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To: Toronto Public Library Board – June 9, 2003  
From: City Librarian  
Subject: **Strategic Plan 2004 - 2006: Proposed Consultation Plan**

Purpose:

This report outlines the strategy for ensuring full participation in the development of the Library's next strategic plan by the public, both users and non-users, staff, and by key stakeholders including the media and potential funders.

Budget Implications:

Costs for the consultation are covered by the \$90,000 one-time funding in the 2003 operating budget to support the strategic planning process.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board approve the consultation strategy for the Strategic Plan 2004 - 2006 (appended as Attachment 1).

Background:

The development of the 2000 - 2003 Strategic Plan included extensive consultation with the public, community agencies, Library friends, City Councillors, and the staff. Specific consultation strategies were customized for the participants. They included focus groups and public meetings. A draft copy of the plan was also distributed to all 98 branches and posted on the website with a comment form encouraging suggestions.

At its meeting on May 12, 2003, the Library Board approved a process to create TPL's next Strategic Plan 2004 - 2006. The Board was advised that a consultation strategy would be proposed for their review and approval at the June Board meeting.

Comments:

The proposed strategy for 2004 - 2006 builds on the successful elements of the consultation process from the 2000 - 2003 plan including extensive opportunities for public and staff input and feedback. In addition, the proposed strategy is informed by the current context, which includes increased public demand and use, active fundraising and a focus on city-building activities.

The strategy proposes a three-tiered approach to public consultation that would roll out over several months starting in October. The approach is to develop broad themes, then revise and refine the themes through consultation.

The first consultations will consist of public forums lead by high profile opinion leaders in Toronto. These high profile participants are expected to draw a broad audience, including both users and non-users, the media and potential funders, and to generate widespread interest and discussion. To ensure broad-based participation, forums will be held throughout the City.

Themes derived from the above forums will be used to establish the framework for one Research and Reference and four regional 'stakeholder roundtables'. These moderated roundtables will mix various stakeholder groups in order to develop a broad understanding of the range of demand for library services.

Additional feedback will be sought through orientation sessions with new councillors, focus groups, a special edition of *Shelf life*, articles in *What's On*, and information on the website.

Finally, community meetings will be held in each of the four regions. These meetings will allow citizens to comment on the plan from a local perspective.

The internal consultation strategy will take into account staff comment and feedback about their role in the previous process and offer ample opportunity for staff input through a series of staff forums. The full consultation strategy for staff will be developed throughout the summer.

#### Conclusion:

The proposed consultation strategy ensures broad-based participation in the strategic planning process by the public, stakeholders and Library staff. The strategy allows the Library to use its planning process to inform and promote current library services to users and non-users, the media and potential donors, and to seek input on priorities for the future.

#### Contact:

Suzanna Birchwood; Director, Marketing and Communications; Tel: 416-393-7212;

Fax: 416-393-7083; E-mail: [sbirchwood@tpl.toronto.on.ca](mailto:sbirchwood@tpl.toronto.on.ca)

Jane Pyper; Director, Service Planning & Support; Tel: 416-395-5602; Fax: 416-395-5542;

E-mail: [jpyper@tpl.toronto.on.ca](mailto:jpyper@tpl.toronto.on.ca)

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Proposed Consultation Plan

Attachment 2: Strategic Plan - Consultation Agenda

Attachment 3: Possible Topics for Public Forums