



# Planning Policy

## Statement of Purpose

Library planning is the major responsibility of the Perth East Public Library Board, as mandated in the *Public Libraries Act*, RSO 1990, c. P44, s. 20 (a) “A board shall seek to provide, in co-operation with other boards, a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community’s unique needs.”

## General Policies

- The planning process follows a cycle of: assessing client needs in the community; reviewing the mission statement, goals and objectives; reviewing the services of the library with regard to assessed client needs and thus determining the role of the Library in the community; setting objectives and preparing strategic plans; implementing the strategic plan; and monitoring, evaluating and reviewing the strategic plan.
- The planning process may be used to develop long-term plans (usually in the form of a strategic plan of development for the Library for a 3-5 year period) and short-term plans (objectives and action plans tied to the annual budget)
- The Board must approve all plans for the Library before the plans can be implemented.
- Planning involves assessing the needs of the community and the role the Library will play in meeting those needs, and thus the community has a right and a responsibility to be involved.

## Planning Committee

The Perth East Public Library Board will establish a Strategic Planning Committee made up of members of the board and the Library CEO and any other members who the board deems appropriate (e.g. members of the public, municipal staff, etc.). Initiation of the Strategic Planning Committee, and the terms of reference (see below) must be authorised by Board.

The terms of reference of the Strategic Planning Committee are:

### Background

Reference to the Public Libraries Act rationalizes the requirement for formal planning and establishment of the Planning Committee. Other background information to be considered includes the previous strategic plan, the mission statement, policies and procedures, and the budget proposals.

### Purpose

The Planning Committee will prepare a **5-year** plan for the Library and will oversee the community needs assessment.

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## Resources

The Committee may require special funding for data collection.

## Reporting schedule

Reports (summarizing activity-to-date and recommendations) to the Board are required at each major step in the planning process (i.e. mission statement, community needs assessment, etc.). Board approval should be received at these steps.

## Mission Statement

Mission statements, sometimes referred to as the 'statement of purpose', provide an overall theoretical framework on which subsequent planning can be based. A mission statement will be formulated, regularly reviewed and adhered to by the Perth East Public Library Board.

In the mission statement, the Board must describe as explicitly and concisely as possible its philosophical understanding of the library service that it intends to provide in the community for which it has been established.

- With guidance from staff, the mission statement must be revised by the Strategic Planning Committee.
- The mission statement must be approved by the Board.
- The mission statement must be reviewed at least every **five** years.
- The mission statement will be clearly declared at the front of the Policy manual and on the Library website.

## Situational Analysis

Community needs, with regard to Library services, must be determined as part of the planning process conducted by the Perth East Public Library Board.

- A 'community needs assessment' must be conducted every **five** years.
- A Library 'profile' (a review of the current state of the library services and costs) must also be collected as part of the information base to help in planning. The objective of the Library profile is to determine how responsive services are to the community. The profile is put together through the analysis of data derived from such sources as:
  - Input measures (e.g. volume of resources coming into the library to support a programme or service. Data are also gathered on library income (e.g. grants) and the uses to which it is put (e.g., hours open, volumes held, volumes added).
  - Output measures (e.g. the magnitude of service provided by the library. Data are gathered on such items as active registration, circulation, in-library use of materials, reference transactions and attendance at programmes.)
- The community needs assessment and the Library profile will be used in the planning process to determine the role of the Library in the community (e.g. information centre, education support centre, popular materials resource, learning for pre-schoolers, reference source, etc.)

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## Strategic Plan

A written Strategic Plan must be formulated at least once in each term of the Perth East Public Library Board.

- In developing strategic plans, the Strategic Planning Committee will consider: developing new services or operations; maintaining or improving the quality of an existing service or operation; and eliminating or minimizing existing problems.
- A major task for the Strategic Planning Committee is the preparation of the Strategic Plan document that draws the collected information together. The two major purposes of the planning document are to: record the findings and recommendations of the Planning Committee; and communicate this information to the Board, the municipal council and the community.
- The CEO or a designate will draft an initial version of the Strategic Plan for discussion by the Strategic Planning Committee.
- The Strategic Planning Committee will make any changes and forward the Strategic Plan to the Board for approval.

## Implementation of the Strategic Plan

The Perth East Public Library Board will oversee implementation of the Strategic Plan.

- After Board approval is obtained, it is the role of the staff, in consultation with the Board, to implement the Strategic Plan.
- Implementation of the plan involves:
  - Revising and developing policies: Policies are rules of conduct created to implement plans that have been established to realize objectives. Every policy statement made by the Board is a public assertion of the way in which it interprets its role in the community.
  - Revising and developing procedures: After policies are set by the Board, library staff can develop procedures and make decisions within the realm of established policies. Procedures are specific directions, established by the staff, to implement the library policies. Procedures provide a clear list of tasks to be completed and the order in which they are to be done.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Strategic Plans must be continuously monitored, evaluated and reviewed by the Perth East Public Library Board.

- The Strategic Plan must be monitored continuously (at least annually) by the Board to check that the tasks are being accomplished according to the timetable and that problems are detected and remedied at an early stage.
- Revisions to the Strategic Plan, if any are necessary, must be documented and reported to the Board.
- After the review of revisions, the Board must establish the Library's priorities for the next period and assess and revise the Strategic Plan again, if necessary.

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- The review process must precede the Library's budgeting process (i.e. the review process must occur before the end of the calendar year). This enables new objectives and activities to be implemented in line with the fiscal year.

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