

REPORT

Oakville Public Library Board

Meeting Date: September 18, 2024

FROM: Oakville Public Library

DATE: September 9, 2024

SUBJECT: Collections Update - September 18, 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Collection Development Update Report be received for information.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- The Collection Development department is responsible for strategically identifying, purchasing, and maintaining OPL's physical and digital collections.
- OPL's collections have expanded beyond traditional digital/physical materials to include the rapidly growing Library of Things, encompassing loanable objects such as tools, equipment, and technologies.
- In July 2023, the board was presented with a Collection Development Update, identifying growth areas such as Children's Print, Digital Content, Multilingual, and Library of Things Collections. An incremental budget increase of \$100,000 annually for the following 5 years was proposed to address these needs.
- An additional \$100,000 was approved as part of the 2024 budget and progress has been made in identified growth areas, though challenges remain, particularly concerning the cost and availability of digital content.
- A comprehensive review of digital resources is ongoing to identify opportunities for reallocating funds to areas with the highest demand.

BACKGROUND:

The Collection Development department at Oakville Public Library (OPL) plays a crucial role in ensuring that the library's collections remain diverse, accessible, and responsive to the community's needs. Since the last update in July 2023, the department has continued to operate within the 2023 Collection Strategy framework, focusing on expanding key areas such as Children's Print collections and Digital Content.

However, the challenges identified in 2023 persist, particularly in digital content, where OPL has struggled to balance the need for a broad and diverse collection with the financial constraints imposed by rising costs and restrictive licensing models. Despite these challenges, the department has made progress in enhancing Children's Print collections and has initiated a comprehensive review of digital resources to better align spending with customer demand.

Oakville's population growth, coupled with changing demographics, continues to significantly influence OPL's collection strategy. Given the operating funding challenges currently faced by OPL, a comprehensive review of digital resources is ongoing to identify opportunities for reallocating funds to areas with the highest demand.

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

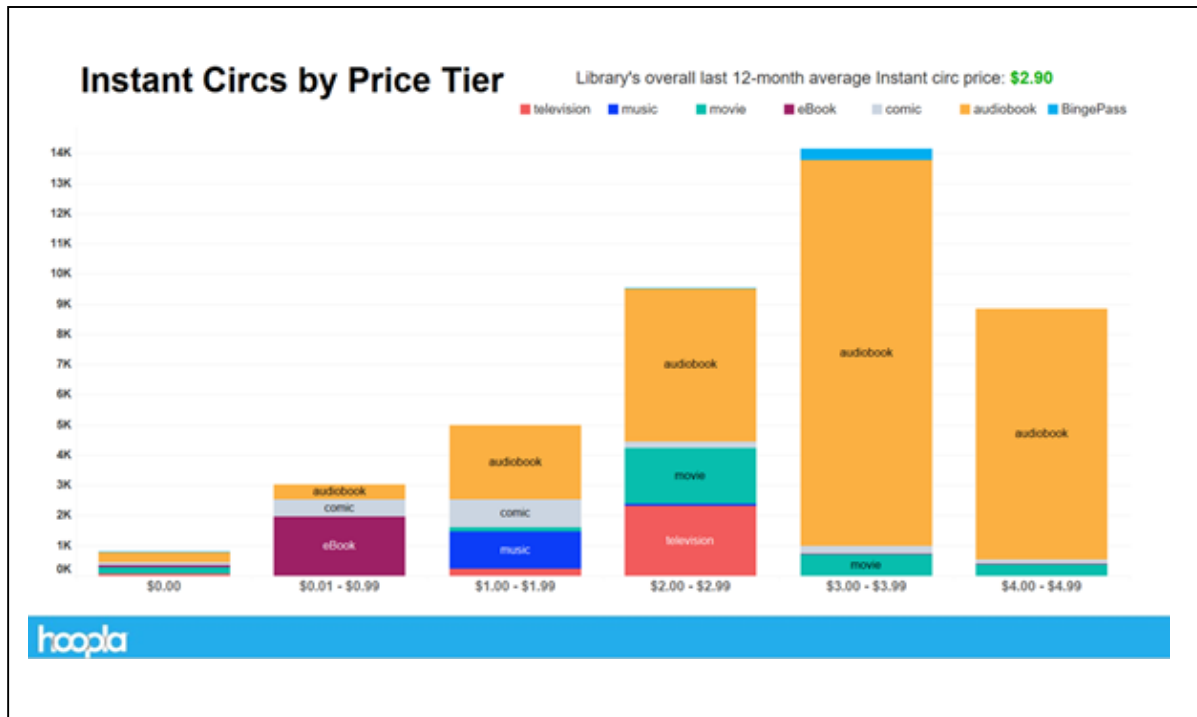
Oakville's steady population growth and significant development targets necessitate continuous review of OPL's collections, with a particular focus on materials for families and children. Rising costs and general inflation, despite slowing to 3%, continue to challenge OPL's purchasing power, particularly in digital content, which remains the library's most significant obstacle.

The cost of digital content continues to rise, with the traditional one-copy-one-user model for eBooks and eAudiobooks on our primary platform, cloudLibrary, has resulted in limited access and extended wait times. The rising demand for eAudiobooks has moved onto other platforms, particularly hoopla, exacerbating budget constraints. The simultaneous-use model of hoopla, although critical for providing broad access, has led to daily borrowing caps being reached as early as 6 AM.

hoopla is a cloud-based digital library service that offers streaming movies and TV shows, music, and audiobooks on a pay-per-use model with simultaneous use. The pay-per-use model is managed through monthly and daily budget caps with an annual budget of \$120,000. Caps are hit as materials are borrowed and currently the daily cap, which resets at midnight, is hit by 6am. This results in frustrated customers unable to access the hoopla collection.

Given the current budget pressure for 2025, OPL is looking at options to restructure the available collection which may including adjusting the eAudiobook offerings to the lower cost content (\$3.55 from the current \$4.99). While the \$4.99 price tier covers a significant portion of our audiobook circulations, vendor projections suggest that lowering our eAudiobook borrowing limit to \$3.55 or below would reduce usage to stay within budget. However, this change would result in OPL losing approximately 40,000 titles from the hoopla collection. OPL would continue to see

increases in demand, but overall, the immediate customer experience would be improved with customers experiencing the limit later in the day.



As a longer-term solution, OPL will need to reevaluate how hoopla fits in with its other one-copy, one-user offerings (e.g. cloudLibrary), and potentially commit additional funds to hoopla as well as adjusting how content is offered through that platform.

The additional \$100,000 approved for 2024 has been partially offset by inflation, with real growth limited to \$45,000. With no new expected funds for 2025, OPL will undertake strategic reallocations of the existing budget to focus on the identified areas requiring growth, including:

- *Children's Print Collections*: Increased circulation underscores the value of these collections, but the current budget only maintains existing inventory without supporting necessary growth.
- *Digital Content*: OPL struggles to meet the 15:1 holds ratio target, resulting in reliance on less sustainable options like hoopla.
- *Community Language Materials*: Despite slight growth, the collection still falls short of adequately supporting Oakville's diverse community, with significant work needed to meet demand.

- *Library of Things*: Costs for maintaining these collections remain high and our ability to expand is limited.

APPENDICES:

N/A

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