

**Report to / Rapport au:**

**Ottawa Public Library Board  
Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa**

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**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

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**File Number: OPLB-2017-0201**

**SUBJECT: Collection Management Framework**

**OBJET: Cadre de gestion des collections**

**REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

- a) Reaffirm its approval of the Collection Management Framework; and,**
- b) Approve the Collection Management Framework review period of once per Board Term.**

**RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa :**

- a) Réaffirme son approbation du cadre de gestion des collections; et**
- b) Approuve le cadre de gestion des collections proposant d'examiner le terme à chaque nouveau mandat du Conseil d'administration.**

**BACKGROUND**

In accordance with the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Board policy OPLB-002 Delegation of Authority item #19, the Board is responsible to approve strategic frameworks for key OPL services. In April 2014, the OPL Board approved the Collection Management

Framework 2014-2016 (OPLB-2014-0042). It represented a significant shift in OPL's collection management approach from the previous granular collection strategy that covered 2009 to 2013, to a more strategic Framework, intended to navigate the changing digital content library landscape and the fluctuating eBook industry. The context in which library collections are selected, acquired, catalogued, and processed continues to be fluid, reflecting a variety of customer expectations.

The Collection Management Framework 2014-2016 (the Framework) has guided staff in taking a customer-centric approach in expending the Annual Materials Budget of approximately \$4.8M, all the while ensuring two objectives are met:

- That OPL collection remain relevant and easily accessible to all customers; and,
- That the OPL optimizes the opportunities that accompany the digital shift from print to electronic materials, while maintaining responsible control of budgets and data.

The Collection Management Framework 2014-2016 included four guiding principles:

1. **Responsive Selection** – Community Driven
2. **Balanced Selection** – Customer Driven
3. **Responsible Investment** – Evidence Driven
4. **Continuous Improvement** – Relationship Driven

These principles ensure that OPL's collections comply with the established objectives.

The Framework also contains tools to support the guiding principles. Materials selection criteria address demand, quality, subject matter, audience, availability and access, and price. In addition, materials' budget targets are in place for youth, French-language, world language materials, and eBooks. These targets are approved annually by the CEO, who has the delegated authority to responsibly expend the Annual Materials Budget. Performance indicators, such as turnover rates and demographic data from Environics Analytics, allow for monitoring trends and pressures; and lastly OPL has in place customer communication channels to inform selection choices.

## DISCUSSION

The guiding principles enshrined in the Collection Management Framework (Document 1) brought forward in 2014, and the tools to support them, continue to be relevant today.

They provide a consistent means to enable staff to make effective decisions regarding library collections in a changing environment.

As the largest bilingual (French and English) public library system in Canada, the OPL's most important mandate is to respond to and reflect the public's reading, listening, viewing, and playing demands when building and maintaining collections. With ongoing library and publishing issues in flux, the Framework remains a valuable, relevant, and stabilizing strategic document for providing direction in matters of collection management. It is designed with enough flexibility to manage the changing digital landscape, and it has been the foundation to improving OPL's Percent of Physical Materials Checked Out as reported in the semi-annual Performance Management Report. This Key Performance Indicator has increased by 3% from 2015 to 2016 (18.80 in 2015 to 19.40 in 2016). This means that more materials are being circulated instead of sitting on the shelves.

Nowhere is the Framework's approach better illustrated than in how print vs. digital materials are selected and acquired. Ebooks and physical books are both popular, but the high pricing structure for eBooks vs. the more affordable pricing for physical books is a persistent issue requiring responsible investment decisions. Recent lobbying of publishers for more favourable library eBook prices has had some impact, but on average eBook prices remain four times higher than a discounted hardcover bestseller or retail eBook. 2015 showed a flat-lining of eBook purchases in the retail market, but a persistent upswing of use in libraries across North America. OPL reached one million circulations in 2016 for its Overdrive eBook/eAudio collection, joining a growing number of North American public libraries in the "Million Club." Public demand varies, and is not format-agnostic. OPL's total circulation of physical materials hovers at more than 10 million per year. Statistics show that OPL gets more return on investment with its physical collection than for its eBooks collection due to better pricing. However, to respond to library trends and customer demand, OPL must invest in both formats as it continues to bridge these two realities. OPL's Collection Management Framework permits this nimble approach to collection decision-making and provides rationale for introducing new eContent like a video streaming collection, while following sound financial parameters.

**Check Out the Benefit: The Economic Benefits of the Ottawa Public Library,** released in November 2016, emphasizes the dominant positive impact of collections on library customers and their importance to the library's economic relevance in the community. Its counterpart, a report on the social impact and benefits of the OPL, will

come forward in 2018. It is anticipated that collections will come out strongly as a positive social benefit for the citizens of Ottawa. The customer-centric service of the provision of collections acts as a “catalyst for exploration and discovery,” with “physical and digital collections that are responsive to customer demands and community needs,” embodying OPL’s vision “to build community and transform lives.” The Framework underscores the importance of having library collections that reflect our community needs, and it ensures that OPL’s collection is positioned to best reflect our changing city.

In 2014, developing a Framework was a new approach, and at the time, dates to renew were set at three years. It has withstood the test of time, and given the reasons set out herein regarding the current environmental context and forthcoming statistical data, staff recommend that the Collection Management Framework be reviewed by the Board once per term.

Adopting the Collection Management Framework, and establishing a review period of once per Board term, will enable OPL to:

- Make annual budgetary decisions to shape a collection that is responsive and responsible, in consideration of the latest internal and external data, customer feedback, and intellectual freedom;
- Conduct ongoing analysis of publishing trends to allow staff to be up to date in library collection decisions and future predictions;
- Analyze census data as released, to continue to inform targets enshrined in the Framework. For example, by Fall 2017, the 2016 Census data for “Language Spoken at Home” and “Recently Arrived” immigration statistics will be released, which will allow staff to better understand the World Language budget targets;
- Appropriately develop collections for new branches (for example, Riverside South and the Ottawa Central Library); and,
- Consider a new mandate for the Ottawa Room (Living Ottawa), and potential future partnerships, such as the collaboration with Library and Archives Canada.

## **CONSULTATION**

The Framework has had regular staff review and input through Content Services’ workshops, feedback from customers and staff to the Library Collections Issues inbox, and responses from staff to the recently developed Content Services Manual, an outcome to the development of the Framework.

Best practices in other North American libraries were analyzed and considered. Most other public libraries have Collection Development Policies, similar to the Materials Selection Criteria included in the current framework. No public library came forward identifying a framework. OPL's approach in developing a framework of this nature is leading edge among its peers. Research of best practices indicates that most North American public libraries have adopted collection development policies which are more comparable to the operational Materials Selection Criteria included in OPL's Framework, and posted on OPL's website. As the OPL Board uses a policy or strategic model of governance that focuses on setting strategic directions and objectives, and as the materials budget represents the second highest line item in OPL's operating budget, the Framework represents the best tool to remain responsive to changing publishing trends, and to best manage collection expenditures.

### **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Collection Management Framework will continue to drive the annual review of materials budget investments, ensuring the library's collection is responsive to customer needs and relevant to the community as a whole.

### **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

AODA compliance measures are integrated into collection management practices.

### **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

### **BOARD PRIORITIES**

This report aligns with OPL Board's Strategic Directions and Priorities: Services that are customer centric, specifically, to provide physical and digital collections that are responsive to customer demands and community needs.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1: Collection Management Framework (immediately follows this report)

## **DISPOSITION**

Upon approval, the Collection Management Framework (Document 1) will guide the expenditure of the annual materials budget. The next review period will fall between 2019-2022, during the next term of the OPL Board.

## Collection Management Framework

The Collection Management Framework provides guiding principles and tools to ensure that OPL both meets the challenges and optimizes the opportunities of the digital shift. The principles and tools within the Framework balance customer service with financial accountability across all facets of selection, acquisition, collection access, and the provision of branch guidance in collection maintenance. This better allows OPL to manage, meet, and exceed both external and internal customer expectations throughout the digital shift.

In conjunction with OPL's mission and values, the following guiding principles inform the Collection Management Framework (see also the Appendix for a visual summary).

### 1. Responsive Collections → Community Driven

In pursuit of OPL's mission, the collections support the interests and needs of people of all ages starting with early literacy and including children, teens, and adults, in both English and French. As a community and tax-supported organization, OPL is committed to providing equitable access to its collection to all of the citizens of Ottawa.

**Tools:** Materials selection criteria including:

- Commitment to intellectual freedom and diversity articulated in the Canadian Federation of Library Association's and Ontario Library Association's statements of intellectual freedom.
- Provisions for digital collections and selection that integrate emerging formats and communication technologies wherever appropriate and economically feasible.

**Table 1 - Materials Selection Criteria**

<b>Criterion</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Demand	Customer demand and anticipated demand
Quality	Attention of critics and reviewers, award winners, or inclusion in bibliographies; Literary merit and contribution to the field of knowledge; Reputation or authority of the author, creator, or publisher; Quality of writing, production, and illustration.
Subject matter	Significance, timeliness, or permanence of subject matter; Representation of diverse points of view; Relationship to the existing collection; Importance of subject matter in relation to community needs; Canadian content.
Audience	Relevance to early literacy, responsive to school age and teen interest, and scholastic support and enrichment; Suitability of subject and style for intended audience.
Availability and Access	Availability of content through the internet, subscription databases, or other means; Suitability of format for library use; Availability of materials through other libraries or institutions; Copyright issues and the availability of public performance rights; Ease of use and remote access potential; Hardware, software, networking, and storage requirements; Licensing requirements; Long term availability and perpetual access rights.
Price	Purchase price and other budgetary considerations; Comparison of content and cost with other available formats.

## **2. Balanced Selection → Customer Driven**

This guiding principle aims to build eCollections while maintaining robust collections in physical formats.

**Tools:** Use of targets (minimum and/or maximum) to reflect customer preference for a balanced collection and to mitigate the risks associated with current uncertainty in the publishing industry. Recommended targets will be approved annually by the CEO within the context of the delegated authority.

This includes **targets** for:

- Youth (Juvenile and Teen) material budgets to reflect OPL's commitment to young people and families as the foundation of our long-term growth.



- Reflecting OPL's position as the largest bilingual (English and French) public library system in North America, French language material will not fall below a minimum proportion defined as the highest percentage of the following four data sets: mother tongue, home language, first official language spoken (provided by Statistics Canada) and the new inclusive definition of a Francophone (provided by the Office of Francophone Affairs and introduced by the Government of Ontario in June 2009).
- Material in languages other than English or French is collected to meet the needs of a diverse population. The focus is on material in languages that serve new immigrants to Ottawa when, per the current Canadian Census, more than 2,000 speak the language at home.
- eBook collection growth is based on the current proportion of eBook circulation, relative to overall collection use, and a base budget for the renewal of expired licenses. This will allow OPL to maintain a strong core collection and purchase new material.

### 3. Responsible Investment → Evidence Driven

As part of the customer service lens, this guiding principle emphasizes fiduciary responsibility with respect to the investment of the public's funds

**Tools:** Incorporate evidence-based investment and evaluation tools at shorter intervals:

- Shift the strategic review and alignment of the Collection Management Framework from three year intervals to once per term of the Board.
- Incorporate Key Performance Indicators such as turnover rates and demographic data from Environics Analytics to monitor pressures/trends and to project corresponding objectives when conducting the annual budget review.
- Use internal tools, e.g. Collection Management's Integrated evaluation tool and cost-benefit analysis to document that content/service providers meet OPL standards.

#### 4. Continuous Improvement → Relationship Driven

This guiding principle aims to enhance and extend both internal and external relationships.

**Tools:** Model a collaborative and proactive approach to connect, communicate, and create options for customers and branch employees.

- Improve the suggestion to purchase experience.
- Reflect OPL's shift to outreach with a project-oriented approach, allowing employees to continually build a reciprocal knowledge base to the benefit of all customers.
- Continuously improve channels to receive feedback from customers and employees around issues and suggestions to improve OPL's collection.
- Improve the discoverability of the collection by optimizing access and materials description, and by using social media via regular blogging on Bibliocommons and other websites to promote OPL's collections.
- Offer continuous training opportunities to employees to enhance their knowledge of publication trends, collection development, and collection access.

APPENDIX 1 – Guiding Principles at a Glance

**Collection Management Framework**

Collection Management Framework

