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**Report to / Rapport au:**

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

**October 10, 2023 / 10 octobre 2023**

**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

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File Number: OPLB-2023-1010-10.5

**SUBJECT: 2023 Fund Development Update**

**OBJET: Mise à jour 2023 sur le développement de fonds**

## **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 à titre d'information.**

## **BACKGROUND**

As per the *Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c.P.44* ("the Act"), the Ottawa Public Library ("OPL" or "the Library") Board ("the Board") retains accountability for the full range of decisions affecting the organization. The Board has decided, however, to use a model of governance that focuses trustee attention on setting strategic direction and objectives, making decisions on major projects, and monitoring performance. As noted in Board Policy OPLB-002 Delegation of Authority ("the DOA"), the Board retains authority to approve frameworks for advocacy, fundraising, and major sponsorships,

and delegates to the CEO authority for their implementation and management, noting that implementation must be in keeping with the overall principles of the DOA Policy.

As per Board direction at the November 30, 2021, Board meeting, and subsequent changes to the OPLB Policy 010 CEO Reporting and Monitoring, staff provide the Board with fund development update reports twice a year, normally in March and September. The most recent update to the Board was provided at the February 23, 2023 meeting (File Number: OPLB-2023-0223-10.5).

The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an update on fund development activities from January through June 2023, and to provide the Board planned activities through to the end of 2023.

## **DISCUSSION**

OPL has two fund development streams: Annual giving and the Ottawa Central Library (OCL) *Unlock Potential* Campaign.

Annual giving is an ongoing process that currently uses, as its primary tactic, email appeals (called “eblasts”) to cardholders who agreed to receive information regarding fund development at OPL. Over the years, approximately 40,000 individuals have agreed to receive fund development information. Annual giving also includes walk-in donations at branches that are typically directed to a specific branch, or to library materials purchases.

The *Unlock Potential* campaign raises funds specifically for the OPL Central branch at Ādisōke, the new joint facility with Library and Archives Canada.

### **Annual Giving**

Annual fund development consists of developing and implementing tactics to raise funds for the overall OPL system. Since 2012, OPL has received funds via a “Donate” button on the OPL website, which direct donors to Canada Helps, a third-party donation processing service for the nonprofit sector.

From 2012 to 2020, OPL received approximately \$97,000 from online donations through CanadaHelps. From December 2020 to present, cumulative online donations have exceeded \$259,000.

The main fundraising tactic for this stream is the use of eblasts. Eblast fundraising appeals are sent through email and are targeted to cardholders who provided consent to receive fundraising information from OPL upon registering for a new library card. Engaging cardholders is an opportunity to test fund development messaging and explore opportunities. Over the years, approximately 40,000 individuals have agreed to receive fundraising information.

Eblasts consistently result in a spike in donations: eblast campaigns since 2020 have averaged approximately \$15,000 per eblast. Four eblasts were planned for 2023. The first eblast in March 2023 raised approximately \$6,500, and the second eblast in June 2023 raised approximately \$4,000. Additional eblasts are planned for October and December. Historically, these two eblasts have netted approximately \$35,000+ combined.

Donations continue to be made online, via cheques mailed to OPL, estate gifts, or in a branch (by cash, debit, or credit card). The first half of 2023 has resulted in \$76,296 in donations to OPL attributed to annual giving, including both active (eblasts) and passive donations.

### ***Unlock Potential Campaign***

Fund development for the *Unlock Potential* campaign consists of developing and executing a major gifts program in support of the Central branch at Ādisōke. As noted in earlier reports to the Board, the campaign is currently in the “Quiet Phase” of the campaign, which focuses on cultivating and soliciting major gift prospects, including individuals, corporations, and charitable foundations.

At the beginning of 2023, in conjunction with the OPL Board Ad hoc on Fund Development, OPL established a target for the 2023 calendar year of \$1,500,000. This target was based on the campaign focus of cultivating and soliciting major gifts, consulting with community leaders, developing support materials (including a website and promotional video), as well as evaluating the strategy and exploration of opportunities to build profile for the campaign and Ādisōke.

From January to June 2023, Fund Development has cultivated gift prospects and is optimistic for upcoming announcements. In line with best practices, much of the work continues to focus on campaign cultivation and solicitation, and activity remains high (see Table 1 below). 2023 results to date total \$10,981.33.

**Table 1: 2023 “Unlock Potential” Campaign Focus**

Activity	Recent Progress	Next steps
<b>Cultivation and solicitation</b>	Invitations to top prospects to tour the Ādisōke construction site; invitations from prospects to submit proposals	Continue to cultivate and solicit top prospects to secure commitments before year end; continue to invite prospects for tours; engage community leaders and prospects; host future tours
<b>Coordinate receipt of planned giving</b>	Received regular unsolicited or previously planned donations.	Continue to sustain relationships

Campaign activities at mid-point 2023 have been focused solely on major gift prospects and this focused approach has yielded new opportunities.

As additional support for the quiet phase, OPL has recently secured the services of a strategic consultant, Advancement Resources Counsel, Inc., to undertake a refresh and update of the campaign, including updates to campaign plans and materials, adjusting for the current status, as well as advising on and actively assisting lead gift prospect identification, initiation and cultivation.

**CONSULTATION**

Consultations on fund development were conducted with members of the 2023-2026 OPL Board Ad hoc Committee on Fund Development, as well as OPL Senior Management and key staff.

**ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

Ottawa Public Library supports and considers the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005)* in its operations. There are no immediate accessibility impacts associated with this report.

**BOARD PRIORITIES**

This report supports the OPL Strategic Directions and Priorities 2020-2023:

“To create the destination experience for the Ottawa Central Library; and develop and implement a fundraising plan.”

### **BUSINESS ANALYSIS IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct business analysis implications of this report. Staff will continue to require data analysis as part of the process of segmenting donors to maximize fund development potential, as described in this report.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Funds raised through the Unlock Potential Campaign will serve to offset increasing costs of FF&E due to inflation, and to support enhancing technology, programming, and the visitor experience in the Central branch. Staff will continue to monitor actuals against projections, and account for any discrepancy in the annual financial planning via the budget process.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **INDIGENOUS AND GENDER EQUITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific Indigenous, gender or race equity implications associated with the report recommendation, but due to the nature of *Ādisōke*, *Unlock Potential* Campaign activities inherently have implications for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. The name *Ādisōke* was given to the facility by the Anishinābe Algonquin Host Nation, reflecting the depth and sincerity of the partner institutions' appreciation for the ongoing engagement with Kitigan Zibi Anishinābeg and the Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation. This ongoing engagement will include discussion of spaces and services at the Central branch.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

## DISPOSITION

Staff anticipate sharing information regarding secured gifts (i.e., those with an actionable signed agreement document) with the Board in a timely manner and continuing to provide summary reports to the Board twice annually regarding both annual giving and the *Unlock Potential* campaign. The next fund development update will be presented in Q1 2024.