

APPENDIX C
COMPARATOR LIBRARIES – SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

COMPARATOR SURVEY AND INTERVIEW

To provide context and to better understand the operations and corresponding statistics of the Guelph Public Library (GPL), three comparator libraries were reviewed. The comparators were chosen based on a similar population base and proximity to Guelph: Cambridge (known as Idea Exchange), Waterloo and St. Catharines. Information was gathered through an online survey which was followed up with an in-person or telephone interview. The survey and interview captured information on:

1. Facilities
2. Staffing
3. Operations
4. Technology
5. Growth plans
6. Relationship with the City and City Council

The staff interviewed for each location was:

- Cambridge Helen Kelly, CEO
- Waterloo Laurie Clarke, CEO
- St. Catharines Lilita Stripnieks, CEO

Both the survey and interview questions were vetted by GPL leadership.

1. Facilities

Cambridge has four locations, three of which are located in City-owned buildings with no rental costs. The fourth location is situated in a school of the Separate School Board and serves as both the school and public library. The costs for this location are shared with the School Board. The total operating cost for the Cambridge libraries is \$5.6M. The library last added a new branch 19 years ago.

The total cost to operate **Waterloo's** three branches is \$5.3M. Two branches are located in city-owned buildings with no rent costs. The only facility costs are for property maintenance such as landscaping and snow removal. One branch is co-located with the YMCA. At this location, the library shares utility costs with the YMCA. The most recent branch to open in Waterloo was the Harper branch in 2011.

APPENDIX C
COMPARATOR LIBRARIES – SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

St. Catharines operates four locations for a cost of \$5.4M annually. Only one branch pays \$40,400 rent for space within a plaza. The remaining branches are situated in city-owned buildings with a token rent amount (\$1, \$2 and \$600 per year). However, for each of these locations, the library paid (or is paying) the debenture for the building from the annual operating budget. St. Catharines last opened a branch in 2012 with the Dr. Huq Family Library.

2. Staffing

Cambridge library employs a total of 87 non-unionized staff, of which 43 are full-time and 44 are part-time; Salary costs are \$4M. For full-time staff, benefits such as EIB, CPP, EHB and long-term disability (LTD) represents 35% of the salary costs. For part-time staff, benefits are 25% of salary costs. Four hundred volunteers also provide 195 hours per week of support. The library maintains parity with the City for annual pay increments and benefits for full-time staff. To seek employment with Idea Exchange, educational requirements vary, depending upon the position. Although some staff have a Masters in Library Science (MLS), other staff have Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Parks and Recreation backgrounds. The CEO's hiring philosophy is to hire for personality and to train for skill. In recent years, the library has made significant investments to cross-train staff in preparation for changes to traditional roles and the implementation of new technology. Additional training for staff is available through the GALE courses provided for public access. GALE courses provide academic, professional or personal development courses. Staffs have access to these programs for self-directed skill development. Upon return from any training courses and to conferences, staffs make a short video about their experience to share with colleagues. The library participates in the Best Small Medium Employee Survey, administered by Aon Hewitt, to gauge employee satisfaction. This year's survey is the 4th year since 2009 for completion.

Waterloo employs a total of 95 non-unionized staff. The staffing cost for the 25 full-time and 70 part-time staff is \$4M. Extended health benefits (EHB) and OMERS account for 20% of salary costs for full-time staff. For part-time staffs that are OMERS eligible, benefits are 14% of salary costs. Prior to 2009, the library maintained wage and benefit parity with the City but after a 2009 job evaluation process, wage parity was broken. Similarly, the library was required to break parity for health benefits due to budget limitations. Some staff have an MLS education but educational requirements are dependent upon the position; management positions typically have a Masters level education. For training and professional development, Waterloo holds annual staff development days. A training priority is to "increase staff narrative of technology", although staff already have a certain level of technical knowledge. As many staff as the budget allows are sent to the Ontario Library Association (OLA) conference and other Southern Ontario Library Services (SOLS) training opportunities. The library employs 150

APPENDIX C
COMPARATOR LIBRARIES – SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

volunteers providing 10 hours per week of time. Volunteers largely perform backroom functions as well as visiting library services.

St. Catharines library was the only unionized operations of the comparators and employs 39 full-time and 65 part-time staff. Volunteers are not used because of the unionized environment. Staffing costs for the 104 staff is \$3.56M, of which 17% is for benefits, excluding OMERS. Only full-time staff is provided with health benefits but part-time staff have the option to buy their own health benefits. The majority of management staff has an MLS education. The library maintains a budget of \$10,000 for staff training which is used to send staff to conferences and provide in-house training courses.

3. Operations

Cambridge libraries open to the public at noon but the branches are used in the mornings for programming. The library is considering expanding its hours of operation which would require not only Council support but also a minor budget increase. The budget increase is expected to be minimal because staffs are already onsite for morning programming.

Cambridge provides a variety of programs such as book clubs, visiting library services, STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) programming, art and music workshops and community outreach. Supporting newcomers is also a key service. A Library Settlement Worker is available to facilitate transitions into the community and the library hosts English conversation circles. Cambridge was also the only comparator to offer GALE learning courses. GALE courses are 6-week, online learning courses for academic, professional or personal development. The courses are free to valid cardholders.

Waterloo library hours vary by branch. For example, the main branch is open six days per week, 10am to 9pm on Mondays to Thursday and until 5:30pm on Fridays and Saturdays. The main branch has Sunday hours from 1pm to 4pm from October to May only. The two smaller branches have weekday closures (i.e. Monday or Friday) and both are closed on Sundays. These hours are largely budget driven and based on the number of hours that staffing costs are available. One particular challenge was when the Harper branch opened, no additional City funding was received. As a result, staffing (and hours) across all branches had to be adjusted. The library is currently reviewing its hours and has identified that the community would like the library to be open 7 days per week. The review will include a re-distribution of hours across the branches.

Waterloo Library offers a variety of free, year-round programming targeting specific audiences and interests. Similar to Cambridge, Waterloo supports newcomers to Canada. The library has

APPENDIX C
COMPARATOR LIBRARIES – SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

partnerships with the settlement organizations, such as KW Multicultural Centre, which provide onsite Settlement Workers and the library also offers English conversation circles.

Most of **St. Catharines** libraries are open Tuesday to Friday from 10am to 8pm (9pm for the central branch and 5pm on Fridays). Saturday hours are 9am to 5pm. The Port Dalhousie branch is only open on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Sunday hours are provided at two branches from October to May.

The St. Catharines library offers a variety of programs targeting children, teens, adults and seniors. Some programs are weekly, others monthly or seasonally. The library partners with various organizations, such as Brock University, to provide these programs. The library uses a number of committees (e.g. management committee, children’s committee, adult committee) to make decisions about new and existing programs.

4. Technology

The use of technology by **Cambridge** Library is incorporated into the annual goals. Last year, Cambridge set the goal to increase technology use by 15%, which was exceeded. Technology use includes public computers available in one hour time blocks and iPads for children’s programming. Two branches provide an iPad kiosk to dispense iPads for in-library use by children. All technology is currently for in-library use and not lent out. However, the library is looking into loaning out “Go Pro” cameras. The library provides various technical instruction programs (e.g. on social media, apps, etc.). The Tech Training 1-on-1 service is the library’s response to the demand for individual technical instruction on people’s own devices. For its operations, the library’s use of technology has resulted in a shift in staff duties. For example, the RFID system has automated check-outs, which has allowed staff to be re-deployed into other areas and functions. Increasingly, the library’s budget is moving more towards technology needs.

Waterloo also provides various technology related programs and seminars. The library conducted a technology study which identified that people are using the library for technology. As a result, the library will expand the number of laptops for programs to 40. These laptops are also used in the children’s department. The study also identified that the demand for public use computers has remained status quo. Therefore, the library is considering not replacing the computers when its due for replacement. The greater demand is for free wi-fi, especially amongst the students. The Tech Connect program is similar to Cambridge’s Tech Training program and provides one-on-one technology help and training. Plans are also in the works to create a technology laboratory for people to try various devices. Proceeds from a recent library fundraiser will be used to purchase a 3D printer.

APPENDIX C
COMPARATOR LIBRARIES – SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

In **St. Catharines**, the need for public-use computers is met through the library's 74 public computers that have internet access. Broadband and VOIP services are also available and virtual services (i.e. RFID) will be installed soon. The library's IT Manager stays current with technology changes and most applications are cloud based. A survey has indicated the need for a 3D printer and the associated programs.

5. Growth Plans

Physical expansion of the main branch is limited but **Cambridge** is in the process of building a new branch. This new branch will be located in the old Post Office, which is a federally and provincially designated heritage site, and it is in close proximity to the main branch. This branch will be a digital library¹ with a makerspace², with a 3D printer. This new branch is being developed in partnership with the City. The City purchased the building in 2012 with the intention to revitalize it.

Since 1997, **Waterloo** Library has conducted various needs studies. At that time, it was identified that 4 branches were needed based, in part, on projected population growth. Previous taskforces have also recommended that the main branch be renovated prior to constructing a new branch. Within the main branch, it is felt that a renovation of the existing space is needed, rather than an expansion of the physical space, to create more space for studying and programming. Although there are no current plans to renovate the main branch, a new branch is planned for the east side of the city. This plan has been approved by City Council and the funding is included in the library's budget. Construction is scheduled to begin in 2020 and an RFP will be issued for an architect to conduct a feasibility study.

St. Catharines has no current plans to expand their branches. In the past, the library had an interest in building a new branch in the west end of the city, located in a City-owned recreational facility. These plans were not approved by City Council and since that time, residents have stated that a west end location is not needed. The most recent expansion

¹ A digital library is a special library with a focused collection of digital objects that can include text, visual material, audio material, video material, stored as electronic media formats (as opposed to print, microform, or other media), along with means for organizing, storing, and retrieving the files and media contained in the library collection.

² Makerspaces (sometimes called hackerspaces, hackspaces, and fablabs) are creative, DIY spaces where people can gather to create, invent, and learn. In libraries they often have 3D printers, software, electronics, craft and hardware supplies and tools, and more. In makerspaces, people share supplies, skills, and ideas, and often work together on projects.

APPENDIX C
COMPARATOR LIBRARIES – SURVEY AND INTERVIEW RESULTS

occurred in 2010 in the north end of the city. A small branch located in a rental property was relocated to a pool complex owned by the City.

6. Relationship with the City and City Council

All three of the comparators reported a strong working relationship with its City and City Council. Each library spoke about partnerships between the library and City to provide programming, host events and support other City (or Council) initiatives. One or two City Councillors sit on the board of each library and all comparators report directly into City Council as a delegation, not through a standing committee of Council.

The **Cambridge** CEO has made “telling the story” of the library to City Council a priority. After producing the first Community Report, the report was presented to City Council. As regular practice, the library provides reports and shares information with Council throughout the year. In addition to the sitting Councillor, Waterloo’s library has a former City Councillor as the board’s chair. The library receives City funding through a three year funding agreement. In addition to the three to four reports per year to Council, library staff participate on various City committees, such as the Culture, Heritage and Safe Neighbourhoods committees. The City runs the library’s payroll and the library’s employee health benefits costs are more affordable by falling under the umbrella of the City’s plan, even though the library’s health plan differs from the City’s plan. Similarly, the library’s building insurance is under the Region of Waterloo, which again, keeps costs affordable.

St. Catharines has an open and accessible relationship with the City and City Council. Although the library processes its own payroll and financial transactions, the same system as the City is used. And the City has full access to the library’s financial and payroll information. Large capital projects are conducted in close contact with and support from the City. The City will help the library with the purchasing process from creating RFPs , obtaining quotes and selecting best applicants. The City will also pay installments for certain capital projects.