

**Date:** January 15, 2020  
**To:** Chair and Members of the Library Board  
**From:** Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO  
**Subject:** **2019 Final Report on Goals**

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## **BACKGROUND**

Annually the Library Board approves a multi-year budget submission and business plan that is submitted to the City of Hamilton. Part of that plan includes goals for the coming year. The Chief Librarian/CEO reports to the Library Board progress on the goals through a midyear report in June and a final report in December/January. This is the final report for the 2019 goals.

## **INITIATIVES 2019**

### **SERVICE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Library Service Hours** – For the last several years, HPL has been working on reducing gaps in service hours without expanding our overall staff complement. The process of strategically addressing gaps in service hours accelerated in 2017- 2018. In 2019 we built on the progress already made and we will continue to monitor and assess the impacts of changes.

- Since 2015, 151 hours of service has been added per week without an increase in staffing. In December 2018 the Library Board received the 4<sup>th</sup> report on service hours in 2 years. In the last half of 2019 staff reported back to the Library Board on the impacts of the changes to date, proposed additional changes that can be implemented within the current staffing complement and discussed possible budget enhancements that would enable addressing more service gaps.
- Beginning in April and running until the end of September 2019, our Mount Hope branch has offered Friday morning bookmobile service to improve access to Library services.
- In September the Library Board approved opening 3 locations at 9 am instead of 10 am: Ancaster, Saltfleet and Sherwood. We will assess the impact of doing this then report back within 6 months. The multi-year business plan submitted to the City included possible modest budget enhancements in the years 2021, 2022 and 2023 to accelerate the reduction in service hour gaps.

**Rural Service Model** – The Freelton extended access model that started in October 2017 has been a great success. Other libraries in Canada are looking at the effective model we have developed. Lynden moved to open access in October 2018. In 2019 we will investigate expanding this to the Carlisle branch.

- The extended access model continues to yield positive results at Freelton and Lynden. This model is planned for the Carlisle, Greensville and Mount Hope branches. The implementation is currently planned to happen in conjunction with capital projects at Carlisle, Greensville and Mount Hope. Should any of those projects experience extended delays the timing will be brought back to the Library Board for reconsideration.

## **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 2019 operating budget while we plan for 2020-2022 operating budgets that meet the City of Hamilton's budget targets as closely as possible.

- The City of Hamilton approved a 2.4% increase for the 2019 operating budget. Staff continue to monitor spending carefully since in recent years the operating surplus has been very small. Our goal continues to be never to run an operating deficit while at the same time we ensure we only ask the City of Hamilton for funding that is needed.
- Budget direction for 2020 was set at 2%. The Board approved a submission that met that target. The Board also approved an enhancement to propose to Council for operating funding for a neighbourhood branch in Parkdale. It represents a .5% in 2020 for ½ of the operating funds with a new branch to open around mid-year. We will ask for the other ½ of operating funding in 2021.

**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 will include fine, fees, donations and special grant funding. 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.

- In April 2019 staff presented the Annual Report on Revenue Generation (non-levy funding). Staff presented a plan that included hiring a fund raiser and establishing a library store to promote HPL. Instead of pursuing that plan, the Board directed staff to report back at a future meeting on:
  - Fundraising Strategy - Staff are to propose a scope of work and estimated cost of a feasibility study to develop a business plan to enhance HPL's fundraising activities
  - "HPL Store" - Staff are to propose a scope of work and estimated cost of a feasibility study to develop a plan to create an "HPL Store" that sells merchandise to promote awareness of the Library in the community.
- In December staff proposed to the Board for 1<sup>st</sup> review undergoing a formal study to determine best approaches to move forward given our context.

**Expanded Metrics Program** - Building on past work, we will continue to improve our metrics reporting. We will continue to monitor trends in usage at HPL while we also ensure we continue to report on how we compare to other libraries. We will continue to work with the broader library community to build rigorous and objective impact measures that help ensure our programs and services are directed towards positive results and outcomes. In March 2017 a new branch by branch report looking at 5-year trends and weekly usage patterns was received.

- Library staff continue to provide quarterly activity reports to the Board. HPL is playing a leadership role in the Canadian Urban Library Council's (CULC) Key Performance Indicators (KPI). HPL is actively involved in evaluating outcomes in areas such as: literacy programs, digital literacy and programs and services for seniors.

**Lean Assessments** - Lean is built around the concept that work should focus on maximizing customer value while minimizing waste. Adding value to our customers while we remove/reduce low impact work is an important source of generating capacity. Building on the work that the City of

Hamilton and other libraries are doing, HPL will continue to work towards using Lean processes to review our work. In 2017 staff completed a full assessment of our shipping process. The goal was to improve how we handle intra-branch traffic. In 2018/19 we started to look at our event management, room bookings and related planning process. While we have made some changes, we anticipate the further changes will be implemented in 2020 as we review policies around programs, partnerships and room rentals.

- **Customer Service Experience Taskforce:** streamlined HPL customer library cards, implemented autorenewal of resources for materials not on hold, decreased holds and total numbers of materials borrowed at a given time to encourage greater use of the Library collections and browsability.
- **The Events Management and Online Program registration** is a customer-focused software that was launched early 2019, to increase program reach and remove barriers to participate. Customers can now register for programs online or in-branch. In the first quarter more than half the program registrations were done online which reduced staff administration and provided streamlined options for customers. The process was streamlined to manage the process from the start of program planning up to publishing and registration. It reduced the registration administration by 20%, made it consistent system-wide and created efficiencies by reducing duplication of work (e.g. include attendance statistical information in the system).
- **Staff Scheduling Software:** Staff Scheduling Working Group has been working with the selected vendor to configure the new software. The new software will bring efficiencies, automation and direct integration with the City Payroll system, leaning the current process. The new software will also integrate online access for staff to view their schedule and information submission through a direct website and mobile app. The software implementation has been challenging and is being delayed to ensure we address the major issues before moving forward with implementation.

### 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 December staff presented an updated Board Policy Manual that incorporates the policy changes approved by the Library Board in 2019, along with an updated schedule of policies to review in 2020. The schedule includes accelerating the review of policies related to Diversity & Inclusion, Core Position Statements, Partnerships, Programs and Space Rentals.

### CAPITAL PROJECTS

**Carlisle Branch** – Advance the redevelopment of a new Carlisle branch.

- The completion of the legal agreement with TD Bank for the donation of the former Carlisle TD Bank branch and property has been completed. We are working with the City and TD to coordinate the public announcement of this and recognizing TD for their generous donation which will serve the Carlisle community for decades to come. Our next phase will be to work out with the Library Board the scope of the work that will be completed to retrofit the former TD bank building. The Library's capital budget request to the City to add \$750,000 to the project on top of the \$1 million already set-aside was approved by Council.

**Central Windows Replacement** – The original 1980 windows were replaced based on life cycle requirements. The final phase of this project was completed in 2019.

- The project was completed on time and on budget. One major side benefit of this project is we now have anchors on all parts of the external roofs. This will enable us effectively to maintain the building.

**Greenville Branch** - Continue to work in partnership with the HWDSB and the City of Hamilton, to advance the joint project.

- HPL and the City are currently working with the HWDSB to get our part of the project completed as part of the construction of the school. If that process is not successful, then the project timelines would be altered significantly.

**Valley Park Branch** - We will finalize scope and funding for the new Valley Park branch with design to be completed in 2019 and construction projected to begin in early 2020.

- We were pleased to learn that the City added funds to enable work on the Valley Park Community Centre to happen as part of this project. This has delayed the project a bit, but we are still on track to tender in Q3 /Q4 of this year. Construction would take approximately 18 months beginning in early 2020 to Spring/Summer 2021. Now that significant recreation space renovations are in scope, we will have to close the existing library for most of the duration of the construction period.
- A temporary site has been located at 1050 Paramount Drive. We are pleased the leasing costs are reasonable and the mall the temporary site is located in close proximity to the existing site.
- The construction contract is in its final stages. We are working with our partners to ensure this can be released soon.

**Westdale Branch** - Completion of the Westdale reflooring project is on track for completion in early to mid-June 2019. This branch refresh included new carpeting, tiling, painting, installing barrier free door operators to the washrooms, privacy panels for the washrooms and a new information desk.

- Renovations were completed ahead of scheduled and we reopened in early June.

**Mount Hope Branch** – In September 2019, the Board approved use of Library Reserve funds to undertake a feasibility study to look at options for a new or renovated Mount Hope branch. The library feasibility study is to be added to the scope of work for a feasibility study that Public Works is working on related to another facility located on the same site.

## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

**Maker Space and Digital Media Equipment** - We will continue to expand the availability of digital media equipment around the system and introduce new technologies and innovations. We will provide programs to teach the use of these tools and other learning opportunities to leverage innovations in entrepreneurship endeavors, for children, and adult learning.

- A new Cricut machine was recently added at the Maker Space in Central. The Cricut is very popular with craft lovers. It is a die-cutting machine that prints intricate and detailed cut designs

from a computer software on a variety of materials. The new unit will be promoted throughout the summer and HPL will offer a new "Creative Space with Cricut" program in the fall.

- System-wide digital literacy programs continue to gain interest. We are always adding new creative and fun learning opportunities such as: "Create your website with WIX" which provides training on web design fundamentals and hands-on experience to get customers to start working on their own website and "Make a Scene with Stikbots" which provides a fun way to use flexible figurines to create animated scenes and learn photography and video in a fun creative way.
- HPL embraced Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) in our digital literacy programs to give customers simulated global real-life experiences. HPL successfully offered numerous armchair-traveler programs throughout the branches providing customers of all ages a virtual tour experience of cities and global landmarks from within the library.
- HWDSB High school students in the Specialist High Skills Major Program (SHSM) worked with Hamilton Public Library to obtain a certificate of completion after exploring video and audio recording and completing a digital project at HPL Makerspace. The students worked in small teams to put their learning into action by creating a short newscast using the green screen and digital tools available at the library. <https://www.hpl.ca/makerspaces/in-action>
- HWDSB Gifted students from grades 7 across 72 Hamilton public schools have visited the Central Makerspace at Hamilton Public Library during 2018-2019 school year for a day of technical enriched programs. The students learned how to use Photoshop to beautify the buildings they photographed on their way to library, visited Local History & Archives department to learn about the history of their selected buildings and created photography collages of the present and historic local buildings using their newly acquired skills.

**2018-2021 Digital Strategy and Plan** - We will develop a digital strategy and plan that supports the Library Board's new strategic plan in 2018. The strategy will ensure that digital technology plans support the delivery of the organization priority and goals and build on national digital library frameworks to deliver community value and prosperity through digital literacy.

- The Digital Strategy and Plan was launched and approved at the January 2019 Board meeting. It supports the Library Board's 2018-2021 strategic plan and drives innovations to achieve HPL's priorities and goals. Some completed projects include:
  - Migration to Office365 and numerous hardware and software system upgrades.
  - Early Learning systems, printers, monitors and Windows 10 upgrades.
  - New Digital Literacy programs designed and delivered in the community
  - Advancing Digital Literacy in collaboration with partners in the community including McMaster, Mohawk City School, the IEC and Google Canada on various initiatives.
  - Other services include Online Library eCard registration and implementing a new system to manage the program planning process including online program registration.

### **STAFF LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT**

HPL's current strategic priorities are all relevant to supporting staff to be equipped to meet current and future needs, however, the priority a **Learning and Innovative Organization** stresses this most clearly. Serving individuals and communities that are facing rapidly changing technology and evolving learning needs, means equipping our committed staff to meet this challenge must be a major area of focus.

To address this challenge, HPL's management and staff have been working on building on our internal staff development programs to create several Learning Institutes (LI). The LI are designed to proactively equip existing staff with the skills they need today and will need in the future. Some LI programs are continuous with content that is regularly updated to reflect current key messages and initiatives within the basic program. Other LI programs are developed specifically to target trends and issues described in the current Multi-Year Business Plan (MYBP) or in response to the introduction of new services or new or evolving technologies and applications. The latter programs are later incorporated in onboarding and other continuous programs. The following LI have been developed and will continue to support staff in their roles:

1. Library Collections Institute
2. Customer Service and Inclusion Institute
3. Digital Literacy and Technology Skills Institute
4. Financial and Human Resources Institute
5. Health and Safety Institute
6. Learning Program Institute
7. Leadership Development Institute
8. Youth Services Institute

### **1. Collections Institute**

The Collections Institute supports collections development and management. Additionally, it promotes the ongoing development of related customer service skills including knowledge necessary to effectively assist customer discovery of and engagement with collections through BiblioCommons, displays at locations, hpl.ca, community outreach and social media. A key area of focus is readers' advisory related skills and knowledge that supports employee conversations with customers seeking advice about fiction, non-fiction, and digital offerings of all types. The Collections Institute also ensures awareness of specific services such as Local History and Archives and the Visiting Library Service. This Institute's audience includes all front-line information service employees and employees working in Collections and Technical Services.

### **2. Customer Service and Inclusion Institute (CSI)**

The Customer Service and Inclusion Institute supports excellence in all areas of customer service. It supports employees' understanding of Mission, Vision, and Values and related professional accountabilities. It includes introduction to core customer service strategies and how those strategies support the circulation of library materials and the provision of information services to customers. It includes customer service training that highlights actions serving diversity and inclusion. Additionally, it incorporates strategies for dealing with conflict and maintaining personal safety in difficult interactions. CSI content is wide-ranging, supporting ongoing and current system operations and special projects with the goal of ensuring customer service actions are consistent system-wide. This Institute's audience includes all employees. A couple examples of specific training provided by the CSI, include:

- **The Customer Service Roadshow:** The Roadshow is one of HPL's core customer service training programs. All employees participate within their first four months of employment and for refresher sessions when appropriate. Content emphasizes service to library users

and to colleagues. It begins with the premise that customer service is not a department: it is how each employee acts to reflect mission, vision, values.

- **Prepare Training®**: The Prepare Training® Foundation Course is a customer service program presented jointly with the Health and Safety Institute to all employees, except Library Pages. With a core philosophy of Respect, Service, and Safety at Work®, the Prepare Training® program is built on values that prioritize respectful interactions, a service-oriented attitude, and maintaining a safe environment for employees and customers. It develops understanding of how to offer professional respect to all customers and has proven to be effective at giving library employees the skills they need to recognize a crisis in the making and to de-escalate it using verbal, para-verbal and non-verbal communication techniques.

### **3. Digital Literacy and Technology Skills Institute**

Digital Literacy and Technology Skills Institute programs support the implementation of digital literacy and technology skill development related initiatives and include programs designed to build capacity and support Maker/Creation Innovative Services and Spaces. This Institute's audience includes all employees.

- **Technical Benchmarks and Training Plan**: The Tech Training Program is the Digital Literacy and Technology Skills Steering Committee's response to employees #1 strategic request: more tech training to meet ever-evolving customer expectations for assistance. The Plan outlines basic, intermediate and advanced level requirements that apply to all HPL employees and is providing training designed to ensure all staff have the technology skills they need. This is critical to public service staff, as technology is one area that we are often asked for assistance from customers.

### **4. Financial and Human Resources Institute**

The primary focus of this institute is to provide onboarding activities designed to create awareness of policies and procedures related to Financial Services, Facilities, Human Resources, and selected areas of system importance not covered by other Learning Institutes. Another focus is refresher training projects in the areas identified above.

- In conjunction with the Process Improvement Group, the policy/standard operating procedures were updated and cash handing & cash reporting training was offered by Financial Services for branch cash custodians.

### **5. Health and Safety Institute**

The Health and Safety Institute supports the orientation and training recommendations of the Management Team and Joint Health and Safety Committee and ensures that HPL meets all compliance requirements for regulatory training. Additionally, its programs promote ongoing development and use of safe work strategies and builds system-wide awareness of best practices and library policies and procedures. This Institute's audience includes all employees.

### **6. Leadership Development Institute**

Leadership is a competency expected of employees in all job roles. Employees are expected to demonstrate leadership supporting Mission, Vision, Values in ways that are appropriate to their



position. The Leadership Institute includes a variety of internal and external supports for current and future leaders. The Leadership Institute also includes Staff Day and other programs designed to develop professional knowledge and to promote best practices. All the listed programs are ongoing.

All programs support enacting Mission, Vision, Values and Multi-year Business Plan activities. For example, Conference attendance in 2019 included the Chief Librarian/CEO's participation in an Internet Archive leaders conference and the Librarians' Summit in November 2019 engaged HPL and Librarians from Burlington Public, Mohawk and McMaster Libraries for a day of library advocacy focused workshops.

### **7. Learning Program Institute**

The Programming Institute supports adult program development, delivery and management. It promotes the ongoing development of related program and customer service skills including knowledge and skills necessary to develop community-led programs, to effectively assist customer discovery of and registration in scheduled programs and to efficiently complete related back-end activities such as speaker and room booking, event calendaring, statistical processes tracking participation, and ensuring prompt delivery of invoices to Financial Services. The Institute also creates awareness of key strategies linking program content with related print and digital collections. This Institute's primary audience is employees involved in programming at HPL. Selected modules such as Communico Reserve are of wider interest and include employees in job roles that support set up and take down of programs, such as Facilities and Communico Attend includes all Public Service employees. All Programming Institute activities support the Library's Strategic Priorities and the goals of the Multi-year Business Plan.

### **8. Youth Services Institute**

The Youth Services Institute supports youth services at HPL by creating awareness of collections and readers' advisory services to youth at all ages and stages and to their parents. Additionally, it develops specialized programming knowledge and skills related to program development, management and delivery for youth. The Youth Services Institute also supports community outreach to organizations such as schools and events where families are a key audience through modules and practical experience focused on partnerships and participation. The Institute also provides role appropriate onboarding information and activities to HPL leaders including Community Youth Librarians, Collections Librarians and Public Service Managers. Its audience therefore includes Public Service Programmers and employees in leadership roles. Most listed programs are ongoing; those related to the Multi-year Business Plan (MYBP) projects have that notation.

## **OTHER IMPORTANT DEVELOPMENTS OF 2019**

**Six New Managers Welcomed to HPL** – Early this year, Kat Drennan-Scace (Red Hill), Lorie Travi (Turner Park), Elizabeth Blackall (Ancaster/Lynden) and Matthew Abbott (Collections/Extension Services) joined the HPL Management Team. In temporary branch manager positions, Alyssa Seul (Westdale/Locke) and Kathleen Shannon (Barton/Kenilworth) were also brought on board.



**eOne Read Canada** – working with 6 other Public Libraries HPL has helped organize for 300 Canadian Public Libraries a National digital reading initiative for June. Glass Beads a collection of Indigenous short stories is the selected title to bring together Canadian digital readers and help advance the role of Canadian Public Libraries in promoting Canadian content and further strengthening the #eContentForLibraries project.

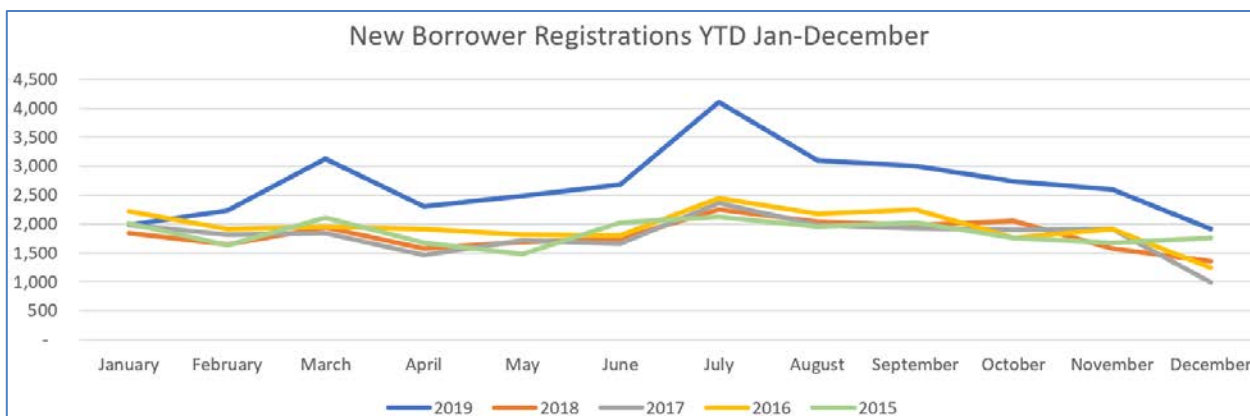
**Celebrating Local Writers** – HPL has hosted two celebrations this year to celebrate local writers. In its 24<sup>th</sup> year the Power of the Pen writing competition celebrates English and French youth Writers. With our partnership with McMaster University we were able to host in its 20<sup>th</sup> year the Mable Pugh Taylor Writer in Residence- Kate Cayley early in 2019 and Nilofar Shidmehr during the fall period. This past spring, Kate hosted a reading reception of the local writers she mentored who wished to share their work.

**Internet Archives Collection Integration** – Technical Services is working to integrate our new Internet Archives Collections into the catalogue so that customers can access this digital collection of 50,000+ items as easily as possible.

- In December the Library Board received a legal opinion on Controlled Digital Lending (CDL) that HPL has commissioned to ensure HPL moves forward with the Internet Archive consistent with Canadian copyright laws. This opinion will be shared with the other libraries in Canada.

**Extended Access Model** – Numerous conversations have been held with public libraries regarding HPL’s implementation of open+ technology with remote support in our rural branches. The journal article, *Open+ Technology with Remote Staff Support Improves Branch Access and Enhances Community Engagement*, written by S. Fahim, D. Wark and S. McKay was published in Public Library Quarterly (<https://doi.org/10.1080/01616846.2019.1665449>). S. McKay also presented the Extended Access model at the Library Marketing Communications Conference (LMCC) Nov 12-15 in St. Louis, Missouri. This conference draws 450 Library marketing professionals from across North America.

**Online Card Registration** - On April 18, 2019 the Online Card registration officially launched by promoting online registration through social media and on the library website front page carousel. In 2019 there were 4420 online registrations completed. Online registration, other improvements made from our customer experience task-force and the museum programs all contributed to a significant growth in new registrations in 2019.



**Free Museum Access Incredible Success** - Library Card access to Civic Museums started Family Day, 2019. The extremely successful one-year pilot invites HPL library card holders to gain free entry into these museums: Dundurn National Historic Site; Hamilton Military Museum; Fieldcote Memorial Park and Museum; Griffin House Museum; Whitehern Historic House and Garden; Hamilton Children's Museum; Battlefield House Museum and Park; and the Hamilton Museum of Steam and Technology. Positive and frequent media attention promoted the program. (<https://www.hpl.ca/museum>)

**Google IT Support Certificate Scholarship** - The Google IT Support Certificate initiative started early January. During the first few months, the initial focus was developing processes, promoting the availability of the program with partners and reviewing applications for eligibility of the scholarship. 50 successful participants representing diverse groups were offered the scholarship. The certificate program officially launched on April 1st. The target is to complete the certification in 8 months and become job ready at the end of certification (with other support programs to help the students succeed). Participant learners are proceeding and advancing well in their studies. 4 learners dedicated more time to the studies, already completed the program and obtained their certification months ahead of schedule.

**Hamilton Music Archives** – on May 3<sup>rd</sup> as part of the City's Music Strategy, HPL launched a collection of the history of music in Hamilton. LH&A launched the Hamilton Music Archive May 2019 at an event that celebrated the important history of music and music professionals in the City. The event concluded with an invitation to donate important memorabilia and music collections to the Archive. The Archive launch was highlighted in The Spectator, CBC, CHCH and Global News.

**2019 Concerts in the Round with Sonic Unyon** - In partnership with Sonic Unyon, HPL hosted a sold-out concert on Central's fourth floor with JUNO Award-winning singer-songwriter Matt Mays in support of his latest album, Twice Upon a Hell of a Time. There are two upcoming concerts also scheduled for Central's fourth floor in summer and fall.

**Central Library Space Study** - We have engaged Colliers Consultants to undertake a space planning study for Central to optimize customer service and improve operational efficiencies. The document would serve as a 5-year roadmap to help guide us as we plan for the next 5 years at Central. The study is in progress and we expect it to be completed by this fall. Staff will be reporting back to the Library Board in Q3 to get direction on which projects to pursue and funding sources.

- Colliers Consultants have provided their report back to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) with a number of recommendations to consider including refreshed furniture for the 4<sup>th</sup> Floor and pursuing a LEAN workflow analysis. High-level cost assumptions were provided by Colliers. We must leverage opportunities as they arise to make the most of our limited funding. The newly re-purposed Capital Enhancement Account and Reserve could be sources of funding for these initiatives balanced with other priorities. We will be reporting to the Library Board in Q1/Q2 of 2020 on the recommendations and possible funding sources.

**Age-Friendly/Dementia-Friendly/Newcomer-Friendly Libraries** - HPL is updating its programs, collateral and wayfinding to reflect an aging population. This includes offering larger print marketing

materials, signs with symbols vs. words, partnering with Alzheimer's Society on dementia tele-workshops, offering memory cafes, etc. Also, we implemented the new CNIB Phone It Forward program to collect donated phones for low-vision customers. The phones are updated with accessible applications to make daily living easier for those with vision loss. This program will be rolled out across HPL in May, which is vision health month. HPL hosted an Age Friendly Libraries Summit on October 1 at Central.

**Virtual and Augmented Reality HPL applications** - The success of the Virtual Reality tours offered at branches, inspired Hamilton Public Library to expand its usage and create simulated experiences closer to home. HPL developed a framework to use Virtual and Augmented Reality to use local content and create new experiences to be enjoyed by customers. HPL created VR tours of Central MakerSpace and Local History & Archives (LH&A) to give customers a simulated taste of the resources HPL offers. Tapping into Hamilton's history, customers can also experience virtual time travel between the historic and modern-day City of Hamilton. HPL applied the framework to integrate historic photographs of Hamilton buildings into Google Street View to create real experiences of touring the city through time using virtual and augmented reality.

Following the successful partnership with Mohawk College, Hamilton Public Library takes story time and reading programs to the next level with a program where kids experience a story written by a popular children's author and transformed into a VR interactive experience by Mohawk's coding club. As kids read from the story, the characters come to life around them; readers need to find a clue and complete a virtual task to progress to the next page in the story. Work in progress with planned completion this year.

**Research Projects with CityLab** – Six HPL project proposals were picked up by partnering post-secondary educational institutions for one or two semesters. The work was completed by students under the supervision of their professors. Students connected with library staff on these topics:

- Cultivating Cultural Humility at HPL
- Enhancing Wi-Fi at HPL
- Growing to Eat Better
- Central Library Information Hub
- Indigenous Naming Consultation
- Newborns and Other New Library Users

### **2SLGBTQ+ Archives: Call for Donations Event**

The library looks forward to launching the 2SLGBTQ+ archives in June 2020, as part of Hamilton Pride. Along with the family of Michael Johnstone the library hosted an event in October attended by Community members, the City Manager, Councillors and Board members.

### **Nautilus Gears: Time Travel Community Scavenger Hunt**

Nautilus Gears mystery has been solved! The winner was presented the beautiful, locally crafted Gears brooch and wooden box at the December 18th Board Meeting. Working with community partners including the Spectator, Hamiltonians were able to explore Hamilton, the Local History Collection and complete some puzzles to solve the community scavenger hunt.

### **Interlibrary Loan: Resumes for print**

The library resumed print only Interlibrary Loan via Canada Post with other Ontario Libraries and via a local courier service with the Six Nations, Brant, Brantford, Haldimand, Norfolk, Oxford County Libraries. We will begin microfilm interlibrary loan early in 2020.

### **New Bookmobile Stops & Community Collections: Eva Rothwell Literacy Train & 24 other sites**

On Friday, October 25th the Bookmobile started a new weekly stop at the Eva Rothwell Centre, the following week stops also started at Seasons Retirement Centre and Six Nations Library. Throughout the summer we worked with the Eva Rothwell Summer camp with a special Summer Reading Program and community collection on the Literacy Train. We are excited to continue growing our relationship with the Centre. More than two dozen Community Collections were launched in 2019 and we look forward to continuing to work with more community agencies in 2020 to expand collections in the community and providing access to HPL resources to even more Hamiltonians.

### **Grab and Go Bags**

Grab and Go bags for Children's books are now available at branches across Hamilton. These bags contain picture books and chapter books. These bags are pre-selected materials customers can grab off the shelf and check out without having to browse the shelves. These bags serve as a time-saver for families who only have a limited amount of time to spend selecting materials. In 2020 we look forward to launching Flix Pix bags with DVDs.

### **Digital Collections Updates:**

Digital circulation reached an all-time high this year in Hamilton by surpassing 1,000,000 copies. In 2019 the new OverDrive Express Collection has led to over 2000 customers a month accessing a "lucky day" checkout. These one-week loans of high demand titles are as popular as the print and DVD Express collections in Branches. The MacMillian digital embargo for public libraries has started. MacMillian is the library's 8th most circulated publisher and customers will start seeing a message in OverDrive on affected titles to let them know the library is only allowed to purchase 1 copy of MacMillian titles in the title's first eight weeks.

### **Empowerment Squared Programming at Branches**

This local non-profit has been doing great work in the City to help support newcomer youth. The organization was founded 10 years ago by Leo Johnston, a McMaster University graduate who came to Hamilton as a government supported refugee from Liberia. HPL has worked with Empowerment Squared in a number of ways for several years, including this year where a new series of teen programs has been launched to empower students to learn about navigating the legal system in Ontario.

### **Celebrating Our Local History at HPL: Anne Jones at Westdale Branch**

Efforts to celebrate a community's local history by creating quality displays and reproductions of images from Local History and Archives (LHA) in our branches has been warmly received by residents.

For Westdale branch, staff created a visual collage to honour local resident and long-time [Westdale customer Anne Jones](#). Among her many accomplishments, Anne was the first Regional Chair of Hamilton-Wentworth and she was inducted into the Gallery of Distinction in 1994. The next branch displays will include Terryberry and Barton.

### **TD Summer Reading Club for Youth**

Summer Reading – HPL joined public libraries across Canada in offering the TD Summer Reading Club across all 22 branches and 2 bookmobiles in order to help children maintain literacy levels and support a love of reading. This year's summer reading theme was the Natural World. With close to 9,000 participants, the summer reading program encouraged kids and teens to read books they love, track their reading, and discover something new in our learning programs. Small group reading support was available in Reading Buddies programs, where Summer Literacy Workers highlighted books on the First Nations Communities Read list and books about the environment.

### **Forest of Reading**

Hamilton Public Library is proud to partner with Hamilton Wentworth Catholic District School Board and Hamilton Wentworth District School Board to celebrate Forest of Reading. Elementary school students have read 2019 nominated books all school year, and in April, over 2000 young readers had the opportunity to meet the authors at 18 visits held at the Hamilton Public Library and the HWDSB Education Centre. In 2020 the library looks forward to hosting a Family Forest event at Turner Park to include families in the celebration of new Canadian Children's literature.

### **100 Books to Read before Kindergarten**

Reading to children from birth to pre-K has many advantages. Adults in the lives of children are their first teacher as a child's learning starts at birth. To help support early literacy the library provides a list of some of our favourite books to enjoy with children during their first five years. The list also includes 20 titles in French. The list is available online and in branches.