



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

10.

Strategic Plan 2008-2011 – Draft Themes and Next Steps

Date:	March 25, 2008
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

The purpose of this report is to present the draft themes and goals for the Toronto Public Library Board's Strategic Plan 2008-2011. At its meeting in May 2007, the Library Board approved a process and timeline to create a strategic plan. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee of the Board is providing leadership and oversight of the process. Phase One of the process included completing an environmental scan and recommending draft themes and goals to the Board for endorsement as a framework for public consultation. This report concludes Phase One.

The draft theme areas being recommended to the Board by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee are:

- Engaging Diverse Communities – in the City and in its Neighbourhoods;
- Addressing the Growing Income Gap—Towards a City of Opportunity Shared by All;
- Our Lives in Digital Times—Libraries in the Virtual World;
- Supporting Creativity and Culture: Participation and Access at the City and Neighbourhood Level;
- Supporting a Sustainable Library.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. Approves the draft strategic plan themes and goals identified in the *Strategic Plan 2008-2011 – Draft Themes and Next Steps* report (Attachment 1) as a framework for public consultation.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact to creating the strategic plan beyond what is included in the 2008 operating budget. Direct costs are associated with staff support and consultation and these are provided for in the budget.

Once the strategic plan is complete, there will be no direct financial implication arising from approving the plan. The strategic plan will provide a context and direction for the development of annual business plans, and funding requests in future operating and capital budgets.

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

DECISION HISTORY

The Library Board approved a process to create the 2008-2011 strategic plan at its May 2007 meeting and appointed a Strategic Planning Steering Committee to oversee the process. The Committee met three times, January 25th, February 8th and March 14th to hear the results of the environmental scan and to shape and endorse the draft themes and goals.

COMMENTS

The creation of a new strategic plan will ensure the Library continues to fulfill its mission of providing library services which meet the changing needs of the people of Toronto.

Strategic Planning Process to date

At its May 2007 meeting, the Library Board approved a four phase process to create a strategic plan. A Strategic Planning Steering Committee of the Board was established. Although the timelines were extended by the Board's adoption of cost containment measures, the process approved by the Board in May is being followed.

Phase One of the process included completing an environmental scan and recommending draft themes and goals to the Board for endorsement. This report concludes Phase One.

Phase Two includes conducting extensive consultations with residents, stakeholders, community groups, councillors and staff using the draft themes and potential goals as a framework. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will be involved in the consultation process. The results of Phase Two will be presented first to the Steering Committee for input and endorsement and then to the Board for approval. The revised timeline for completing Phase Two is June 2008.

Phase Three of the process includes refining goals and strategies to address each of the theme areas and conducting further consultation on these. It is anticipated that results of Phase Three will be presented for input and endorsement to the Steering Committee in late summer and to the Library Board for final approval in September.

Phase Four, the final phase, includes communicating the strategic plan and incorporating the priority themes into capital and operating budgets and divisional, departmental and branch work plans. Ongoing reports to the Library Board will ensure accountability.

Development of Draft Themes and Goals

Throughout the summer and fall, library staff completed an extensive environmental scan to understand the context in which the library will be providing service in the next four years. The external scan examined the demographic, social and environmental trends including the 2006 Census results for Toronto, and various research reports from external agencies. The internal scan included achievements of the last strategic plan, an analysis of performance measures trends, results of the 2006 Telephone Survey and innovations in the library sector with the potential to enhance public library service in Toronto. This research was presented in a series of briefing notes which were developed with input from staff with specific subject expertise. These briefing notes were used to develop two presentations for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee on January 25th and February 8th. Results of these two sessions were summarized into a themes and goals document (Attachment One) which was reviewed and endorsed by the Committee at a meeting on March 14th and which is summarized below. Examples of the strategies that would further these goals are referenced in Attachment One.

Draft Themes & Goals

Theme One: Engaging Diverse Communities –in the City and in its Neighbourhoods

Addresses Key Issues

- Community engagement, inclusiveness and social cohesion.
- The complex diversity of Toronto's communities: geographic and those based on age, language, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation and culture.
- Unique needs of children, youth and seniors.

Draft Goals

- Encourage participation in City life.
- Encourage participation in library programs and services.
- Support children in getting ready to read.
- Engage youth.
- Promoting seniors' independence, quality of life & lifelong learning.

Theme Two: Addressing the Growing Income Gap- Towards a City of Opportunity Shared by All

Addresses Key Issues

- Growing income gap across the city and the relationship between prosperity and the quality of employment.
- Employment is linked to education.
- Education is linked to literacy and numeracy.
- Newcomer population is under employed despite high education levels.

Draft Goals

- Address the needs of vulnerable individuals and neighbourhoods in partnership with others.
- Focus on supporting literacy and educational goals.

Theme Three: “Our Lives in Digital Times”- Libraries in the Virtual World**Addresses Key Issues**

- Growing importance of technology and virtual space.
- Increase access to digital content, software, hardware, Internet and training.
- The opportunity technology provides to rethink service delivery, increase accessibility and give users the opportunity to access service through a channel of choice.

Draft Goals

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

Theme Four: Supporting Creativity and Culture: Participation and Access at the City and Neighbourhood Level**Addresses Key Issues**

- Creative cities increase the quality of life, build prosperity, foster economic growth and international competitiveness.
- To be inclusive, creative and cultural activities in Toronto need to reflect the diversity of the city.

Draft Goals

- Support City-wide and local cultural expression.
- Build Library's role in accessible cultural programming.

Theme Five: Supporting a Sustainable Library**Addresses Key Issues**

- Environmental sustainability and reducing the Library's environmental footprint.
- Leadership and advocacy for the essential role of the public library in the community.
- Sustainability of finance, infrastructure and staff resources.

Draft Goals

- Promote environmentally sustainable practices.
- Engage in leadership and advocacy.
- Ensure sustainability of the budget.
- Ensure sustainability of staff resources.

- Ensure sustainability of infrastructure.

Next Steps

Phase Two of the strategic planning process includes conducting extensive consultations with residents, stakeholders, community groups, councillors and staff to confirm or refine the draft themes and goals. A detailed consultation strategy designed to encourage broad engagement in the development of the strategic plan was approved at the Board's June 2007 meeting after review and endorsement by the Steering Committee. The consultation will emphasize target groups including socially excluded persons, those who are economically disadvantaged, parents and caregivers of preschool and at risk children, youth, seniors and current users. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will be involved in the consultation, and they will review the results before recommending any changes to the Board for approval in June.

Phase Three of the strategic plan process includes refining goals and strategies to address each of the theme areas and conducting further consultation on these. It is anticipated that a draft plan will be presented to the Library Board for approval in September 2008 depending on the results of the consultation process.

After Board approval of the plan, Phase Four of the process will begin. The strategic plan will be widely communicated to residents, stakeholders and staff and used as a framework for developing capital and operating budgets and system and divisional service plans. Annual reporting to the Board on the achievement of strategic plan goals will ensure accountability.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Strategic Plan 2008-2011 Draft Themes and Goals