

Mission Statement
Freedom to Discover

Strategic Priorities
A Community Beacon Relevant and Responsive
Learning and Innovative Organization

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday, December 16, 2020
Central Library, Board Room

6:00 PM Meeting

AGENDA

VIDEO

1. Discussion Period

- 1.1 Land Acknowledgement - NV
- 1.2 Submitting Nominations - NV/PT

2. Acceptance of Agenda

3. Minutes

- 3.1 Minutes of the Wednesday, November 18, 2020 Library Board Meeting- Attachment #3.1

4. Declaration of Conflict

5. Presentations

- 5.1 Update on 2020 & Looking Ahead to 2021 - PT - Attachment #5.1

6. Consent Items

- 6.1 Upcoming and Outstanding Agenda Items - PT - Attachment #6.1

Suggested Action: Receive

- 6.2 2021 Letter from the Board -PT - Attachment #6.2

Suggested Action: Recommendation

- 6.3 Fines & Fees Policy (2nd Review) - DW - Attachment #6.3

Suggested Action: Recommendation

7. Business Arising

- 7.1 Multi Year Business Plan & 2021 Goals (2nd Review) - PT/TD - Attachment #7.1

Suggested Action: Recommendation

- 7.2 2021 Operating Budget (2nd Review) - TD - Attachment #7.2

Suggested Action: Recommendation

8. Correspondence

9. Report

- 9.1 Chief Librarian Report - PT - Attachment #9.1

Suggested Action: Receive

- 9.2 COVID-19 Response & Planning Report - PT - Attachment #9.2

Suggested Action: Receive

10. New Business

11. Policies

- 11.1 Access to Information & Communication Technology (1st Review) - SF - Attachment #11.1

Suggested Action: Receive

12. Private and Confidential

13. Date of Next Meeting

- 13.1 Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 6:00 pm Meeting

14. Adjournment

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Alyssa Seul, Senior Leadership Support Manager
Subject: **Minutes of the Wednesday, November 18, 2020 Library Board Meeting-Attachment #3.1**

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Minutes of the Wednesday, November 18, 2020 Library Board Meeting	1/5/2021	Cover Memo

Mission Statement
Freedom to Discover

Strategic Priorities
A Community Beacon Relevant and Responsive
Learning and Innovative Organization

HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Regular Board Meeting
Wednesday, November 18, 2020
Central Library, Board Room

6:00 PM Meeting

MINUTES

VIDEO

PRESENT:

N. van Velzen, E. Bowen, R. Coruzzi, J. Kirkpatrick, S. Laurie,
Councillor Pearson, L. Spence-Smith

STAFF:

P. Takala, S. Fahim, L. Weaver, D. Wark, T. Del Monaco, L.
DuPelle, K. Dennie, A. Seul

REGRETS:

C.A. Klassen, H. Dhaliwal, Councillor Partridge

Time to Order:

The Library Board Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Discussion Period

1.1 Land Acknowledgement - NV

The Hamilton Public Library is situated upon the traditional territories of the Erie, Neutral, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee (pronounced "Hau-dee-no-sho-nay") and Mississaugas. This land is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, which was an agreement

between the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabek (pronounced “Ah-nish-ih-naw-bek”) to share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. We further acknowledge that this land is covered by the Between the Lakes Purchase, 1792, between the Crown and the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. Today, Hamilton is home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island (North America) and we recognize that we must do more to learn about the rich history of this land so that we can better understand our roles as residents, neighbours, partners and caretakers.

1.2 Retirement of Karen Dennie - PT

2. Acceptance of Agenda

Add item 12.1 In-camera session

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by John Kirkpatrick,

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD ADOPT THE AGENDA AS AMENDED.

MOTION Passed

3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the Wednesday, October 21, 2020 Library Board Meeting - KD - Attachment #3.1

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by Stu Laurie,

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2020 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.

MOTION Passed

4. Declaration of Conflict

No board members declared a conflict of interest.

5. Presentations

6. Consent Items

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by John Kirkpatrick,

THAT CONSENT ITEM 6.1 BE ADOPTED AS PRESENTED.

MOTION Passed

6.1 Upcoming and Outstanding Agenda Items - PT - Attachment #6.1

That the Hamilton Public Library Board receive the upcoming and outstanding items report for information.

7. Business Arising

8. Correspondence

MOVED by Elly Bowen, seconded by Robert Coruzzi,

THAT THE CORRESPONDENCE BE RECEIVED FOR INFORMATION.

MOTION Passed

8.1 Ontario Library Service - PT - Attachment #8.1

9. Report

9.1 Chief Librarian Report - PT - Attachment #9.1

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by Stu Laurie,

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD RECEIVE THE NOVEMBER 2020 CHIEF LIBRARIAN REPORT.

MOTION Passed

9.2 Nominating Committee - PT/KD - Attachment #9.2

MOVED by John Kirkpatrick, seconded by Stu Laurie,

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY APPOINT THE FOLLOWING BOARD MEMBERS TO THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE: N. van Velzen, S. Laurie, R. Coruzzi

MOTION Passed

9.3 Q3 Metrics Report - TD - Attachment #9.3

MOVED by Stu Laurie, seconded by Elly Bowen,

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD RECEIVE THE 2020 3RD QUARTER METRICS REPORT FOR INFORMATION.

MOTION Passed

10. New Business

10.1 2021 Library Board Meeting Dates - KD - Attachment #10.1

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by John Kirkpatrick,

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD APPROVE THE FOLLOWING MEETING DATES FOR 2021: JANUARY 20TH, FEBRUARY 17TH, MARCH 17TH, APRIL 21ST, MAY 19TH, JUNE 16TH, SEPTEMBER 8TH, OCTOBER 20TH, NOVEMBER 17TH, DECEMBER 15TH

MOTION Passed

10.2 Mobile Library Services - LW/TD - Attachment #10.2

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by Stu Laurie,

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD ENDORSE THE DIRECTION OUTLINED IN THIS REPORT. THAT STAFF CONTINUE TO INVESTIGATE AND CONSULT ON THIS DIRECTION AND CREATE A REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP) TO FURTHER DEVELOP THE BUSINESS CASE FOR THIS DIRECTION.

MOTION Passed

10.3 2021 Operating Budget (1st Review) - TD - Attachment #10.3

MOVED by Stu Laurie, seconded by Maria Pearson,

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD RECEIVE THE PRELIMINARY REPORT ON THE 2021 OPERATING BUDGET FOR INFORMATION AND COMMENT.

MOTION Passed

10.4 Multi-Year Business Plan & 2021 Goals (1st Review) - TD/PT - Attachment #10.4

MOVED by John Kirkpatrick, seconded by Robert Coruzzi,

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD RECEIVE THIS REPORT FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT.

MOTION Passed

10.5 Non-Union Compensation - Library Pages - LD - Attachment #10.5

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by John Kirkpatrick,

WHEREAS, FOLLOWING COUNCIL DIRECTION, THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD APPROVED THE LIVING WAGE FOR THE LIBRARY PAGE POSITION (EX. SUMMER READING WORKERS AND/OR OTHER APPLICABLE STUDENT POSITIONS). WHEREAS THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD'S NON-UNION PAY EQUITY AGREEMENT REQUIRES THE BOARD TO MATCH COST OF LIVING INCREASES GIVEN BY THE CITY OF HAMILTON, THE BOARD APPROVES COST-OF-LIVING INCREASES FOR LIBRARY PAGES AND STUDENT POSITIONS (EX. SUMMER READING STUDENTS ETC) EMPLOYEES TO MATCH INCREASES THAT WERE APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL AND CITY OF HAMILTON FOR THE NON-UNION MANAGEMENT AND PROFESSIONAL EXEMPT EMPLOYEES IN 2021.

MOTION Passed

11. Policies

11.1 Statement on Service Continuity (2nd Review) - PT - Attachment #11.1

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by Elly Bowen,

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD APPROVE THE STATEMENT ON SERVICE CONTINUITY.

MOTION Passed

11.2 Strategic Plan - 2021 Letter from the Board (1st Review) - PT/NV - Attachment #11.2

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by Robert Coruzzi,

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD RECEIVE THE 2021 LETTER FROM THE BOARD FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT.

MOTION Passed

11.3 Fines and Fees Policy (1st Review) - DW - Attachment #11.3

MOVED by Lori-Anne Spence-Smith, seconded by Elly Bowen,

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD RECEIVE THIS POLICY FOR REVIEW AND COMMENT.

MOTION Passed

12. Private and Confidential

MOVED by R. Coruzzi, seconded by Councillor Pearson,

THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MOVE IN-CAMERA TO DISCUSS AN ITEM ABOUT AN IDENTIFIABLE INDIVIDUAL.

MOTION Passed.

MOVED by Maria Pearson, seconded by John Kirkpatrick,

THAT THE IN-CAMERA SESSION BE ADJOURNED.

MOTION Passed

12.1 Personal Matter about an Identifiable Individual

13. Date of Next Meeting

13.1 Wednesday, December 16, 2020, 6:00 pm Meeting

14. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25pm.

MOVED by Elly Bowen, seconded by Robert Coruzzi,

**THAT THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING OF
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2020 BE ADJOURNED.**

MOTION Passed

Minutes recorded by Karen Dennie, Alyssa Seul

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian
Subject: **Update on 2020 & Looking Ahead to 2021 - PT - Attachment #5.1**

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
December 2020 Update and Looking Ahead	12/15/2020	Cover Memo



Hamilton
Public
Library

FINAL REPORT ON 2020 & LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

December 2020 – Chief Librarian/CEO

F R E E D O M T O D I S C O V E R

[HPL.CA](https://hpl.ca)



OUTLINE

Final Report on 2020 Goals

- Today's Presentation
 - Highlights of 2020
 - Preliminary look at metrics of 2020
 - Preview of Strategic Planning in 2021
 - Overview of Service Priorities
- Final Report on 2020 Goals in January





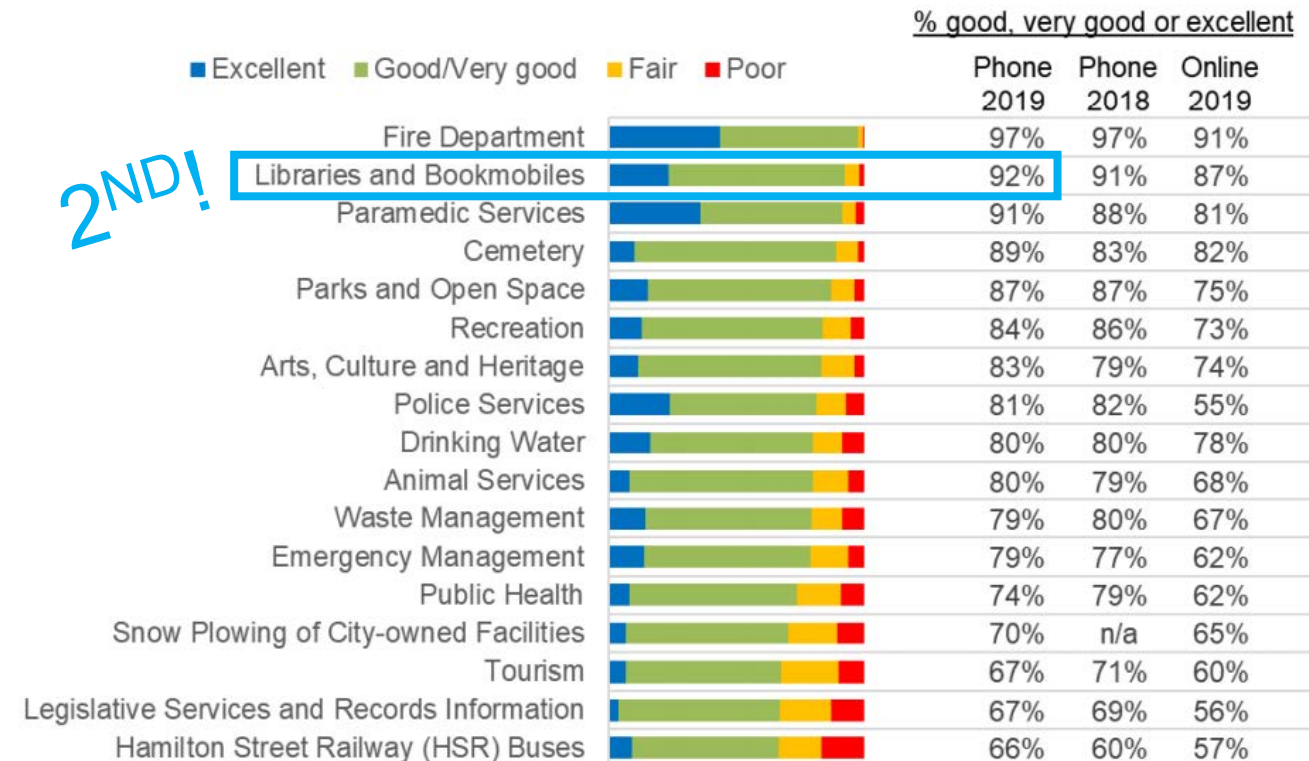
2020 STARTED WITH

- Unanimous Council support for Parkdale enhancement
- 2019 **Our City Survey** – HPL ranked 2nd by Hamiltonians
- March - **COVID-19 Pandemic**
- Work done since March has been tremendous



Our City Survey 2019

Ratings of Services





ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 2020!

- ✓ Supporting Library members during the pandemic
- ✓ Staff resiliency, flexibility & teamwork
- ✓ Pandemic planning & leadership
- ✓ Collaborating with the community & City
- ✓ Rapid shift to online only in spring
 - Seniors friendly calling
 - Freshdesk remote support, MS Teams
 - Online programs and online learning
- ✓ Reopening library branches in summer
 - Enhanced safety and distancing
 - Takeout service
- ✓ Fine Free
- ✓ Expansion of service hours



“ The Hamilton Public Library has been fantastic during this COVID uproar ... Always in touch, letting us know what is going on ... Then when they opened for business, they were very organized and courteous. Well done.

– Maureen M. ”



LIBRARY SERVICES IN 2020

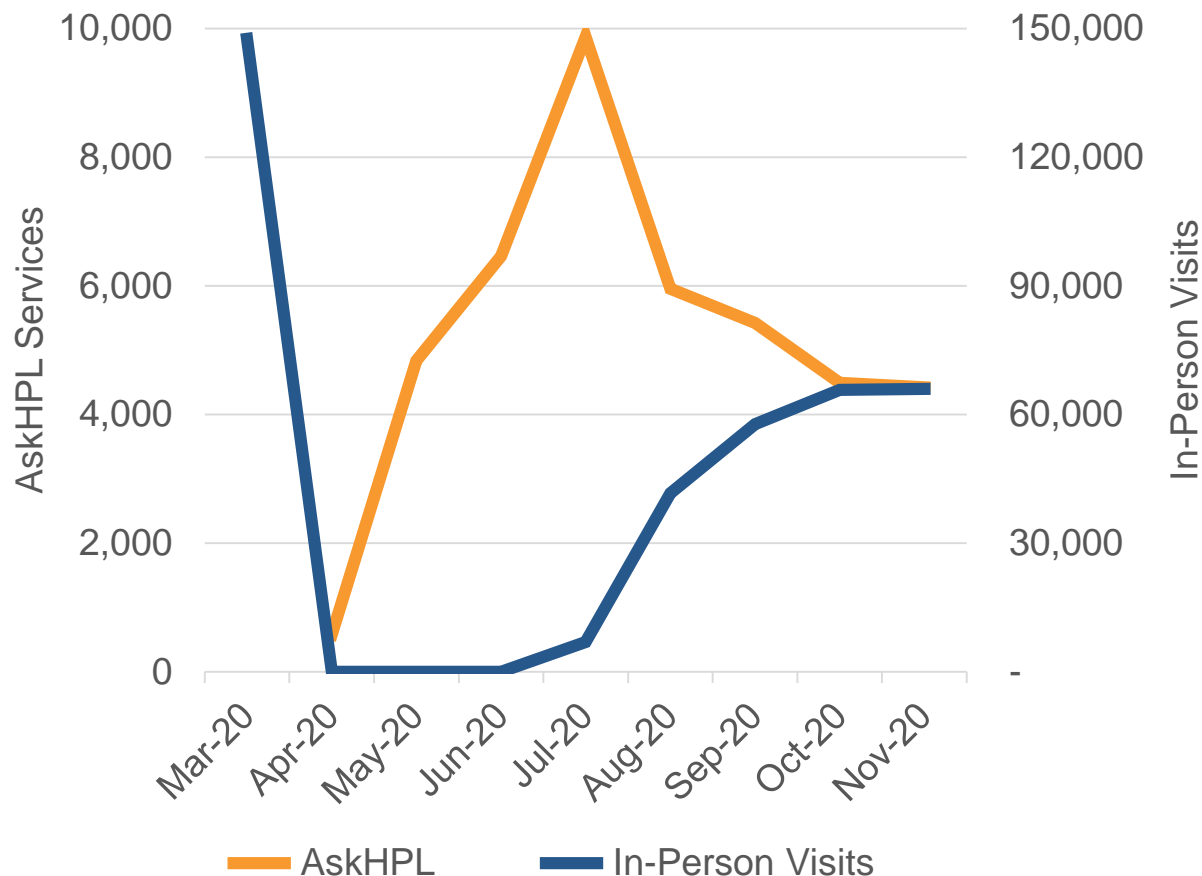


You've been a treasure trove of information; I am so grateful you have called!

– local senior resident



Visits & AskHPL



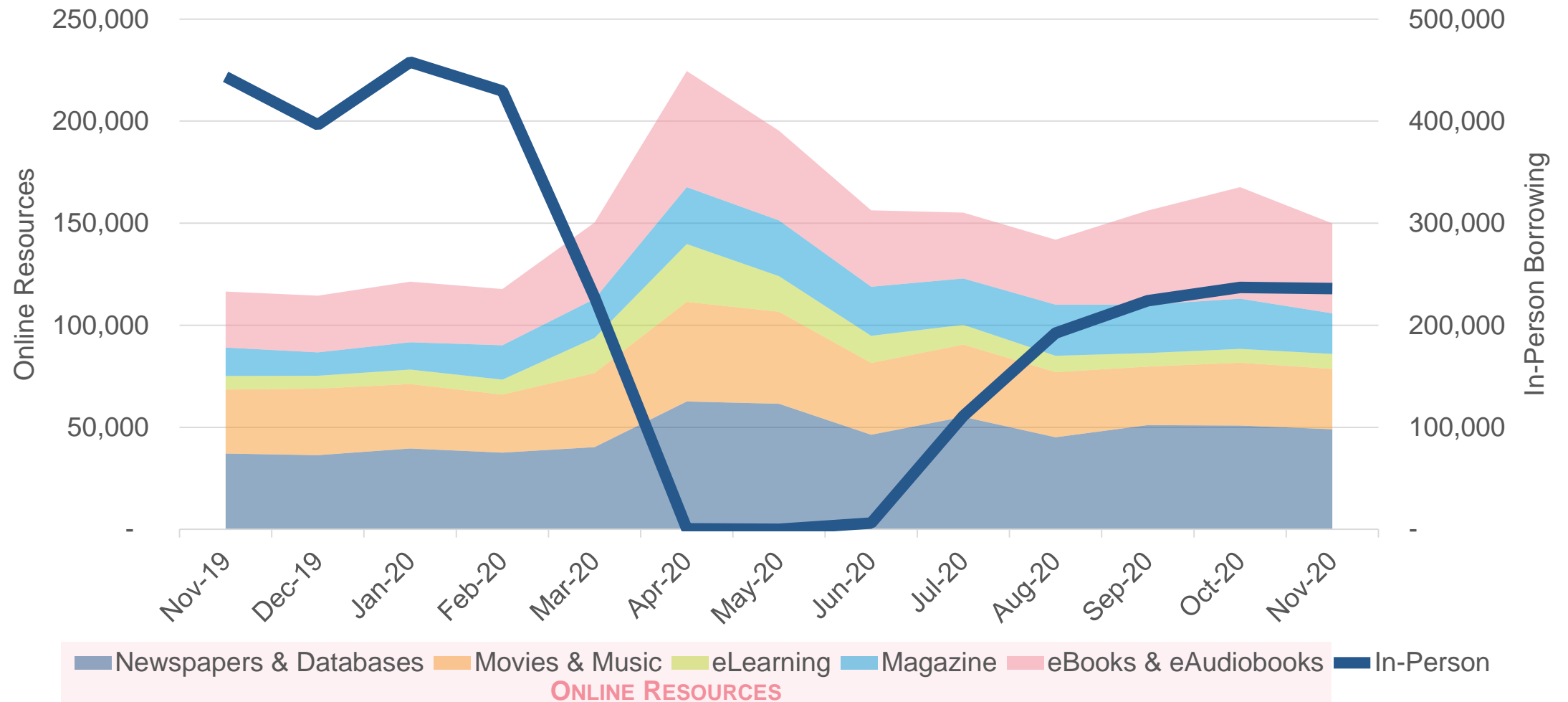
- AskHPL allowed staff to respond remotely to members through email, phone & chat
- Friendly Calling
 - HPL staff reached out into the community to reduce social isolation with 8,734 calls
 - We supported technical literacy with over the phone help with devices, referrals to community resources and helped more residents access what they needed from home



COLLECTIONS

Online Resources from the library have seen a significant increase this year

Library Borrowing

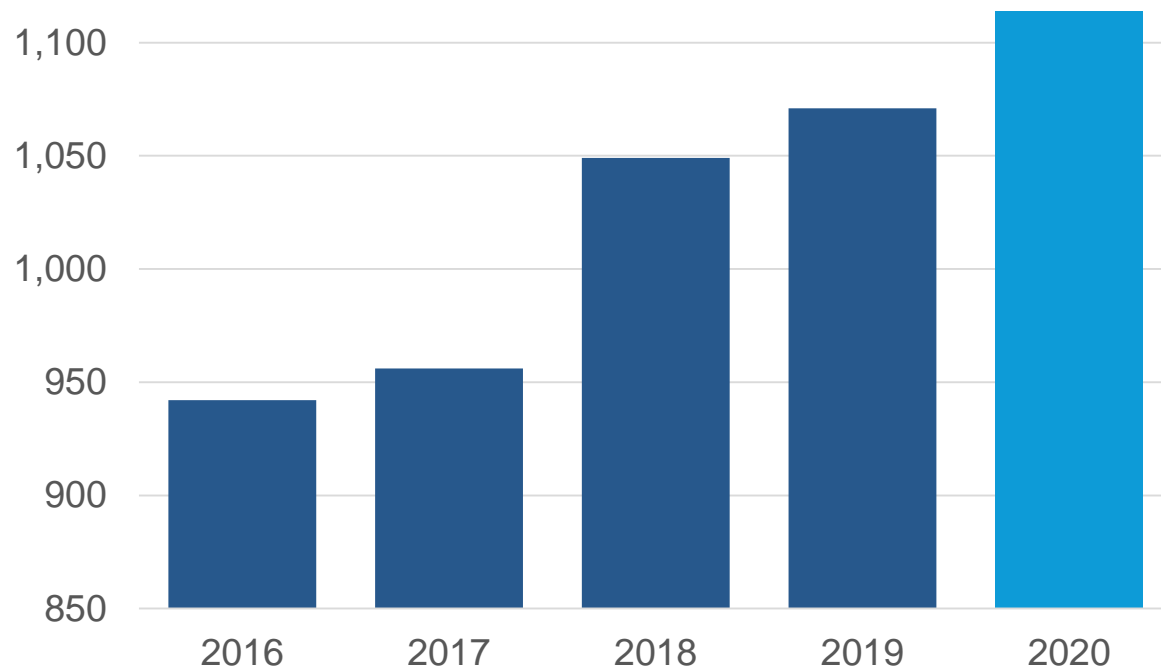




EXPANDING LIBRARY SERVICE HOURS

Service Planning & Development

Hours Per Week at all HPL Branches



- Consistent growth in hours through innovation
- Since 2016 HPL has added 8,600 hours of library service, or 358 full days
- 18% increase since 2016 in hours

“ Very grateful that the Library is open once again for physical pick-ups and appreciative of the professional attitude and work ethic of the staff. ”
– Dan K.



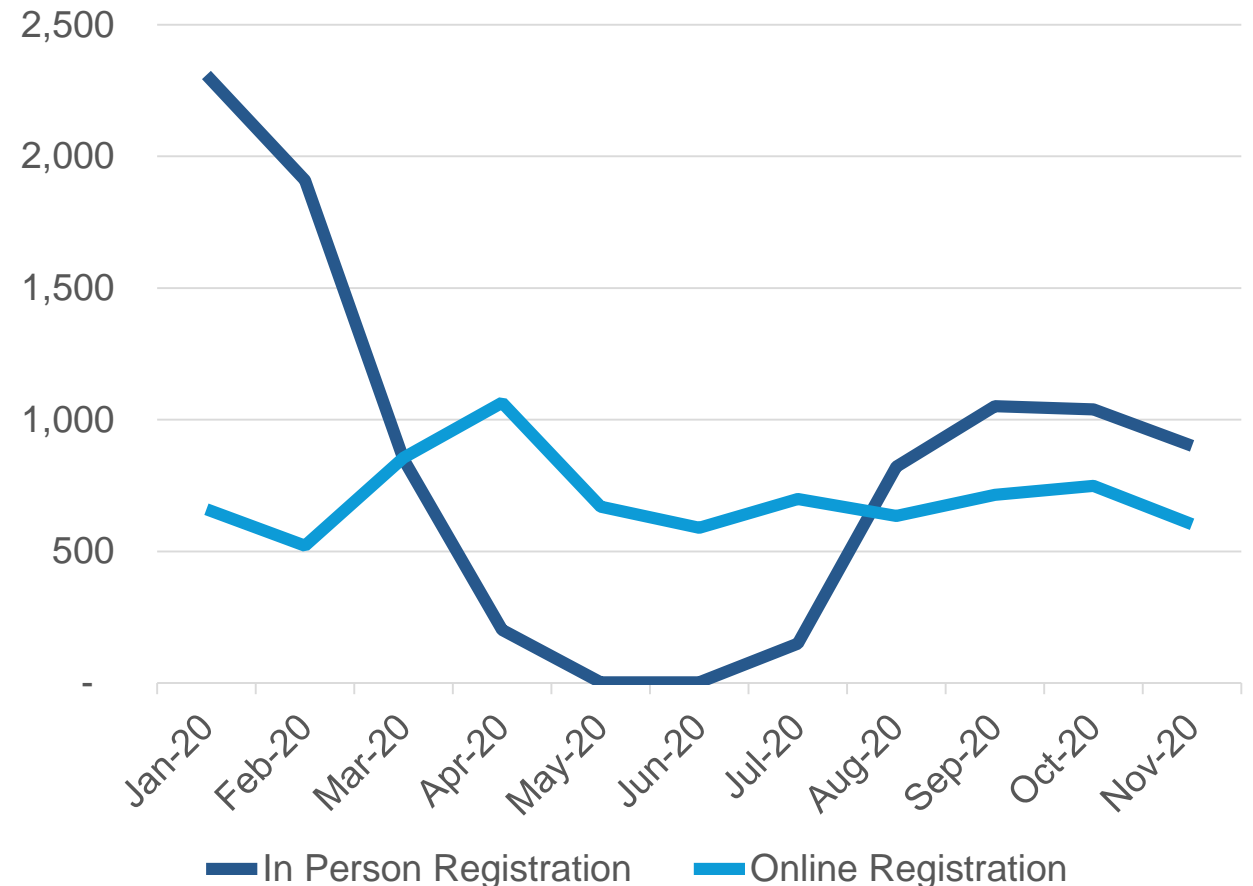
SERVICE PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

Library Membership

- Online registration, which debuted in April 2019 increased during the spring to enable more members to access the library
- Online registration saw a 77% increase over last year so far

“ Love your easy-to-use website and all the help when I visit a branch! Thank you.
– Donald R. ”

New Members, by Month





FACILITY RENEWAL



CARLISLE



GREENSVILLE



VALLEY PARK



PARKDALE

A graphic featuring the year '2021' in large white numerals inside four overlapping circles of different colors: green, blue, dark blue, and purple. The circles are set against a dark blue background with faint, stylized snowflake patterns and scattered colorful confetti (yellow, pink, blue, and purple).

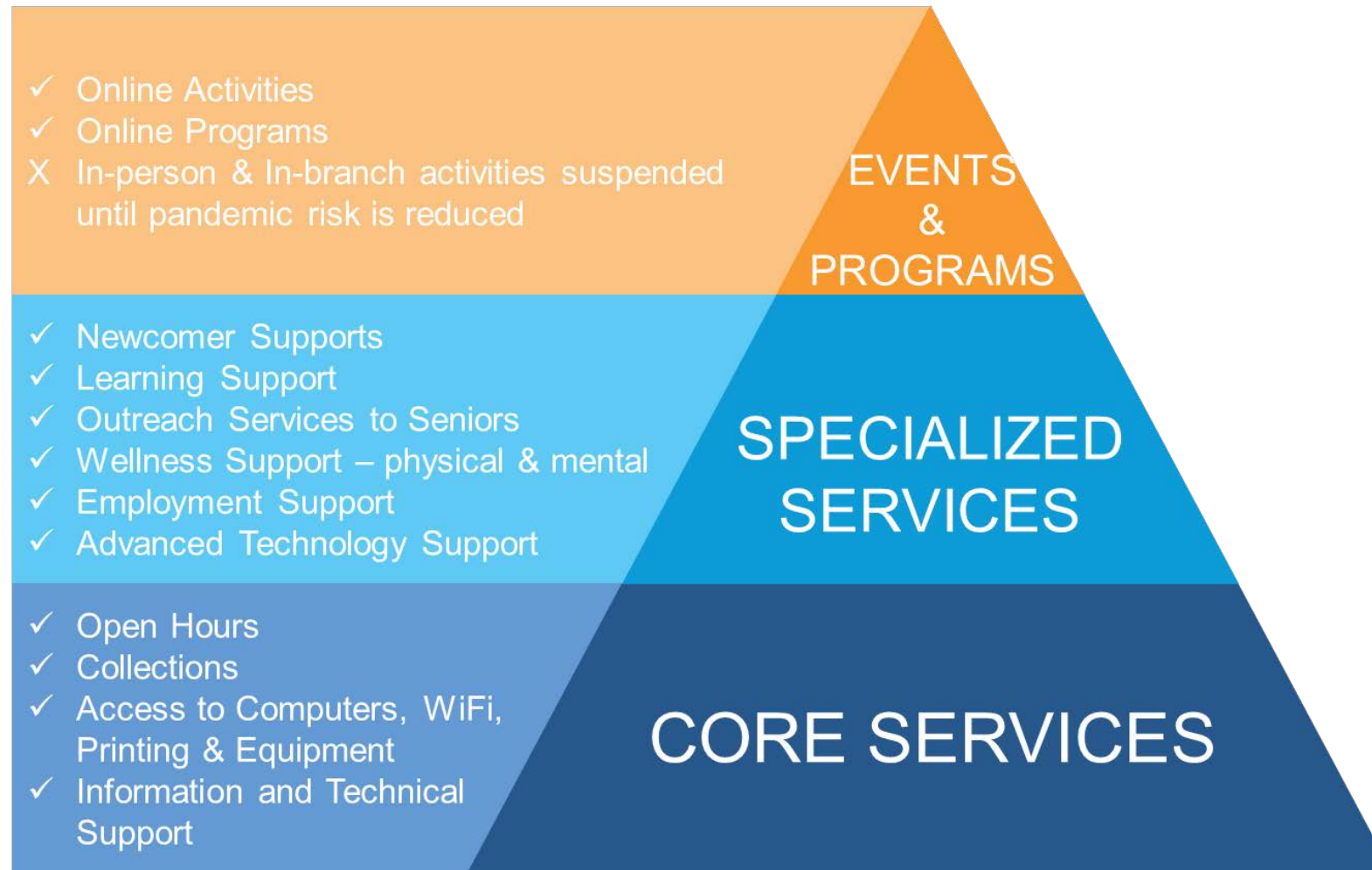
2021

with **HPL**

- Continued pandemic response and service priorities for 2021 –
- Develop a new Strategic Plan for long term priorities and aspirations –



SERVICE PRIORITIES IN 2021



During the pandemic, our priority has been to provide **as much service** as we **safely can**.



SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2021

- HPL provides **critical access** and **supports** to many, now is the time to **further cement this understanding** in our community and its leaders
- With capacity down significantly, we need to spread our service out as widely as we can – ***serving smaller numbers over a longer periods of time***
- We need to **ensure staff feel that we will support them** when they should not come into work because of possible exposure to COVID
- Our **funding outlook is positive**. We need to leave vacant some positions to cover pandemic related costs temporarily



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-25 – LONG TERM PRIORITIES

- **Updating the Strategic Plan:** Starting the process of developing our new Strategic Plan.
- **Balancing the Urgent vs. the Important** - Because of the ongoing pandemic and all the changes it has brought, and could still bring, we are adopting flexibility in the timing so we ***can continue to address immediate issues when needed***
- We are aiming to follow a similar process as we did last time. To see the documentation from the last plan:
<https://www.hpl.ca/articles/strategic-priorities-2018-2021>



STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025 – 4 STARTING POINTS

1. Key Background Readings

Collecting reports, strategic plans, metrics and key frameworks to recommend for consideration. We look for things that would be highly relevant to our discussion but not limited to public libraries.

2. Longer Term Metrics

Looking at longer term trends and shifts and how historical trends influenced our community's use of the library in the past.

3. Accomplishments of the Current Plan

In Q1 of 2021 staff will work on a report which reviews the strategic plan from 2018-2021.

4. Meeting User Needs IV

Five core assumptions about the planning context for HPL in the next decade.



CONCLUSION & QUESTIONS

- Staff are focused on working together: supporting each other and members to get through the pandemic
- There will be some difficult months ahead, **our future is bright**
- 2021 is about solidifying, integrating innovations and exploring opportunities to increase our positive impact

Thank you to the Library Board for your support!

Questions/Comments

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
Subject: Upcoming and Outstanding Agenda Items - PT - Attachment #6.1

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Library Board receive the Upcoming and Outstanding Agenda Items Report.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Upcoming and Outstanding Agenda Items	12/10/2020	Cover Memo

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Library Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
Subject: **Upcoming Agenda Items**

2020 LIBRARY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

Note: Policies are listed for the month they are scheduled for 1st Review.

Month	Agenda Items
January 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Election of Officers ✓ Operating Budget Presentation to Council ✓ Advocacy & Political Participation Policy
February 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 2019 Year-End Metrics Report ✓ Presentation – Consolidated Policy Partnership, Program & Rental Space ✓ Diversity & Inclusion Policy ✓ Audit Committee Report ✓ Report on Safety and Security
March 18	MEETING CANCELLED DUE TO COVID-19
April 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COVID-19 Response & Planning Reports ✓ Q1 Metrics Report ✓ Initial Report on Last Year Financials (Pre-Audit) ✓ Reserve Report Update
May 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COVID-19 Response & Planning Reports ✓ Library Board By-Laws ✓ Carlisle Renovation Scope of Work ✓ Reducing Barriers - Fines and Fees Report ✓ Working with Us Policy ✓ Intellectual Freedom Policy ✓ Digital Usage Report
June 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COVID-19 Response & Planning Report ✓ Report from the Audit Committee ✓ Board Bylaws ✓ Fines and Fees Report
July, August	No Meetings
September 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COVID-19 Response & Planning Report ✓ <i>Mid-Year Progress Report on 2020 Goals</i> ✓ Q2 Metrics Report ✓ Holiday Closures for Following Year ✓ Capital Budget Submission ✓ Update on Capital Projects

October 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COVID-19 Response & Planning Report ✓ Legal Review – Working with Us Policy ✓ Library Board Statement on Sustainability
November 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Operating Budget Next Year ✓ Multi-Year Business Plan & 2020 Goals ✓ Meeting Dates for Following Year ✓ Nominating Committee ✓ Q3 Metrics Report ✓ Fines & Fees Policy
December 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ COVID-19 Response & Planning Report ✓ Access to Information & Communication Technology ✓ Borrowing Policy

2021 LIBRARY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

- ❖ Items are usually listed for the month they are scheduled for 1st Review
- ❖ Staff will continue to provide updates to the Library Board on COVID-19 in 2021

Month	Agenda Items
January 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Officers • Operating Budget Presentation to Council • Legal Review <i>Working with Us Policy</i> • Final Report on 2020 Goals
February 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2020 Year-End Metrics Report • Audit Committee Report • Access by Design & Privacy by Design • New Strategic Plan Timelines & Process
March 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report on Partnerships • Copyright & Intellectual Property Policy • Purchasing Policy • Privacy Policy for Library Customers
April 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q1 Metrics Report • Initial Report on Last Year Financials (Pre-Audit) • Reserve Report Update • Policy Development Framework • Cash Handling Policy
May 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rights of Children & Teens in the Public Library • Safety of Children in the Public Library • Displays & Exhibits Policy • Local History & Archives Collection Policy
June 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mid-Year Progress Report on 2021 Goals</i> • Report from the Audit Committee • Board Bylaws

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fines and Fees Report
July, August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Meetings
September 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q2 Metrics Report Holiday Closures for Following Year Capital Budget Submission Update on Capital Projects Donations & Sponsorship Policy
October 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operating Budget Next Year Multi-Year Business Plan & 2022 Goals Security Camera Policy Staff Development & Training Policy Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
November 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting Dates for Following Year Board Nominating Committee Q3 Metrics Report
December 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2022 Budget Presentation

ITEMS TO RE-SCHEDULED

Annual Report on Revenue Generation

Municipal Benchmarking Report

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
Subject: **2021 Letter from the Board -PT - Attachment #6.2**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Library Board approve the *2021 Letter from the Board*.

BACKGROUND:

Since 2018 the Board has approved an annual letter from the Library Board to provide guidance to staff for the coming year. This enables the Library Board to update the strategic direction that staff should focus on in the coming year. In the final year of the Board's term, the letter provides a legacy document for the Board to provide consensus advice for the incoming Library Board to consider.

Strategic Plan 2022-2025

As we have discussed and is referenced in the Multi-Year Business Plan report we are recommending we commence work on the new plan. Because of the ongoing pandemic and all the changes it has brought, and could still bring, we are recommending some flexibility in the timing so we can continue to address immediate issues when needed. Also, with a lot of things still unclear about what we may be facing in a couple years, it would be a good idea to develop the plan but review it earlier than we normally would. For example, if we complete the plan in Q3 or Q4 of 2021, we may want to see if it needs any adjustments in late 2022 or early 2023.

To see the documentation from the last plan, including notes from the special meetings the Board held, they are all on this page: <https://www.hpl.ca/articles/strategic-priorities-2018-2021>.

The process worked well last time and we will review and confirm with the Board the process we will follow early in 2021. There were four (4) exercises that commenced the process in 2016/17:

1. **Key Background Readings** - We spent a few months asking for Board members, Management and staff to suggest reports, strategic plans, metrics and key frameworks to recommend for consideration. We looked for things that would be highly relevant to our discussion but it was not limited to only insights specific to public libraries. Out of that process we selected 14 documents and extracted the most relevant information into a 145 page document. This document provided a useful environmental scan that informed our discussions. We are asking Board members to begin suggesting things they think could be useful by emailing myself and the Board Chair. We will be collecting until the end of January 2021.

2. **Longer Term Metrics** - Looking at longer term trends and comparative metrics from our peers helped provide insights into trends. This will be especially important this time as so much has changed since the pandemic started. In the months and next couple years we are going to have to discern between temporary changes caused by the pandemic, with more lasting changes. Any inferences we draw from the data will need to be reviewed and confirmed on a periodic basis during the life of the next strategic plan.
3. **Accomplishments of the Current Plan** - In Q1 of 2021 staff will work on a report that looks at what has been accomplished since the last plan was adopted. As we look ahead, it is important that we also look back to appreciate some of the accomplishments of the last few years.
4. **Meeting User Needs IV** - This document articulated five (5) core assumptions about our planning context for the next decade. Reviewing and updating this document would be advisable as we focus our attention on setting HPL's future direction in the new strategic plan.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
2021 Letter from the Board and Strategic Plan	12/10/2020	Cover Memo

Hamilton Public Library Board
Strategic Plan 2018-2021
December 2020

Mission	2
Values	2
Strategic Priorities	2
Note about “Letters from the Board”	2
2021 Letter from the Board.....	3
2020 Letter from the Board.....	5
2019 Letter from the Board.....	6
2018 Letter from the Board.....	7

MISSION

“Freedom to Discover”

VALUES

Intellectual Freedom – Provide equitable access to and support for knowledge and creativity.

Inclusiveness – Support inclusion by creating trusted services and spaces that welcome everyone.

Innovation – Anticipate and respond to changing needs and technology.

Respect – Support the value and dignity of all individuals.

Accountability – Ensure that library services remain relevant and vital and that resources are managed effectively and ethically.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Community Beacon

The Hamilton Public Library will be a source of pride in the community. The library system will act as a unifying force by welcoming everyone. Our physical and digital spaces will be inviting and accommodating. We will be a leader in fostering community engagement and participation.

Relevant and Responsive

The Hamilton Public Library will continue to advance core library values as we embrace our evolving role in supporting access and literacy. We will support people in their lifelong learning journey by helping them thrive today as they prepare for tomorrow. We will maintain strong physical collections as we grow digital services. We will be a national library leader, working collaboratively to create policies and agreements that ensure access to intellectual property in all formats.

Learning and Innovative Organization

The Hamilton Public Library will continuously seek new ways to assist the learning and growth of all individuals. The library will support staff to be engaged in their roles and in the library profession. We will provide staff with opportunities to continually enhance their skills and develop new competencies, so they can meet changing technology and information needs. We will focus on ensuring we reduce barriers to using our services as we promote awareness of the Library in the communities we serve.

NOTE ABOUT “LETTERS FROM THE BOARD”

When the Library Board approved the Strategic Plan in February 2018, it was decided that annually the Board would approve a “Letter from the Board”, to provide updated context on the Strategic Plan. This letter instructs staff and in years when a new Board is appointed by Council, the letter serves as a legacy document, allowing the outgoing Board to collectively provide advice for the new Board to consider.

Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO

2021 LETTER FROM THE BOARD

December 2020

The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 has brought a level of disruption to our community that is without precedent. Since the beginning of the pandemic Library staff and the Library Board have been focused on ensuring HPL keeps staff and Library members safe while ensuring we play a positive role in helping Hamilton respond. We are proud of the leadership and innovation that HPL has demonstrated during the crisis. We extend our deep appreciation to Library staff for your resilience during the pandemic. We encourage you to continue to respond effectively to changing circumstances and to work closely with the Library Board to ensure we use the coming year to lay the foundation for a future where HPL's relevance and impact are assured for years to come.

HPL has adapted well to the challenges of the pandemic. We encourage staff to utilize the new resources and technology that are now available to build and refine services and programs. We congratulate staff for a year of tremendous growth in usage of digital content. We encourage you to continue to monitor usage to ensure we are getting value and look for ways to improve member's experiences with these resources. The pandemic will have likely changed some usage patterns that will be lasting in nature. Staff should be proactively looking for these trends and shifting collections budgets allocations where appropriate.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a public health and economic crisis that will require HPL to work in partnership with other allied groups and organizations to ensure the recovery creates a more inclusive and sustainable prosperity. A recent report from the *Canadian Urban Institute (CUI)*ⁱ 200 days into the pandemic identified several core challenges facing Canadian cities. These include:

- First, our main streets, local economies and downtowns are severely threatened.
- Second, systemic urban inequality is continuing to deepen.
- Third, the finance and governance arrangements for local governments are broken.

Helping people and the community get through the pandemic will be a critical focus of the coming year. As we get closer to the final stages of the pandemic, HPL will be shifting its focus to supporting the recovery. Challenges to learning, digital access and social isolation are some of the core community challenges that HPL has an important role to play in addressing.

HPL has a long history of successful partnerships. That experience should be utilized to build new strategic partnerships to ensure our programs and services complement the efforts of other trusted partners. We commend staff for the progress they have made with the **Hamilton Red Book**ⁱⁱ. HPL has taken on this commitment because we want to ensure there is a comprehensive and up-to-date source of information about services and supports available to residents of Hamilton. Connecting people with resources and supports is a core role of a public library. Actively embracing that role will be important as residents experience challenges during the pandemic and post pandemic recovery period. We also look forward to working with staff to advance important partnerships advancing reconciliation with Indigenous communities and bringing access to cultural and learning experiences for all Hamiltonians.

The generous and consistent support from the City of Hamilton enables us to realize our mission. We appreciate that support and are mindful that the City of Hamilton, like other municipalities, is facing serious burdens that will strain its ability to provide enough funding. We encourage HPL to

continue to work with the broader library community to advocate for increased permanent funding from higher levels of government to offset the burden on local tax payers. The Board will also continue our ongoing practice of working with staff to ensure that the funding we receive is diligently managed and leads to services and programs that have the maximum positive impact on our members.

As HPL strives toward increasing its positive impact we encourage staff to work with each other and management on applying past successful strategies to new opportunities and challenges. This includes continually working towards measuring the value of work and basing service decisions on research and collective impact. It means meeting new priorities by shifting current resources and using technology and process changes to improve how the work is done. It also includes working with academic partners committed to helping us better understand what factors lead to meaningful impacts. We look forward to learning more about the research that HPL is involved with in advancing youth literacy, digital literacy and helping seniors stay socially engaged and healthy. We encourage HPL to continue to support innovative programs like City Labs.

2021 promises to be an exciting year for facility renewal. We look forward to the completion of the Greenville and Parkdale branches in Q1. That will be followed by the Carlisle TD Bank renovation and by the new Valley Park branch later in the year. We also look forward to receiving the Mount Hope feasibility study and finding a path forward for that location.

The Board is proud that HPL is an internationally recognized innovative leader in public library service. We are proud of the work staff have done during current challenges. We encourage you to continue to work together and to support each other. Please continue to follow public health guidance to reduce the risk of COVID-19 spread and keep everyone safe, as you also provide as much assistance and service to community members as you safely can. Remember, the work we do during the pandemic will impact our post-pandemic relevance and support.

2020 LETTER FROM THE BOARD

January 2020

On February 21, 2018, the Library Board adopted a new Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2021. That plan was built on a strong foundation of research and community engagement. We encourage the new Library Board to take time to understand the context with which that plan was developed and understand some of the longer-term opportunities and challenges that face public libraries in the 21st Century.

Much was accomplished during the previous strategic plan and we anticipate the new Library Board will ensure that HPL continues to remain relevant to the communities we serve. During this term, 2015-2018, the Library Board has enhanced its annual business planning process. That process aligns with the City of Hamilton multi-year business plan process and will be an important tool for the Library Board to direct the discretionary efforts of the organization.

From our extensive community outreach to develop the Strategic Plan, we learned that there is a high level of satisfaction with HPL and that there is strong community alignment with the values we are committed to as a public library. We hope the new Board will continue to build on the work we have done to improve library service hours, programs and spaces.

We see that more work needs to happen around improving awareness of library services and breaking down barriers to using HPL. One issue that was a point of discussion of this Board was how the Library Board should address issues like library fines that in some cases cause barriers to residents. We were unable to reach consensus on this issue and advise the new Board to carefully examine the implications of changes to the fines structure and take a step-by-step approach, ensuring that the implications of changes are understood.

As HPL strives toward increasing its positive impact we hope the new Board will ensure that past successful strategies will be applied to new opportunities and challenges. This includes continually working towards measuring the value of work and basing service decisions on research and collective impact. It means meeting new priorities by shifting current resources and using technology and process changes to improve how the work is done.

The Board is proud that HPL is an internationally recognized innovative leader. HPL will continue to adopt new technologies and seek out new services and partnerships to more effectively serve our communities. Through these priorities we will continue to be forward-looking, responsive, and accountable. We wish the new Library Board every success!

2019 LETTER FROM THE BOARD

January 2019

On February 21, 2018, the Library Board adopted a new Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2021. That plan was built on a strong foundation of research and community engagement. We encourage the new Library Board to take time to understand the context with which that plan was developed and understand some of the longer-term opportunities and challenges that face public libraries in the 21st Century.

Much was accomplished during the previous strategic plan and we anticipate the new Library Board will ensure that HPL continues to remain relevant to the communities we serve. During this term, 2015-2018, the Library Board has enhanced its annual business planning process. That process aligns with the City of Hamilton multi-year business plan process and will be an important tool for the Library Board to direct the discretionary efforts of the organization. From our extensive community outreach to develop the Strategic Plan, we learned that there is a high level of satisfaction with HPL and that there is strong community alignment with the values we are committed to as a public library. We hope the new Board will continue to build on the work we have done to improve library service hours, programs and spaces.

We see that more work needs to happen around improving awareness of library services and breaking down barriers to using HPL. One issue that was a point of discussion of this Board was how the Library Board should address issues like library fines that in some cases cause barriers to residents. We were unable to reach consensus on this issue and advise the new Board to carefully examine the implications of changes to the fines structure and take a step-by-step approach, ensuring that the implications of changes are understood.

As HPL strives toward increasing its positive impact we hope the new Board will ensure that past successful strategies will be applied to new opportunities and challenges. This includes continually working towards measuring the value of work and basing service decisions on research and collective impact. It means meeting new priorities by shifting current resources and using technology and process changes to improve how the work is done.

The Board is proud that HPL is an internationally recognized innovative leader. HPL will continue to adopt new technologies and seek out new services and partnerships to more effectively serve our communities. Through these priorities we will continue to be forward-looking, responsive, and accountable. We wish the new Library Board every success!

2018 LETTER FROM THE BOARD

February 2018

In preparation for developing the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan the Library Board sought to understand broad trends impacting society and public libraries, as well as, specific challenges and aspirations of the communities we serve. The Board looked at the *Our Future Hamilton Community Vision* and conducted a community survey that received over 7,000 responses. That process has informed the new Strategic Plan and the annual business plans that will follow.

The community has told us that there is a high level of satisfaction with HPL and that there is strong alignment with the values we are committed to as a public library. We also learned that we could do a better job of informing people about our services and that there are groups that we could better serve. As we continue to improve our service hours, programs and spaces we will focus on breaking down barriers to use. We will also focus on improving access to collections, in particular our selection of eBooks.

As we strive toward increasing our positive impact, the Library Board expects that we will continually work towards measuring our value and basing service decisions on research and collective impact. We will meet new priorities by shifting current resources and using technology and process changes to improve how we do our work. Staff will use the annual business planning process as a way to identify new opportunities to meet the Board's priorities.

The Board is proud that HPL is an internationally recognized innovative leader. HPL will continue to adopt new technologies and seek out new services and partnerships to more effectively serve our communities. Through these priorities we will continue to be forward-looking, responsive, and accountable.

i i <https://canurb.org/wp-content/uploads/FINAL-Signpost-200-Sept-28-2020.pdf>

ii <https://redbook.hpl.ca/redbook>

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Dawna Wark, Director of Public Services - Branches
Lisa Weaver, Director of Collections and Program Development
Subject: **Fines & Fees Policy (2nd Review) - DW - Attachment #6.3**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Library Board approve the updates to this policy.

BACKGROUND:

As a result of Board directive on fines and fees received at the June 17, 2020 Board Meeting, changes have been made to the HPL Fines and Fees Policy to align with Board direction.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Fines and Fees (2nd Review)	12/10/2020	Cover Memo

Fines and Fees Policy (2nd Review)

Policy Level: Library Board

Author: Director of Public Service

Review Period: 4 Years

Approved: March 2019; December 2019; December 2020

Policy Purpose:

To ensure that staff and the public are aware and can easily access the parameters regarding fines and fees for a variety of services.

Key Point Summary:

- Fees are charged for services such as printing.
- Borrowing privileges for physical materials are suspended when an overdue limit is reached.
- Customers are notified of long overdue materials. The Library uses a collection agency to collect overdue accounts that exceed the established threshold. Accounts are not reported to credit firms.
- A summary of fines and fees is provided for the following categories:
 - Non-resident fees
 - Printing, photocopying and Makerspace fees
 - Local History & Archives image reproduction fees
 - Fines and fees are set by the Library Board as stipulated by the Public Library Act.

Definitions:

Fees are collected for some services or room rentals.

Library Materials are items that can be borrowed from the Library, such as books, DVDs, magazines or video games.

Services are resources or programs that the Library offers, such as Local History & Archives image reproduction.

Makerspace refers to the media studios and sound and photo studios that are available at many Library locations.

Policy Details:

Hamilton Public Library will not charge fines on overdue or fees on lost materials until January 1, 2022.

Customers will be notified of overdue materials via phone or email. The Library does pursue blocked overdue accounts with a collection agency. Accounts are not reported to credit firms. All fines and fees were cleared in July 2020.

Staff are encouraged to use their discretion when marking overdue items as lost and returned. Staff will refer to their Manager for extenuating and complex situations.

How to pay forward fines:

Customers can pay waived fines or fees at a service desk at any location or online. Customers can pay fines or fees on accounts, other than their own, without the card being present. However, staff may not be able to issue a receipt.

Suspension of Borrowing Privileges

Library Member accounts will be blocked from further loans when half of their loan limit is overdue. Due dates are determined by the open hours at the location where the item is checked out. If a location is open on Sundays, items checked out at that location may be due back on a Sunday. Suspensions only apply to physical borrowing. Digital collections and resources remain accessible. See [Borrowing Policy](#).

- Discovery Cards - 20 items overdue
- Inspire Cards - 3 items overdue
- Community Cards - 100 items overdue
- Reciprocal Cards - \$10 suspension limit (\$5 for Juvenile Reciprocal cards)
- Non-Resident Cards - \$50 suspension limit

Lost / Damaged Materials

Customers who book the Makerspace equipment and supplies are responsible for loss or damage and will be charged associated lost/ damaged fees.

Substitutes - Hamilton Public Library does not accept substitutes for lost or damaged material in lieu of fees for lost costs.

Interlibrary Loans - The Interlibrary Loan rate listed is the rate assigned at the time the item is determined lost or missing. Customers are responsible for the full rate charged by the lending institutions and rates are adjusted as the customer is invoiced.

The fines, fees and lost cost for items is outlined below:

Cards and other Fees

- Non-resident Card - Annual – in 2020 - \$60; 2021 - \$80; 2022 - \$100

Exceptions to Standard Fines

- Interlibrary Loan items (ILLO) - Some libraries charge for late items and customers are asked to cover the late fines.

Library Material Lost/Damaged Fees

- Interlibrary Loan* - \$25

Printing and Makerspace Fees

Printing & Photocopying:

- 3D Printing - \$0.10 per gram for filament
- Black & white - \$0.10 per page (first two copies are free with library card)
- Colour - \$0.25 per page

Vinyl Cutting

- Vinyl Cutting - \$1 per foot for vinyl
- Vinyl Printing & Cutting – cost of ink per ml + cost of material per foot
- \$0.50 per ml of ink
- \$1.50 per foot for standard vinyl
- \$3.00 per foot for premium vinyl

Cricut – cost of material per foot

- \$1.00 per foot for vinyl
- \$0.50 per sheet (cardstock)

Embroidery

- \$2 per 10,000 stitches (\$2 minimum) – thread
- \$0.50 per foot (1-foot minimum) – backing material
- Large Format Printing – cost of ink per ml + cost of material per foot
- \$0.50 per ml of ink
- \$1 per foot for Matte paper
- \$1.50 per foot for premium and photo paper

Customers are required to use Library-supplied materials for print and Makerspace services, to reduce damage to equipment. Exceptions are allowed for some items i.e. fabric for embroidery and vinyl/veneer and paper for Cricut.

New makerspace services are added from time to time. Fees for new additions will be consistent with other rates in this policy, where possible, and must cover Library costs.

Makerspace Equipment Lost/Damaged Fees

- Auxiliary items: Cables, Drumsticks, Microphone stands/SD Card - \$25
- Tripod, Video Camera/Elgato, etc. - \$90

- Speakers, BluRay Burner, USB Microphone, etc. - \$130
- Wacom tablet/Scanner, etc. - \$225
- Camera, GoPro, Drum Kit, Keyboard, Guitars, Cricut - \$500
- iMac - \$2000

Fees for loss or damage of newer equipment that is added to the Makerspace from time to time will be consistent with other rates in this policy, where possible, and must cover the cost of repair or replacement of the items.

Local History & Archives – Image Reproduction Fees

- Non-Commercial Use - \$20/image (300 DPI JPEG); \$30/image (600 DPI TIFF)
- Commercial Use - \$40/image (300 DPI JPEG); \$50/image (600 DPI TIFF)

Local History & Archives - Additional Fees

- New Digital Image - \$20 per scanned image
- Rush Orders (2 business days)
- 1-5 images: \$20/per order
- 6-20 images: \$50/order
- 21+ images: \$100/order

Local History & Archives – Shipping Fees

- Within Canada - \$5/order
- International - \$15/order

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
Tony Del Monaco, Director of Finance & Facilities
Subject: **Multi Year Business Plan & 2021 Goals (2nd Review) - PT/TD - Attachment #7.1**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Hamilton Public Library Board approve the Multi-Year Business Plan Report for submission to the City of Hamilton.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

As our primary funder, the Hamilton Public Library works closely with the City of Hamilton in preparing our annual budget request. The Multi-Year Business Plan is one requirement of that process.

BACKGROUND:

This document is being brought before the Board for final approval. A reminder that this is part of the City process. The Library Board has its internal annual goal setting and performance review process that could build additional detail into our plans for 2021.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
2021 Multi-Year Business Plan	12/11/2020	Cover Memo

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Library Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
 Tony Del Monaco, Director of Finance & Facilities
Subject: **Hamilton Public Library 2021 Multiyear Business Plan (2nd Review)**

Purpose Statement.....	2
Outcome/Mandate(s).....	2
Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic	3
Current Working Assumptions.....	3
1. 1st Priority Supporting the Emergency Response	3
2. Solidarity with the City of Hamilton	3
3. Pandemic will not be a Brief Disruption, Phased Reopening	3
4. New Measures in Place for Reopening	3
5. Rapid Shift to Online	4
6. Taking Care of Staff and Proactively Helping the Community	4
7. Pivoting to a New Normal.....	4
HPL REOPENS - Principles.....	4
1. Protection of Public Health.....	4
2. Universal Design and Focus on the Vulnerable Sector	4
3. Maintenance of HPL Facilities and Assets	4
4. Community Priorities and Partnerships	4
5. Economic Recovery	5
6. Health, Well-Being and Productivity	5
7. Legal or Regulatory Requirements	5
8. Resource Availability.....	5
Long-Term Trends	5
1. Disruptive Change & Resilience.....	5
2. Funding Constraints.....	5
3. Role of Public Library and the Importance of Partnerships	5
4. Increasing Importance of Digital Content	5
5. Challenge of Network Security & Complex Intellectual Property Landscape.....	6
Initiatives in 2021	6
New Strategic Plan – To Support the Recovery	6
Responding to the COVID-19 Pandemic.....	6

Progressive Steps if the Pandemic Worsens Locally	6
Facility Renewal.....	8
Expanding Library Service Hours.....	9
Expanding Access to Quality Library Collections, Resources and Programs	9
Expanding our Reach and Reducing Barriers	11
Advancing Community Priorities Through Partnerships	12
Advancing Culture and Inclusion.....	12
Setting up our Staff for Success.....	13
Major Initiatives for 2022 to 2024	14

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The Hamilton Public Library (HPL) provides public library service to the residents of Hamilton. Our mission statement “*Freedom to Discover*” expresses our goal as an organization creating places and services where everyone is welcome regardless of background. In the execution of our mission the Library Board has adopted the following core values to shape both how we conduct our business and what services we provide:

- **Intellectual Freedom** – Provide equitable access to and support for knowledge and creativity.
- **Inclusiveness** – Support inclusion by creating trusted services and spaces that welcome everyone.
- **Innovation** – Anticipate and respond to changing needs and technology.
- **Respect** – Support the value and dignity of all individuals.
- **Accountability** – Ensure that library services remain relevant and vital and that resources are managed effectively and ethically.

OUTCOME/MANDATE(S)

In February 2018 the Library Board adopted three strategic priorities that provides direction for the period 2018-2021. Those priorities are:

- **A Community Beacon** - The Hamilton Public Library will be a source of pride in the community. The library system will act as a unifying force by welcoming everyone. Our physical and digital spaces will be inviting and accommodating. We will be a leader in fostering community engagement and participation.
- **Relevant and Responsive** - The Hamilton Public Library will continue to advance core library values as we embrace our evolving role in supporting access and literacy. We will support people in their lifelong learning journey by helping them thrive today as they prepare for tomorrow. We will maintain strong physical collections as we grow digital services. We will be a national library leader, working collaboratively to create policies and agreements that ensure access to intellectual property in all formats.
- **A Learning and Innovative Organization** - The Hamilton Public Library will continuously seek new ways to assist the learning and growth of all individuals. The library will support staff to be engaged in their roles and in the library profession. We will provide staff with opportunities to continually enhance their skills and develop new competencies, so they can meet changing technology and information needs. We will focus on ensuring we reduce barriers to using our services as we promote awareness of the Library in the communities we serve.

As we strive toward increasing our positive impact, the Library Board expects that we will continually work towards measuring our value and basing service decisions on evidence and collective impact. We will meet new priorities by shifting current resources and using technology and process changes to improve how we do our work. The Board is proud that HPL is an internationally recognized innovative leader. HPL will continue to adopt new technologies and seek out new services and partnerships to more effectively serve our communities.

Although the way public library service is delivered continues to evolve, the core values and mission of the public library remains highly relevant. Nurturing the love of reading, advancing literacy, preserving the past, supporting lifelong learning, reducing social isolation, advancing intellectual freedom, providing equitable access to information, ideas and technology remain core to the mission of the public library.

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The onset of the public health emergency in March 2020 has resulted in an organization wide effort to ensure that HPL responds effectively to support residents and public health. In the first weeks of the pandemic, staff worked with the Library Board to identify **Working Assumptions for the Rest of 2020**. Those assumptions were first reviewed by the Library Board at the April 15, 2020 meetingⁱ.

CURRENT WORKING ASSUMPTIONS

In the first weeks of the pandemic, HPL staff and the Library Board developed a number of working assumptions for 2020, to inform our decision making and to communicate to staff and residents how HPL would operate during the pandemic.

1. 1ST PRIORITY SUPPORTING THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

HPL's highest priority during the emergency needs to be supporting the City's and Public Health's response, assisting with relief efforts and preparing to assist with the recovery.

2. SOLIDARITY WITH THE CITY OF HAMILTON

We will follow direction and advice from Public Health and ensure our decisions align with the City of Hamilton's. Doing otherwise would cause confusion and would not support public safety.

3. PANDEMIC WILL NOT BE A BRIEF DISRUPTION, PHASED REOPENING

When we can reopen will depend on how effective mitigation efforts are, the amount of testing that happens and the state of the pandemic in Hamilton and other places. The likely timeline we will be following is a carefully phased reopening from June to September 2020, with enhanced restrictions in place well into 2021. The Ontario Government has released a *Framework for Reopening our Province*ⁱⁱ. The restart of the economy will be gradual, the restart phases will be accessed every two (2) to four weeks (4). After each phase, depending on progress being made, we need to be prepared for a continuation of the existing measures, further relaxing of restrictions, or step back to more restrictions. HPL will follow a similar approach, aligned with steps taken by the City of Hamilton.

4. NEW MEASURES IN PLACE FOR REOPENING

When we do reopen, we will need to have in place physical distancing and enhanced cleaning and other measures to ensure we minimize the risk that our spaces become a vector of virus spread.

These measures will need to remain in place until well in 2021. Some measures, such as enhanced cleaning, will likely be beneficial to continue after the pandemic threat has passed. With a limited ability to do in person programming we will need to re-direct some staffing resources.

5. RAPID SHIFT TO ONLINE

After supporting the response to COVID-19, HPL needs to focus on enhancing online services, support and staff development.

6. TAKING CARE OF STAFF AND PROACTIVELY HELPING THE COMMUNITY

Our intention is to minimize staff layoffs during the emergency. We are focused on keeping staff working productively so we can maintain our dedicated staff and ensure as an organization we can stay focused on being a positive force in the emergency response and the recovery. Depending on the duration and other changing circumstances HPL will adjust as needed. We will continue to work closely with the City of Hamilton and CUPE 932 to ensure we minimize negative personal and organizational effects of laying off staff.

7. PIVOTING TO A NEW NORMAL

HPL needs to look at the COVID-19 crisis as a turning pointⁱⁱⁱ. As an organization, our ability to adapt to changes brought on by the pandemic will be critical to maintaining our support after the public health emergency passes. HPL will need to work with the City and other partners to support the economic recovery process.

HPL REOPENS - PRINCIPLES

During the spring the Library Board approved HPL's phased reopening plan that was closely shaped after the City of Hamilton's plan but carefully adapted to apply to HPL's context. The framework is guided by the following principles:

1. PROTECTION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The health of residents and HPL staff continues to be our highest priority. We will provide opportunities to maintain safe physical distance from others and follow good public health and occupational safety practices when reopening Library facilities and restarting programs and services.

2. UNIVERSAL DESIGN AND FOCUS ON THE VULNERABLE SECTOR

The principles of *Universal Design*^{iv} will inform our approach to ensure our services are provided as barrier free as possible. We will prioritize providing access to technology and learning supports to those most in need.

3. MAINTENANCE OF HPL FACILITIES AND ASSETS

We will consider which facilities and assets require maintenance or other actions to support Library business and operations.

4. COMMUNITY PRIORITIES AND PARTNERSHIPS

We will prioritize the services most valued and needed by the community. We will work with trusted partners to ensure our services complement their efforts. We will strive to provide informed referrals to those seeking information or assistance.

5. ECONOMIC RECOVERY

We will prioritize Library services and activities that contribute to the economic recovery of the City and the community. We will focus on supporting small businesses, job seekers and community members seeking information about supports and services available for them to help with their recovery. We will provide free online learning opportunities and supports (including technical support) to advance educational and skills advancement.

6. HEALTH, WELL-BEING AND PRODUCTIVITY

We will consider the health, well-being and productivity of employees when determining the most suitable location for them to do their best work. Through all reopening stages, staff will work remotely to support Hamilton residents. We will use specialized teams to maximize productivity and minimize staff exposure to other HPL staff members as we rapidly adapt our service model in response to COVID-19.

7. LEGAL OR REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

We will consider whether a municipal service or activity supports a legal or regulatory obligation of HPL or the City.

8. RESOURCE AVAILABILITY

We will consider the availability of resources such as staff, physical and financial resources, Personal Protective Equipment and more when making decisions. We assume a tight funding environment for 2020 and 2021 and beyond. Except for non-levy funding, any emergency expenditures we incur in response to COVID-19 will need to be self-funded by savings we accrue through service restrictions. Any loss in fee revenue will need to be offset by cost savings.

LONG-TERM TRENDS

While developing the 2018-2021 Strategic Plan the Library Board adopted [Meeting User Needs IV](#) which identified **five major trends** that need to be factored into long term planning .

1. DISRUPTIVE CHANGE & RESILIENCE

With future disruptive changes ahead, libraries will need to continue to focus on enhancing our ability to adapt. The health of our organization will be dependent upon us remaining relevant and vital to the lives of residents and to communities we serve.

2. FUNDING CONSTRAINTS

There will be significant competition for funding. Operating budgets will continue to be constrained and accessing sufficient capital funding to maintain all our facilities will be an ongoing challenge.

3. ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARY AND THE IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIPS

Public libraries are uniquely positioned to contribute to the health, education and prosperity of the communities we serve. To accomplish this, we must continue to develop successful partnerships and actively participate in broader community initiatives.

4. INCREASING IMPORTANCE OF DIGITAL CONTENT

The trends toward the increasing importance of digital content and growing competition from the private sector to provide access to it will continue. The circulation of physical books will remain a

core service and the unique local content held and made accessible by HPL will become increasingly important.

5. CHALLENGE OF NETWORK SECURITY & COMPLEX INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY LANDSCAPE

Network security, privacy and intellectual property issues will become more challenging. With content we control, we have an opportunity to model best practices that facilitate effective sharing that creates the maximum benefit to society.

INITIATIVES IN 2021

NEW STRATEGIC PLAN – TO SUPPORT THE RECOVERY

In 2018 the Library Board adopted its current [Strategic Plan](#). That plan was built on the success of previous plans. During the pandemic, HPL has had to rapidly adapt its service model to current circumstances. In 2021 we will commence the development of our next plan, which will focus on increasing HPL's relevance and positive impact in the years ahead. The pandemic has highlighted the obstacles and challenges many people face in our community.

Key community challenges which impact the Library's mission and service delivery are:

- Inadequate literacy skills in all age groups but especially youth
- The digital divide, access to technology, connectivity and the skills to function safely and successfully online
- Quality of life for all and challenges with food and housing insecurity
- Social isolation and individual alienation, particularly with older adults
- Increasing welcome and support for newcomers in our community
- Creating an inclusive community that is enriched by mutual understanding and empathy
- Lack of knowledge in local history and especially an understanding of our Indigenous communities

As HPL develops a forward-thinking vision for Library service in the future, we will work with other groups and organizations serving Hamilton. HPL is committed to complementary programs and services so that the library is a positive force in better coordination and navigation of services in our community.

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Since March 2020, HPL focused its organizational assets to position the Library as a constructive force during the public health emergency by helping individuals and the community get through this crisis successfully. As HPL focuses on our emergency response we are laying the foundation for our organization's role in the post-COVID recovery period. After only offering online services in Phase 1, HPL has gradually restored most core services safely with public health precautions in place. In person learning programs and other events have moved to being offered online. In 2021 we will build on this solid foundation to provide as much support we can to the community, provided we can do it safely, being mindful of available resources.

PROGRESSIVE STEPS IF THE PANDEMIC WORSENS LOCALLY

Should the pandemic worsen locally, HPL has identified progressively restrictive steps HPL will employ should circumstances warrant.

Note – as the understanding of COVID-19 improves and other changes happen, our plan will be

updated based on guidance from the City and Public Health.

PHASE 3 STEPS

In all Steps the COVID-19 precautions are in place including reduced capacity, enforcing PPE and physical distancing, enhanced cleaning and HVAC modifications.

A. Restrictions Based on Local Capacity only

Branch specific length of stay restrictions based on local computer capacity.

B. Red-Control Phase - System-wide Two (2) Hours Daily Recommended Time Limit

2-hour recommended maximum daily duration of visits. This is a guideline, except where capacity is locally exceeded, then it will be enforced. Discourage eating and drinking in the library.

C. Grey-Lockdown Phase

HPL has identified additional restrictions that will be put in place should Hamilton be moved to the Grey-Lockdown Phase by the Ontario government.

Operating budget

We will continue to ensure operating funds are used effectively to maximize our impact and relevance to the community. We will work within the 2021 operating budget while we plan for the 2022-2024 budgets that meet the City of Hamilton's budget targets as closely as possible. As we continue to strive to expand our impact by using existing resources, we will identify cost effective, high-impact programs for City Council to consider. While we have restrictions in place, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, HPL will use the gapping of vacant library positions and other cost saving measures to ensure we play our part in helping the City of Hamilton overcome fiscal challenges facing all levels of government during the pandemic.

Revenue Diversification

We will continue providing the Board with an annual report that highlights alternative sources of funding we received in the previous year. This will include fees, donations and special grant funding. We will continue to focus on ways we can supplement our funding consistent with our vision and values as an organization. In the medium-term HPL will be focused on contributing to the economic recovery of residents and the City and helping create a more inclusive prosperity. We will work with the broader Canadian library community and allies to advocate for a fairer and more sustainable funding systems in Canada and Ontario for municipalities like the City of Hamilton.

Metrics and Business Intelligence

HPL's robust metrics reporting system continues to inform the Library's decision making. In 2020 as HPL began its phased reopening, it shifted to a weekly dashboard from a monthly. This has helped HPL management confirm effective resource deployment and is looking at patterns of usage on a frequent basis. As 2021 unfolds the weekly dashboard will be monitored closely. In 2020 HPL rapidly shifted to a cloud-based customer support system called FreshDesk to provide support for AskHPL. With new visibility, AskHPL Information Services allowed us to better understand, plan and improve the service. In 2021 we will be building on FreshDesk by implementing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) System to better manage our partnerships and program development effectively.

FACILITY RENEWAL

In early 2019 the 5th version of the *Facilities Master Plan*^v was approved by the Library Board. HPL has made great progress at bringing all facilities up to current library and accessibility standard. We will continue to incorporate future capital maintenance costs into our Facilities Master Plan and long-term planning. Here is a list of 2021 major capital projects:

Carlisle

We appreciate the generous donation of the TD Bank building in Carlisle. In 2020 a capital budget was approved by the Board and designs for the renovation have now been completed. The renovation is expected to be tendered later this year after a pre-qualification screening for prospective bidders. An expected opening of the new location is mid-2021.

Greensville

Work on the much-anticipated project is now well underway and the new library is taking shape. Construction is expected to last the rest of this year and we are anticipating that we will be able to move into our new space in Q1/2 2021.

Mount Hope

In September 2019 the Library Board approved use of \$75,000 from Library Reserves to undertake a feasibility study for a new or renovated branch that would address accessibility issues and provide for long-term sustainability at that location. The original plan to undertake the feasibility study in conjunction with the City may need to be revised as City plans for the site may change.

Parkdale

Construction of the new Parkdale branch by Indwell is nearing completion. The branch will have good street presence on Parkdale and provide core library services to the community. The partnership enables HPL to offer service in the Parkdale neighbourhood while avoiding a large capital cost. In 2020, capital budget funding of \$250,000 was approved and 50% of the operating budget enhancement was also approved (\$145,000) with the remaining 50% (\$144,000) identified as an operating budget enhancement in 2021. The branch will open in Q1/Q2 2021.

Valley Park

Construction is on track at Valley Park. This major project includes a new 11,500 sq. ft. library and renovations to City Recreation space. In the interim, we are operating out of a nearby temporary location at 1050 Paramount Dr while construction takes place. Construction is expected to last well into 2021 and we may be in a position to move in late in the year provided we stay on track. We would like to thank the Heritage Green Community Trust for their generous contribution of \$1.25 million to the project that has allowed us to incorporate two (2) 1,500 sq. ft. community rooms that can be combined together into one large space.

EXPANDING LIBRARY SERVICE HOURS

Providing residents, in all parts of the City, with a strong base of consistent service will be built on in 2021.

END OF 2020 SERVICE HOURS

Location		M	T	W	T	F	S	S
Group 1								
Central	Red Hill							
Barton	Sherwood	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am –	-
Concession	Terryberry	– 9 pm	– 9 pm	– 9 pm	– 9 pm	– 6 pm	5 pm	
Dundas	Turner Park							
Kenilworth	Waterdown							
Group 2								
Ancaster	Stoney Creek	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am –	-
Binbrook	Valley Park	– 6 pm	– 6 pm	– 6 pm	– 6 pm	– 6 pm	5 pm	
Locke	Westdale							
Saltfleet								
Group 3								
Bookmobile	Greensville	-	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am	10 am –	-
Carlisle	Lynden		– 6 pm	– 6 pm	– 6 pm	– 6 pm	5 pm	
Freelton	Mount Hope							

Building on the end of 2020 Library Service hours in 2021 we will do the following:

- Closely monitor capacity, feedback, and usage patterns
- Prioritize consistency and simplicity to avoid confusion
- The new Parkdale branch will open with Group 1 hours
- Investigate the restoration of Sunday service
- Expand evening hours in Group 2 locations
- Restore *Rural Extended Access* at Freelton, Lynden and expand to Carlisle and Greensville after construction projects are complete
- Respond to other critical needs as they emerge

EXPANDING ACCESS TO QUALITY LIBRARY COLLECTIONS, RESOURCES AND PROGRAMS

Community Collections via Extension Services

Some of HPL's good quality discarded materials are now available in local Little Free Libraries, Food Banks and on the Bookmobile. These items include stickers which indicate the item is for reading and sharing and is a sample of what can be borrowed from HPL with a free library card.

Borrow by Mail

The library is working on a pilot for senior members to be able to access holds through the postal service.

eContent Advocacy

Thank you to the community and council for continued support and advocacy on behalf of Canadian Libraries with the national eContent access campaign. The next One eRead Canada / Un livre Canada-wide title for January 2021 is *Vi* available in English and French.

Internet Archives: Open Library

Working with the Internet Archives (IA) the library has launched its Open Library collection. Future projects include providing access to a low vision collection and growing our archival content on IA.

Local History and Archives (LHA)

Working with the Internet Archives and reviewing a Digital Asset Management Plan we are working to develop a strategy to support an acceleration of the digitization of key collections. Staff are currently developing a plan to display artifacts from the Terryberry family, including family tombstones that were donated to us. We continue to explore how to celebrate local landmarks and residents, by recognizing individuals that have made a local impact in our collection, branches and online.

Learning at HPL

The library has launched daily 1:1 tutoring via Brainfuse in English and French. This service includes job seeker support with 1:1 resume and cover letter reviews and job and interview coaching.

Discover at Home

We provide offline options for learners of all ages and educators to use in the classroom and at home, with activities, practice tests and flashcards are available.

Reading Programs

The library continued to celebrate readers, reading and writing this year in many ways. We continue to host a Writer-In-Residence in partnership with McMaster and celebrate writers with the Power of the Pen and Short Works Prizes. Annual reading program celebrations virtually will include Summer Reading Club, Hamilton Reads and Telling Tales festivals.

Digital Literacy

Navigating the digital landscape is even more important as people's lives moved online during the pandemic. The library has launched several technology certificates and learning opportunities including: Cisco Learning Academy, TEDx and coding workshops which will continue to develop into 2021.

Google IT Support Certificate Scholarship

Working with Google, HPL provides free continuing education opportunities to 100 Hamiltonians, over two years, to obtain an IT support certificate to prepare them for an entry level technology career. 100 individuals participated in 2019- 2020 with 60 graduates to-date. Talks are underway with Google about the potential of continuing to offer the program in 2021.

Computers for Success Canada

Eight minority targeting internship positions were made possible through a Government of Canada grant managed by Computers for Success Canada. The internship will provide youth graduates of the Google IT support certificate the opportunity to apply their acquired experience.

City School by Mohawk

HPL continues to grow its partnership with Mohawk College to offer a wider selection of free college credit programs. City School was delivering programs at Hamilton Central Library and Red Hill Branch but has moved to virtual programming in 2020. For 2021, the library and City School will continue to provide other wrap around services to students such as device and internet access, in-person help with technology and basic technology training to assist students making a smooth transition to online learning. HPL is also participating on the Stewardship Committee for City School Challenge 2025 initiative. The initiative is building demand-driven workforce development in Hamilton. It aims to bridge the gap between employers' needs and people's education to support

access to meaningful employment, reduce poverty, and enhance opportunity. The committee champions the initiative to build momentum and advance collective priorities as well as recruiting people and ideas for insights and collaboration.

EXPANDING OUR REACH AND REDUCING BARRIERS

Virtual Branch

HPL's virtual branch continues to be updated with new content daily. Members have access to newspapers and magazines from around the world in various languages. Movies, ebook and eaudio content as well as research databases to support learning and pleasure reading, watching and listening for all ages. Content is accessible both online and for download.

The virtual branch now also offers a chat service for members during the library's open hours. Members can connect directly with a team member who can help access the services, collections, provide research support and with community connections.

Fine Free

The library removed all fines and fees for youth materials permanently and adult fines and fees until December 2021. The library will continue to explore ways to continue to remove barriers for members to access services and collections at the library.

Library Membership Growth

Staff will continue to look for ways to ensure that we are able to increase the number of residents that benefit from our services. Currently we have over 160,000 active customers (people who have a library card and have used the library in the last 2 years). That represents 27.7% of the City's population. Our goal is to reach 35% by 2025. One area of emphasis is ensuring students have active cards and are using HPL to advance their studies.

Lending Devices and Data

Access to the internet and basic technology represents a challenge to a lot of people and families especially as more services and learning moves online. The library continues to prioritize efforts to provide access to computers and the internet by updating technology and expanding the number of devices and length of time available to members to access technology. The library is also looking at lending out devices with free internet to members in need. Working with partners such as City School by Mohawk, Boys and Girls Club and other local organizations, the library will ensure that these devices and services reach the most people in need.

Wi-Fi Improvements

HPL is reviewing existing HPL Wi-Fi coverage and quality of the service to improve the service and add new features like push notification, new items arrival, hold item notification, COVID 6 feet distancing alert, etc. The library is undertaking a few pilot initiatives to test numerous Wi-Fi solutions to improve free internet access and provide quality Wi-Fi service to Hamilton residents in and around HPL branches. The library is also working in collaboration with the City of Hamilton's Chief Digital Officer to investigate solar-powered cellular solutions to increase the external Wi-Fi coverage range while exploring broader opportunities for connectivity.

Public Computers

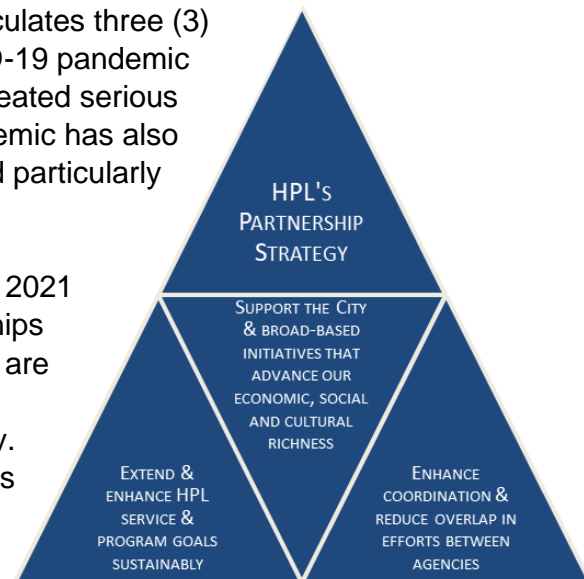
The library is upgrading all public computers, including monitors, privacy screens and updated windows 10 and office software. With half the public computer inventory in use due to physical distancing, it provides an opportunity for the library to stagger the replacement over a few years starting with 250 new devices in 2020 and 2021 and the rest of the 400+ devices in 2022.

ADVANCING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

The Hamilton Public Library [Partnership Policy](#) articulates three (3) core reasons we engage in partnerships. The COVID-19 pandemic has been both a public health emergency and has created serious disruptions to many parts of our economy. The pandemic has also brought major challenges to education in general and particularly affected already vulnerable families.

HPL has a long history of successful partnerships. In 2021 and beyond we will be looking to engage in partnerships that help people get through these difficult times. We are looking to work with others to support educational success, personal wellbeing and economic prosperity. With such great need and serious financial challenges facing governments at all levels, HPL wants to work with other organizations that are focused on working together to make meaningful impacts. A

key part of our strategy is our work on the **Red Book Hamilton**^{vi}. The Hamilton Public Library now manages the Red Book, a Hamilton community resource database. HPL has taken on this commitment because we want to ensure there is a comprehensive and up-to-date source of information about services and supports available to residents of Hamilton. The site includes both governmental and non-governmental information. To further the impact of this work, HPL is making the data in the Red Book available for free to support things like: Specialized resource lists for target groups, providing the underlying data for the *Chalmers App*^{vii} to support people experiencing homelessness.



The *Our Future Hamilton (OFH)*^{viii} initiative articulated a positive long-term community vision for our City. The six (6) core themes identified in that vision resonate with HPL's vision and program. In the last several years HPL has participated in OFH events. With the cancellation of the annual summit due to COVID-19, HPL looks forward to advancing this initiative post pandemic. For the past several years HPL has had a successful partnership with the City's Xperience Annex. Xperience Annex works with youth to understand their needs and create pathways to community services and employment. Due to COVID there is a pause in the Youth Navigator being onsite at Central.

ADVANCING CULTURE AND INCLUSION

Urban Indigenous Strategy

We look forward to continued work with UIS as we work towards the Calls to Action in both the UIS and Truth and Reconciliation. The library has submitted a 5-year work plan to the UIS and Haudenosaunee Development Institute for their consideration and recommendations.

Civic Museums

In addition to working with the Museum teams at the City on the Library Card partnership, the library is actively working with the Museum to plan for the City's 175 celebrations. The library also continues to work with a group of citizens who support the city as they plan for the future of the City's Culture and Tourism Division regarding a City of Hamilton Museum as directed by City Council.

CityLAB

HPL is collaborating with Hamilton-area post-secondary faculty and students on a CityLAB initiative to consider how to engage members who choose or do not have access to programs online.

City Parks and Recreation

Working with Parks and Recreation the library will be promoting 175 Things to Do in Hamilton in 2021.

McMaster University and McMaster Library

HPL partners with McMaster in multiple ways, including in the annual Writer in Residence. HPL is a key partner in two national research initiatives led by McMaster Researchers, one explores the effectiveness of digital literacy programs and services in the public library and the other is exploring strategies to keep seniors socially engaged and developing.

Community Research Platform

In collaboration with the Faculty of Social Sciences at McMaster University, HPL is developing a conceptual community research platform to support current and future Community-Based Participatory Research initiatives. The platform will formalize the partnership and support these initiatives, providing McMaster faculty and researchers with access to the community via the Library; in turn, the Library benefits from the scholarship to inform decision-making about our programs and services and to contribute to demonstrating the Library's social impact .

Ongoing local community partnerships with BIAs and Farmer's Markets

We strive to become a visible presence in the community at Farmer's Markets across the City promoting library services and programs along with food literacy and are actively engaging with BIAs for opportunities to celebrate Hamilton's 175.

SETTING UP OUR STAFF FOR SUCCESS

Serving communities that are facing rapid change requires that we develop responsive staff training. Our committed staff will be equipped to meet this challenge because we will continue into 2021 to create adaptable training to meet theirs and the community's needs.

HPL's management and staff have been continuing the work on our internal staff development programs and added several to address specific pandemic challenges:

- Roll-out of MS Teams for collaborative and remote work, and supporting online programs
- Adoption of FreshDesk and FreshCaller for AskHPL Information Services

As we continue to respond to meet the needs of the "new normal" our staff development will have to respond. HPL will continue to employ new technology and process improvements to meet community needs and increase our internal capacity without expanding our overall staffing complement.

Gender Identity and Expression Protocol Training City of Hamilton

We are hoping to have half of the system trained by the end of 2021 (excluding library pages who will be participating in a modified version of this training in 2022).

Workplace Mental Health Leadership Certificate

HPL is certifying managers and coordinators with the goal to have all staff at those job levels certified by the end of 2022.

MAJOR INITIATIVES FOR 2022 TO 2024

Translating the vision articulated in our new strategic plan into operational activities will be a major focus of the years 2022 to 2024. Ensuring we maximize our impact by shifting existing resources to areas of new demand will remain our focus. Specific initiatives that we anticipate from 2022 to 2024 include the following:

Supporting the Recovery

As our community gets to the other side of the COVID-19 pandemic, HPL will work with trusted partners to support residents, students, small businesses and job seekers to move forward in their learning and economic prospects.

Expanding Service in a Sustainable Way

Library service hours following the pandemic closure, were standardized system wide with branches being open Monday to Friday, 10 am- 6 pm and Saturday 10 am - 5pm. Limited evening service hours were introduced at our largest locations (Central, Dundas, Red Hill, Terryberry and Turner Park) and at locations identified as needing increased access to technology, Wifi and space (Barton, Concession, Kenilworth, Sherwood, and Waterdown).

As the pandemic restrictions relax because of public health guidance that the risk of the pandemic is receding, HPL will look to provide as much support to the community as we sustainably can do. We will align with funding available and work towards relatively consistent expanded service hours system wide. If *Evening Study Hours* from 9 pm to 11 pm at selected locations are unable to restart in 2021 we will also investigate this in 2022. We will look for opportunities to work with strategic partners to support learning in the evening hours.

New Collective Agreement

In February 2017 a four-year collective agreement for the period 2017-2020 was approved by the Library Board. A new Collective Agreement will need to be in place for 2021 that is fair to staff while the organization remains focused on realizing our mission. We will continue to use innovation to create capacity while at the same time ensuring we empower staff to make a difference. We will continue to focus on retraining existing staff to meet new service needs while we make every effort to use attrition to contain staffing costs as required by budgets.

Central Library – Local History & Archives

The final phase of Central Renovations is the 3rd Floor that includes making Local History & Archives more visible. Planning the scope of that project and its relationship to a potential City of Hamilton Museum will require significant planning and consultations. The planning process for the LHA renovations will be an ongoing effort.

Bookmobile Replacement

HPL has 2 bookmobiles. A replacement program and forecast needs to be put in place. Consideration should be given to requirements and need for an additional vehicle or potentially other forms of service delivery (i.e. electric vehicles, smaller vehicle, alternative service models).

Digital Technology Initiatives

We will continue to pursue digital technology improvements to streamline our services and enhance service offerings. We will continue to add new and emerging technologies to our services.

Planning for Future Facilities

As HPL begins to finish the major facility renewal that began over 10 years ago, the Library Board will work with the City on longer term plans to address services in areas lacking resources and

areas with increasing population growth. We will look for opportunities to expand our services in areas where residents need more support.

-
- i <https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/MeetingView.aspx?MeetingID=84&MinutesMeetingID=109&doctype=Agenda>
 - ii <https://files.ontario.ca/mof-framework-for-reopening-our-province-en-2020-04-27.pdf>
 - iii <https://blog.hypeinnovation.com/how-crisis-driven-innovation-can-help-your-organization>
 - iv Universal Design - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_design
 - v <https://www.hpl.ca/sites/default/files/19-01-FMP.pdf>
 - vi <https://redbook.hpl.ca/redbook>
 - vii <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/chalmers-1.5734230>
 - viii <https://www.hamilton.ca/city-initiatives/priority-projects/our-future-hamilton-community-vision>

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Tony Del Monaco, Director of Finance & Facilities
Subject: **2021 Operating Budget (2nd Review) - TD - Attachment #7.2**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Hamilton Public Library Board approve for submission to the City of Hamilton the 2021 Operating Budget at an increase of \$459,000 or 1.5%.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

HPL has received direction from City Council for a 2.0% increase with respect to the 2021 operating budget.

The 2021 operating budget is at a 1.5% increase which would result in a \$459,000 increase. The net levy municipal contribution would be \$32,030,050.

The 1.5% increase includes a 0.5% increase for the new Parkdale branch that will be operating out of leased space on the ground floor of Indwell Community Housing's new project on the corner of Parkdale and Melvin Avenues. As part of last year's 2020 budget, the Library brought forward an operating budget enhancement request of \$289,000 split between the 2020 and 2021 budget years.

The Board passed a Statement on Service Continuity, committing the library to maintaining investment in five key areas. Those key areas are: Collections; Facilities; Technology; Staff; and Programs and Services. A 1.5% budget increase allows the Library to achieve these priorities and meet customer service demands.

BACKGROUND:

The following provides a recent history of the budget direction that has been received from City Council along with subsequent submissions by the Library Board:

	<u>Direction</u>	<u>Library</u>
2011	2.0%	0.7%
2012	0.0%	1.0%
2013	0.0%	0.0%
2014	0.0%	0.2%
2015	-----	1.5%
2016	1.0%	1.0%
2017	1.8%	1.8%

2018	1.5%	1.8%
2019	-----	2.4%
2020	2.0%	2.5%*
2021	2.0%	1.5%*

** includes a 0.5% budget enhancement in 2020 and 2021 related to the new Parkdale library branch.*

As can be seen from past operating budget submissions, the Library has a strong track record of meeting or exceeding City Council's budget guidelines. Over the past decade, the average annual increase in HPL's operating budget has been limited to 1.3% per year.

2021 Budget Outlook:

The 2021 Operating Budget is currently at a requested municipal contribution of \$32,030,050 which is an increase of \$459,000 or 1.5% over the 2020 Operating Budget of \$31,571,050.

Attached as Table 1 to this report is a 2021 Budget Summary that provides an overview of the changes by cost category.

Employee related expenses are budgeted to increase by \$21,610. That is made up of a gross increase of \$326,770 for salaries, wages, & benefits which is being offset by the inclusion of a gapping budget of \$305,160. The salary and wage increase includes a 1.6% cost of living adjustment. Increases in employee benefit costs such as vacation pay, OMERS pension contributions, and health benefits are also included.

This year, we have added a gapping provision of \$305,160 to the staffing budget which is offsetting the salary, wage, and benefits increases. The gapping represents staffing vacancies that are expected to go unfilled for a period of time. This may occur as employees retire, leave the organization, change positions, or take temporary leaves of absences.

As part of last year's budget process, City Council approved a living wage for Library Pages. A budget enhancement of 50% of the impact was provided to the Library. To offset the impact and cover the remaining 50%, budgeted page hours have been reduced but still remain in-line with actual Page hours utilized the last several years. With our new Greensville branch nearing completion and expected to open in 2021, we will realize lease savings that has allowed us to remove \$39,000 from our lease budget. Operating costs for the new Parkdale branch have been added to the budget resulting in a slight increase of \$29,000 overall for the Building & Grounds budget. The Contractual Services budget has been increased by \$143,000. This mainly relates to a \$150,000 right-sizing of the budget related to service and maintenance contracts for various equipment across the system such as RFID gates, self check-out units, and sorters.

The Reserve/Recoveries budget is increasing by \$144,080. This is primarily related to a new dedicated reserve transfer of \$85,000 annually to the Library's Capital Enhancement Reserve. Now that many facilities have been recently updated, we now need to ensure we have dedicated funding to keep our spaces fresh and inviting. This new budget item would provide us with dedicated dollars on an annual basis to build up our reserves for future branch refreshes. Also, part of the increase (\$39,000) is related to our share of the City's property insurance recovery

allocation.

On the Revenue side, our Fees, General, & Other Grants budget has decreased by \$172,700. This is a result of several factors. First, our Fines budget has been eliminated and reduced by \$280,000. This is to reflect the permanent removal of youth fines and the suspension of all fines to the end of 2021. Second, to reflect various grants we have been receiving on a consistent basis the last several years, \$95,000 has been added to this budget line. This includes \$60,000 related to Ontario 211 funding to support our Redbook initiative and \$35,000 in various Young Canada Works grants to support youth employment. Third, lease payments for the automated teller machine at the new Carlisle branch that we have started receiving from TD Bank have also been added to the budget (\$12,300).

Our Government Grants & Subsidies budget has increased by \$47,000 which includes grant increases related to the Newcomer Learning Centre grant of \$22,000 and a \$25,000 provision for the New Horizons Grant that we have been receiving in recent years to support Seniors programming.

Attached to this report as Table 2 is a line by line detail of the 2021 operating budget changes.

Impact of Covid-19

We are expecting that Covid will have an impact on operations for most if not all of 2021. We are expecting Covid-related expenses to be about \$80,000 for the year, related to supplies for staff and the public such as hand sanitizer, gloves, sanitizing wipes & spray. We are also expecting revenues related to printer and photocopier usage to be below budget. We have not adjusted the 2021 budget for these items because we expect to be able to cover these costs with expected savings in other budget areas such as staff vacancies and programming expenses.

Parkdale Budget Enhancement

As part of last year's budget process, we submitted and were approved for a budget enhancement request for 50% of the operating costs of the new Parkdale branch. We were also approved for a \$250,000 capital budget to fit up and equip the new leased space from which we will be operating. Because the Parkdale branch was not expected to be fully operational in 2020, the operating budget enhancement was split 50/50% between the 2020 and 2021 budget years. The remaining budget enhancement of \$144,000 forms part of our 1.5% 2021 budget submission. The budget enhancement is to fund the operating costs of the new Parkdale branch. This mainly relates to staffing and security to allow the branch to be open to the public for 59 hours per week. This would also be used to cover annual lease payments. Facility operating, supplies and programming costs are also included in the enhancement request. Indwell has designed the space to Passive House standards which will keep costs for heating, hydro and cooling low compared to other sites.

We expect to be operating out of the new location in Q1/Q2 2021.

Further details on the new mini-branch include:

- Approximately 1,500 square feet
- Passive House design will be energy efficient to help keep operating costs low
- Meets space specifications as per our Library Facilities Master Plan including:
 - One-storey that meets accessibility standards.

- Designed with energy efficiency and environmental sensitivity in mind.
- Flexible space that allows for easy adaptation for future library services.
- The location of the branch is consistent with our Facilities Master Plan:
 - Located on main thoroughfare with a clearly visible entrance and street presence.
 - Located in a community with a high population cluster.
 - A walkable location for many in the community.
 - Located along and near two major bus routes (2 – Barton; 11 – Parkdale)
- Branch amenities would include:
 - Popular collection
 - Public computers
 - Free WiFi
 - Programming
 - Staffing compliment to be open 59 hours per week
 - On-site security
- The branch will complement other existing community supports and help to foster community engagement, enhance social inclusion, advance early literacy, and promote lifelong learning.

Three Year Outlook

The Library participates in the City's multi-year budgeting initiative. Operating budgets are still approved on an annual basis, however a three year forecast – in addition to the current budget year - now accompanies the annual budget. The three year forecast is for information purposes only.

We are forecasting a 2.2% to 2.3% operating budget increase in each of the next three years to maintain current levels of service and address the following key budget drivers:

- A 2.2% percent increase in employee related costs has been assumed over the three year period to cover estimated cost of living increases as well as potential increases in employee benefit costs. Starting in 2022 and in each year subsequent to that, we have included a provision for a \$50,000 to \$100,000 reduction to the level of gapping for which we are budgeting as vacancies are filled on a more regular basis.
- The Materials & Supply budget includes a modest increase to our furniture budget to allow us to better update our spaces and the furnishings within.
- Vehicle expenses includes a modest budget reduction for the anticipated purchase of new bookmobiles that would require less maintenance & repairs.
- Building and Ground shows an increase for inflationary lease costs and security contract costs.
- Small provision for Consulting services added in 2023.
- Continued increases to the equipment service & maintenance budget has been included as part of Contractual Services at \$25,000 to \$50,000 per year.
- An increased provision for reserve recoveries of between \$25,000 and \$50,000 to allow us to build reserves for future needs such as branch refreshes, digital equipment

purchases & replacements. Now that many facilities have been recently updated and planning is underway for our Carlisle and Mount Hope locations, no other branches remain unsustainable in their current condition. We now need to shift our focus to ensuring our spaces remain fresh and welcoming. To do this we would like to start building in budget increases over the near term that would provide us with dedicated dollars on an annual basis to build up our reserves for minor branch refreshes so we can continue to meet our member expectations.

- The increase in City Recoveries relate to estimated increases in direct cost allocation changes from the City and have been assumed at \$25,000 to \$50,000 per year.
- Indirect City Cost allocations have been estimated to increase by 2% inflation.
- Fees, General, & Other Grant revenues are projected to increase moderately with respect to photocopy & print revenues.

Service Hours Enhancements

Over the last several years, the Library has been addressing gaps in service hours, which was identified as a priority from our recent customer survey. Using existing budget capacity we have been able to add over 150 open hours per week. Gaps remain but cannot be addressed without an increase in budget resources. We are proposing a series of small increases above the maintenance budget. Additional increases of 1.5% and 0.4% in 2023 to 2024 respectively are currently proposed as part of the three-year forecast. Timing and cost of the service hours budget enhancements will be re-assessed post-Covid.

Attached as Table 3 to this report is the 2021 Budget summary plus a three year forecast for the 2022-2024 period.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Table 1 - 2021 Operating Budget Summary	12/9/2020	Cover Memo
Table 2 - 2021 Operating Budget Changes	12/9/2020	Cover Memo
Table 3 - Three Year Forecast	12/9/2020	Cover Memo

Table 1 - 2021 Budget Summary

	2020	2021	2021-2020	2021-2020
	Budget	Budget	Change	Change
	\$	\$	\$	%
Net Levy	31,571,050	32,030,050	459,000	1.5%
EMPLOYEE RELATED COST	22,480,920	22,502,530	21,610	0.1%
MATERIAL AND SUPPLY	3,751,280	3,751,280	-	-
VEHICLE EXPENSES	85,640	101,360	15,720	18.4%
BUILDING AND GROUND	2,524,640	2,553,660	29,020	1.1%
CONSULTING	-	-	-	-
CONTRACTUAL	1,529,710	1,672,710	143,000	9.3%
RESERVES / RECOVERIES	2,341,330	2,485,410	144,080	6.2%
COST ALLOCATIONS	241,200	236,370	(4,830)	(2.0%)
FINANCIAL	390,720	375,420	(15,300)	(3.9%)
Total Expenses	33,345,440	33,678,740	333,300	1.0%
FEES, GENERAL, & OTHER GRANTS	(554,940)	(382,240)	172,700	(31.1%)
GOVERNMENT GRANTS AND SUBSIDIES	(1,219,450)	(1,266,450)	(47,000)	3.9%
Total Revenue	(1,774,390)	(1,648,690)	125,700	(7.1%)

Table 2 - 2021 Operating Budget Changes

Category	Budget Change \$	Drivers
EMPLOYEE RELATED COST	21,610	
Salaries & Wages	248,910	1.6% COLA adjustment, step increases; staffing for Parkdale
Benefits	77,860	OMERS, Vacation Pay, Health Benefits
Gapping	(305,160)	Budget line added for vacancies
MATERIAL AND SUPPLY	-	
VEHICLE EXPENSES	15,720	
Central Fleet Charges	15,780	Charges from City for vehicle maintenance
Licenses	(60)	Charges from City
BUILDING AND GROUND	29,020	
Rent-Offices & Buildings	(20,250)	Removal of Greensville Lease; addition of Parkdale Lease
Heating Fuel	7,000	New Parkdale Branch
Hydro	6,000	New Parkdale Branch
Water & Sewer	250	New Parkdale Branch
Security	31,000	New Parkdale Branch
IP Telephony Charges	5,020	City driven change
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES	143,000	
Equipment Service & Maintenance	150,000	For RFID, Self-Check Units, Sorters, & Other Equipment
Overdue Placement Fees	(7,000)	Fines & Overdue Fees eliminated
RESERVES / RECOVERIES	144,080	
Transfer to Vehicle/ Equipment Reserve	1,410	City charge for future replacement of vehicles
City Direct Vehicle Insurance Recovery	4,610	Charges from City
City Direct Insurance Recovery	38,920	Charges from City
City Direct Facilities Recovery	14,140	Charges from City
Transfer to Capital Enhancement Reserve	85,000	Dedicated transfer to Capital Enhancement Reserve
COST ALLOCATIONS	(4,830)	
Driver Training Recovery	340	City driven cost
City Indirect Accounting Services Recovery	1,170	City driven cost
City Indirect Financial Applications Recovery	2,370	City driven cost
City Indirect Payroll Recovery	4,350	City driven cost
City Indirect Accounts Payable Recovery	160	City driven cost
City Indirect Procurement Recovery	(10,430)	City driven cost
City Indirect Budgets Recovery	(3,110)	City driven cost
City Legal Services Recovery	320	City driven cost
FINANCIAL EXPENSES	(15,300)	
Overdue Collection Fees	(15,300)	Fines & Overdue Fees eliminated
EXPENSES	333,300	
FEES, GENERAL, & OTHER GRANTS	172,700	
Fines	280,000	Youth Fines permanently eliminated; All fines currently suspended
Administration Fees	(12,300)	Lease revenue related to new Carlisle branch ATM
Third Party Contributions/ Grants	(95,000)	Young Canada Works, Ontario211 Funding
GOVERNMENT GRANTS & SUBSIDIES	(47,000)	
Federal Grants	(47,000)	Newcomer Learning Centre grant; New Horizons Grant
REVENUES	125,700	
NET LEVY	459,000	

Table 3 - Three Year Forecast

	2020	2021	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Budget	Budget	Change	Change	Change	Change
Maintenance Budget						
\$ Net Levy	31,571,050	32,030,050	459,000	710,810	739,051	732,864
% increase			1.5%	2.2%	2.3%	2.2%
EMPLOYEE RELATED COST	22,480,920	22,502,530	21,610	545,056	587,047	619,962
MATERIAL AND SUPPLY	3,751,280	3,751,280	-	5,000	5,000	10,000
VEHICLE EXPENSES	85,640	101,360	15,720	2,027	(20,000)	1,668
BUILDING AND GROUND	2,524,640	2,553,660	29,020	14,000	14,682	13,816
CONSULTING	-	-	-		15,000	
CONTRACTUAL	1,529,710	1,672,710	143,000	50,000	50,000	25,000
RESERVES / RECOVERIES	2,341,330	2,485,410	144,080	100,000	100,000	75,000
COST ALLOCATIONS	241,200	236,370	(4,830)	4,727	4,822	4,918
FINANCIAL	390,720	375,420	(15,300)	-	2,500	2,500
Total Expenses	33,345,440	33,678,740	333,300	720,810	759,051	752,864
FEES, GENERAL, & OTHER GRANTS	(554,940)	(382,240)	172,700	-	(10,000)	(10,000)
GOVERNMENT GRANTS AND SUBSIDIES	(1,219,450)	(1,266,450)	(47,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)	(10,000)
Total Revenue	(1,774,390)	(1,648,690)	125,700	(10,000)	(20,000)	(20,000)
Budget Enhancements						
SERVICE HOURS**					476,000	143,000
% increase					1.5%	0.4%
Total Budget Impact		32,030,050	459,000	710,810	1,215,051	875,864
% increase			1.5%	2.2%	3.7%	2.6%

**Timing & Cost of Service Hours Budget Enhancement to be re-assessed post-Covid.

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
Subject: **Chief Librarian Report - PT - Attachment #9.1**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Library Board receive the December 2020 Chief Librarian Report.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
December 2020 Chief Librarian Report	12/11/2020	Cover Memo

Chief Librarian Report – December 2020

Ontario Library Association (OLA) Super Conference 2021

The OLA Super Conference presents an annual opportunity for staff and Board members to learn and share important developments related to libraries. Due to COVID-19 the 2021 Super Conference which takes place between February 3 and 6 will be entirely virtual this year. We are pleased to announce that all employees and Board members will be able to participate this year. What is unique about this year, is the sessions will be recorded and will be available to watch until September. As we begin developing our new strategic plan, we will be asking people to identify the most useful sessions and encouraging staff and Board members to watch a selection of them. More information will be shared early in the new year.

<https://www.olasuperconference.ca/whats-happening/2021-schedule/>

Countdown to 2021

HPL is promoting 31 days of resources to our community. Each day members can go online and receive an activity to complete on one of our online platforms. A new online resource is featured daily.

<https://www.hpl.ca/Countdown2021>

Cable 14 Program Promotion

Visit the Library on your television. We are thankful to Cable 14 for their promotion of a variety of library programming in their daily programs.

December Weekend Reads

Each weekend in December HPL will highlight a high holds title for unlimited checkouts and no holds. Check out the title on social media and sign out via OverDrive – Libby. This a great way to work on your To Be Read list and try a new format of reading and listening.

Learning With HPL

Members now have access to CBC-Curio collections with selections from BBC and National Geographic as well. Each show includes lesson plans and content is accessible in English and French. The December Literacy calendar in addition to other learning activities are available for download.

Ontario Provincial Park Passes

Thanks to the Ontario Government the Library is looking forward to sharing access to Ontario Provincial Park passes in 2021. More information will be shared as it becomes available and once the passes arrive.

Greensville Lease – 59 Kirby Ave

City Real Estate is working on extending the lease for us at our current location at 59 Kirby Ave. We've given them instructions to extend the lease into 2021 with an option to terminate the lease with advance notice. The current lease agreement is set to expire at the end of 2020 but there is a holdover

provision that allows for the lease to continue under the same terms and conditions until an extension is negotiated.

Re-lamping Project

In the new year, the City will soon be tendering work for a re-lamping project that will re-lamp indoor light fixtures at most branches with energy efficient LED lamp technology. Initiated by the City's Office of Energy Initiatives, the goal of this project is to provide energy savings that would move the City closer towards meeting its corporate Energy Intensity and Greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

The LED lamp technology provides an excellent opportunity to reduce energy consumption as well as maintenance cost while delivering an excellent lighting quality output. The estimated annual operational savings of \$38,000 would be repaid to the City annually until estimated project costs of \$185,000 are repaid – a payback period of under 5 years.

Central Stairwell Light Fixture Replacement

HPL has asked the City to retain the services of a lighting consultant to advise on suitable replacements for the stairwell lights above the main atrium staircase at the Central library. You may have noticed that many of these lights are flickering. Maintenance on the existing fixtures is cumbersome and replacement of the bulbs cannot be easily done without closing the staircase and setting up scaffolding to repair. The lighting consultant will be providing us with suggested fixtures that would complement the aesthetic of the building as well as provide ease of maintenance in the future. A recommended option along with costing will be brought to the Board for approval in the coming months.

Canada's First Bilingual Digital Book Club

Coming soon: Canada's first bilingual digital book club led by the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC/CBUC). Simultaneous unlimited access to English and French eBook Vi by author Kim Thúy January 1-31, 2021. Brief, beautiful book focuses on the invisible strength of women and probes the refugee narrative.

Clean and Green Neighbourhood Grant at Barton

The Barton Branch has received a Clean and Green Neighbourhood grant from the City of Hamilton for \$500. This grant will go towards adding a third planter outside the front of the branch. The plan includes having volunteers from local organizations help with planting a vegetable garden, and to run library programming around it. The aim is to get this up and running for Spring 2021. Although we're hoping to connect with a local organization or school, this is still to be determined because of the pandemic. Depending on the situation, we would love to get local children and volunteers to help out and contribute to this fun outdoor neighbourhood initiative.

Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
December 2020

NOVEMBER 2020 MEDIA COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTS

Mountain resident is 1 millionth ebook borrower from Hamilton Public Library

Virtual branch borrowing up 300 per cent so far this year

By: Mark Newman, Hamilton Mountain News, October 30, 2020

Source:

<https://www.hamiltonnews.com/news-story/10235486-mountain-resident-is-1-millionth-ebook-borrower-from-hamilton-public-library/>

When Konnie Vissers borrowed the ebook [“Understanding Garden Design, The Complete Handbook for Aspiring Designers” by Vanessa Gardner Nagel](#) from the [Hamilton Public Library](#), little did she know she would be making history.

Turns out the gardening book was the one millionth ebook checked out at the library this year.

“It was a funny phone call to receive,” said the west Mountain resident, who was notified of the milestone borrowing by library officials in mid-October. “I told my sister and she thought it was hilarious because I’m always checking out library books; she said this would happen to me.”

She noted “Understanding Garden Design” was one of about 30 gardening-related ebooks she checked out, hoping to get ready for the 2021 growing season.

Vissers, who moved to Hamilton from [Mount Albert](#), north of Toronto, with her husband and two young children a year ago, said ebooks are a great way to access library services when it’s difficult to leave the house.

“With two little kids at home, it’s easy to do lots of reading in the evening while they are sleeping,” she said. “I prefer paper books, but when I’m sitting in a dark room with a child, it’s easier to do it on my iPad.”

The [University of Toronto](#) graduate student, who is studying trauma and how it affects children, said she also likes to e-borrow children’s books and audio books.

She figures she has borrowed about 100 ebooks this year.

“I read a few books a week,” she said.

Library officials presented Vissers with a gift bag to mark the one millionth ebook borrowing.

Lisa Radha Weaver, director of collections and program development at the library, noted the [coronavirus pandemic](#) has boosted ebook and other online borrowing this year.

“Our ebook circulation in some cases has gone up almost 300 per cent between the music, movies, videos, magazines, ebooks and audio books that we have,” Radha Weaver said. “Members like Konnie have been using our virtual branch 24 hours a day, seven days a week.”

Rahda Weaver noted as of late October, 1.3 million ebooks have been checked out compared to about 900,000 last year.

Borrowers use the [OverDrive /Libby](#) app to download the material.

“The virtual library allows members to access materials in a lot of different formats at their convenience in different languages from all over the world,” Rahda Weaver said.

To access the virtual branch, a library card is required.

They can be obtained at [hpl.ca](#) or at any HPL branch.

Users can access [askhpl.ca](#) to start online borrowing.

The top 10 ebook titles borrowed from the Hamilton Public Library in 2020 were:

1. “Moon of the Crusted Snow: A Novel” by Waubgeshig Rice
2. “Becoming” by Michelle Obama
3. “Where the Crawdads Sing” by Delia Owens
4. “Nine Perfect Strangers: A Novel” by Liane Moriarty
5. “Past Tense: A Jack Reacher Novel” by Lee Child

6. "The Handmaid's Tale" by Margaret Atwood
7. "The Reckoning: A Novel" by John Grisham
8. "Blue Moon: Jack Reacher Series, Book 24" by Lee Child
9. "Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone: Harry Potter Series, Book 1" by JK Rowling
10. "The Guardians: A Novel" by John Grisham

The top 10 eAudiobook titles were:

1. "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone: Harry Potter Series, Book 1" by JK Rowling
2. "You Are a Badass: How to Stop Doubting Your Greatness and Start Living an Awesome Life" by Jen Sincero
3. "Moon of the Crusted Snow: A Novel" by Waubgeshig Rice
4. "The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck: A Counterintuitive Approach to Living a Good Life" by Mark Manson
5. "The Year of Less: How I Stopped Shopping, Gave Away My Belongings, and Discovered Life Is Worth More Than Anything You Can Buy in a Store" by Cait Flanders
6. "Talking to Strangers: What We Should Know about the People We Don't Know" by Malcolm Gladwell
7. "Becoming" by Michelle Obama
8. "The Untethered Soul: The Journey Beyond Yourself" by Michael Alan Singer
9. "Where the Crawdads Sing" by Delia Owens
10. "Girl, Wash Your Face: Stop Believing the Lies About Who You Are So You Can Become Who You Were Meant to Be" by Rachel Hollis

Borrowers can set the lending time on their ebook or eAudiobook to seven, 14 or 21 days.

After the set period, the title is automatically returned.

Novel 'Boy' tells hard story of becoming a man, in Hamilton author Brent van Staalduinens new fiction

By: Jeff Mahoney, *The Hamilton Spectator*, November 5, 2020

Source:

<https://www.thespec.com/entertainment/books/opinion/2020/11/05/novel-boy-tells-hard-story-of-becoming-a-man-in-hamilton-author-brent-van-staalduinens-new-fiction.html>

Hamilton author Brent van Staalduinens, a prizewinning short story writer who also won praise for "Saints, Unexpected," his first novel, is relieved to see completed the long obstetrics on his second. It's called "Boy," and it has a story to tell aside from the story it has to tell. In fact, if I can stretch the already over-elasticized metaphor in that earlier sentence, "Boy" took so long to crown that two subsequent projects finished gestating behind him in the queue before "he" even came out, breathing, healthy and almost 300 pages long. That was at a virtual launch party in September.

Such is the early life of a book in the days of a so-called, *ahem*, *novel* coronavirus.

"Boy" was conceived — OK, that's the last on that trope, I promise — almost seven years ago as Brent's thesis for his Master of Fine Arts (creative writing) at the University of British Columbia. His thesis adviser on the book was none other than celebrated Canadian novelist, Miriam Toews.

It took some time for Brent to find a publisher. He shopped it around, found an agent, lost an agent. Finally, Dundurn Press made an offer, there was more delay getting it ready but then it was all set for publication early this year. Then COVID, and in the meantime Brent's third novel "Nothing But Life," which should have been coming out about now, got pushed to 2021.

"'Boy' really started with two images that came to me," says Brent, who works at the Hamilton Public Library. "Something just lands in the back of your brain, and Mara (a character in the book) was this guy living under a highway, a priest."

The other image was of a young man, 18, sitting on a rock, contemplating the impending collapse of his life plans.

He wrote two chapters. Then, almost without knowing it, he had written five, then six. Now “Boy” is out there in the world.

The title is the name of the main character — Boy McVeigh, a high school senior with once good grades and a promising post-secondary prospect with the Royal Military College for which he has been highly recommended. But, his supporting structures are in bad shape. His father is in jail. His older sister, Charlie, has died in a car accident. His mother, Misty, and her boyfriend, Nick, are alcoholic and negligent.

His best joy is his half-brother, baby Jay, with whom he has a beautiful, virtually parental bond. What do they say? The child is father to the man?

As the novel opens, Boy is slipping badly. Teetering even. His marks have dropped off a cliff, he is distracted and moody and awkward socially. Part of the reason is that he is sometimes heard talking to himself. Or is he? And he has injured his forehead.

In the opening scene, he is opening an envelope from the RMC to which he has applied and soon after he is sitting on a rock, just to be alone with his gloom. But Boy, it turns out, is never much alone. The ghost of his sister Charlie follows him around. Hence, the appearance that he is talking to himself. He injures his head on the rocks in the opening pages.

Author Brent has a taste in his work for the — how should I put it? — unobtrusively fantastic. Hence, the ghost in the story. And hence, the character Mara, a disgraced priest who lives under the highway and can stop time.

I say unobtrusively because Brent does not do with these agencies of the supernatural what you might expect. They are not powerful, at least not obviously so, and their texture as characters is given far more prominence than their magicalism. And the milieu in which they move is one of gritty realism, the story being set in inner-city Hamilton. They’re like the ghost in “Hamlet,” in a sense; you can take them as real or as projections of the protagonist’s conflicted soul.

“I like to think of it as genre-bending,” says Brent. Yes, there’s a vein in the marble of magic realism, but also of social realism, bildungsroman, young adult fiction and much else.

“Boy” is a fast-paced read, busy, sometimes maybe a bit too busy, but also powerful and moving, and it engages the reader with the challenge of ideas, expressed through character, choice and action, often not easily resolved.

Brent is happy it’s being received. The launch, emceed by Jamie Tenant, was a good success, attracting 70 on YouTube and 160 on Facebook. “It’s something, putting out a book during a pandemic.”

And the way it’s going, he might be doing it again in a few months with “Nothing But Life.”

As Brent notes in his John Keats quote at the beginning of the book: “O aching time! O moments big as years!”

For more, see brentvanstaalduinen.com

You can also put a hold on it at the library.

Mohawk unveils big plans for its unique approach to education

By: Fallon Hewitt, The Hamilton Spectator, November 7, 2020

Source:

<https://www.thespec.com/news/hamilton-region/2020/11/07/mohawk-unveils-big-plans-for-its-unique-approach-to-education.html>

With an eye to tackling poverty and meeting the needs of employers, Mohawk College is embarking on an ambitious project to expand its City School program in Hamilton — and also take it national.

The [Challenge 2025 project](#) turns the traditional employment model on its head.

Rather than supplying workers who selected a post-secondary program, graduated and are now looking for work, Challenge 2025 is a vision to train the workforce by finding the demand and bringing people to it by bringing education to them.

"We do think it really has the potential to change how we train people, to change the way we get people into employment and change the way we get people out of poverty," Mohawk president Ron McKerlie said during a Spectator editorial board meeting this week.

The Challenge 2025 project is a plan to "accelerate and amplify" the college's City School model, which brings education to targeted neighbourhoods through the use of satellite or mobile classrooms. The programs and courses offered are tailored to build skills for careers with employers that are partners in the program.

Having brought education to more than 500 students since its launch five years ago, Challenge 2025 aims to ramp up City School to accommodate closer to 4,000 over the next five years.

"If we're really going to make a population-level impact, if we really want to make that needle move ... we're going to have to touch thousands of lives," Jim Vanderveken, dean of the Centre for Community Partnerships and Experiential Learning at Mohawk, said during the meeting.

McKerlie said the plan differs from the supply-led education-to-work model in place at schools. Through conversations with business leaders, he said the current model has become "incredibly inefficient in the world of scarce resources."

He said the need for a new model, combined with the need to retrain parts of the workforce affected by the pandemic, make this the perfect time for Challenge 2025.

"I think the need has never been greater than it is now," he said. "We are the bridge ... between those two concepts, those two challenges, those two problems."

Roots of the project

Launched in 2015, City School was started in response to The Spectator's original [Code Red series](#) that showed poor health outcomes are strongly connected to neighbourhoods with higher rates of poverty and lower education.

Its delivery model moves post-secondary education into priority neighbourhoods. The first site was in the Eva Rothwell Centre on Wentworth Street North in the Keith neighbourhood.

Other sites have also opened at the Central Branch of the Hamilton Public Library, Mission Services and the Hamilton Regional Indian Centre. Mohawk also has a mobile classroom and a second mobile unit was added in September 2019.

With Challenge 2025, they'd also aim to open a Rapid Skills Training Centre on the Hamilton Mountain.

It would also continue the work of connecting those it serves with "life stabilization" supports such as housing, child care and transportation that would in turn help them join the workforce.

"We recognize that a conversation about education is very difficult to have with individuals who are precarious," said Vanderveken. "We need to make sure we are providing them those intensive supports initially to ensure that they are prepared to move to the next stage."

Plans for the project

Since the launch of City School, Mohawk has engaged with more than 500 students — with nearly 200 of those students having transitioned to a program at the college.

But in the next five years with Challenge 2025, they're hoping to carve the path to post-secondary education for 4,000 students and partner with at least 100 employers in the region to close gaps in the local workforce, said McKerlie.

Of those students, they're aiming to transition 3,000 of them off of income support programs such as Ontario Works and into "meaningful employment," he added.

With the demand-led focus, Vanderveken said the college has asked industry partners to identify which skill sets and "competencies" they're needing staff to have. In turn, they'll be built into the curriculum.

Some of the industry partners already on board include Maple Leaf Consumer Foods, the Hamilton-Oshawa Port Authority, ArcelorMittal Dofasco, Hamilton Health Sciences and KF Aerospace.

After a student goes through the program, the college will also continue to "support" employers and

the new hires in hopes of encouraging retention.

“Retention is really critical and in this environment, retention is a significant challenge for employers,” Vanderveken added.

The future

McKerlie said the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Canadians only “magnifies” the need for the project, pointing to the devastation of the hospitality and tourism industries.

Those that lost their jobs will need to be retrained for another job — and during that time they may need to go on social assistance to do so. The program will be able to bridge the gap for those who were not prepared for the upheaval, he added.

Vanderveken said the college believes the program has the potential to support the “restart and recovery” process in Canada to better include marginalized people — a community of potential workers employers have been unable “to tap into.”

“Our goal is to be there and to help them get retrained and get back into meaningful work,” said McKerlie.

Challenge 2025 will also look to expand its reach beyond the Hamilton region.

They’re currently looking at three partnering institutions to test the model — one in British Columbia, one in Manitoba and another in Nova Scotia.

Working alongside accounting firm Deloitte, McKerlie said they hope to eventually bring a “fact case” to the federal government on “how they fund education so that it’s more linked to job outcomes.”

“City School has proven to be a great model, so why wouldn’t we try to grow it and try to take it national,” he said.

“We see a tremendous amount of potential here,” added Vanderveken.

Hamilton councillors seeking 'balance' between spending and tax relief in 2021 budget

By: Kevin Werner, Stoney Creek News, November 12, 2020

Source:

<https://www.hamiltonnews.com/news-story/10265366-hamilton-councillors-seeking-balance-between-spending-and-tax-relief-in-2021-budget/>

Hamilton councillors have set the stage for what could be a contentious 2021 budget debate that will pit advocates for additional spending against those who want tax relief for cash-strapped residents. Councillors agreed in a 10-4 vote at their Nov. 11 council meeting to establish a 4.28 per cent water and wastewater rate increase, while also overturning finance staff’s recommendation in a 9-5 vote to eliminate the annual 0.5 per cent infrastructure levy and move forward to address the city’s deteriorating roads, sidewalks and bridges.

The city’s 2020 water and wastewater rate increase was 4.11 per cent. Councillors are scheduled to debate the proposed rate increase in December.

Councillors also pulled back on staff’s recommendation to force various boards and agencies, including the Hamilton Police Service, Hamilton Public Library Board and conservation authorities, to impose a zero per cent budget increase and allowed them to boost their budgets by two per cent.

But they did support increasing user fees by two per cent starting next year.

Flamborough Coun. Judi Partridge, a staunch advocate of curtailing city spending, was opposed to the 4.28 per cent water and wastewater rate increase, but was agreeable to restricting boards and agencies’ budget increases, as well as imposing the zero per cent guideline for the city’s departments.

“We understand there have been challenges right across the board,” said Partridge during the Nov. 11 council meeting. “Personally, I’d like to see that zero expand to across all of our departments.”

Hamilton councillors approved an average tax increase of 2.9 per cent last March during the start of the pandemic, after starting the budget process with a proposed 5.5 per cent average tax hike.

Mountain Coun. Terry Whitehead was the only councillor who voted against the budget.

Stoney Creek Coun. Brad Clark said his residents are “struggling financially” during the pandemic, with homeowners racking up debt and using credit cards because they’re unable to afford any additional costs.

Yet Clark supported adding the 0.5 per cent infrastructure levy — which will raise about \$4.3 million — to help fix deteriorating roads and sidewalks.

“I have residents tripping and falling on broken sidewalks,” he said.

Corporate services director Mike Zegarac said staff’s recommendation on the infrastructure levy was to “pause” on implementing it this year because of the pandemic. In addition, the city is already funding the police’s new forensic building and transit expenditures.

Mountain Coun. John-Paul Danko applauded the inclusion of the levy, arguing it is the “responsible course of action” as the city attempts to address its infrastructure deficit.

“By not doing the maintenance that our capital infrastructure requires, we are causing ourselves to spend more money down the road,” he said.

Ancaster Coun. Lloyd Ferguson said he doesn’t want to burden struggling constituents with higher taxes or fees this year. He said adding the extra 0.5 per cent “will be tough. People are struggling out there and I hear it too.”

Hamilton’s preliminary budget negotiations are starting with a proposed 4 per cent average tax increase. By adding the infrastructure levy, said Zegarac, the tax hike jumps to 4.5 per cent.

The city avoided a potentially devastating \$61-million deficit because of the coronavirus pandemic when the federal and provincial governments provided COVID-19 relief. City officials also delayed a few capital projects and engaged in other cost-cutting measures that will see the city finish the year with a \$420,000 surplus.

The city is expected to see nearly \$45 million from a joint federal-provincial “safe restart agreement.” It’s unclear how much Hamilton will receive from the agreement’s second phase.

Zegarac said the city will continue to dip into its reserves, including the \$11 million in federal gas tax, for 2021 to cover the extra \$12 million added to its capital budget.

Mayor Fred Eisenberger supported both the additional 0.5 per cent infrastructure levy and imposing the two per cent budget increase for boards and agencies.

Mountain Coun. Tom Jackson called a four per cent tax increase “unacceptable,” but councillors have until the end of March to whittle it down to a more acceptable number.

“We have six months of work in front of us,” he said.

Out of the pandemic and Into the Woods

By: Gary Smith, The Hamilton Spectator, November 12, 2020

Source:

<https://www.thespec.com/entertainment/stage/2020/11/11/out-of-the-pandemic-and-into-the-woods.html>

It’s probably the perfect show for a pandemic.

Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine’s frequently dark, yet always uplifting 1987 musical “Into the Woods,” is a look at familiar fairy tales, where happily ever after isn’t guaranteed.

This blending of familiar tales, including Cinderella, Rapunzel and Jack and the Beanstalk is a powerful reminder whatever crisis we face, we are not alone.

Coming to Burlington Performing Arts Centre, in a staged reading by Talk is Free Theatre, it promises to be a treat for theatre-starved audiences,

Aidan deSalaiz who has performed at Theatre Aquarius in such hits as “The Full Monty,” “Legally Blonde” and “Beauty and the Beast,” plays The Baker who longs for a child.

“Theatre has helped me find the deepest part of myself,” deSalaiz says. “I was a little kid when I started out, playing Tiny Tim in ‘A Christmas Carol’ with star William Hutt at The Grand Theatre in London, Ontario, I was just 10 and Mr. Hutt would always make me laugh. When I was 15, I decided to

concentrate on acting. I just knew it would be my life. I went to Ryerson Theatre School and studied. Acting just felt right to me. It's helped me figure out who I am."

deSalaiz was about to appear with the Stratford Festival this past summer, but, of course, COVID-19 intervened.

"I love the role of The Baker and I played it last November in Barrie, with many of the actors reprising it at BPAC. He comes from a broken childhood and is on a search to find out who he is. He's brave and passionate. He knows life can be dark. He knows there are consequences for everything. And he knows too, we love deeper and stronger when we've felt pain."

Oakville actress Jamie McRoberts literally grew up acting in shows in Hamilton.

"I did 'The Velveteen Rabbit' when I was seven at Jackson Square in the Hamilton Public Library for The Great Big Theatre Company. After that, it was dance lessons and the Theatre Aquarius Summer School. I played Mary Lennox, the little girl in the musical 'The Secret Garden' for Hamilton Theatre Inc. in 1999," she says.

"And, I just kept going. I got an agent. I played a Munchkin in 'The Wizard of Oz' at Theatre Aquarius. Then, a lot of years later, in 2016, I played Glinda in Oz at Young Peoples' Theatre in Toronto."

In March 2019, McRoberts performed to rave reviews in the Adelaide Australia Fringe Festival in a show she was to reprise in Toronto, but the coronavirus got in the way.

McRoberts played The Baker's Wife in "Into the Woods," opposite deSalaiz, in Barrie last November and was hoping for a Toronto run when it was stopped cold.

Set to appear at Charlottetown Festival this past summer, McRoberts was devastated when it was pulled from under her.

"I'm not worried about performing during COVID. At some point, we just have to move forward. People need to communicate, to share. And we need what theatre will bring to the economy. I try to explain to my husband, when theatre stopped I lost a piece of myself, a part of who I am. But you know I never gave up hope it would come back."

Charlotte Moore who plays Jack's Mother in the BPAC performances is an icon of Canadian musical theatre. She's played at major Canadian theatres in star roles, including bringing her one woman show "Friends of Mine" to Theatre Aquarius in 2008.

Like all performers knocked for a loop by pandemic closures Moore's glad to be climbing back on a stage.

"I love this Sondheim show," she says. "It's about parenthood, your concern for your children and for community itself. It's about how we need to support each other. And it's as pertinent now as when it was written."

"I admit I was apprehensive about doing a show, but so few people are getting to make art now. It would be foolish not to do it. My kids say I'm "Covid Paranoid," but I feel perfectly safe in this show. Precautions are being taken. The producers were very upfront about how things would be."

Moore says she has lost a year's work missing roles in "42nd Street" at Drayton Entertainment and a tour of the musical "Cabaret."

"But you know others are in worse straits, so I'm not going to moan about it. And being back on stage is a great big celebration."

In the Kitchen with Esh offers modern twists on Indigenous foods

By: Diane Galambos, Contributing Columnist, *The Hamilton Spectator*, November 17, 2020

Source:

<https://www.thespec.com/life/food-wine/opinion/2020/11/17/in-the-kitchen-with-esh-offers-modern-twists-on-indigenous-foods.html>

It is the season of giving thanks.

A few years ago, writer Christine Sismondo chronicled what she called the odd, complicated history of Canadian Thanksgiving for which there is no compelling origin story. While acknowledging that pre-

contact with Indigenous populations, some European countries had harvest feasts, they cannot claim to have invented “Thanksgiving.” Sismondo goes on to review how the roots and evolution of this feast are linked to Canada’s Indigenous peoples.

Enter Aicha Smith-Belghaba, aiming to inform and excite people about classic and modern Indigenous cooking. She is currently featured in a seven-part video series hosted by the Hamilton Public Library (HPL).

Smith-Belghaba describes food as her passion having grown up with large families both here and in Algeria. Food, she says, is important and respected on each side of the family. For her whole life, she has lived on Six Nations of the Grand River, a centuries-old confederacy with various names — that she refers to as Haudenosaunee (hud-ena-shaw-nee) meaning “People of the Longhouse.”

Her mother met her Algerian father while she was in university and thus two cuisines and lifestyles shaped Smith-Belghaba’s life. Here she grew up around the kitchen, markets, in the garden or in the bush with grandparents. She spent some summers in France and Algeria where she was deeply affected by meeting her paternal grandmother. She says that although they had no common language, they communicated with ease in the kitchen. Food, she says, is the universal language.

Haudenosaunee have long been known for their agricultural traditions — at the minimum growing corn, squash and beans referred to as “the three sisters.” But the foods they grow, forage and hunt form a richer pantry and Smith-Belghaba feels her two food traditions pair well. Imagine squash and kale tagine-style, spiced with ras el hanout, cumin, and cilantro. Indigenous ingredients, she stresses, are versatile in accepting a lot of flavours and she likes to start with Indigenous ingredients and cook them however she feels.

One of her dishes that I tasted was somewhat based on a traditional succotash, with spicy twists. Corn and black beans were combined with rice, butternut squash, red pepper, onion, garlic, turmeric and chili peppers. With combos like this, Smith-Belghaba represents the meeting place of modern and tradition. She is not constrained by dishes that have ancient roots and says she never works with recipes. This is not to imply that she is dismissive of her native foods.

Her overall goal is to educate others about Indigenous foods, demonstrating how to easily incorporate them into their daily lives. The official website of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy details that in addition to farming, some foods were foraged — for example nuts, mushrooms, berries and root plants. Hunting and fishing provided proteins.

Smith-Belghaba wants to remind cooks that Indigenous ingredients are versatile and healthy, pointing out that the pre-contact diet contained no butter, salt or refined sugar. She reckons all of this was a better pathway to a healthier body-mind-soul connection.

She has no formal culinary training, something she has turned into an asset. “I’m self-taught which is amazing because that means anybody can cook, right?” She credits the school of life for the skills that she uses in her work — which includes running a catering company.

Her name Aicha (pronounced “eye-eesh-aw”) evolved into the nickname “Esh” (pronounced “eesh”).

On Facebook, she’s at “[Esha’s Eats](#)” and the HPL video series is titled “[In the Kitchen with Esh](#).”

Having done several projects with CBC and participated in some fundraising projects, she was approached by the Hamilton Public Library to do a series of online cooking demos. That led to a connection with Annette Paiement and the Steady Canoe Group at The Cotton Factory who produced the videos.

The first video in the series was Sweetgrass Sweet Tea with Lavender and Orange. While simple, it was a platform for Esha’s storytelling, in this case about the traditional uses of sweetgrass as medicine or a smudge. Breaking with tradition, she added the braided sweetgrass to the tea which became imbued with its calming and soothing properties. The tea was sweetened using Humble Bee honey produced locally from 30 hives in Hamilton including rooftop hives at The Cotton Factory. Subsequent episodes include roasted stuffed squash with wild rice and mushroom medley; walleye; apple leek stuffed chicken breast; and harvest salad with maple vinaigrette.

The sessions are “participatory” only in that comments can be left on the YouTube channel. Smith-Belghaba talks about her “secondary” goal — to spread awareness of hindrances when Indigenous peoples set out to source their food. She gives examples such as obstruction of walleye fishing and the current strife among East Coast lobster fishers. She hopes through her work to shed light on these issues.

She is happy to represent two cultures reporting amazing experiences linked to sharing food. She stresses that spreading awareness of Indigenous issues, and her love and knowledge is a beautiful thing to her.

Somewhat shy, but with a confident presence on camera, she is fearless in her cooking.

“In the Kitchen with Esh” videos are aired weekly on Wednesdays from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. until Dec. 9. Previously aired episodes continue to be online for viewing.

Information access is vital for older citizens

By: Margaret Denton, The Hamilton Spectator, November 17, 2020

Source:

<https://www.thespec.com/opinion/contributors/2020/11/17/information-access-is-vital-for-older-citizens.html>

In order to learn about health and community services, housing options, transportation choices, recreation and leisure activities, or just about any other services or resources, we must know how to locate this information. Further, information needs to be up-to-date, accurate, reliable and easy to find. Working together the Hamilton Council on Aging with its partners the City of Hamilton and the Seniors Advisory Council are preparing the second Hamilton’s Plan for an Age-Friendly City (2020-2026). To inform the development of the plan we reached out to the community to ask older adults “what were the barriers and obstacles to accessing information” and their suggestions for improving access to information. A total of 4,100 citizens and 76 service providers and City of Hamilton staff shared their views through focus groups, online or printed surveys and community events.

Communication and Information is the third age-friendly goal and over the past five years much has been accomplished. A community resource guide for older adults was developed, the City of Hamilton has a new landing page for comprehensive information on services and supports for older adults (www.hamilton.ca/seniors), and many organizations have established digital literacy programming. The City of Hamilton and the Hamilton Public Library now offer translation services. But much more work needs to be done.

In our current community consultation, we found that access to information and knowledge about where to go for assistance continues to be a gap among both older adults and service providers. Participants told us to keep the diverse needs, interests and preferences of all individuals in mind when providing information. Information should be available in different formats — e.g. print, online, telephone, local television stations. Increasingly, the internet is used to communicate important information, sometimes with little thought given to the reality that not everyone has access to technology or the internet. The coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the inequities in digital literacy and in access to technology; this is something that must be addressed going forward.

Further, information should be available in the dominant languages spoken in Hamilton. Fifteen per cent of Hamilton residents 55 years and older speak a language other than English or French at home.

It is important to ensure that information is available to and accessible for individuals who may be living with a cognitive impairment, vision and/or hearing challenges or who may have low literacy skills. Information must be made available in compliance with minimal AODA standards.

In terms of the type of information needed, around one-third of participants wanted information on health and wellness, housing options, recreation and leisure, and end of life care. About one quarter mentioned government forms, estate planning and wills, and healthy eating and meals.

Multiple sources of information exist but the problem is that there is a lack of connection between existing systems and information is not kept up-to-date. We asked participants “Where would you prefer to get information about resources/activities for older adults and seniors?” Many sources were mentioned but the most frequent answers were the City of Hamilton website, the City of Hamilton 55-plus Recreation Guide, the local newspaper, the Hamilton Public Library, seniors’ organizations or clubs, over the internet, doctor’s office or community health centers or through email. Citizens should be able to access information via one portal that connects to other information systems. Ontario 211 is a telephone or online information source on government and community-based services but unfortunately very few older adults use this source to get information about resources or activities, pointing to the lack of awareness of this service. Similarly, Hamilton’s information source, The Red Book which is an online or print format information source to services in Hamilton offered through the Hamilton Public Library is not well known among older adults.

The restrictions imposed because of COVID-19 have made all this more challenging. So much vital information is only available online and shockingly Hamilton does not have complete internet coverage. Fortunately, residents may access the internet through libraries in these areas without even having to enter the buildings. However, it is important that the City of Hamilton and the telecommunication companies collaborate to ensure reliable and consistent internet service throughout Hamilton.

As we move forward in planning to make Hamilton age-friendly, we will be recommending that existing information systems are better connected, are available in different formats and accommodate the needs, preferences and abilities of individual, including language and accessibility.

Need help and don’t know who to call? Here’s a list of Hamilton services to get you through the pandemic

By: Maria Iqbal, *The Hamilton Spectator*, Monday November 23, 2020

Source:

<https://www.thespec.com/news/hamilton-region/2020/11/23/need-help-and-dont-know-who-to-call-heres-a-list-of-hamilton-services-to-get-you-through-the-pandemic.html>

With all the changes during the pandemic, it’s hard to know where [to find help](#).

“People really don’t know where [to access information](#) about community services and recreational opportunities,” said Margaret Denton, co-chair of Hamilton Council on Aging’s education and advocacy committee.

That can leave Hamiltonians, especially seniors stuck at home, unsure of where they can turn.

“Isolation is very difficult, and seniors are really good at hiding their challenges,” said [Josey Kitson](#), assistant executive director of Wesley Urban Ministries, a social service agency serving Hamilton, Halton and Brantford. Wesley focuses on vulnerable people including youth, people experiencing homelessness, newcomers and seniors.

“The best referral sources are coming from people who’ve gotten to know them and who have a better understanding of the challenges that they’re facing and what they’re going through especially during COVID,” Kitson added.

Kitson encourages people to reach out to those they know.

“If you see someone in your community and you think they’re struggling, make sure you ask what they need because there are services out there that you can connect them to,” Kitson said.

Whether it’s groceries, transportation or supports for mental health, here’s a list of services available.

COVID-19 Information

Only visit a COVID-19 assessment centre if you have been referred by a health-care professional.

COVID-19 Hotline

If you think you have COVID-19, phone 905-546-2424, ext. 7970

City of Hamilton: Public Health

www.hamilton.ca/coronavirus/media-room

905-974-9848

phscovid19@hamilton.ca

Public Health Agency of Canada

www.canada.ca/publichealth

Hamilton Spectator

Free digital access to essential local coronavirus articles

at www.thespec.com/news/canada/coronavirus.html

For unlimited access to all articles, subscribe at www.thespec.com/subscribe or 905-522-7732.

Cable 14

TV: Channel 14 (cable subscribers)

Web (Livestream): <http://www.cable14.com> (*now available free of charge)

Safety

Seniors' Safety Line (24-hour Elder Abuse Prevention)

1-866-299-1011

Seniors Support Police (Non-Emergency)

905-540-5300

Catholic Family Services of Hamilton Seniors at Risk Program

Counselling, case management (virtual services by phone/online): cfshw.com, 905-527-3823

General Information

211 Ontario

Speak to a live agent about where to go for help. Available 24-7 in more than 150 languages. Dial 211, search online or chat at 211ontario.ca or contact info@incommunities.ca

City of Hamilton Infoline

905-546-2489

Hamilton Red Book

Information provided by Hamilton Public Library about social services and community resources in Hamilton

redbook.hpl.ca/redbook

Wesley

An organization offering support, information, and case management to vulnerable people in Hamilton, Halton and Brantford.

905-528-5629, ext. 306 or 284

seniors.services@wesley.ca

Community Resources for Older Adults

Visit www.hamilton.ca/seniors or www.seniorshamilton.ca

Essential Items

St. Matthew's House Seniors First Response Team

For support and essential item deliveries for vulnerable people, including seniors experiencing hunger, homelessness and income insecurity during the pandemic.

To make a referral, call 905-523-5546, ext. 240. To make a donation, visit stmatthewshouse.ca or call 905-523-5546, ext. 230

Ancaster Community Services — Shopping 4 Seniors

An essential item delivery service for Ancaster residents 55-plus who have limited help at home.

Clients must spend \$25 to \$200 after taxes in addition to a \$10 service fee. Fees may be adjusted for low-income clients. Call 905-648-6675.

Hamilton Food Share (Emergency Food)

905-664-9065

Healthcare

Telehealth Ontario: Call 1-866-797-0000 to speak with a nurse about your health-care questions (available 24-7)

Primary Care: Call your family doctors for information on in-person or virtual appointments.

Pharmacies: Phone your pharmacist for information on delivery for prescriptions.

Home and Community Care (HNHB LHIN): Home care and other LHIN services are considered essential. Contact your care co-ordinator for questions.

Social Connection

Seniors' Centre Without Walls

Free recreational group activities over the phone offered by the City of Hamilton. Workshops, games, fitness classes, and other activities are available.

To register, phone 905-973-0891 or email scww@hamilton.ca. To see the activity schedule, visit www.hamilton.ca/recreation/seniors-centre-without-walls.

Chatting to Wellness

Daily chatting sessions over the phone for Canadians 50-plus.

To sign up, call 437-702-2025 or visit www.chattingtowellness.ca

Dundas Community Services — Friendly Calling Program

Seniors and people with disabilities receive weekly calls for 15 to 30 minutes for companionship.

To register, call 905-627-5461 or visit www.dundascommunityservices.on.ca/friendly-calling

Hamilton Public Library — Online/Call in programming for seniors

www.hpl.ca/events/games/all

Phone: 905-546-3200

Mac-Waterloo-Niagara Student Senior Isolation Prevention Partnership

Weekly phone calls from health-care professional students who provide isolated seniors comfort and education about COVID-19. Older adults in Hamilton, Waterloo or Niagara can be referred to the program through a health-care provider or community organization. Interested seniors can ask their health care provider to refer them at MacSeniorIsolationPrevention@gmail.com

Hamilton Council on Aging's 'Do You Know Your Neighbour?' Facebook group (all ages)

facebook.com/groups/DYKYN

Wesley

Phone: 905-528-5629, ext. 306 or 284

Email: seniors.services@wesley.ca

Technology

Cyber Seniors

Online sessions to teach seniors how to use technology.

Call toll-free at 844-217-3057 or visit cyberseniors.org

Grocery

Some stores have designated shopping hours for seniors. Others offer online shopping, and pickup and delivery services. Contact a specific store for more information.

Banyan Community Services — Grocer-Ease Shopping & Delivery Program

For eligible seniors and adults with disabilities in Hamilton.

Banyancommunityservices.org, 905-545-1175

Instacart: Delivery and pickup service from various shops, including Walmart, Fortinos, M&M Food Market, Staples, Shoppers Drug Mart. Visit instacart.ca

Metro: Metro.ca

Longo's: Grocerygateway.ca

Walmart: Walmart.ca

Fortinos: Fortinos.ca

DRY GOODS: Shop online for home delivery

Amazon: amazon.ca

Costco: Costco.ca

Wesley

Currently accepting referrals for their holiday hamper program, where clients can receive customized items based on their age and interest.

Phone: 905-528-5629, ext. 306 or 284

Email: seniors.services@wesley.ca

Transportation

It is recommended that residents limit trips to essential outings.

DARTS: A shared-ride service in Hamilton that goes from stop to stop for people using wheelchairs, scooters and for CNIB cardholders. Apply at Hamilton.ca. A health-care professional will be required

to complete parts of the form. Once registered, call 905-529-1717 or visit DartsTransit.com/webbooking to book. Reservations must be made at least one hour in an advance, up to a maximum five days. Minivans and regular-sized cars are available.

Taxi Scrip: A discount taxi-fare program for Hamilton residents who can't use public transit. Registered members can buy coupon books to receive a 40 per cent discount with local taxi companies. To apply, complete the form at Hamilton.ca.

Hamilton Street Railway: All buses in Hamilton have ramps for curb-level entry and exit, and can accommodate wheelchairs and scooters within the standard size.

Trans-Cab: A shared-ride taxi service between the HSR and Blue Line Taxi. The service is offered to all passengers in parts of Glanbrook and Stoney Creek not currently served by buses. If you are in the service zone, call Blue Line Taxi 905-525-2583 (525-BLUE) and request a Trans-Cab pickup.

Visit www.hamilton.ca for more information

Housing

St. Matthew's House Housing Outreach Preventing Eviction of Seniors Program (HOPES)

stmatthewshouse.ca or call 905-523-5546

Housing Help Centre

www.housinghelpcentre.ca, 905- 526-8100

Services, appointments by phone or email

Wesley

905-528-5629, ext. 306 or 284

seniors.services@wesley.ca

Hamilton Shelter Health Network

905-526-7137

McMaster researchers receive almost \$75,000 in funding for projects with community partners

By: Sara Laux, Brighter World – McMaster University, November 24, 2020

Source:

<https://brighterworld.mcmaster.ca/articles/mcmaster-researchers-receive-almost-75000-in-funding-for-projects-with-community-partners/>

Three researchers in the Faculty of Social Sciences have received almost \$75,000 from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to launch projects in partnership with community organizations.

The Partnership Engage Grants allow university researchers to work closely with non-governmental and non-profit organizations, charitable foundations and other community partners, facilitating research that will help meet an immediate need or challenge, and allowing researchers and organizations to share and learn from each others' unique knowledge and expertise.

James Gillett, Jeremiah Hurley and Ameil Joseph received grant funds this spring. Their projects, which are underway, are scheduled to wrap up in May 2021.

Gillett, along with co-applicants Nicole Dalmer, Brian Detlor and Meredith Griffin, is partnering with the Hamilton Public Library to understand and, ultimately, facilitate research partnerships between universities and libraries.

Hurley, who is working with co-applicants David Feeney, Emmanuel Guindon, Arthur Sweetman, Jean-Eric Tarride and collaborator James Hughes of the McConnell Foundation, is developing a guide for measuring and evaluating the outcomes of investments in social programs and infrastructure.

[*Read more: "We should treat public health the same as public works" by Jeremiah Hurley*](#)

Joseph, who is collaborating with co-applicant Sarah Jama of the Disability Justice Network of Ontario, is exploring the unique challenges and barriers faced by disabled youth, which will then help inform the network's ongoing work.

"Social scientists have always had strong ties to community partners," says Cynthia Belaskie, research support facilitator for the Faculty of Social Sciences. "The SSHRC Partnership stream

recognizes the importance of community-engaged research and the PEGs allow faculty to test new partnerships, demonstrate the value of academic research and provide the partner organization with a useful research product within 12 months.”

Waubgeshig Rice’s novel Moon of the Crusted Snow wins HPL’s Hamilton

Reads 2020

By: Jeff Mahoney, The Hamilton Spectator, November 26, 2020

Source:

https://www.thespec.com/entertainment/books/opinion/2020/11/26/waubgeshig-rices-novel-moon-of-the-crusted-snow-wins-hpls-hamilton-reads-2020.html?utm_source=twitter&source=thespec&utm_medium=SocialMedia&utm_campaign=&utm_content=

Waubgeshig Rice kicked off [Hamilton Reads 2020](#) in April, when we were just beginning to feel the life-altering scope of the [pandemic](#), with his dystopian novel “Moon of the Crusted Snow,” and now he’s tying a handsome bow on his involvement with the competition by winning the whole thing with the book, which is about life-altering chaos.

Hamilton readers voted with their library cards and lifted Rice’s “Moon of the Crusted Snow” to the top of the Hamilton Reads list, “the one book that everyone in Hamilton should read,” with 1,822 checkouts since Hamilton Public Library’s Hamilton Reads 2020 was launched in April with, as it turns out, “Moon of the Crusted Snow.”

Many other books were in the running, but Rice’s took the laurel.

“Moon on the Crusted Snow” was also the HPL’s No. 1 borrowed ebook this year. It was discussed in more than a dozen online book clubs in the last eight months.

To make matters even better, Rice is inviting Hamiltonians (and others) to join him for an online, live presentation and discussion about his book and more on Saturday Nov. 28 at 2 p.m. at the HPL’s website, hpl.ca. He will be joined by fellow authors Cherie Dimaline and McMaster University/HPL Writer-in-eResidence Janet Marie Rogers.

In Rice’s novel, a pall descends over an Anishinaabe reserve when the power goes out — seemingly permanently. But as they wait for relief from outside, they learn that it has gone out all over the world. There are many parallels in the fictional story with the real-life challenges of lockdowns and changing routines and habits.

The communities, both far and near, in “Moon of the Crusted Snow” struggle to preserve order amid chaos, with compliance being test at every turn.

More than 244 badges were earned by participants in this year’s HPL Hamilton Reads challenge and Hamilton Reads-related programs and artist studio tours were viewed on HPL’s YouTube channel 727 times.

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
Subject: COVID-19 Response & Planning Report - PT - Attachment #9.2

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Library Board receive this report for information and comment.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

The COVID-19 Pandemic is a public health emergency. Our first responsibility in this crisis is to protect the health of staff and the public. As an organization, we then need to support the broader emergency response as we adapt our services to respond to challenges the pandemic poses. Finally, we need to play a positive, leadership role in helping residents and the communities we serve recover.

In the coming months we will continue to investigate and report to the Library Board the potential financial, staffing and legal implications of the pandemic and the accompanying public health and economic challenges that this brings. Currently, we have almost completed the process of recalling Library Pages. We have a number of vacant positions that we are being cautious about replacing because of the current restrictions we are under and the need to cover COVID-19 related expenses.

BACKGROUND:

The attached December 2020 update includes our draft plan should Hamilton be moved to the *Grey-Lockdown Phase* by the Ontario Government. We continue to get feedback from the City on our proposed plan and will update the plan should we get direction to do so.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
COVID-10 Response and Planning Report	12/11/2020	Cover Memo

Date: December 16, 2020
From: Paul Takala, CEO/Chief Librarian
To: Library Board
Subject: **HPL COVID-19 Response & Planning Report**

Contents

December Update.....	1
Table 1: Current Service Hours	2
Current COVID-19 Response.....	2
Capacity and Duration of Visits.....	2
Enforcing PPE Rules	3
HVAC Enhancements.....	3
Enhanced Cleaning and Disinfecting	3
Supporting Contact Tracing	3
Library Materials	3
Ontario Regulations on Libraries in Grey-Lockdown Areas	3
Special Note about Rationale behind HPL Grey-Lockdown Strategy	4
Update on Enforcement of PPE & Accommodations	4
Table 2: Proposed Grey-Lockdown Phase Restrictions	5
Table 3: Updated Branch Capacity	6
Appendix i: HPL Phased Reopening Plan	7
Principles	7
References.....	8

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT – THE PROPOSED MEASURES FOR HPL SHOULD HAMILTON MOVE TO THE GREY-LOCKDOWN STAGE ARE STILL UNDERGOING REVIEW.

DECEMBER UPDATE

As the pandemic risk remains relatively high in the GTHA, we are proposing that we take a pause on expanding core service hours until Q1 2021, where we can work with the Library Board to assess the impact on our ability to deliver service. We are proposing this because of the risk of increased absenteeism due to potential exposure to COVID-19 and the need to ensure staff do not report to work in-person when they should not. We are proud of the fact that we are currently offering more service than most public libraries while we also stay focused on ensuring we keep our members and library staff safe. With all the precautions we have in place, HPL is a low risk environment, however, if community spread of COVID-19 accelerates in our community, we will need to establish further restrictions to ensure we provide service as safely and reasonably possible. In October and November, HPL's core service hours were expanded. As we enter December, HPL service hours are listed in Table 1.

TABLE 1: CURRENT SERVICE HOURS

Location	MON	TUE - THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
GROUP 1 – Central, Dundas, Red Hill, Terryberry, Barton, Concession, Kenilworth, Sherwood, Turner Park, Waterdown. (<i>Parkdale opening 2021</i>)	10 - 9	10 - 9	10 - 6	10 - 5	-
GROUP 2 - Ancaster, Binbrook, Locke, Saltfleet, Stoney Creek, Valley Park, Westdale	10 - 6	10 - 6	10 - 6	10 - 5	-
GROUP 3 – Bookmobile, Carlisle, Freelon, Greenville, Lynden, Mount Hope	-	10 - 6	10 - 6	10 - 5	-
FRESHDESK (ASKHPL) – Remote Information Service & Member Support (<i>Phone, Email, Online Chat</i>)	10 - 9	10 - 9	10 - 6	10 - 5	

Building on the end of 2020 Library Service hours in 2021 staff will work with the Library Board to expand hours when the conditions are right. Staff will continue to closely monitor capacity, feedback, and usage patterns. The following will be key considerations:

- Prioritizing consistency and simplicity to avoid member confusion
- Investigate the restoration of Sunday service
- Expand evening hours in Group 2 locations
- Restore *Rural Extended Access* at Freelon, Lynden and expand to Carlisle and Greenville after construction projects are complete
- Respond to other critical needs as they emerge

CURRENT COVID-19 RESPONSE

We continue to follow City and Public Health guidance, adjusting operations and planning based on authoritative guidance and the best information and evidence we have available. Our goal remains to provide as much critical service as we can, provided we can do it safely.

CAPACITY AND DURATION OF VISITS

To support physical distancing HPL has imposed strict capacity limits system wide. We have also been monitoring capacity closely. Pre-COVID-19 HPL would normally have 72,000 in person visits per month. In recent weeks HPL has been averaging just over 15,000 visits per week in our 22 locations (See Table 3 – Capacity Limits by Location). We continue to monitor all locations closely to ensure we do not exceed capacity limits. So far there have been only a few isolated cases where we have locally reached our adjusted capacity, so we are not enforcing the recommended 2-hour daily visit limit. The following is our current direction around in person visits:

System-wide Two (2) Hours Daily Recommended Time Limit

2-hour recommended maximum daily duration of visits. This is a guideline; it will only be enforced when a location exceeds its capacity limit. No eating or drinking allowed, however, if members need to hydrate with water, masks may only be removed for brief periods when members are actively drinking and not in close proximity to others.

ENFORCING PPE RULES

We have all staff supplied with reusable facemasks and eye protection. We also have supplies of disposable masks. We strongly encourage the public to wear facemasks and give them a disposable mask if they do not have one. Enforcing the local mask mandate has been largely successful, although we have had instances where staff have had to address members not adhering to the rule. While we continue to track non-compliance and address it with staff and management, most mask conversations are with members reporting concerns around other members not respecting the mandate.

HVAC ENHANCEMENTS

The City of Hamilton Facilities Division has installed new high-grade filters and has increased the flow in all our HVAC systems. During the pandemic, locations will be temporarily closed if our HVAC systems are not functional.

ENHANCED CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

Significant efforts have been made to ensure high touch surfaces throughout the Library are cleaned and disinfected several times a day. In addition, public computers are disinfected between each use. Hand sanitizer is available to members and staff throughout our system.

SUPPORTING CONTACT TRACING

Since moving to Phase 3 HPL has supported contact tracing by requiring library visitors to have a library card or identify who they are when they enter. We are mindful that during the pandemic, reckless behaviour can result in serious health consequences for individuals and undermine our community's success at controlling the virus. In early 2021 we will review this with the Library Board and determine when to stop doing this. HPL actively works to reduce barriers for members and potential members. To date contact tracing has not posed an issue for members and only a few people have left unwilling to identify who they are. We should be aware that some individuals may hear or see the check-in process and be deterred from identifying themselves.

LIBRARY MATERIALS

Although there is mounting evidence that quarantining materials may not reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, we are continuing to keep returned materials in quarantine for 72 hrs. We will continue to monitor this issue in partnership with other library systems and applicable legislation. We will continue to look for guidance from Public Health officials as the science evolves on surface testing and transmission. Currently, we are not allowing in branch use and sharing of newspapers, magazines and children's toys and equipment.

ONTARIO REGULATIONS ON LIBRARIES IN GREY-LOCKDOWN AREASⁱ

All safety precautions we have in place will continue if Hamilton moves to Grey-Lockdown Level. We will consult the City and Public Health on these measures and any additional actions the City recommends ensuring we continue to operate as a low risk environment for staff and the public.

SCHEDULE 3 - PLACES THAT MUST CLOSE OR THAT ARE SUBJECT TO CONDITIONS

Public libraries

(1) *Public libraries may only open if they comply with the following conditions:*

1. *Circulating materials must be reserved over the telephone or online.*
2. *Circulating materials may only be exchanged with members of the public through contactless drop-off, pick-up or delivery.*
3. *Patrons must only be permitted to enter the premises to facilitate contactless drop-off and pick-up or to access computers, photocopiers or similar services.*

4. *Patrons must not be permitted to be in the book stacks, or to handle circulating materials that are shelved, or in other areas of library storage.*
5. *Circulating materials returned to the library must be disinfected or quarantined for an appropriate period of time before they are recirculated.*
6. *The person responsible for the public library must comply with subsection (3), if applicable.*

(2) The conditions set out in paragraphs 3 and 4 of subsection (1) do not apply with respect to any space the library provides for,

- (a) a day camp for children described in section 27 of Schedule 2;*
- (b) a provider of child care within the meaning of the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014;*
- (c) mental health support services or addictions support services, so long as no more than ten people are permitted to occupy the space; or*
- (d) the provision of social services.*

(3) The person responsible for a public library shall,

- (a) record the name and contact information of every member of the public who attends the space described in subsection (2);*
- (b) maintain the records for a period of at least one month; and*
- (c) only disclose the records to a medical officer of health or an inspector under the Health Protection and Promotion Act on request for a purpose specified in section 2 of that Act or as otherwise required by law.*

SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT RATIONALE BEHIND HPL GREY-LOCKDOWN STRATEGY

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated challenges that many residents face. With the closure of school and academic libraries for in person studying, students are using the library to access quiet study space and use our connectivity. With residents that do not have connectivity at home, HPL's computer and Wi-Fi access provides a critical service to enable them to apply for jobs, access online government services and stay connected with others. With HPL's precautions in place, we remain a low-risk environment for virus spread. The proposed Grey-Lockdown Measures will be activated immediately should Hamilton be moved to that phase by the Province or the City. HPL will continue to monitor our environment closely and the local risk of community spread of COVID-19. We will continue to seek input from Public Health and the City. We will be prepared to implement stricter measures, should circumstances warrant.

UPDATE ON ENFORCEMENT OF PPE & ACCOMMODATIONS

- **Face Masks** - Mandatory staff compliance with face masks. Library members provided disposable mask upon entry if not wearing one. Face shields or eye protection also required when staff can not maintain physical distancing with exempt members not wearing a face mask.
- **Alternate for Exempt Individuals** - Masks are required, exempt individuals will be required to wear a face shield as an alternative. All locations have face shields to loan or give to individuals that require them. Face shields will be disinfected and dried before reuse in cases where they are loaned. Regular customers will be provided one to keep and reuse when the situation warrants. If a vision issue is disclosed, while maintaining physical distancing Library Pages will help the person navigate the branch.
- **Additional Accommodations** - Working with partners serving vulnerable individuals and with Library members in need of supports, in January 2021 HPL will start a pilot project to offer a limited number of individuals alternative accommodation by providing a mobile connected device for an extended loan period of 1 month. Accommodated members will be required to agree to only visit the Library to pick-up holds.

TABLE 2: PROPOSED GREY-LOCKDOWN PHASE RESTRICTIONS

SERVICE	RED-CONTROL MEASURES	PROPOSED GREY-LOCKDOWN MEASURES
Contact Tracing & Screening	All members required to check-in using library card or provide name & phone number, screening procedures followed.	All members required to check-in using library card or provide name & phone number, screening procedures followed.
Service Hours	See <u>Table 1: Current Service Hours</u>	Maintain existing service hours & monitor capacity and usage. Temporarily reduce hours if needed due to staff shortages. The goal is to do this in a planned way to minimize the need for unplanned temporary service disruptions.
In-person visits duration for Per Day	Recommended 2-hour daily maximum enforced only when capacity limits reached	90 minute maximum in-person visit per day (during <i>Cold Weather Alerts</i> this limit will be suspended)
Library Provided Computer Access	2 hours current daily maximum per person recommended	1¼ hour (75 minute) maximum daily computer session per person per day, no extensions allowed.
Personal Device Wifi Use	2 hours current daily maximum per person recommended, no limit enforced. Outdoor use of Wifi available 24X7, with no restrictions as long as physical distancing is maintained.	In library-use of Wifi is restricted to the visit duration of 90 minutes. Outdoor use of Wifi available 24X7, with no restrictions as long as physical distancing is maintained.
Print Pick-up	Print jobs may be picked up, standard printers and advanced printing including 3D print jobs where available.	Print jobs may be picked up, standard printers and advanced printing including 3D print jobs where available.
Holds Pick-up	Touchless self-check	Access to holds shelves not allowed. Staff will retrieve holds for members.
Browsing of Shelves	Open with contact tracing	Not permitted. Staff may retrieve requested items for Library members.
Standard Member Services	Issuing new library cards, assistance with check-out, printing and computer support provided as long as PPE and physical distancing rules followed.	Issuing new library cards, assistance with check-out, printing and computer support provided as long as PPE and physical distancing rules followed.
In-depth Assistance Appointments	Scheduled individual appointments for legal and other supports allowed. Remote support emphasized with accommodations for in person as exceptions.	Scheduled individual appointments for legal and other supports allowed. All other appointments virtual, except if special approval is granted by a Director.
Programming	Core online and partner led	No in-person events, online programs only.
Mail Holds to Vulnerable Individuals	Visiting Library Service (VLS)	Continue for VLS and reconsider for other members. Library has access to the Library Book Discount Mail program.

TABLE 3: UPDATED BRANCH CAPACITY

We are monitoring capacity at each location on a regular basis. Recent trends in visits shows a modest decline in visits. Except for a couple isolated incidents, we have not reached the current capacity limits. Capacity will be regularly reviewed.

Max Public Capacity based on Estimated Square Public Footage/144.

Location	Public Max. Calculated Capacity ⁱⁱ	Current Adjusted Max. Public Capacity	Proposed Grey-Lockdown Capacity
Central- 1 st Floor	146 Ham Rm - 93	50	35 – computers and holds
Central 2	126	50	25 - 1 person per table
Central 3	119	50	25 - 1 person per table
Central 4	103	50	25 - 1 person per table
Ancaster	75	35	35
Barton	43	15	15
Binbrook	29	15	12
Carlisle	13	7	3
Concession	32	15– 1 st floor	12
Dundas	73	30 – 1 st floor 20 - lower level	15 – 1 st floor 10 – lower floor
Freelton	8	7	4
Greensville	11	11	5
Locke	7	7	3
Lynden	16	12	12
Mount Hope	11	4	3
Kenilworth	32	15 – 1 st floor 10 – 2 nd floor	10-1 st floor 10-2 nd floor
Parkdale (to open in 2021)	13	7	6
Red Hill	57	30	21
Saltfleet	52	25	21
Sherwood	83	35	30
Stoney Creek	33	18	12
Terryberry	115	50 - 1 st floor - 2 nd floor	40 w/study room use 28 w/out study room use and 1 person/table
Turner Park	139	70	60
Valley Park	7	4+	4
Waterdown	87	35	30
Westdale	42	25	12

APPENDIX I: HPL PHASED REOPENING PLAN

Introduction

This Appendix includes key parts of the **Phased Reopening Plan**. The full version is available here: <https://www.hpl.ca/sites/default/files/HPLReopeningPlanJune2020.pdf>

This plan is adapted from the *City of Hamilton's (CoH) COVID-19 Recovery Plan – A Road Map to our New Reality*ⁱⁱⁱ. Its development is also informed by Hamilton Public Library's [Working Assumptions and Phased Reopening Plan](#)^{iv} and the *Canadian Urban Library Council's (CULC) Toolkit on Recovery & Reimagined Public Library Services Post COVID-19*^v.

*Authors Note: This document takes significant text from the **Hamilton Reopens Plan** and adapts it for the Hamilton Public Library (HPL). The authors acknowledge the contribution of the individuals with the CoH who have strongly influenced this plan.*

HPL Reopens

Since COVID-19 began to spread in Hamilton in March 2020, HPL has followed the City's lead. HPL has prioritized the health and safety of residents and employees. We closed library facilities and cancelled programming and events. We quickly pivoted to offer programming and services online and reached out to support the City and community's emergency response.

Alignment with the Hamilton's and Ontario's Reopening Framework

HPL Reopens is meant to align with the Province's framework for Reopening Ontario after COVID-19. The City of Hamilton's framework also uses a phased approach, enabling both the Province and the City to ensure appropriate measures are in place to reopen safely and limit risks to public health. HPL will take guidance from the Province of Ontario as we move between phases. However, reopening in Hamilton will depend on the pandemic situation within our city, and may not align exactly with the Province's phases. We may choose to move through the phases of reopening at a different speed than the Province, based on the conditions in Hamilton and advice from our local Medical Officer of Health.

PRINCIPLES

Reopening of HPL's physical spaces will be gradual, safe and measured. This framework is guided by the following principles:

1. Protection of Public Health

The health of residents and HPL staff continues to be our highest priority. We will provide opportunities to maintain safe physical distance from others and follow good public health and occupational safety practices when reopening Library facilities and restarting programs and services.

2. Universal Design and Focus on the Vulnerable Sector

The principles of *Universal Design*^{vi} will inform our approach to ensure our services are provided as barrier free as possible. We will prioritize providing access to technology and learning supports to those most in need.

3. Maintenance of HPL Facilities and Assets

We will consider which facilities and assets require maintenance or other actions to support Library business and operations.

4. Community Priorities and Partnerships

We will prioritize the services most valued and needed by the community. We will work with trusted partners to ensure our services complement their efforts. We will strive to provide informed referrals to those seeking information or assistance.

5. Economic Recovery

We will prioritize Library services and activities that contribute to the economic recovery of the City and the community. We will focus on supporting small businesses, job seekers and community members seeking information about supports and services available for them to help with their recovery. We will provide free online learning opportunities and supports (including technical support) to advance educational and skills advancement.

6. Health, Well-Being and Productivity

We will consider the health, well-being and productivity of employees when determining the most suitable location for them to do their best work. Through all reopening stages, staff will work remotely to support Hamilton residents. We will use specialized teams to maximize productivity and minimize staff exposure to other HPL staff members as we rapidly adapt our service model in response to COVID-19.

7. Legal or Regulatory Requirements

We will consider whether a municipal service or activity supports a legal or regulatory obligation of HPL or the City.

8. Resource Availability

We will consider the availability of resources such as staff, physical and financial resources, Personal Protective Equipment and more when making decisions. We assume a tight funding environment for 2020 and 2021 and beyond. Except for non-levy funding, any emergency expenditures we incur in response to COVID-19 will need to be self-funded by savings we accrue through service restrictions. Any loss in fee revenue will need to be offset by cost savings.

REFERENCES

ⁱ <https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/200082#top>

ⁱⁱ Max Public Capacity based on Estimated Square Public Footage/144.

ⁱⁱⁱ City of Hamilton Recovery Roadmap - <https://www.hamilton.ca/reopens>

^{iv} HPL's Working Assumptions and Phased Reopening Plan - <https://www.hpl.ca/sites/default/files/20-05-HPLWorkingAssumptionsfor2020.pdf>

^v CULC Think Tank Tool Kit - <http://culc.ca/advocacy/thinktank/>

^{vi} Universal Design - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Universal_design

Date: December 16, 2020
To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Director Digital Technology and Creation
Subject: **Access to Information & Communication Technology (1st Review) - SF - Attachment #11.1**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Library Board receives the attached Position Statement on Access to Information and Communication Technology.

FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial, staffing or legal implications resulting from this report.

BACKGROUND:

Hamilton Public Library Board endorses the Position Statement on Access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT) that was adopted by the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA/FCAB) on August 2017. HPL's Access to Information and Communication Position Statement was last approved by the Board in May 2017.

ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
Access to ICT Position Statement	12/9/2020	Cover Memo

Access to Information and Communication Technology Position Statement

Policy Level: Library Board
Author: Director Digital Technology and Creation
Review Period: 4 years
Approval Date: December 9, 2020

POSITION STATEMENT

The Hamilton Public Library Board adopts and endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA/FCAB) Position Statement on Access to Information and Communication Technology (ICT).

STATEMENT DETAILS

Preamble

CFLA/FCAB views the Internet and other publicly available ICT networks as public goods essential to participation in a democratic and information-driven society. Therefore, CFLA/FCAB recognizes that access to ICT is an essential part of the universal access to information that Canadian libraries provide and support.

CFLA/FCAB and its members will co-operate with governments, agencies, industry, and other organizations to ensure that these fundamental rights are represented in all policies and laws governing access to and dissemination of information via ICT.

The Hamilton Public Library Board endorses **that all Canadians have the right to:**

1. Universal, Equitable, and Affordable Access to Robust ICT networks

- Access to high-speed ICT networks should be available and affordable to all regardless of factors such as age, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, social and political views, national origin, economic status, location, and level of information literacy.
- Special efforts should be made to ensure equity of access in rural and remote areas and access to inclusive technologies for people with disabilities.
- A public policy framework should support the development of ICT infrastructure that meets high standards of speed, reliability and universality

2. Access to Information Literacy

- Everyone should have the opportunity to acquire the necessary skills to find and use information using ICT.

3. Open Access to Information

- Open access to information should be encouraged at all levels of government and in all publicly funded institutions. This information should be available free of charge with as little restriction on re-use and modification as possible.
- Government and public institutions should take responsibility for archiving information in order to preserve collective memory.

4. Freedom of Expression

- Individuals have the right to create, share, exchange, access and receive the widest range of ideas, information and images.
- Public policy should encourage neutrality of traffic flow on ICT networks, neither privileging nor restricting information based on content or type. Libraries and other knowledge organizations should encourage the development and use of neutral search and retrieval mechanisms.

5. Privacy

- Privacy of personal information on ICT networks should be carefully protected by legislation.
- In all situations, there should be a written statement outlining the purpose for which personal data is collected. The collection of personal information should be limited to that which is necessary for the purposes identified by the organization. Consent should be required for the collection of personal information and the subsequent use or disclosure of this information.
- This data should not be traded or sold without the express written permission of the individual affected. Information about privacy policies and mechanisms should be easily accessible and all changes to these should be made on an “opt-in” basis.
- Individuals should have the right to examine their own personal information collected by government, public bodies and corporations and to have mistakes corrected, both without charge.

Source: <http://cfla-fcab.ca/en/programs/guidelines-and-position-papers/access-to-information-and-communication-technology-ict/> Adopted August 26, 2017

APPROVAL HISTORY

Last Approved on May 2017