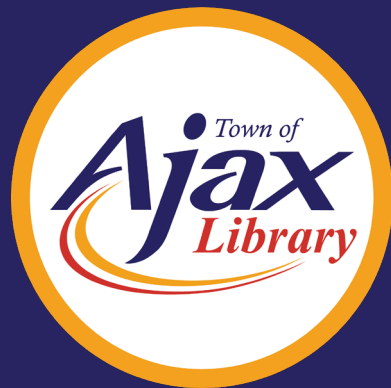




# 2024 Annual Report



# A Message from our Chief Librarian



What an incredible year 2024 turned out to be! We opened the Grandview Kids Express Branch, a new spot for our community to access books and resources on the go. We were recognized by our peers with two awards, and launched new initiatives like Swim and Skate Passes from the Town of Ajax. We've also been busier than ever, with record-breaking visits and checkouts! It's inspiring to see our community learn and discover together.

Sarah Vaisler, Chief Librarian and Executive Officer

## 2024 Library Board



**Piyali Correya**  
Chair



**Pia Kaukoranta Vahabi**  
Vice-Chair



**Sterling Lee**  
Regional Councillor,  
Ward 2



**Voytek Bialkowski**



**Sepelene Deonarine**



**Mallik Fernando**



**Rebecca Hayes**



**Deborah McDougall**



**Douglas Miller**

Learn more about our Library Board online:  
[ajaxlibrary.ca/boardmembers](https://ajaxlibrary.ca/boardmembers)



## Vision

A welcoming and exceptional Library empowering success within our diverse community.



## Mission

Design experiences and connections where community, discovery, and innovation intersect.

Find more guiding principles in the Strategic Master Plan.  
[ajaxlibrary.ca/policies](https://ajaxlibrary.ca/policies)

“Ajax Public Library is the friendliest and nicest library I’ve ever known. Every interaction I’ve had with staff has been helpful as the staff are friendly and kind.”

- Joyce

## In This Report: Library Board Ends

The Ajax Public Library Board sets “Ends” which outline the reason for the existence of the Library and guide the design and provision of service. Board Ends are identified throughout this report, showcasing how the Library has supported our residents.

**Services to Support:** The Library exists to further the leisure, educational, and professional endeavours of Ajax’s communities.

**Safe and Welcoming Spaces:** The Library exists to foster a sense of safety and inclusion in its diverse community through programs, services, and collections.

**Create and Grow:** The Library exists so that customers will have a hub for their creative, innovative, and technological pursuits.

**Engaging Together:** The Library exists so that customers have community for connections, civic engagement, and belonging.

**Free to Read:** The Library exists so that there is equitable access to information and resources for its customers, upholding intellectual freedom, enabling an informed citizenry.



# 2024 Showcase



## Ajax Public Library is Award-Winning!

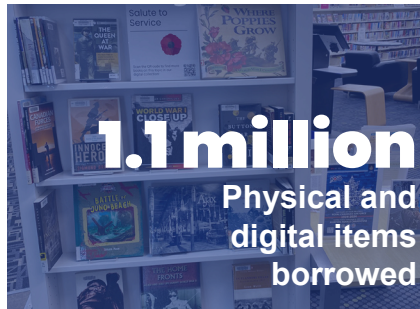
The Library was honoured with two (2) awards by the Ontario Library Association for our Collection Diversity Audit and Drag Queen Storytime partnerships.



## Grandview Kids Express Branch Opens!

Grandview Kids Express Branch was opened in November, expanding Library services and supporting Grandview Kids families.

## By the Numbers



# Launched in 2024

From new programs, items to borrow, and services to support our community, the Library launched a variety of initiatives in 2024, including:

- Swim and Skate Passes from the Town of Ajax
- NoveList eResource
- Mango Languages eResource
- Free printing for resumes and government documents
- 1000 Colourful Stories  
Preschool Reading Club ▶
- Baby Book Club  
and My First Library Card
- Additional Book Clubs  
at Audley and Main Branches
- Room rental now available  
at Audley Branch



## What We Stand For

The Library Board released two position statements in 2024, solidifying the importance of intellectual freedom and equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Library.

Find the full statements online at [ajaxlibrary.ca/policies](http://ajaxlibrary.ca/policies).

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“The Library will safeguard access to and expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinions.”

- Board Position Statement  
on **Intellectual Freedom**

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“The Library will aim to be a space where everyone, regardless of their background or identity, feels welcomed and valued.”

- Board Position Statement on  
**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**

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# Services to Support

## **Newcomer Fair ▶**

Over 200 attendees and 26 local organizations attended the Newcomer Fair at Main Branch in April 2024. Information was shared about housing, employment, and other resources.

## **Rainbow Registered**

In September 2024, the Library became Rainbow Registered® and joined other 2SLGBTQI organizations across Canada as a welcoming and inclusive space.

## **Coffee Connect at the Makerspace**

Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade hosted their Coffee Connect at the Makerspace in May 2024. Over 80 local business owners learned about online resources, collections, and saw the Makerspace in action.



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“Thank you for being so welcoming to everyone and providing a cool space for everyone during the hot weather we’ve been having.”

- Anonymous

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# Safe and Welcoming Spaces

## **Ajax Homelessness Task Force Community Event ▶**

The Library hosted this event in September 2024 to encourage conversations around homelessness and promote local resources and support services.

## **Canadian Sign Language Museum Display**

Throughout October 2024, the travelling exhibit “Sign Languages of Canada” toured Ajax, with its first stop at Main Branch. The exhibit showcased six (6) sign languages used in Canada, highlighting their unique characteristics.



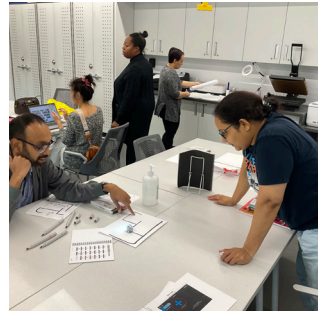
# Create and Grow

## Project Makerspace ►

Connecting seniors and youth to explore key life and technology skills. Funded by the New Horizons for Seniors grant offered by the Government of Canada.

## Makerspace Turns One!

A year of the Makerspace has shown Ajax's incredible creativity. Equipment became so popular, we added more 3D printers, sewing machines, and new features like sublimation to support our customers' growing interests.



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“The Makerspace is a great addition to the Ajax Library. The team are so supportive and makes the space accessible to all user levels and ages. Endless creativity.”  
- Chris H.

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# Engaging Together

## Ramadan Celebrations ►

Throughout March 2024, the Library recognized Ramadan in our displays, with a special storytime, and custom crafts in the Makerspace.

## Chinese Cultural Event

Featuring dancing, folksongs, Tai Chi, and traditional instruments, the Litmus Chinese Dancing Association hosted their annual event at Main Branch on March 23, 2024.

## Archives Town Hall Display Case Update

In August 2024, the Archives display case in Town Hall was updated to feature new objects and meet accessibility guidelines. It features sections on HMS Ajax, Defence Industries Limited (DIL), and the Town's early years.





# Free to Read

## Big Book Sale ►

Once again the community came out in droves as we made space for new items on our shelves. The annual sale occurred in May 2024 and was a great way to give items a forever home and avoid the landfill.

## Local Author Day

In October 2024, ten local authors setup booths in Main Branch. They shared their work and connected with each other and visiting customers.

## Authors Leanne Toshiko Simpson and Uzma Jalaluddin

Visiting Main Branch in October 2024, these local authors shared their stories and answered questions from the audience. The attendees celebrated local BIPOC voices and felt represented by the authors visit.



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“The staff is so helpful, the collection of books for kids and curriculum books is wide/huge, which attracts me the most and the staff members are the best and knowledgeable. They make it easy and convenient for us. 5 stars for them!”

- Beena

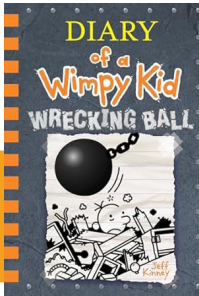
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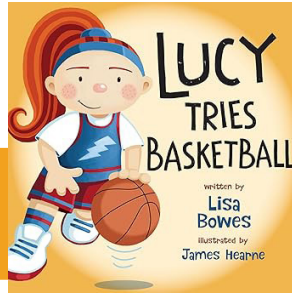
# Favourite Finds

Books our customers enjoyed most in 2024!

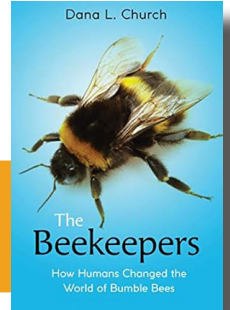
Junior Fiction



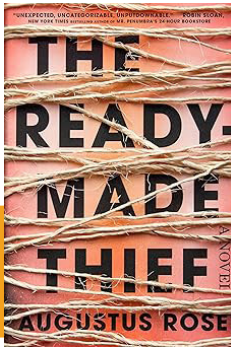
Junior Picture Book



Junior Non-Fiction



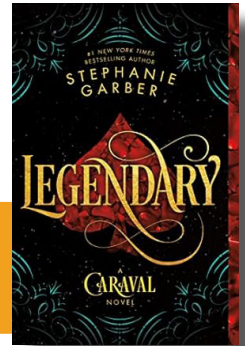
Adult Fiction



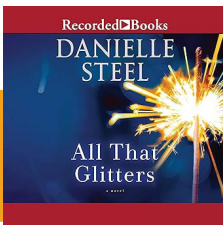
Adult Non-Fiction



Young Adult Fiction



Audio-book



Movie



Video Game



**Top Authors!** Our young readers continue to reach for Geronimo Stilton, Jeff Kinney, Dav Pilkey, and Mo Willems year after year. The only adult author in the top 10 in 2024 was James Patterson!

# Partnerships

Special thanks to some of the partners who help us build a stronger community:

- Abilities Centre
- Afghan Women's Organization
- Alzheimer Society Durham Region
- BlackLit Durham
- Business Advisory Centre Durham
- Community Development Council Durham
- Community Living Ajax-Pickering
- Congress of Black Women of Canada
- Credit Counselling Society
- Durham Children's Aid Society
- Durham Chinese Canadian Culture Centre
- Durham College
- Durham Community Legal Clinic
- Durham Master Gardeners
- Durham Public Health
- Durham Region Unemployed Help Centre
- Durham Youth Services
- EarlyON Child and Family Centre Durham
- Fill a Purse for a Sister Campaign
- Grandview Kids
- Hispanic Canadian Alliance of Durham
- John Howard Society of Durham Region
- KnowledgeFlow Cybersafety Foundation
- Literacy Network of Durham Region
- Muslim Women of Durham Region
- Ontario Caregiver Association
- Ontario Motor Vehicle Industry Council
- Ontario Tech University
- PFLAG Durham
- Region of Durham
- Safety Network Durham
- Sankat Mochan Hanuman Mandir and Cultural Centre Inc.
- Self-Management Program Central East
- Service Canada
- Toronto and Region Conservation Authority
- Town of Ajax
- Tri-Regional Infant Hearing Program
- Victim Services of Durham Region
- Welcome Centre Immigrant Services
- YMCA Durham

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“I am delighted with the service as well as the volunteers who deliver the library books. The Ajax Public Library is an important part of my life, and the service it provides and the staff and volunteers who support the services of this wonderful place bring me joy.”

- Anonymous

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# Valuing Ontario Libraries

Ontario Library Service (OLS) and Nordik Institute created the Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT) to measure the value and impact of public libraries in their communities. The framework is built around the concept of Social Return on Investment (SROI), which applies a dollar value to services offered at no charge, like library programs and circulation.

The total value of free services, programs, and spaces provided by the Library is over \$65,000,000. These directly support Ajax residents and the social and cultural fabric of our Town.

	Economic Value
<b>Total SROI</b>	\$65,162,341.02
<b>SROI Benefit per Resident</b>	\$514.44
<b>Impact of One Open Hour</b>	\$3,633.94

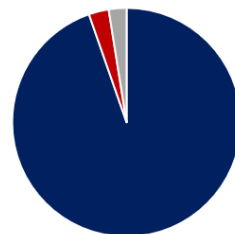


For each dollar (\$1) invested in Ajax Public Library, the community experiences a **\$9.72 SROI!**

## Financials

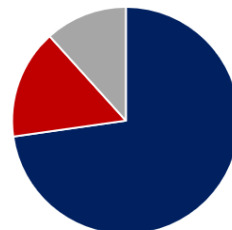
### Income

- Town of Ajax Operating Grant: \$7,117,600
- Provincial and Federal Grants: \$212,033
- Other Income: \$188,976



### Expenses

- Staffing: \$5,571,173
- Operations: \$1,190,790
- Collections: \$895,147



\*Above figures are not final until the Library's annual audit.



# Stay Connected

905-683-4000

[libraryinfo@ajaxlibrary.ca](mailto:libraryinfo@ajaxlibrary.ca)

[ajaxlibrary.ca](http://ajaxlibrary.ca)

## Main Branch

55 Harwood Ave. S

## McLean Branch & Makerspace

95 Magill Dr.

## Audley Branch

1955 Audley Rd. N

## Grandview Kids Express Branch

1461 Harwood Ave. N.

