



A Regular Meeting of  
the Richmond Hill Public Library Board  
will be held virtually at

[https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6743941674?pwd=cElEd3pVR0hqTnNGdFIRcWp2S](https://us06web.zoom.us/j/6743941674?pwd=cElEd3pVR0hqTnNGdFIRcWp2SmNYZz09)

[mNYZz09](#) Tuesday, September 28, 2021

at 4:00 pm

## **AGENDA**

### **1.0 Call to Order**

### **2.0 Regrets**

Frank DiPede

### **3.0 Adoption of Agenda**

### **4.0 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof**

### **5.0 Minutes**

#### **5.1 Library Board Minutes – September 2, 2021 Special Meeting**

### **6.0 Presentations**

#### **6.1 2021-25 Strategic Plan**

Robin Fribance, Executive Manager, Experience & Strategy, RHPL  
Members of the Strategic Plan Task Force

Stephen Davies, Principal Consultant and Managing Director,  
Transformation By Design

## **7.0 Reports**

Accessible documents can be accessed through the [RHPL website > Your Library > About Us > Library Board](#)

### **7.1 Richmond Hill Public Library Strategic Plan 2021-25 Report SRLIB21.21**

## **8.0 New Business**

- 8.1 Discussion with Stephen Huycke, Director, Legislative Services/City Clerk regarding composition of library board (see accompanying letter from City Clerk at end of package)

## **9.0 Member Announcements**

## **10.0 Date of Next Meetings**

The next Regular Meeting of the Library Board will be held on:

**Tuesday, October 26, 2021 @ 4:00 p.m.** virtually using video-teleconferencing technology.

*Please advise Darren Solomon and Susan Quinn of regrets for attendance, by noon of the day of the meeting at e-mail: [dsolomon@rhpl.ca](mailto:dsolomon@rhpl.ca) and [squinn@rhpl.ca](mailto:squinn@rhpl.ca)*

The Richmond Hill Public Library Board

Thursday, September 2, 2021

## **MINUTES**

The Richmond Hill Public Library Board held a special meeting on Thursday, September 2, 2021 virtually using video-conferencing technology.

**Present:** Councillor Greg Beros, Chair  
Stephen Chait  
Regional and Local Councillor Joe DiPaola  
Frank DiPede  
Mahnaz Shahbazi  
Rona Wang

**Staff:** Darren Solomon, Chief Executive Officer  
Catherine Charles, Director, Collections and Program Development  
Yunmi Hwang, Director, Branch Services  
Vishal Narula, IT Manager – Fire & Library Services, City of Richmond Hill  
Robin Fribance, Executive Manager, Experience & Strategy  
Michelle Splitter, Manager, Collections  
Andrew Li, Financial Management Advisor CFS, City of Richmond Hill  
Susan Quinn, Executive Administration Coordinator

### **1.0 Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

## **2.0 Regrets**

Bram Kivenko

Councillor Tom Muench

Regional and Local Councillor Carmine Perrelli

## **3.0 Adoption of Agenda**

**Motion:**

21:52

**Moved By:**

S. Chait

**Seconded by:**

R. Wang

**THAT** the Agenda of September 2, 2021 be adopted.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **4.0 Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest.

## **5.0 Minutes**

### **5.1 Library Board Minutes – August 13, 2021**

**Motion:**

21:53

**Moved By:**

F. DiPede

**Seconded by:**

R. Wang

**THAT** the Minutes of August 13, 2021 be adopted

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**6.0 Presentations**

None

**7.0 Reports**

Accessible documents can be accessed through the [RHPL website > Your Library > About Us > Library Board](#)

**7.1 2022 Operating Report SRLIB21.20**

**Motion:**

21:54

**Moved by:**

Regional and Local Councillor J. DiPaola

**Seconded by:**

R. Wang

**THAT** the Library Board approve RHPL's 2022 Operating Budget so it may be moved to the City for funding consideration; and

**THAT** RHPL's anticipated 2021 Operating Budget surplus be transferred to the Library Reserve in order to cover the 2022 non-Personnel Operating Budget increase.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**8.0 New Business**

None

## **9.0 Member Announcements**

The Board Chair advised that board member Bram Kivenko resigned from the board due to personal reasons and that the City Clerk would be notified so that the open position on the board can be filled.

## **10.0 Date of Next Meetings**

The next Regular Meeting of the Library Board will be held on:

**Tuesday, September 28, 2021** virtually using video-teleconferencing technology.

## **11.0 Adjournment**

**Motion:**

21:55

**Moved By:**

Regional and Local Councillor J. DiPaola

**Seconded by:**

S. Chait

**THAT** the meeting be adjourned at 4:13 p.m.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

Respectfully submitted,

“Signed version on file in the Administration Offices”

Councillor Greg Beros  
Chair

Darren Solomon  
Chief Executive Officer



**Report Subject:** Richmond Hill Public Library Strategic Plan 2021-25

**Report For:** Approval

**Meeting Date:** September 28, 2021

**Staff Report #:** SRLIB21.21

**To:** Richmond Hill Public Library Board

**From:** Robin Fribance, Executive Manager, Experience & Strategy

## **SUMMARY**

The last Strategic Plan for Richmond Hill Public Library (RHPL) was done in 2013 and the organization needed an updated vision and plan for the future. So RHPL undertook a thorough and sophisticated strategic planning process starting early this year.

The content of our proposed new Strategic Plan was derived from a strategic foresight project, in-depth consultation process, business and systems context analysis, Library culture staff survey, a series of workshops with the Steering Committee, Task Force, and Library Executive Leadership Team, and value modelling and analysis.

The Strategic Plan's core content contains:

- Revised positioning statements, including RHPL's Purpose, Vision, Mission, and Values;
- Nine priority areas each with a distinct Strategic Objective; and
- 32 strategies which guide the actions we will focus on over the next few years.

RHPL will use the Balanced Scorecard measurement and management framework to track progress on the objectives, which have been sequenced in such a way that

dependencies and interrelationships have been considered and planned for beginning now and running through Year 4 of the Plan in 2025.

We also recognize that the landscape and context in which the Library operates will continue to evolve, and we are consciously setting ourselves up to be able to adapt along the way.

We are excited by the collaborative work we are putting forward to the Board. We have designed an insight-driven, ambitious and aspirational Strategic Plan that will create new and needed value for the residents and the City of Richmond Hill for years to come.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the Richmond Hill Public Library Board:

1. Approve the Richmond Hill Public Library Strategic Plan 2021-25.

### **RATIONALE**

RHPL last completed strategic planning in 2013. Since then much has changed in the community and the world, as have customer expectations, technologies, and RHPL's relationship with the City of Richmond Hill. Given all that changes and gaps in strategic governance at the Library, new CEO Darren Solomon identified the need to craft a new vision for RHPL to reimagine the way we could serve our customers and utilize our resources.

Early in 2021 we engaged a strategic advisory firm, Transformation By Design (TBD), and also began background work on a complementary, but converging, strategic foresight project. Because seven years had passed since the Library's last strategic plan, the strategy project overall was designed to be comprehensive in both breadth and depth, as well as to be collaborative.

To this end, an extensive consultation process was undertaken to enrich the planning work with meaningful insights from the City's leadership team, City of Richmond Hill



Councillors, members of Richmond Hill's business community, thought leaders in the library sector and adjacent domains, RHPL program partners, RHPL staff, Richmond Hill community members, and RHPL customers. Furthermore, several interconnected project teams were constituted inclusive of RHPL Board members and City of Richmond Hill staff. The projects teams and their members were:

- **Steering Committee:** Greg Beros\*, Catherine Charles, Frank DiPede\*, Robin Fribance, Yunmi Hwang, Darren Solomon, Rona Wang\*

*\*RHPL Board Members*

- **Task Force:** Karin Ash\*, Catherine Charles, Carrie Dawber, Robin Fribance, Annesha Hutchinson, Yunmi Hwang, Asher Jaffri\*, Amy McArthur\*^, Kim Maddin, Vishal Narula\*, Hanna Riahi, Lisa Ronald, Darren Solomon, Michelle Splitter, Karen Wales, Michelle Weinberg, Peter Wilson, Len Wong

*\*City of Richmond Hill staff*

*^Advising re: HR, Union, Culture*

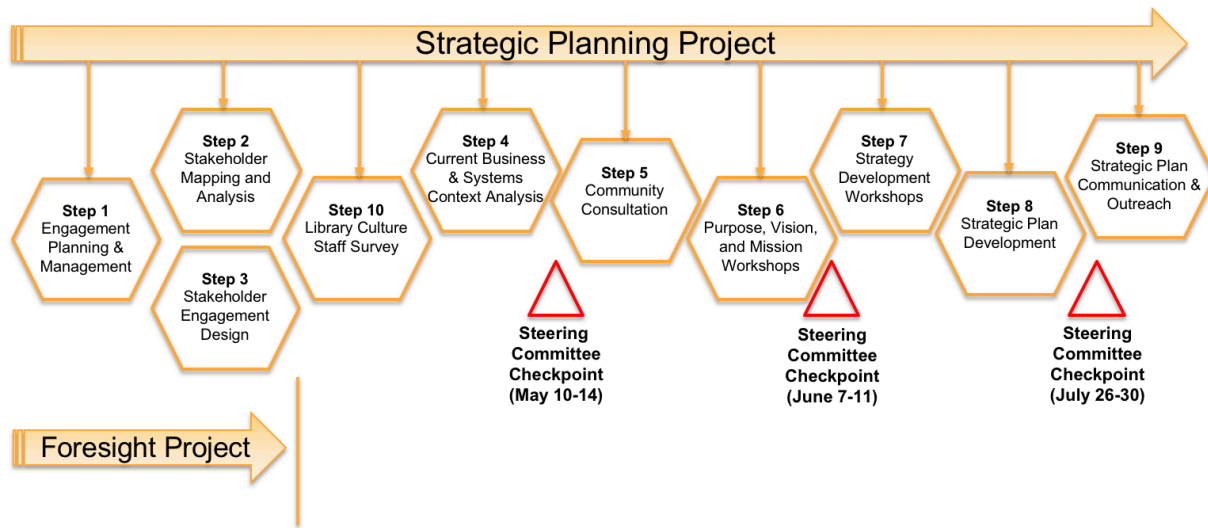
- **Core Team:** Chris Carter, Catherine Charles, Stephen Davies, Robin Fribance, Yunmi Hwang, Paul Hingorani, Darren Solomon
- **Strategic Advisory Consultants (TBD):** Chris Carter, Stephen Davies, Paul Hingorani

Decision-making resided with the Steering Committee, while the majority of the plan's content was developed by the Task Force. The approach to the strategic plan was foresight-infused strategy, deeply informed by human-centred design as well as by the consultations mentioned above, and guided by the strategic and management expertise of our consulting team, TBD. The City of Richmond Hill's Strategic Priority Areas were also closely considered in terms of alignment and opportunities for synergy.

The kick-off meeting of the Steering Committee took place on April 1, 2021 followed closely by the initial meeting of the Task Force. The Task Force worked on developing the core content of the Strategic Plan. The Steering Committee largely explored and

analyzed issues, opportunities and risks facing the Library, along with validating and guiding our direction. The project was designed to follow the process and steps shown in the diagram below.

## Overview of Strategy Design Process



Each of the sections below provides a summary of the highlights of the process overall as well as the major outputs of the planning process.

### Strategic Foresight Project

RHPL initiated strategic planning with a strategic foresight project. Strategic Foresight, also known as Futures Studies, contains a practice that organizations use to gather and process information about their future operating environment. Foresight allows organizations to make better informed decisions about where they are headed and how to navigate uncertainty. Through tools such as horizon scanning and scenario development, organizations are also able to use foresight to develop confidence in their plans.

RHPL's foresight project steps included:

- **Thought leader interviews** with recognized leaders in the library, education, and community development ecosystems to gain a deeper understanding of the changes they are observing and how communities are being impacted;
- **Staff Survey** to better understand their view of the most important and uncertain changes impacting libraries today and into the future;
- **A Horizon Scan** to identify changes happening across social, technological, economic, environmental, and political realms to understand emerging signals, trends, and drivers of change;
- **Two Task Force Workshops** to work through critical uncertainties and characteristics of potential future scenarios;
- **Scenario Development** to outline eight potential futures that the library could experience within the next twenty years.

The foresight project was pulled through into Step 7 of the strategic planning process with a workshop that ascertained the preferred future for RHPL. The output of the foresight project is part of the related documents that the board can access via a web link.

### **Organizational Culture Survey & Analysis**

Recognizing the link between organizational culture and organizational performance, RHPL conducted an organizational culture survey. Using the Denison Organizational Culture Survey (DOCS), which benchmarks RHPL against 1,000+ other public, private and not-for-profit organizations, it became possible to see distinct areas for improvement and opened up an avenue to ongoing conversations about RHPL's culture. The survey also created a foundation upon which we have been able to establish the scope and sequencing of strategic initiatives and actions. The survey results and in-depth analysis was presented during an in-camera session of the RHPL Board on May 25, 2021.

## Stakeholder & Community Consultations

As part of the strategic planning process we conducted a thorough exploration of RHPL's stakeholders, creating several stakeholder models and associated business context models. From these models we designed a consultation framework that would engage a broad range of stakeholders, clarify the current perception of RHPL in the community, as well as recognize stakeholder needs and interests.

Stakeholder consultations were in the form of 1:1 interviews and small focus groups. These consultations were held with:

- Members of the City's leadership team that manage resident-facing services, inclusive of Community Services, Economic Development, Communications, Office of the City Clerk;
- City of Richmond Hill Councillors;
- Members of Richmond Hill's business community;
- York Region community services organizations and RHPL program partners;
- RHPL and City of Richmond Hill staff including IT and the Office of the City Manager.

We also conducted community consultations with Richmond Hill community members and RHPL customers in the form of:

- An online survey (respondents = 652; conducted in English, Farsi, Traditional and Simplified Chinese);
- Two virtual town halls (registrants = 30);
- A social media poll campaign (respondents = 1,279).

Feedback from the consultations surfaced remarkably consistent themes. The highlights below include those recurring themes that became key inputs into our strategic plan core content:

- RHPL has an opportunity to more deeply engage the community to both expand participation with the Library and attract new users;
- RHPL should take on a more active role as a community hub, connecting people to each other and to issues of interest and importance;
- RHPL should make a significant effort to increase its digital experiences;
- RHPL has an opportunity to become an “onramp” for businesses and entrepreneurs, especially in the very early stages of exploration and development;
- RHPL is well-positioned to be a key driver of diversity, inclusion, and intersectionality in Richmond Hill;
- RHPL has an opportunity to expand its profile and reach in the community with more comprehensive outreach programs and/or activities;
- RHPL can contribute positively to the development of Richmond Hill as a dynamic place to live and work.

A summary of the stakeholder and community consultations is part of the related documents that the board can access via a web link.

## **Strategy Formulation Workshops**

The Strategic Planning Task Force participated in a series of seven strategy formulation workshops between June 2 and July 22, 2021. Between each workshop Task Force members completed “homework” on their own and in small breakout groups to refine ideas and narrow down content. The workshop series consisted of the following major steps:

- Exploring RHPL’s programs, services, and stakeholders;
- Impact assessment; Vision and Mission ideation;
- Strategic positioning;
- Discerning preferred futures, pulled through from our strategic foresight project;

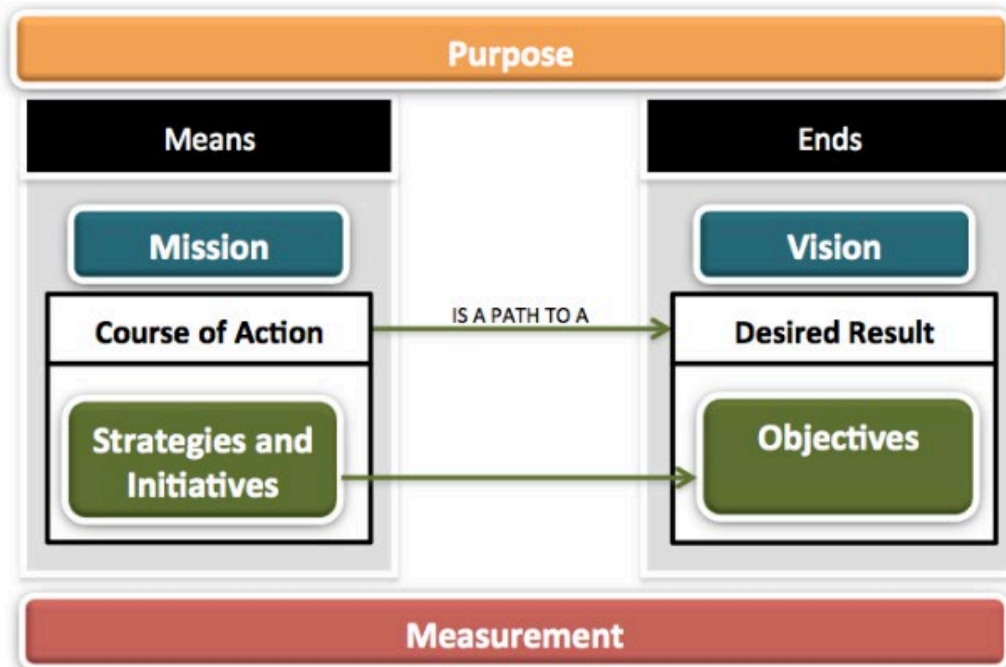
- Strategic Priorities, including proposing Strategic Objectives under each Strategic Priority;
- Prioritizing of Strategic Objectives and proposing strategies under each Strategic Objective;
- Reviewing and refining strategies and reviewing new RHPL Values.

Select outputs and artifacts from the workshops are part of the related documents that the board can access via a web link.

### Strategic Plan Core Content

This section of the report contains RHPL’s key Strategic Plan content.

Both the Steering Committee and the Task Force utilized a planning model adapted from the Business Motivation Model, which oriented the Strategic Plan around an “Ends” and “Means” framework, as shown in the diagram below.



The Ends are things we wish to achieve, our desired results or Objectives. The Means are the actions we will undertake to achieve those Ends. They are our Strategies and

Initiatives. Our Mission, therefore, is associated with the Means, while our Vision is associated with the desired results. The Vision is our aspiration for what RHPL will look like in the future. In order to craft strategy that allows for success of both day-to-day operations and meaningful transformation, our strategic foresight project used a twenty-year timeframe; our Vision has a ten-year time frame; and our Objectives and Strategies have a 4-5 year time frame. The core content of the strategic plan is grounded in ensuring excellence in operations while remaining focused on growth and opportunities. Given the constant and rapid change around us, we also recognize that our operating strategies should not remain fixed and static; we will treat this as a responsive living plan that will adapt as needed.

The Strategic Plan core content includes RHPL's 2021-25 positioning statements (Purpose, Vision, Mission), Organizational Values, Strategic Priorities, Objectives, Strategies, and Strategic Indicators to measure progress toward the Objectives. A summary is below and supporting documentation is part of the related documents that the board can access via a web link.

## **Positioning Statements**

Purpose: As a strong cornerstone of Richmond Hill, we exist to improve your quality of life. Our role is a gathering place for our community and to provide equitable and universal access to resources that support your well-being.

Vision: We provide world-class library experiences that motivate you to confidently adapt and thrive in a world of change, and enhance Richmond Hill as a place to live, visit, and do business.

Mission: We offer you knowledge, experiences, and resources that enable you to grow the capabilities you need to respond to personal, local, national, and global challenges, trends and interests.

## **Organizational Values**

We champion our differences - We believe that understanding and embracing diversity enriches us; that our services should be accessible to everyone; that freedom of expression ensures we can exchange ideas and perspectives.

We focus on impact - We believe that our customers are our top priority; that doing the right things and doing things right will help us focus and be more impactful; and that we need to balance short and long-term growth.

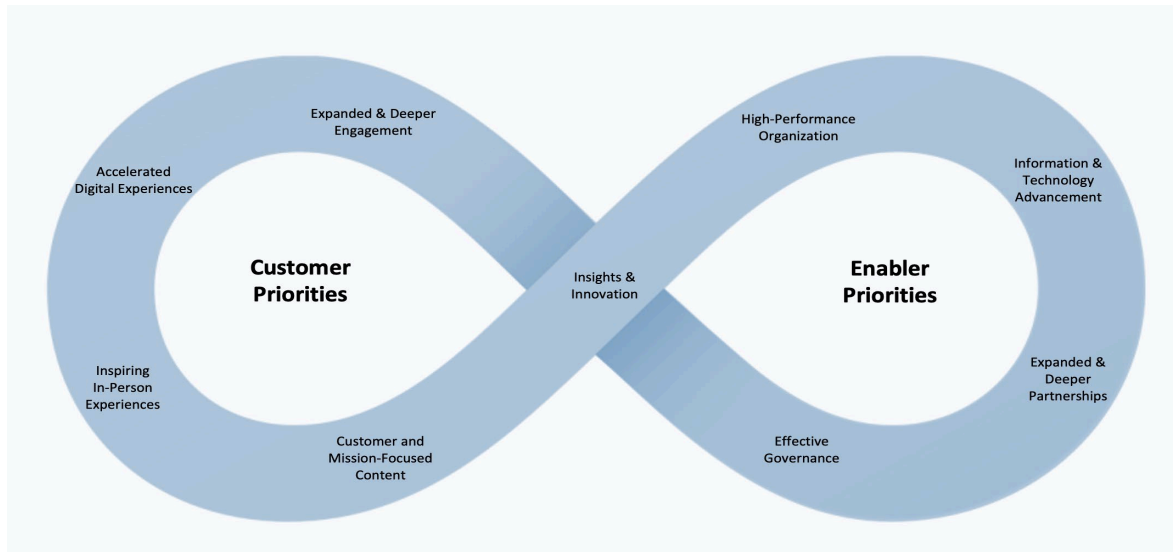
We are adaptable - We believe that embracing ambiguity and responding quickly to change is necessary in a fast-paced world; that curiosity and creativity fuel new thinking; and that our failures make us stronger and smarter.

We actively engage - We believe in co-designing with our community; that hands-on and collaborative experiences make for more memorable learning; and that accountability means being part of the solution.

### **Strategic Priorities, Objectives and Strategies**

Strategic Priorities are organized into three portfolios. The first portfolio supports our customers' experiences, the third enables us to deliver on the customer portfolio. In between the two resides RHPL's innovation portfolio, which acts as a bridge between the customer-oriented Strategic Priorities and the Enabling Priorities. The diagram below shows the three portfolios and the Strategic Priorities organized within each one.





### Priority 1: Inspiring In-person Experiences

Strategic Objective: Provide creative, flexible, convenient, and inclusive community spaces and service excellence.

For many customers, the Library represents one of the last remaining public spaces; a place where they are not required to purchase anything or make a transaction of any kind, but can utilize the space for work, school, personal development, or leisure. RHPL's ability to service the community in this unique manner is a key element of our value proposition, and we aim to do it in a way that inspires and embodies service excellence.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Customer use
- Customer reach
- Customer satisfaction

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Launch new Central Café – A revitalized Café can enrich the RHPL experience for customers, attract people to the Library, and be a source of revenue.
- Modernize meeting room facilities – Modern meeting rooms will support a broader range of programs and will attract and support community users who require amenities that are not readily available at accessible rates, including those who are working remotely.
- Develop RHPL Master Plan, including branch outreach strategy – As Richmond Hill grows, RHPL will grow with it. The Master Plan initiative will look at our infrastructure and presence in the community. It will identify the needs of residents that we are not able to fulfill today, the community’s future needs based on growth forecasts, and will look at the opportunity to expand or shift our outreach activity to targeted pockets to bring the Library closer to our residents.
- Explore branch specialization – Community consultation revealed a possible opportunity to develop “specialist” branches, such as a technology-branch, or community services branch. This opportunity warrants deeper research and validation, followed by a comprehensive plan of its own should the exploration support pursuit of this opportunity.
- Assess after-hours model – Similar to the strategy above, there is evidence that there may be a market for “after-hours” services. This opportunity warrants deeper research and validation, followed by a pilot plan should the exploration support pursuit of this service.
- Redesign service model to meet all customer needs at first point of contact – Consultation with our customers showed that RHPL visits can feel disjointed and frustrating, with customers having to visit multiple departments in the library in order to achieve the goals of their visit, such as return items, pay a fee, get a recommendation, get research assistance, and check out materials.

This strategy aims at redesigning the service model so that there is a single point of contact for the customer on a given visit, reducing their effort and increasing their delight, as well as creating efficiencies in RHPL's internal processes.

## Priority 2: Accelerated Digital Experiences

Strategic Objective: Modern digital experiences to deliver products and services more widely, intuitively, effectively and efficiently.

Modern digital and user experiences are an expectation today, not a nice-to-have. Our horizon scan and consultation made it clear that the demand for digital products and services will only grow and may be key to attracting and retaining users who expect high quality digital experiences.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Progress on the roadmap
- Digital customer reach
- Digital customer use

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Redevelop the RHPL website – Our current website fails to meet customer expectations, has usability and technical issues, and provides little flexibility for delivering content. Our new website will provide an intuitive, frictionless experience that is backed up by thorough user research and testing, and that can be scaled over time, ultimately serving as an exciting digital branch that is a destination unto itself.
- Develop a digital product strategy that modernizes the member experience – We need a comprehensive strategy in order to plan for and implement the digital products that will provide the best return on investment for the Library and the highest value for customers. Focusing on modern, intuitive experiences that help

customers and staff manage their workload and interactions with the library, examples may include such initiatives as digital ID verification, automated onboarding, and consolidated account management.

- Integrate personalization into experiences – Increasingly consumers are experiencing and expecting services that are tailored to their needs, desires, and interests. This strategy aims to deliver customized options for users based on their preferences for things ranging from communication frequency to recommendations based on implicit and explicit goals/interests and behaviours.

### Priority 3: Customer and Mission-Focused Content

Strategic Objective: Evolve curated offerings to always be relevant to our community through a future-ready approach.

A key to resilience is to understand our increasingly complex world. As a purveyor of information, RHPL is well-positioned to be a hub of information about the changing world around us, helping individuals, organizations, and communities to anticipate change, adapt and thrive.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Customer use (digital and in-person)
- Customer reach (digital and in-person)
- Customer satisfaction

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Develop new “future-ready” content offerings – RHPL will produce new content offerings specifically aimed at helping users meet the demands of our future world, whether that be dealing with changes in the economy, tackling climate change, or aging well, to name only a few.

- Support development of entrepreneurs and small businesses – RHPL’s consultation process brought to light a couple of gaps in the business ecosystem in Richmond Hill, in particular the “pre-entrepreneur” phase, which the Library is well-positioned to fill.
- Enhance multilingual offerings – In order to be relevant to members of our community and attract new customers, RHPL has an opportunity to enhance offerings in key languages.
- Expand membership to include access to other mission-relevant organizations – RHPL will seek ways to create synergies with other organizations where there is the potential for mutual benefit. These can include, for example, internal business process efficiencies such as purchasing agreements with colleague libraries, or customer-oriented access-type offers through partnerships with organizations such as the Business Improvement Association.

#### Priority 4: Expanded and Deeper Engagement

Strategic Objective: Build Customer relationships, awareness and appreciation of our services and value.

Feedback from our consultation process clearly demonstrated that RHPL needs to do more to communicate not only our range of products and services, but also the value of the Library to everyone in our community, and that by doing so we will attract and retain customers and develop a network of influencers.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Customer reach
- Customer use
- Customer satisfaction

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Develop a brand strategy and new identity – RHPL’s brand promise is not clear. The Strategic Plan is a springboard to uncovering our unique value proposition and distilling how to communicate it to the community, including determining the most inclusive and appropriate terminology for our “customers.”
- Build and execute a marketing and media plan – This strategy aims to raise the bar on our marketing activities and make it possible to conduct coherently integrated marketing activities that raise the profile of the Library as a whole as well as promote our products and services while increasing membership and use of the Library.
- Integrate proof-points of library value organically into customer journeys – RHPL needs to make our value proposition clear to Library users. From their individual benefits to the benefit that the Library brings to the health of the community overall, need to be articulated and communicated.
- Build librarians into personalities – RHPL has a wealth of talent and knowledge among its ranks. As a way to engage customers and deliver fresh, exciting content to Library users, this strategy aims to develop our librarians into personalities that customers can follow, learn from, and tune in to for comment and conversation on particular topics and themes. This strategy supports other strategies, in particular, the development of a new website that serves as an exciting digital branch, modernization of the member experience, personalization of the customer experience, and delivery of “future-ready” content offerings (which will be described below), among others.
- Develop a literacy initiative by engaging the community on deeper participation in literacy – Literacy is a vital component of a thriving, economically sound community, yet in Canada literacy rates have been dropping consistently over the last several decades, possibly due to immigration. RHPL is uniquely positioned to not only promote the importance of literacy in our community but to

contribute to the improvement of literacy rates in Richmond Hill, which will in turn support resilience in our community.

#### Priority 5: Insights & Innovation

Strategic Objective: Build and maintain our capacity to understand, explore and test to create new value.

Today's most successful organizations are often relentlessly focused on meeting the needs of their customers. For RHPL to deliver on its Vision and Mission in a world of constant change we must invest more time in learning about our customers, understanding what they need and want, and working with them to ensure that solutions are designed to meet those needs and desires. This is a new way of working for RHPL, and will require some new skills to be developed, and supported by a modernized infrastructure.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Number of staff receiving training in innovation methods and techniques
- Customer satisfaction with new/improved products and services

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Create a customer insights strategy – In order to offer the most relevant products and services RHPL needs to be able to capture and analyze the most important customer data to allow for evidence-based decisions. A customer insights strategy will define what information we need to gather, how to store and analyze that data to arrive at insights about the customer, and how to turn those insights into relevant products and services.
- Develop innovation and foresight capabilities, including the talent, processes, and tools – Determining the ideal innovation mix, ranging from incremental improvement through to transformational innovation, is important for then identifying the skills mix that needs to be developed and the processes and tools

required to support that growth. Developing foresight skills will make it possible for RHPL to anticipate and recognize change, making our organization itself more resilient, but also making it possible for us to offer programs and services that can truly assist our community to thrive in a complex world of change.

- Participate in Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) Innovation Program – We were part of a CULC task force designed to support the future of libraries coming out of COVID-19, several strategies were identified. One of them will be focused on ongoing innovation and futures planning for member organizations.

#### Priority 6: Information and Technology Advancement

Strategic Objective: Modernize our technology infrastructure and processes.

Consolidating IT services with the City of Richmond Hill has added to the IT resources and capabilities available to support Library operations and plans. This added expertise has identified that we need to improve our infrastructure and processes, bringing our practices up to minimum operating standards, and eventually exceeding them.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Progress on the road map

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Execute IT infrastructure modernization program – With the partnership of City colleagues, we are undertaking a series of IT projects to bring us up to current best practices.
- Execute IT digital application management program – The Library environment is very application-heavy, both in terms of products that we offer to customers and those that are used in day-to-day operations. It is vital to ensure that they are secure, well-integrated, and meet RHPL's current and future needs.



- Expand collaboration tools pilot – For RHPL to be efficient, productive, and responsive at the levels expected today it is essential for the Library team(s) to be able to work collaboratively and as seamlessly as possible. In 2021 we began to pilot the use of Microsoft Teams. Expanding this platform throughout the Library and utilizing it to the fullest will help us deliver on numerous other objectives, including building a high-performance organization and developing our innovation capacity.
- Develop a data strategy – Sound business decision and accountability over resources requires RHPL to make evidence-based decisions, yet there is no data strategy, consistent practices or capabilities in place to enable us to make data-driven decisions routinely possible. A data strategy will identify a plan to support the growth of data-oriented processes, fluency, and governance.

#### Priority 7: Effective Governance

Strategic Objective: Develop effective governance and accountability.

As a publicly funded organization committed to equitable access, RHPL recognizes its role in effective stewardship of resources and building an organization that can be utilized for everyone in Richmond Hill well into the future. This means ensuring the health and sustainability of the Library beyond the life of the Strategic Plan.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Progress on the plans

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Develop a financial sustainability strategy, including exploring government grants, private sector partnerships, public fundraising, retail merchandise, user fees, and subscriptions, and development charges strategies – In order to increase RHPL's budget and meet the rising costs of running a world-class library, we aim to have diversified and sustainable funding sources.

- Create a Board development plan – In order to attract and retain Board members who are excited to advance the strategic and governance vision of RHPL, we recognize that the role of a Library Board member needs to be appealing. This strategy aims to equip Board members with the skills and perspectives they will need to advocate for and champion the Library, and that transfer to other aspects of their personal and professional lives.
- Develop and launch a holistic diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) plan – Public libraries have long held themselves accountable for providing equal access and a welcoming environment for all members of the community. As society evolves, however, systemic barriers to community resources and services are increasingly coming to light. RHPL aims to ensure that the Library is diverse, equitable, and inclusive and that DEI is realized among our staff and customers, addressed in policy and in practice.
- Develop and launch an environmental sustainability strategy – As a beacon of the community, RHPL aims to craft a holistic sustainability plan that clarifies and sets out actionable steps to address areas of weakness that might be identified.
- Develop department business plans flowing from the Strategic Plan – In order to ensure that the Library as a whole is moving in directions that support the strategic plan, each major unit will be responsible for developing a business plan that clearly articulates how it will support the Library's priorities and strategies.

#### Priority 8: Expanded and Deeper Partnerships

Strategic Objective: Enhance our network of partners and the value we exchange.

In order to deliver on our Vision, RHPL is aiming to expand the breadth of our partnerships in order to have greater impact in the community, to build more equity as an influential stakeholder in our social system, as well to continually learn from and share with the broader global library sector.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Partner reach
- Partner satisfaction

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Become a participant in local and regional social policy and planning tables – Having a seat at local and regional planning tables will enable RHPL to take a more active role in meeting the needs of the community.
- Broaden library sector best practices and learnings – By learning from leading libraries around the world, RHPL will begin to develop an increasingly sophisticated perspective on the role and management of public libraries, bringing those practices to life in Richmond Hill and contributing to thought leadership in our more immediate professional environment.
- Expand volunteer program – Community consultation and staff feedback reveal the opportunity for volunteers to play a more active role in the day-to-day operations of the Library.

#### Priority 9: High-Performance Organization

Strategic Objective: Create a high-performing work culture and optimized structure.

Organizations benefit from high-performance with more motivated, knowledgeable, and independent employees, while staff are known to communicate better and enjoy greater levels of trust, efficiency, and productivity. RHPL aims to build a high-performance organization, rooted in a positive organizational culture.

Progress on this objective will be measured by:

- Organizational culture health

Strategies for delivering on this Strategic Objective are:

- Develop our culture in order to improve performance – There is clear evidence of the link between strong organizational culture and high performance. RHPL’s organizational culture survey revealed that we have much work to do to improve the Library’s culture.
- Develop and launch a staff performance management program – Related to the work on organizational culture, a staff performance management program will support accountability, goal setting, and professional growth.
- Align organization structure and operational capabilities to plans – For RHPL to succeed in delivering on the Strategic Plan, it’s important to align capabilities to the strategies, clarify roles and levels of delegated authority, and establish accountabilities as related to outcomes and progress toward the objectives.

## **Balanced Scorecard**

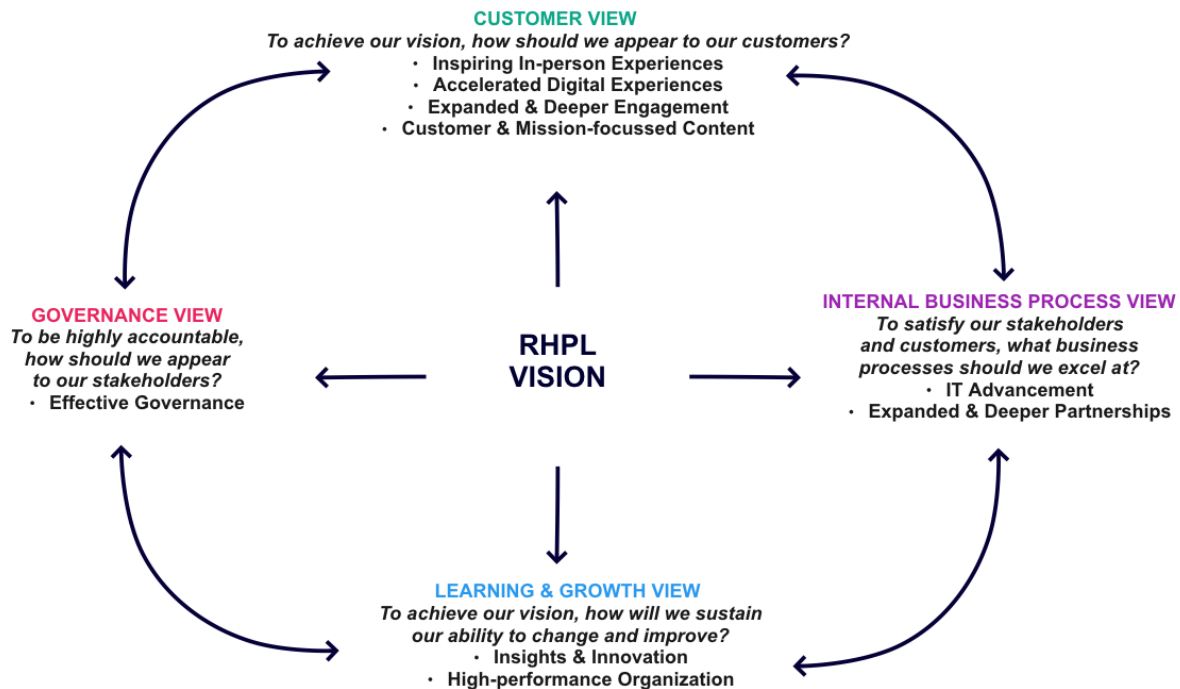
The section above includes the measures that will be used to indicate progress toward achieving the Objectives. These measures form part of a larger measurement and management framework known as the Balanced Scorecard (BSC). The BSC is a strategic planning and management system that looks at strategic measures in addition to traditional financial measures, ultimately achieving a more balanced perspective on success. The BSC helps organizations:

- Communicate what they are trying to accomplish;
- Align the day-to-day work that everyone is doing with strategy;
- Prioritize projects, products, and services;
- Measure and monitor progress towards strategic targets.

The BSC has four “views” that each tie back to the Vision and Mission. In order to determine how the RHPL Vision is realized through accomplishment of the Strategic Objectives, we ask ourselves the following four questions:

1. Customer View – To achieve our vision, how should we appear to our customers?
2. Internal Business Process View – To satisfy our stakeholders and customers, what business processes should we excel at?
3. Learning and Growth View – To achieve our Vision, how will we sustain our ability to change and improve?
4. Governance View – To be highly accountable, how should we appear to our stakeholders?

The Views and RHPL's Objectives within each view are shown in the diagram below.



Based on the Strategic Objectives and Measures described above, RHPL will develop specific targets for each Objective. The current year will provide a baseline from which to track progress. The work of defining and determining specific targets is beginning to take place and will be completed by the end of the year. As examples, targets may be in

the form of such metrics as “percentage increase year over year,” or “number of projects delivered on time and on budget.” Each target will have a precise definition relevant to the corresponding Objective.

## **Sequencing**

The planning of individual strategy execution highlights numerous interdependencies and relationships. The following provides a high-level snapshot of the sequencing of strategy execution, with each year of the plan showing when we expect work on specific strategies to launch. Some strategies may be completed within the same year, others take multiple years to complete, while others will become new and ongoing parts of our business as usual functions. A more flushed out roadmap, along with any changes, will be created once we complete more detailed scoping.

Year 1 - 2021-22:

- New Central Cafe
- Modernize meeting room facilities (pilot)
- Develop RHPL Master Plan and branch outreach strategy
- Redevelop RHPL website
- Develop digital product strategy
- Build marketing and media plan
- Participate in CULC Innovation program
- Align organization structure and operational capabilities to Strategic Plan
- Expand Collaboration tools pilot
- Develop data strategy
- Develop department business plans
- Integrate proof-points of library value into customer journey
- Develop a brand strategy and new identity
- Develop literacy initiative
- Develop new “future-ready” content offerings
- Develop innovation and foresight capabilities

- Develop our culture in order to improve performance
- Develop a DEI strategy
- Execute IT infrastructure modernization program
- Broaden library sector best practices and leanings

#### Year 2 – 2023:

- Modernize meeting room facilities
- Execute digital application modernization program
- Integrate personalization into experiences
- Build librarians into personalities
- Create a customer insights strategy
- Develop and launch a staff performance management program
- Create Board development plan
- Develop a financial sustainability strategy
- Develop and launch an environmental sustainability strategy
- Become a participant in local and regional social policy and planning tables
- Expand volunteer program
- Support development of entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Enhance multilingual offerings

#### Year 3 – 2024:

- Explore branch specialization
- Assess after-hours access model
- Expand membership to include access to other mission-relevant organizations

#### Year 4 – 2025:

- All strategies will be completed and final assessments will be done. A 2025-2030 Strategic Plan will be drafted.

## **Next Steps**

In addition to initiating the Year 1 strategies as described above, immediate next steps are:

1. Communicate the Strategic Plan – Once approved by the Library Board, a one-page version of the Plan as well as a page on RHPL's website will be developed for sharing with stakeholders and the public.
2. As mentioned earlier in this report, specific targets for each Strategic Objective will be developed in order to measure progress toward the Objectives and a detailed roadmap will be completed.

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

1. Foresight (Pre-read and Scenarios)
2. Consultation Summary deck
3. Business Models
4. Task Force Workshop Summary decks





July 30, 2021

Richmond Hill Public Library Board  
c/o Darren Solomon, Chief Executive Officer  
dsolomon@rhpl.ca

Dear Chair Beros and Library Board Members,

**Re: Composition of Richmond Hill Library Board**

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I am writing to seek your feedback on the composition of Richmond Hill Library Board's beginning with the 2022 to 2026 Term of Council that starts on November 15, 2022. Under the *Public Libraries Act* ("PLA") Richmond Hill Council is responsible for establishing the Library Board and appointing the Members.

On April 22, 2020, Council passed the following resolution:

"That staff report back on recommendations to update the City's composition requirements for the Richmond Hill Public Library Board that are consistent with the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c.P.44, as amended."

In response to this direction, a Staff Report on the Library Board's composition will be included on a Council Agenda in the Fall of 2021. As key stakeholders familiar with the governance of the Library your input into the future composition of the Board would be invaluable.

The current composition of the Library Board was approved by Council on January 15, 2001. Under the 2001 rules, the Board is comprised of between nine and ten members as follows:

- No more than four but not less than three Members of Council;
- Two residents of Richmond Hill qualified pursuant to the PLA and appointed by Council;
- Two residents of Richmond Hill qualified pursuant to the PLA recommended by the York Region District School Board and appointed by Council;
- One residents of Richmond Hill qualified pursuant to the PLA recommended by the York Region Catholic District School Board and appointed by Council.

Since 2001, the PLA has been updated to remove the requirement that a Library Board include representatives selected by the local education community. The York Region District School Board has requested Council update the Library Board rules to remove the requirement that they be required to recommend persons for appointment to the Board. As part of its report to Council, City Staff will make a recommendation to Council that the Board composition not include representatives recommended by the York Region District School Board and York Region Catholic District School Board.

The PLA has the following requirements:

- A public library board shall have at least five members appointed by the municipal council. [PLA, section 9(1)]
- The total Members of Council appointed to the Board shall be less than a majority of the total members of the board (e.g. a Board of nine members shall include no more than four Members of Council). [PLA, section 10(2)(a)]

- Other persons appointed the board shall be:
  - At least 18 years of age;
  - A Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident of Canada
  - A resident of the Richmond Hill;
  - Not be employed by the Board or the municipality. [*PLA, section 10(1)*]

Any recommendations to Council will be based on the rules in the amended PLA. Additionally, to ensure that the role of the Council and Board are distinct and in compliance with provincial legislation, staff will recommend that the total number of Members of Council that can be appointed to the Board be less than a majority of Council.

To assist City Staff in making recommendations to Council your consideration and response to the following questions would be appreciated:

1. To ensure good governance, community representation, effective decision making, and efficient meetings, what is an ideal Board size (e.g. total number of members)? In considering your response to Question 1, please note the following:
  - a. Boards are normally composed of an odd number of Members to ensure that decisions can be made by majority vote.
  - b. A larger board size requires more Members to be present at each meeting to form a quorum. If the Board currently experiences challenges obtaining quorum, a larger size board may actually make this more challenging.
2. Should Council continue to have the option to set the size of the Board at the beginning of a Term of Council (e.g. the total size of the Board shall be either nine or ten members), or should the total size of the Board be a fixed number (e.g. the Board shall be comprised of nine members)?
3. Should Council consider appointing both Canadian Citizens and Permanent Residents of Canada to the Board, or keep the current requirement that only Canadian Citizens be appointed?

This and any other feedback provided will be taken into consideration when reporting to Council.

Thank you for taking the time to consider the future governance of the Richmond Hill Library Board. If the Board desires, I would be pleased to attend a Board meeting to discuss this matter before reporting to Council.

Yours sincerely,



Stephen M.A. Huycke  
Director, Legislative Services/City Clerk