



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

2012-2015 Strategic Plan: Summary of Achievements

Date:	April 25, 2016
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of significant achievements resulting from the implementation of *Read. Learn. Create. Deliver: Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan 2012-2015*. Reporting on achievements related to the strategic plan supports public engagement, transparency and accountability to residents and stakeholders.

The strategic plan set out ways in which Toronto Public Library services would continue to contribute to and enrich the economic, social and cultural life of Torontonians. The plan outlined four priority areas and 15 goals for service development and partnership development to leverage resources and improve services:

1. **Grow a City of Readers**
2. **Develop a City of Learners**
3. **Catalyze and Connect a City of Innovators, Entrepreneurs and Creators**
4. **Deliver Excellent Library Service to Torontonians Efficiently and Effectively**

Significant progress was made in achieving goals in all four priority areas.

Overarching Achievements

- Opened new award-winning branches, Fort York and the Scarborough Civic Centre
- Expanded open hours by 162.4 hours per week from 2012 to 2015
- Advanced the evaluation from content consumption to content creation with the introduction of the three Digital Innovation Hubs, Asquith Press, programs such as maker fairs, hackathons, design challenges, innovators in residence and through partnerships, staff training and resource reallocation
- Introduced and enhanced services and programs to address the needs of particular sectors: service development for children birth-5 and 6-12, youth, seniors and older adults, people with print disabilities, and residents living in poverty
- Through service and operational efficiencies, reduced FTE positions by 111.5
- Installed self-service check-in and check-out technology system-wide, including a centralized sorter and 13 branch sorters; efficiencies invested in expanding open hours and budget savings

- Completed Canada's first library economic impact study with positive outcome measures for TPL
- Established the Bram & Bluma Appel Salon as a literary and cultural commons in the heart of the city
- Championed the shift to more virtual services through e-content and website development, social media, wifi in all branches, self-service, and additional in-branch technologies
- Increased focus on issue and information-based programming
- Led successful national campaign for fair e-book pricing
- Foundation raised \$17,917,012 in support of library programs to expand library service and reach across all four areas of the strategic plan.

Certain initiatives requiring continued focus have been brought forward to 2016, including launch of a revitalized, interactive children's website and redesign of the main TPL website. Carry-forward items will be achieved through the new Strategic Plan 2016-19, which places strong emphasis on expansion of digital services.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

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

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its November 29, 2012 meeting the Toronto Public Library Board approved the Library's Strategic Plan 2012-2015:

<http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2012/nov29/10b.pdf>

COMMENTS

To support achievement of the 2012-2015 Strategic Plan, annual work plans were approved and reported on annually to the Board. A detailed summary of four-year achievements is included in Attachment 1. Overarching accomplishments include the following:

New Branches

The opening of the Fort York and Scarborough Civic Centre branches in 2014 and 2015 extended safe, welcoming public space for reading, learning and creating to new communities. Both branches feature inspiring architecture, barrier-free access and flexible space that can be configured for different uses. Fort York and Scarborough Civic Centre branches have been recognized with awards for design excellence and are well-utilized by the growing communities they serve. New library card registrations remain high and digital innovation programs and children's programs, in particular, are very well attended.

Expanded Open Hours

TPL achieved longer, more standardized hours with an increase in open hours at 14 branches across the city over the four years of the strategic plan. Branches include Lillian H. Smith, Richview, Toronto Reference Library, Albert Campbell, Albion, Barbara Frum, Brentwood, Don Mills, Maria A. Shchuka, York Woods, Downsview, Eglinton Square, Jane/Dundas and Morningside. With the opening of Fork York Branch in May 2014 and Scarborough Civic Centre Branch in May 2015, TPL increased its total open hours in 2014 and 2015 by 62 open hours per week at each new location.

Advanced the Evolution to Content Creation

The Library provided technology, programming and staff expertise to help Torontonians create, innovate and collaborate. Three Digital Innovation Hubs (DIH) were launched at the Toronto Reference Library, Fort York and Scarborough Civic Centre, responding to public interest in emerging technology and the rise of maker culture. Each DIH features dedicated staff, workstations, 3D printers, and audio and video production equipment. The Asquith Press Book Printing Service launched at Toronto Reference Library Digital Innovation Hub in June 2014 enables library users to design and print perfect-bound, bookstore-quality paperback books at a low price.

A range of signature programs inspired attendees to embrace content creation. Artists in the Library programs began in 2014 in partnership with Toronto Arts Council and featured 14 artists. TPL's first Hackathon was hosted over two days in November 2015 in partnership with Open Data Toronto, Open Data Institute of Toronto, and Wellbeing Toronto. A total of 50+ participants, ranging in age from 12 to 75, and mentors, worked together to create concepts to improve library service. The Toronto Maker Faire was held at the Toronto Reference Library in 2014 and 2015 with 8,000 and 9,000 participants respectively.

Introduced and Enhanced Services and Programs for Targeted Sectors of the Population

The Library placed considerable focus on supporting the reading and learning needs of children ages birth-5 and 6-12, youth, seniors and older adults, people with print disabilities, and low-income residents.

In 2012, the Library introduced *Let's Get Ready for Reading*, an accompanying guide to the Ready for Reading initiative for parents, caregivers and educators of children from birth to five years. Two hundred thousand copies were printed, with 167,750 distributed by 2015. The guide received the Minister's Award for Innovation in 2014. The Ready for Reading website is on track for implementation in 2016.

In 2014, TPL developed a Middle Childhood Framework for children, to support the City of Toronto Middle Childhood Strategy. Initiatives include After School Clubs with hands-on learning opportunities; summer camps, piloted in 2015, featuring robotics, coding, and magic; and an after-school recreation centre introduced at Mimico Centennial Branch, in partnership with Parks, Forestry and Recreation.

With funding from the City of Toronto's Poverty Reduction Strategy, two new Library Youth Hubs were established at Cedarbrae and York Woods branches in 2015. These welcoming spaces provide youth ages 13-19 with quality after-school homework help in math, science, English, French, and other subjects as well as nutritional snacks. Youth also have access to enriching complementary programs that help to develop social and leadership skills. Another youth initiative, the High School Outreach program, promoted teen collections and programs and taught students how to use electronic resources effectively. Young Voices celebrated its 50-year anniversary in 2015. The program was enhanced in 2012 with a multi-year donation from the Daniels brothers.

A wide variety of programming of interest to seniors and older adults was offered at the Library from 2012-2015. User Education programs such as Internet Safety for Seniors and Cyber Seniors increased 145.8%, with a corresponding increase in attendance of 151.7%, from 2012 to 2015.

To advance accessibility, TPL supported the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) launch in 2014. In 2015, TPL promoted the CELA collection, which included downloadable audiobooks for customers with print disabilities. In 2014, the International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) Collection of Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities found a new home in the North York Central Library's Children's Department. The collection offers outstanding titles for and about children and young people with disabilities from around the world.

To support low-income residents, a Fines Forgiveness Campaign was introduced in May 2015 to restore borrowing access to blocked cardholders. A total of 3,144 customers participated and borrowed 142,760 items during the campaign.

Service and Operational Efficiencies

A Lean Six Sigma review of TPL's operations was undertaken and was used, along with technology-driven initiatives, to increase efficiencies, improve customer service and reduce costs. Between 2012-2015, the overall complement was reduced by 111.5 FTE positions through service and operational efficiencies.

RFID Installation Completed

Self-service check-in and check-out technology was installed system-wide, including a centralized sorter at the Ellesmere Bibliographic Services Centre and 13 branch sorters. For customers, benefits of the technology include improved convenience and privacy, and reduced line-ups. Delivery time of materials between branches was reduced to three days on average. Operational impacts include reduction in materials handling associated with check-out, less staff time needed to cover circulation service points and improved ability to handle increased circulation activity with existing staffing levels. Efficiencies were invested in expanding open hours and budget savings.

Completed Canada's First Library Economic Impact Study with Outcome Measures for TPL

So Much More: The Economic Impact of Toronto Public Library on the City of Toronto was published in 2013. This landmark study measured the return on investment for public library service and the value provided to Toronto residents. Key findings included:

- TPL delivers \$5.63 of economic impact for every \$1 spent
- TPL creates over \$1 billion in total economic impact
- For Torontonians who use library services, the total direct benefit is as much as \$500 per library member
- The average open hour at a library branch generates \$2,515 in direct benefits
- The return from the City of Toronto's investment in the Toronto Public Library is 463%.

Bram & Bluma Appel Salon Established as Toronto's Literary and Cultural Commons

The Bram & Bluma Appel Salon solidified its position as the pre-eminent place in Toronto where writers, thinkers, artists and innovators from around the world gather for conversation and debate. Guests in 2012-2015 included Margaret Atwood, Janet Evanovich, Jonathan Franzen, Chris Hadfield, Ben Heppner, Lawrence Hill, John Irving, Kathy Reichs, Mohamed Fahmy and Salman Rushdie (91 programs, 34,519 attendees from 2014-15).

Championed the Shift to More Virtual Services

The Library introduced expanded and enriched access to a wide range of e-content in 2012-2015, including audiobooks, magazines, music, video and learning tutorials delivered through new digital content services such as Zinio eMagazines, Naxos Music Library, Hoopla Digital and lynda.com. OverDrive, the Library's largest e-book collection, grew from 11,500 titles from January 1, 2012 to 100,285 titles by December 31, 2015, reflecting the Library's strategic priority to increase the range of formats and number of titles available in electronic format. Circulation of e-books, e-audiobooks, e-magazines, videos and music increased by 309.5% from 2012 to 2015 and a total of 4.4 million in 2015, making TPL the global leader in e-circulation.

Increased demand for e-content and use of the Library's social media channels fuelled a 20.4% increase in total virtual visits between 2012 and 2015.

Over the course of the strategic plan, the Library played a key role in bridging the digital divide by providing access to technology to enable all library users to participate more fully in our networked society. All branches offer computers, Internet and wireless access. Between 2012 and 2015, the number of workstation user sessions increased by 9%. Use of the Library's wireless service grew exponentially, with an increase of 116.1% in wireless sessions over the four years, due to widespread use of smartphones and tablets by in-branch users.

Increased Focus on Issue and Information-based Programming

The Library strengthened its offering of programs in the areas of health, personal finance and small business and entrepreneurship. Business Inc., an eight-week business program, offered in partnership with the City of Toronto and the Toronto Business Development Centre, accepted 479 attendees entrepreneurs into the program from 2012-15. The Entrepreneur in Residence program launched in 2012 with entrepreneurs Miriam Tuerk (2012), Jean Chow (2013), Sunny Verma (2014) and Mike Brcic (2015). Thought Exchange lectures offered

direct access to some of Toronto's top thinkers and creators in the fields of history, science, medicine and the arts.

Led Successful National Campaign for Fair e-Book Pricing

TPL played a leading role in a public e-book advocacy campaign (<http://www.fairpricingforlibraries.org>) in collaboration with the Canadian Library Association, the Canadian Urban Libraries Council, the Ontario Library Association, the Nova Scotia Library Association, the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, and with several Canadian libraries, including Edmonton and Ottawa Public libraries. As a result of these efforts, in December 2015 Penguin Random House announced a more flexible pricing model for library e-books. Efforts to encourage other multinational publishers to follow suit with flexible and affordable e-book pricing will continue in 2016.

CONCLUSION

Through its Strategic Plan 2012-2015, the Library advanced delivery of high-quality services to meet the needs and aspirations of Toronto residents and communities. Carryover projects from 2012-2015 align and support the priority areas of the new strategic plan. Areas for continued focus include digital, mobile and self-service options, expanded access to technology in branches and community locations, and a continued focus on lifelong learning, including e-learning and experiential learning for adults, and out-of-school time for children in the middle years and youth. Greater impact will be created through alignment with the City's Poverty Reduction Strategy and the Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy 2020.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Strategic Plan 2012-2015 Achievements