selection process:

- Anticipated or expressed needs and interests of the community;
- Reputation and/or significance of the author/illustrator/publisher;
- Comments of professional and independent critics and reviewers;
- Relationship to the existing collection;
- Budgetary considerations;
- Format of material;
- Suitability of physical form for library use;
- Physical limitations of the buildings.

VPL does not keep, acquire or purchase materials that the Canadian courts have found to be obscene, hate propaganda, or seditious.

New Formats
New formats will be considered for purchase as demand and use dictates. Some materials are purchased in several formats in order to serve all members of the community. Availability of format, cost per item and VPL's ability to acquire and handle the material are also factors in determining when a new format will be collected. Similar considerations will influence the decision to delete a format from the collection.

Library of Things
VPL maintains a collection of physical items that provide opportunities for customers to explore new interests, pursue hobbies, and reduce waste. This collection may include Experience Passes, STEAM Kits, Cognitive Care Kits, Lendery items (including kitchen equipment, sports and recreation equipment, tools, etc.), and more.

Local Authors
Local authors are welcome to submit an application along with one copy of their published book to have their work included in the VPL collection. Donated books for possible inclusion must have been published within the last 2 years. Full information is available on the VPL website's Submitting a Work for Consideration section. All books must meet VPL's selection criteria and standards as detailed in the policy.

Artificial Intelligence
Library materials will not be rejected based solely on the work being generated by AI. Works, regardless of the source of the content or its format, are subject to the policy and are judged in their entirety and in context. VPL will make selective choices of AI-generated content, while respecting the intellectual property of human authors and creators. The library will endeavour, however, to provide transparency about whether collection items are produced by AI through our cataloguing practices.

Customer Suggestions
VPL customers may request the purchase of specific materials by filling out the Suggest a Title form on VPL's website. All suggested purchases are reviewed by VPL staff with decisions for purchase being guided by the principles and criteria outlined in this policy. Items that fall outside VPLs selection criteria or that are unavailable for purchase may be acquired through the Inter-Library Loan Service.

COLLECTION ANALYSIS AND MAINTENANCE

VPL undertakes ongoing analysis of collection and circulation trends to make decisions about how best to allocate spending to meet our customers' needs. Collections are also assessed on an ongoing basis to ensure that materials continue to meet the principles and criteria outlined in this policy. Collections are maintained through the identification of gaps, and the replacement of certain materials on an ongoing basis.

Deselection
Deselection is the withdrawal of items from the collection that are in poor condition, contain outdated or inaccurate information, or are no longer of interest to the public. VPL continually assesses the performance of its collections so they remain current, in good physical condition, and that they balance both immediate and long-term customer needs. Decisions to remove items from the collection are not made based on anticipated approval or disapproval, but on the merits of the work and relevance to customers.

Reconsideration of Materials
VPL recognizes the right of any individual to object to using certain library materials for personal use. VPL does not accord to any individual the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of that same material.

VPL customers who object to a specific item in the collection may place a formal request for reconsideration by filling out a Request for Reconsideration form. Decisions made about challenged materials will be communicated to the originator of the request following completion of a formal staff review.

Some of VPL's digital content is provided by third-party vendors VPL subscribes to services in which the third-party vendor, and not VPL staff, determines the specific titles or materials made available through the service. In these circumstances, VPL is unable to reconsider specific materials to which customers object but may inform the third-party vendor of customer concerns and/or take these concerns into consideration in determining whether to continue using the service. Final decisions regarding Requests for Reconsideration rest with the CEO.

GIFTS AND DONATIONS

Donations of Materials
VPL accepts unsolicited materials on the understanding that VPL ownership is unconditional. It is understood that material donations are freely given without conditions attached, and that all donations will be used or disposed of as VPL deems appropriate. VPL is under no obligation to inform the donor of the decision.

VPL has no obligation to retain intact, or to provide, special library shelving for unsolicited gifts of private collections.

Customers who wish to make donations of books and other materials should consult with VPL staff.

Financial Donations
VPL helps customers honour or recognize special individuals or events through its financial donations. Monetary gifts will be used, at VPL's discretion, to select materials that meet the principles and criteria outlined in this policy.

Materials purchased through the Book Dedication Opportunity are not exempt from deselection.