

## **Program Overview**

### **Toronto Public Library**

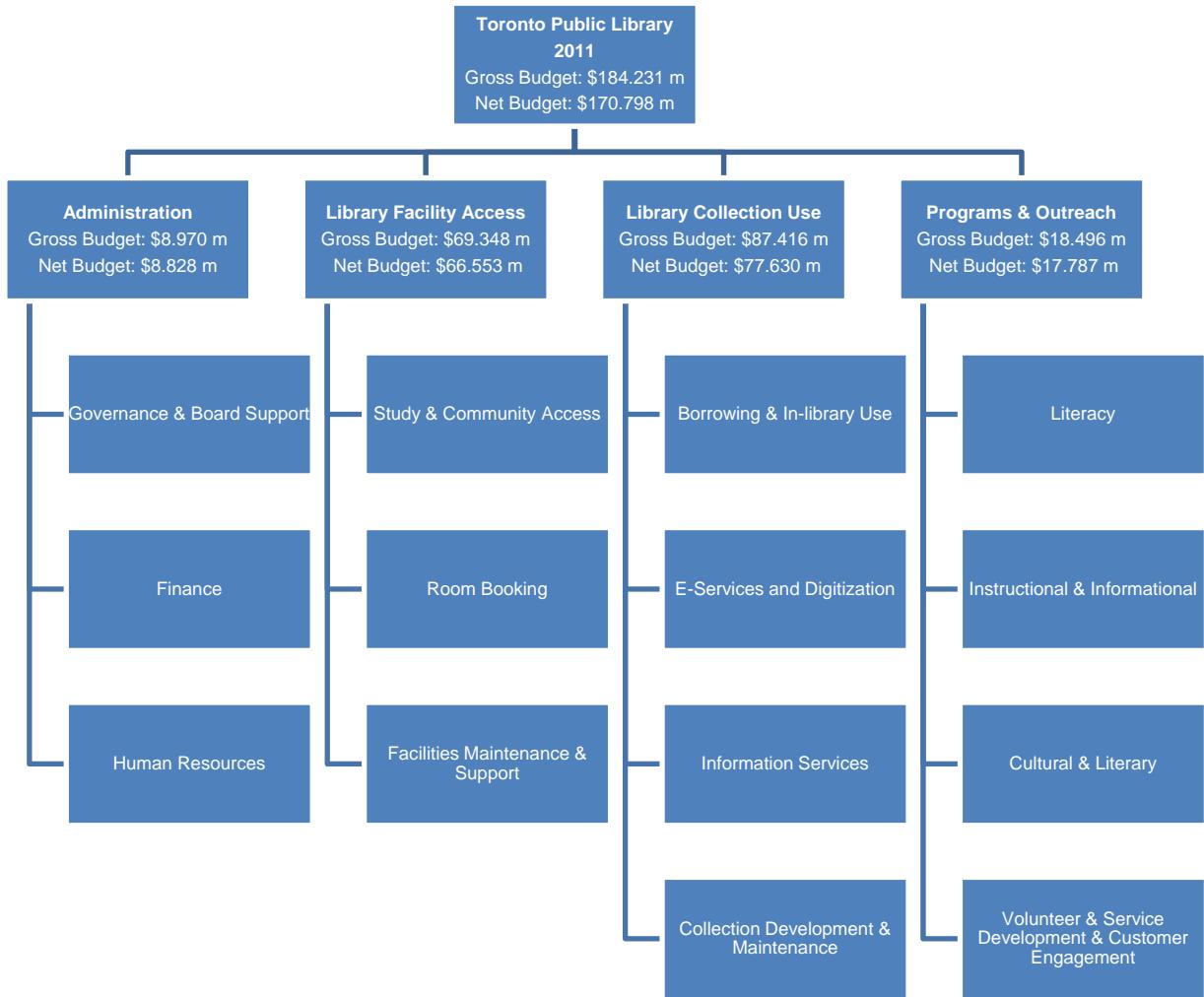
#### **Mission Statement:**

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:



**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 2010 annual performance measures.

**Service Overview**

**Branches:** *98 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:** *18,352,210*

**Collections:** *11 million items in print, audio visual and electronic format*; in 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 resources including digitized items from the library's special collections, electronic subscription databases, and etitles including ebooks and e audio

**Circulation:** *32,324,416*

**Information Services:** *7,484,286 questions answered*; to support study independent research, and life learning; to recommend reading material and support collection access and use in all formats

**Virtual and E Service:** *27,003,433 website visits*; the library's website supports access to collections, services and programs 24/7 with access to online collections

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

**Workstation Users:** *5,993,062*

**Wireless Sessions:** *1,115,697*

**Public Workstations with Internet Access:** *1,710 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:** *28,706*

**Attendance:** *791,231*

### **Program Strategic Directions:**

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

- Engaging Toronto's Diverse Communities – In our city and our neighbourhoods
- Addressing the Growing Income Gap – Towards a city of opportunity shared by all
- Expanding Access to Technology and Online Services – Our Lives in Digital Times
- Supporting Creativity and Culture – Participation and access at the city and neighbourhood level
- Supporting a Sustainable Library – Ensuring a sustainable future

### **Key Challenges and Opportunities**

Toronto Public Library faces the following challenges and opportunities.

#### **Challenges**

- Responding to increased public demand
- Sustaining collections in multiple formats, languages, print and audio-visual while addressing demand for newer formats
- Providing access to computers and wireless with bandwidth to support increased demand
- Maintaining a website with self service features to improve customer service efficiently
- Offering schedules of open hours which meet the needs of communities and residents and leverages the investment in the physical infrastructure and collections
- Putting measures in place to address equity including the needs of disadvantaged and vulnerable communities and which meet obligations under the *Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and address equity of access for seniors, youth and newcomers

#### **Opportunities**

- Addressing budget targets through efficiencies and revenue generation
- Efficiencies include: service consolidations, technology and automation opportunities, materials handling including the selection, acquisition and processing of new materials and time keeping and payroll efficiencies
- Increased self service options including RFID and customer account features online

- Sustaining effective partnerships to deliver service efficiently and avoid duplication; partners include the City, the Toronto Public Library Foundation, Citizenship and Immigration Canada and community agencies

### Key Accomplishments:

2010 performance measures reflect broad trends in library usage:

- circulation increased, including use of etitles,
- in person visits to library branches increased as residents visit to access collections, computers and wireless service and attend library programs;
- information requests and in library use of materials stabilized or declined as residents access information online through the library's website and through finding aids created by library staff

Performance measures for January to June 2011 reinforce the continued importance of libraries as community hubs offering access to collections computers and wireless service as well as literacy and cultural programs for all ages as well as online information.

Measure	2010	2009	% change
Circulation	32,324,416	31,271,072	3.4%
Visits	18,352,210	17,554,470	4.5%
Workstation Users	5,993,062	6,130,523	*-2.2%
Wireless Sessions	1,115,697	677,364	64.7%
Information Requests	7,484,286	7,730,028	-3.2%
In-library Use	7,808,931	7,959,072	-1.9%
Programs Offered	28,706	27,862	3.0%
Program Attendance	791,231	750,200	5.5%
New Registrations	168,976	161,857	4.4%
Virtual Visits	27,003,433	23,393,920	15.4%

\*Decrease related to branch closures for renovation

### Performance trends in January to June 2011

Circulation 1.5% ( e-Titles increased 105.9%, representing 1.4% of total circulation)

Visits 3.4%

In-library Use 3.6%

Information Requests 1.8%

Workstation Users 4.5%

Wireless Sessions 144.8%

### Strategic Plan Achievements: January 2010 –June 2011

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

##### *Encourage participation in city life – ↑ Program Attendance 5.5%*

- Library anniversaries and branch re-openings provide opportunities for residents to

engage in neighbourhood celebrations; e.g. Thorncliffe experienced a 490% increase in registrations and a 99% increase in circulation after reopening.

- Public consultations were held for branch renovation projects, including Fairview, Northern District, Bridlewood, Mount Dennis, and the new Scarborough Centre Fort York/Bathurst branches. Other consultations included the City and Library consultation on the Core Service Review and an online survey about digital and special collections.
- Overall program attendance increased 5.5% to 791,231 with increased emphasis on programs for older adults and seniors. Programs support literacy and literary culture, celebrate Toronto's diversity, provide information on civic issues and support small business and employment needs of residents
- Branches across the city celebrated Toronto's diversity, including a conference for youth during Black History Month, the Taste of Korea event held during Asian Heritage Month, and the Red Sky Aboriginal Dance Group during Aboriginal Week.

***Promote greater participation in Library Programs and Services – ↑ New Registrations 4.4%***

- To improve customer service, staff providing roving reference to proactively support use of collections and services.
- Increased library card registrations by developing and implementing a card registration campaign targeting key audience segments identified as priority or underserved (i.e. active older adults, at risk groups, newcomers, and non-library users).
- Library hours increased to reflect public demand through efficiencies gained through self-service check- out; a total of 120 hours were added at 15 branches in 2010, increasing neighbourhood access and expanding access to collections, computers and safe public space through improved efficiency resulting from the installation of self-checkout technology (RFID).
- Online and social media channels (TPL website, blogging, Twitter, Facebook and email marketing) were used extensively this year to promote programs, Library news, branch openings and closings, job postings, and other information of interest to customers and followers.

***Support Toronto's children in early reading skills – ↑ Pre-School Program Attendance 20.3%***

- Attendance at Ready for Reading programs that support pre-school literacy increased to 243,201, an increase of 40,937 or 20% over 2009. Through Storytime Outreach, programs were delivered at 49 community agencies, shelters, aboriginal and newcomer centres, reaching 3,604 adults and 4,698 children with 584 new registrations.
- New KidsStops, interactive early literacy centres, opened at renovated Thorncliffe and Cedarbrae branches for a total of four.

***Support educational achievement for youth as a foundation for future success***

- High School presentations on using library resources for research were provided to 21,611 students in 383 classes.

- After-school-time support was offered for youth at a number of branches throughout the city; three new after school homework sites were introduced at the Albert Campbell, Centennial and Sanderson branches; 183 sessions were held with 3,256 student visits supported by 77 mentors who are university students
- 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.

***Engage with our youth in ways that are meaningful to them with emphasis on leadership skills and social integration***

- Word Out! Teen Summer Reading supports youth in building their reading skills throughout the summer. 1,683 teens registered, and the popularity of this reading blog grew significantly from 10,137 views in the summer of 2009 to 22,272 in 2010, a 120% increase.
- To increase awareness of volunteer and employment opportunities for youth, teen volunteer and job fairs were held at many branches across the city. Don Mills Branch had over 300 in attendance. Cedarbrae Branch also held an information session about employment opportunities at the Library.

***Enhance older adults' quality of life and quest for lifelong learning – ↑ Older Adult and Seniors Program Attendance 44.0%***

- Attendance at seniors programs increased by 44%; an array of topics to address local needs and interests were offered, including Living Legacies; Climate Change; Aboriginal Culture; Memoir Writing and Investment Fraud.
- Information fairs at Flemingdon Park Branch and Toronto Reference Library highlighted community resources for seniors.

***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.
- The Library continued its support for small business owners and entrepreneurs. Programs included Small Business – How to Test Your Idea, Helping Businesses Sell to Government of Canada and Using Social Media to Build Your Small Business; Seven Common Start-Up Mistakes and Business Plans for Small Businesses.
- Toronto Public Library's capacity to provide services to a variety of user groups, including adults with disabilities and newcomers was enhanced with the addition of collections in alternate formats such as audio books. The Library partnered with CNIB and increased the size of alternate form collections.
- ESL support was provided through a number of partnerships; English Conversation Circles provide an opportunity for newcomers to improve their

language skills and expand their community network, and are at several branches including a new program at Centennial Branch.

- To support library users who live in shelters, a number of programs were offered, including technology classes to support employment.
- Toronto Public Library joined Toronto Employment and Social Services (TESS), Toronto Public Health, and Parks, Forestry and Recreation in the Investing in Families Initiative (IIF). The highly successfully program provides support for families in gaining employment with increased access to City services. TPL provided clients with registration kits, information on library services and programs including supports for job seekers and programs to support children and youth.

***Focus on supporting literacy and educational goals for adults***

- The Library Settlement Partnership, funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), is now in 19 branches.
- 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**

***Create an outstanding virtual library branch – ↑ Virtual Visits 15.4%***

- The redesigned Library website and integrated catalogue with enhanced content, additional functionality and increased search capabilities was fully launched and the old site decommissioned. Through a single search, users can access collections, and programs. Visits to the Toronto Public Library website increased by 15.4%; access to online information is an efficient way of extending library service hours and managing demand for information.
- Online readers advisory was expanded: A Find Your Way to Your Next Great Read page was developed incorporating Book Buzz, the online book club, an average of 10,417 page views per month and a growing membership.

***Ensure access to technology for all – ↑ Wireless Sessions 64.7%, ↑ e-Titles downloaded by customers 70.3%***

- The Library provides access to computers with Internet access, and office applications software; to improve customer service, computers were replaced with energy-efficient, large-screen monitors.
- To support information literacy, 1,666 technology-related user education sessions were offered with 14,141 people in attendance. Programs support information literacy, accessing library resources and joining online communities.
- Access to technology for persons with disabilities was improved through the purchase of ten laptops to enable users to integrate their own software. Daisy players were also purchased for people with print disabilities to access and navigate talking books. The laptops and daisy players were purchased through a grant from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

***Build virtual content***

- Enriched online content includes commercial eTitles, online data bases of magazines, newspapers and journals, and digitized resources from the Library's special collections of rare materials.
- Toronto Reference Library expanded access to digital content by developing and posting two virtual books, published eight virtual exhibits, scanned 2,252 books in full text and contributed approximately 5,000 images to the Our Ontario website.
- Implemented strategies to promote e-content including books, music and video to new audiences

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

***Support city-wide and local cultural expression – ↑ Cultural Program Attendance 9.6%***

- 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.
- 2010 saw record attendance at Library literary events included the fifth annual Keep Toronto Reading Festival, the fourth annual One Book Community Reads program, the City of Toronto Book awards, and the Library's first year partnering with the Toronto Star for their Short Story Contest.
- The "Thought Exchange" program series launched in 2010 challenging older adults and life-long learners to "satisfy their curiosity with an eclectic collection of lectures and discussions across the city."
- The first ever "Book Bash Children's Literature Festival" was held in 2010 on the last Saturday in August at NYCL and Mel Lastman Square. The all-day event featured author readings, workshops, storytelling, puppet shows, crafts, activities and more. The program was a success with a total of 2,134 people attending the festival, including over 1,000 children.
- The City's first installation of Poetry is Public was unveiled at the re-opening of Cedarbrae. The three lines from a poem by Rosemary Sullivan, "a man packed a country/ in a suitcase with his shoes/ and left", are permanently mounted in bronze lettering embedded in the Library.
- In November 2010, the Library hosted its inaugural Human Library program at five branches across the city, making it one of the largest human library events in the world. Over 200 people took the opportunity to "check out" one of our 60 human books for a one on one conversation. The program garnered huge interest from local, national and international media.

***Build the Library's role in providing original and accessible cultural programming – ↑ Cultural Programs Offered 7.2%***

- Library partnerships with the City's top cultural institutions helped to make arts and culture more accessible to thousands of Torontonians in 2010. Program

partnerships included: the Library's Onstage Performing Arts Series partnered with Stratford Festival, CanStage, Soulpepper and Tarragon to present a number of performing arts lectures based on their 2010 seasons; the Toronto Zoo joined the AGO, the Ontario Science Centre, the ROM, and the other eight top cultural venues as a free destination with the Sun Life Museum + Arts Pass (MAP) program; visiting artists and lecturers from the Canadian Opera Company, Orchestra Toronto, CineFranco, National Film Board of Canada, Ontario Genealogical Society; increased cultural programming through partnerships included Luminato, LitCity, and the Toronto Book Awards; and many more.

- The Library is a popular destination for the display of art by local residents; the art exhibit program had its best year yet with 225 artists applying for 134 exhibition times at 13 locations.

## **Supporting a Sustainable Library**

### ***Promote environmentally sustainable practices***

- Green technologies were featured in a number of branch renovations and state of good repair projects including solar panels at the Cedarbrae Branch.
- Landscaping and greening projects were completed at several branches; eg. Fairview Branch completed a landscaping project featuring new seating and planting with the assistance of grants from Walmart Evergreen Green Grant and beautification funding.
- Access to resources on the environment was enhanced with the purchase of additional material in adult and children's collections.

### ***Ensure sustainability in the budget, staff resources and infrastructure***

- Effective management of the Virtual Branch Services and Technology Asset Management Program (TAMP) capital funds resulted in upgraded hardware and software to support the implementation of the Library's new website; and planned expansion in access to TPL's digital collections, added disk capacity and support for the large scale digitization project of Canadian history collections.
- The operating budget was effectively managed through a combination of efficiencies, reductions and revenue adjustments while maintaining a focus on strategic priorities.
- Professional development and training opportunities addressed compliance with legislation including the Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act and Bill 168, Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act (Violence and Harassment in the Workplace).
- Fulfilled requirements of Ontario Bill 168, Occupational Health and Safety Amendment Act (Violence and Harassment in the Workplace) 2009 through a number of initiatives, including a public awareness campaign on the issues of violence in the workplace; courses to support staff in creating a welcoming, supportive and safe environment for the public, including Crisis Prevention, Lock Down Procedures, Dealing with Difficult People or Setting Effective Limits/Giving Bad News.
- Training on Diversity was organized for senior staff and a workforce survey was

completed to better understand the workforce composition.

- There was continued focus on the State of Good Repair (SOGR) backlog with renovation projects in 16 branches to address areas such as lighting, washrooms, HVAC, elevators and flooring. The Library also did a comprehensive building audit and identified the scope of the SOGR backlog at \$50 million.
- The Infrastructure Stimulus Fund (4.3 million) addressed SOGR work at North York Central Library, Agincourt, Northern District, Richview and Fairview branches. Toronto Reference Library also received support through the Infrastructure fund (3 million).
- Toronto Public Library received awards for several building projects including Bloor/Gladstone (5), Dufferin/St. Clair (2), Jane/Sheppard (1) and S. Walter Stewart (1). Toronto library projects were featured in various publications including American Libraries, Access OLA, Masterpieces of Library Architecture and Design, Canadian Interiors and American School and University.
- Renovation and state of good repair projects ensure that library buildings reflect current and future customer and community needs and feature accessible, high-quality, and flexible public space. Renovations included: North York Central, the Toronto Reference Library, Thorncliffe, Cedarbrae and the Bridlewood branches