



Vancouver Public Library

**VPL 2020 Strategic Plan  
Quarterly Progress Report**

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**Q4 2019**

## CHIEF LIBRARIAN REMARKS

### Summary

Year-end 2019 marks the completion of VPL's 2017-2019 strategic plan. This year saw the completion or advancement of many successful initiatives, including: the launch of RB Digital streaming video increasing access to popular film content; the offering of numerous engaging programs including the Let's Talk About Reconciliation film series, Connections to Kith & Kin, and the "Capturing Vancouver" citizen journalism workshops; the launch of a refreshed staff training "Patron-Centred: Customer Service the VPL Way"; expanded use of outcomes-based evaluation through Project Outcome; and the completion of new graphic standards for VPL. Also throughout 2019, staff worked closely with the Board to develop a new 4-year strategic plan for VPL. To complete the year, we undertook VPL's annual public survey to measure our Key Performance Indicators for the close of the 2017-2019 strategic plan. VPL continued to see excellent results on the key measures of patron satisfaction and the public's recognition of VPL as an important community service, and perceptions of VPL's brand remained exceptionally positive.

### **Learning, Creativity & Innovation: By 2020 VPL will be recognized as a go-to venue for learning, creativity and innovation in Vancouver.**

VPL is dedicated to enabling Learning, Creativity and Innovation in Vancouver. In Q4/19, two strategic initiatives were completed – Fast Access to the Most Desirable Materials, and the Multilingual Collections Strategy. The Enhanced Early Literacy Branch Spaces initiative continued to make solid progress - we are expecting to select a contractor in Q1/20 and make the new early literacy playground available to the public in Q3/20. Our public survey found that 67% of the public agreed that VPL is a go-to venue for learning, creativity and innovation, a drop from 2018 but remaining relatively consistent with our 2017 measurement.

### **Access & Equity: By 2020 VPL will be accessible and inviting to everyone**

Improving access and equity continued as a top priority. Recommendations for Creative Approaches to Extending Service Hours were completed in Q4/19, and we committed to build on the Trans\* Inclusion Strategy in 2020 and beyond. Facilities projects including the phase 1 Archives Relocation, Oakridge Redevelopment, and Marpole Redevelopment continue to move forward. Looking at key performance indicators, combined physical and digital visits grew by 3% from 2018 and 86% of patrons were satisfied with VPL's services, remaining consistently high from last year. 79% of the public agreed that VPL is accessible and inviting - while this indicator has declined from 2018, it remains higher than the 2017 level, prior to the opening of levels 8 & 9.

### **Sharing & Collaboration: By 2020 VPL will be at the centre of a community that shares information, ideas, & stories**

VPL continues to promote sharing and collaboration amongst Vancouverites. In Q4/19, the Community Voices Film Festival reached completion through the successful Citizen Journalism program, and we committed to continue building on our efforts towards the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action in 2020 and beyond. In terms of performance measures, both total collection use (physical and digital combined) and annual program attendance remained relatively stable compared to 2018. In 2019, 70% of the public agreed that VPL connects them with the ideas and information they need to be inspired and thrive - lower than in 2018, but remaining above the level measured in 2017.

### **Organizational Strength: By 2020 VPL will be seen as a vital civic service and will be adaptable in the face of change.**

VPL remains committed to building its organizational strength. The New Staff Orientation Training initiative was completed in Q4/19, and the Brand Development & Rollout reached a significant milestone with the completion of new graphic standards for VPL. Other initiatives, including Support to Advance, the Branch Staffing Model and Project Outcome for Evaluation continued to move forward with targeted completion in 2020. In 2019, Staff Training increased by 6% over the previous year. A full 95% of Vancouver residents believed that VPL is important to the Vancouver community, remaining consistently high compared to last year.

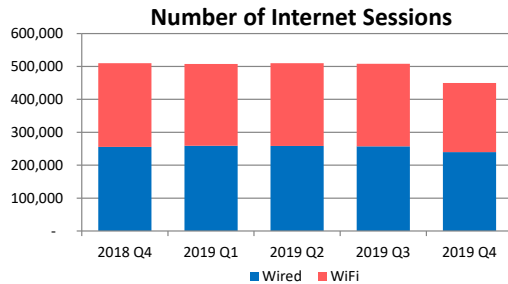
Part 1: Indicators

Dashboard		Annual Progress										
Indicator	Type	2018	2019	Trend (Yr/Yr)	2018 Q4	2019 Q1	2019 Q2	2019 Q3	2019 Q4	Trend (Q419/Q418)		
# of visits (physical & digital)	KPI	13,370,876	13,814,338 *	3% ✓	3,450,228	3,491,413	3,402,488	3,544,016	3,374,136	-2% ✘		
# of physical visits	KPI	6,438,486	6,366,330	-1% ✘	1,556,234	1,612,661	1,583,454	1,661,376	1,506,554	-3% ✘		
# of digital visits	KPI	6,932,390	7,448,008 *	7% ✓	1,893,994	1,878,752	1,819,034	1,882,640	1,867,582	-1% ✘		
# of internet sessions (wired & wireless)	SI	2,067,023	1,975,385	-4% ✘	510,130	507,425	510,075	508,293	449,574	-12% ✘		
% of public who agree that VPL is a go-to venue for LCI	KPI	76%	67%	-12% ✘								
Program attendance (content creation)	SI	13,812	17,165	24% ✓	3,477	3,149	3,141	6,960	3,915	13% ✓		
Digital creation spaces (sessions booked)	SI	23,688	n/a		5,716	5,949	6,000	5,863	n/a			
Collection use: local indie author (physical & digital)	SI	1,520	1,941	28% ✓	395	558	461	497	425	8% ✓		

\* Preliminary 2019 data. Final 2019 data will be presented in the 2019 Annual Business Review

Key Trends

Number of Visits (including physical & digital) - See Page 5



The number of internet sessions decreased by 12% between Q4/18 and Q4/19. The decrease reflects declines in WiFi usage (-18%) as well as wired internet usage (-6%). On an annual basis, internet sessions were down 4% from 2018 in contrast to the desired trend of stable usage.

The decline in WiFi usage was driven largely by connectivity issues at Central related to a firmware upgrade in late November, resulting in a decline of 26% from Q4/18. WiFi usage stayed relatively steady (-1%) across branches.

Wired internet sessions declined in Q4 due to lower usage at both Central (-4%) and in branches (-7%). Temporary closures at Kerrisdale and Hastings branch as well as the Oakridge relocation reduced the availability of wired work stations accessible to patrons during Q4.

Key Performance Indicator - Annual Progress

Our 2019 public survey found that 67% of the public agreed that VPL is a go-to venue for learning, creativity and innovation, a drop from 2018 but remaining relatively consistent with our 2017 measurement.

**Part 2: Initiatives**

Goals & Initiatives	Sponsor	Lead	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	On Time	On Budget	Notes
<b>21st Century Learning</b>								
Revamped Digital Literacy Program	DI	AOS	2017 Q1	2017 Q3	100%			Project Complete
Enhanced Early Literacy Branch Spaces	JI	MA	2017 Q1	2020 Q3	67%			Contractor selection Q1/20 & completion Q3/20
English as an Additional Language	JI	DE	2018 Q1	2020 Q1	100%			Assessment completed
Fast Access to Most Desirable Materials	KC	IC	2017 Q2	2019 Q4	100%			Project Complete
Multilingual Collections Strategy	KC	IC	2017 Q2	2019 Q4	100%			Project Complete
<b>Made@VPL</b>								
Bud Osborn Creation Space	JI	SK	2017 Q1	2019 Q1	100%			Space fully functional
Mobile Creation Lab & Programming	KC	PH	2018 Q1	2019 Q3	100%			Project Complete
Self-Published Local Author Program	KC	JD	2017 Q1	2018 Q4	100%			Project Complete

**Part 3: Impact**

**21st Century Learning**



The Sphero Mania program at Joe Fortes, on the first Monday of Winter Break, gave kids (and a few enthusiastic parents) the chance to experiment with Spheros, small rolling robots that are programmed using an iPad. Children worked in pairs to program the Spheros to roll over ramps, through mazes, under furniture, and “bowl” at stacked pyramids of plastic cups. At the end of the session, several parents expressed gratitude that the library program enabled their kids to get out of the house and try something new over break. One parent noted that programs like this one enable her child to experience an exciting, and expensive, object like a Sphero. The branch hopes to present similar programs in the Spring.

**Made@ VPL**



For the second year in a row, in partnership with DOXA, VPL presented a slate of free public programming as part of the Vancouver Podcast Festival. The festival highlights the power of podcasts, and brings together local podcast creators with national and international series. This included panel discussions, live recordings, and classes on how to create a podcast. The VPL events had over 500 patrons attend.

Part 1: Indicators

Dashboard

Annual Progress

Indicator	Type	2018	2019	Trend (Yr/Yr)	2018 Q4	2019 Q1	2019 Q2	2019 Q3	2019 Q4	Trend (Q419/Q418)
Number of active cardholders										
Active in the last 12 months	KPI	269,626	272,430	1% ✓						
Active in the last 3 years (CULC comparable)	KPI	448,281	452,285	1% ✓						
Number of active borrowers (physical materials)	SI				173,421	173,086	172,049	171,977	170,744	-2% ✖
Number of active Overdrive users	SI				34,067	35,089	35,852	37,038	38,041	12% ✓
% of patrons who are satisfied with VPL's services	KPI	84%	86%	2% ---**						
Number of lapsed borrowers (physical materials) <sup>1</sup>	SI				64,637	65,331	64,765	64,826	64,875	0% ---
Number of lapsed Overdrive users <sup>2</sup>	SI				9,996	11,202	11,441	11,623	12,046	21% ✖
% of public who agree that VPL is accessible and inviting	KPI	85%	79%	-7% ---						
Number of visits (physical & digital)	SI	13,370,876	13,814,338 *	3% ✓	3,450,228	3,491,413	3,402,488	3,544,016	3,374,136	-2% ✖

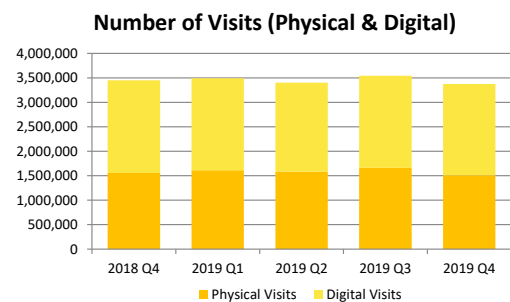
<sup>1</sup> Lapsed borrowers refers to the number of cardholders who did not borrow physical items in the last 12 months but did in the prior 12 months.

<sup>2</sup> Lapsed Overdrive users refers to the number of cardholders who did not use Overdrive in the last 12 months but did in the prior 12 months.

\* Preliminary 2019 data. Final 2019 data will be presented in the 2019 Annual Business Review

\*\* Percentage increase/decrease for this indicator is not statistically significant.

Key Trends



Number of visits, physical and digital combined, decreased by 2% from Q4/18 to Q4/19. Annually, visitation grew by 3% from 2018, in line with our desire for continued growth.

Digital visits remained stable with a slight decrease of 1% over Q4/18. We see an ongoing shift in the way patrons access our collections and resources, as providers increasingly develop mobile apps that allow users to bypass our homepage altogether. We expect web traffic to gradually increase as we move towards a more user-friendly navigation for our Digital Library collections. Annually, digital visits increased by 7% from 2018.

Physical visits decreased by 3% relative to Q4/18. Visits to the Central Library decreased by 8% likely due to the boost in visitation seen in Q4/18 with the opening of Levels 8 & 9. Branch visits remained stable with a small 1% decline overall. Both Oakridge (-56%) and Kerrisdale (-74%) saw significant drops in physical visits due to closures in Q4/19. The decreased visitation to these branches was buffered in large part by increased physical visitation to both Kensington (+49%) and Mount Pleasant (+37%) branches. Annually, physical visits remain relatively stable with a slight decline of 1% from 2018.

Key Performance Indicator - Annual Progress

In 2019, the total count of cardholders active over the past 12 months was up by 1% over 2018, consistent with our desired growth trend.

86% of patrons were satisfied with VPL's services, remaining consistently high relative to 2018.

79% of the public agreed that VPL is accessible and inviting - while this indicator has declined from 2018, it remains higher than the 2017 level, prior to the opening of levels 8 & 9.

**Part 2: Initiatives**

Goals & Initiatives	Sponsor	Lead	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	On Time	On Budget	Note
<b>Patron Centred Experience</b>								
New VPL.ca Website	CdC	KC	2017 Q1	2017 Q2	100%			Project Complete
néca?mat ct Strathcona Branch	SS	DG	2017 Q1	2017 Q2	100%			Project Complete
Creative Approaches-Extend Service Hours	JI	SM	2017 Q2	2019 Q4	100%			Recommendations complete
Facilities Master Plan	CdC	PC	2017 Q3	2018 Q2	100%			Project Complete
Trans* Inclusion Strategy	DI	AM	2017 Q1	2019 Q4	100%			Recommitted to this strategic focus for 2020 & beyond
Accessible Adaptive Equipment	JI	DE	2017 Q2	2020 Q1	100%			Equipment identified and selected
<b>Welcoming Spaces</b>								
Strategic Branch Refurbishment Plan	SS	ES	2017 Q2	2018 Q1	100%			Project Complete
Central Library Revitalization	CdC	DI	2017 Q1	2019 Q3	100%			Levels 8 & 9 opened
Archives Relocation - Phase 1	CdC	DI	2017 Q1	2020 Q4	100%			Underway
Children's Library Renovation - Phase 1	JI	MA	2019	2024				
Oakridge Branch Redevelopment	JI	KE	2017 Q3	2019 Q4	75%			Design phase underway
Marpole Redevelopment	JI	KE	2018 Q4	2019 Q4	50%			Public consultation to begin in 2020
Customer Service Training Refresh	JI	SM	2018 Q2	2019 Q2	100%			Training underway

**Part 3: Impact**

**Patron-Centred Experience**



The Teen Services team delivered a Job Searching 101 workshop for Vancouver Community College (VCC) students with cognitive disabilities. VCC's Career Awareness program helps vulnerable students transition into employment, and the college views VPL as a key partner in this process. Our popular workshop connects youth to employment resources for career exploration and applications, and provides a library connection that opens doors to other important VPL services. Attendees were welcomed to Central with a resource tour, and the diverse group was surprised and excited to find multilingual resources that reflected their first languages.

**Welcoming Spaces**



The Northeast Area Teen Services Librarian partnered with Britannia Secondary's Sexuality and Gender Acceptance Alliance Group and Out in Schools, a group that brings films into classrooms to inspire youth to step into the challenges and the triumphs of LGBT2Q+ communities, to present All Our Stories: Queer Books and Film for Youth. Teens quickly reviewed and rated a curated selection of fiction titles and then screened films. Each teen was able to borrow their top choice of book. This annual program supports inclusive spaces and enables conversations and Teen Services hopes to bring this program to other branches in the future.

Part 1: Indicators

Dashboard Annual Progress

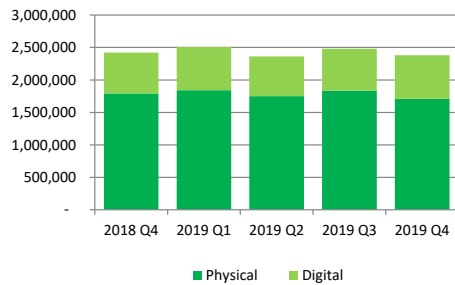
Indicator	Type	2018	2019	Trend (Yr/Yr)		2018 Q4	2019 Q1	2019 Q2	2019 Q3	2019 Q4	Trend (Q4/19/Q418)
% of public agree VPL connects to ideas & info needed to be inspired & thrive	KPI	76%	70%	-8%	---**						
Collection use (physical & digital) <sup>1</sup>	SI	9,881,521	9,755,350	-1%	*	2,422,003	2,507,054	2,363,853	2,482,104	2,379,868	-2% *
Program attendance	SI	245,307	247,774	1%	✓	55,833	52,556	80,935	59,511	54,144	-3% *
Research questions	SI	715,347	677,421	-5%	*	160,301	182,206	170,107	169,746	155,362	-3% *
Program attendance: dialogue-based programs	SI	12,988	13,908	7%	✓	4,309	3,670	3,913	2,654	3,671	-15% *

<sup>1</sup> Figures for 2017 and 2018 digital use are re-stated from previous quarters' reports due to changes to in counting methodology.

\*\* Percentage increase/decrease for this indicator is not statistically significant.

Key Trends

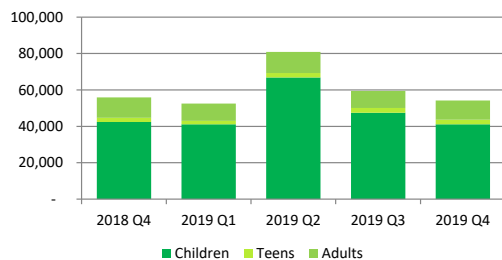
Collection Use



Total collection use, including physical and digital, declined slightly by 2% between Q4/18 and Q4/19. On an annual basis, total collection use remained fairly steady with only a minor decline of 1% from 2018.

Total digital collection use increased by 6% from Q4/18. The growth was driven by the continued increase in demand for downloadable eAudiobook, eBook and magazine content, and offset by declines in use of streamable content and traditional database products. Annually, digital collection use increased 6% from 2018.

Program Attendance



Physical circulation continued to decline at both Central (-4%) and branches (-5%). The decline in branches is likely related to the temporary closure of Kerrisdale and Hastings as well as the relocation and large reduction in collection size at Oakridge. Overall, the decline in physical circulation continues to reflect the shift from physical to digital borrowing. Annually, physical circulation fell by 4% from 2018.

Program attendance decreased by 3% from Q4/18 to Q4/19. Attendance at adult programs decreased by 5%, driven in part by lower attendance at one large event and slightly fewer adult programs offered overall. Attendance at teens' programs increased by 5% from Q4/18. Children's programs saw a slight decrease of 3% over Q4/18 due to one less major author event planned during Q4/19.

Looking forward, staff will continue to focus efforts on creating compelling and relevant programming that maintains high overall attendance and meets the needs and interests of patrons.

Annually, program attendance saw a slight increase of 1% over 2018.

Key Performance Indicator - Annual Progress

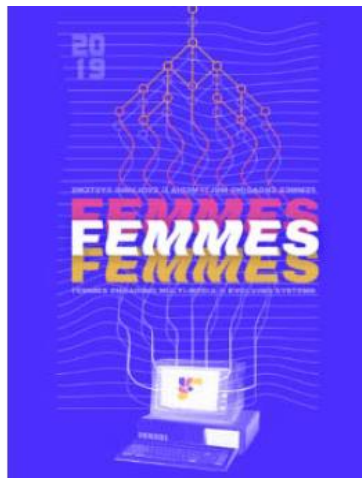
In 2019, 70% of the public agreed that VPL connects them with the ideas and information they need to be inspired and thrive - lower than in 2018, but remaining above the level measured in 2017.

**Part 2: Initiatives**

Goals & Initiatives	Sponsor	Lead	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	On Time	On Budget	Note
<b>Community Connections</b>								
Community Voices Film Festival	DI	EW	2018 Q3	2019 Q4	100%			Project evolved into Citizen Journalism
Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action	CdC	ML	2017 Q2	2019 Q4	100%			Indigenous student practicum framework developed
<b>Platforms for Sharing</b>								
Story City (Canada 150+)	CdC	KC	2017 Q1	2018 Q2	100%			Project Complete
Vancouver Stories	DI	GD	2017 Q3	2018 Q4	100%			Project Complete

**Part 3: Impact**

**Community Connections**



Project Management and Holding Power as a POC, a free and open to all moderated panel discussion, engaged an audience of 58 patrons with questions and answers about being in leadership positions as people of colour. The program arose from a partnership between Femmes Engaging Multimedia and Evolving Systems (FEMMES) and Programming and Learning (PLG). Prior to the workshop, PLG worked with FEMMES to book spaces for other workshops which supported womxn, nonbinary, and femmes of colour in creating works of interactive fiction, learning to code, project management, creative writing, and more. This partnership supported FEMMES in their work to bring together people, create spaces for learning, and allow the voices of their community to be heard. In total FEMMES hosted four other workshops in VPL spaces with 48 people in attendance. This relationship is one that PLG will continue to pursue with the hope of offering more programs in the future.

**Platforms for Sharing**

**Becoming Labrador**



Saturday, December 14, 2019  
 2:00 P.M. – 3:30 P.M.  
 Kensington Branch  
 1428 Cedar Cottage Mews

Kensington branch hosted the NFB Film screening of “Becoming Labrador” which follows a group of recently arrived Filipino workers to Happy Valley – Goose Bay in Labrador. Members of the Filipino community and the wider community attended the screening which was followed by a post-screening discussion on Filipino migration to Canada led by a representative from a local Filipino grassroots migrants’ organization. This combination of film showing followed by a discussion really brought the community together for the exchange of ideas and information on issues that matter to our communities.



Part 1: Indicators

Dashboard		Annual Progress			Quarterly Progress (Current Quarter vs. Previous 4 Quarters)						
Indicator	Type	2018	2019	Trend (Yr/Yr)	2018 Q4	2019 Q1	2019 Q2	2019 Q3	2019 Q4	Trend (Q419/Q418)	
Employee engagement <sup>6</sup>	KPI	n/a	n/a								
Staff training	SI	62%	66%	6% ✓	62%	67%	71%	68%	66%	6% ✓	
Absence rate (days equivalent) <sup>4</sup>	SI	11.0	11.0	0% ---							
Median public awareness of VPL services <sup>6</sup>	KPI	n/a	n/a								
Earned media impressions <sup>5</sup>	SI										
eNewsletter subscriptions	SI	46,995	49,582	6% ✓	12,165	12,240	12,307	12,429	12,606	4% ✓	
% Vancouver residents believe VPL is important	KPI	96%	95%	-1% ---**							
# of visits (physical & digital)	SI	13,370,876	13,814,338 *	3% ✓	3,450,228	3,491,413	3,402,488	3,544,016	3,374,136	-2% ✘	

<sup>4</sup> Days Equivalent is a metric used to express the Absence Rate as # of days lost to align with Stats Can benchmarks and peer groups.

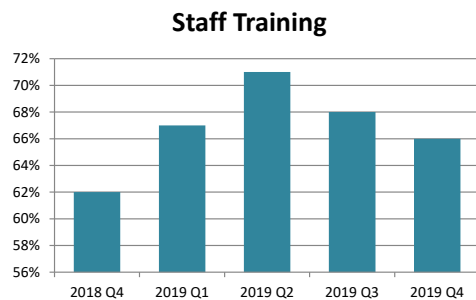
<sup>5</sup> Data is unavailable due to implementation of new data source.

<sup>6</sup> Data not available for the reporting period.

\* Preliminary 2019 data. Final 2019 data will be presented in the 2019 Annual Business Review

\*\* Percentage increase/decrease for this indicator is not statistically significant.

Key Trends



Staff training (defined as % of staff who completed at least one training program or conference in the past 12 months) increased from 62% in 2018 to 66% in 2019, in line with our goal.

In Q4/19, we continued with core training, offering two new Patron-Centred: Customer Service the VPL Way sessions and four Workplace Violence Prevention sessions, a Managing Conflict/Respectful Workplace session, a Responding with Respect training session, and a Cultural Competency: Indigenous and Urban Indigenous Peoples - Impacts of Residential Schools and Colonization session. In addition, Information Services continued to host training sessions to support branch staff in meeting patron information needs, and a Coaching Skills for Managers course was held.

Looking ahead, we are reviewing our training plan and will continue to focus on core training for all staff in 2020. Updated online training for Building Respectful and Inclusive Workplaces, which now includes gender identity and expression, and training for staff and supervisors on the new scheduling software will begin in early 2020.

Key Performance Indicator - Annual Progress

In 2019, annual eNewsletter subscriptions increased by 6% over 2018.

95% of Vancouver residents believed VPL is an important part of their community. This measure remains consistently high compared to our 2018 measurement.

**Part 2: Initiatives**

Goals & Initiatives	Sponsor	Lead	Start Date	End Date	% Complete	On Time	On Budget	Note
<b>People &amp; Culture</b>								
Refresh Community-Led Training	JI	CM	2018 Q1	2018 Q4	100%			Project Complete
New Staff Orientation Training Review	BR	IC	2017 Q4	2019 Q4	100%			Project Complete
Support to Advance	BR	WM	2017 Q2	2019 Q4	82%			Anticipated to be completed by Q2 2020
Branch Staffing Model	JI	SM	2017 Q1	2019 Q4	91%			Scheduling software rollout underway
Central Public Service Model	DI	AM	2019 Q1	2019 Q4	60%			Delayed due to staff capacity challenges
<b>Value &amp; Impact</b>								
Reporting and Data Management	CN	PC	2017 Q1	2019 Q4	100%			Refinements continue
Project Outcome for Evaluation	CN	PC	2017 Q3	2019 Q4	78%			System-wide roll out report in development
Create a new member experience strategy	CN	TBD	2019 Q3	2019 Q4				
VPL Brand Development & Rollout	CN	SF	2018 Q2	2019 Q4	78%			Full roll out starting Q1 2020

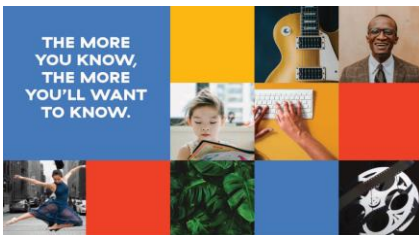
**Part 3: Impact**

**People & Culture**



Several CTS staff attended the Fall UBC HELP (Human Early Learning Partnership) Research Expo. This annual event focuses on the latest research on early childhood development, and identifies trends in childhood vulnerabilities in BC communities and beyond. This is an important annual event that informs our practice in Children’s and Teen Services, engages our staff with the broader early years community, and helps align our resources to the needs of Vancouver families.

**Value & Impact**



Q4 2019 saw the completion of new graphic standards for VPL. This exercise is the first major update of brand standards since 1994 and provides the tools for VPL to communicate effectively in the 21st Century. The updated brand standards are created from a “digital-first” perspective with a focus on clear, concise and friendly interaction. A mix of simple text, welcoming imagery and a nod to the colour schemes and motifs of our current brand allows the narrative of VPL’s visual story to continue with these new visual tools. Our brand is very strong with our patrons, and this refresh will accommodate the contemporary communications needs of the organization. With the delivery of these new tools in 2019, we now look to 2020 as the time when we will be integrating our updated look into VPL communications.