

**Capital Budget Adjustment List Briefing  
Keshen Goodman Library**

**COW Date Added: November 26, 2019 Business Unit: Halifax Public Libraries**

Tracking Id	Capital	2020/21 Amount (negative is savings/revenue)	20/21 Avg Bill Impact (negative is reduction)
	Capital	\$2,000,000	\$6.92
<b>Adjustment Description</b>	Renovations to Keshen Goodman Library including the construction of a 1200 sq. ft. addition to the building, changes to the layout, improvements to the functional space, and improvements to the materials/finishes & furnishings to respond to state of good repair issues, accommodate population growth and respond to significant increases in library use.		
<b>Priority Alignment</b>	Social Development – Social Infrastructure HRM communities, families, youth, and seniors have access to social infrastructure that enables them to participate fully in their community.		
<b>Funding Options</b>	Increase the tax rate – \$6.92 increase to the average tax bill Increase debt (only for new projects and those with a minimum 20 year life) debt servicing cost over 10 years = \$2,349,800 Reduce funding for Bedford Library project –\$250,000 earmarked for the Bedford Library project in 2020-2021 could be redirected toward this project, as further work on the Bedford project cannot be undertaken until land has been secured.		

**Service Implications and/or impact on Priority**

Keshen Goodman Public Library provides critical social infrastructure in the Clayton Park area. The Library welcomed over 481,000 visitors last year, provided 71,091 computer bookings, provided over 228,153 WiFi connections, and offered over 1,600 free library programs. Over the past 2 years, the number of visitors to the Keshen Goodman Library has increased by 14%.

The changes in the surrounding neighbourhood, the predicted population growth, the complex social dynamics of the neighbourhood and the significant increases in library use require us to act quickly to make improvements to the Library space to maintain service to this growing community.

Currently the branch is considered too small for current library usage rates, the space available is poorly designed resulting in tension between different library users, and is showing significant wear and tear. The proposed renovation includes the construction of a 1200 sq. ft. addition to the building, changes to the layout and improvements to the functional space including: consolidation of staff work areas to provide more public space, acoustic treatment to reduce background noise in accordance with a recently completed acoustic assessment, implementation of Lean Six Sigma workflow improvements, and replacement of flooring and soft seating. These changes should resolve a number of the challenges currently experienced by customers of this branch and extend its useful life.

**BACKGROUND**

The 25,000 sq. ft. building opened in 2001 and was almost entirely funded through a bequest left by Marion Keshen in honour of the Keshen Goodman family. The bequest provided 96% of the funding for this \$5.9M project; only 4% (\$250,000) of the total cost was provided by the municipality for adjacent access roads.

## DISCUSSION

The branch serves a very diverse community. People of all ages engage in a variety of solitary and collaborative activities every day. They connect with friends and neighbours, learn technology or language, participate in a range of programs, read, receive tutoring support, and volunteer. The Library's proximity to Halifax West High School means that many teens spend their lunch and outside-of-class hours at the Library. The surrounding neighbourhood includes many apartment and condominium buildings which house a high proportion of seniors and many newcomer families.

Public library space guidelines recommend a baseline of 0.7 gross square footage (GSF) per capita. Currently Keshen Goodman provides only 0.37 GSF per capita to its neighbourhood, approximately half the minimum space recommended. In the case of Keshen Goodman, demand on the Library is higher than in many other communities, in large part because of the high density of the neighbourhood and the large newcomer community in the area. Even with approval of this renovation, the Library will remain significantly undersized for the community.

### Keshen Goodman Catchment Area Population Projections:

	LOW – (2% growth over 5 years)		Medium – (7% growth over 5 years)		High - (12% increase over 5 years)		Recommended library square feet per capita
	Catchment population	Square feet per capita	Catchment population	Square feet per capita	Catchment population	Square feet per capita	
2011 (Actuals)*	37,566	0.67	37,566	0.67	37,566	0.67	.70
2016 (Actuals)*	66,795	0.37	66,795	0.37	66,795	0.37	.70
2021	68,130	0.37	71,470	0.35	74,810	0.33	.70
2026	69,492	0.36	76,473	0.33	83,787	0.30	.70

\*Based on Statistics Canada Census data by dissemination area for the Keshen Goodman catchment area.

The catchment area of the Keshen Goodman branch was predicted to grow by 11% in the 20 years after the Library opened (2000-2020), however it had already doubled from 33,372 to 66,795 by 2016. Looking at future population projections, it is anticipated that even with modest growth, between 69,492 and 83,787 people will live in the neighbourhood by 2026 and require service from the Keshen Goodman Library.

In the 2016 Census 16.9% of the population served by Keshen Goodman identified themselves as immigrants and 14.5% indicated a language other than English or French as their first language. These rates are significantly higher than the HRM overall figures of 9.3% and 7% respectively. Since 2016, based on the experience in the branch, the newcomer population has increased further. Libraries are uniquely positioned to engage newcomers by encouraging participation, facilitating connections and providing assistance to navigate their new community. Keshen Goodman, with its extensive language learning programs, homework support for newcomer youth, and its welcoming environment, is a model of excellence in this regard and is of vital importance to newcomers to Halifax.

Keshen Goodman has an extraordinarily high level of activity as is reflected in current library statistics. Beyond the significant attendance and technology usage noted above, Keshen Goodman circulates a high volume of books and other materials. For example, although Keshen Goodman is only 1/5 of the size of the Central Library it circulates 85% as many materials as Central Library.

## RISKS

Not making these improvements will result in the Library having increasing difficulty in meeting demand in this community; this is already an issue. As the Library provides critical social infrastructure for newcomers including equitable access to language learning, technology and social opportunities, not having the space to accommodate the needs could result in some newcomers not successfully integrating with the larger community. Failing to have adequate space and infrastructure, including seating and programming for

seniors and others who may live alone will result in increased social isolation which leads to poorer health outcomes. Failure to provide safe and welcoming space for teenagers and opportunities for engagement has a negative impact on the mental health and educational outcomes for youth.

Impacts already being experienced at the branch due to population growth include:

- Access to programming and community events – customers are turned away due to program room capacity
- Customers are denied access to English Language Learning due to space limitations. Currently there is a significant waiting list.
- Staff work area is currently too small to process the volume of materials safely and efficiently. Efficiencies and improvements have been identified through Lean Six Sigma projects, however these improvements cannot be implemented without spaces changes.
- Regular customer complaints due to inability to separate quieter activities from more social activities and poor acoustics.
- Poor access to seating due to lack of furniture and poor functional space.
- Inadequate access to computers due to lack of space for technology.
- Lack of dedicated teen space.

The significantly higher than anticipated use of the library branch has put strain on the physical infrastructure of the Library and not undertaking these improvements will result in potential building failures. If this renovation is project is not undertaken, we foresee more frequent failures of building systems; additional wear and tear to the building resulting in increased maintenance costs and emergency spending; and potential branch closures due to building issues. Not completing this smaller refit now increases the likelihood that the Keshen Goodman Library would need to close completely for a larger renovation within 5 years. It is preferred to undergo this smaller project now to minimize service disruption to the public.

**Original Signed**

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