

REPORT

REPORT TO: Mayor Bonnette and Members of Council

REPORT FROM: Beverley King, Manager of Community and Adult Services

DATE: March 27, 2018

REPORT NO.: LIB-2018-0003

RE: eLearning Service: Lynda.com

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT report No. LIB-2018-0003 dated March 27, 2018 regarding e-Learning service: Lynda.com be received.

BACKGROUND:

Libraries have long been places of learning. According to the Ontario Government's sector profile, public libraries positively impact the economic success and well-being of a community. They are key contributors to literary and lifelong learning; positively impact physical and mental health; support job training and skills development; offer many resources for career planning and employment success; and help integrate newcomers to Canada.¹

The 2013 study of the economic impact of the Halton Hills Public Library (HHPL) revealed that every dollar invested in the Library yielded an average return of \$4.04 in economic benefit.² The HHPL created a value calculator that allows residents to calculate the direct impact the library has on their lives based on their use of the Library.³

Ontarians are increasingly accessing their public libraries electronically. Digital services, technology infrastructure and programs have become central to the success of libraries in meeting community needs.⁴ Despite all of the changes in how people consume information, the HHPL has remained on the crest of the digital learning wave. For years

¹ <https://www.ontario.ca/document/environmental-scan-culture-sector-ontario-culture-strategy-background-document/sector-profile-public-libraries>

² Diamanti, Jane. Economic Impact of Halton Hills Public Library. June 2, 2014.

³ <http://www.hhpl.on.ca/using-library/library-value-calculator>

⁴ <https://www.ontario.ca/document/environmental-scan-culture-sector-ontario-culture-strategy-background-document/sector-profile-public-libraries>

it has offered services like online reference resources, streaming movies and music, and of course, downloadable ebooks and audiobooks. Now the HHPL is venturing into new digital learning territory. It is offering resident's access to thousands of free courses through a service called Lynda.com.

COMMENTS:

What is Lynda.com?

Lynda.com is an online e-Learning platform that is part of LinkedIn, the world's largest professionally oriented social media platform. Lynda.com offers over 3,500 courses and more than 144,000 video tutorials taught by recognized industry experts.

The self-directed training is available 24/7 for those who want to learn business, technology and creative skills. As a professional development resource, Lynda.com's strength is in the breadth and depth of material available. Courses cover a range of topics including computers and software, business, marketing, management, design, languages, time management, and more. They are also designed to meet a range of skill levels from beginner to advance.

What are the benefits?

The platform itself offers many value added features to help residents customize their training paths to reach their personal and professional goals. Residents have the ability to learn at their own pace, download content to watch offline, earn certificates after completing full courses, or focus on one specific skill since the videos are short and have fully searchable transcriptions.

Lynda.com has the potential to impact youth looking to develop new skills and explore career paths; business owners and professionals wanting to upgrade skills or expand their knowledge-base; and lifelong learners interested in personal growth opportunities.

Professional development training tends to be expensive. A personal membership to Lynda.com is valued at \$300-\$400 annually. This is more affordable than most professional, off-site training, but still a barrier for many residents. Similarly it offers the convenience of learning anytime and anywhere. Course materials are up-to-date and include the recent software versions making Lynda.com relevant and meaningful.

How to access?

Residents can access Lynda.com through the Library's website using their HHPL card. Library cards are free to anyone who lives, works or goes to school in Halton Hills.

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Lynda.com directly aligns with one of the Town's top eight strategic priorities: municipal service delivery. This new service is designed to be an effective, efficient and economically delivered service. It also aligns with the Town's strategic goals to foster a healthy community and to foster a prosperous economy.

Lynda.com aligns with the Halton Hills Public Library's Strategic Plan goal to cultivate and deliver leading-edge resources and expertise so that residents can realize their life goals and contribute to a healthy and thriving community.

FINANCIAL IMPACT:

There is no financial impact directly associated with this report.

COMMUNICATIONS IMPACT:

There are no direct communication implications associated with this report.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS:

The Town is committed to implementing our Community Sustainability Strategy, Imagine Halton Hills. Doing so will lead to a higher quality of life. The relationship between this report and the Strategy is summarized below:

Do the report's recommendations advance the Strategy's implementation?

Yes

Which pillar(s) of sustainability does this report support?

Cultural Vibrancy, Economic Prosperity, and Social Well-being

In Summary, the Sustainability Implications of this report are as follows:

Overall, the alignment of this report with the Community Sustainability Strategy is:
Excellent

CONSULTATION:

Staff consulted with other library systems that launched a similar service.

CONCLUSION:

By facilitating free access to elearning platforms that provide personal and professional skill development opportunities, the HHPL continues to support the community's economic health and overall well-being. Lynda.com enhances the library's compliment of digital services.

Since launching Lynda.com in January 2018, the HHPL has had over 231 users view over 224 hours of video training. There have been over 50 certificates issued for fully completed courses. The early uptake is encouraging. With ongoing marketing, the Library anticipates that this professional development services will make a difference in our community for youth, business owners, professionals and lifelong learners.

Reviewed and Approved by,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Geoff Cannon", followed by a long horizontal line.

Geoff Cannon, Director of Library Services

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brent Marshall".

Brent Marshall, CAO