

Burlington Public Library

Building for Tomorrow Update
Strategic Directions 2005-2007

Approved November 17, 2005

Burlington Public Library

Building for Tomorrow Update, Strategic Directions 2005 - 2007

Table of Contents

Section	Page
Introduction	3
Burlington Public Library Vision, Mission & Values	4, 5
Strategic Directions 2005-2007	6
A Enhance awareness of the Library and make it a place that “rocks” for people – a destination.	
B Understand our community better and target our collections and services to meet their needs.	
C Make the Library more accessible, convenient, and welcoming.	
D Be a proactive, leading and effective organization.	
Approach to Implementation and Monitoring	14
Summary Table of Objectives & Strategies	15

Introduction

This document outlines the strategic directions of the Burlington Public Library for the period Fall 2005 to July 2007. The attached material reflects the key results of the strategic plan update process including results of the Board and Senior Management discussions on Saturday, October 22.

The process to update the Library's Strategic Directions included the following steps:

- Development of an environmental scan
- Review of library data
- Review of results of previous consultations including the City of Burlington Quality of Service Survey 2003 and recent library user feedback forms
- Consultation with selected groups of stakeholders. Focus groups were held as follows:
 1. Burlington Public Library Staff – Thursday, September 8, 2-4pm, Central Library, Holland Room
 2. Library Customers/Patrons: Session #1 – Monday, September 12, 10am–noon, Central Library, Holland Room
 3. Library Customers/Patrons: Session #2 – Tuesday, September 13, 7-9pm, Tansley Woods Library Programme Room
 4. Teens – Thursday, September 15, 7-9pm, Central Library, Program Room #1
 5. Community Groups – Tuesday, September 20, 7-9pm, Central Library, Holland Room
 6. City Councillors and Managers – Monday, October 3, 11am–1pm
- Library Board visioning session, September 19, 2005
- Management strategy development session, October 5, 2005
- Board/Senior Management strategy workshop, October 22, 2005

Burlington Public Library Vision, Mission & Values

The Board reviewed the Library's vision, mission and values and reaffirmed these for the upcoming planning period:

Long Term Vision

The Burlington Public Library of the future will be known for these features:

- **A Community Gathering Place**
- **Multiple Generations will feel Welcomed and Well-served**
- **Convenient, Accessible Customer Services**
- **The First Place to Look for Quality Information**
- **A Balance of "High Tech" and "High Touch" Services**
- **A High Profile in the Community**
- **A Flexible, Respected and Sustainable Organization**

Mission Statement

Burlington Public Library enriches, informs and educates the Burlington community.

The Library's Values

- **Accessibility** — We strive to provide barrier-free facilities, resources and programs that are accessible to all.
- **Accountability** — We are accountable to our community for the services we provide.
- **Creativity and Innovation** — We encourage and support creative approaches and innovative solutions in all aspects of library service.
- **Information and Literacy** — We believe in the importance of an informed and literate community.
- **Intellectual Freedom** — We subscribe to the basic principles of intellectual freedom and of the open exchange of information.
- **Life Long Learning** — We believe in providing resources and services that contribute to life long learning.
- **Love of Reading** — We nurture the joy of reading in people of all ages.
- **Quality of Services** — We value excellence in our customer services and collections.
- **Respect and Dignity** — We treat all people with respect and dignity.
- **Work Environment** — We believe in providing a safe and positive work environment that provides staff challenging opportunities to grow and develop, and to contribute.

Strategic Directions 2005-2007

The following strategic objectives will guide our work over the planning period of 2005 to mid 2007:

- A** Enhance awareness of the Library and make it a place that “rocks” for people – a destination

- B** Understand our community better and target our collections and services to meet their needs

- C** Make the Library more accessible, convenient, and welcoming

- D** Be a proactive, leading and effective organization

Specific strategies under each objective are outlined on the following pages. The top priority strategies (based on a Board/Senior Management priority-setting process) are:

Top Priority Strategies 2005-2007*

- B1. Build the Library’s understanding of its users and the community**
- C1. Optimize the hours of service**
- A1. Increase community group usage of the Library’s facilities, collections and services**
- C2. Complete the Facility Planning Study and initiate planning and design work on the chosen solution**
- D1. Implement strategies to ensure that the Library is an employer of choice**
- D2. Increase the Library’s capacity to develop and effectively implement new ideas within a shorter time frame**

*Listed in priority order. These priorities are highlighted on the following pages.

Objective A	Enhance awareness of the Library and make it a place that “rocks” for people – a destination.
--------------------	--

While the people of Burlington appreciate the Library and believe it is an important community service, it is clear that many are unaware of the Library and/or what it has to offer. In recent years there has been a drop-off in the percentage of Burlington residents who have a library card (i.e. membership in the Library has not kept pace with the growth in the community). There are concerns that users are unaware of the value-added services that the Library provides (e.g. access from home or in the Library to quality in-depth information provided through subscription-based electronic databases). There are also concerns that some groups, particularly youth, may not see the Library as relevant to their needs.

The Burlington community has made a significant capital investment in library facilities over the past few years. In recent years the Library’s programming has been somewhat constrained by the size and nature of its facilities. The time has now come to leverage the community’s investment in new facilities and to enhance the Library’s role as a community gathering place and a place that “rocks” for people – a destination.

Strategies

A1. Increase community group usage of the Library’s facilities, collections and services

- Investigate opportunities for co-promotion with organizations such as the City (Parks and Recreation), the café vendor and Tourism Burlington
- Promote awareness of library services (including collections, programs and facilities) to community groups.

A2. Enhance the Library's programming and special events

- Provide an increased number of core full library programs per year including for example: Book clubs; Author visits for schools; Computer basics training
- Provide an increased number of one-time current, topical programs per year (system-wide, all ages) (potentially in cooperation with partners) Planned topic areas for 2005/2006 include: Estate Planning, RESPs, Travel, Digital Cameras, Health
- Pilot and evaluate new programs for children and teens
- Develop a special events strategy

A3. Conduct outreach programs to schools, businesses and the City

In co-operation with Halinet, develop an agreement with the school boards to enhance interaction and partnership with the schools

- Increase the number of class visits to schools
- Pilot a homework help program
- Develop targeted information regarding the Library's services for businesses and City departments

A4. Develop a consistent logo and tag line for the Library

- Seek external assistance to support the development of a new tag line and visual identity for the Library

A5. Conduct a Library membership campaign for all Burlington residents

Desired Outcomes/Indicators

- Increased visitors
- New programs over-subscribed
- Different groups coming into the Library
- Full utilization of rooms
- Positive comments
- City Council and City staff more familiar with services
- Business community aware and using resources
- Existing users have broader awareness of services
- Increased number of active registered borrowers – up to 60% from 47%

Objective B

Understand our community better and target our collections and services to meet its needs.

The Burlington community is evolving from a suburban to urban community. The City's population is growing and changing. The population is aging, and as people age their library-related needs often change (e.g. need for more large print materials and supports for people with visual impairments, need for increased homebound service). At the same time many new young families are moving into the areas north of the QEW, and there is evidence to suggest that the newcomers to Burlington are from diverse backgrounds and may not be fully aware of the Library and what it has to offer.

Overall, patrons have higher expectations in terms of getting materials faster. There are growing concerns about ensuring that children and youth have strong literacy skills – particularly among young boys who have scored lower on provincial literacy tests. The Library recognizes the critical importance of continuing to develop a better understanding of the community and ensuring that its services, collections and resources are more responsive to the demographics of community and what customers want.

Strategies

B1. Build the Library's understanding of its users and the community

- Conduct detailed community research and consultation including a user and non-user survey
- Develop improved ongoing mechanisms for continuous feedback
- Investigate how to update customer information to ensure accuracy of demographic and geographic data (after implementation of the new Library Automation System – end of 2006)

B2. Complete the spending of capital material funds for Central Library and Brant Hills Branch Library

Burlington Public Library

Building for Tomorrow Update, 2005-2007

B3. Evaluate and implement ways of getting materials to patrons faster

Desired Outcomes/Indicators

- Detailed understanding of library users, non-users and community needs
- Completion of capital collection building for Brant Hills and Central
- Faster turnaround times for bestsellers/most requested items

Objective C	Make the Library more accessible, convenient, and welcoming.
--------------------	---

The Library recognizes the need to continue to enhance its services as the community grows. If the Library is to fully meet the needs of citizens it must address the needs of a growing community and a commuting community. A high percentage of the employed labour force commutes outside of the City daily and residents live extremely busy lives. There are also concerns that the Library must be accessible and welcoming to all of the community's citizens – particularly those with disabilities, those who may be unable to come to the Library and those who may not be comfortable or familiar with library services.

Strategies

C1. Optimize the hours of service

- Evaluate ways of extending evening and Sunday hours

C2. Complete the Facility Planning Study. Initiate planning and design work on the chosen option

C3. Enhance in-library customer service

- Investigate how to implement a roaming reference pilot project at Central

Desired Outcomes/Indicators

- More convenient open hours
- Expansion of service in the north over the long term
- More proactive customized service

Objective D **Be a proactive, leading and effective organization.**

With the completion of two major capital projects, the Library is now well-positioned to move ahead on a number of other initiatives. The Library's capacity to continue to move forward depends in large part on the strength of its staff and volunteers, its partnerships and its profile in the community. The Library needs to ensure that it is efficient, effective and innovative in its work and it needs to further develop its staff.

Strategies

D1. Implement strategies to ensure that the Library is an employer of choice

- Complete the Compensation Project including a new salary administration process and respond to ongoing market reviews
- Enhance training through increased investment in training
- Encourage and reward innovation and develop an ongoing meaningful staff recognition plan
- Develop and implement a succession plan

D2. Increase the Library's capacity to develop and effectively implement new ideas within a shorter time frame

- Establish a BPL Innovation Forum (including quarterly think tanks in department meetings)
- Develop an improved approach to manage idea implementation
- Evaluate ways of further empowering staff and decentralizing decision-making

D3. Enhance the Library's leadership profile within the community

- Hold an annual networking and reporting session for City Council
- Define community outreach responsibilities for all managers and Board members

D4. Enhance partnerships and cooperation with the City

- Sustain, and where appropriate, increase partnering with City departments such as Human Resources, Finance, Information Technology and Facilities Management.
 - Establish BPL as a leading cultural institution in the City's cultural strategy.
 - Increase support for the Heritage Umbrella Group (HUG)
 - Participate in the City's Art in Public Places initiative.
 - Seek opportunities to increase participation of BPL managers/staff on relevant City committees
 - Participate in the City's next Strategic Plan process

D5. Ensure an effective information technology infrastructure

- Implement the new Library Automation System
- Implement the Wide Area Network upgrade
- Implement an IT evaluation and review process

Desired Outcomes/Indicators

- New ideas can be taken from conception to implementation in 6 months
- Library Board and staff are playing leading/active roles in community organizations
- Increased sharing of resources with the City
- The Library plays strong role at the City's planning table
- Stable technology
- Succession plan in place and updated regularly

Approach to Implementation and Monitoring

The approach to strategy implementation and monitoring has been designed to ensure action.

- **Preparation of Implementation Plan.** The Library's management team will take these directions and translate them into action by preparing a more detailed implementation plan. This implementation plan will identify the specific tasks that the Library will undertake along with timelines and responsibilities.
- **Development of a new Performance Benchmarking system.** The Library will develop a new set of core benchmark indicators to enable assessment of the Library's progress relative to the identified desired outcomes.
- **Monthly Progress Quick Updates.** The Library's management team will produce a short monthly report on strategic plan implementation issues (i.e. identify variances relative to planned progress). If implementation is on track the report will simply note this. This report will provide the means for management to alert the Board regarding any implementation issues.
- **Biannual Progress Reports.** The Library's management team will produce a more detailed report on progress twice a year (every 6 months – January and June)
- **Annual Review and Report.** On an annual basis, the Library will review and report on its results/performance. During this process, the environmental scan will be updated and new challenges and issues which the Library needs to address will be discussed.

Summary of Strategic Directions

Strategic Objective	A	B	C	D
Strategies	<p>Enhance awareness of the Library and make it a place that “rocks” for people – a destination</p> <p>A1. Increase community group usage of the Library’s facilities, collections and services A2. Enhance the Library’s programming and special events A3. Conduct targeted outreach to schools, businesses and the City A4. Develop a consistent logo and tag line for the Library A5. Conduct a Library membership campaign for all Burlington residents</p>	<p>Understand our community better and target our collections and services to meet their needs</p> <p>B1. Build the Library’s understanding of its users and the community B2. Complete the spending of capital material funds for Central Library and Brant Hills Branch Library B3. Evaluate and implement ways of getting materials to patrons faster</p>	<p>Make the Library more accessible, convenient, and welcoming</p> <p>C1. Optimize the hours of service C2. Complete the Facility Planning Study. Initiate planning and design work on the chosen option C3. Enhance in-library customer service</p>	<p>Be a proactive, leading and effective organization</p> <p>D1. Implement strategies to ensure that the Library is an employer of choice D2. Increase the Library’s capacity to develop and effectively implement new ideas within a shorter time frame D3. Enhance the Library’s leadership profile within in the community D4. Enhance partnerships and cooperation with the City D5. Ensure an effective information technology infrastructure</p>

Priority Strategies as identified at the October 22nd planning session are highlighted.