

## **Program Overview**

### **Toronto Public Library**

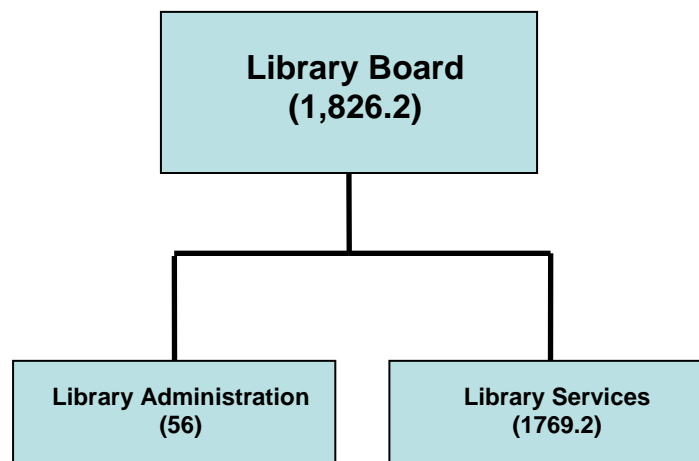
#### **Mission Statement:**

Toronto Public Library (TPL) provides free and equitable access to library services that meet the changing needs of the people of Toronto.

Toronto Public Library preserves and promotes universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment. New technologies extend access to global information beyond library walls. Toronto Public Library upholds the principle of intellectual freedom.

Effective partnerships enhance library service throughout the City. Toronto Public Library is accountable for the effective management of library resources and for the quality of library service offered to the people of Toronto.

#### **Program Map:**



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**Key Services:**

Toronto Public Library is the largest and busiest public library system in North America offering a comprehensive range of services to address the needs of Toronto's diverse neighbourhoods, communities and residents. Infrastructure and services are outlined below with 2009 annual performance measures.

**Branches:** *99 locations* including research and reference, district and neighbourhood branches providing access to safe community space for use by community groups and residents including book mobile service for isolated communities.

**Visits:** *17,554,470*

**Collections:** *11 million items in print, audio visual and electronic format*; in over 40 languages to support access and address the information and recreation needs of residents of all ages including children, youth and seniors with materials to support ESL, literacy, and special collections. Online access to collections, electronic content, and information resources for Toronto residents

**Circulation:** *31,271,072*

**Virtual Visits:** *23,393,920*

**Access to Technology:** Access to computers and the Internet at all library branches to address the digital divide.

**Workstation Users:** *6,130,523*

**Wireless Sessions:** *677,364*

**Public Workstations with Internet Access:** *1,675 computers*

**Programming and Strategic Partnerships:** The Library works with the City of Toronto, the Toronto Public Library Foundation, other levels of government and local community agencies to deliver efficient and effective community based services and programming that support literacy, reading, employment, and culture.

**Programs Offered:** *27,862*

**Attendance:** *750,200*

**2011-2013 Program Strategic Directions:**

Toronto Public Library's current plan: Our Shared Stories: Writing the Future of Toronto's Library 2008-2011 outlines five key priorities, outlined below in bold, with related goals. These priorities were identified through an environmental scan and extensive consultation with residents, stakeholders and community agencies. A new planning cycle will begin in 2012.

**Engaging Toronto's Diverse Communities – In our city and our neighbourhoods**

- Encourage participation in city life;
- Promote greater participation in library programs and services;

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- Support Toronto's children in early reading skills;
- Support youth in their educational achievement as a foundation for future success;
- Engage with our youth in ways that are meaningful to them, with emphasis on leadership skills and social integration;
- Enhance older adults' quality of life and access to lifelong learning.

**Addressing the Growing Income Gap – Towards a city of opportunity shared by all**

- Address the needs of vulnerable individuals and neighborhoods working in partnership with others;
- Focus on supporting literacy and educational goals for adults.

**Expanding Access to Technology and Online Services – Our Lives in Digital Times**

- Create an outstanding virtual library;
- Ensure access to technology for all;
- Build virtual content.

**Supporting Creativity and Culture – Participation and access at the city and neighbourhood level**

- Support city-wide and local cultural expression;
- Build the Library's role in providing original and accessible cultural programming.

**Supporting a Sustainable Library – Protecting our resources and our future**

- Promote environmentally sustainable practices;
- Engage in leadership and advocacy for the essential role of the public library in the community;
- Ensure sustainability of the budget, staff resources and infrastructure.

**Key Challenges and Opportunities**

Toronto Public Library faces the following challenges and opportunities.

**Challenges**

- Responding to increased public utilization of library demand for programs and services, with no additional resources.
- Addressing the digital divide by maintaining the technology infrastructure to support in-branch computers with sufficient bandwidth and wireless service to address public demand.
- Maintaining or increasing open hours to meet the needs of diverse communities and individual residents including students and job seekers.
- Demand for new and targeted services to address the needs of newcomers, an aging population, youth at risk and vulnerable individuals.
- Addressing the diversity of the population.

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## **Opportunities**

- Potential efficiencies with the introduction of technology including RFID self service check-in and automated materials sorting.
- Effective partnerships to expand outreach and enhance services; partners include the City, the Toronto Public Library Foundation, and a variety of community agencies including Tropicana.

## **2010 Key Accomplishments**

The Library is an excellent resource supporting residents during the economic downturn. In 2009, TPL experienced its busiest year ever, with all performance measures reporting increases. In 2010, usage of library service continued to increase. January to June performance measures show increases over 2009:

|                        |                           |                           |
|------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| ↑ Circulation 5.0%     | ↑ In-Library Use 1.6%     | ↑ Holds Requested 7.1%    |
| ↑ Visits 6.4%          | ↑ Wireless Sessions 75.6% | ↑ Program Attendance 3.3% |
| ↑ Virtual Visits 48.3% | ↑ Workstation Users 1.9%  |                           |

- The current strategic plan: Our Shared Stories: Writing the Future of Toronto's Library 2008-2011 addresses service priorities. In 2009 and 2010, increased focus has been on supporting Toronto's economy by providing resources and services that support job seekers, careers and skills upgrading, literacy, youth and access to technology.
- TPL has leveraged external funding and partnerships to support efficient and effective service delivery. Highlighted 2010 accomplishments are listed below under strategic plan themes.

## **Engaging Toronto's Diverse Communities – in the City and in its Neighbourhoods**

- *Encourage participation in city life – ↑ **Program Attendance 3.3%***
  - Improved public service hours at 8 branches with no additional operating costs, expanding access to collections, computers and safe public space through improved efficiency resulting from the installation of self-checkout technology (RFID).
  - Delivered popular services in partnership with City and community agencies including the Sun Life Financial Museum and Arts Pass to City museums and cultural venues funded by the Toronto Public Library Foundation ; and the Library Settlement Partnership, which delivers settlement services to newcomers in library branches funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada
  - Increased access to local meeting rooms and theatre space for community use including the York Woods Arts Hub, the North York Central Concourse stage and a new meeting room at the recently reopened Thorncliffe branch.
  - Contributed to the celebration of Toronto's history through participation in Heritage Toronto's plaques and markers program, Jane's Walks neighbourhood tours, the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Riverdale Library, the updating of Toronto Public Library's local history publications and local programs including the Black Creek Living History Program funded through the New Horizons Grants for Seniors.

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- *Promote greater participation in Library Programs and Services – ⬆ **New Registrations 2.4%***
  - Promoted library use and awareness through the Library registration campaign to expand memberships to reach targeted audiences including newcomers and initiated steps to introduce online registration.
  - Implemented policies and procedures to eliminate service barriers in compliance with new requirements associated with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act.
- *Support Toronto's children in early reading skills – ⬆ **Pre-School Program Attendance 21.9%***
  - Delivered Ready for Reading programming, offering engaging children's collections and interactive programs to support preschool children learning to read.
  - Delivered outreach story times in high-priority neighbourhoods with partial funding from the Toronto Public Library Foundation.
  - Launched two more KidsStop interactive centres designed to develop pre-literacy skills at Thorncliffe and Cedarbrae branches.
- *Support educational achievement for youth as a foundation for future success*
  - Provided research materials and reference help, safe study space, and access to computers for youth in neighbourhoods throughout the City.
  - Offered programs to support literacy and engage readers including the TD Summer Reading Club; and reading support programs including Leading to Reading to help children reading below grade level with partial funding from the Toronto Public Library Foundation.
  - Through the High School Outreach Campaign including both classroom and in library visits will provide research instruction with emphasis on online resources to over 25,000 students by year end; the Toronto Public Library Foundation supports the campaign.
  - Expanded access to after-school time programs in support of the City's Middle Years Strategy including three targeted programs addressing newcomer youth, with funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). Ryerson, York and the University of Toronto have partnered to provide tutors and mentors.
  - Continued the Transitional Intervention Program for Suspended Students (TIPSS) in partnership with the Toronto Catholic District School Board. The majority of suspended students choose to participate and some students have gone on to join a Youth Advisory Group and train as Leading to Reading volunteers. The province is considering this program as a model for wider implementation.
  - Collaborated with the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Toronto District School Board on the EcoArtVan outreach project commissioned by No. 9, an organization committed to using art to stimulate social and environmental change, to deliver a hands-on art and environmental learning program for children in at-risk communities across Toronto.
- *Engage with our youth in ways that are meaningful to them with emphasis on leadership skills and social integration*
  - Expanded Word Out! Teen Summer Reading Club to all 99 branches, and enhanced the online presence to include interactive components to engage reluctant readers.
  - Expanded intergenerational programs and workshops for seniors and youth, including the Joint Internet Mentoring (JIM) Program and the Albion memoir writing program.

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- Supported teen leadership skills and community engagement through Youth Advisory Groups and increased volunteer and employment opportunities. More than 2,500 youth volunteer at the library.
- Improved teen areas to provide safe study and meeting spaces for youth including the youth-led Malvern SPOT, which incorporates the Pro-Tech Media Lab that provides youth with leadership opportunities and access to multimedia technology for video editing, web design and computer animation. The Toronto Public Library Foundation acts as a trustee for funding this project.
- *Enhance older adults' quality of life and quest for lifelong learning – ⬆ **Older Adult and Seniors Program Attendance 48.8%***
  - Conducted focus groups to engage residents in the development of services and programs and to provide input on a model for advisory groups; and hosted an Information Fair for Seniors to highlight services and programs available from community service providers.
  - Increased cultural and information programming of relevance to older adults for example “*Out of the Shadows*”, a series of programs about mental health, in partnership with Reconnect Mental Health Services.
  - Offered user education programs to support computer use by older adults.

**Addressing the Growing Income Gap-Toward a City of Opportunity Shared by All**

- *Address the needs of vulnerable individual and neighbourhoods in partnership with others*
  - Reached 100% of schools in priority neighbourhoods with the Kindergarten and High School Outreach programs to support literacy and academic success. Funding is provided by the Toronto Public Library Foundation.
  - Partnered in City initiatives that support vulnerable neighbourhoods, communities and residents, including Investing in Families targeting single parent families on social assistance to promote library use and access to library services and programs. Participated with Toronto Helps providing employment support, the Neighbourhood Action Teams and Local Immigration Partnerships.
  - In consultation with local communities, identified and developed strategies to remove barriers to access and encourage participation in literacy and reading support programs.
  - Leveraged partnership with the CNIB to expand access to alternative format materials.
- *Focus on supporting literacy and educational goals for adults – ⬆ **Literacy Program Attendance 44.5%; ⬆ User Education Program Attendance 8.3%***
  - The Library Settlement Partnership, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), is now in 19 branches. The Library is providing space and support for community agencies to offer settlement services in the languages of local communities and programming to address local issues. Since its inception, in 2007, Toronto Public Library's LSP has served more than 29,000 clients, as of June 30, 2010.
  - Delivered services to support adult literacy learners including dedicated tutoring at 10 locations and specialized collections; and piloted a tutoring curriculum that supports employment and skills upgrading.

**Expanding Access to Technology and Online Services-Our Lives in Digital Times**

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- *Create an outstanding virtual library branch – ⬆ **Virtual Visits 48.3%***
  - Completed a major redesign of the library's website with a highly effective search engine to expand access to library services and collections online.
  - Improved functionality of library catalogue with sign-on features.
- *Ensure access to technology for all – ⬆ **Workstation Users 1.9%; ⬆ Wireless Sessions 75.6%***
  - Expanded wireless to all 99 branches to support students and job-seekers. Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) funds wireless at 20 branches and expanded wireless bandwidth at three branches in high-priority neighbourhoods.
  - In partnership with the City, implemented a strategy to install a fibre network to increase bandwidth at all 99 library branches.
  - Expanded access to laptops in after school homework clubs at three branches to engage and support youth.
  - Implemented strategies to promote e-content including books, music and video to new audiences.
- *Build virtual content – ⬆ **e-Titles downloaded by customers 56.0%***
  - Digitized over 2,000 items providing increased access to Canadian historical content.

**Supporting Creativity and Culture – Participation and Access at the City and Neighbourhood Level**

- *Support city-wide and local cultural expression*
  - Sustained and efficiently managed the library's materials budget and allocated funding to high demand areas including employment resources. Leveraged funding from the Toronto Public Library Foundation to build a circulating collection of materials to support newcomers at the Toronto Reference Library and to buy alternate format materials to support persons with disabilities.
  - Continued programming with broad appeal such as the *Asian Heritage*, *Inspired Lives* and *Grey Matters* series located in branches across the city.
  - Supported local artistic expression through a variety of partnerships, projects and programs including the Arts Hub at York Woods branch funded through the Partnership Opportunities Legacy Fund; art exhibits featuring works by local residents and programs such as memoir writing in collaboration with local community colleges.
  - The *Keep Toronto Reading – One Book* festival successfully launched its *Books We Love* campaign, which released journals into 99 Toronto neighbourhoods. Hundreds of residents engaged in the program and shared their favourite books.
- *Build the Library's role in providing original and accessible cultural programming*
  - Partnered with a number of cultural initiatives in the City including The Toronto Book Awards, Luminato and Lit City.
  - Showcased Canada's best writers and their new books with the "eh List Author Series" in various branches.
  - Hosted the Toronto Comic Arts Festival, which drew more than 11,000 visitors from across Canada, the U.S. and around the world.

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- Coordinated and hosted the first Canadian Children's Literature Festival in partnership with the Toronto Public Library Foundation to support reading and local literary expression. Book Bash, the signature event had over 1,000 in attendance.

**Supporting a Sustainable Library**

- *Ensure sustainability in the budget, staff resources and infrastructure*
  - Achieved significant infrastructure investment through the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund to address the Toronto Reference Library and other state of good repair projects.
  - Implemented the 2009-2011 collective agreement.
  - Developed a comprehensive diversity training and recruitment plan.
  - Completed capital projects including the opening of Cedarbrae branch, the expansion of Thorncliffe branch and state of good repair projects at Deer Park, Palmerston, Yorkville and Northern District branches.
- *Promote environmentally sustainable practices*
  - Implemented year two initiatives of the Library's green strategy to address buildings and systems, energy consumption, waste diversion and recycling.

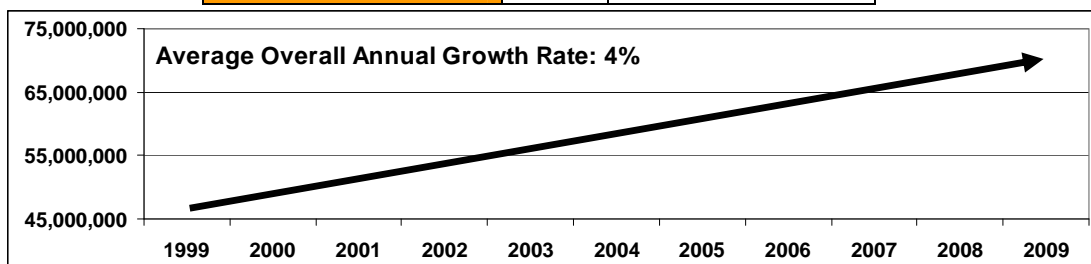


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## Performance Measures

Toronto Public Library (TPL) efficiently delivers its core services at 99 branches across the City; access to relevant collections, information services, programming and technology to address increasing demand from Toronto's diverse population.

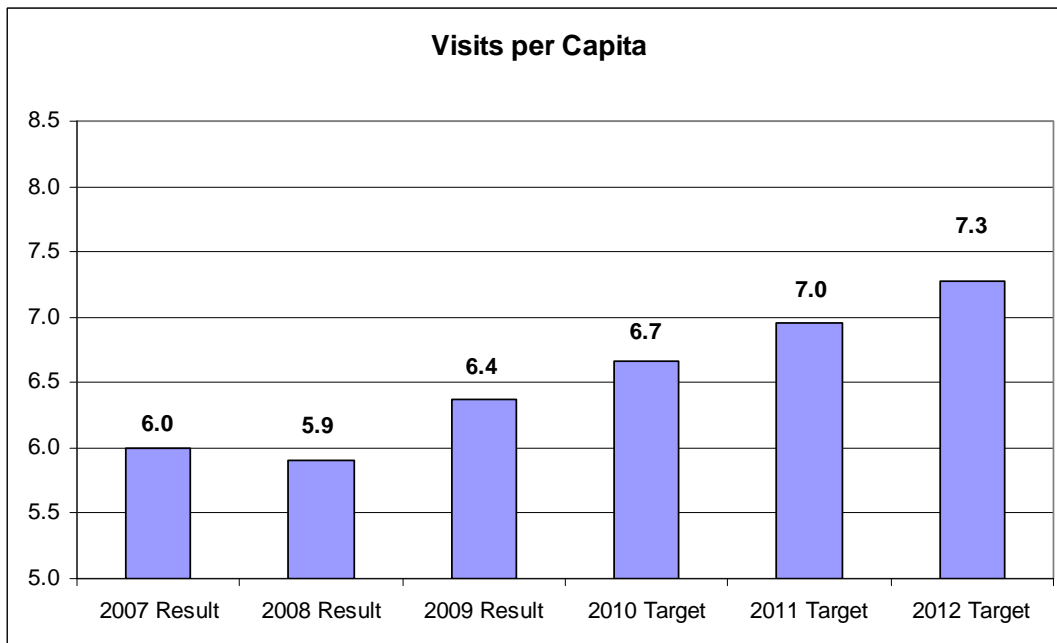
| Library Activity  |   | 1999 – 2009 |
|-------------------|---|-------------|
| Circulation       | ↑ | 24%         |
| Electronic Visits | ↑ | 1909%       |
| Books Reserved    | ↑ | 137%        |
| Total Activity    | ↑ | 52%         |



Since 1999, activity levels have increased steadily with an average overall annual growth of 4.4%.

## Community Impact

### Toronto Public Library: Visits per Capita



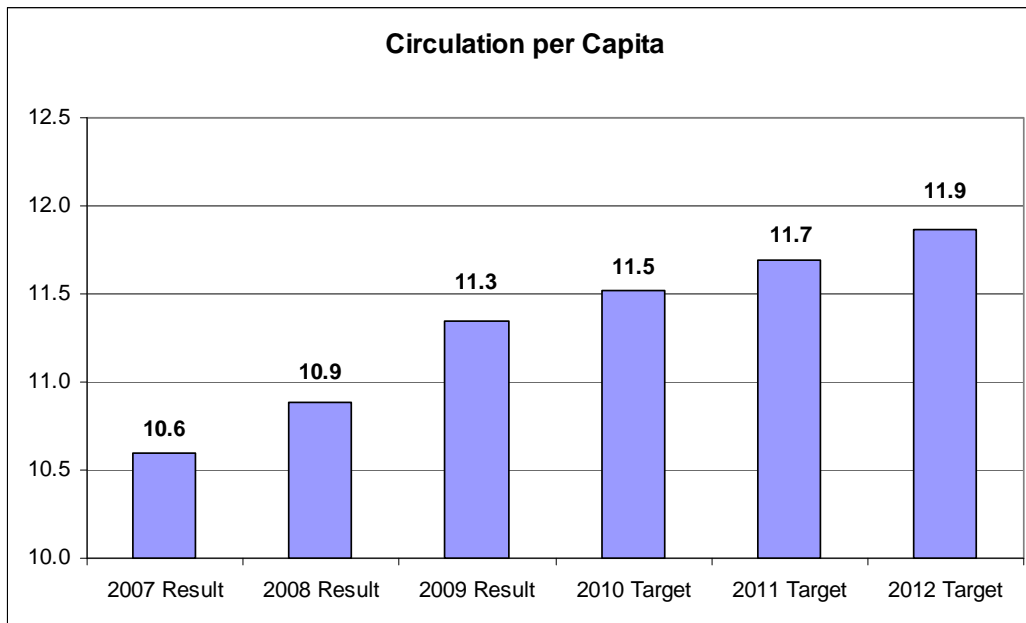
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Toronto Public Library is experiencing an increase in visits by residents of all ages who come to borrow materials, study, use computers and wireless and attend a variety of programs demonstrating the expanding role of libraries as community hubs.

**Service Outcomes**

**Toronto Public Library: Circulation per Capita**

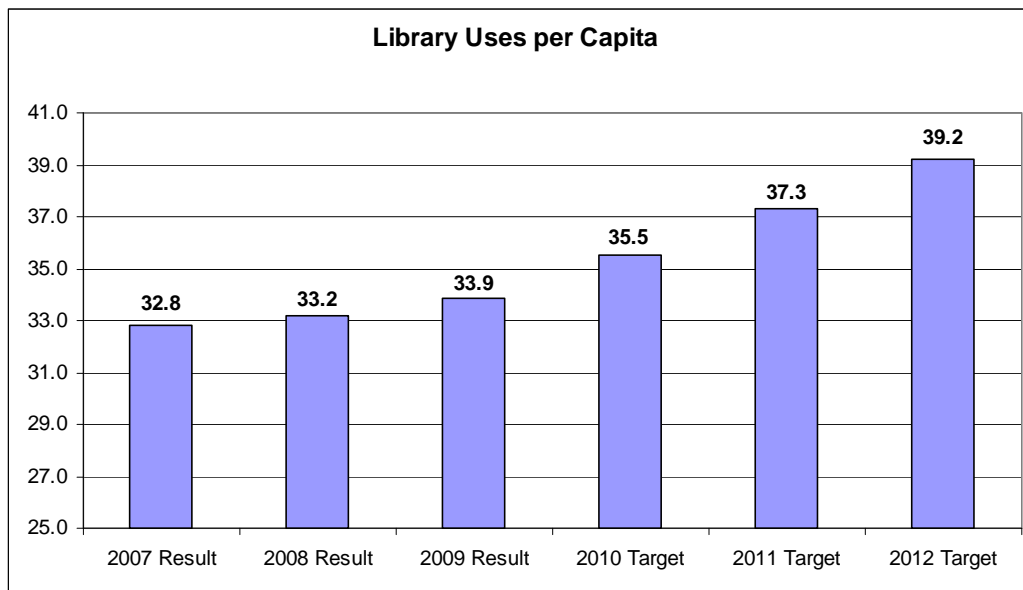


Toronto Public Library is experiencing an increase in circulation as residents access the library's collections to support education, employment and recreation. The library provides access to materials in over 40 languages and a variety of formats including e-content.

**Efficiencies**

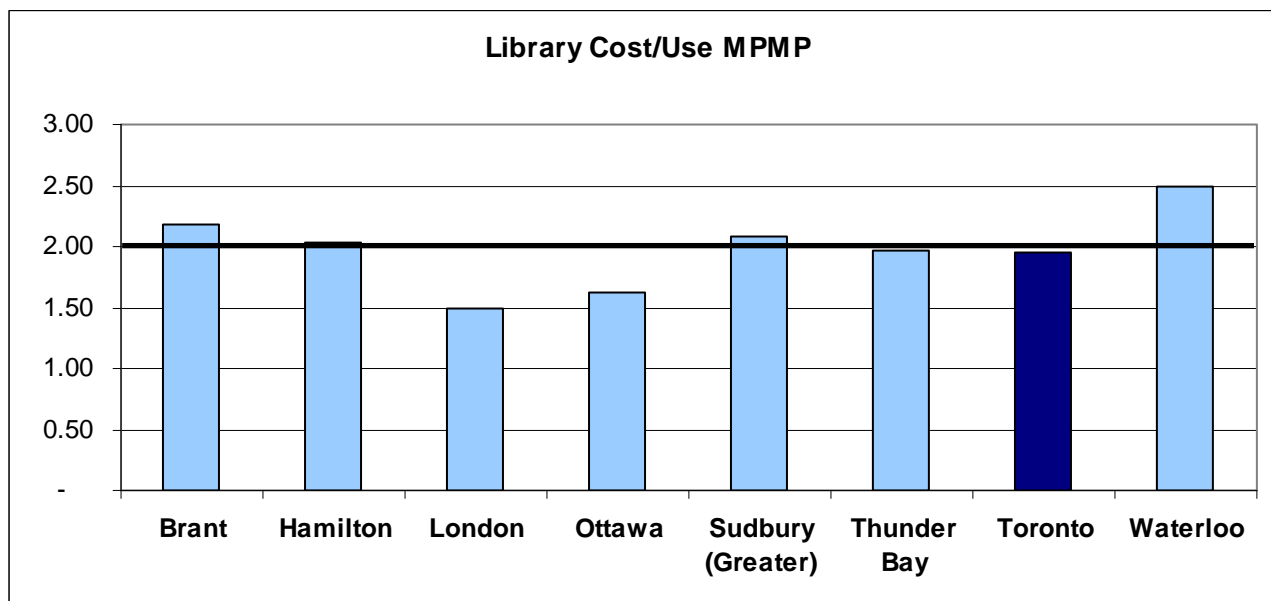
**Toronto Public Library: Library Uses per Capita**

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Toronto Public Library is used by a broad cross section of Toronto's diverse population. This measure captures both traditional branch based services and electronic usage.

**Benchmarking: Ontario Municipalities**



Source: OMBI 2008

Median cost per use \$2.00.

Toronto's cost per use (\$1.95) is the third lowest yet Toronto offers a wide range of highly used services to meet the needs of Toronto's urban population including significant research, archival and

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multilingual collections in several formats; access to computers and the Internet; programming and safe meeting space for residents and community groups.

**Benchmarking: Ontario Municipalities**

**Ontario Municipal Benchmarking 2008 Results**

**Summary**

In 2008, the Ontario Municipal Benchmarking Initiative (OMBI) ranked Toronto Public Library:

- #2 in library uses per capita(33.2);
- #1 in electronic visits per capita (9.29);
- #1 in electronic uses per capita (12.7);
- # 2 in computer workstation use per capita (2.01);
- # 2 in library circulation per capita (10.90);
- #1 in library holdings per capita (4.27);
- #1 in wireless connections per capita (.21).