

Report to / Rapport au:

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

Date submitted_ENG / Date submitted_FRE

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File Number: OPLB-2022-0503

SUBJECT: Service Delivery Framework

OBJET: Cadre décisionnel sur la prestation des services

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Receive the report for information;**
- 2. Approve the Service Delivery Framework (SDF), including the Guiding Principles, Service Categories, and Service Channels, as further described in this report;**
 - a. Direct staff to implement Phase 6, including:**
 - i. Establish a service planning and design team;**
 - ii. Develop the approach, strategies, and frameworks associated with the SDF; and,**
 - b. Direct staff to modify OPLB Policy 010 – CEO Board Reporting and Monitoring to reflect that key strategic frameworks are reviewed a minimum of once per term of Board.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique (BPO) d'Ottawa :

1. Prenne connaissance du présent rapport à titre d'information;
2. Approuve le cadre décisionnel sur la prestation des services, y compris les principes directeurs, les catégories de services et les modes de services y afférents, décrit dans le présent rapport :
 - a. Demander au personnel de mettre en œuvre la phase 6, soit notamment :
 - i. d'établir une équipe de planification et de conception des services;
 - ii. d'élaborer l'approche, les stratégies et la structure du cadre;
 - b. Demander au personnel de modifier la Politique sur les rapports de la directrice générale et le suivi du C.A. de la BPO (010) en y indiquant que les principaux cadres stratégiques sont revus au moins une fois par mandat du C.A.

BACKGROUND

In keeping with the *Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c.P.44* ("the PLA"), other relevant statutes, laws, and good governance practices, the Ottawa Public Library ("OPL") Board ("the Board") retains accountability for the full range of decisions affecting the organization. According to Section 15 of the PLA, the Chief Executive Officer ("CEO") shall have general supervision over, and direction of, the operations of the public library and its staff, and shall have the other powers and duties that the Board assigns to them from time to time.

The Board uses a policy or strategic model of governance that focuses most of the attention of trustees on setting strategic direction and objectives, making decisions on major projects and monitoring performance. As such, the Board has approved Policy 002 – Delegation of Authority ("the DOA"). As part of that policy, the Board has maintained authority over the approval of strategic frameworks for key OPL services and has delegated the implementation and management of strategic frameworks to the CEO.

OPLs existing service delivery framework (“the 2003 Framework”) was approved by the Board in March 2003 (Item #8.1 Doc. #03-16) and is no longer in common use. The 2003 Framework outlined core services (including collections, resources, and public services by age group) and service delivery channels (including branches of various sizes, mobile, and virtual services). The core services as defined in the 2003 Framework no longer accurately reflect modern public library services, which now includes access to printers, meeting rooms, study space, creative technologies, online services, specialty programs, and more. Moreover, the 2003 Framework did not include a structure or process to guide staff decision-making. Without such structure, the 2003 Framework was not regularly consulted by staff as part of their work, nor was it reviewed or updated in subsequent years.

Since the Board’s approval of the 2003 Framework, OPL has seen a great deal of organizational change. In 2008, WiFi was introduced as a public service in branches, and online services for both public use and staff operations have continued to grow and expand since. In 2011, a review of the 2003 Framework was proposed as a project, but the recommendation at the time was to focus instead on determining community needs as part of the 2012-2015 strategic planning process. In 2012, OPL began using radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology to better streamline operations and improve customer service, and in 2013 the organization moved to a single-point-of-service (SPOS) model.

The purpose of this report is to present an updated Service Delivery Framework (“the SDF”) and to seek direction to establish a service planning and design team, as well as develop the approach, strategies, and frameworks that will underscore the implementation of the SDF going forward.

DISCUSSION

A service delivery framework is a foundational document that describes the overarching services offered by an organization, as well as the ways the public can access those services. It should help an organization to identify gaps in service, address inconsistencies in service levels, and determine effectiveness of service offerings. Ultimately, the SDF is an accountability tool, which will allow OPL to increase transparency in decision-making, and result in a more consistent and equitable service experience for customers.

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, OPL was required to close branches, and as a result, staff had to reimagine the way they delivered public services. As part of that planning, staff went back and looked at the 2003 Framework. It was clear that the 2003 Framework was inadequate for decision-making purposes, as it was out of date, defined a limited scope of services, and over-emphasized branch locations for delivering library services. To further assist with planning and research around COVID-19 service resumption, staff reviewed other key documents outlining public library services in Ontario: the Ontario Public Library Guidelines and the *PLA*.

The Ontario Public Library Guidelines are intended to help standardize (and, in some cases, improve) the quality of public library service across the province. These Guidelines provide a process for libraries to assess their governance, management, and services against best practices. Section 9.1 of the Ontario Public Library Guidelines was useful for OPL staff during the pandemic, as this section stresses the importance of library systems determining service levels, the nature of their services, and what will be offered to the public – as well as documenting these accordingly. Considering this, staff determined that the 2003 Framework was outdated and recognized the need for a refreshed service planning document.

The *PLA* requires all libraries in Ontario to provide certain services for free as described in Section 23.2: “*every board shall allow the public to, (a) reserve and borrow circulating materials that are prescribed or belong to a prescribed class¹; and (b) use reference and information services as the board considers practicable, without making any charge.*” These two services as described in the *PLA* are mandated services that OPL must provide as a public library in Ontario. Provincial funding via the Public Libraries Operating Grant (“PLOG”) is predicated on the provision of these two services, and the 2003 Framework focused almost exclusively on these two services. The *PLA*’s scope of services has not been revised in more than 30 years and is considered by many to be outdated; consequently, OPL’s 2003 Framework no longer reflects the wide variety of services expected in modern public library systems. OPL provides collections and information services free of charge, in keeping with the *PLA*, and additional services both for free (such as library programs), and for a fee (such as meeting room rentals).

¹ Prescribed classes include “books with hard, soft and paper covers, periodicals, newspapers, audio materials designed for the handicapped, sound recordings, audio and video cassettes, tape recordings, video discs, motion pictures, film strips, film loops, micro materials in all formats, computer software, and multi-media kits.” R.R.O. 1990, Reg. 976: Grants for public libraries
<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/900976/v2>

Overall, the 2003 Framework required updating, not only to ensure appropriate governance, but to enable effective service planning for modern public library needs. To complete this work, beginning in late in 2020, staff took a phased approach to review and revise the 2003 Framework. The following outlines the phases undertaken as well as status and results. It should be noted that while considerable progress has taken place in Phases 1-5, Phase 6 is predicated on approval from the Board prior to undertaking and completing the final components.

- Phase 1 (complete): Research best practices, followed by the development of an initial service inventory.
 - A review was undertaken of existing library service frameworks with a focus on those from Ontario, specifically the Ontario Public Library Guidelines, and the Toronto Public Library: Service Delivery Model (2017). As well, staff reviewed COVID recovery plans from several libraries, including Vaughan Public Library's COVID Recovery Strategy.
 - In late 2020 and early 2021, an inventory of existing services was developed (See Document 1); and a consulting firm was engaged in November 2020 to review the 2003 Service Framework and the new inventory, as well as assist in categorizing services.
- Phase 2 (complete): Definition of the scope of OPL's services and review and analysis of the service inventory.
 - Through conversations facilitated by the consultant in Q1 and Q2 2021, staff used the service inventory to further prioritize services and identify areas of potential partnership to provide or enhance services. Through these discussions, common themes emerged, as did the realization that OPL had seen a shift in service offerings during the pandemic, as virtual service offerings increased as a result.
- Phase 3 (complete): Development of Guiding Principles, as well as definitions of channels and services for the SDF.
 - With the service inventory completed, and the common service categories identified, staff determined that the SDF needed to include Guiding Principles, such that decisions could be made around focus and

prioritization of services. With the creation of the Guiding Principles, staff developed definitions for the services and channels that all align under common tenets.

- Phase 4 (ongoing): Engagement of employees to incorporate their feedback on the SDF.
 - A staff working group was developed to discuss and collect feedback on the work to-date. This group met regularly for over eight (8) weeks, discussing the service category themes, channel definitions, and general structure of the SDF. The feedback and notes collected from the working group members were reviewed by management and were subsequently incorporated into this report.
 - Recognizing that there are more opportunities to engage employees in the development of the strategies and frameworks, this phase is ongoing.
- Phase 5 (complete): Clarify relationship to other key strategic documents and frameworks.
 - With the Guiding Principles and the service category and channel definitions confirmed, staff next determined the ways by which key documents would interact as part of the SDF. It was determined that each of the categories and channels would need associated strategic documents, to guide staff when making decisions.
- Phase 6 (post-approval): Next steps – Establish a service planning and design team, as well as develop the approach, strategies, and frameworks associated with the SDF.
 - This Phase is described more fully in the section of this report called “Implementation in Phase 6”.

OPL Service Delivery Framework

There are several important differences between the SDF being proposed in this report and the 2003 Framework. To begin, and as per current OPL practice, staff are incorporating Guiding Principles into the SDF, to guide future service planning. Moreover, the proposed structure of the SDF sets it apart from the 2003 Framework,

because it includes two functional areas – service categories and service channels – which will allow OPL to be flexible and responsive to community needs. Specifically, the service category strategies and the service channel frameworks will provide staff with tools to guide decision-making and provide a greater clarity around OPLs services for the public. Another important part of what differentiates the SDF from the 2003 Framework is the recommendation to establish a service planning and design team, which will be responsible for overseeing and implementing the SDF.

Finally, staff are recommending that OPL Board Policy 10 – CEO Board Reporting and Monitoring, be amended to reflect that strategic frameworks (as described in the DOA) are reviewed a minimum of once per term of Board; specifically, the commitment to review and revise the SDF on an ongoing basis, so as to ensure that this document remains an active part of service delivery planning at OPL in the long-term. In addition to being an effective tool for OPL staff to use when designing and planning services, the SDF can be shared with residents, community groups, City partners, and funders as a basis for consultation on service development and delivery.

The SDF will:

- Be used by staff to guide the design, development, operation, standardization, and retirement of services;
- Conform to Ontario Public Library Guidelines and industry best practice;
- Underpin the development of respective strategies and frameworks, which will:
 - Support a consistent service experience
 - Empower employees to tailor services to meet community needs; and,
 - Respond to trends and needs with flexibility.

Considerations

While service delivery frameworks from other libraries and organizations were reviewed as part of the research described in Phase 1 (above), each organization is different, necessitating a service delivery model that is tailored to meet the distinctive needs of the community served. For OPL, most notable is Ottawa's geographic area of 2,760 sq. km, 80% of which is rural². In 2002, the library system was created as a result of municipal amalgamation, which saw the consolidation of 11 former library systems into

² "Rural Residents: Equity & Inclusion Lens Snapshot." https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/documents/files/rural_ss_en.pdf

one. In the past two decades, Ottawa has grown from a community of 774,072³, to more than 1,000,000 people, and by 2035 the population is expected to grow to more than 1.2 million⁴. As such, while reviewing service delivery plans from other organizations proved useful as part of the research phase of this work, the SDF presented here reflects the unique situation of OPL.

Additionally, it is important to note that the Board's Delegation of Authority Policy provides a structure through which to approve key strategic frameworks. For example, the Board has previously approved such documents as the Alternative Services Framework, the Content Services Framework, and the Financial Framework. Some of these documents interact with the SDF, and some will need to be revised for better alignment. For instance, because the Content Services Framework was approved prior to the development of the SDF, it will need to be amended to re-align with the structure of the SDF, which includes the development of service strategies.

Guiding Principles for Service Development

Given the considerations above, staff identified a need to develop Guiding Principles to provide parameters for service delivery. These Guiding Principles will inform staff decisions as they implement the SDF and conduct service design, planning, and assessment. These Guiding Principles influence services that the public interact with, rather than direct the ways in which staff operationalize those services behind the scenes.

Staff recommend that the Board approve the following Guiding Principles, that Services at OPL will be:

- Underpinned by OPL's vision, mission and values;
- Shaped by, and responsive to, community needs and trends;
- Influenced by technology and innovation; and,
- Governed by the fiscal environment and resources available.

The Framework

³ "Community Highlights for Ottawa"

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/english/profil01/CP01/Details/Page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=3506008&Geo2=PR&Code2=35&Data=Count&SearchText=Ottawa&SearchType=Begin&SearchPR=01&B1=All&Custom=>

⁴ "Socio-demographic Data and Population Projections." <https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/reports-research-and-statistics/sociodemographics.aspx#Data-Source-and-Notes-for-Figure-1>

The SDF identifies Service Categories and Service Channels for the delivery of public services to the community.

Service Channels

OPL has identified three (3) Service Channels through which its services are delivered: the Virtual Channel, the Facility Channel, and the Mobile Channel. These channels were part of the 2003 Framework, and while the Facility and Mobile channels have existed for decades and have been shaped over time, the Virtual Channel was still in its infancy in the early 2000s. This new SDF more strongly embeds the Virtual Channel, and balances service delivery across all three channels.

The SDF extends one step further and will include a decision-making tool for each Service Channel, which is something that was lacking in the 2003 Framework. Specifically, each Service Channel includes a broad definition and an associated Framework that staff will use to guide decision-making. In some cases, the Framework associated with the Service Channel has not yet been created (such as the Virtual Framework), while in other cases (such as the Alternative Services Framework), an existing document will need to be refreshed and amended to ensure alignment with the SDF.

Virtual Channel:

- Broad definition: The methods by which services are delivered in a virtual environment.
- Examples: Website, Social media, Email, Phone, Chat, etc.
- Key document: Virtual Framework (NEW – not yet developed)

Facility Channel:

- Broad definition: The methods by which services are delivered in-person at OPL locations.
- Examples: Central, District, Local, etc.
- Key document: Facilities Framework (In development)

Mobile Channel:

- Broad definition: The methods by which services are delivered in-person at other locations.

- Examples: Bookmobile, Homebound, Outreach, etc.
- Key document: Mobile Framework (currently named Alternative Services Framework – being refreshed via Ad hoc Committee)

The development and implementation of the Channel Frameworks has been included as part of the next phase of this project (Phase 6) and will be brought to the Board for approval as they are developed.

Service Categories

OPL has identified five (5) Service Categories, that group together like-services: Collections, Expertise, Programs, Spaces, and Tools. The Collections and Expertise categories are mandated by the *PLA* (as indicated earlier, and which is reflected in the services identified in the 2003 Framework), making these foundational services. In decision-making, these are the two services that OPL is committed to continuing under any and all circumstances. The remaining three categories (Programs, Spaces, and Tools) reflect modern service expectations of public libraries and have been identified as priority services that OPL will offer to the community. For clarity, should operational challenges arise, Collections and Expertise are the services that will be prioritized.

With the Board approving the Service Category definitions, staff will develop the Service Strategies, which are tactical documents that will guide the implementation and assessment of services. To align with the Guiding Principle that “Services will be shaped by, and responsive to, community needs and trends”, the Service Strategies will be informed by public input.

Each Service Strategy will consider the following:

- An outcome statement to guide the strategy;
- Defined standards and/or guidelines for specific services within the broader category;
- A description of how services are delivered via each Service Channel.
- A decision instrument to determine the addition of new services; and,
- An evaluation tool to measure progress in achieving the stated outcome, and to support decision-making with regards to increasing or decreasing existing services.

Collections Category:

- Broad Definition: Items in the catalogue
- Examples of Collections: Books, Musical instruments, DVDs, Chromebooks, Reference materials, Streaming service (e.g., Kanopy, Hoopla), eBooks, eAudiobooks, etc.
- Key document: Collections Strategy

Expertise Category:

- Broad Definition: Staff who support literacy and information needs
- Examples: Reader's Advisory, Research assistance, eReader support, Technology support, Account and membership support, etc.
- Key document: Expertise Strategy

Programs Category:

- Broad Definition: Intentionally-designed activities or events
- Examples: Babytime, Croisée des mots, Art exhibitions, Book clubs, Speaker series, etc.
- Key document: Programs Strategy

Spaces Category:

- Broad Definition: Defined areas for customer use
- Examples: Teen Zone, Meeting room, Reading Lounge, "Zoom" room, Comments section of catalogue, Computer lab, etc.
- Key document: Spaces Strategy

Tools Category:

- Broad Definition: Equipment or technology that is not in the catalogue
- Examples: Computers, Printers, Scanners, Toys, Microfilm readers, 3D printers, Audio-visual editing software, etc.
- Key document: Tools Strategy

In all cases, the strategy associated with each Service Category has not yet been created. The creation of the strategies has been included as part of the next phase of this project (Phase 6) and will be brought to the Board for information as they are developed.

Implementation (Phase 6)

As described earlier in this report, the next step (Phase 6) is implementation to establish a service planning and design team, as well as develop the approach, strategies, and frameworks associated with the SDF. This phase will ensure consistent and effective implementation of the SDF. When the 2003 Framework was approved, there was no mechanism to ensure it kept pace with public service needs. Therefore, to support the SDF, ensure consistency of development, and to keep it aligned with service requirements, a team will be charged with service planning and design for OPL.

This department will be responsible for applying the SDF from an operational perspective: 1) leading the development and implementation of the Service Strategies, 2) developing an approach to increase or decrease existing service levels, and 3) ensuring a strong service evaluation component. This will allow OPL to take a more holistic approach to service design, planning, and evaluation, will support data-driven decision-making, as well as incorporate assessment and evaluation into service planning. Moreover, this will ensure accountability with regards to resource allocation and improve transparency of service delivery decisions.

Upon Board approval of the recommendations in this report, staff will undertake a series of steps to complete and implement the SDF:

Implement Phase 6:

- a. Establish a service planning and design team that will lead and implement the SDF.
 - b. Complete the three (3) Service Channel Frameworks, and bring these Frameworks to the Board for approval
 - c. Develop the five (5) Service Strategies, incorporating public engagement where applicable, and bring these Strategies to the Board for information.
 - d. Ensure new frameworks, and revisions to existing frameworks, align with the new SDF.
2. Keep the Board apprised of progress of SDF implementation.
 3. Amend OPL Board Policy 10 to reflect the reporting out on the SDF at least once per term of Board.

CONSULTATION

As part of the development of the SDF, staff reviewed service delivery documents from other organizations, where available. From the library sector specifically, Toronto Public Library's Service Delivery Framework was consulted and reviewed. Staff also consulted with a working group consisting of approximately 20 employees from across multiple departments and positions, and integrated the information collected through those employee engagement sessions into discussion held with the Library Senior Management Team.

If approved by the Board, staff will undertake public engagement, where appropriate, as part of the creation of the Service Strategies.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Ottawa Public Library complies with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, (2005) in its operations. There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

BOARD PRIORITIES

The SDF supports the OPL value of *Integrity*: "We embody the principles of public stewardship, transparency, and accountability in our operations and interactions."

The SDF is also aligned with the Strategic Priority *Build Organizational Capacity*, specifically: "Develop data-driven decision-making".

BUSINESS ANALYSIS IMPLICATIONS

The development of the Service Strategies will include guidelines and performance measurement metrics, which will need to be collated and identified by staff.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The creation of the service design and planning team may have financial implications. Management will seek to staff this new department through internal restructuring; however, one additional full-time equivalent (FTE) may be required. Staff will report back to the Board on the status of the department creation, and any new FTEs will be requested through the next annual budget process.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

INDIGENOUS AND GENDER EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

There are no Indigenous or gender and equity implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Sample Service Inventory Table

Document 2 Visualization of SDF

DISPOSITION

Upon approval of this report, staff will:

1. Implement Phase 6:
 - a. Establish a service planning and design team that will lead and implement the SDF.
 - b. Complete the three (3) Service Channel Frameworks, and bring these Frameworks to the Board for approval
 - c. Develop the five (5) Service Strategies, incorporating public engagement where applicable, and bring these Strategies to the Board for information.
 - d. Ensure new frameworks, and revisions to existing frameworks, align with the new SDF.
2. Keep the Board apprised of progress of SDF implementation.
3. Amend OPL Board Policy 10 to reflect the reporting out on the SDF at least once per term of Board.