

The Corporation of the Town of Orangeville

Report to Library Board



To: Chair and Members of the Board
From: Darla Fraser, Chief Executive Officer
Date: February 26, 2025
Report #: 25-05
Subject: Project Update - Exploratorium

Recommendations

**That Report 25-05, Project Update - Exploratorium be receive; and
That the Board approve the Exploratorium Policy as presented in Appendix A; and
That the Board approve a construction budget up to a maximum of _____
dollars.**

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the board with an update on the development of a makerspace.

The community makerspace within the Alder Street Library, branded as the Exploratorium, is set to become a hub of innovation and discovery. Aligned with our strategic plan, it aims to inspire curiosity and engagement through a welcoming design and cutting-edge technology.

Discussion

Policy Draft: A comprehensive policy (Appendix A) has been developed, detailing guidelines for public use of the Exploratorium, covering access, safety, and usage instructions.

Next Steps

- **Budget Finalization:** Continue collaboration with architects to align the project needs with the budget.

- **Community Engagement:** Develop a strategic marketing plan to promote the Exploratorium's offerings and stimulate community interest.

Construction and Budgeting

- **Architectural Coordination:** We are working closely with architects to finalize the design and define the budget. Finish selections are prioritized based on availability and cost-effectiveness.
- **Revised Timeline:** The original target completion date of March 31st is not feasible. A revised timeline is being crafted to ensure quality and align with facility needs.

Proposed Programming Schedule

- **Two-Week Rotation:** Ensures diverse programming across community segments, incorporating weekend and evening hours.
 - **Staffing:** With the Makerspace Specialist only, the Exploratorium will operate for 9 days every two weeks.
 - **Open Hours:** At least 12 hours per week for general use without specific programming, facilitated by the Makerspace Specialist.
 - **Youth Programs:** Minimum of 3 per week, focusing on skill and creativity development for younger patrons.
 - **Adult Programs:** Minimum of 3 per week, targeting skill enhancement and community engagement for adults.

Public Interaction and Marketing

- **Engagement Opportunities:**
 - Encourage patron exploration of the Exploratorium and understanding of its offerings.
 - Offer personal or group tours to increase awareness and accessibility.
 - Structured programs and pathways for equipment certification to foster skill development.
 - Emphasize opportunities for independent use during drop-in times.
- **Marketing Strategy:** Develop a comprehensive plan to promote the makerspace's programs and draw community interest.

Conclusion

Progress on the Exploratorium is well underway, with significant emphasis on programming and engaging the community. Despite facing some challenges, the groundwork for a dynamic and collaborative community resource is firmly established.

Strategic Alignment

Strategic Direction: Discover

Objective I: Design a makerspace with a digital media lab

Financial Impact

The financial investment into the Makerspace will draw from the community grant awarded for equipment along with capital carried forward for furniture and fixtures, library modernization and makerspace upgrades (approximately \$60k, \$18k and \$ 10k respectively). Additional funds could be accessed at the board's discretion from the building reserve funds.

Prepared and respectfully submitted by,

Darla Fraser,
Chief Executive Officer