



7. STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015: Draft Priority Areas and Next Steps

Date:	June 12, 2012
To:	Strategic Plan Steering Committee
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present draft priority areas and goals for the 2012 - 2015 strategic plan to the Strategic Plan Steering Committee for review and recommendation to the Toronto Public Library Board as a framework for public consultation. At its November 21, 2011 meeting, the Board approved the report *Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015: Establishing a Process* that identified draft priority areas as an early milestone.

The draft priority areas recommended for the 2012 - 2015 strategic plan are included in Attachment 1 and summarized as follows:

- **Grow a City of readers:** foster a love of reading as a first priority helping residents overcome the barrier of low literacy levels;
- **Develop a City of learners:** support lifelong learning as fundamental to economic prosperity, social cohesion and civic engagement;
- **Catalyze a City of innovators, entrepreneurs and creators of all ages:** spark experimentation positioning Torontonians to succeed in a global knowledge economy;
- **Deliver excellent public library service** to Torontonians efficiently and effectively.

After Board approval of the priority areas, the Library will engage in community consultation and continue to update the environmental scan with newly released data about Toronto from the 2011 Census results. It is anticipated that priority areas and initiatives may evolve as a result of consultation with residents, stakeholders, community partners and staff.

An updated timeline for public consultation is included in Attachment 2 for information. Tactics include a public survey of users and non-users, a web presence, a consultation tool kit, social media presence, focus groups and public meetings. The consultation process will begin in July and conclude in October with Board approval of the new plan targeted for November 2012.

Preliminary service levels and targets are included in Attachment 3 for information. Through the consultation process, service levels and targets will be further developed and then presented to the Steering Committee with the final plan going to the Board for approval.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Strategic Plan Steering Committee:

1. endorses the four draft priority areas and thirteen related goals for the 2012 - 2015 strategic plan as outlined in this report, and recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board approves these as a framework for public consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no financial impacts beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget. Direct costs associated with consultation as approved by the Library Board are provided for in the 2012 operating budget. The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and is in agreement with it.

DECISION HISTORY

At its November 21, 2011 meeting, the Toronto Public Library Board approved the report *Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015: Establishing a Process*.

<http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2011/nov21/16.pdf>

At its January 30, 2012 meeting the Board approved the report: *Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015: Consultation Plan*.

<http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/about-the-library/board/meetings/2012-jan-30.jsp>

COMMENTS

At its November 21, 2011 meeting, the Board approved the report *Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan 2012 - 2015: Establishing a Process* that identified the draft priority areas as an early milestone in a six-stage process to create and implement a new strategic plan for the Library. The process includes the following phases: 1) orientation, 2) environmental scan, 3) public consultation, 4) further development of the plan, 5) development of performance indicators and targets and 6) integration of the plan into capital and operating budgets.

This report recommends draft priorities resulting from the environmental scan (Phase 2) and provides and presents a revised consultation timeline (Phase 3).

Environmental Scan for the Strategic Plan

Over the past three months, Library staff completed an environmental scan to understand the context in which service will be provided over the next four years. The external scan

analyzed demographic, economic, political and social trends. Research included initial 2011 Census results and reports from the public and private sector. The internal scan was an assessment of the current state of library service, including achievements and areas for continuity from the last strategic plan, usage trends, and Library resources including staff, branches, collections and services. Research was summarized and presented to Board members, a representative of the Toronto Public Library Foundation Board and senior library staff at an information session held on May 7, 2012.

The information session included the following:

- a four-year look back: accomplishment and proposed areas of continuity from the previous strategic plan;
- demographic trends in Toronto;
- economic and funding outlook;
- lifelong learning and education trends;
- reading promotion and literacy trends;
- technology trends;
- publishing trends;
- demand for library service;
- current state assessment: branches, collections, virtual library services, reference services and user education programs and staff.

Recommended draft priority areas and goals for 2012 - 2015 are outlined below and summarized in Attachment 1 as a framework for public consultation. Preliminary wording of a vision statement is included for consultation. The Library's existing mission and service values have been rewritten to be more concise and action oriented.

The revised consultation timeline is provided for information in Attachment 2. The process will begin in July and conclude with the Board's approval of the strategic plan targeted for November 2012. Consultation tactics include: a survey on Toronto residents both users and non-users to understand awareness and usage of the Library; web and social media presence updated throughout the process; a consultation tool kit with background information from the environmental scan, public, and focus groups; public meetings/open houses in the Fall with ongoing engagement with Library staff.

Preliminary service levels and targets are included in Attachment 3 for information. Through the consultation process, service levels and targets will be further developed and presented to the Steering Committee with the final plan going to the Library Board for approval.

The consultation process will include stakeholders, partners, residents and staff. From the consultation the Library will learn: whether the priorities reflect community and residents' needs, which service strategies will have the broadest impact in addressing the priorities; and about any potential partners to support priority areas.

Draft priority areas and goals

Four draft priority areas and thirteen goals are presented for recommendation to the Board as a framework for consultation with sample initiatives as outlined below. Under each priority area the key issues from the environmental scan are provided as context.

Preliminary, sample initiatives are included for information.

Priority Area One: Grow a City of readers: Foster a love of reading as a first priority helping residents overcome the barrier of low literacy levels

Responds to these key issues identified in the environmental scan:

- reading is the foundation of success in education and lifelong learning;
- 25% of children enter school lacking the numeracy and literacy skills to succeed;
- the growing achievement gap in school achievement and participation in post secondary education between boys and girls;
- underperformance of some Toronto schools on standard literacy tests, especially at the secondary level impacts future productivity;
- poor literacy skills are linked to lower education, earnings, health and social outcomes, including high rates of unemployment;
- rates of illiteracy are projected to increase by 64% by 2031 in Toronto especially among seniors and immigrants with lower literacy levels;
- public libraries are largely shut of out of ebook distribution and public demand is increasing.

Draft Goals and sample initiatives:

Goal 1. Support readers of all ages, especially children at critical stages in their development in building print literacy skills, in discovering great stories and books, and in connecting with authors, creators and other readers:

- a stronger presence for Ready for Reading with improved access for preschoolers, parents and caregivers, including those in all-day kindergarten;
- increased emphasis on literacy and reading for children in the middle years (ages 6 - 12) with strategies to engage boys in the digital age, including initiatives tied to the Pan Am Games;
- targeted initiatives to engage older adults and seniors in reading with support for readers transitioning to e-content and e- readers.

Goal 2. Champion the value of reading as a strong foundation for life success through campaigns, outreach strategies and programs:

- leverage partnerships to enhance reading promotion including national, provincial and private/public partnerships.

Goal 3. Lead the drive for access to econtent, including ebooks for public library users:

- advocate and work nationally, provincially and locally to engage the book industry, publishers and creators in providing access to econtent for libraries in response to growing demand.

Priority Area Two: Develop a City of learners: Support lifelong learning as fundamental to economic prosperity, social cohesion and civic engagement

Responds to these key issues:

- Canada/Ontario and Toronto is continuing to transition from a manufacturing to a knowledge-based economy with new requirements for skills;
- relatively low labour market productivity related to lack of innovation and investment in information communication technologies impacts Canada and Toronto's competitiveness;
- the digital divide is still with us: many residents cannot afford access or have the skills to access and use technology efficiently;
- employment shortages related to demographic trends will impact Toronto's future workforce - older workers will work longer and require new skills, youth will experience difficulty transitioning from education to the workforce; immigrants continue to be under employed;
- continuous learning and skills upgrading supports productivity in an increasingly competitive global economy where competition is fierce - yet participation rates in lifelong and community-based learning among adults are low;
- an aging, active population requires new skills to fully participate in the economic, social and cultural life of Toronto.

Draft goals and initiatives:

Goal 4. Provide easy access to the world's knowledge through collections in a range of accessible formats, including unique material about Toronto's economy, its diverse history, communities and culture:

- digitize rare and unique holdings from library collections with educational or community partners;
- encourage residents and partners to create and share content to enrich and animate library collections.

Goal 5. Respond to the emerging demand for self-directed learning and skills development to help users prepare, learn and grow through life's transitions from home to school, school to work, work to second careers and retirement to support a better quality of life:

- offer community-based and online learning opportunities in partnership with educational, cultural and business organizations;

- build intergenerational and mentoring projects to support work force development, skills upgrading and service enhancements.

Goal 6. Help learners of all ages to build information and digital literacy skills to access and use technology and information effectively:

- respond to the demand for accessible information literacy and lifelong learning programs in partnership with community and cultural agencies and the education community;
- implement requirements of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and related regulations to make library service more accessible.

Priority Area Three: Catalyze a City of innovators, entrepreneurs and creators of all ages: Spark experimentation positioning Torontonians to succeed in a global knowledge economy

Responds to these key issues:

- Canada, Ontario and Toronto is challenged transfer ideas and innovation from research to market impacting competitiveness and productivity;
- more people are working independently and remotely and may require work space;
- for Toronto youth today, entrepreneurship and small business ownership will replace more traditional employer relationships yet the cost of start up may impact students with high levels of debt;
- personal mobile devices are increasingly important creating increased demand for wireless service;
- context aware applications will allow context specific responses to user inquiries, eg. personalized recommendations for reading or library programs based on users location and or interests;
- bricks and mortar and online services complement and drive customer usage, engagement and community building and innovation across a number of sectors including IT, and education;
- advances in open data and discovery will increase user expectations for access to services and information;
- cloud computing is taking hold creating new expectations for apps and data;
- social media provides new opportunities to communicate with customers but creates new expectations for immediate response;
- the City of Toronto is investing in culture: the Creative Capital Gains: an Action Plan for Toronto supports the cultural sector as an employment sector transitioning to digital media and culture as a factor in attracting skilled workers to the City.

Draft goals and initiatives:

Goal 7. Build and evolve comprehensive virtual library services available anytime/anywhere integrating new and emerging technologies for better service:

- expand service to mobile and remote users, a growing group;
- increase access to enriched content created by a broad range of contributors in a range of media;
- offer more ways for users to engage online and contribute content.

Goal 8. Animate library branches to encourage collaboration through inspired design linking the community and library with technology enabled, wired workspaces, hours and service models to support work, study, planned and casual programs events and conversation:

- address unmet demand for bandwidth, wireless, in-branch technology support, and access to ebooks and ebook devices;
- investigate kiosk services and other innovations with access and self service options ;
- review service hours to address community needs.

Priority Area Four: Deliver excellent library service to Torontonians efficiently and effectively**Responds to these key issues:**

- the public sector is in a period of restraint;
- the 2012 Canadian and Ontario budgets include streamlining service delivery to address escalating costs related to an aging population;
- the fiscal outlook in Toronto is one of restraint with modest spending growth;
- new data sources and metrics provide opportunities to understand and anticipate user needs and deliver services efficiently.

Draft goals and initiatives:

Goal 9. Support the Toronto Public Library Foundation, the Library's most valued partner, in achieving ambitious fundraising goals:

- provide a clear overview of fundraising opportunities with goals and outcomes to communicate with potential funders.

Goal 10. Engage in a range of partnership models to enhance service delivery and diversify revenue streams:

- leverage library resources efficiently through different roles in partnerships: lead, provider or supporting partner.

Goal 11. Provide easy access to helpful, expert staff who understand how residents want to access and use information:

- provide information services through a number of channels including social media.

Goal 12. Equip staff with access to the technology and skills to support users and to innovate and evolve services efficiently in the digital age:

- develop an annual technology strategy and training plan to advance the plan's initiatives.

Goal 13. Develop targets and refine performance measures and engage in service evaluation and benchmarking to increase operating efficiency:

- create an annual work plan and report on results to support accountability.

Next Steps

After approval of the draft priority areas by the Board in June, the Library will engage in public consultation on the draft priority areas outlined in Attachment 1 using the timeline in Attachment 2. Final approval of the strategic plan has shifted from September to November as a result of the recent labour disruption.

Results of consultation on the draft priority areas with the results of the public survey will be presented to the Steering Committee and Board in early fall. A final strategic plan, including the proposed mission, vision, values and priority areas, goals, targets and performance metrics is targeted for review by the Steering Committee and approval by the Board in November 2012 after public meetings and online review.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Draft Priorities and Vision for Consultation
Attachment 2: Consultation Timeline
Attachment 3: Preliminary Service Levels and Targets