

Strategic Plan 2016-2019: Key Messages and Communications Plan

Date:	February 2, 2016
To:	Strategic Plan Steering Committee
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to present the public-facing key messages and communications plan for *Expanding Access, Increasing Opportunity, Building Connections: Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan 2016-2019*, along with information on the reporting of results.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Strategic Planning Steering Committee recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the public-facing key messages of the Strategic Plan 2016-2019, as outlined in Attachment 1;
2. approves the communications plan for the Strategic Plan 2016-2019, as outlined in Attachment 2; and
3. directs staff to implement the communications plan, report semi-annually on the status of strategic plan initiatives, and report annually on outcomes and achievements in the context of the Library's broad performance measures.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The costs of creating communications materials relating to the Strategic Plan, including writing and printing of promotional handouts, information graphics and a comprehensive document, are estimated to be \$5,000-\$10,000 and are provided for in the 2016 operating budget.

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and is in agreement with it.

DECISION HISTORY

At its April 20, 2015 meeting, the Library Board approved the report *Creating a New Strategic Plan: 2016-2019*. <http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2015/apr20/14.pdf>

At its June 22, 2015 meeting, the Library Board approved the report *Strategic Plan 2016-2019: Draft Priorities and Consultation Plan*. <http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2015/jun22/13a-spssc-strategic-plan-2016-2019-draft-priorities-and-consultation-plan.pdf>

October 26, 2015 meeting, the Library Board approved the report *Strategic Plan 2016-2019: Draft Priorities, Outcomes and Results of Public Consultation to Date*. <http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2015/oct26/10b-spssc-strat-plan-2016-2019-draft-priorities-outcomes-results.pdf>

At its December 14, 2015 meeting, the Library Board approved the report *Expanding Access, Increasing Opportunity, Building Connections – Toronto Public Library’s Strategic Plan 2016-2019*. <http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2015/dec14/10c-spssc-strategic-plan-2016-2019.pdf>

COMMENTS

Background

At its December meeting, the Library Board approved the draft priorities, goals, outcomes, indicators and key activities (Attachments 3 and 4) for *Expanding Access, Increasing Opportunity, Building Connections: Toronto Public Library’s Strategic Plan 2016-2019* and directed staff to create public-facing messaging for the plan and a communications plan for Toronto Public Library Board approval in January 2016.

The Strategic Plan was developed by implementing a comprehensive consultation strategy approved by the Library Board. Over 3,000 Toronto residents, staff and stakeholders participated in the process. Key consultation tactics that informed the plan were a hybrid telephone/online survey of Toronto residents conducted by Forum Research, roundtables with library users and non-users in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas, and focus groups with library staff. The plan positions the library for the future, responds to new and emerging trends in the service environment, and aligns with key City and Provincial strategies relating to poverty reduction, youth, newcomers, seniors and culture.

Key Messages:

Expanding Access, Increasing Opportunity, Building Connections (Attachment 1)

The Key Messages document is targeted to users/stakeholders and is outcome-focused. Overarching outcomes for the Strategic Plan have been added: increased engagement with

the Library by users, advocates, partners and funders, and the value of library services to the City of Toronto as a whole.

The Key Messages are structured under the Strategic Plan's three broad themes of access, opportunity and connections. In clear and accessible language, each section articulates the key issues, trends and customer needs the Library is responding to; the outcomes the Library is committing to achieving; and the difference that will be noticeable from the customer's/stakeholder's perspective.

Measures of success are included in the Key Messages document for 2016 and future years. Over the four-year implementation of the plan, there will be increased emphasis on developing and reporting success measures and broad outcomes for the themes and specific activities. This strategic focus on outcomes reflects an increased commitment on the part of TPL and the broader library community to develop increased capacity to track and report on the outcomes of services.

For TPL, work on outcomes began with *So Much More: The Economic Impact of Toronto Public Library on the City of Toronto* and will expand to include the impact of library services on the educational, work, social and personal goals of residents and communities of diverse backgrounds. Working with library staff and the library sector, by 2019 TPL will have increased capacity to develop and report on outcomes, supporting service excellence, public accountability and transparency, partnership development, advocacy and fundraising efforts by the Library.

Communications Plan:

Expanding Access, Increasing Opportunity, Building Connections (Attachment 2)

The objectives of the communications plan are to inform key audiences about the Library's strategic priorities for 2016-2019, increase awareness of library services among users and non-users, and encourage people to engage with the Library in-branch and online. Audiences are defined as both internal and external stakeholders, and include staff, the Toronto Public Library Foundation, Toronto residents, participants in the strategic plan consultation process, community and corporate partners and potential funders.

A number of strategies and tactics will generate awareness and interest in the Strategic Plan priorities and outcomes, including a media strategy (traditional and online), online presence, promotional materials and a tool kit for staff engaging with external stakeholders. The Strategic Plan section of the TPL website will be redesigned and content reorganized for easier access and an improved user experience. Promotional pieces will be developed, including a handout, info graphic and expanded version of the plan with more detailed information about the needs and impact of expanded services offerings under the Strategic Plan's priorities. These tools will focus on the outcomes and benefits for Torontonians, and will support outreach and engagement activities with residents, funders, and other stakeholders. An internal toolkit for staff consisting of a presentation and the Key Messages document will be distributed.

The proposed schedule for implementation of the various strategies and tactics of the communications plan is March to May 2016.

Implementation and Next Steps Outcomes, Indicators and Accountability:

Semi-annual reporting of the status of strategic plan activities and annual reporting on outcomes and indicators will support transparency and accountability in achieving results. Reporting on outcomes and indicators will begin in 2016 and will expand over the four years as annual strategic work plans are developed and implemented. Outcomes include both quantitative and qualitative measures to ensure that library services are relevant, efficient and of high quality. Proposals before the Board, including capital and operating budget submissions, policy and service directions will include a statement of how they align and support the Library's strategic priorities.

CONCLUSION

The creation of a new strategic plan is key to delivering library services that reflect the changing needs of Toronto residents. Clear key messages and a comprehensive communication strategy will engage staff, residents, communities, partners and funders in understanding the Library's strategic priorities and in achieving results. A commitment to reporting on results regularly will focus organizational resources and efforts on achieving outcomes and will support accountability and transparency.

Successful implementation of the plan will transform service delivery, build support and usage, and achieve the overarching outcome of the plan of empowering Torontonians to thrive in the digital age and global knowledge economy.

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SIGNATURE

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City Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Strategic Plan 2016-19: Key Messages

Attachment 2: Strategic Plan 2016-19: Communications Plan

Attachment 3: Strategic Plan 2016-19: Priorities, Goals, Outcomes

Attachment 4: Strategic Plan 2016-19: Key Activities for 2016 and Key Indicators