

**Report to / Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Public Library Board  
Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa**

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**File Number:** OPLB-2021-0103

**SUBJECT: Ottawa Public Library (OPL) and Library and Archives Canada (LAC)  
Joint Facility Project Update**

**OBJET: Mise à jour sur le projet d'installation partagée de la Bibliothèque  
publique d'Ottawa (BPO) et de Bibliothèque et Archives Canada  
(BAC)**

#### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this report for information.**

#### **RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa prenne  
connaissance du présent rapport.**

#### **BACKGROUND**

On January 31 and February 8, 2017 respectively, the Ottawa Public Library Board ("the Board") and City Council approved the Central Library Development: Ottawa Public Library-Library and Archives Canada Joint Project report (OPLB-2017-0101/ACS2017-OCC-OPL-0001), which established that the City of Ottawa's new, modern Central

Library will be located at 555 Albert Street within the Escarpment District at the western gateway of the Central Business District and the eastern edge of LeBreton Flats, and built in partnership with Library and Archives Canada (LAC). The facility will become a landmark destination in the National Capital Region, delivering a rich customer experience through OPL's programs and services, as well as LAC's public services, exhibitions, and events. The partnership between these two institutions, one reflecting the vibrancy of the capital city's community, and the other showcasing the country's heritage, will make this a truly unique offering in Canada.

On June 4, 2018, the Board delegated authority to the CEO to negotiate, finalize, and execute the Governance Agreement, delegated authority to the City Manager of the City of Ottawa to amend the Governance Agreement on behalf of both the City and the Board, directed the Project Management Office to provide updates to the Board when each major project milestone is met, and received the Implementation Plan and Funding Strategy for the Joint Facility (OPLB-2018-0601). City Council subsequently approved the Implementation Plan for the Joint Facility (ACS2018-OCC-OPL-0001) on June 13, 2018. The Implementation plan included recommendations regarding the following:

1. The partnership and governance agreement between the three organizations: OPL, LAC, and the City;
2. The next phases of design-bid-build procurement for the Joint Facility, including the delegated authority to the City Manager to undertake necessary action to proceed through each stage;
3. The completion of a business case study on the cost-benefit of the project's participation in the federal district energy program and negotiation of an agreement if recommended by the Executive Steering Committee;
4. The approval of additional budget authority and funding for a total project cost of \$174.8 million, with \$104.2 million to be funded by the City and the Library; and,
5. The approval of a 200-space City-owned underground parking garage to be included as part of the Joint Facility.

Pursuant to approval of the Implementation Plan by Board and Council, the Governance Agreement was executed in December 2018, providing the framework for how the project will proceed and how secondary agreements related to construction and future operations will be developed. The Agreement outlines that strategic oversight and major decision-making during the design and construction phases of the project will be delegated to the Executive Steering Committee (ESC). The members of the ESC are

the City's General Manager of Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development (PIED), the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of OPL, and the Librarian and Archivist of Canada. Additionally, the National Capital Commission (NCC) is a key stakeholder for LAC, and a Joint Design Review Panel (JDRP) was established which includes members of the NCC's Advisory Committee on Planning, Design and Realty (ACPDR) and the City of Ottawa's Urban Design Review Panel (UDRP) as part of the comments and approval process.

The City provides all project management services through a Project Management Office, and a Joint Project Team has been established with representatives of all three organizations to address day-to-day operational decision-making.

Since the approval of the Implementation in June 2018, the Project Team has presented updates to the Board at the following meetings (reverse chronological order):

- September 8, 2020 – OPL-LAC Joint Facility – Project Update (presentation)
- November 5, 2019 – OPL-LAC Joint Facility Project: Update (OPLB-2019-1103) (report & presentation)
- June 11, 2019 – OPL-LAC Joint Facility Project: Update (presentation)
- February 5, 2019 – OPL-LAC Joint Facility Project: Overview of Public Engagement Process (presentation)
- December 11, 2018 – Ottawa Central Library Development Project – Update (presentation)

The purpose of this report is to provide an OPL lens and update to the work and progress on the Joint Facility in 2020, and a look ahead at upcoming milestones in 2021 related to construction, community engagement, service delivery planning and operational readiness.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Design Process & Update**

The design process is divided into several phases and sub-phases as follows:

#### *Design Process*

- Schematic Design Phase - COMPLETE

Schematic design, often referred to as the conceptual design, is where the Design Team develops the overall architectural character of the building and finalizes the placement of the functional program areas within the building. The floor plans, circulation areas, and exterior massing and form of the Joint Facility were developed and updated to reflect the feedback received through the various engagement streams (public, Indigenous, and staff).

- Design Development Phase - COMPLETE

This phase further developed all design elements of the project into a single comprehensive building entity, including the finalization of the building form and exterior, much of which was highlighted and celebrated at the extremely successful design unveiling event on January 23, 2020. This event included the participation of hundreds of Ottawa residents and leaders, with more than 100,000 views and impressions on the web. More importantly, feedback on the event demonstrated significant public support for the design, including consistent feedback that it reflected the input received during engagement sessions. The event also garnered extensive and almost universally positive coverage by local, national and architectural media outlets.

- Construction Documents Phase – IN PROGRESS

This phase involves the development and refinement of detailed drawings for all building components and is divided into several sub-phases, most notably the 30%, 60% and 90% drawing sets. The percentages relate to the level of completeness of the full set of architectural drawings (site plan, floor plans, sections, details, etc.) that are combined with structural drawings and mechanical and electrical drawings. At 100%, these drawings will form the tender package for construction.

### *Design Update*

With the completion of the Schematic Design phase in September 2019 and the Detailed Design Development phase in March 2020, the Joint Facility project moved into the Construction Documents phase. This phase began shortly after the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Fortunately, restrictions imposed by various levels of government have not had a negative impact on project progress, and the Project Team has been able to advance the design remotely without issue. The project is currently in the 90% sub-phase of the Construction Documents phase. This will be followed by final

design presentations to the NCC and OPL Board in Q2 2021, and then review and approval of the tender package by the ESC, also in Q2 2021.

## **Construction Process & Update**

### *Construction Process*

The construction of the OPL Joint Facility has a four-stage procurement process:

- Stage 1 - Request for Pre-Qualification (RFQ) - COMPLETE  
In this stage, submissions are evaluated per identified rated requirements and a list of pre-qualified General Contractors is developed.
- Stage 2 - Request for Tender (RFT) for Early Works Packages – COMPLETE  
This stage included evaluation of submissions for early works including shoring, excavation, and site remediation work.
- Stage 3 - Industry Engagement – IN PROGRESS  
This stage involves engaging with the pre-qualified respondents and any of their chosen industry partners:
  - for the provision of project-specific market intelligence relating to project scope, budget, schedule, and quality considerations generally, and;
  - through commercially confidential meetings, to inform and assist the project team in validating cost and schedule assumptions.
- Stage 4 - Request for Tender (RFT) for Facility Construction - UPCOMING  
In this stage, an RFT is issued to the pre-qualified respondents, seeking a firm price for the construction of the Joint Facility.

### *Construction Update*

Following evaluation and due diligence, the following three submissions met the minimum mandatory requirements and form the pre-qualified list of General Contractors: Ellis Don, PCL, and Pomerleau.

The early site works tender was awarded to PCL in October 2020, and work on mass excavation, shoring, and soil remediation is underway and continuing.

The Project Team anticipates entering Stage 4 of the construction procurement process in Q2 2021, pending ESC approval of the final design and completed tender package as

described above. The tender for the main project construction will then be released to the pre-qualified general contractors, with official groundbreaking and construction of the Joint Facility scheduled to begin later in 2021.

Timelines remain unchanged for construction period from 2021 to 2024, building's ready-for-use milestone (construction meets substantial performance certification) in late 2024, and official opening in 2025.

### **Design Resilience**

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Project Team and architects commissioned a study to ensure the Joint Facility could respond to future pandemic events, including futureproofing design adjustments and operational changes to be considered. The approach encompassed bringing together operational, design and simulation perspectives to develop appropriate recommendations for the Joint Facility.

The complete results of this study will be presented to the project's Executive Steering Committee for consideration later in Q1 2021. Results will also be shared with the Board in advance of public release.

### **Accessibility Update**

Universal accessibility is an important goal in the building design. Through the application of stringent universal design standards, the goal is to be one of the most accessible buildings in the National Capital Region. Throughout the design evolution, accessibility has remained at the forefront of the building's advancement. The Project Team continues to work with an independent third-party accessibility consultant to provide an independent review of building plans throughout the design process.

The consultant's responsibilities include:

- Helping to facilitate improved accessibility features;
- Completing an accessibility matrix of various Accessibility Standards including the new Accessible Canada Act;
- Undertaking a compliance review of the design plans; and,
- Providing subject matter expertise on the application of accessible obligations and best practices as part of a universal design approach.

Further, the City's Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) continues to advocate for the importance of equity and diversity in all facets of the building design. Since the last written report, the Project Team provided the AAC with a detailed update on key accessibility features in November 2020. Additionally, OPL has engaged with individuals living with a variety of disabilities to obtain direct feedback and suggestions on accessible design, programs, and services for the Joint Facility.

Key recent enhancements to accessibility include the following:

- A gentler slope and a better location for the ramping in the exterior plaza;
- Added accessible outdoor seating;
- Intuitive wayfinding within the central gathering space with prominently located elevators;
- Para Transpo waiting areas found at both Albert Street entrances;
- West Albert Street entrance located to provide access to the bus and Para Transpo layby, with comfortable waiting space in the café seating area and with direct exterior views; and,
- Underground parking clearance that accommodates larger accessible vehicles for group visits.

### **Public and Indigenous Art Update**

Over the past year, Jason Bruges Studio, a London (UK)-based public art design studio, has been working on developing a large-scale, site-specific artwork which will be installed in the Joint Facility. Influenced by public input received during the Inspire555 public engagement workshop series, the interactive installation takes inspiration from architectural features of the building's design and the use of the facility's public space. The public art concepts are anticipated to be released later in 2021, and the artwork will be installed for the opening of the facility.

In addition, a separate but coordinated Indigenous Art Program will include multiple art opportunities open to First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation artists to recognize, support and value Indigenous art and cultures. Working with the City's Public Art Office, a Curator of Indigenous Art has been hired and will have more information to share about this program later in Q1 2021.

## **Sustainability Update**

Maximizing the environmental sustainability of the building continues to be a major focus. In its Fall Economic Statement, the Government of Canada announced that it will provide additional funding that will support sustainability enhancements for a Net Zero Carbon facility. This funding will result in significant enhancements including:

- upgraded building exterior and insulation;
- triple-glazed windows;
- solar panels on the building rooftop and imbedded in the building facade;
- more sustainable building materials; and,
- and a green wall on the interior of the facility.

Additional incremental sustainability options continue to be explored. Pursuant to the June 2018 Board approved report, one of these options is to connect to the federal District Energy System (DES) for building heating and cooling. In the coming years, the federal government is planning on converting their DES system to a net zero carbon energy source which would give OPL-LAC the option to purchase net zero carbon heating and chilling, significantly reducing carbon emissions. The Project Team is currently finalizing commercial and technical terms with a recommendation for the Executive Steering Committee expected later in Q1 2021.

## **Engagement & Consultation Update**

### *Public Engagement*

General public engagement on the building design concluded with the fourth workshop of the Inspire555 series in November 2019 and subsequent survey. The most comprehensive consultation on a public building project in Canada's history, the series included ten in-person workshops with over 1300 attendees, 3000 online participants (from across the country), and pop-up consultation events across the City. Feedback was used to inform the final stages of Detailed Design Development in early 2020, including the acclaimed Design Reveal event in January of that year.

In 2020, consultation efforts focused on continuing to build strong relationships with Indigenous Peoples, and on engagement with staff subject matter experts on specific building elements.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the planned Indigenous engagement activities to feed into the Detailed Design and Construction Documents phases were moved to virtual and online platforms (more details provide below).

### *Indigenous Engagement*

The site for the Joint Facility is located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin people, who have lived in the area for thousands of years. The adjacent Chaudière Falls is a sacred meeting place for the Algonquin Anishinabe and other First Nations, associated with a portage and trade route for Indigenous people along the Ottawa River.

The idea of a community public library and national library and archives on this territory presents an opportunity to examine the nature of knowledge transfer and learning that will take place in the building, and how it relates to the local Algonquin Anishinabe People as well as Indigenous communities across the country. The identity and vision of the project will be made richer by the inclusion of traditional Indigenous knowledge.

The communities of Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg First Nation and Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation were selected as the two main communities for engagement on the design of the Joint Facility. These communities are important for several reasons, including proximity to Ottawa, cultural fluency and interest in participation.

To begin this process, the Design and Project Teams travelled to the two communities in March 2019. These initial meetings were dedicated to listening, understanding and developing relationships. Three in-person design workshops were then scheduled with community members. The Design Team reflected back to the communities what they heard during the design workshops held over the course of 2019, and how their ideas inspired significant architectural elements of the building design. This resulted in the project consultation being described by Algonquin engagement participants at the Design Reveal event as “how consultation with Indigenous people should be run...” More about the design feedback received from the Algonquin host nations can be found on the project website at [inspire555.ca](http://inspire555.ca).

This past October, Elders from Pikwakanagan and Kitigan Zibi led a blessing ceremony on the site of the Joint Facility. The ceremony included prayers and a smudging of the site and signaled the commencement of preliminary construction work that will prepare the site for construction.

In coordination with the Project Team's Indigenous consultants, three videoconference information sessions were held in September and October 2020 with Urban Indigenous organizations that serve the local community as well as national organizations representing First Nation, Métis Nation, and Inuit communities. In November 2020, a virtual engagement session was also held with urban Indigenous members of Ottawa, and an online survey was open for several weeks, to provide First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Nation individuals living in Ottawa and across the country with the opportunity to share input into the design, programs and services of the Joint Facility.

The purpose of these activities was to provide information about the project, share the results of the ongoing engagement with the Algonquin communities, seek ideas of how to weave other First Nations, Inuit, Métis cultural elements into the design, services and programming, and seek feedback on what might encourage Indigenous Peoples to visit the new Joint Facility. These sessions and survey will provide key insights on how the facility can be more reflective and inclusive of all First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation visitors.

### *Employee Engagement*

Throughout 2020, the Project Team has drawn on staff expertise to inform various components of the building design. This has been done through formal means (e.g. a Staff Advisory Group), and more informal discussions regarding design considerations in specific areas as required, for example in Materials Handling and the Children's area.

### **Related City Projects**

There are several other City and NCC projects related to the Joint Facility that are being tracked by the Project Team to ensure design and construction integration and schedule coordination. This includes the adjacent multi-use pathways leading to the site and the realignment of Albert and Slater Streets.

### **Looking Ahead**

2021 represents another busy year on the project and will involve a transition for OPL project staff from design reviews to program and service planning for the Facility.

### *Design and Construction*

The design process for the Joint Facility will be completed in Q2 2021, involving a final review of the tender documents by the Project Team, and culminating in a final design presentation to the Board. The Project Team anticipates entering Stage 4 of the construction procurement process in Q2 2021, pending ESC approval of the final design and completed tender package. The tender for the main project construction will then be released to the pre-qualified general contractors, with official groundbreaking and construction of the Joint Facility scheduled to begin later in 2021.

### *Operational Readiness*

In the coming year, various project subgroups will begin to review future considerations related to operational readiness, including technology, security, and retail operations (e.g. café and gift shop). This will involve the preparation of an Integrated Facilities Management Plan in accordance with the approved Governance Agreement, which will include all operational activities, processes and deliverables for the design review, construction, commissioning, occupation, activation, maintenance, owner acceptance, and ongoing facilities operations.

### *Service Planning*

The start of construction will mark a significant transition point for OPL project team members, as attention turns toward the design of future services in the Joint Facility. As such, a framework for detailed OPL service and program planning will be developed, further to the OPL Board-approved 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, which included “Create the destination experience for the Ottawa Central Library” as a key component of “Redesign the Library Experience.” This service plan will identify innovative new services to be developed, inform future staffing plans and become the blueprint for how OPL will use the space in the Joint Facility to ensure that it is a welcoming space for everyone. The plan will also demonstrate how these services and programs will connect back to the OPL system.

### *Engagement*

Though the Inspire555 public engagement campaign has concluded, the Project Team will be looking for opportunities to engage with the public, Indigenous Peoples, employees and project stakeholders, and receive feedback on elements such as programming, use of spaces, and furniture and equipment choices. The Project Team

will also be looking to host a specialty speaker series through the construction phase of the project to remain engaged with the public and provide updates on construction activities.

## **CONSULTATION**

There was no public consultation during the development of this report. Consultation was performed with the Joint Facility Project Team and the Library Senior Management Team (LSMT).

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with receiving this information report.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with receiving this information report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with receiving this information report.

## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

No additional accessibility impacts are associated with this information report other than what has been identified under the *Accessibility Update* above.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no technology implications associated with receiving this information report.

## **BOARD PRIORITIES**

Central Library Development was an approved 2015-2018 strategic priority for both the Board and Council.

In June 2019, the OPL Board approved a 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, which included “Create the destination experience for the Ottawa Central Library” as a key component of “Redesign the Library Experience.”

Supporting the development of the new Central Library project is identified in the 2019-2022 City Strategic Plan, which contains the Term of Council Priorities and was approved on December 11, 2019.

**DISPOSITION**

The Project Management Office will continue to lead all aspects of the Joint Facility project, with the next major milestone being the completion of the Construction Documents phase and ESC approval of the tender package.

The next update to the Board will be the final design presentation in Q2 2021.