

**2012 Operating Budget Suggestions: Increasing Support
for Collections through Online Donations**

Date:	June 25, 2012
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

At its meeting on November 21, 2011, the Library Board considered the report *2012 Operating Budget – Budget Suggestions* and approved several Budget Committee suggestions for increasing revenue. The City Librarian was requested to report back on a number of these suggestions, including the suggestion that *the library explore ways to support collections through expanded opportunities for individuals to donate funds for collections through the Library's website to the Toronto Public Library Foundation*. This report responds to this request.

Library staff are developing a comprehensive strategy to increase financial support for collections through the Foundation, as identified in the fundraising priorities. Online giving promotions for collections will be an important element of this strategy. New online giving promotions, e.g. 'donate now' buttons for collections, will be introduced on the website; this will enhance customer awareness of the Toronto Public Library Foundation while continuing to build online giving.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is an expectation that more donations will be received by the Foundation as a result of the implementation of additional online giving promotions on the Library's website although a specific amount has not been forecast. These funds will be used to support collections as identified in the Library's fundraising priorities approved by the Board at its April 2, 2012 meeting.

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on November 21, 2011, the Library Board considered the report *2012 Operating Budget – Budget Suggestions* and approved several Budget Committee suggestions for increasing revenue. The City Librarian was requested to report back on a number of these suggestions, including the suggestion that *the library explore ways to support collections through expanded opportunities for individuals to donate funds for collections through the Library’s website to the Toronto Public Library Foundation.*

At its meeting on April 2, 2012 the Board approved the *2012 – 2014 Fundraising Priorities* report that identified collections, including specific collection areas, as one of the priorities.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Library’s website currently has a ‘donate now’ link on the footer section of the homepage. Other online giving promotions are included in different sections of the website, typically associated with specific services, programs and events. Additional promotions will be added in several locations, beginning with the immediate addition of a ‘donate now’ button in a prominent location on the homepage.

Currently, online giving promotions direct donors to a third-party website portal where donations are processed and receipts are issued. In a move towards better integration between the Foundation website and donation processing, by year-end, the Foundation will be migrating to a new, more customized system that will support the donations process within the Foundation website and facilitate immediate e-tax receipts. This will further increase awareness of the Toronto Public Library Foundation and its goals, enhance online fundraising results, and increase efficiency in processing donations.

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COMMENTS

The Library’s website receives over 1.6 million visits every month. Visitors browse it to discover materials, search for items, review their accounts, place holds, find out Library branch hours, obtain program and service information, look up information about the library and more.

The Library website areas that would be suitable for placing a prominent ‘donate now’ button are:

- **The Home Page**
The website home page is the 3rd most active part of the Library website in terms of page views. Due to the volume of views and visits every month, a Foundation promotion above the fold on the homepage should result in increased online donations.
- **Collection Section (Books, Video, Research & More)**
The collection pages include lists of new titles, bestsellers, award winners, recommended reading, information about Special Collections and access to the Digital Archive. When customers visit these pages they are in ‘browsing’ mode and more likely to see and act upon a prominent ‘Donate Now’ request. A ‘donate now’ button will be placed on specific pages with the most traffic including the new titles lists and bestsellers lists.

Other areas that offer opportunities for online giving promotions include programming pages and branch renovation information which highlight the Library’s capital projects.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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