

Purpose

- To guide staff in the acquisition of material that is of current interest and/or lasting value to existing and future Library users.
- To familiarize Library users with the principals upon which selection decisions are made and for how reconsideration is handled for Burlington Public Library collections.
- To outline a process to handle objections or requests to purchase items for the collection.

Summary

The selection of materials for the Library is driven by principals defined in the [Library's Mission Statement](#).

Ongoing material selection activities are founded on staff familiarity with existing collections, their awareness of the needs of Library users, and their knowledge of retrospective, current and future trends in informational and recreational materials suitable for public library use.

Except where limited by law, children are entitled to borrowing privileges and open and ready access to materials and facilities provided by the Library. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for monitoring and limiting the use of Library materials by their children.

The Library endeavors to provide equitable access to its extensive collections through a multi-tiered service delivery model which rationalizes the location, scope and focus of collections. In addition, items may be delivered to any branch at the user's request. The Library materials budget is maximized through coordinated and controlled expenditure.

Statement of Policy

The selection of Library materials is driven by the principals defined in the Library's Mission Statement and anchored in intellectual freedom as defined in [Section 2\(b\) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms](#) which guarantees everyone the freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication. The Library endeavors to build inclusive and diverse collections through a wide array of authors, content and formats.

The Library selects:

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- contemporary materials representing varying points of view and which are of current interest and possible future significance, including materials which reflect current conditions, trends and controversies;
 - source materials and thoughtful interpretations which document or shed light on the past;
 - materials that inform and increase an individual's ability to function effectively as a member of society;
 - materials that provide an aesthetic experience, stimulate the imagination and increase an individual's potential creativity;
 - materials that expand an individual's understanding of the world in which they live;
 - materials in the two official languages, English and French, as well as materials which reflect the diverse linguistic or cultural heritage of the Burlington community;
 - materials that entertain and may enhance an individual's enjoyment of life;
 - textbooks and curriculum-related works when they are considered to be useful as an introduction to a subject, are the only source of information, or because their content is considered essential to a library collection.

Staff selection activities are supported by attention to review media, bibliographies and reviewing tools, consultation with the publishing industry, authoritative discussions of genres or subject areas, and recommendations from Library users. Activities are responsibly exercised within the context of available funds.

Special consideration is given to materials with Canadian content, that record the Canadian experience or that relate to life in Canada or the lives and works of Canadians.

Burlington Public Library complies with any law enacted at the federal, provincial or municipal level, and therefore does not collect or maintain items which have been judged obscene or pornographic, or have been banned by the courts, the relevant sections of the [Criminal Code of Canada](#) are: sedition, hate propaganda and obscenity.

No materials are excluded from selection solely because of "race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, age, record of offenses, marital status,

disability, family status, sex, sexual orientation and/or receipt of public assistance” ([Ontario Human Rights Code](#)) of the creator of work.

No materials are excluded from selection solely because they may come into the possession of a child.

In adopting this Policy, the Burlington Public Library Board and staff endorse the statements of the [Canadian Federation of Library Associations](#) and of the [Ontario Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom and the Individual](#) , [Position on Children’s Rights In the Library, and Teen’s Rights in the Public Library](#)

Scope

The materials Selection Policy applies to all formats including print, non-print, audio-visual and electronic materials.

This policy applies to any Library staff or organization that undertakes the selection or withdrawal of materials for the Library’s collections and to all Library staff involved with accepting and evaluating gifts to the branch collections.

Specific Directives

1. Selection Criteria

Some or all of the following criteria may be taken into consideration during the selection process for all materials, whether purchased or donated:

- Anticipated or expressed needs and interests of Burlington’s diverse community;
- Representation of Canadian and/or local perspective;
- Reputation and/or significance of the author/illustrator/publisher;
- Skill, competence and purpose of the author/illustrator/publisher;
- Artistic presentation and experimentation;
- Comments of professional and independent critics and reviewers;
- Accuracy, authority and objectivity of the work;
- Representation of popular or important movements, genres or trends;
- Suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audiences;
- Format of material, technical quality, and/or effectiveness of medium to content;
- Insight into human and social condition;
- Importance as a document of the times;
- Relationship to the existing collection;

- Budgetary considerations;
- Suitability of physical form for library use;
- Physical limitations of the buildings.

Selection guidelines for digital resources also includes:

- Ease of access;
- Hardware / Network requirements;
- Comparison of content with other available formats;
- Licensing requirements;
- Staff training and customer assistance requirements
- Cost considerations in relation to the overall development of the collection.

2. New Formats

Careful consideration is given to the introduction of new formats to library collections. Budget considerations, community needs and the probable impact on existing resources are all reviewed before items are selected and introduced to collections in a new format.

The selection of material in any new format may result in the Library's decision to retire specific items or material formats from its collections in order to responsibly accommodate trends in user demands and/or changes in technology.

3. Withdrawal Activities

Selected materials are regularly assessed for their condition, accuracy, currency and usage, within the context of the library collection, and relevance to Library users. The withdrawal of materials from any collection is a formal process conducted by knowledgeable staff, according to written guidelines, as a necessary means to maintain collection vitality, size and scope.

An item that is subject of a libel action of which the Library becomes aware will be removed from the collection until the action is finally resolved when, depending on the outcome of the action, it will be returned to the collection or permanently withdrawn.

4. No Endorsement of Content

Selection of an item for a library collection does not constitute endorsement by the Library of either the content or viewpoint expressed in that item.

5. Access to Collections

- a) Honouring the legal requirements of the [Film Content Information Act](#), the Library may restrict the availability of material where applicable.
- b) The Library may control the use of any collection material in order to protect items deemed susceptible to theft or damage by users, or to ensure the widest possible use of materials by Library customers.
- c) The Library does not mark selected materials in order to indicate approval or disapproval of item contents or attempt to expurgate information contained in selected items.
- d) Burlington Public Library actively participates in resource sharing for the benefit of library customers. As such, the Library may enter into partnerships with other libraries and organizations to assist in providing increased access to collections. Details of any partnerships will be outlined through operational procedures.

6. Gifts and Donations

- a) The same criteria and guidelines that apply to the selection of all Library materials are used to evaluate gifts. It is understood that gifts are freely given without conditions attached, unless specifically negotiated beforehand, and that all donations will be used or disposed of as the Library deems appropriate.
- b) Tax receipts are issued by Burlington Public Library only for items that meet the selection guidelines and are accepted into the collection.
- c) Gift Copies from Local Authors: In an effort to support local authors, recording artists and film makers, we accept gift copies of their work as long as they are submitted in a format currently supported and align to collection development criteria. The library cannot accept imposed conditions relating to any item after its acceptance (e.g. consignment, return). Items that are not added to the collection are not returned, but rather discarded or sold. Items are considered for inclusion

according to the Library's selection criteria. The [Local Author Form](#) can be found on the Library's website.

7. Local History Collection

The Library has a particular interest in local history and takes broad views of work about Burlington and works by local authors, whether or not such materials meet the standards of selection in other respects. However, the Library is not under any obligation to add to its collection everything about the area or produced by local authors, printers or publishers if it does not seem to be in the public interest. The Library will endeavor to not duplicate municipal resources.

Gifts to Local History Collection: Gifts in this case are defined as original works or works of significant historical value being offered to the Library at no charge. We have a mandate to collect and preserve valuable items that pertain to Burlington's past and its culture. Local History Collections will accept historical material of any medium including: textual records; photographs and other visual records; maps, plans and architectural records; and sound recordings and oral history recordings. Valuable items on Burlington's past are evaluated by staff in our Collections department before being accepted.

8. Customer Requests

- a. Library users may place formal requests for the purchase of collection materials by completing a form provided by the Library.
- b. All customer suggested purchases are reviewed by Library staff who apply the same selection criteria that are applied to all materials purchased by the Library.
- c. The originator of a request will be notified of the Library's selection decision.

9. Reconsideration of Materials

- a. The Library believes that a vital society encourages members of its community to actively participate in an open exchange of ideas and opinions. Material selectors consequently strive to provide the widest possible range of resources within Burlington Public Library collections.

- b. The content or manner of expressing ideas in material that is purposely selected to fill the needs of some Library users, may be considered to be offensive by other Library users. The Library recognizes the right of any individual or group to reject library material for personal use but does not accord to any individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of that same material.
- c. Library users who object to materials located in the collection are asked to complete a written request for the reconsideration of the materials. Request forms are available for this purpose at all Library branches or can be requested online via [Contact Us](#).
- d. Decisions made about challenged materials will be communicated to the originators of the requests following completion of a formal staff review. The final decision on any challenge to the collection rests with the CEO.
- e. An annual report on challenges to Library materials is provided to the Board.
- f. Some of the Library's digital content is provided using third-party vendors. The Library subscribes to services in which the third-party vendor, and not Library staff, determines the specific titles or materials made available through the service. In these circumstances, the Library is unable to reconsider specific materials that Library users object to but may inform the third-party vendor of user concerns and/or take these concerns into consideration in determining whether to continue using the vendor.

Accountability

The responsibility for selection of materials is vested in the office of the CEO which delegated this professional activity to qualified and knowledgeable staff.

Appendices

Appendix 1: References

Federal Legislation

[Criminal Code of Canada](#)

Provincial Legislation

[Film Content Information Act, 2020, S.O. 2020, c. 36, Sched. 12\(Ontario.ca\)](#) as updated.

[Ontario Human Rights Code, 1990, c. H.19](#) as updated.

Public Library Policies

[Toronto Public Library Materials Selection Policy](#)

[Hamilton Public Library Collections Policy](#)

[Oakville Public Library Collections Development Policy](#)

Appendix: Definitions

Materials:

All of the items that comprise library collections regardless of format.

Collections:

The various holdings of the Library organized by category, e.g. fiction collection, French collection

Format:

The medium in which information is presented, e.g. a book, DVD, e-video

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Projected Review Date: 2018

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#21-65, Nov 25, 2021

Associated Procedures:

