



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Library Furniture – Award of Contract

Date: January 27, 2025
To: Toronto Public Library Board
From: City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Toronto Public Library Board approval for a commitment to purchase system and office furniture, including supply and installation from POI Business Interiors (POI), and Patrick Cassidy and Contemporary Office Interiors.

All major capital projects and interior state-of-good-repair projects include new furniture as part of the project scope. For branches which are not due for capital project or interior state-of-good-repair projects, the Facilities team maintains a rolling three-year plan of furniture by branch that is known and expected to need replacement or refurbishment.

Library branches feature flexible layouts and require functional and durable furniture that can withstand heavy use and meet a variety of needs: seating and study/workspace options, multi-function meeting and program rooms, and custom-designed zones to accommodate different needs. Toronto Public Library (TPL) staff work closely with consultant architects to select components that will meet these requirements.

TPL leverages Ontario Education Collaborative Marketplace (OECM) contracts for educational and office space furniture to benefit from advantageous terms, pricing and administrative efficiencies. TPL primarily purchases branch furniture from the firms noted above based on established discounted rates and the manufacturers represented.

The total value of the commitment with POI is approximately \$4 million, excluding Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) over three years, January 2025 to December 2027.

The total value of the anticipated spend with Patrick Cassidy and Contemporary Office Interiors is approximately \$2 million, excluding HST, over three years, January 2025 to December 2027.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approve a commitment to spend up to \$4.4 million, excluding Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) with POI for the supply and installation of Steelcase furniture over the remaining term of the OECM contract, including extension periods from January 2025 to March 2028; and
2. approve a commitment to spend up to \$2 million, excluding Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) with Patrick Cassidy and Contemporary Office Interiors for the supply and installation of furniture over the remaining term of the OECM contract from, January 2025 to April 2026.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The budget for library furniture, required as part of most branch renovation and expansion projects, is included in capital projects in the approved 2025 – 2034 capital budget and plan. The total expenditure of \$4.4 million with POI and \$2 million with Patrick Cassidy and Contemporary Office Interiors during the remaining contract terms will supply library furniture for eight Capital Projects, 15 State of Good Repair Projects (SOGR), and proactive repair and replacement of worn or unrepairable furniture.

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

DECISION HISTORY

On [February 28, 2022](#), Library Board approval was received for an award of contract to POI for the supply and installation of specific library furniture, using the OECM provincial contract. The total value of the commitment with POI was approximately \$3 million, excluding HST, over three years, January 2022 to December 2024. This contract has allowed TPL to procure furniture for the following capital projects; Bridlewood, Ethennonnhawahstihnen', York Woods, Fairview, Wychwood and numerous smaller SOGR projects across the system.

On [September 18, 2023](#), Board approval was received to work with Patrick Cassidy and Contemporary Office Interiors using the OECM provincial contract up to a total value of \$1,500,000. This contract allowed TPL to procure furniture for the following capital projects; Bridlewood, Ethennonnhawahstihnen', York Woods, Fairview, Wychwood and numerous smaller SOGR projects across the system.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Providing practical and long-lasting furniture that is easy to configure for multiple library uses is a key aspect of creating and sustaining a welcoming, accessible, and flexible environment.

Some new furniture for public and staff spaces is a requirement for nearly all building capital projects and funding is included in the project budgets. TPL develops a procurement strategy for required purchases that achieves best value in accordance with the Purchasing Policy. OECM is a not-for-profit collaborative sourcing partner for Ontario's education sector, broader public sector and other not-for-profit organizations. OECM contracts with reputable suppliers through an open and competitive tendering process to offer a wide range of products and services and generate savings for public sector organizations through collaborative sourcing. TPL is eligible to take advantage of pricing under OEM contracts.

COMMENTS

TPL has signed customer-supplier agreements for the OECM contracts for educational and office space furniture and is able to purchase the supply and installation of specific library furniture. POI is the Toronto area distributor of Steelcase furniture which TPL chooses for public computing areas, staff seating, height adjustable desks and workstations because it is durable, functional and meets ModernTO standards (a workplace modernization space plan approved by City Council in October 2019).

Additional library furniture such as moveable 'urban living room' furniture, study chairs, meeting room chairs, laptop bar seating, and children's furniture must also be durable and functional. TPL sources library furniture made by Keilhauer, SPEC, Herman Miller, Arconas, Humans scale and Palmieri. In the Toronto area, these manufactures are represented by Patrick Cassidy and Contemporary Office Interiors.

The approved 2025 – 2034 capital budget and plan includes new public and staff area furniture as part of major capital project and multi-branch state of good repair projects. Examples of branch capital projects that are expected to require furniture over the next three years include:

- Locke
- Junction Triangle
- Pleasant View
- Centennial
- Oakwood Village
- Toronto Reference Library
- Northern District
- North York Central Teen Area

For all capital projects, existing furniture is evaluated for reuse through refinishing and/or upholstery prior to the selection of new furniture. Renovations typically increase branch square footage for public use and introduce new services, such as Digital Innovation Hubs, teen areas, and new program rooms, which require additional new furniture.

For branches which are not due for capital project or interior state-of-good repair project, the Facilities team maintains a rolling three-year plan of furniture by branch that is known and expected to need replacement or refurbishment.

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SIGNATURE

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