



Vancouver Public Library

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: January 10, 2020
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TO: Library Board
FROM: Carol Nelson
SUBJECT: 2020 to 2023 Strategic Plan – Measurement & Evaluation

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on measurement and evaluation for the Strategic Plan.

PURPOSE

This report is for discussion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Board receive the report for information.

BACKGROUND

At the December Board meeting, the Board approved a set of performance indicators that will be reported on regularly to measure VPL's progress toward implementing the 2020 to 2023 Strategic Plan.

The approved suite of indicators includes five measures of overall performance: physical & digital visits, collection use, active cardholders, patron satisfaction and public perception of VPL's importance to the community. It also includes one representative measure for each of VPL's four strategic pillars: program attendance for the Learning & Creativity pillar; physical visits for the Shared Spaces & Experiences pillar; a new public survey question, to be

determined after research for the Belonging & Connection pillar, and staff training for the Organizational Strength pillar.

The Board discussed the need to more fully evaluate VPL's progress beyond the use of these measures, and how the evaluation approach could encompass both short-term outputs and longer-term outcomes. The Board requested that staff identify ways to evaluate progress on the two goals related to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action, as well as ways to evaluate relationships with community partners. Trustees identified that ways to assess progress on the goals related to the Belonging and Connection pillar could be explored through research into the work of other organizations in this area.

DISCUSSION

The draft text for the Measurement and Evaluation section of the strategic plan document is attached in Appendix A, and staff are seeking feedback on this text before it is finalized.

A Board workshop is recommended in Q1 or early Q2 2020 to develop a common understanding of performance measurement and evaluation and to assist the Board in identifying the reporting that will be needed from staff to meet the Board's obligation to monitor the success of the VPL Strategic Plan.

Staff has begun to research different approaches to measuring Belonging and Connection, consulting with other public libraries and reviewing studies by community organizations such as the Vancouver Foundation, Toronto Social Capital Study, and the Canadian Index of Wellbeing. This research will continue with the intention of establishing a measurement that VPL will use for this pillar before the end of Q4 2020.

VPL has hundreds of partnerships with community organizations and individuals, ranging from one-time program delivery agreements to highly formalized partnerships, such as the agreement with Library and Archives Canada, which is documented in a memorandum of understanding. Staff have identified that partnerships may be best measured by selecting a few key strategic partners and evaluating qualities of these relationships over time as we work towards a common goal. This would likely yield a more meaningful evaluation than a numeric count of VPL's hundreds of community partners with different levels and types of relationship. Staff will continue to consider measurement for this area.

Staff will be considering where outcomes-based measurement is most meaningful in 2020, and implementing this for specific goal areas in the Strategic Plan.

Questions for Discussion

1. Does the Board have questions or feedback on Appendix A?
2. Does the Board agree that a measurement and evaluation workshop would be helpful, and if so are there specific topics that should be covered?

FINAL REMARKS

The 2020 to 2023 Strategic Plan provides important direction for VPL in meeting the evolving needs of the Vancouver community. Measurement and evaluation will provide the Board with timely and relevant information to monitor our progress towards achieving our strategic goals.

Appendix A

Draft Text for Measurement and Evaluation Section of Public Document

Measuring Our Performance

Measuring and reporting on our performance is critical to ensuring accountability to our patrons, the City, stakeholders and the general public. VPL has established transparent measurement and reporting processes, and we will continue to monitor progress toward the goals we've set for ourselves for 2020-2023. A combination of quantitative and qualitative information in addition to financial indicators will provide a holistic picture of how we are working to achieve our vision of an Informed, Engaged and Connected City.

Key measures of overall library-wide performance include:

1. physical and digital visits (i.e. *traffic to one of VPL's 21 locations as well as website and app usage*)
2. collection use (i.e. *circulation of physical collections and use of digital resources*)
3. number of active cardholders
4. patron satisfaction
5. public perceptions (*of VPL's importance to the community*)

VPL has historically tracked these, providing solid trends and benchmarks.



Additionally, indicators specific to each of the strategic pillars and goals will be tracked. Examples of these include:

6. program attendance at activities related to Truth and Reconciliation and civic dialogue
7. staff training participation rates

Measurement and reporting alone is not enough to ensure success. VPL is also committed to evaluating our activities to identify what's working well, what's not, and why, so that we can make adjustments as necessary. We will review both short-term outputs and longer-term outcomes to assess how well we are achieving our goals. Working with other community organizations will enable us to evaluate impacts on broader societal issues, such as reducing social isolation.

Importantly, we will continue to evaluate our progress on addressing the Truth and Reconciliation Commissions Calls to Action, and are committed to assessing the strength and value of relationships with key community pa