



100 John West Way
Aurora, Ontario
L4G 6J1
(905) 727-3123
aurora.ca

Town of Aurora

General Committee Report

No. CMS20-026

Subject: Library Square – Governance Review

Prepared by: Phil Rose-Donahoe, Manager of Library Square

Department: Community Services

Date: November 3, 2020

Recommendation

1. That Report No. CMS20-027 be received.

Executive Summary

This report provides details regarding program and service delivery at Library Square, including how each of the key stakeholders will collaborate to ensure the public receives a range of complementary programs geared to various skill levels and life experiences.

- Staff formed a Collaborative Programming Working Group (CPWG) with the purpose of building consensus regarding the types of programs to be offered at Library Square and which organization(s) would deliver them.
- The CPWG agreed upon a number of guiding principles that will create a framework for program and service delivery within Library Square.
- The CPWG developed an inventory of current programs and identified opportunities to expand existing programs and develop new programs for Library Square.
- The CPWG will continue to meet in order to determine the optimal programming mix and corresponding delivery organization(s) within Library Square.
- In addition to the work undertaken by the CPWG, staff will continue to determine strategies for space allocation and IT service delivery and report back at a later date.

Background

On June 16, 2020, Council passed the following resolution in regards to Library Square governance:

1. That the Not-for-Profit/Municipal Hybrid Model be approved as the governance model for the future operation of Library Square; and
2. That staff work with stakeholders to develop a fees and charges schedule for Library Square and report back to Council at a later date; and
3. That the Director of Community Services form a Space Allocation Working Group comprised of Town staff and key stakeholders that will provide recommendations regarding rental and booking responsibilities for Library Square, including all spaces at 22 Church St. School, the New Addition, Outdoor Square, Bridge and Aurora Public Library; and
4. That the Director of Community Services form a Collaborative Programming Working Group comprised of Town staff and key stakeholders that will provide recommendations regarding program delivery strategies and create a programming and performance schedule for Year 1 and Year 2 of Library Square operations; and
5. That the Director of Community Services form an Information Technology Working Group comprised of Town staff and key stakeholders that will provide recommendations regarding the delivery of IT Services for Library Square, including all spaces at 22 Church St. School, the New Addition, Outdoor Square, Bridge and Aurora Public Library.

Since receiving Council's direction, staff have moved forward with implementing the recommendations detailed in the report of June 16, 2020.

Analysis

Staff formed a Collaborative Programming Working Group (CPWG) with the purpose of building consensus regarding the types of programs to be offered at Library Square and which organization(s) would deliver them.

Given how integral programming will be to the success of Library Square, the CPWG was the first of the three (3) working groups approved by Council to meet.

The CPWG is comprised of the following members from the three main stakeholders:

Name	Title	Organization
Bruce Gorman	CEO	Aurora Public Library
Suzanne Haines	Executive Director	Aurora Cultural Centre
Robin McDougall	Director, Community Services	Town of Aurora
Phil Rose-Donahoe	Manager, Library Square	Town of Aurora
Lisa Warth	Manager, Recreation Services	Town of Aurora
Shawna White	Curator, Aurora Museum & Archives	Town of Aurora

The CPWG met three (3) times over the summer in order to review the programs and services currently offered by each organization and the possibility for expanded and new programming at Library Square. Furthermore, the CPWG examined which organization is best suited to deliver each program and where greater collaboration is possible in program and service delivery.

The CPWG agreed upon a number of guiding principles that will create a framework for program and service delivery within Library Square

Although the exact mix of programs and services to take place at Library Square has yet to be determined, CPWG members came to a general consensus on the following principles that will guide program and service delivery at Library Square:

1. Program and service delivery is a shared responsibility that can be understood as a pathway or continuum. This means that, whenever possible, stakeholders will work together to design programs that engage participants from the beginner stage through to the professional level, with an emphasis on accessibility for all ages and abilities. Ideally, Library Square will offer a seamless progression of programs where participants can grow their knowledge base and develop their skills over the course of their lifetime.
2. Each of these three stakeholders possess a wealth of expertise and experience that can be drawn upon when developing programs. As partners in Library

Square, it is important that before contracting out program delivery to external third party vendors, these stakeholders first consider if the competencies and capacity exist internally to deliver the program either through a fee-for-service agreement or as a partnership. Drawing upon internal competencies as a default position will lead to increased capacity among the local creative sector and result in more efficient program delivery.

3. Duplication of programming is acceptable as long each of these stakeholders offers programs in a way that is complementary rather than competitive.
4. Given the dynamic nature of program and service delivery, and the ongoing need to collaborate, the CPWG should continue to meet over the next two (2) years leading up to the opening of Library Square and during the facility's start-up period.

The CPWG developed an inventory of current programs and identified opportunities to expand existing programs and develop new programs for Library Square

Each organization on the CPWG has specific expertise and niche program areas that they have developed and honed over time. Generally speaking, these niches are summarized in the following table:

Organization	Primary Area of Focus	Description
Aurora Cultural Centre	Performing Arts (Music, Theatre, etc.) Visual/Fine Arts (Gallery Exhibitions/Tours, Painting & Drawing and Photography Classes, etc.) Curriculum-based/ Curriculum-enhanced programs Crafts (Textiles, Glass, Jewellery Classes) Camps Community Events	The ACC develops accessible/community-focused programs geared to beginners, right up to pre-professionals and professionals. They have extensive experience hosting professional live performances and professional visual arts programs and exhibitions. They also develop year-round education programs that complement their performing arts and visual arts streams.

Aurora Public Library	<p>Adult Learning</p> <p>Literary Arts (Fiction, Non-fiction, Poetry, Storytelling)</p> <p>Electronic Arts (New Media, Digital & Animation)</p> <p>STEAM (Science, Tech, Engineering, Arts and Math)</p> <p>Crafts</p> <p>Community Events</p> <p>Camps</p>	<p>The APL offers nearly 1,900 programs annually that focus on providing individuals with skills to navigate everyday life. APL staff are generalists and their goal is to enhance the experience of residents in a way that is complementary/adjunct to more advanced programs offered by other stakeholders (i.e. to create excitement for ongoing learning). Many of their programs are not designed for a specific skill level but are meant to be more experiential in nature and open to people of all skill levels and life experiences.</p>
Town of Aurora, Aurora Museum & Archives	<p>Heritage (Natural, Built, Material, Folkloric Arts, Artifact-based)</p> <p>Community Events</p>	<p>The AMA provides programs for generalists to scholars. Their goal is to tell the stories of our communities through exhibitions, research, lectures/talks and tours. Staff have also recently undertake film and theatre programs/initiatives. The AMA views the entire town as a museum, not just a collection of artifacts within four walls; activating outdoor spaces has become an increasing area of focus (e.g. Pet Cemetery)</p>
Town of Aurora, Recreation Services	<p>Entry-level arts programming</p> <p>Health and Wellness</p> <p>Civic Arts (e.g. Public Art)</p> <p>Community Events</p>	<p>Town staff are also generalists that provide entry-level/grassroots programming, or programs that allow individuals to pursue their hobby. The focus is on accessibility and low cost, although they work on a cost-recovery basis. When developing programs, Town staff examine trends and</p>

	Camps	seek community feedback. The Town provides many basic or “learn to” programs, such as Learn to Draw, Learn to Play an Instrument, etc. Fitness, health and wellness programming is a growing field. Recreation Services staff are currently evaluating which programs might transition to Library Square once operational.
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Collectively, the organizations on the CPWG offer a myriad of programs that appeal to a wide range of ages, interests, and skill levels. Library Square opens up the possibility to expand existing programs and develop new ones. Below is a list of existing programs that could grow in size, frequency or diversity, as well as new programs made possible by Library Square:

- Live performances, including theatre, music, comedy, improv, storytelling etc.
- Pop-up performances
- Language classes
- Electronic arts (e.g. filmmaking, podcasting)
- Film screenings
- Seminars/presentations
- Children and youth theatre and music programs
- Camps
- Craft (e.g. macramé, quilting, weaving, felting, screen printing, repurposing fabric, needlecraft, wood working)
- Special events (e.g. Culture Days, Aurora Teen Idol auditions, Aurora’s Christmas Market, Aurora Art Show & Sale, Busker Festival, Jazz Festival, etc.)
- Education programs, heritage fairs, teacher resources kits

In addition to the programs offered by the key stakeholders, Library Square provides the opportunity to work with a broad range of other groups and individuals who will be able to make use of the new space to enhance the variety and diversity of programming for the community.

The CPWG will continue to meet in order to determine the optimal programming mix and corresponding delivery organization(s) within Library Square

Although the CPWG has made significant progress, more work needs to be done to determine what the programming schedule for Year 1 of Library Square will look like. Therefore, the CPWG will continue to meet over the next two (2) years leading up to the opening of Library Square and during the facility's start-up period.

In addition to the work undertaken by the CPWG, staff will continue to determine strategies for space allocation and IT service delivery and report back at a later date

Now that there is a clearer picture of the types of programs that will be offered at Library Square, one of the next steps is to consider where each program will take place within the new facility. This will involve the development of a Space Allocation Policy that provides clear guidelines regarding venue management. Moreover, the Space Allocation Policy will address what spaces other community/cultural groups may need to deliver programs at Library Square, whether in partnership with one or more of the key stakeholders or through some type of rental agreement. A Space Allocation Working Group will be formed in the coming weeks to undertake this task.

Additionally, an Information Technology Working Group will meet to determine the necessary strategies, plans, roadmaps and processes regarding the integration and optimization of IT services for Library Square.

Staff will continue to make progress on Library Square governance and report back to Council again at a later date with more information and further recommendations.

Advisory Committee Review

Not applicable.

Legal Considerations

None.

Financial Implications

At this time there are no financial implications of note. As part of the ongoing review of the Town's desired Library Square Governance model, the financial implications of each will be examined at that time. In 2019, the Town commenced a three year plan to phase in an estimated incremental core operating budget of \$720,000 in increments of

\$240,000 per year in support of the Library Square's operations including its selected governance model.

Communications Considerations

The Town of Aurora will use 'Inform' as the level of engagement for this project. There are five different levels of community engagement to consider, with each level providing the community more involvement in the decision making process. These levels are: Inform, Consult, Involve, Collaborate and Empower. Examples of each can be found in the Community Engagement Policy. These options are based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum and assist in establishing guidelines for clearly communicating with our public and managing community engagement. In order to inform the public, this report will be posted to the Town's website and other means of feedback options of the Library Square governance model will be issued at a later date where all stakeholders can participate.

Link to Strategic Plan

The development of Library Square supports the following Strategic Plan goals and key objectives:

Supporting an exceptional quality of life for all in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- **Invest in sustainable infrastructure**
- **Celebrating and promoting our culture**
- **Encourage an active and healthy lifestyle**
- **Strengthening the fabric of our community**

Enabling a diverse, creative and resilient economy in its accomplishment in satisfying requirements in the following key objectives within these goal statements:

- **Promoting economic opportunities that facilitate the growth of Aurora as a desirable place to do business**

Alternative(s) to the Recommendation

1. Council may provide further direction.

Conclusions

This report provides an update regarding Library Square program and service delivery, as well as an overview of the work undertaken by the Collaborative Programming Working Group to build consensus regarding the types of programs to be offered within Library Square and which organization(s) would deliver them.

Attachments

None

Previous Reports

CMS19-005 – Library Square Project Update - GC Template, February 12, 2019

FS19-012 – Library Square – Financial Strategy, March 21, 2019

CMS19-009 – Library Square – Proposed Operating Plan, March 21, 2019

CMS20-008 – Library Square – Governance Review, March 3, 2020

CMS20-012 – Library Square – Governance Review, June 16, 2020

Pre-submission Review

Agenda Management Team review on October 15, 2020

Approvals

Approved by Robin McDougall, Director, Community Services Department

Approved by Doug Nadorozny, Chief Administrative Officer