



Strategic plan



report card.

2013-17



Enriching your connections, choices and community.

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Message from the Board Chair and Chief Executive Officer

On behalf of the Richmond Hill Public Library Board, we are pleased to present our **Strategic Plan Report Card**, reviewing the foundation for our future that exists within our Strategic Plan.

In 2013, the Library Board approved a Strategic Plan to establish our long-term goals and how we were going to achieve them. This document, through the strategic imperatives within, has served as our vision for transformation; it has guided our activities as we've embraced dynamic new models of library service over the past five years.

This Report Card tracks our progress towards these goals, as well as reinforces our commitment to communicate, to be accountable, and to be transparent to our community. We believe it is important for the community we serve to see how we are meeting and exceeding their needs to deliver excellent services and resources and offer rewarding and enriching experiences.

Each of our four strategic pillars has several objectives, and in this report card you will be able to see how Richmond

Hill Public Library is performing in the dimensions of **strengthening your connections, contributing vibrant spaces, enriching your choices, and reinforcing our capabilities.**

This year, we are looking back and evaluating our success in upholding these pillars using our Report Card. In doing so, we can translate the lessons of the past five years into further refinements to our strategic process going forward.

The results are telling, and demonstrate how our ability to adapt has meant that we've never been more relevant than we are right now. As a free, public institution, we're firmly entrenched as a vital service in our community. We provide people of all ages, beliefs, and cultural and financial backgrounds with the resources they need to expand their level of knowledge throughout their lives.

Teenagers head to our spaces after school to study. Seniors come to our locations to socialize. Newcomers visit us to learn English in a comfortable, welcoming environment, while jobseekers

Looking to the skies at our **Solar Eclipse Viewing Event** | Central Library



use our services and resources to help with career training and job preparation. Those who may not be able to afford internet connectivity at home come to the Library to get online.

On any given day at Richmond Hill Public Library, we'll be visited by the very young and very old, the poor and the affluent, the formally educated and the self-educated, all with a common purpose — to access the information, education and entertainment resources available from the Library.

We're a textbook example of democracy in action: We're a place where everyone is welcome and offer resources that everyone can access. Simply put, the Library brings people and knowledge together.

While the Library has experienced significant growth since we released our Strategic Plan in 2013, our foundational mission has remained constant as we evolve with our community. Through the many resources, programs, and services we offer, our residents can nurture discovery, curiosity and a belief in possibility.



David Bishop
Board Chair



Louise Procter Maio
Chief Executive Officer



Creating smiles at our **Moonlight Movies** outreach booth | Ozark Park



Getting a visit from local author Hema Rajawat at our **Summer Reading Club** Launch Party | Richmond Green Library



Dressing up in front of the green screen at our **OPLW Celebration Event** | Central Library

Our Purpose, Vision & Values

Celebrating a fresh library card design at our **New Library Card Launch** | Central Library



Enjoying **'hands-on' learning** with new reptilian friends | Richmond Green Library



Celebrating Indigenous Culture display with local customer and display contributor James Peters (Caldwell First Nation) | Richvale Library

Our Vision is clear.

We will enrich your choices, your connections, and your community in ways you've never imagined. As our community changes dramatically, we are determined to know you better, and to continuously improve the sources, services and spaces you deserve from your Library.

We will be recognized as being aligned with Town initiatives and as an integral part of the community network, catalyzing conversations within the community and among individuals. We will be your know-how, enjoy-that space for discovery, and experimenting. You'll know us, not just as the place that loans books, but as the Library staff who touch your diverse lives in positive and impactful ways.

our Purpose is sure.

We are your Library. Your knowledge centre. When you need to solve a problem, make a decision, learn, read, enjoy or explore an issue, we integrate the sources with the expertise to help you to build your life and build your community.

Arts Mackenzie Music Students **Jazz in the Garden** Performance | Central Library Garden



Our Values are strong.

Accessibility

We offer a welcoming presence and equitable treatment for all

Diversity

We appreciate and celebrate our differences and similarities

Intellectual Freedom

We provide free and equitable access to information

Innovation

We deliver responsive and creative service excellence

Respect

We promise honesty and integrity in all interactions

Literacy and Lifelong Learning

We promote and encourage a love of reading and personal growth

Accountability

We practice efficient and effective stewardship of Library resources

Our values have become an integral part of the character culture at RHPL. They are practiced in our daily interactions with both our customers and our colleagues to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all who visit the Library.

— Sharon Robinson, RHPL
Values Training Staff Facilitator



Developing a love of reading at our **Reading Buddies** program | Richmond Green Library



Taking time to enjoy a good book in the **Children's Department** | Central Library

Our Strategic Pillars

Strengthen your connections.

Contribute vibrant spaces.

Enrich your choices.

Reinforce our capabilities.

We've followed through on our pledge to focus on strengthening your connections with the sources and people that answer your questions, inspire your thinking, expand your explorations, and drive your aspirations.

We've moved our service interactions to connect with residents in different places and contexts, always integrating sources into services and programs.

- Increased presence at neighbourhood events to bring you interesting content, programs and conversations in the spaces and places you frequent, including schools, parks, and community centres
- Engaged with you at local cultural events like Moonlight Movies, Concerts in the Park, Doors Open Richmond Hill, Oak Ridges Fair, National Public Works Day, and many more
- Connected with the community in new, meaningful ways; connections have grown 12 times from 5,630 to 689,899 in a five-year period



Discussing challenges facing newcomers to Richmond Hill during our **Community Conversations** series | Central Library



Experiencing new sights and sounds at **Culture Days** | Central Library



Meeting the community at our **Concerts in the Park** outreach booth | Mill Pond Park

Strengthen your connections.

We've collaborated with our partners and community organizations to identify how best to connect with under-served community segments, co-creating and delivering solutions to fill service and program gaps that best benefitted the segments.

- Bolstered ties with local organizations to provide ever-expanding resources for our community
- Strategically catered resources to specific groups in our community, including the local business community, vulnerable youth, and newcomers
- Offered spaces to build civic relationships and collaborated to create programs with Town of Richmond Hill culture, civic, and heritage teams, Richmond Hill Board of Trade, York Region District School Board, Catholic Community Service of York Region, YMCA Early Years, Rotary Club of Richmond Hill, 360°kids, and many more
- Worked with neighbouring libraries to create the York Region Public Library Partnership, offering borrowing privileges to residents across all nine regional municipalities

We've curated content and information resources in ways you can easily use, and in ways that connect you to other local sources that you wouldn't otherwise know of. We've also enabled the community to curate their content, building community connections and memories that ultimately create our local history.

- Solidified our reputation as the trusted recipient of local community group archives, including the Richmond Hill Horticultural Society, Richmond Hill Lions Club, and the Ontario Genealogical Society, who have allowed us to preserve and provide access to more than 150 years of community history
- Launched a social media presence on Instagram, Pinterest, YouTube, and LinkedIn to complement our enhanced digital presence on Facebook and Twitter, connecting with you in your preferred digital spaces at your convenience

"I've spent countless hours in this Library, either reading the great selection of (free!) books, or writing essays for high school, then university – the only building I come to for work and fun. I've graduated university, and this Library was a big part of that. As a Richmond Hill resident, I'm proud of this place."

– Ross Arbour (Richmond Hill Resident)

We've launched community-centric conversations and events in which residents explored social and civic topics and issues in a safe, non-partisan environment with the opportunity to further inform themselves with relevant content and sources.

- Offered conversations and events that epitomize our commitment to lifelong learning and providing unique opportunities to be culturally enriched, with topics that have included homelessness, Indigenous issues, challenges facing newcomers, and how libraries can inspire community change and foster lifelong learning
- Earned provincial hub designation for the annual province-wide Culture Days, partnering with dozens of local cultural groups to introduce new cultural experiences
- Showcased burgeoning artistic talent in our community through our annual High School Arts Contest, which has seen 350+ participants over the past five years
- Hosted annual open houses in celebration of Ontario Public Library Week, highlighting local entertainment, the latest in library technology, and the valuable role libraries play in your life
- Presented engaging author visits and stirring live musical performances to celebrate several annual cultural highlights, including Black History Month, Asian Heritage Month, National Poetry Month, Holocaust Education Week, and Remembrance Day

We've positioned and marketed the Library as the connecting knowledge centre.

- Developed a newcomer strategy to become a hub for newcomers, giving new residents and newcomers the tools they need to comfortably transition to their new home
- Expanded our collections to offer books, movies, and music in more than 20 languages, language programming for all ages, and a website where all content can be translated into 99 different languages
- Embarked on a rebranding exercise to better position the Library to reflect the changing library landscape, including a new logo and a new tagline – “Celebrate Your Curiosity” – that encourages you, our customers, to enrich your connections, choices and community in our physical and digital spaces
- Expanded our digital resource collection to offer 50+ dynamic and diverse subscriptions available 24/7 at your fingertips, entrenching your Richmond Hill Public Library card as your key to unlocking free access to content that will feed your intellectual curiosity



Community Connections
1.2 Million



Booking and Events
4,071

We've followed through on our pledge to contribute vibrant spaces and places, physically and virtually, throughout Richmond Hill that are easily integrated into your daily life and renew your library experiences. Spaces are flexible, morphing to your individual, group or collaborative needs, either on-site or online, and serve as venues for creative, literary and community-building events.

Receiving a visit from Jack and Zoë Bennett as part of **#JacksLibraryTour** (Jack's mission to visit libraries across Ontario) | Central Library



We've rethought our physical spaces as services in themselves, rather than just as places for services. We've retooled our facilities, identifying innovative space solutions for different types of services, programs, and uses – inside and outside of our physical buildings.

- Shifted the motivations behind the use of our physical spaces to urge you to treat Library spaces as yours—a true community living room
- Set the course for the future through the development and approval of the *Facilities Master Plan* in 2013, which charted future facility developments, most notably the new Oak Ridges Library
- Commenced construction of a new 19,000 square-foot Oak Ridges Library; our newest branch will feature a series of innovative spaces, including a maker space, community program rooms, an urban living room, dedicated teen and tween areas, and a green roof
- Installed new, flexible furniture to increase the adaptability of our spaces; from lecture halls to movie theatres, our areas have the versatility to offer some “wow” moments to those who stop in



Architectural rendering of the new Oak Ridges Library

“A library is an important social resource, information resource and educational resource. A library serves the community since it is accessible for all, regardless of income, resources or culture. In a world that prides itself on ever more speed, the library is a space that supports considered inquiry and in depth curiosity. I think the Richmond Hill Public Library is doing a great job at fulfilling all these roles.”

– RH Thomson (Richmond Hill Television, Film, and Stage Actor)

- Transformed into concert halls by hosting performances by Chorus York, the Hill Chamber Players, and Richmond Green Secondary School music students; movie theatres during the Town’s Moonlight Movies events; escape room games with creativity from high school volunteers; and much more
- Undertook the *Central Library Expansion Feasibility Study* and worked with the Town’s Civic Precinct Project Steering Committee

We’ve planned and positioned Library services where residents, businesses and community groups are – co-sharing spaces, and co-mingling permanent and temporary engagement points.

- Invited you to use our many indoor and outdoor spaces for personal enrichment, collaboration, and networking
- Installed charging stations for mobile devices across our branches
- Introduced wireless internet service to Oak Ridges, Richmond Green and Richvale Libraries, and upgraded wireless internet service at Central Library
- Implemented system-wide enhancements, including a community reading area at Richmond Green Library; the conversion of the magazine room to an events room at Central Library, along with renovations within the Mary-Lou Griffin Local History Room and the west check-out area; a dedicated teen space, newly-refurbished shelves and mobile, flexible furniture in the children’s area at Richvale Library
- Served as one of Richmond Hill’s largest providers of free WiFi; this core service, along with providing access to public computers, helps to eliminate socioeconomic barriers in our community, as the Library can be counted on to provide regular access to authentic, reliable information in a safe place



Electronic Visits
8.3 Million visits



In-Person Visits
5.7 Million visits



Wireless Internet Uses
3.6 Million uses



Public Computer Uses
709,676 sessions

We've developed and implemented a virtual facilities plan, reshaping our website as a virtual space and service that is synergistic with and complementary of our physical spaces.

- Introduced e-materials to our collection, including books, magazines, music, and movies; created a digital collection to support lifelong learning
- Positioned the Library's virtual branch to connect you to the knowledge and expertise you need both when you want it and how you want it; offering resources from training courses through Lynda.com to picking up the nuances of a new language through Mango Languages, along with access to millions of eBooks, songs, and documentaries
- Refreshed our website by enhancing our home page for better interaction with promotional campaigns that highlight the Library's physical and digital resources
- Entered the final stages of design for a new RHPL website to bring improvements to our customers; when launched, it will be vibrant, intuitive, and user-friendly, with a view to enhance our customers' digital experience when visiting the Library

Creating video games with the Library's **STEAM Volunteers** | Central Library



Celebrating our **Teen Advisory Group** volunteers | Central Library Garden



We've followed through on our pledge to enrich the choices you have to build your individual life and build your community with quality services and programs.

We've reviewed our many services and programs, and have refined our offerings to deliver unique, meaningful choices for individuals and for community segments.

- Launched AODA programming, a seed library, an In-Residence series for aspiring entrepreneurs and artists, a community conversation series, and multi-language programming (French, Chinese) for various age groups
- Revamped programming staples to ensure each iteration is fresh and inspiring, including reviving our Writer-in-Residence series; our annual High School Arts Contest, Poetry Gala, and Holocaust Education Week offerings; and bringing local history to life through our Archeology in York Region series
- Hosted dozens of award-winning authors for engaging discussions, including His and Her Excellency David and Sharon Johnston, Robyn Doolittle, and Kamal Al-Solaylee

We've delivered skill development programs that ready people at various ages and stages of their lives to pursue their educational, career and personal interests in the realities of the 21st century.

- Offered core literacy programs such as storytimes for all ages, outreach to schools and day care centres, ESL classes, teen and tween programs, and book clubs for all ages
- Provided skill development programs for computer and digital literacy, offered access to new technologies such as 3D printers and digital content creation stations, and facilitated the exchange of innovative ideas for our small business community by launching a local Chamber of Commerce business series and an ongoing Entrepreneur-in-Residence program

Enrich your choices.



Enjoying classical tunes from Arts Mackenzie students during **Culture Days** | Central Library Garden



Launching our **MagnusCards** mobile app, designed to help those with cognitive disabilities use library services | Central Library



Borrowed items
11.1 Million



New Collection Items
343,076



Programs Offered

14,968

Program Attendance

268,643

- Became the first library in Ontario to offer a FIRST LEGO League Junior Robotics program

We've collaboratively designed and delivered services with partners and community organizations for specific community segments that none of us could deliver alone.

- Launched digital MagnusCards app: Four free step-by-step visual guides that help individuals with cognitive special needs use library services
- Enhanced collection of accessible items through our partnership with the Centre for Equitable Library Access, offering access to 230,000+ books, magazines, and newspapers in described video, audiobook, e-Text, and braille formats
- Rolled out hundreds of additional programs and services designed in collaboration with community partners

We're transforming our service model to one that achieves our vision, moving from behind the desk or out of the building to beside and with the customer.

- Initiated a self-service model at the Central Library check-in desk for customer convenience; we're adapting our sources and expertise to guide you to where you want to be, to know, to enjoy or to do



Meeting a prehistoric friend at our **Summer Reading Club** Launch Party | Richmond Green Library

"Our Library is a cultural hub in our community. It nurtures creativity by encouraging curiosity, contemplation and by providing a place to connect, learn, and share."

– Andrea End (Local Artist)

Learning from local actor and director **RH Thomson** as he discusses Canada's involvement in the Great War | Central Library





Inspiring family creativity at our **OPLW Celebration Event** | Central Library

We've identified and managed measures that allow us to track the value and impact of our programs and services for Richmond Hill and for various community segments. We use these measures to continually improve service and program choices and the Library's operations.

- Developed new, wide-ranging metrics for measuring the usage of programs and services so that we remain flexible in identifying ways to better serve our customers
- Installed Happy or Not terminals at each of our locations as part of the Library's customer-focused approach, inviting our customers to "Please Rate our Service Today"; the terminals provide real-time data from our customers, enabling us to review levels of satisfaction and challenging us to make your experience better



Bringing together three generations for a storytime during **Culture Days** | Central Library

We've reinforced our services and programs in ways that no other organization can with on-target, unique curated medleys of published and unpublished content, visuals, digital media and connections to experts.

- Completed our Local History Digitization Project, adding 50,000+ pages of digitized local newspapers to our robust online collection; photographs, local history books and brochures, rare documents, and vintage posters are also available
- Formed system-wide teams focused on curating content and merchandising dynamic and diverse aspects of our growing collection
- Supported local authors through participation in the annual global Indie Author Day event, hosted local author book sales, and offered digital submission tools for local authors to apply to have their books considered for inclusion in the Library's collection

Reinforce our capabilities.



Experiencing a full day of training under one roof at **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Central Library



Learning new skills to better serve the community at **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Central Library

We've followed through on our pledge to reinforce our many capabilities that bring our services and programs to life. Staff are gaining the competencies and confidence to fully contribute as community connectors, curate content, facilitate conversations and events, and to be the Library wherever residents are. Our organization, technologies, and funding serve as the infrastructure for launching and realizing our vision.

We've enabled staff to fully contribute to the realization of the vision with training, coaching and mentorship.

- Devoted budget capacity for staff development and training
- Devised and launched annual system-wide Staff Development Day
- Increased staff training and development opportunities through offering in-house leadership training, encouraging participation in webinars and seminars, and sending staff to conferences run by the Ontario Library Association, Canadian Library Association, American Library Association, Public Library Association, etc.,

We've transformed our service model, engaging in meaningful community relationships and/or service interactions with residents in different places and contexts, and integrating sources into services and programs.



Inaugural Staff Development Day 93% staff attendance

- Committed to living our values for a culture of success
- Received a *2016-2017 Community Partner Award* from Community Living York South, a partner we regularly work with to deliver programs that provide support services for individuals with intellectual disabilities; it's a partnership that serves as an example of our ability to offer our community welcoming, accessible programs and resources

We've reviewed our organization structure, ensuring it is aligned with our strategies and provide each and every staff with the supports and processes to confidently fulfil their role.

- Implemented new organizational alignment to support the pillar in the Strategic Plan in four key areas: Customer Experiences, Community Connections, Content, and Technologies
- Created a purposeful focus to realize our organizational vision

We've developed and implemented other key guiding documents that underpin our strategies

- Created the *Richmond Hill Public Library Strategic Plan* in 2013 to chart our future
- Developed the *Facilities Master Plan* in 2013, which outlined the need for evolving space
- Produced annual Business Plans and Budgets that align with the realization of our vision



Reflecting upon our past and visualizing our future at **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Central Library



Exploring new technology during our **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Central Library



Viewing the finished product of a 3D Printer at **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Central Library

Reinforce our capabilities.

Reinforce our capabilities.



Discovering robotics during **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Central Library



Exploring local history as part of **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Mary-Lou Griffin Local History Room, Central Library



Building teamwork through challenges during **RHPL Staff Development Day** | Central Library

- Devised a *Technology Assessment Plan* in 2014 to analyze and modernize our technological offerings
- Recommitted ourselves to the values cited in our *Strategic Plan* by creating the *Living Our Values: Creating a Culture for Success* document, where we described what our values look like when expressed in every day behaviours with our customers and with each other
- Undertook a *Central Library Expansion Feasibility Study*, including an audit of the existing Central Library, an engineering review of the current facility and the feasibility of expansion with renovations as required, and public and staff consultation
- Reviewed, refreshed and created policy to assist with fulfilling Library purpose and to ensure consistent Library service in the community
- Contributed Library content to the *Town of Richmond Hill Development Charges Background Study, Reports on Culture, and Accessibility Reports*

We would like to thank you for all you have dedicated to our community. You have shared the love of reading with many children. It is very appreciated that you lend millions of book for free to people who can't afford to buy them. The best part of the library is that it provides people with a place to relax or socialize with others. Some people think the library is not an important factor of our communities, but we would like you to know that we appreciate the Library for all of these important things. Thank you!

– The 2nd Richvale Pathfinders
Girl Guides of Canada



NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES



MAKER ACTIVITIES



FAMILY FUN FOR ALL AGES

Our Continued Commitment

We don't take our strategies lightly. We continue to be committed to transforming these words into reality. Every year we target specific goals, work towards those goals and measure our progress. Our actions implement these strategies into services for you. Our actions speak louder than any words. Our actions are in concert with the Town and other organizations, and are ever mindful of the technological and societal trends impacting our community and of you – your plans, hopes, challenges and aspirations.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH



LIVE ENTERTAINMENT



LITERACY & LIFELONG LEARNING



Celebrate your curiosity.



Richmond Green
1 William F. Bell Pkwy.
Richmond Hill, ON
L4S 2T9



Central Library
1 Atkinson St.
Richmond Hill, ON
L4C 0H5



Richvale
40 Pearson Ave.
Richmond Hill, ON
L4C 6T7



Oak Ridges
13085 Yonge St. #12
Richmond Hill, ON
L4E 3L2

905-884-9288

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