

MEMORANDUM

To: Newmarket Public Library Board

From: Todd Kyle, C.E.O.

Date: December 14, 2016

Re: Strategic Plan renewal options

As requested by the Board, this report will outline high-level options for renewal of the library's Strategic Plan which is dated 2013-2016.

Background:

The current Strategic Plan was developed in 2012 after a two-year period where the Library was guided by a set of informal interim strategic directions taken from the 2005-2010 Strategic Plan, 2010 Council and Board strategic priorities, the 2011 Town of Newmarket Business Plan, and the Strategic Technology Committee's *Key Drivers for Technology* proposal.

While progress during this period was uneven, the development of the library accelerated greatly under the direction of the 2013-2016 Plan. The Library's dedication to community dialogue and discovery was deepened through expansion of the York Info service, the launching of IdeaMarket, and a number of program partnerships with community organizations. The Library's commitment to being a centre of learning for the community led to the launch of a number of programs and services to cement our role in providing digital literacy, including computer workshops, online courses, technology assistance on demand, and the Maker Hub. Finally, the Plan led us to improve the Library's capabilities and capacities by investing in self-service automation technology, a vast array of online digital media, and publicly accessible technology such as laptops and workspaces.

If one were to look at a quick environmental scan, the overall directions of the 2013-2016 Plan would seem to be still relevant and still aligned with the community's overall strategic direction as articulated by some of the collaborations the Library is involved with. The Library is part of the Community Collaborative Ecosystem, a partnership working to promote Newmarket as a knowledge-based, technology-enabled community, in alignment with the Town's Innovate Newmarket strategy and with its economic development strategy.

In addition, while some of the specific actions proposed under the 2013-2016 Plan have been completed, and many are underway and ongoing, a number of them, especially those related to increasing the Library's reach and expanding Library space in the community, have seen only modest progress.

The context, then, is one where the current Plan has in no way outlived its usefulness nor its relevance, and in fact continues to provide a solid fundamental base to further development. In addition, the context is of a Library that struggles to play its agreed-upon role in a facility that is inadequately sized, logistically challenged, and of limited appeal to the broader community. Indeed, the Board has approved funding for a study of facility needs, pending Council support. For this reason, the Board may wish to concentrate its efforts in the area of infrastructure renewal rather than strategic role planning.

Options:

There are two suggested options for the Board to pursue a renewal of the current Strategic Plan:

- A. A thorough rebuild of the Library's strategy from the ground up, including new community consultation, situational analysis, and visioning sessions, resulting in new strategic directions, and objectives and action items for each. The lowest cost for this direction would start at \$3000 for Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) to facilitate the planning sessions; community consultation and high-level staff support is not included in this fee. A private-sector consultant providing all services including high-level direction and community consultation would cost starting at \$30,000 (the approximate cost of the current Plan). These could be funded through the Library's operating surplus.
- B. A renewal of the existing Plan through identification of new action items for each strategic role, focusing on facility renewal. This may be achieved either for no marginal cost (using existing staff resources) or by a modest cost through SOLS (estimated \$1000), and consist of staff and Board planning sessions. An option is to consult with Library users, which would add another consultant cost.

The following motion is recommended:

THAT the Library Board receive the report on Strategic Plan renewal options.