



## MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: June 16, 2020  
Author: Carol Nelson, Director, Planning & Communications  
VanDocs#: DOC/2020/144730  
Meeting Date: June 24, 2020  
TO: Library Board  
FROM: Kurt Heinrich, Chair, Community Relations, Planning & Development Committee  
**SUBJECT: VPL Annual Report format**

---

### **SUMMARY**

This report is to provide the Board with an overview of a simplified format recommended for the 2019 VPL annual report.

### **PURPOSE**

This report is for decision.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the Board approve publishing the 2019 VPL annual report in a 'letter format', including an acknowledgement of donations received in 2019.

### **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

The Community Relations, Planning & Development Committee members recognized the need to reconsider the format for the 2019 Annual Report due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, both because a focus on 2019 services would not seem relevant to the Library's audience at present, and because of the effort involved in creating the report while staff are endeavouring to re-open. They identified the need to acknowledge donors and meet the needs of the VPL Foundation; inquired about the format, which staff clarified would be a traditional letter; and requested that the documents be available as one bundle to simplify digital access.

## **POLICY**

The Library must produce annual financial statements under the Library Act, s.11, however, there is no requirement for additional annual reporting to the public. VPL has historically produced annual reports containing highlights for the public in addition to the financial statements.

## **BACKGROUND**

VPL has produced an annual report in both paper and digital form for many years. The annual report provides a snapshot of VPL's financial statements (with [detailed financial statements](#) posted online), and highlights of activities during the year. In consultation with the CRPD committee, the [2018 annual report](#) followed a digital-first approach, with briefer content more closely linked to the strategic outcomes of the 2017-2020 strategic plan. Most trustees noted that they like to have something to share for their meetings with government liaisons, but that the format of an annual report was not necessary. Trustees cited the '[At a Glance](#)' report, first produced in 2018, as equally/some felt more valuable to raise awareness of VPL.

## **DISCUSSION**

The 2018 Annual Report was produced and published in May/June 2019. Due to pandemic impacts, the 2019 report has not yet been initiated. Development and production of the publication, while far less labour intensive than prior years, requires a fair amount of time from the Marketing & Communications team as well as other managers and directors.

Much of the content that is helpful for trustees and the VPL Foundation is presented in existing VPL publications: [VPL annual statistics](#) (2019 version included in reports for June 15, 2020 meeting), [VPL at a Glance](#) (to be updated with 2019 stats), and 2019 financial statements ([posted on vpl.ca](#)).

With human resources stretched thin due to the pandemic, it is recommended that an alternative 'letter' format with links to the three above referenced publications be posted on vpl.ca. Further, presenting stories of successes in 2019 without reference to current closures and recovery plans may be viewed as irrelevant by many readers. As an interim measure, we may also consider posting quarterly 'updates from the Chief Librarian' with summarized quarterly statistics on vpl.ca.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. Do you agree with the proposed approach and format for 2019?
2. Would a quarterly update including usage statistics be valuable to post publicly for 2020?

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Creating a letter style 2019 Annual Report will save minimal cost as printing was reduced in 2018, but will save substantial staff time and effort.

## **FINAL REMARKS**

While producing an annual report is not a legislated requirement, historically it is a document that provides a snapshot of progress toward strategic goals, along with a summary of financial position. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and resulting staff constraints, production of a robust 2019 annual report is not feasible. A letter format along with links to existing public documents that provide similar information is proposed.