

2021 Annual Report



Milton
Public
Library
Be Inspired

A message from our Chair & Chief Librarian

Throughout 2021 I was inspired by the Milton community and our determination to promote each other during the ongoing pandemic and increase in visibility of ongoing injustices, both past and present. This inspiration was felt and embraced by MPL as well.

MPL's extended hours allowed Miltonians increased access to the supports MPL offers our community including inclusive programming – including Rainbow Reads and our very own Beyond the Stacks podcast - updated collections, access to the Food for Life Community Fridge and our plethora of virtual offerings. Our annual One Book One Milton event started the year off with Samra Habib's We Have Always Been Here and concluded with Jagmeet Singh's Love & Courage. Both events were met with huge success garnering the attention of people throughout Canada and raising MPL's profile once again.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the tireless and innovative MPL Management Team and MPL's hardworking and dedicated staff for the love and effort they pour into our library and continuing to make it a space for our community to Read. Learn. Create. Connect.

Whilst the impact of the pandemic, on our services, continued unabated throughout 2021, this did not mean that staff at Milton Public Library were unable to provide excellent customer service. Far from it, in fact, as can be seen by the contents of this year's Annual Report which seeks to provide a small snapshot of our achievements.

Through a continued focus on meeting your needs through our online offerings, more Miltonians accessed our programmes and collections than ever before. Witnessing this increased uptake of our services throughout the two years of the pandemic has illustrated to all the staff at MPL how much everything we do matters and is valued by those who mean the most – you, our patrons.

And so, on behalf of us all, I extend my sincere gratitude to each and every Miltonian who connected with us during this time, through whichever medium. In doing so, your support inspired us to continue to deliver on our mission to Read, Learn, Create & Connect. THANK YOU. Or as we'd say in my homeland, Diolch yn fawr iawn, pawb!



Sarah Marshall
Chair



Mark Williams
Chief Librarian



Year at a Glance

2021 was another tumultuous year, as a result of the ongoing pandemic. Despite which, staff at MPL continued to innovate by adding new functionality to MPL's mobile library app, implementing award winning virtual volunteer opportunities for youth and maintaining the highest active cardholder rate of any public library in Canada (currently 86,300 people or 68% of the population actively use their MPL card).

↑36% new
cardholders

↑27% number of
programmes



↑119% total
circulation



Customer Experience

MPL continued to enhance the experience for library patrons through a “service-first” philosophy with responsive programming and collections. With the ongoing impacts of the pandemic continuing unabated as we entered 2021, MPL’s focus was on meeting the needs of our patrons, through whichever service model was available, including Curbside Collection, the transformation of our physical spaces, and exciting online programme offerings.

- Mobile Library App
- Curbside Collection
- Live Chat with a Librarian
- Open communication on important service updates
- Mandatory employee vaccination policy
- Physical spaces and safety measures



↑15% people visiting the library online

“Well done team. Thanks for all the pivots, dips and dodges over the last few years. We are very thankful for each and every staffer who helped us keep engaged with our libraries. Thanks doesn’t cover it, but just know you are seen and much appreciated. Keep it up!”

MPL Patron



Enhanced Collections

MPL made significant strides to enhance access to e-resources throughout the pandemic, leading to increased usage. Highlights include our continued partnership with the Internet Archive, which provided patrons with access to millions of digitised works from across the globe as well as an increased investment in MPL's e-book offerings.



Decolonised MARC Records/ Indigenous Subject Headings

MPL acknowledges the need for national solutions to harmful and inappropriate subject headings and resource descriptions by utilising more respectful and appropriate terminology. In 2021, MPL completed a project of updating the subject headings of Indigenous and other diverse collections, such as the Rainbow Collection, in response to a more decisively inclusive service model which we have been working towards since 2018.

"I deeply appreciate your efforts and commitment to providing ongoing programming and services during this pandemic. I have enjoyed Curbside Collection, virtual book clubs and e-books. All delivered by highly organized, enthusiastic, friendly and knowledgeable staff. Thank you."

MPL Patron

Sports Equipment Lending Programme

MPL implemented the Sports Equipment Lending Programme in 2021. This well-accessed programme provides patrons the opportunity to borrow outdoor games and sports equipment provided by the Town of Milton, along with an ability to place holds through the Library Catalogue.

Service Enhancements

MPL achieved a milestone in 2021, announcing that for the first time ever, hours would be extended at both Main library and Sherwood branch to include full days on Sundays. This announcement was met with universal praise from patrons. In step with this work, MPL undertook initial planning for its first ever bookmobile, which will be fully electric and which is anticipated to be on the road within the next couple of years.





Top row L to R: Max Eisen, Terry Fallis, Randall Adjei
 Middle row L to R: Jagmeet Singh, Morgan Murray, David A Robertson, Ijeoma Oluo
 Bottom row L to R: Joshua Whitehead, Samra Habib, Michelle Good, Jerry Craft, Raufikat Oyawoye-Salami

Continuing to Inspire

MPL demonstrated continued success in the delivery of virtual programmes in 2021, including year-on-year increases in popular programmes including the Summer Reading Club, Read Woke, Laurier Milton Lecture Series, and high-profile author talks, including those hosted by Randall Adjei, Michelle Good, and Jagmeet Singh.

↑145% children
programme
attendance

↑135% teen
programme
attendance

↑28% adult
programme
attendance





Being Inspired By...

- MPL Community Ambassador and Canadian Olympian, Maddie Schizas
- Rainbow Reads with MP Adam van Koeeverden and Fairy T
- Storytimes with Mrs. Claus
- [Beyond the Stacks](#) Podcast



Storytime with Mrs. Claus in partnership with Conservation Halton

"I just wanted to message and say THANK YOU so much for the Punjabi storytime! My kids love them and can't wait until the next one. My youngest pointed at the screen and said 'I want to be her when I grow up.' Representation matters, and I thank you from the bottom of my heart for providing such a great storytime to our kids."

MPL Patron



"Milton Public Library has been in touch with the community's needs right from the start of Covid. Programmes are offered that are interesting and geared towards every age group. Thank you so much!"

MPL Patron



Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Anti-Racism

MPL continues to respond to a more decisively inclusive service model, applying an equity lens to all aspects of library service delivery. In 2019, staff began the process of building an organisational-wide approach to inclusion, diversity, equity, and anti-racism with consulting firm, DiversiPro. To date this has included the creation of two interim reports. The final report which contains 32 recommendations for MPL to become a truly anti-racist organisation has been adopted by the MPL Board and a strategic plan is in progress to action each of the 32 action items identified.

Communication to Staff and Public on Internal and External Consultations

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Anti-Racism at Milton Public Library

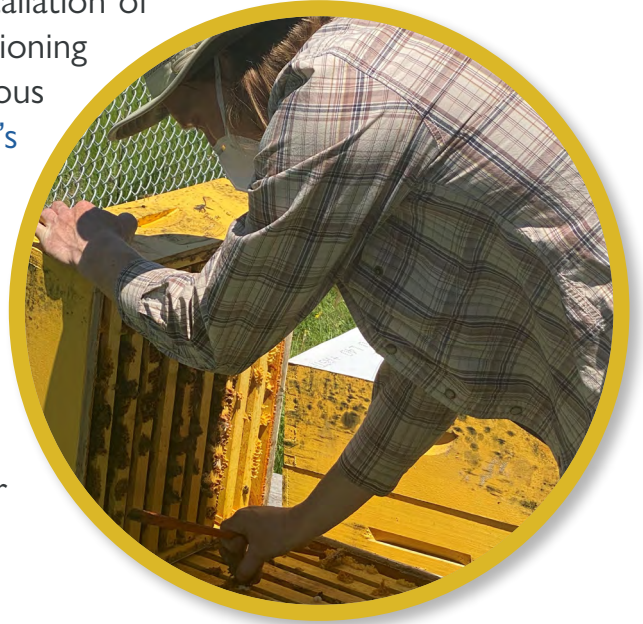


Collaboration and Partnerships

An integral part of MPL's success and resiliency through the pandemic stems from the strength of our community outreach and partnerships. A major partnership with Ontario Parks and Conservation Halton led to circulating park passes. Other key initiatives included our continuing partnership with local apiary, [Humble Bee Inc.](#), the installation of three Pride benches across branches, and the re-envisioning of Beaty branch in collaboration to include an Indigenous garden with Indigenous-led organisation, [Grandmother's Voice](#), among others.

Beaty Branch Honey

MPL partnered with Humble Bee, a full-service apiary with a focus on sustainable urban honey production and education. Beehives were installed at Beaty branch in August 2020, and MPL was thrilled to offer honey for sale from its inaugural batch.



The Stinger

MPL collaborated with Third Moon Brewing, a local small business that shares MPL's commitment to the community by giving back through fundraising initiatives, to create 'The Stinger,' which was brewed with a pot of Beaty branch honey and sold through Third Moon.



Healthy Communities Initiative Grant

MPL was the proud recipient of \$50K in funding from the Government of Canada's [Healthy Communities Initiative](#). Partnering with local Indigenous organisation, [Grandmother's Voice](#), MPL will bring new life to Beaty Branch in 2022 and inspire a more inviting and vibrant community space that will include an Indigenous garden, supportive programmes, and enhanced collections.



A Welcoming Seat

Working with the Town of Milton to bring this initiative to life, rainbow Pride benches were installed at all MPL locations. The benches are available year round for residents to enjoy sitting in the outdoors, while representing a safe space for our 2SLGBTQIA+ community. In addition, 10% of the purchase price of the benches was donated to [Rainbow Health Ontario](#)!



Food for Life Community Fridge

Partnering with Food for Life, a community fridge was installed at Beaty branch, fully stocked with food for anyone in need.



MCRC's Food for Fines & Fill-A-Crib Campaigns

MPL led another successful Food for Fines campaign in October, collecting donations to support the Milton Community Resource Centre's Infant Food Bank. The campaign gathered baby food, diapers, and formula to help Milton families in need. Throughout December, MPL was a contactless drop-off point for donations during the Infant Food Bank's annual Fill-a-Crib campaign.

You're mad, bonkers, completely
off your head. But I'll tell you a
secret. All the beautiful people are

Alice in Wonderland - Lewis Carroll



User Experience (UX)

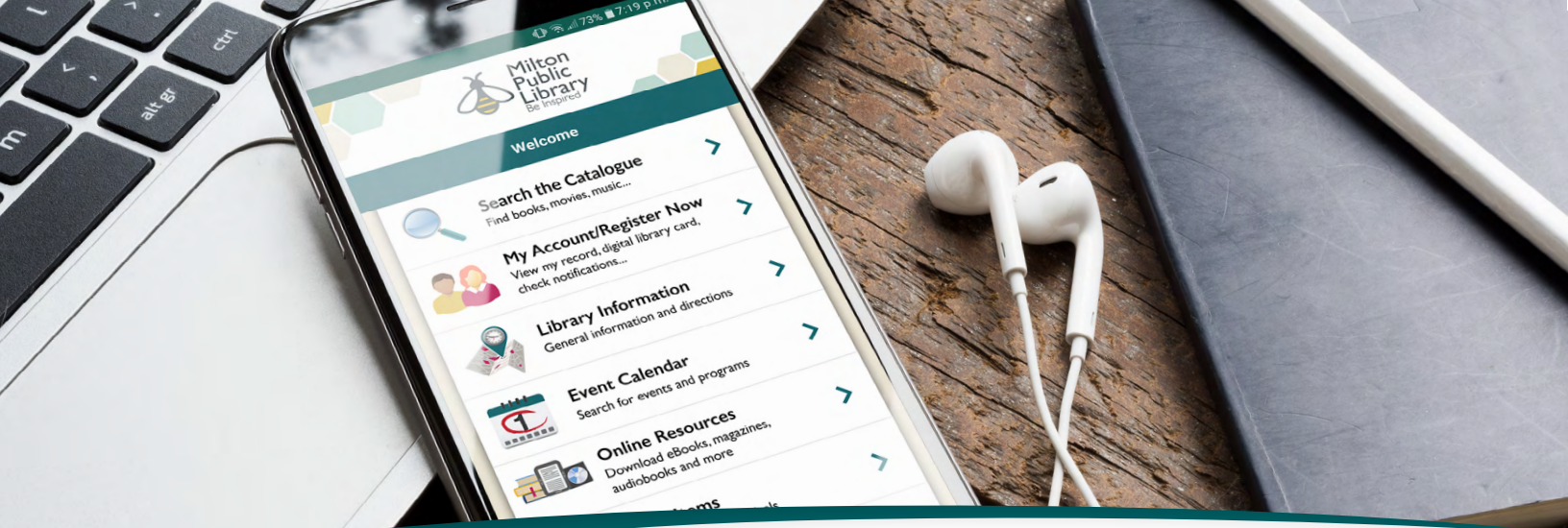
In 2021, MPL partnered with the Faculty of Information, the Centre for Community Partnerships, and the University of Toronto to evaluate MPL's existing website as part of the Faculty of Information student's coursework. The project's primary goal was to assess the website's usability in the area of general UX. As a result, MPL has taken the student's recommendations into consideration as we develop our new website, scheduled to launch in 2022.



Internet Archive & Library Futures Partnerships

As a result of the existing partnership with the Internet Archive and Open Libraries project, in 2021, MPL joined forces with Library Futures to be a stronger advocate for our patrons' digital rights by advocating for equitable access to knowledge, ensuring that MPL's patrons can enhance their discovery of and access to books in the digital age.





Technology and Innovation

Innovation continued to be top of mind for MPL in 2021. It was especially important throughout the pandemic in order to support patrons' access to resources through periods of facility closures. Through the re-configuration of MPL's innovative [Mobile Library App](#), MPL was the first Canadian public library to integrate functionality to accommodate Curbside Collection, simplifying the process for patrons. The success of this approach led to higher than anticipated levels of circulation of physical materials when compared to 2019 (pre-pandemic).

↑296% online library activity

↑82% Mobile Library App usage

↑82% video game circulation

↑281% Mobile Library App page views

↑87% junior kits circulation

↑26% book circulation

Google Knowledge Panel

MPL partnered with LinkedData in 2021 to display MPL's collection on Google's knowledge panel. This enables our readers to find MPL, and its resources, via a simple Google search, allowing patrons to place a hold, or the borrow the book, directly from MPL's catalogue.



Digitisation Project & 3D Scanner

MPL acquired a state-of-the-art book scanner in 2021, which is being used to digitise and preserve items in MPL's local history collection, available through [Milton Digital](#).



Awards and Recognition

MPL's Chief Librarian, Mark Williams, was one of eight public library CEO's from across North America to form part of the ULC's Working Group on Democracy & Information. He was also asked to join the Centre for Free Expression's Working Group on Intellectual Freedom.

Notably, and continuing our track record of award-winning service, MPL again received international recognition for our work with [Internet Archive](#) and [Library Futures](#). MPL's Director, Support Service, Kanta Kapoor, received the [2021 Internet Archive Hero Award](#). Kanta also received the Ontario Library Association Technical Services Award for being an innovator and leader in the technical services area leading to the development of the highly-praised MPL Mobile Library App.



Looking Ahead

Here's a glimpse of what's to come as MPL prioritises efficiency, innovation, service excellence, and inclusion in 2022:

Main expansion

The planning and design phase of the expansion of Main library has begun with a view to starting construction in 2023. It is anticipated that the expansion will open to the public in late 2024.

Website launch

In 2022, MPL's website will be completely relaunched, focussing on improving the user experience.

Bookmobile

MPL's 'branch on wheels' will prioritise serving the rural communities, as well as those neighbourhoods that don't have easy access to a physical branch. The fully electric bookmobile will be designed with environmental sustainability in mind, and will provide access to performance space, programming, collections, and high speed internet access. It is anticipated to hit the streets in 2023!

New Horizons for Seniors Programme

MPL is the proud recipient of \$25K in federal funding under the 'New Horizons for Seniors Programme' for projects that make a difference in the lives of seniors and their communities. MPL launched 'The Hand-Me-Down Project' in April with the goal of supporting healthy ageing, celebrating diversity and promoting inclusion through intergenerational mentoring and engagement.





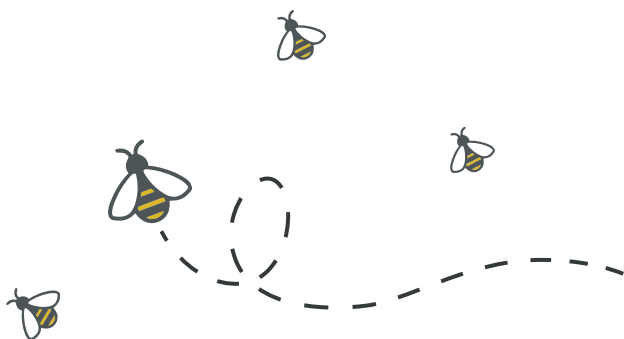
Top row L to R: Mark Williams, Vito Montesano, Kanta Kapoor
Bottom row L to R: Erin Auger, Maria Petricko, Ashley Directo

Management Team

Mark Williams	Chief Librarian
Vito Montesano	Director, HR
Kanta Kapoor	Director, Support Services
Vacant	Director, Customer Experience
Erin Auger	Manager, Public Service
Maria Petricko	Manager, Branches
Ashley Directo	Manager, Marketing & Communications

Board Members

Sarah Marshall, Chair
Margaret Warmels, Vice Chair
Omer Amin
Matthew Fabian
Councillor Sameera Ali
Councillor Kristina Tesser Derksen



From left to right: Matthew Fabian, Councillor Kristina Tesser Derksen,
*Maggie Chan, Sarah Marshall, Councillor Sameera Ali, Omer Amin
Missing: Margaret Warmels
Resigned: Maggie Chan



Mission

MPL empowers the community to:
Read. Learn. Create. Connect.

Vision

To inspire through discovery,
collaboration, and creation.

Values

Intellectual Freedom. Inclusivity. Accessibility. Exceptional
Public Service. Lifelong Learning. Accountability.

Locations

Main

1010 Main Street East,
Milton, Ontario L9T 6H7

Sherwood

6355 Main Street West,
Milton, Ontario L9T 2Y1

Beaty

945 Fourth Line,
Milton, Ontario L9T 6P8



www.beinspired.ca