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To: Toronto Public Library Board – May 12, 2003
From: City Librarian
Subject: **Translation Policy**

Purpose:

To request Toronto Public Library Board approval of a policy to guide translation of important information about collections, services and programs at Toronto Public Library (Attachment 1).

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

Translation of library information will be accommodated within the operating budget. For 2003, \$10,000 has been allocated in the operating budget for translation purposes.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board approve the *Translation Policy*.

Background:

Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan identified the need to expand city-wide access to French and Multicultural collections and services. One of the initiatives to support this goal is the development of a policy to guide the translation of important library information. Prior to amalgamation, most of the former library systems translated important publicity into other languages. However, none had a formal policy in place. The City of Toronto adopted a *Multilingual Services Policy* on February 15, 2002 to affirm the City's commitment to ensuring that City information is available to all its residents (Attachment 2). The City's policy was reviewed in the development of a translation policy for the Library.

Comments:

The purpose of this policy is to provide residents with broad access to important electronic and print information about Toronto Public Library's collections, services and programs by offering this information in selected languages. French, as one of Canada's official languages, has been specifically identified to ensure that whenever Library information is translated into a language other than English, it is also translated into French either in full or summary form. The policy provides a framework for identifying priorities for translation as well as languages to be translated. This policy complies with the City's *Multilingual Services Policy*. A report will be submitted to the City's Administration Committee outlining the ways in which the *Multilingual*

Services Policy has been implemented across the City; the Library's policy will be referenced in this report.

A survey of a number of large library systems in Canada and the United States, and selected libraries in Australia and New Zealand, indicated that none appears to have a translation policy, although virtually all do provide translation of some library information in print and on web sites. As one of the most multicultural cities in the world, it seems appropriate that Toronto's public library system recognizes its residents' linguistic and ethnic diversity through the adoption of a translation policy.

Conclusion:

This translation policy affirms Toronto Public Library's commitment to making important information about collections, services and programs widely available. The policy provides a framework for identifying information for translation and languages to be translated. As an official language in Canada, translation of information into French, either in full or summary form, has been specifically identified within the policy.

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City Librarian

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Translation Policy

Attachment 2: City of Toronto Multilingual Services Policy