

**Strategic Plan 2008 - 2011 – Consultation Strategy for
Toronto Public Library**

Date:	June 11, 2007
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

On June 6, 2005 the Board approved a Public Consultation Policy. The policy requires the Library to create opportunities for participation by citizens and stakeholders in decision-making processes, and that the Board approve consultation plans for strategic planning initiatives. This report complies with the Public Consultation Policy.

This report outlines the consultation plan for the Library's new strategic plan covering the period from 2008 - 2011. The report includes the goals and principles, target participants and proposed tactics.

The creation of a new strategic plan will allow the Board to establish service priorities for the next four years. The consultation plan creates opportunities for the public, stakeholders, the Mayor and Members of Council, Library staff and Toronto Civic Employees Union – Local 416 C.U.P.E. to provide input to the plan throughout its development. The Strategic Plan Steering Committee of the Board and the Library Board as a whole will receive summaries of the strategic plan consultation to ensure transparency and accountability of the process and that results are incorporated into the strategic plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the proposed consultation plan as outlined in Attachments 1, 2 and 3;
2. directs staff to implement the consultation plan; and
3. directs staff to provide updates to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and the Library Board on the results of the consultation process

Implementation Points

Under the leadership of the Strategic Planning Steering Committee, Library staff will implement the consultation process. New service considerations may emerge through the environmental scan and consultation process. As a result, the consultation strategy may be modified to address new topics or engage additional targeted groups.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

The Director, Finance and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

At its April 16, 2007 meeting, the Board appointed members of a Strategic Plan Steering Committee. At its meeting of May 14, 2007, the Board approved the process to create the strategic plan and a budget of \$70,000 to support consultation. One of the first milestones in the strategic planning process is Board approval of this Consultation Plan.

COMMENTS

The Library Board's Public Consultation Policy commits the Library to creating opportunities for participation by citizens and stakeholders in decision making processes, including the strategic plan, and to removing barriers to participation. The policy states that the Library will both build on successful practices and use innovative and creative techniques to foster public consultation.

The proposed consultation plan for 2008 - 2011 builds on successful elements of the 2004 - 2007 plan, and incorporates new approaches. The proposed plan is flexible and will be adjusted to respond to participants' needs and emerging priorities and service issues.

The outcomes of the strategic plan will require a comprehensive communications plan which will be considered by the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and brought forward at a later date.

Goals and Principles of Consultation:

Attachment 1 includes goals and principles for the consultation which are based on the Library's Public Consultation Policy. The goals highlight the importance of an inclusive consultation process which will allow the Library to create service strategies for the future; build partnerships and create a shared sense of ownership of the new plan; and foster a broad understanding of the Library's contribution to Toronto's economic vitality

and social capital. The principles included a commitment to remove barriers to participation within the context of available resources, to utilize existing Library and community events for the consultation, and to balance the needs of individuals, communities and neighbourhoods with those of the City as a whole.

Target Participants:

Attachment 2 outlines potential participants under four broad categories: Toronto residents, stakeholders, Library staff and the Mayor and Members of Council. Specific emphasis is placed on reaching youth, newcomers, older adults and seniors as well as socially-excluded persons and residents of the City's priority neighbourhoods.

Proposed Tactics to Engage Participant Groups:

Attachment 3 outlines proposed tactics to be used to engage specific participant groups. A key input will be the results of the telephone survey of users and non-users completed in 2006. General tactics include notices in local media, including ethno and culturally specific media, and consultation at community-based events and programs. Specific tactics are then outlined for each of the targeted groups. These include online and in-branch comment forms, focus groups, individual meetings, and consultation at Library events and programs.

The structure of the Neighbourhood Action Teams will be used to engage community agencies, and additional community groups will be targeted through the stakeholder round tables. Youth Advisory Groups will be encouraged to create branch specific events to engage youth in local communities and materials will be posted on *ramp*, the Library's youth website. External facilitators will be used to consult with the community in places outside the Library. Where appropriate, events may be conducted in languages other than English.

The plan proposes that consultation take place in all three phases of the plan's development. Phase One will focus on the environmental scan and will take place over the summer. Phase Two will focus on proposed priority areas and will be ongoing from September to December. There will be stakeholder round-tables and staff focus groups, as well as extensive community-based consultation. Phase Three will include consultation on the draft plan and will conclude in March 2008.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Goals and Principles
- Attachment 2: Target Participants
- Attachment 3: Proposed Tactics to Engage Participant Groups