

# REPORT

## Oakville Public Library Board

**Meeting Date: August 21, 2025**

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**FROM:** Oakville Public Library

**DATE:** August 12, 2025

**SUBJECT:** 2025 Q2 OPL Goals – August 21, 2025

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### **RECOMMENDATION:**

That the 2025 Q2 OPL Goals be received for discussion.

### **KEY FACTS:**

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

- As per the Oakville Public Library (OPL) Board Procedural By-Laws, the CEO is to set annual goals and expectations which are linked to the organization's strategic goals and recommend these to the Board for approval.
- For 2025, OPL is proposing four areas of focus –Capital Projects, Cardholder Growth, Staff Growth and Engagement, Succession Planning with corresponding goals for review and feedback.
- The 2025 OPL goals were approved at the November 21, 2024.
- Progress reports on the status of the OPL Goals are brought to the Board quarterly.

### **BACKGROUND:**

The CEO is required to submit annual goals to the Board for approval.

### **COMMENT/OPTIONS:**

The four following areas of focus were identified as key areas for improvement and/or growth in 2025:

### **CAPITAL PROJECTS**

1. Previously started in Q3 2024 and continuing in 2025, OPL will engage with donors and prospective donors to raise funds to support the new Central Branch located at 193 Church St. OPL will also identify and apply for

**applicable grants to assist in funding the project with a goal of raising a minimum of 1 million for the project through both streams.**

***Strategic Pillar: Expanding Our Reach***

Q1 – With the pausing of the New Central project until the structural review of the post office is complete (mid-April), OPL has continued prospect work to identify potential donors both individual and corporate.

Q2 –The structural review of the Post Office has been completed and highlighted several outstanding issues with the existing building in terms of being able to support the floor weight requirements of a public library as well as the ability to add additional levels to accommodate the required space needs. Options are being reviewed and will come to the board in the coming months.

- 2. In Q2 2025, OPL will start detailed design of the Trafalgar Urban Core South branch including community engagement within the Trafalgar Urban Core South and neighboring areas to understand the program needs of the branch. The process will include a minimum of 5 community engagements including a targeted survey, focus groups and programming. Success will also be measured using the percentage of identified community needs integrated into the design.**

***Strategic Pillar: Expanding Our Reach / Enriching Lives and Building Healthy Communities***

Q1 – OPL is waiting for the Branthaven and the Town of Oakville to finalize the agreement to purchase the approx. 17,000 ft space in the upcoming development.

Q2 – Town Legal and Branthaven continue to work on the agreement. Timelines are being adjusted to reflect the condo market, and this goal will not start this year as anticipated. Once the agreement is signed with project target dates, the goal can be re-assessed.

- 3. Starting in Q2 2025, OPL will begin hiring and onboarding staff for the permanent Sixteen Mile branch targeted to open in late Q3 2025. OPL will have completed 100% of the required hiring/onboarding 30 days prior to the opening of the branch.**

***Strategic Pillar: Expanding Our Reach / Investing in Staff to provide exceptional customer experiences***

Q1 – At the March 20<sup>th</sup> board meeting, OPL provided updated timelines for the permanent Sixteen Mile Branch. Major construction of the Sixteen Mile Community Centre and Library is scheduled to be completed by November 2025, with staff moving in and preparing the building for opening to the public in February 2026. It is now anticipated that that this goal will commence in Q3 2025. That said, the hiring for the Manager, Customer Experience for Sixteen Mile has started with an anticipated onboarding in late-May.

Q2 – Olivia Harris was promoted as the new Manager, Sixteen Mile, moving from her position of supervisor at OPL's Central Branch. Timelines for hiring the remaining Sixteen Mile positions was finalized and recruitment is expected to start rolling out in early Q3.

4. **By Q4. ensure that the third-party company tasked with digitizing OPL's local newspaper collection successfully digitizes 100% of the collection and delivers to OPL a complete and high-quality digital archive.**

***Strategic Pillar: Expanding Our Reach / Promoting Digital Discovery***

Q1 – Project kick-off meeting was held with the vendor in late-February to review and finalize the project plan. The vendor picked up all the materials on March 17<sup>th</sup> for transport to the digitization facility. The materials are currently being assessed prior to digitization.

Q2 - Project is on schedule. Phase 1 of the digitization work commenced in Q2 and as of June 30<sup>th</sup> all the Phase 1 volumes were scanned, with a large part of the Phase 1 scanned images processed and uploaded to OPL's platform.

### **LIBRARY CARDHOLDER GROWTH**

1. **Starting in Q2, OPL will leverage its new marketing tool to develop cardholder onboarding and retention programs to highlight the depth and breadth of the tools and services available to customers with focus on digital. By the end of 2025, OPL will have increased the percentage of Oakville households with a library card by 10% and increased the number of active accounts by 5%. (carried over from 2024)**

***Strategic Pillar: Expanding our Reach / Promoting Digital Discovery***

Q1 - Implementation of Patron Point, OPL's new marketing tool, is progressing well, with data upload now underway and configuration expected to be completed by mid-April. The next phase will involve onboarding and training with the vendor to equip the marketing and technology teams for effective and strategic use of the platform, with full implementation planned to be completed by end of April.

Q2 – The Patron Point system has been implemented as scheduled (April). During May-June, the customer newsletter was fully transitioned to the new platform, along with the creation of OPL-branded templates to support the expansion of communication with customers (e.g. Fundraising online mailer). During Q3, work will start to implement the onboarding customer communication and retention email packages.

- 2. Starting in Q1, OPL will continue to engage in new cardholder signup activities and strengthen ongoing connections with customers to demonstrate the continued value of active membership. By the end of 2025, OPL will have increased the percentage of Oakville households with a library card by 10% and increased the number of active accounts by 5%.**

***Strategic Pillar: Expanding our Reach / Promoting Digital Discovery***

Please note: These two goals have the same metric as it reflects a two-pronged approach to customer growth and retention.

Q1 – OPL ended 2024 with a Household card rate of 57%. For 2025, the number of households increased from 77,000 to 80,096 resulting in a revised house card rate of 53% as of January 1, 2025. At the end of Q1 2025, the household increased to 54%.

It should be noted that the cardholder goal for 2025 was increased from 5% to 10% to account for the expected increase as a result of the opening of Sixteen Mile. With the move to Q1 2026 for the opening of Sixteen Mile, this will likely have an update on OPL's ability to reach to the 10% increase.

Q2 – At the end of Q2, the percentage of households with Oakville Public Library card increased by 1% and active accounts increased by 2.07%. Active cardholders at the end of Q2 represents 87.4% of all OPL cardholders.

### **Staff Growth and Engagement**

1. **Starting in Q1, OPL will leverage feedback from the Customer Satisfaction Survey to identify key areas for improvement and develop new learning opportunities for OPL staff to enhance the delivery of services for all customers. By Q3 2025, there will be a measurable improvement in customer satisfactory survey ratings in these areas.**

***Strategic Pillar: Investing in Staff to provide exceptional customer experiences***

*Q1 – In February, the Board received the Customer Satisfaction Survey Results 2024 report outlining the key learnings and action steps (below) based on the results.*

1. Enhance Facility Comfort: OPL will continue to implement small but impactful improvements to seating areas such as the changes at White Oaks and Woodside completed in 2024.
2. Increase Awareness Campaigns: OPL is in the process of adjusting its Summer OPL Ambassador program to execute outreach strategies to promote lesser-known library services and programs throughout Oakville.
3. Increase Staff Engagement with Customers – OPL leadership is working with staff to encourage a proactive approach to engaging with customers including ensuring that all customers are greeted when entering OPL spaces and getting out from behind the desk to be more accessible to customers throughout the branch.
4. Website Improvements – OPL.ca will undergo user testing in 2025 to identify key customer concerns/barriers and enable staff to adjust as needed. In particular, the testing will help identify which areas are causing the most issues for customers as OPL.ca consists of multiple website sites on various platforms.

Q2 – This quarter, OPL concentrated on implementing the actions steps identified in Q1. A review of the metrics will happen in Q3 to determine the impact and any adjustments needed.

2. **Starting in Q1, OPL will review the results of the Fall 2024 Staff Feedback Survey to identify actions to align the rating between two key engagement results:**
  - a. **“My contributions are important to the success of my department” which received an average 84% satisfaction result in previous years.**

- b. **“Taking everything into account, I like working at this organization” which received an average 69% satisfaction in previous years.**

**Based on the review, OPL will engage staff to identify actions to support a measurable improvement in aligning the results of those two key engagement results.**

***Strategic Pillar: Investing in Staff to provide exceptional customer experiences***

Q1 - OPL received the results of the Fall 2024 Staff Feedback Survey in late January 2025. Based on previous surveys, OPL selected two statements that have not been aligned, and it was validated through the Fall 2024 Staff Feedback Survey that these two statements continue to be divergent. Staff rated “My contributions are important to the success of my department” at a higher satisfaction rate of 79% to “Taking everything into account, I like working at this organization” at a 69% satisfaction rate in the 2024 survey.

OPL leadership was provided direction to review the results of the 2024 Staff Feedback Survey with their staff groups and get feedback on actionable items to support a measurable improvement in our engagement results. Staff meetings within each department have taken place over Q1 and feedback is being compiled to determine the next steps both from a department and organizational level.

Q2 – Feedback from the sessions OPL leaders held with staff resulted in the identification of the following key themes and suggested action items:

- Internal Communication & Collaboration
- Career Development & Advancement
- Employee Engagement & Recognition
- Inclusion, Trust & Leadership Visibility

Suggested action items have been collected for each theme and are being reviewed and prioritized.

### **Succession Planning**

1. **By the end of 2025, the CEO will develop the leadership and writing/presentation skills of the Director, Customer Experience and**

**Director, Innovation and Integration by encouraging and supporting them to take a 50% larger role in board report writing and presentation delivery. The success will be measured by all directors presenting at least 6 board reports each by year-end, with a 90% satisfaction rate from board members on the clarity and effectiveness of the reports and presentations.**

***Strategic Pillar: Investing in Staff to provide exceptional customer experiences***

Q1 – In the first quarter of 2025, both directors played an active role in drafting 11 out of the total 38 reports presented to the board. The CEO provided feedback on these reports, ensuring that they were informative, concise, and focused on key issues that the board prioritizes. This initial stage has allowed both directors to refine their writing skills and gain confidence in producing high-quality board communications. In Q2, both directors will move towards both writing and delivering select reports verbally to the board.

Q2 – The directors submitted 9/27 reports to the OPL board during Q2 with 3 of the reports being presented to the board directly via the writing director. A survey is planned to be sent to the board following the September board meeting to gather feedback on satisfaction and improvement areas.

### **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Framework**

In the November 2024 OPL goals report, OPL stated that the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Strategic Framework has been removed from the OPL Goals for 2025. The DEI Employee Resource group is drafting Year 3, and it will be brought to the board in Q1 2025. However, membership changeover in the group and the number of new members along with a change to the group's leadership support, the DEI Strategic Framework Year 3 will be drafted as a partial year from June-December to allow the team time to re-do their terms of reference and set their action plan. The 6-month plan is expected to come to the board as part of the June meeting agenda package.

Due to anticipated vacations throughout June-August, the DEI Employee Resource Group drafted their action plan to focus on the last 4 months of the year. This plan will include the launch of a monthly staff newsletter, which will aim to keep staff informed on the work DEI ERG is doing along with highlighting internal resources and initiatives. For example, the first newsletter (September issue) will re-introduce the team and highlight Orange Shirt Day. In Q4, the team will focus on training as most of the group are relatively new to both the committee and DEI work in general. The team is working with a consultant from Halton Diversity Equity Roundtable as well as narrowing down specific training opportunities, namely a DEI Foundations training course to start.

**APPENDICES:**

N/A

Prepared and submitted by: Tara Wong, CEO