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To: Chair and Members of the Library Board
From: Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO
Subject: **Hamilton Public Library Goals 2020 – Final Report**

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INTRODUCTION

The initial [2020 Goals](#) were approved in January and the [Mid-Year Progress Report](#) was received in September. The emergence of the COVID-19 Pandemic in March resulted in a significant priority shift for 2020. HPL’s response to the pandemic was shaped by our commitment to support Hamilton’s emergency response and to maximize delivery of safe library service. Staff worked closely throughout the year to ensure the Board was engaged and well informed of changes HPL made to respond to the crisis.

2020 put a lot of pressure on staff to deliver services differently, the collective response of staff to support the community and each other has been positive. Several new service innovations were adopted for service continuity during the shutdown periods. The investments made in these service innovations will continue to serve us during the remained of the pandemic and will strengthen our support of Hamilton’s recovery.

On behalf of the HPL Team I would like to extend our deep appreciation to the Library Board, Council, City staff and the community for all the support we received during this challenging year.

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

HPL'S SERVICE RESPONSE IN 2020

Phase	Dates	Activity Summary
Online Only Services	Mar. 17	Implementation of FreshDesk remote customer support system and MS Teams to support work from home. HPL staff assist with EOC deliveries and Public Health. Virtual programs and friendly calling to seniors. Enhanced access to digital collections.
Take-out Service	Jun. 23	Central, Red Hill, Terryberry and Dundas started take-out service June 23 rd . Ancaster, Kenilworth, Sherwood, Saltfleet, Turner Park and Waterdown opened for scheduled pickup beginning Jul. 14 th . Staff continued to provide quality online programming, friendly calling and support through virtual AskHPL services.
Modified Reopening	Jul. 30	22 branches reopened July 30 th for browsing, holds pickup, computer access and the use of printers, scanners, fax and Central makerspace equipment. Appropriate PPE, all visitors provide library card for contact tracing, physical distancing and enhanced hygiene and cleaning measures. Bookmobile take-out service restarted Sep. 22 nd and VLS extended to include Library Mail Service Oct 6 th .
Red-Control Zone	Nov. 16	Hours were extended into the evening on Oct. 19 th to increase access equitably across Hamilton.
Grey-Lockdown Zone	Dec. 21	Access to computers, printing and the holds shelves for customers to perform contact-less pickup.
Provincial Shutdown	Dec. 26	On demand takeout of holds, print on the go and makerspace projects. Bookmobile service continues and branches are open for temporary branch service hours reducing evening hours.

Proactive Planning & Reporting

HPL's early leadership in the pandemic was greatly assisted by the advanced planning that staff had engaged in over several years. When there were indications that a pandemic could be emerging, the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) reviewed and updated our contingency plans for a pandemic. We shared our [Pandemic Service Continuity Plan](#) on the website and widely within the Canadian public library community. In addition, with uncertainty about how long the pandemic would last and the implications, in April the Board received the first version of our [Working Assumptions for 2020](#). That document provided needed context at a time when it was unclear what to expect next.

As more details about the nature of COVID-19 emerged, the Library developed our [Phased Reopening Plan](#). That plan was modelled after the City's [COVID-19 Recovery Plan – A Road Map to our New Reality](#)ⁱ but it was also adapted to better align with our context. HPL also participated in the development of the Canadian Urban Library Council's (CULC's) [Toolkit on Recovery & Reimagined Public Library Services Post COVID-19](#)ⁱⁱ.

HPL Emergency Response Team (ERT)

Our plan called for activating an **Emergency Response (ER)Team** in the case of a pandemic. The core role of the ERT was to make prompt informed decisions and to communicate those decisions to impacted stakeholders. The ERT spent the early days of the pandemic meeting daily. As the situation became more stable the ERT gradually reduced the frequency of its meetings. By the end of 2020 it was meeting once weekly, although, special meetings are called whenever necessary. The ERT meets remotely using the Microsoft Teams platform.

PUBLIC HEALTH MEASURES

Throughout the pandemic, HPL is following public health guidance and direction to ensure the Library protects staff and the public.

Facilities Preparations & Enhanced Cleaning

Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning (HVAC) assessments were done to allow us to install new higher-grade air filters where needed and where possible. Enhanced cleaning procedures were developed based on City-approved standards and remain in place.

Enforcing Personal Protective Equipment

One of the key public health measures that has been proven to be effective is wearing face masks. We have all staff supplied with reusable face masks and face shields. We also have supplies of disposable masks. We strongly encourage the public to wear face masks and give them a disposable mask if they do not have one. In December we started to require library visitors that are exempt from wearing face masks to wear a face-shield.

Physical Distancing and Reduced Capacity

As we were preparing to reopen, Public Health gave us a formula to calculate the maximum public capacity = *Estimated square public footage/144 (12ft X 12ft per person)*. After making this calculation we reviewed each location and defined an Adjusted Capacity. This has been monitored closely.

Supporting Contact Tracing

Since HPL has reopened for in-person service we have been having members check-in using their Library card or provide their name and phone number. In 2020 we had a few Library staff confirm a positive COVID-19 test. In all cases we provided Public Health with the appropriate information. Our environment is considered low risk because of all the precautions we are following. None of the cases we reported lead to other positive tests being reported at HPL.

Library Materials

Although there is mounting evidence that quarantining materials may not reduce the risk of COVID-19 transmission, throughout 2020 we continued to keep returned materials in quarantine for 72 hrs. We continued to monitor this issue in partnership with other library systems and applicable legislation. We end 2020 still not allowing in branch use and sharing of newspapers, magazines and children's toys and equipment. All materials are available for hold and loaned for 28 days and we continue to monitor hold and loan periods.

Matching Service to the State of Public Health Risk

Since the public health emergency was declared, HPL adjusted our service model to align with the City of Hamilton and Public Health guidance. The phases of service we have offered in 2020 are included in the Phases of the Pandemic table.

DIRECTLY SUPPORTING THE EMERGENCY RESPONSE

According to our approved plans, HPL's highest priority during the emergency is supporting the City's and Public Health's response, assisting with relief efforts and preparing to assist with the recovery. In the first phases of the pandemic this was a major focus of our efforts. Throughout 2020 we have continued to offer our assistance to the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC). We continue to look for ways we can work in partnership to support the emergency response.

Providing HPL Staff to the City EOC and Public Health

Early in the pandemic we proactively reached out to offer our assistance to the City of Hamilton and the EOC. The two main areas of support we provided were delivery supports and assisting Public Health in booking COVID tests.

Additional Community Support Activities

Early in the pandemic, while under strict limitations for what we could do, and after addressing HPL and COH needs, HPL engaged with community agencies for staff to support the community response where appropriate. We assigned staff to several activities including:

- Dundas Community Services - friendly calling to isolated people in the Dundas Community
- Kids Help Phone – staffing phones to answer calls from concerned children
- Hamilton CareMongering - grocery drop off to people in need
- Scrub Caps for Ont. Frontline Workers - sewing of scrub caps and headbands
- Canadian Blood Service – Donations of Blood, Plasma and Platelets
- Stinson Neighbourhood Association and St. Clair Community Church - preparing care packages for Frontline workers (approx. 30)
- New Vision Church (Rest and Hygiene Centre) - assisting at rest and hygiene centre

3D Printing of PPE Parts

Early in the pandemic, when there was a shortage of personal protective equipment (PPE), HPL assisted with creating PPE parts using our 3D printers. We partnered with the City of Hamilton, Innovation Factory, Hamilton Wentworth District School Board, Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board and shop3D.ca to source and print the PPE. At one point we had 30, 3D printers running 24/7 at Central Library. Of these, seven were from HPL, one from the City's Planning Department and 22 on loan from the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board. The finished face shields were distributed by the City's EOC to local health organizations, including Six Nations.

Friendly Calling Seniors

One of the most well received activities staff engaged in was our calling members 75+ to check-in and see how they were and if they needed any assistance. They were also asked if they want a weekly check-in call, responses have been overwhelmingly positive. These calls also led to follow-up virtual appointments, where staff assisted people learning how to access eBooks and our other online resources.

Cooling and Warming Centres

In response to a heat emergency the library opened 4 branches as cooling and hydration centres early in the summer in collaboration with the City. As we opened for modified services, our Library branches were being used as Cooling Centres. As we moved into winter, HPL worked with the City to support the creation of warming centres should cold advisories be issued.

HPL REMOTE AND ONLINE SERVICE DEVELOPMENTS

The long-term investments HPL has made in technology infrastructure, including equipment, staff capacity and training, contributed to our ability to rapidly shift to an online only environment. 2020 has resulted in a lot of innovation that will benefit us moving forward.

Remotely Supporting Individuals with Freshdesk

On May 3 we launched a new call support system called Freshdesk (FD). This enabled us to redirect phone calls to staff working remotely. Our AskHPL service has been integrated into FD. This system provides us with a timely view of activity levels and going forward will be our main way members contact us remotely.

Connecting Hamiltonians to Available Services

HPL maintains the [Red Book Hamilton](#) database of community information. Staff created custom lists to support people looking for supports during the pandemic. For example, staff created a list of agencies providing [Mental Health Hotlines](#). The information from the Red Book Hamilton is integrated into the new Chalmers App. that is targeting supports for people experiencing homelessness.

Expanding Digital Collections Access

Increased focus on/promotion of digital resources and increasing access to digital resources by purchasing more titles and increasing limits. Coordinating promotion for the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) customers who are without materials. Other changes include:

- HPL, Burlington PL and Mississauga PL started sharing their e-collections giving HPL members access to 211,400 titles.
- Improved Home Access: move from in-branch databases to unlimited online databases (Ancestry.com, IELTS, Open Library, Kanopy and CBC Curio for movies and documentaries)
- Promotion of partner-run online programs that benefit customers while at home (for example, HPO online concerts, YWCA in-home/online workouts, Hamilton Arts Council Concerts)
- A reciprocal online borrowing program was launched between HPL, Mississauga Library and Burlington Public Library. Initial feedback from residents in all cities has been very positive.
- eExpress Collection – via OverDrive and increased loan limits
- Increased loan limits via Kanopy streaming
- Return of Hoopla – movies, music, books and audio
- Digital Magazines – expansion of the collection to include 3000 new titles

Shift from in-Person to Remote Programs

With restrictions on people gathering in person, HPL rapidly shifted to offer online programs. Public programming is being provided through Microsoft Teams. Staff were trained to provide programming from their homes with minimal technical support required. Staff can set up meetings and invite external presenters (for discussions like book clubs) or create public live events where customers can join without an invitation. For special events throughout the year, livestreaming

provided a live event feed on hpl.ca. After events are finished, event listings were updated with the recorded video so that customers can quickly view events directly in Communico event listings.

- **Supporting Local Artists** - HPL has partnered with the Hamilton Arts Council and AGH to create online learning performance opportunities for local performers. These online events paid local artists to bring some needed live music and entertainment to our community. HPL also sponsored artist performances during Hamilton Art's Week, Hamilton Literacy Awards and Cobalt Connects events.
- **Which Book Next** - The Library has introduced a new online service called Which Book Next. This is an email-based Reader Advisory (R.A.) service run by the AskHPL team. Sample feedback received from customers: "Wow, thank you so much for the speedy reply! I am very excited about your new service! I just put 3 of them on hold. You totally nailed the suggestions based on the summaries of these books. Thank you! I will use this service again, I love it!"
- **Writer in Residence** – HPL, McMaster University and McMaster Library welcomed Janet Rodgers as our new Writer in Residence and we've moved the program online. Janet is available for Hamilton writing and aspiring writers digitally via enlwr@mcmaster.ca.
- **Code Club** – We have launched a 10-week Code Club Online program for children between 8 – 12 in different creative exercises sessions to learn and develop coding skills.
- **Google (GISC) Project** – In total 52 learners in the program have completed their courses in different levels. We promoted a workshop about virtual interviews and workshops to the learners.
- **Digital Literacy Programs** – There was growth in online digital literacy programs in 2020. Example of new initiatives include: Grow with Google, 3D print TinkerCad, Create a Website and others.

Supporting Learning from Home

In 2020 we increased visibility and promotion of online card registration including a streamlined form for teachers to help students access library resources online. Several library eResource vendors offered temporary free access to new databases while schools and library branches were closed. We currently offer **remote technical support** to customers. As learning from home is increasingly relied upon, we want students and their families to know they can get remote help from HPL staff.

- [Online Things to Do at Home](#) links to some of our most useful and popular online resources.
- A special page of [Resources for Learning](#) was also created.
- For learners of all ages, a rich collection of [Do-it-Yourself Resources](#)
- A new [simple online library card application](#) has been created for students

IN-PERSON SERVICES DEVELOPMENTS

After the initial lockdown in March, HPL was gradually able to restore modified in-person service during the summer and build on that foundation by phasing in additional service in the autumn. In November and December increased restrictions were again put in place. With all the restrictions we have in place due to COVID-19, our in-person capacity is much lower than what it normally would be. While we end 2020 in a Provincial Shutdown, only offering limited in-person Take-out service, we are proud of the fact that in 2020 HPL was able to provide more services than most Libraries in other communities. We need to acknowledge the support of the City of Hamilton that made that possible.

Library Service Hours

Expanding Library Service Hours has been a long-term goal of the Library Board. Work on expanding Library hours around the system has been a major focus since 2015. The following tables show the major phases of Library Service hours since the initial closure due to the pandemic. We have achieved a greater consistency of hours for our branches to be open despite the pandemic, in contrast to irregular hours schedule pre-pandemic. One of the major barriers to service identified in recent years for members is the confusion that a complex and challenging matrix of service hours provides for members. While a very active Library member learns to adjust to the complexity, potential and infrequent members find closed days and other service complexities difficult to navigate. This creates a barrier to usage and undermines our ability to easily communicate our service offerings to existing and new potential members.

Several factors temporarily put constraints on Library service hours, including:

- **COVID-19 Restrictions:** With HPL operating under pandemic restrictions and many people limiting their outside movement, the demand for and our ability to serve the normal volume of in-person visitors is limited.
- **Operating Budget:** Many public libraries have had their 2020 operating budgets reduced. HPL did not experience this in 2020, however, HPL understood that the City, as with most other municipalities, is facing severe budget pressures, so we did not anticipate extra levy funding to support our COVID related expenses. The operating assumption, that the Board approved, is that we will need to self-fund through savings all required expenses.
- **Staffing:** Initially many Library Pages had not yet been returned to work and other retirements and vacancies have not yet been filled causing constraints. In early stages Library staff were seconded to support the City’s emergency response and staff were accommodated to work remotely during the pandemic. Regarding vacancies, we are currently holding off filling most vacancies until we have more certainty around the 2021 operating budget.
- **Additional Work Requirements:** Implementing enhanced cleaning including regularly frequently touched surfaces and checking-in members as they enter our spaces have required additional staff resources.

ONLINE ONLY SERVICE HOURS – STARTING MAY 3

Location	MON - FRI	SAT	SUN
Online Only Service	8 - 10	8 - 5	1 - 5

INITIAL TAKE-OUT SERVICE HOURS

Location	TUES - FRI	SAT	SUN
Phased in Reopening of Branch	11 - 7	8 - 5	1 - 5

SERVICE HOURS – STARTING JULY 28

Location	TUE - THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
All Locations	11 - 7	11 - 5	11 - 5	-

SERVICE HOURS – EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 5 TO HOLIDAY CLOSURES & LOCKDOWN

Location	MON	TUE -THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
GROUP 1 – Central, Dundas, Red Hill, Terryberry, Barton, Concession, Kenilworth, Sherwood, Turner Park, Waterdown.	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, Greensville, Lynden, Mount Hope	-	10 - 6	10 - 6	10 - 5	-
FRESHDESK (ASKHPL) – Remote Information Service & Member Support (Phone, Email, Online Chat)	10 - 9	10 - 9	10 - 6	10 - 5	

SERVICE HOURS – EFFECTIVE DURING PROVINCIAL SHUTDOWN (END OF 2020)

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

Physical Collections

- Community Collections – expansion of collections to Food Banks and Community Housing
- Interlibrary Loan – resumed filling ILLO requests created during pandemic closure
- Initiated Reciprocal Agreement with Six Nations Public Library
- HPL was awarded the only public library donation of the Canadian Children’s Book Center Collection

Fines Free

Fines on Youth materials were eliminated permanently in 2020 and Fines on all other materials were suspended until the end of 2021. Fines have long been a barrier for many people and a

relatively small and decreasing revenue stream has been resulting in disproportionate costs to administer while creating real and perceived barriers for library members. Many positive comments have been received related to the Fines-free initiative and we've encouraged library members to "pay-it-forward" by donating the value of their fines.

Rural Service Expansion

Extended Access was suspended at Freelon and Lynden. The construction projects at Carlisle and Greenville will add two more Extended Access locations. Plans for Mount Hope which are not as advanced will later address that location, bringing all rural branches the Extended Access service. In 2021 HPL plans to relaunch Extended Access when it is appropriate and safe to do so.

Local History and Archives (LHA)

LHA continues to move forward with a number of important initiatives, including:

- Internet Archive (IA) and Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) - National promotion and presentations of Legal Opinion and National Emergency Library
- Media responses to COVID related research and remote collection access
- Celebrating Local History through Social Media
- Digital Asset Management System (DAMS) research and preparations

OTHER ORGANIZATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Library Membership Growth

Online Card Registration was launched in 2019. There were over 30,000 new members using the library's OverDrive collection in part due to COVID and as part of our reciprocal online agreement with Mississauga and Burlington Public Libraries. At the end of 2020 HPL had 157,992 active members.

A Learning & Innovative Organization: Setting up our Staff for Success

HPL's current strategic priorities are relevant to supporting staff to be equipped to meet current and future needs, and our being a **Learning and Innovative Organization** stresses this. Serving communities that are facing rapidly changing technology, with their needs evolving and changing, means equipping our committed staff to meet this challenge must be a major area of focus. Early in the pandemic with most of our staff working from home, we placed a major focus on staff completing online training and maintaining a weekly learning logⁱⁱⁱ. With all the changes to how we work, getting staff trained was a priority. Major focuses of this year have been on Microsoft Teams and FreshDesk.

ADVANCING COMMUNITY PRIORITIES THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS

Although much of our partnership activity is currently suspended due to COVID-19, HPL continues to explore partnerships to respond to COVID-19. Partnerships will play a critical role in HPL's actions supporting the post pandemic recovery. Important partnership priorities for 2020 include:

- **Indwell at Parkdale** – Funding for the project was approved in early 2020. Construction is proceeding well and our lease with Indwell has been finalized. The location will likely be open for business in early 2021. Parkdale will be HPL's 23rd branch. It will be located on Parkdale Avenue between Barton & Melvin Avenues on the ground floor of Indwell's affordable housing community complex. Branch amenities will include a popular collection, public computers, free

Wi-Fi, and community meeting rooms. We will also be able to take advantage of two on-site gardens to offer some fun outdoor programming.

- **Urban Indigenous Strategy** – Working with the Urban Indigenous Strategy the library was the host of local Indigenous Artists as part of Hamilton Reads. We look forward to continued work with UIS as we work towards the Calls to Action in both the UIS and Truth and Reconciliation Report.
- **Indigenous Programming** – HPL is dedicated to highlighting Indigenous voices through our programming. Our current Writer in Residence, Janet Rogers, is a Mohawk/Tuscarora writer from the Ontario Six Nations, and she launched her new book *Ego of a Nation* in celebration of National Indigenous People’s Day at an author event, and she also produced a podcast that was aired on McMaster’s podcast system in June. The 2020 Hamilton Reads title is *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice, who is an Anishinaabe writer and journalist from the Wasauksing First Nation. On HPL’s YouTube Channel you’ll discover studio tours with artists Tsēmā Igharas who is an award-winning, interdisciplinary artist of Tahltan descent, and Dani Jonathan, a crafter from Six Nations. Tsēmā and Dani, along with Nunavummiuq artist Jesse Tungilik created Achievement Badges as part of our Hamilton Reads Summer Reading Program.
- **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 explores strategies to keep seniors socially engaged and developing. 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.
- **McMaster Children & Youth University (MCYU)** – HPL had offered in-person programs, but they are now evolving to online clubs and on-demand delivery of these programs that bring the university right to kids in the community.
- **Continuing Education – Google IT Support Certificate Scholarship** – Working with Google, HPL provided 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.
- **Frontier College** – HPL is distributing 1000 booklets filled with learning activities from Frontier College. HPL and Frontier College have expanded the partnership by offering online math tutoring and reading help for kids, and teen tutoring for a variety of high school subjects.
- **Reading Programs** - The library continues 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. HPL launched the annual Hamilton Reads program early this year in order to engage readers across Hamilton during the first weeks of the pandemic. With a successful launch in mid-April the ebook for our featured title *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice has been circulated 5000 times, we have hosted book clubs and featured artist and author events through our Virtual Branch. Our annual reading programs include hundreds of Hamilton readers with the TD Summer Reading Club, Top Teen and Junior Teen Novel, Hamilton Reads and Telling Tales festivals.

- **Supporting Authors** – As part of the promotion for the Short Works Prize, HPL has hosted a weekly program through the Virtual Branch called Poems and Stories from Home, which features local writers reading their work. These programs offer opportunities for local writers to find an audience for their work during this unprecedented time. HPL has also hosted several live author events online.
- **Seniors Programs** – Supporting Seniors through programming to help reduce social isolation was a priority for programming the Virtual Branch. We continue to work with many of our partners including City of Hamilton Recreation, Metcalf Foundation, McMaster, Ontario Bar Association, and the Hamilton Council on Aging to offer both face-to-face programs online, as well as interactive live informational events. During the physical branch closure staff called thousands of isolated seniors and supported them with accessing library and community resources as well as a recreational/social check in.
- **Hamilton Pride 2020** - The library supported Hamilton 2020 Pride and inclusion by providing information and resources for Pride Hamilton to share and promote, including booklists containing reads by and about 2SLGBTQIA+ communities (Kids, Teen, Adult). Also shared were lists of books to support conversations about race, racism and resistance (Kids, Teen, Adult), titles by Indigenous authors (Indigenous Authors), and books about teen mental health (Teen Mental Health). HPL also supported Pride this year by promoting a curated list of 2SLGBTQIA+ community resources in the Red Book (Community Resources). In addition, a Pride-themed Discover At Home activity was created and posted in June to coincide with Hamilton Pride.
- **Gender Identity and Expression Protocol Training City of Hamilton** – In 2020 we continued the process of ensuring all permanent staff participate in this training. In 2021 library pages will be participating in a modified version of this training.
- **Ongoing local community partnerships with Farmer's Markets** – HPL strives to becoming a visible presence in the community at Farmer's Markets across the City promoting library services and programs along with food literacy. During the physical location closure the library donated print resources to Food Banks for sharing with customers and included a Hamilton Farmer Market Display at Central.
- **Newcomer Learning Centre** – The Newcomer Learning Centre continues to support its 100 student and tutor pairs, in person while the library was open to the public, and 70 pairs online since March 2020. The Seniors language classes have all transitioned online, and they continue to be running weekly. Two additional conversation circles have been added online while library locations are closed for entry.

Important Partnerships Impacted by COVID-19 Pandemic

- **Mohawk College** – City School by Mohawk – Hamilton Public Library continues to grow its partnership with Mohawk College to offer a wider selection of free college credit programs. Before the pandemic, City School was delivering 4 programs twice a week at Hamilton Central Library covering topics about music, business plans and careers in Technology. Although more credit programs were planned for the Winter of 2020 at Central and Red Hill with a focus on small business entrepreneurship and child development those programs have taken a pause. We will be exploring ways we can continue working with Mohawk on this important and growing initiative.
- **Xperience Annex** – Is a partnership initiative between HPL and the City of Hamilton located at Central Library Circuit 4.0 (4th floor, Central Library). Xperience Annex support youth in achieving their goals by connection and collaboration with education, health care and

employment providers. With the help of youth navigators 6 days a week, Xperience Annex works with youth to understand their needs and create pathways to community services and employment. The program is currently paused, but we are looking to relaunch at the appropriate time.

- **Our Future Hamilton (OFH)** – OFH’s positive vision for the future informs HPL activities to advance the key themes in our work. Normally, HPL actively supports OFH events, including their annual summit. HPL will look for ways work with the City and Library partners to advance the vision as we work on recovery.

FINANCIAL & OPERATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- **Operating budget** – We will continue to ensure operating funds are effectively used to maximize our impact and relevance to the community. This will include ensuring we work within the 2020 and 2021 operating budget while we plan for the 2022-2024 operating budgets that meet the City of Hamilton’s budget targets as closely as possible.
- **Revenue Generation** – We will continue providing the Board with an annual report that highlights alternative sources of funding we received in the previous year. This includes fines, fees, donations and special grant funding. The first report on revenue generation was received in March 2017. We will continue to focus on ways we can supplement our funding in ways that are consistent with our vision and values as an organization.
- **Fundraising Strategy** – Pending Board approval, staff will undertake a study to develop potential revenue generation strategies and tactics. That report will provide the Board with options to consider for future directions. In 2020, the Board approved funds for a fundraising feasibility study to identify potential fundraising strategies. Due to COVID-19 that project has been deferred.
- **Expanded Metrics Program** – Building on past work, we will continue to improve our metrics reporting. In 2020 we moved to a weekly dashboard model to support our operational agility during the pandemic. We continued to participate in national library data strategies and are committed to data transparency.
- **DC Charges** – Public Libraries are now eligible for full cost recovery for eligible capital expenses as outlined in Development Charges Act. The mandatory 10% deduction was removed for all services that remain eligible in the Development Charges Act. This allows 100% of the portion of library growth-related projects to be collected from development charges vs a 90% capped maximum in the past. We will be working with the City in 2021 as they update the Development Charges By-law to reflect this change.

Policy Development

HPL will continue to update and refine our organizational policies. The review schedule as approved by the Library Board in the Policy Manual will continue. In 2020 we continue with that process as we also expedite our review of our Inclusion, Program, Space Rentals and Partnership policies to ensure we address current policy challenges facing libraries in other communities.

- **Fines and Fees Policy** – HPL began assessing the impact of our fines and fees in 2018 and have made significant inroads and passed the new Fines and Fees Policy in June 2020. Now everyone in Hamilton – kids, teens and adults – can have a fresh start by resolving and waiving library fines until December 31, 2021. All youth material fines have been eliminated permanently. Previously blocked members have borrowed 3.45% of 2020’s circulation and 8,026 kid and teen members can now borrow materials.

FACILITY RENEWAL

In 2011 HPL had 6 locations that could not be brought up to current standards and provide accessible services into the future. Only one facility remained without a plan, Mount Hope. A feasibility study will soon be underway, and options are being explored. In 2018 the Library Board completed an independent assessment of our facilities to evaluate how HPL services and physical locations will align with the expected demographic patterns throughout the City. In addition to identifying potential gaps in library service, we will continue to incorporate future capital maintenance costs into our Facilities Master Plan and long-term planning. As we work to build our service, we will need to ensure we have a plan to effectively manage existing facilities over the long term. In early 2019 the 5th version of the Facilities Master Plan was approved by the Library Board.

- **Carlisle** – This past year, we continued to advance the redevelopment of a new Carlisle branch. We appreciate the generous donation of the TD Bank building in Carlisle. A 2020 capital budget submission has been approved for a \$1.75m capital project. In 2020 staff worked with the Library Board on finalizing the scope of the work and a final design has now been completed. An analysis of the state of the existing roof was recommended by the design consultant. A roof replacement was originally out of scope. Pending the outcome of the roof review we may need to add to the scope and budget. The project is expected to be tendered in early 2021 with construction to start in the spring.
- **Greenville** – In 2020, we continued to work in partnership with the HWDSB and the City of Hamilton to advance the project. Staff were instructed to advance construction of the new library and work with the City to identify additional funds for the project. Options for value engineering were considered and approved for redesign to bring the budget down without compromising the functionality of the space. Additional reserve funding was approved by the Board in April 2020. The Joint Development Agreement between the City and the School Board was then updated and executed. Our scope of work was added to the project and construction proceeded smoothly with work now nearly complete. Shelving, equipment, and furniture is now on order in anticipation of a Spring 2021 occupancy.
- **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 City's Recreation Department has been exploring other options which could have an impact on plans for the site. The feasibility study has been temporarily paused until we have some more clarity on their plans for the site. Work on the study should resume in 2021.
- **Valley Park** – The temporary location was opened in Q1 2020 at nearby 1050 Paramount Drive. Requests for tenders for the Library portion of the work related to the new branch came in over budget. Additional reserve funding was approved by the Board in April 2020 with additional Development Charge funding approved as part of the 2021 Capital Budget Process. Construction work is now well underway. The frame of the new library is now up, the roof has been installed, and concrete flooring has been poured. A Fall 2021 occupancy is anticipated.
- **Parkdale** – Funding for the project was approved in early 2020. Construction is proceeding well. Our lease with Indwell has now been finalized. The location will likely be open for business in early 2021. Parkdale will be HPL's 23rd branch. It will be located on Parkdale Avenue between Barton & Melvin Avenues on the ground floor of Indwell's affordable housing community complex. Branch amenities will include a popular collection, public computers, free Wi-Fi, and community meeting rooms. We will also be able to take advantage of two on-site gardens to offer some fun outdoor programming.

HPL PANDEMIC RESPONSE DOCUMENTS IN 2020

Pandemic Service Continuity Plan, March 2020

<https://www.hpl.ca/sites/default/files/HPLSystemPandemicPlan-2020-03-13.pdf>

Working Assumptions, May 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=859&MeetingID=78>

Phased Reopening Plan, June 2020

<https://www.hpl.ca/sites/default/files/HPLReopeningPlanJune2020.pdf>

Service Hours Strategy Report, September 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=928&MeetingID=80>

Mid-year Progress Report, September 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=919&MeetingID=80>

Statement on Service Continuity, November 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=942&MeetingID=82>

Multi-Year Business Plan 2021, December 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=993&MeetingID=83>

Update on 2020 and Looking Ahead, December 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=998&MeetingID=83>

COVID-19 and HPL's Pandemic Response, April 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=846&MeetingID=84>

COVID-19 and HPL's Pandemic Response, May 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=855&MeetingID=78>

COVID-19 and HPL's Pandemic Response, June 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=869&MeetingID=79>

COVID-19 and HPL's Pandemic Response, September 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=881&MeetingID=80>

COVID-19 and HPL's Pandemic Response, October 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=895&MeetingID=81>

COVID-19 and HPL's Pandemic Response, December 2020

<https://hpl.novusagenda.com/agendapublic/CoverSheet.aspx?ItemID=915&MeetingID=83>

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- ⁱ City of Hamilton Recovery Roadmap - <https://www.hamilton.ca/reopens>
 - ⁱⁱ CULC Think Tank Tool Kit - <http://culc.ca/advocacy/thinktank/>
 - ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.hpl.ca/articles/professional-development-resources-hpl-staff>