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To: Toronto Public Library Board – January 19, 2004

From: City Librarian

Subject: **Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2004-2006 – *The Long View: Strategic Plan Consultation Workbook***

Purpose:

To provide the Toronto Public Library Board with an update on the strategic planning process, and to seek approval for an initial draft of the strategic plan as contained in *The Long View: Strategic Plan Public Consultation Workbook* to be used as a framework for further consultation.

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

Costs for the strategic plan consultations are funded in the 2004 operating budget.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board:

(1) receive the strategic plan update for information; and

(2) approve the initial draft of the strategic plan as contained in *The Long View: Strategic Plan Public Consultation Workbook* as a basis for consultation.

Background:

Strategic Plan 2000-2003

The Toronto Public Library Board approved its first strategic plan as an amalgamated library system *Creating the Future: Treasuring the Past* – Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan 2000-2003 in June 2000. The plan was developed and informed by research about Toronto and extensive consultation with community stakeholders, residents and Library staff. The plan introduced a vision, mission, organizational values and service priorities for the newly amalgamated Toronto Public Library. To ensure the Library achieved concrete and substantive results under each of the plan's four pillars, the Library Board approved a detailed three-year workplan in September 2000. The Board receives an annual report on the Library's performance measures and progress on strategic plan initiatives. The final report on the current plan will be presented to the Board in the first quarter of 2004.

Comments:

Strategic Plan 2004-2006

Process

At its meetings of May 12 and June 9, 2003, the Board approved a process and consultation strategy for the new plan. The new strategic planning process is being guided by a joint steering committee comprised of four Library Board members, a representative of the Toronto Public Library Foundation Board, the City Librarian and senior Library staff members. Throughout the summer, staff completed the first step in the process, an extensive scan of demographic and societal trends in the city and strengths and weaknesses of the library system. Research included a review of library literature and city planning documents, a thorough analysis of the 2001 Statistics Canada census reports for Toronto, library usage trends as well as interviews with over forty Library staff members responsible for key service areas. To determine priorities for the future, emerging issues were reviewed within the context of achievements of the last plan.

A joint steering committee planning day was then held on October 17, 2003 as a second step in the process. In preparation, achievements for the last strategic plan and briefing notes on the environmental scan were distributed. A document summarizing the emerging issues and themes at the planning day was reviewed and revised by the steering committee, and subsequently used as a basis for consultation with Library staff members. Key external environmental issues are summarized in Attachment 1.

Consultation with Library staff

Initial consultation with both Library staff members and the public was undertaken as a third step in the process. Approximately 220 staff members representing both public service and support departments attended the first round of staff focus groups. Staff members were asked to review the emerging themes and add others as appropriate, and begin the process of formulating goals to address these themes. In a subsequent meeting, approximately 100 Library branch heads and supervisors were also asked to review and prioritize the themes and goals from the perspective of the branch they represent. Reviewing the themes from both the system and branch level was intended to ensure that the draft plan meets the needs of the City as well as the needs of local communities. Results of the environmental scan were reviewed with members of the Toronto Civic Employees Union – Local 416 C.U.P.E. to obtain their input.

Consultation with the public

Public consultation began with two public forums to generate interest, ideas and discussion. The first held at the Toronto Reference Library focused on the future of the public library. The second at the Maria A. Shchuka Library was aimed at the needs of youth, one of the fastest growing age groups in the City. Over 200 people attended the forums, and many took the opportunity to fill out comment forms. The sessions received media coverage and generated ideas that could be implemented in the short-term with minimal impact on existing resources and those requiring substantial resources that will have to be weighed as priorities in the new

strategic plan. On-going public feedback is being sought through a comment form on the Toronto Public Library website.

Next Steps

The initial draft of the strategic plan, *The Long View: Strategic Plan Public Consultation Workbook* included in Attachment 2 reflects direction received from the joint steering committee and initial consultation with both the staff and public. The *Workbook* is intended to be an engaging summary of the emerging issues and themes. The environmental issues highlight areas where the Library can make a difference in the quality of life of residents. Emerging themes are illustrated with examples of potential goals and strategies to encourage discussion, and are not intended to be exhaustive. The *Workbook* does not cover areas of library service or highlight areas where existing service levels will be maintained. It presents strategic priorities for discussion and comment.

As a next step, it is recommended that the Library Board approve using the first draft of the strategic plan, *The Long View Strategic Plan Public Consultation Workbook* as a basis for further consultation. Future consultation activities include orientation sessions for city councillors, another public forum in the East Region, three stakeholder round-table discussions to which representatives of community groups will be invited, outreach presentations to city committees, round-tables and community partners, and focus groups for the public and staff. In addition, the draft can be accessed by the public in Library branches and will be posted on the Toronto Public Library website for comment by both the staff and public. Further activities may be planned to respond to issues and ideas that emerge through consultation. Public meetings on a final draft of the plan including goals and strategies created from the results of public consultation are planned for April.

It is anticipated that a final plan will be presented to the Board in May/June 2004 for approval pending the results of the next stage of public consultation. This final version will be a more exhaustive document, which will address internal principles of operation including the need for fiscal sustainability and the essential role of staff in implementing the plan. The themes, goals and strategies will be further developed.

Conclusion:

Toronto Public Library's new strategic plan will outline how the Library will contribute to building the City and enhancing the quality of life for all residents. The plan will provide a framework and context in which to develop multi-year capital forecasts, annual business plans and operating budget submissions, and system and branch level service plans. Offering extensive opportunities for engagement and participation throughout its development ensure that the new plan is a dynamic response to city issues and reflects priorities for library service which are shared by the Library Board, city councillors, Library staff and residents of Toronto.

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List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Key issues emerging from the external scan
Attachment 2: The Long View: Strategic Plan Consultation Workbook 2004-2006