



Library Action Plan

2021 to 2026



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Library vision

Australia's best inner urban network of neighbourhood libraries, helping to make Port Phillip a creative, liveable, prosperous and socially connected city for everyone who lives and works here.

Culture... Creativity... Connection...

Why we need this plan

A beautiful, bold and creative city

A *Library Action Plan* is a key deliverable from the *Council's Art and soul: creative and prosperous city strategy 2018 – 2022* under *Outcome 3: Arts, culture and creative expression are part of everyday life*.

One of the oldest areas of European settlement in Melbourne and the traditional lands of the Yalukit Willam clan of the Boon Wurrung, Port Phillip is known and treasured for its rich heritage, urban village feel, arts and culture, and tourism appeal. The City has an established and emerging creative industries sector which accounts for one-third of local economic activity.

The City has a high proportion of people aged 25 to 39 years, with lower numbers of children, young people, older workers and retired people. Port Phillip residents have high average levels of education, employment, income and literacy. Most households have access to the internet and digital services. However, the City is also home to people who experience multiple forms of disadvantage; homelessness, unemployment, mental health issues, and alcohol and drug problems.

Port Phillip libraries are a vital part of the City's cultural and social infrastructure, and support the creative ecosystem. Our libraries are safe spaces to learn, create and belong. At Port Phillip libraries, the community can access life-changing art, ideas, education and social connection. Our libraries are free and equal; everyone is welcome. Some of the individual and community outcomes Port Phillip libraries support are:

- harnessing creativity
- literacy and lifelong learning
- personal development and wellbeing
- social and digital inclusion
- informed and connected citizenship
- stronger, more creative and culturally inclusive communities
- placemaking
- economic and workforce development

Port Phillip's five library branches, online services and outreach programs reach more than 55,000 people, one of the highest library membership rates in Victoria. With a collection of 210,000 physical items and 25,000 eBooks, in 2018-19 the libraries had:

- 647,000 branch visits and 130,000 unique website users
- 937,000 loans of books, magazines, DVDs, etc. and 138,000 loans of eBooks

- 31,000 attendances in hundreds of onsite and offsite library programs and activities
- 84,000 bookings of public-access computers

Port Phillip libraries have a high level of customer satisfaction (9.9 out of 10) based on its large and diverse collections, literacy and learning programs for people of all ages, information and reference services, free access to computers and wifi, convenient public spaces and customer-focused staff.

Port Phillip has the highest benefit to cost ratio of all Victorian public libraries (\$6.50) – well above the Victorian average of \$4.30 and ahead of all neighbouring libraries.

21st century library trends

While Port Phillip libraries have high-levels of membership and customer satisfaction, we want to strive to be the best urban library service in Australia. To do this, we need to keep pace with contemporary library practices and trends.

Libraries around the world are becoming social anchors and keystone institutions in urban renewal and regeneration projects. They are meeting the increasing community demand for learning and social activities such as early years' and adult literacy, book clubs, technology and school holiday programs, young adult programs, digital literacy, craft and social activities, life-skills and information sessions.

Many libraries are getting their members more involved in the design of services, programs and collections. Libraries are using outreach to meet people where they live, work, learn, shop and play. New partnerships with creative and cultural industries, businesses and entrepreneurs, schools, not for profits and local historical societies create opportunities for libraries to deliver greater economic and public value.

New library technologies are increasing the ways people can access libraries, allowing them to reserve and check-out items, access library branches 24/7, and benefit from artificial intelligence (AI) and virtual reality (VR) approaches to education.

Across the world, the size and composition of library collections is changing as more information becomes available online and in electronic formats, such as eBooks and audio books. They are arranging their books by genre, rather than the traditional Dewey Decimal System, and displaying them cover out like bookstores, making books easier to browse. Libraries are adjusting their collection footprint to free up flexible space for a mix of quiet and noisy, individual and collaborative activities.

Along with these changes, the skill mix in the library workforce is expanding to include people with expertise in education, community engagement, social work and youth work, digital, program development, marketing, and program and partnership development.

The following national and international case studies help illustrate these trends:

DOKK1, Aarhus, Denmark <https://dokk1.dk/english>

Vancouver Public Library Inspiration Lab <https://www.vpl.ca/inspirationlab>

Bunjil Place Library, Casey-Cardinia <https://www.cclc.vic.gov.au/branches/bunjil-place/>

Marrickville Library, Sydney <https://www.innerwest.nsw.gov.au/explore/libraries/new-marrickville-library>

Listening to our community

Through a range of consultation methods including interviews, surveys and focus groups, we asked the Port Phillip community for their ideas about how our libraries could do more to help them.

Beautiful spaces

You told us that you love your local library and the fact that you can walk to them but you're concerned that not enough money has been invested in the facilities over recent years. You said that beautiful libraries attract more visitors, increase community pride and contribute to stronger communities. Specifically, you asked for improvements to infrastructure, amenities, fittings and furniture. You would like brighter, lighter, more contemporary libraries with separate areas for children and students and quiet reading and working spaces as well as more meeting spaces for community groups, for classes and activities and for collaborative work. You would also benefit from longer opening hours, including evenings & weekends.

Responsive programming

You asked for a variety of literary and creative programs in libraries. You would appreciate opportunities for creativity, innovation, community learning and social cohesion and to be involved in planning such programs to ensure they reflect local interests. There is also a strong desire for more children's programs such as story time and rhyme time. For young people, more creativity sessions, school holiday programs, reading groups and homework clubs. For adults, you suggested technology classes and more literary and literacy programs.

A contemporary collection

For many people, the library is still a place to borrow and read books, newspapers and magazines as well as a variety of other formats. You told us that the library is a valued place to support your family's love of reading. You also told us that you were noticing fewer new items on the shelves. While you value our digital collections, it is apparent that many of you are unaware of the full range and breadth available. Many of you would like these collections expanded to be comparable to the more traditional hardcopy collections. You told us that you would like to see the library collection more fully meet the needs and interests of the different communities across Port Phillip: older people from diverse cultural backgrounds; and younger people from Asia and other countries. You suggested that we increase the scope and breadth of our collection, including more appealing teenage resources and subscribing to more sophisticated papers and magazines for people with high levels of literacy.

Engagement and connection

The consultation showed that many residents come to the libraries to connect with others – parents connect through children's activities, young people connect through book groups, isolated people can talk to staff, and like-minded people can meet. You asked for more opportunities to connect, especially for those from diverse communities as well as young people and older people. You would like us to liaise with local interest groups and ask you for your ideas and be more open to feedback. You want to hear from your libraries more often about the range of services and programs on offer.

Future-oriented technology

While most Port Phillip residents are connected at home, the consultation showed that residents are still seeking technology services in libraries. Young people and those on low incomes may not be able to afford equipment or needed software, and older people may need training and assistance. New technology can support innovation and creativity. You asked for better Wi-Fi, highly skilled, technology-savvy staff, more computers, new and leading-edge technology and digital literacy classes to make the most of these technologies.

Challenges and opportunities

In planning for the future, Council has identified the long-term challenges that will impact on liveability and the health and wellbeing of the community. Five of these challenges – population growth, rapid evolution of technology, urbanisation, changing economic conditions and climate change – are all areas where libraries can make a difference through services, access to information and community engagement.

Population growth

The Port Phillip population is expected to grow by 68,000 people to be more than 176,816 by 2041. This growth will be concentrated in the Fisherman's Bend renewal area on the northern edge of the City, and in established neighbourhoods such as St Kilda Road and South Melbourne. The 2041 population will continue to be highly mobile and dominated by 25 to 39-year-olds, but with an increasing number of older people. The Port Phillip community will likely become more culturally diverse as the number of people born overseas grows. More than two-thirds of households will be single person or couples without children. As this population growth occurs, libraries will need to respond. Plans to redevelop existing library's and/or build new libraries will need to be considered, along with reviewing services, programs and opening hours to meet demand.

Projected growth patterns in library demand and usage

A range of growth and demand factors will influence how effectively library service delivery, resourcing and facilities match potential future usage needs. While many of these factors may extend beyond the life of this plan, they are key considerations in ongoing service and resource planning. A detailed outline of these issues is provided in Appendix 1.

Urbanisation

Port Phillip is one of the smallest and the most densely populated municipalities in Victoria, with population density (5,500 per sq km) more than twice the metropolitan average. As the population grows, density will also increase. As dwelling sizes reduce, residents will look for somewhere outside of home and work to spend their recreational and social time. They will also be searching for ways to make social connections and overcome loneliness. For these people, the library can be a point of connection, safety, stability and support, a place where they can come together and be part of Port Phillip life. With urbanisation comes the risk of increasing disadvantage for the have-nots. The libraries will prioritise services and programs for disadvantaged individuals and groups

and create safe, welcoming spaces where people can read, relax, study, work and take part in social activities.

Port Phillip libraries will contribute to placemaking in the City by creating vibrant, inclusive community spaces, and by co-locating with other creative enterprises and complementary services. Our libraries are in walking distance to most of our residents and we will use outreach and partnerships to include those residents who can't reach us.

Rapid evolution of technology

Changes to technology and the digital environment are accelerating, sometimes with unanticipated consequences. The world is becoming more connected. People, businesses and governments are increasingly moving online to connect, deliver and access services and obtain information. Around one in every 18 employed persons works from home. We can expect increasing demand for Council services to be delivered online.

Port Phillip residents are seizing the opportunities of the digital economy, particularly as it relates to the creative industries, with the highest percentage of employment in that sector in Victoria. We also support a growing cluster of gaming, high tech and digital industries in South Melbourne.

Port Phillip Libraries will become centres for supporting creative industries, gaming, innovation, connectivity and access to information. We will develop spaces to support creative production (eg recording and rehearsal spaces), co-working and access to new technologies. We will invest in online service delivery (ebooks and audiobooks, website) and deploy technology to increase access, for example by working towards allowing 24/7 opening hours in our branches. For those residents who are not confident with technology, we will run education sessions to build their digital literacy.

Changing economic conditions

With the rise of start-ups, the gig economy and a high proportion of small to medium sized enterprises (SMEs) and social enterprises in the City, we will increasingly rely on the knowledge economy to support growth. The spectrum of people considered vulnerable is widening due to increased costs of living, rental and property costs, social exclusion and health inequity. Our libraries will focus more services and programs on supporting the most vulnerable members of our community, for example the homeless, the economically disadvantaged, older people and children at risk.

Similarly, high rental prices put pressure on small businesses and creative practitioners. Port Phillip libraries will support the attraction and retention of artists and creative industries by factoring affordable creative spaces into library refurbishments and redevelopments. We will partner with creative industries to support the local creative ecosystem.

Climate change

Much of the City is only one to three metres above sea level and coastal areas are exposed to the impacts of climate change. We can expect flooding, erosion, storm damage, decreased water quality and threats to water supply, reduced summer outdoor activities, hotter urban spaces and smoke pollution from bushfires. These changing environmental conditions will challenge some members of our community to stay healthy and safe. For example, those experiencing health or housing crises will be more vulnerable to periods of extreme heat or cold. Port Phillip libraries will provide education and public forums on topics of climate change and will plan crisis responses to support and relieve our residents during extreme heat days, smoke pollution and flooding events.

As we redevelop and build new libraries, we will ensure that we adapt our buildings to changing climate conditions and that any new or redeveloped libraries are aligned with environmental sustainability principles and practices.

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Library plan: what will be different?

The City of Port Phillip has a unique character – dynamic, creative and culturally diverse. Port Phillip’s integrated network of public libraries also have their own unique character – local and accessible places that respond to the reading, information and social needs of their communities – while upholding the principles of a contemporary library – universal access, freedom of expression and civic engagement.

The libraries are already well-loved and well-used community spaces. This Action Plan sets the course for the development of Port Phillip libraries over the next five years.

This Action Plan contributes directly to the outcomes of the *Council Plan 2017-2027*, the integrated *Health and Wellbeing Implementation Strategy*, *Art & Soul Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2018-2022*, the *Placemaking Action Plan*, *Live Music Action Plan*, *Game Action Plan* and other relevant Council plans.

Port Phillip Libraries: a connected network of neighbourhood libraries that connect, grow and enrich our community.

Our goals

Belong	Help people to participate in Port Phillip life, with a focus on the vulnerable and disadvantaged
Connect	Connect people with; each other, services and resources, and the world around them
Grow	Support people of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances to read, learn and enrich their lives
Create	Inspire people to be creative, turn their ideas into reality, and participate in a prosperous creative ecosystem
Sustain	Respond to the needs and aspirations of our diverse and growing community

What you can expect from our libraries in 2026

Our libraries in 2026	
St Kilda	The redeveloped St Kilda Library is the City's largest and most used library, with creative production capacity such as creative labs, an exhibition gallery and recording and rehearsal spaces. It is an iconic library destination seen as a benchmark for urban libraries in Australia.
Albert Park	Albert Park Library is nestled in the heart of the local shopping strip – close to shops, cafes, restaurants and bars. Albert Park is a community hub for Albert Park and neighbouring Middle Park residents.
Port Melbourne	Port Melbourne Library is a modern library in an historic Town Hall focused on creativity and programs that are delivered across the whole Town Hall building's venues – literature, music, art, design and new technologies – this is the place to connect, collaborate and create.
Emerald Hill	Emerald Hill Library is a place for storytelling, both in traditional formats and through gaming. An area rich in indigenous history, Emerald Hill is home to the City's Heritage Centre, a hub for children's reading and a place where stories are shared across all forms of media. This library has a strong relationship with local makers, creators and gamers.
Middle Park	Middle Park Library operates as a 24/7 branch providing the local community with increased access to collections and spaces. It is also the key attractor in a vibrant community hub supporting local community learning, health and well-being.
Virtual Library	The library website and app provide users with easy access to a wide range of library services. Browse the catalogue, download a book, search a database, enrol in a program, watch an educational video, book a room, join a chat. You connect in your own time.
Outreach	Our Home Library Service takes the collection to housebound residents. Other outreach activities take the library out into the community to engage with new library users in schools, shopping strips, stations, parks and at festivals.

Action plan

The Library Action Plan 2021-2026 identifies actions that will be implemented over the next five years to give effect to the libraries' vision for the future.

Belong	Help people to participate in Port Phillip life, with a focus on the vulnerable and disadvantaged
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a 10-year asset renewal and redevelopment program to meet the growing and changing needs of Port Phillip residents including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redevelop St Kilda Library to increase capacity and flexibility of spaces, and to integrate an arts and creative production focus • Renew and refurbish other library branches to enhance their local character and service delivery, to accommodate more programming, technology, gaming and spaces for creativity, and to respond to community consultation • Pilot one library as a 24/7 branch to provide the local community with increased access to collections and spaces • Identify any new library builds required in developing communities • Develop engaging and interactive children's areas at all branches that provide opportunities for programming, collaboration and parents/carers coming together 2. Increase literacy, digital literacy, literature and creative programs across the library network that bring people with common interests or social needs together 3. Support Council role in strengthening cultural heritage, protecting local identity and enabling storytelling through continued investment in Local History services and resources 4. Build partnerships and explore co-location opportunities with organisations such as public and non-profit agencies, community groups, schools and businesses to increase outreach activities that take the library into the community, with a focus on disadvantaged and vulnerable communities and individuals 	
Connect	Connect people with each other, services and resources, and the world around them
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build a high-quality and contemporary hardcopy and digital library collection that responds to diverse and emerging community needs 2. Review and update the library's collection and circulation policies and practices to increase community access and utilisation 3. Participate in State-wide library sector resource-sharing initiatives to increase cost efficiency and improve outcomes for our community 4. Develop a new, more interactive library website as part of Council's Customer Experience (CX) program to improve access to digital services, collections, events and news. 5. Deliver technology support and digital literacy programs for people who lack skills and confidence in using technology devices, tools and platforms. 	

Grow	Support people of all ages, backgrounds and circumstances to read, learn and enrich their lives
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Participate in community infrastructure planning for Fisherman's Bend and South Melbourne to ensure library and learning services considerations are included 2. Increase early years and youth resources, space and services and programs across library branches, online and in the community. 3. Implement a communications strategy to better inform existing and new audiences about what services, programs and collections the libraries offer 4. Increase amenity and make library spaces lighter, brighter, more accessible and welcoming and removing barriers between customers and staff 5. Implement a volunteer program to extend library services, particularly to vulnerable groups such as the homeless, children at risk and the elderly 6. Partner with local, independent bookshops on literary programs and promotional opportunities 	
Create	Inspire people to be creative, turn their ideas into reality, and participate in a prosperous creative ecosystem
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Implement a community-driven creative production and education program for all age groups 2. Create, capture and make available original material such as podcasts, events and oral histories that reflect local voices and experiences 3. Establish an artist/writer/storyteller in residence program in libraries 4. Support delivery of Council's Live Music Action Plan by creating space for performance, rehearsal, exhibition and creative development 5. Develop partnerships with local businesses, schools and creative industries to establish Port Phillip libraries as centres of excellence in digital technology resources and education 6. Support initiatives identified in Council's Game Action Plan, including spaces and resources for people to play, learn, experiment and create 	
Sustain	Respond to the needs and aspirations of our diverse and growing community.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Establish libraries as climate emergency relief centres and host public education, discussions and forums on climate change and sustainability 2. Implement a 5-year library technology plan to respond to changing community needs and expectations 3. Develop a comprehensive children's education program 4. Develop a library consultation and feedback program that involves local residents, community organisations and partners in reviewing, evaluating and designing library services, spaces and programs 5. Implement a library workforce recruitment and development plan to ensure staff resourcing, skills, capacity and commitment meet or exceed emerging community needs and service demands 6. Improve staff rostering and resource allocation to increase operational efficiency across the network 7. Establish a staff team to lead and develop programming, community development, public engagement and feedback 	

Measuring success

In 2025 Port Phillip Libraries will still be well-loved and well-used places in the heart of the City.

This Library Action Plan will deliver:

- more library users (library visits and members per capita)
- a more responsive and contemporary collection (loans per item, customer satisfaction)
- greater value to individuals and the community (program attendance per capita, qualitative program evaluation)
- more diverse Council, community, cultural and creative partnerships (number of programs delivered in partnership)
- greater return on investment in an industry-leading library service (funding per capita)
- consistently high levels of customer satisfaction (measured through surveys and interviews)
- a library service that has a positive impact on people's lives (told through case studies and stories)

References

City of Port Phillip Council Plan 2017-2027

Art and Soul, Creative and Prosperous City Strategy 2018-2022

Libraries Change Lives, State Library of Victoria and Public Libraries Victoria, 2019

Appendix 1: Library Usage Forecasts

Introduction

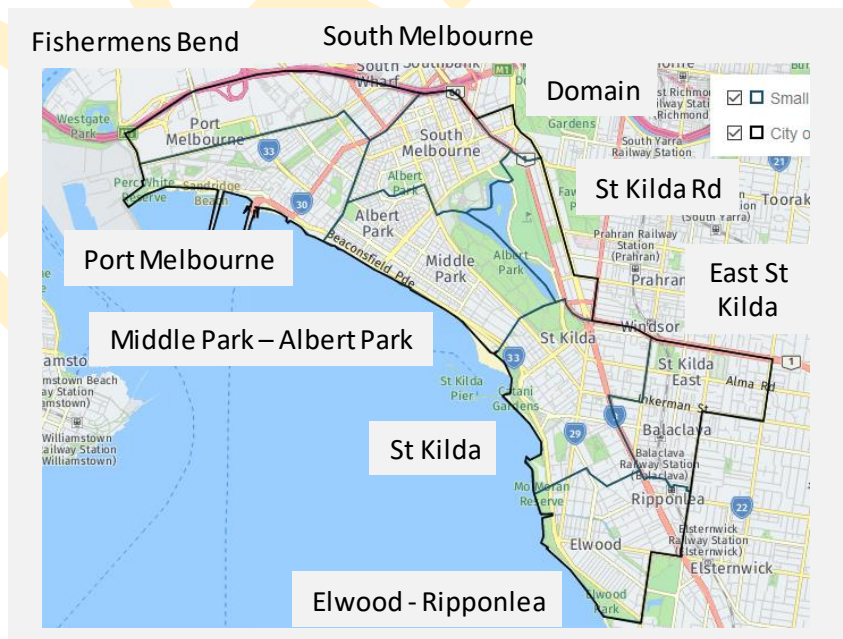
“The Port Phillip population is expected to grow to more than 168,000 by 2041. This growth will be concentrated in the Fishermans Bend renewal area on the northern edge of the City, and in established neighbourhoods like St Kilda Road and South Melbourne. The 2041 population will continue to be highly mobile and dominated by 25 to 39-year olds, but with an increasing number of older people. The Port Phillip community will likely become more culturally diverse as the number of people born overseas grows. More than two-thirds of households will be single person or couples without children.” (Library Action Plan – Working Draft, December 2019)

The statement above is based on statistics and commentary in the *City of Port Phillip Council Plan 2017-2027, Revised June 2019*. The latest information from .id community – an evidence-base for over 250 local government areas in Australia and New Zealand, and a key source of the City of Port Phillip’ statistical information – indicates that as at November 2019 “The City of Port Phillip population forecast for 2020 is 117,420, and is forecast to grow to 176,816 by 2041.” This is a 50.6% increase in the City’s population from 2020 to 2041.

This population growth will have a direct impact on use of and demand for of public library services.

This document provides an indication of the possible service implications for Port Phillip Libraries. It identifies a range of library services used by the population and particular age or demographic cohorts and shows the expected growth in the relevant population in 9 small areas across the City (as defined by .id community.

- Fishermans Bend
- Port Melbourne
- South Melbourne
- Domain
- St Kilda Rd
- Middle Park – Albert Park
- St Kilda
- East St Kilda
- Elwood – Ripponlea



For the purposes of this exercise 2018 is taken as the population baseline, where the City of Port Phillip had an estimated resident population of 113,608. Baseline library usage data is for the 2018-19 year.

Forecast population growth by small area

The City of Port Phillip's population is estimated to grow from 113,608 in 2018 to 176,816 in 2041, an increase of 63,208 people or 56%.

Total population '000	FB	PM	SM	Dom	SKRd	M-A	SK	ESK	E-R	CoPP
2018	0.9	17.5	10.3	5.0	7.9	12.3	25.2	17.9	16.6	113.6
2041	29.9	18.6	13.2	11.1	12.3	11.9	29.9	19.8	17.4	176.8
Change	+29.0	+1.1	+2.9	+6.2	+4.4	-0.4	+4.7	+1.9	+0.7	63.2
% change	3300%	6%	29%	124%	55%	-3%	19%	11%	4%	56%

However, about half of the population growth (an extra 30,000 people) will be recorded in Fishermans Bend with Domain, St Kilda Rd and St Kilda housing most of the other growth. Port Melbourne, East St Kilda and Elwood – Ripponlea will experience only little population growth (up to 10% over 21 years), while there will be no growth in Middle Park – Albert Park.

Note: Published data is incomplete – small area totals understated by approximately 12,000.

Simple estimates of increased library use

At the simplest level, use of public library services can be seen as a 'volume business'. That is, the greater the population the greater the level of library use. If the current per capita rate of library use was to be continued through to 2041 there would be an extra 360,000 library visits and 520,000 loans of physical collection items per year in 2041. An additional 17,000 people would be attending library programs and the size of the physical collection would need to increase from 214,000 to 333,000 books, magazines, audiobooks, etc.

Type	Measure	2018 ... 2018-19	2041	Change
Population	Population '000	113.6	176.8	+ 63.2
Library visits	Visits '000	646.6	1,006.4	+ 359.8
	Visits per capita	5.7	n/a	n/a
Loans	Loans '000	937.4	1,459.0	+ 521.6
	Loans per capita	8.3	n/a	n/a
Program attendance	Attendance '000	31.0	48.2	+ 17.2
	Attendance per capita	0.27	n/a	n/a
Physical collection	Items '000	214.0	333.0	+ 119.0
	Items per capita	1.9	n/a	n/a

At this stage no estimate is made of the potential demand for access to technology (e.g. computers, wifi) as it is not possible to know what technologies will be in use in 2041.

Assuming State Government grants and income from user fees and charges remain at the same per capita level, Council's annual funding contribution of \$44.64 per capita might be expected to stay the same other than adjustments for inflation. However, with additional demands in delivering a greater volume of service the number of library staff would need to increase from 41.0 to 63.8 EFT.

The current library infrastructure could not cope with this level of use and increased collection size – especially in Fishermans Bend/Port Melbourne – so there would need to be capital investment to increase the volume of library space available. In simple terms this might be an additional 2,700 m².

Type	Measure	2018 ... 2018-19	2041	Change
Population	Population '000	113.6	176.8	+ 63.2
Council funding	\$M	\$5.07	\$7.89	+ \$2.82
	Funding per capita	\$44.64	n/a	n/a
Library staff	EFT	41.0	63.8	+ 22.8
	EFT per '000 people	0.36	n/a	n/a
Library floor space	Gross floor area m ²	4,891	7,612	+ 2,721
	GFA per '000 people	43.1	n/a	n/a

More realistic estimates of increased library use

The figures above are simple estimates assuming no change to the business of public libraries or community demands for library services. In practice, there will be changes – some of which might be predicted, some of which cannot (e.g. the technology outlook). The following analysis explores some possibilities.

Library visits

Across the Victorian public library sector, the rate of visits to libraries has been declining in recent years, down 4% from 5.0 per capita in 2013-14 to 4.8 in 2018-19. Port Phillip has an above average rate of 5.7 visits per capita, although this is down from 6.7 in 2013-14. However, this change has not been uniform across the sector with increased levels of visitation in some areas, particularly where there has been investment in new library facilities. For example, Yarra Libraries have increased visitation from 6.0 per capita in 2013-14 to 8.3 in 2018-19.

The St Kilda Library has had no major investment to increase floorspace in recent years and at many times of the day is operating at high capacity. This is likely to have contributed to the declining rate of visits as the population increases. If the City of Port Phillip were to invest in new library infrastructure (i.e. new, expanded or upgraded libraries) and the libraries are better able to fulfil their role as community hubs, the current decline in visitation might be reversed. The following table presents a range of possible scenarios.

Scenario	Visits per capita	Estimated visits 2041 '000	Change from 2018 646,000
20% decline	4.6	805.2	+ 158.5
10% decline	5.1	905.8	+ 259.1
2018-19	5.7	1,006.4	+ 359.8
10% growth	6.3	1,107.1	+ 460.4
20% growth	6.8	1,207.7	+ 561.1

Loans of physical collection items

The per capita rate of borrowing physical collection items from Victorian public libraries has been decreasing – from 8.4 in 2013-14 to 6.4 in 2018-19. This is partly due to a shift in readership from physical to digital collections (i.e. from books to ebooks) and partly due to reduced levels of reading in the community (e.g. other entertainment and leisure options, reduced literacy, changing habits).

Port Phillip library users are proud of the large and varied collection available to them and the rate of borrowing of physical collection items is the third highest in the state (8.3 loans per capita). Port Phillip is behind only Boroondara (13.1) and Whitehorse Manningham (8.9), and ahead of neighbouring Glen Eira (7.9), Bayside (7.7) and Melbourne (7.7).

While it is difficult to know what library collections and borrowing habits might look like in 2041, it is reasonable to assume that there will continue to be a shift in format and that Port Phillip will continue to have above average borrowing levels. Even under the most extreme scenario presented below (a 40% drop in per capita borrowing of physical items in 2041), the number of loans made would be similar to the current level.

Scenario	Loans per capita	Estimated loans	Change from 2018
		2041 '000	937.4
2018-19	8.3	1,459.0	+ 521.6
10% decline	7.4	1,313.1	+ 375.7
20% decline	6.6	1,167.2	+ 229.8
30% decline	5.8	1,021.3	+ 83.9
40% decline	5.0	875.4	- 62.0

No estimates are made of the potential number of downloads of eresources (e.g. eBooks, eMagazines, eAudio) as these are not likely to have major implications for library infrastructure and provision. Funding for library materials will continue to shift to achieve an appropriate balance between community demand for physical and digital collections.

Program attendance

Public libraries are increasingly being seen and used as community hubs for learning, recreation and socialisation. As a result, libraries are offering an increasing number and range of library programs for people of all ages and interests – far beyond the early years literacy programs, book clubs and author talks that are staple library fare. Per capita attendance at Victorian library programs has increased 25% in the past 5 years, from 0.28 in 2013-14 to 0.35 in 2018-19.

With a relatively small population of young families and pre-school age children, Port Phillip Libraries have historically had below average attendance rates at its library programs – 0.27 per capita in 2018-19. While there will be an increase by 2041 in the absolute number of children in Port Phillip aged under 15 years (from 13,470 in 2018-19 to 17,840), the proportion of the population in this age range will drop from 11.9% to 10.1%. This suggests increasing demand for early years, after school and school holiday programs, but a likely drop in per capita attendance at library programs.

However, this may be offset by increased demand for library programs from two other key population cohorts. Firstly, the proportion of the Port Phillip population aged 60 years and over will increase from 16.4% in 2018 to 20.7% in 2041, almost doubling in this time from 18,600 to 36,500. This cohort is looking to public libraries and other community providers to offer lifelong learning and socialisation opportunities. Secondly, the proportion of single person households in Port Phillip will increase from 39.9% in 2018 to 41.8% in 2041 – with an extra 17,750 people living alone. Many people in this group are known to use libraries as a 'third place' (apart from home and work).

Therefore, it can be expected that participation in programs at Port Phillip libraries is likely to increase in both absolute and per capita terms over the next twenty years.

Scenario	Attendance per capita	Estimated attendance 2041 '000	Change from 2018 31.0
2018-19	0.27	48.2	+ 17.2
10% growth	0.30	53.0	+ 22.0
20% growth	0.33	57.8	+ 26.8
30% growth	0.35	62.7	+ 31.7
40% growth	0.38	67.5	+ 36.5

Physical collection

Port Phillip Libraries currently have a very large physical collection, with 1.9 collection items per capita. This is well above the state average of 1.20 items per capita, ahead of all metropolitan library services except Boroondara (2.4), and ahead of neighbouring libraries (Bayside 1.4, Melbourne 1.4, Glen Eira 1.0).

The gradual shift in format from physical to digital collections is seeing libraries carry less floor stock. Port Phillip's physical collection has dropped in per capita terms from 2.2 in 2013-14 to 1.9 in 2018-19. However, an ageing population in Port Phillip is likely to increase future demand for reading material.

The table below shows that even with a massive drop in the size of the collection on a per capita basis, the increase in the City's population will still require a physical library collection at least as big as the current collection.

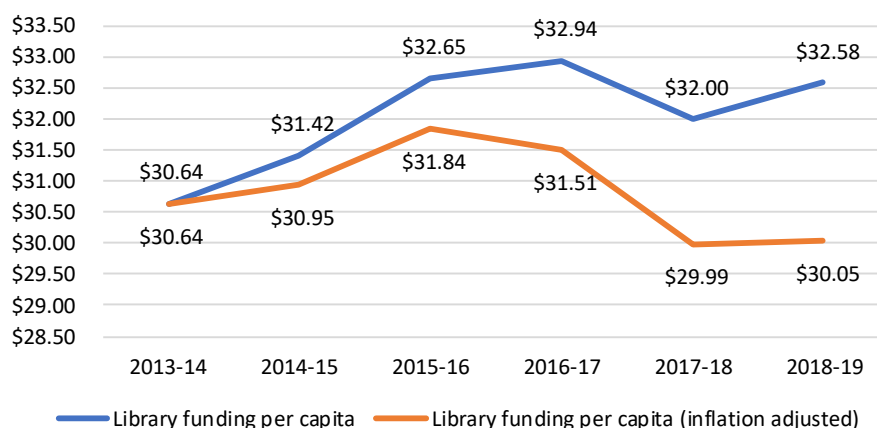
Scenario	Items per capita	Estimated collection size 2041 '000	Change from 2018 214.0
2018-19	1.9	333.0	+ 119.0
10% decline	1.7	299.7	+ 85.7
20% decline	1.5	266.4	+ 52.4
30% decline	1.3	233.1	+ 19.1
40% decline	1.1	199.8	- 14.2

Council's library funding

In real (inflation adjusted) terms, library funding from local government has been fairly stable over the past years, increasing from \$30.64 in 2013-14 to \$31.84 in 2015-16 before dropping back to around \$30 in 2017-18 and 2018-19.

City of Port Phillip funds its libraries above the Victorian average at \$44.64, in line with inner city and neighbouring Councils (Bayside, Glen Eira, Stonnington, Yarra and Maribyrnong) who all have funding levels between \$41 and \$51 per capita. The Victorian average is brought down to \$32.58 by lower average levels of funding in library corporations (that typically achieve cost efficiencies) and low funding by some Councils (often in outer metropolitan areas).

Victorian Public Library Funding \$/capita (operating) from Local Government



LGA	Maribyrnong	Yarra	Port Phillip	Bayside	Glen Eira	Stonnington
Library funding per capita 2018-19	\$51.37	\$50.84	\$44.64	\$43.23	\$42.71	\$41.84

Library staffing

The introduction of RFID and other technology-enabled services in public libraries around the world has not (for the most part) led to a reduction in library staffing. In most cases, staff have been re-assigned from low transactional work to higher value activities supporting library users through library programs, outreach services and technology access. The future size of the library workforce on a per capita basis will be influenced by:

- increasing demand for lifelong learning and social programs
- increasing demand for technology support and accessing government services
- increasing requirements for supporting customers with disabilities or people affected by mental health, drug and alcohol addiction, homelessness or family violence
- reduced staff requirements for managing a smaller (per capita) stock of library items
- efficiencies achieved through emerging technology and library sector collaboration.

The following table presents a range of scenarios, all of which will see a substantial increase in the number of staff working in the libraries.

Scenario	Staff EFT per '000 people	Estimated EFT 2041 '000	Change from 2018 41.0
15% decline	0.31	54.2	+ 13.2
10% decline	0.32	57.4	+ 16.4
5% decline	0.34	60.6	+ 19.6
2018-19	0.36	63.8	+ 22.8
5% growth	0.38	67.0	+ 26.0

Library floor space

As noted previously, on current figures the Port Phillip Libraries have a gross floor area (GFA) of 43.1m² per 1.000 people, with total floor space across the five branches of 4,891m². With a forecast increase in the population of 56% the libraries would need 7,612m² GFA in 2041.

The current library benchmark for determining library floor space in Australia is *People Places* from the State Library of NSW. This indicates that under current service expectations across the branch network the Port Phillip population would be best served by libraries with total GFA of 6,493m². This indicates that the current libraries are approximately 25% undersized.

Current floor space in branches and *People Places* do not give a good indication of requirements as far out as 2041 as the demand for space will change significantly over the next 20 years. For example:

- collections
 - demand for face out displays and bookshop-style presentation of popular items
 - more accessible shelving height (from eyeline to knee height)
 - reduced per capita physical stock held on the library floor
- program and activity spaces in libraries
- general spaces and seating
 - increased demand for meeting rooms and group working spaces
 - increased demand for casual seating to access technology and online services
 - potential demand for co-working, creative and entrepreneurial spaces.

Under any likely scenario Port Phillip Libraries will need a significant increase in floor space by 2041.

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