



## Staff Report for Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: October 23, 2024

Report Number: SRCFS.24.049

Department: Corporate and Financial Services

Division: Information Technology

**Subject: SRCFS.24.049 - Non-Competitive Acquisition of Website Redesign for Richmond Hill Public Library**

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### Purpose:

The City of Richmond Hill Information Technology Division (IT) is seeking Council approval for a single source acquisition greater than \$100,000, in accordance with Procurement By-law 113-16 as amended by By-law 141-20.

### Recommendation(s):

- a) That staff report SRCFS.24.049 be received;
- b) That the contract for development and implementation of the public-facing Richmond Hill Public Library website for Richmond Hill Public Library ("RHPL") Website be awarded non-competitively to Mugo Web for a cost not exceeding \$293,500 (exclusive of taxes) for three years following a 90-day post-launch warranty period, with the option to renew for two additional one-year terms, pursuant to Appendix "B" Part 2, Section (a) of the Procurement By-law No. 113-16 as amended by By-law 141-20 "in the absence of receipt of any Submissions in response to a request".
- c) That the Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services be authorized to execute any and all necessary documentation to affect the contract.

### Contact Person(s):

- Mirza Mehdi, Digital Product Manager, Library, [mmehdi@rhpla.ca](mailto:mmehdi@rhpla.ca)
- Rob Jones, Director Information Technology/CIO, [rob.jones@richmondhill.ca](mailto:rob.jones@richmondhill.ca)
- Sherry Adams, Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services, [sherry.adams@richmondhill.ca](mailto:sherry.adams@richmondhill.ca)

## **Page 2**

### **Report Approval:**

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

## Page 3

### Background:

One of the key Priority Areas in the RHPL 2021-2025 Strategic Plan is "Accelerated Digital Experiences," which is to be achieved through the following strategies:

- Redevelop the RHPL website
- Integrate personalization into the user experience
- Develop a digital product strategy that modernizes the member experience

Upon completion of the Strategic Plan, RHPL staff promptly initiated the first of these strategic activities: the redevelopment of the RHPL website. In early 2022, the vendor Cinnamon Toast Media was engaged for the first phase of this project, which involved creating a new website strategy and design aimed at modernizing the customer experience and meet customer needs, such as enhanced search functionality, robust self-serve features, and increased user engagement among other objectives.

To ensure a comprehensive approach, a holistic review of the old website was conducted, which included extensive user research involving both staff and customers (customer surveys with 600 respondents, focus groups with 20 participants, and 10 one-on-one interviews). Based on these findings, a website strategy was developed, along with a site map, wireframes, page designs, and functional requirements. These elements form the foundation for the development of the new website, which will incorporate numerous features and functions identified as important and desirable by library users. The implementation of these features is expected to increase satisfaction among current users and attract new patrons.

Following the completion of the first phase, a second phase, known as the Minimum Viable Product (MVP) Website Refresh, was initiated to address some of the gaps identified in the website strategy and to align with the library's new brand launch. The MVP was realized collaboratively by internal members of the City's Application Services team and RHPL. This second phase of the website focused on updating the look and feel in accordance with the website strategy, procuring and implementing the new BiblioCommons discovery layer and events platform, launching a new mobile app, and introducing an online booking platform for meeting rooms and makerspace services.

The third and final phase will fully realize the comprehensive vision of the website strategy, which includes:

- **Universal Federated Search:** Internal customer research, including user journey mapping and interviews, revealed that users want a single search feature that can query the catalogue, other library resources, website content, and the programming calendar in one place.
- **Improvement of Information Architecture:** Enhancing the website's structure to better align with patrons' needs.

## Page 4

- **E-commerce Integration:** Development and integration of an e-commerce store within the RHPL website, allowing merchandise to be sold online to patrons.
- **Online Library Card Registration:** Implementation of an online address verification system for new library card registrations and renewals, in accordance with RHPL’s library card policy.
- **Single Sign-On (SSO) Functionality:** Seamless sign-in experience across the RHPL website, BiblioCommons suite of products, and other third-party tools (i.e., e-resources), eliminating the need for users to re-authenticate.

To achieve these objectives, an experienced web development firm is required.

### Discussion:

This procurement is deemed a sole source acquisition pursuant to Appendix “B” Part II a) of the Procurement By-law - “in the absence of receipt of any Submissions in response to a request.”

To move forward with this acquisition, CRH IT and RHPL teams collaborated to identify Mugo Web as a suitable vendor that meets both our business and user functional requirements. Mugo Web has a proven track record of developing websites for Canadian libraries, including Collingwood Public Library, East Gwillimbury Public Library, and Haliburton County Public Library.

The award of the contract to Mugo Web for the Library’s redesign website will streamline operations by reducing unnecessary resource expenditures and providing a scalable, responsive platform that integrates seamlessly with both internal and third-party systems, aligning with RHPL’s evolving Digital transformation and website strategies. On September 26, 2026, RHPL Board approved Report #SRLIB24.15 called Single Source Acquisition for the RHPL Website.

### Financial Implications:

The total value of the approval is \$293,500 exclusive of taxes to include software subscription purchases and annual recurring fees for the term of the planned contract. Post go-live annual maintenance and support will be part of the yearly Operating Budget after Warranty (e.g., starting 2nd half of 2025 and going forward).

### Relationship to Strategic Plan 2024-2027:

**Pillar 2: Focusing on People** – RHPL is an important part of Richmond Hill’s diverse community of residents.

RHPL’s redesign website will ensure the library remains relevant in an increasingly digital world, significantly enhancing the user experience for our existing patrons and attracting new users.

Climate change considerations are not applicable to this staff report.

## **Page 5**

### **Attachments:**

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. All attachments have been reviewed and made accessible. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Appendix A – RHPL Board Staff Report – Sole Source Acquisition RHPL Website
- Appendix B – RHPL Board Excerpt

## Page 6

### Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCFS.24.049 Non-Competitive Acquisition of Website Redesign for Richmond Hill Public Library.docx
Attachments:	- Appendix B - RHPL Board Excerpt.docx - Appendix A - RHPL Board Report.docx
Final Approval Date:	Oct 9, 2024

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

**Rob Jones - Oct 9, 2024 - 8:16 AM**

**Sherry Adams - Oct 9, 2024 - 9:40 AM**

**Darlene Joslin - Oct 9, 2024 - 9:59 AM**