

## HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

**Strategic Planning Session  
Wednesday, December 1, 2004  
Central Library, Hamilton Wentworth Room**

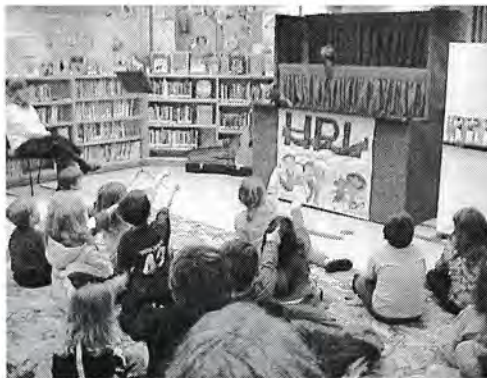
5:30 p.m. Dinner  
6:00 p.m. Meeting

### AGENDA

Reading Material in preparation for session

1. Hamilton Public Library Strategic Plan 2004
2. Branch Libraries: The Heartbeat of the Community
3. City of Hamilton Citizen Satisfaction Survey – Executive Summary
4. Hamilton Public Library Environmental Scan – November 2004
5. Urban Stories: The Next Chapter – Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan 2004-2007

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2004



# THE HAMILTON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

## A SUMMARY OF THE BOARD'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR 2004

### MISSION

The Hamilton Public Library unites people and ideas in a warm and welcoming environment. The library's staff, collections, and access to global electronic resources help to enrich the lives of individuals. The library actively champions literacy, access to information and the joy of reading.

### VALUES

#### **Intellectual Freedom**

We provide individuals with access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity, and intellectual activity.

#### **Inclusiveness**

We work with our diverse communities to encourage library use.

#### **Innovation**

We anticipate and respond to the changing needs of our communities.

#### **Respect**

We listen and respond to diverse opinions, foster understanding and protect the dignity of individuals.

#### **Accountability**

We ensure that library services are vital and relevant to our community and to people's lives.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY: EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

Library branches and the Central Library are each community places for neighbours to meet and for ideas to be shared. Libraries incite pride and delight. While our libraries have much in common and provide consistent core services, a good community library reflects unique aspects of its surrounding neighbourhood. The Hamilton Public Library supports community development.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY: CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

The Hamilton Public Library will encourage people to use their public library's resources. The library system will serve people in ways that are relevant to their unique circumstances. Diversity, to some, means simply that Canadian residents come from a variety of languages, ethnic backgrounds and experiences. For the Hamilton Public Library, diversity also recognizes differing reading abilities and ways of understanding information as well as other unique needs of the people we serve.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY: STRENGTHEN OUR ORGANIZATION

The Hamilton Public Library will grow and improve through ongoing renewal. We believe that the library is a growing organism. We will ensure that the human and financial resources available to us continue to provide the best possible service to our community and its residents.

## Our Future

A 2003 international report on the world's libraries begins with the sweeping comment that "rapid transformations, particularly in the technological sphere of the public world, are more profound and more frequent than at any other time in humanity's history . . . "Change" is made up of so many events, inventions, ideas, replacements, introductions, alterations and modifications that the complexity of the environment overwhelms vocabulary."<sup>1</sup> The report suggests that even the Oracle at Delphi would decline any attempt to predict our future. While much of the change we endure may be fueled by technology, technology itself is not the issue. The question is how we, as a service-driven organization, respond to changes that swirl around us.

Numerous studies suggest that the lives of many people no longer separate into tidy chunks labeled school and work and leisure. People work while commuting, attend school while sitting in their homes, and take leisure far differently than was the case even a few years ago. The increasing desire for "convenience" is pervasive. School, public, and academic libraries must, in the future, work together to create seamless services that match the ways people live. The current Hamilton Public Library is a good community partner. The future Hamilton Public Library will be even more integrated within community, provincial and national initiatives.

The Hamilton Public Library of the future must also ensure that the design of our organization is as important as the design of our facilities and our collections. We must improve our institution's ability to be flexible and nimble. We believe that stability and sustainability can only be ensured by remaining relevant, responsive and open to creativity.

We will need an anchor, and our anchor will remain the fundamental reasons that libraries came to exist. We will ensure that all Hamilton residents can access the information and resources they need in order to support and to enrich their lives. We will ensure that the many voices and opinions of our community and world can be heard. We will reach out to those in need.

There is an abundance of evidence showing that the term "library" represents, for most people, a safe haven that helps them to make sense of a complex world. We are aware that the public places this same trust in library services that are delivered electronically. Public trust and confidence comes for many reasons, one of which is the knowledge and expertise of our staff. We have to ensure that staff continue to have the tools needed to provide excellent service.

The Hamilton Public Library Board has identified three priorities - *Empower Communities, Celebrate Diversity, and Strengthen Our Organization*. The 2004 Strategic Plan lists specific goals that are illustrative of how staff will act to advance these priorities. At the same time, the 2004 Strategic Plan is merely a snapshot, showing staff goals as they exist in the Spring of a long year. The Hamilton Public Library Board empowers staff to adjust specific goals when better opportunities arise. There are places, within the Strategic Plan, where one or two lines of text reflect incredible amounts of work. For example, migrating to an new integrated automation system requires enormous work by our Electronic Services staff and also creates the need to re-train virtually all staff members.

The Hamilton Public Library Board believes in continuous improvement and a continuous strategic planning process. The Board's 2004 strategic plan will be updated through the monthly strategic reports that the board receives. A schedule for these reports can be found on page 8. You may, if you wish, connect to strategic reports that relate to specific aspects of the library's service through the library's website at [www.hpl.ca](http://www.hpl.ca).

The Hamilton Public Library has been enduring the difficult amalgamation of three former independent library systems. The success of the future Hamilton Public Library will depend both on the new organization we build and on our ability to amalgamate traditional public library services with the best of future possibilities.

Ken Roberts,  
Chief Librarian

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<sup>1</sup> 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan ([www.oclc.org/membership/escan/default.html](http://www.oclc.org/membership/escan/default.html))



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## EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

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*Library branches and the Central Library are places for neighbours to meet and for ideas to be shared. Libraries incite pride and delight. While our libraries have much in common and provide consistent core services, a good community library reflects unique aspects of its surrounding neighbourhood. The Hamilton Public Library supports community development.*

*To accomplish this goal staff initiatives include:*

- Develop branch library collection profiles that allow branches to reflect their surroundings (SOURCE: *Collections workplan 2004*)
- Propose, to the Library Board, a process for developing a Service/Capital Master Plan by the end of the year. (SOURCE: *Board direction, November 2003*). In advance of such a plan, staff will:
  - Advance the south mountain library facility and investigate its potential impact on the services provided by other library branches. (SOURCE: *Approved Capital project, design stage*)
  - Develop a plan to implement the final recommendations of the Central Library Review process (SOURCE: *Central Library Services Review Report to the Board, November, 2003*).
  - Review library services to the growing population of eastern Flamborough (SOURCE: *New*)
  - Initiate the potential renovation and expansion of the Ancaster library. (SOURCE: *Approved Capital project*)
  - Investigate the possibility of developing a stronger Young Adult orientation within the Saltfleet Branch. (SOURCE: *New*)
- Migrate the library's integrated automation system to the "Horizon" product, creating greater public capabilities (SOURCE: *Technology Report to Board, June, 2003*)
- Act as a strong partner in the Connect Hamilton – Create Community project, using library expertise to assist with the community/rural portal (SOURCE: *Technology Report to Board, June, 2003*).
- Develop and promote adult readers' advisory services through initiatives as *Hamilton Reads* (SOURCE: *New*)
- Conduct a facilities audit of the branch libraries to identify and prioritize branch renovations required as the result of changed processes, ergonomic requirements and merchandising initiatives (SOURCE: *New*)

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## CELEBRATE DIVERSITY

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*The Hamilton Public Library will encourage people to use their public library's resources. The library's system will serve people in ways that are relevant to their unique circumstances. Diversity, to some, means simply that Canadian residents come from a variety of languages, ethnic backgrounds and experiences. For the Hamilton Public Library, diversity also recognizes differing reading abilities and ways of understanding information as well as other unique needs of the people we serve.*

*To accomplish this goal staff initiatives include:*

### **Ask people what they need from their public library system**

- Consult with stakeholders and the general public about the possibilities and opportunities that the re-vitalization of the Central Library presents, including identifying the appropriateness and relevance of the collections to the customers. (SOURCE: *Central Library Services Review Report to the Board, November, 2003*)
- Evaluate data from "Opening Doors", a national survey intended to determine children's reading habits and their use of the public library, and incorporate findings in the Youth Services Report to the Board for 2004 (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*)
- Conduct a web services assessment study of the library's website and make necessary modifications (SOURCE: *Technology Report to Board, June, 2003*)
- Conduct a research study to measure the effectiveness of the library's summer reading program (SOURCE: *New*)

### **Design services for groups that may not be utilizing the library system**

- Enter into a formal partnership with Community Action Program for Children for the delivery of Summer Reading Program components, family literacy programs, and other programs of mutual interest in the east end of the city (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*)
- Increase use of the library and its resources by newcomer families through the Multicultural Early Learning Development (MELD) project and other initiatives. (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003; Central Library Services Review, 2003*)
- Promote library services and collections for young families at local Early Years Centres, community satellite centres and daycare centres (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*)
- Work with City of Hamilton Public Health and Community Services Departments on programs that reach fathers and promote reading (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*)
- Consolidate and strengthen the multilingual collections appropriate to the most recent immigrant groups at the Central Library and selected branches. (Source: *Meeting User Needs: Our Collection Responsibilities, 2003 Central Library Services Review, 2003*.)
- Increase awareness and use of the Library's Employment and Career information resources through continued partnering with HRDC and new projects such as the *Options for Women* conference to provide relevant support to key target groups of this community (SOURCE: *New*)

- Re-introduce and evaluate library-related programs for adults at selected locations (SOURCE: *New*)
- Expand the Visiting Library Service throughout the entire city (SOURCE: *Hamilton Public Library Transition Team Report, 2001*)

**Increase student awareness and use of the library system**

- Pilot an after-school Homework program in at least one library location (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*)
- Increase curriculum related support services for students and teachers in elementary school grades (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*)
- Identify and promote library print and electronic collections that support High School curriculum core courses. (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*)
- Establish a Central Library Youth Advisory Group (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*).
- Include a higher emphasis on school-related material in Collection profiles (SOURCE: *Meeting User Meets II: Our Collection Responsibilities, March, 2003*)

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## STRENGTHEN OUR ORGANIZATION

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*The Hamilton Public Library will grow and improve through ongoing renewal. We believe that the library is a growing organism. We will ensure that the human and financial resources available to us continue to provide the best possible service to our community and its residents.*

*To accomplish this goal staff initiatives include:*

### **Promote the library system as a single entity**

- Celebrate our achievements as a unified library system by enacting our Communications Plan (SOURCE: *Communication Plan to Board, February, 2003*)
- Unify the look of our external signage (SOURCE: *2003 Interim Strategic Plan*)
- Encourage dialogue between the Library Board, staff, and the various “Friends” groups in order to clarify the role of the Friends of the Hamilton Public Library (SOURCE: *New*)
- Manage the collection as one cohesive resource applying the principles of stewardship. (SOURCE: *Meeting User Needs II: Our Collection Responsibilities, 2003*)

### **Strengthen the organizational culture of the library system**

- Ensure that the new Collective Agreement is uniformly understood and applied (SOURCE: *New*)
- Develop recruitment and orientation strategies for new employees (SOURCE: *New*)
- Work with our bargaining agent to begin the process of adopting a new pay equity/job evaluation plan (SOURCE: *Collective Agreement*).
- Create a new work team for youth services (SOURCE: *Youth Services Report to Board, November, 2003*).
- Re-define the role of library professionals, expanding their opportunities for community outreach and renewal (SOURCE: *Central Library Services Review Report to the Board, November, 2003*)

### **Strengthen the Management Culture of the library system**

- Complete processes of clarifying how organizational decisions are made, emphasizing the need to encourage accountability for all managers in operational decisions. (SOURCE: *Continuation of 2003 Interim Strategic Plan*)
- Ensure that managers have appropriate documentation to ensure consistency in operational decision-making. (SOURCE: *New*)
- Introduce annual “work plans” for all management staff members (SOURCE: *2003 Interim Strategic Plan*)
- Develop process to update performance appraisals and to establish a foundation for succession planning through the ongoing development of management staff. (SOURCE: *New*)



- o Improve the library's Intranet as a place for management tools and resources as well as management discussion forums (*SOURCE:New*)
- o Encourage participation in professional activities and development (*SOURCE:New*)

**Maintain support services that are capable of delivering the library's services**

- o Improve the general level of cleanliness of the Central Library (*SOURCE: Central Library Services Review Report to the Board, November, 2003*)
- o Negotiate a Facilities Service Level Agreement with the City of Hamilton, with measures for maintaining and improving our buildings. (*SOURCE:2003 Strategic Plan*)
- o Negotiate a Human Resources Service Level Agreement with the City of Hamilton, clearly defining the services that we are to provide our staff and services that may be provided through the City of Hamilton (*SOURCE:2003 Strategic Plan*)
- o Participate in a consortium of large Ontario public libraries designed to explore the potential savings of purchasing electronic resources together (*SOURCE:New*)
- o Plan for the timely replacement of owned computer equipment as part of the 2005 operating budget (*SOURCE: Technology Report to Board, June, 2003*)

## **MONTHLY STRATEGIC REPORTS**

Monthly strategic reports are designed to provide the Library Board with information on the health and future priorities of various aspects of the library's service. The monthly strategic reports also outline the general workplans that will guide activities over the next 18 months to two years. The monthly strategic reports will allow the board to develop each year's overall strategic plan having already discussed the activities and directions being taken by various service components.

- o **March, 2004 – Collections/Facilities**
- o **April, 2004 – Board Orientation**
- o **May, 2004 – Adult Services**
- o **June, 2004 – Electronic Services/Facilities**
- o **September, 2004 – Communications**
- o **October, 2004 – Human Resources/Training**
- o **November, 2004 – Youth Services**
- o **November and December, 2004 - Strategic Plan for 2005**



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## CHAPTER 2

{ *Chicago, Illinois* }

## Branch Libraries

### The Heartbeat of the Community

Among the predictions made in the mid-1990s about the influence that the Internet was likely to have on society was the idea that public libraries would lose their importance and might even disappear altogether. With limitless information available online, including the texts of books, why would people bother going to libraries, and why would government continue to fund them? A well-documented long-term decline in reading was already having an effect on libraries. In Chicago, circulation fell and budgets were cut all through the 1970s and 1980s. Staffing was reduced and hours of operation were shortened. In the late 1980s, the temporary home of the central library was torn down and the collection divided among other temporary sites. It seemed the growth of the Internet would be the final blow. In a 1998 *American Prospect* article called "Will Libraries Survive?" linguist Geoffrey Nunberg presented the doomsayers' case:

A 1998 Commerce Department study found that 62 million people are using the Internet, and other estimates put the figure still higher. Most of these . . . are people who already use the public library less often than their parents did for purposes of obtaining recreational and instructive reading. Now they no longer need to rely on the library even for the sorts of information they can't easily get on National Public Radio or at Barnes & Noble. . . . They may still want to have a library around as an information

source of last resort, but they have a number of more convenient options to exhaust before they are driven to use it.<sup>1</sup>

The library should be dead or dying, but that is not what is happening, at least in Chicago. In little more than a decade, Chicago has built thirty-two neighborhood branch libraries and renovated nine others. The downtown Harold Washington Library Center, opened in 1991, is one of the largest public library buildings in the world. Its green metal roof with huge gargoyle-like owls, their wings extravagantly unfurled, makes it an unmistakable landmark. Fourteen more new branches are scheduled to open by 2005. More to the point, the libraries are humming with activity. As of spring 2002, circulation was up 17 percent over the previous year, which had seen an increase over the year before that. Go into almost any branch after school or on a Saturday and you find crowds of students doing their homework; adults scanning the shelves, studying, and participating in book discussion groups (in one of four languages), in writers' groups, or in classes; and all of the branch's computers in use.

What is going on here? This surprising success reflects a big investment in facilities and staff. Now a separate line item in the city's budget and funded by property tax revenues, the Chicago Public Library is somewhat shielded from the economic ups and downs that affect many government services. But money alone is not the answer. The CPL thrives today because it embodies a new idea of how a library functions. No longer a passive repository of books and information or an outpost of culture, quiet, and decorum in a noisy world, the new library is an active and responsive part of the community and an agent of change. In addition, the Internet, which seemed to threaten its reason for being, turns out to be one of the things that bring people to the library.

#### The Near North Branch: Bridging Communities

The Near North Branch Library, which opened in 1997, represents the new style of neighborhood library in Chicago. A freestanding tan stone



building with plantings of shrubs and flowers along two sides and a good-sized parking lot, it is several times bigger than typical old storefront neighborhood branches. Like all the other new libraries in the system, it has meeting rooms available for classes, discussions, and neighborhood groups. Like other branches, it incorporates artwork by local artists—in this case, a mural of dancers in the entryway and portraits by Illinois artists. As in other branches, its collections and services reflect the needs and interests of the community it serves, and they change as that community changes.

The Near North Branch sits between two very different neighborhoods. The Gold Coast, along the shore of Lake Michigan, is wealthy and mainly white, an area of expensive apartments, town houses, and condominiums. The mostly African-American Cabrini Green to the west has been known especially for its grim, high-rise public housing, for empty lots, gang violence, and run-down schools. Members of both communities use the library and, some of the time at least, meet one another through its programs and activities.

On weekday afternoons, as many as seventy schoolchildren, most of them from Cabrini Green, fill the children's section. Some of them work with the volunteers in the Homework Help program, most of whom are Gold Coast residents, retirees looking for satisfying and interesting ways to stay connected with the world. Claire, an energetic older woman from the Gold Coast, is one of the most active volunteers. She is at the library many afternoons when the kids arrive, and they know her as someone ready to sit down and help them with their assignments. She also attends the branch's adult book club meetings, where conversations about books draw personal stories from participants. "You hear astounding things from other adults," she says, and adds, "I have two homes. This is my other home." The meeting rooms at Near North are used for book discussions, condo association meetings, meetings of the Negro Women's League, finance workshops, job skills classes, teachers' in-service training, and other activities. Any group in the community can reserve a room. The computers that provide Internet access at the branch are used

by people of all ages. High school and college-age "cyber navigators" teach basic computer and Web-search techniques.

Some adults who come to Near North have been using public libraries all their lives; others get their first library card here. A woman who lives at a nearby mental health residence often spends hours in the library. Sometimes street people snooze at one of the tables, as welcome as anyone. On a Friday afternoon in late May, a young woman coming from a graduation event stands in front of shelves of books while her father takes a picture of her in her lavender dress.

Millie, a forty-eight-year-old African-American woman, watches her five children as they spread out to various sections of the library, pursuing their own interests. While her three sons and two daughters explore Near North, Millie talks about the opening of the library and its meaning for her and her children. "I never had my own library card before they built this library," she says. She calls her children over; each proudly displays his or her own library card. "Putting this library here was more than just adding a building. It was about changing a perception. Before, I thought no one cared about people around Cabrini. And so we didn't care. Now I feel like someone is watching, trying to make things better. So I am trying to better myself and my children."

Children's librarian Anne Ayres greets children and adults as they come in. She knows all the regulars by name. "Libraries have changed," she says, and admits that a few people do not like the changes. "You don't get perfect quiet," she explains. "Some older people have trouble with the noise and activity." For most, though, this new style of library is more comfortable and useful than the old one, a place to be known and get to know others, a source of services as well as of books and information. "Now people say, 'I'll meet you at the library,'" Ayres says. "It's a safe place. It reminds me of the old neighborhood grocery store, where the grocer knew everyone and everyone saw their neighbors."

Near North's success at being a resource and meeting place for these two neighborhoods is no accident. The location of the branch, the design of the building, the collections, artwork, and staffing all reflect an

explicit determination to make the library attractive to the whole range of potential users. It is meant, too, to be a social force in the neighborhood, a "community anchor," in the words of Mayor Richard M. Daley, and a catalyst for change.<sup>2</sup> Daley refers to the neighborhood library as the "heartbeat" of the community.

The library and the mayor hoped that locating Near North on the border between Cabrini Green and the Gold Coast would accomplish two things: encourage other improvements in Cabrini and bring together residents of two neighborhoods who had virtually no contact with one another. Assistant Commissioner for Neighborhood Services Charlotte Kim says that Gold Coast and Cabrini Green residents had long been requesting their own new branches. Winning the support of the aldermen in those communities for a single, shared branch took years of conversation—to communicate the vision of a library that would bridge the neighborhoods, as well as the practical and persuasive point that the Chicago Public Library would not fund two branches in the area. Once the decision to build the branch was made, Chicago Public Library Commissioner Mary Dempsey and her staff faced the challenge of building a library that would attract patrons from both communities.

Choosing exactly the right location was critical. Dempsey says she was offered two sites on Division Street, one just west of the El (the elevated rapid transit line) that runs north and south along Orleans Street, one just to the east of it. She chose the eastern site, believing that Gold Coast residents would not patronize a library farther west (and farther into Cabrini Green) and that the El itself created a physical and psychological barrier. The site chosen was still in Cabrini, in a run-down neighborhood and adjacent to a liquor store that attracted a lot of daytime drinkers. She hoped, though, that it would be close enough to the Gold Coast to "feel" accessible. The decision to build a good-sized parking lot was based explicitly on a desire to draw patrons who might be uneasy about walking into a neighborhood they perceived as dangerous.

At least as important as these considerations was the choice of a branch manager. Dempsey's search for the best candidate, for someone,

she says, "who could speak quietly to both communities," led her outside the library system to Craig Davis, who was working in the private sector. Davis served as Near North Branch manager for its first five years. (He moved to a job at the Harold Washington Library Center in the spring of 2002.) His basic principle, he says, was "No matter who walked in, we treated them as equal to anyone else. They received whatever services they needed." Though he is pleased with his new position, you hear in his voice a hint of regret at no longer being in the thick of things at Near North, figuring out how to serve and bring together the diverse population of the area. During his first year or so as branch manager, he says, the library received frequent calls from Gold Coast residents, asking if the neighborhood was safe. The calls gradually decreased and then ended: experience, word of mouth, and changes in the neighborhood (more about the changes later) put the fears to rest. Anne, an attorney who lives in an impressive Gold Coast condominium with a view of Lake Michigan, brings her eleven-year-old daughter, Savannah, to Near North to check out books for her science project. "When I first moved to this area, I honestly could not have imagined coming this far west on Division. The library has won us over," she remarks, and her daughter nods. "There is a feeling of safety here, and I really enjoy coming to a place where such a diverse group interacts positively."

At Near North, as at other branches, the staff actively connect with the community. The old idea of the librarian behind her wall of books, passively waiting for patrons to arrive, is gone. Anne Ayres says that children's librarians reach out to all the schools in the neighborhood. (Commissioner Dempsey says unequivocally, "The library has an obligation to connect with every school principal in Chicago.") Before Near North opened, Ayres met all of the school principals and took photographs of the schools. On Dedication Day, when Near North opened its doors for the first time, children found a map of the area surrounded by photographs of the schools, including their own (plus a picture of Hogwarts to give young readers the thrill of imagining that Harry Potter's school might be hidden somewhere in Cabrini Green). Ayres regularly makes

the rounds of the elementary schools to read stories. She describes how children's faces light up when they come to the library for the first time and recognize her—"Hey, you came to my school!"—and begin to think of the library as theirs, too. Davis says that the schools were "our inroad into the Cabrini community." One young mother noted the influence of the librarian's visit on her son's desire to go to the library: "One day, someone from here, maybe the librarian, visited my son Antonio's school. He came home and wouldn't stop talking about a library card and having his own books." She paused, smiling and shaking her head. "He took me, I didn't take him."

Davis used a Polk Brothers Foundation grant to fund workshops and programs that addressed the needs and interests of residents—often predominantly from one neighborhood or the other, but sometimes from both. A series of workshops on résumé writing, interviewing techniques, and how to enter a GED (General Equivalency Diploma) program attracted mainly Cabrini residents; seminars on financial planning drew more participants from the Gold Coast. Poetry readings and book discussions draw mixed crowds, though Davis laments what seems to be a decline in participation by Cabrini adults. Many who were actively involved in planning for the branch and were among its first patrons seem to have drifted away. The well-attended discussion of Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the first book in the "One Book, One Chicago" program designed to encourage city residents to read the same book at the same time, was the biggest recent success at bringing in people from both neighborhoods and an opportunity to hear some of the "astounding things" about people's lives that Claire mentions. The summer children's reading program is popular with all children. In the summer of 2001, more than thirty thousand children participated in the program throughout the city, collectively reading more than 415,000 books.

Before he left Near North, Craig Davis oversaw new acquisitions for the branch's African-American history collection, one that has a particular focus on local history. "The library should be a custodian of knowledge of the neighborhood," he says. And in fact the localness of this and

other branches is one of the first things that strike a visitor used to the idea of the library as a refuge from the world outside and a repository of a higher culture the neighborhood may aspire to but cannot reach. The local art, the pictures of schools, the meetings of neighborhood groups, and the collections that reflect the languages and interests of patrons make the library a place where people see a reflection of their own culture even as they get access to a wider one.

In the six years since the Near North Branch opened, the area around it has changed. As with most instances of urban improvement, the changes tell a complex story. The liquor store is gone, purchased by the Chicago Public Library and replaced by a garden. A nearby park has been renovated. A new high school opened nearby in 2000 and a new police station in 2001. Condominiums are going up on what had been empty lots, and a new Dominick's supermarket across the street from the library draws customers from both neighborhoods. The streets that, in Dempsey's words, "you wouldn't want to go down a few years ago" are much safer. Most of the Chicago Housing Authority high-rises have been torn down. Eliminating those failed experiments in urban renewal and public housing makes sense but comes at a cost: the mixed-income housing built to replace them cannot accommodate all the former tenants. So neighborhood improvement here means displacement for some, as it often does. The decline in the number of adult patrons from Cabrini Green may reflect the disappearance of some of those people from the neighborhood. In effect, then, the Gold Coast has crept farther west and the library, though still on the border, sits in a neighborhood that is becoming more middle class.

To what extent is the library responsible for these changes? Mary Dempsey believes that renewal (and some gentrification) was going to happen in this part of the city with or without the library. But the Near North Branch has been a source as well as a sign of change, the first substantial investment in a neighborhood that had been declining for a long time. With a laugh, Dempsey says, "We've been called the Marines, because we are the first to go in." Their going in has symbolic as well as



practical value, as Millie's comments suggest. "A five- to seven-million-dollar investment tells people in a neighborhood they're valued," she says. In a community like Cabrini Green, starting with a library sends a very different and much more positive message than starting with a police station. Unquestionably, the Near North Branch has been a boon to Cabrini residents, attentive to their needs, respectful of their backgrounds and cultures. At the same time, it cannot escape the irony of helping to make a neighborhood too expensive for some of its longtime residents by making it attractive to people with more money. Some Cabrini Green residents complain that they are being forced out just when the area is becoming a safer place to live, with more amenities. An elderly African-American woman, a lifelong resident of Cabrini Green, speaks of how she no longer lives in the area but is just visiting her daughter, because she can no longer find a place to live: "My building closed and was knocked down. I wanted to stay here, close to my family. But how can I afford that? The new places are expensive." Her daughter adds, "As soon as it gets nice, we all have to go."

This is one of the ironies of investing in social capital that we will see in some other stories, too: improvements that help bring members of a community together sometimes also disrupt or sever old ties.

The area around the Harold Washington Library Center in the Loop has changed from an unappealing and somewhat unsafe area into a lively residential community that new people are moving into, many of them couples coming back from the suburbs after their children have grown. In response to finding itself in what is now a residential neighborhood, the library has opened "CPL Express" on the ground floor—in effect a neighborhood branch within the central library. In 2002, following the lead of many bookstores, it also opened a café, creating a new meeting place for area residents.

Mayor Daley believes that improving neighborhoods should be an explicit aim of the library. Speaking at an Urban Libraries Council conference in 2000, he said, "Unless you are out there changing neighborhoods, you are not completing the work you are to do."<sup>3</sup> Commissioner

Dempsey clearly believes that she serves the city, not just the library. Riding with her from the Harold Washington Library Center on South State Street to the Near North Branch on West Division, you get a sense of how engaged she is with the dynamics of a changing city and the way the library will affect and be affected by the changes. She knows which new businesses are moving into particular locations, which businesses are closing, which buildings will be renovated and which demolished, and what will replace them.

### Other Neighborhood Branches

The outreach and responsiveness of Near North—the extent to which its neighborhood shapes its collections and activities—are typical of branches throughout the system. All reach out to local schools; all tailor their collections and programs to the character of the neighborhood, sometimes in surprising and subtle ways. The Humboldt Park Branch, in an area with a large Latino population, maintains an extensive collection of Spanish-language books, magazines, and newspapers. Branch manager Tom Stark chose to combine the youth and adult nonfiction sections, since he was sensitive to the fact that adults with a wide range of reading abilities patronized the library; the blended collection would allow readers to find easy-to-read books without the humiliation they might feel searching for books in the children's section. And because nearby Humboldt Park has lakes stocked with fish, the library keeps a rack of fishing rods near the circulation desk, lending them to anyone who has a library card, with or without books on how to fish.

Stark, who is married to Anne Ayres, lives a few blocks from the library, so he is part of the community and participates in local organizations to understand neighborhood issues and learn what residents want from the library. He says that the Friends of the Library, who were deeply involved in getting the branch built, have their fingers on the pulse of the community and help keep the library connected.

Meeting local needs and connecting with the community also shape



the Teacher in the Library program. Erma Marks and Kelly Bodkin are teachers at nearby schools who spend after-school hours at the Humboldt Park Branch. Marks says, "Children come to you, but sometimes their parents come to learn how to help their children with schoolwork, and some adults working on their GEDs ask for help for themselves. We're available to anyone who wants help." Kelly, who, like Tom Stark, lives and works in the neighborhood, says she never imagined she would want to work with children at the library after a full day at school with them, but her hours at the library make her a more effective teacher and connect her more closely with the neighborhood. "Being here makes the teacher part of the community," she says. "I see some of the kids I teach at school here, and they come to think of a teacher as someone who listens to them. And I'm always preaching the library at school."

On a Thursday evening in late May, seven or eight people from the neighborhood meet to discuss Amy Wilentz's *Martyrs' Crossing* in a book discussion group at the Humboldt Park Branch. One of the women in the group leads the discussion. Tom Stark takes part, though he is careful to let others shape the conversation. The group is much smaller than the one that gathered a month earlier to discuss Elie Wiesel's *Night*, the second book in the "One Book, One Chicago" program. Most of them express dissatisfaction with Wilentz's book, something of a letdown after Wiesel's powerful short novel. But the diverse group of women and men, Hispanic, African-American, and white (including one transplanted Briton) use the novel as a jumping-off place to share stories of their own lives. One man talks about growing up in a violent Chicago neighborhood and so understanding how violence affects the lives of the Palestinians and Israelis who populate the book. Another man describes dropping out of school as a youth and discovering his intellectual capacity and love of reading later on. Impressed by the beauty of the writing, he likes the book best of anyone in the group. At the end of the session, they consider what to discuss at their June meeting: maybe some poetry next time. Stark promises to track down some possibilities and be in touch with them so they can choose.

The Bezazian Branch in Uptown is smaller than those in Near North and Humboldt Park but built on the same model, a freestanding building with a row of windows on the street letting in plenty of natural light, a large public meeting room, Internet-access computers, and collections and decorations that reflect the surrounding community. Uptown has a large Southeast Asian population, so the library has books in Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Chinese, along with English-language books and smaller collections in Russian and other languages. The area is extremely diverse, says branch manager Mary Clark. Children come to the local elementary school with thirty-two different native languages, and the school offers bilingual education in seven of them. Sometimes the groups that sign up for courses in ESL (English as a second language) are mostly Vietnamese, sometimes Bosnian; sometimes the members are elderly Russians. In the spring of 2002, green shoots of bamboo sprouting leaves sit in glasses of water on the circulation desk, in display cabinets, and in Clark's office—growing the shoots is a spring custom of many of the library's patrons.

Clark says that the first public act of many newcomers in the city is to get a library card. It is the first official document that connects them to their new home, that makes them part of the place. They can get one even if they do not speak English, and they do not have to prove anything except that they live in Chicago. Mary Dempsey describes the library as "the least threatening public institution." Its absence of barriers to members, its determination to welcome everyone, proves the point. So the library frequently functions as a point of entry into the society for new immigrants, a safe and easy first step to participation in community and public life. "I learn English here," a middle-aged Vietnamese man says, pointing to a sign on the wall for ESL classes. He smiles at the seven- or eight-year-old girl beside him and adds, "My daughter, she teaches me, also."

On a Saturday afternoon in late May at the Bezazian Branch, members of the Neighborhood Writing Alliance gather in the meeting room—about twenty people, African-American, Hispanic, Asian, La-

tino. Most are here to read from their work, a few are just looking for a place to sit for an hour or so and maybe hear something interesting. A woman who identifies herself as Patty reads excerpts from her harrowing, matter-of-fact account of her five months of homelessness in the neighborhood. Anton, who says he edits a newsletter for people in his building, reads a piece called "New Beginnings," which includes these lines: "In life there are choices and chances. Make a choice, take a chance, reap the rewards." Chuck reads a love poem, "Electric Touch." Anifa maneuvers her battery-powered wheelchair to the front of the room and reads a long, critical letter to Oprah Winfrey about how women should and shouldn't be portrayed on her show. Everyone is applauded. Many of the people taking part in the Saturday reading meet at the library every Tuesday afternoon, so they know one another and one another's work well.

There are few children in the library this afternoon. Clark says sixty or more show up after school, some to work with Homework Help volunteers from the neighborhood. But the computer terminals are in constant use and adults of various ages and races occupy every seat in the place. Their concentrated attention to the books and papers in front of them suggests that most are engaged in serious work or study.

Clark, who has managed the Bezazian Branch for two years, talks about how the role of the librarian has changed and is now more active and engaged. She recalls the young woman who recently asked for a book on zoning regulations because she wanted to open a nail-care salon. "In the past, I would have just handed over the book," Clark says. "But she was really asking a small-business question, and I worked with her to get the answer." Similarly, library staff helped a woman who needed to fill out a financial aid form for her grandson—a form available only online. Having never used a computer before, much less gone on the Internet, she could not have found the form or completed it without their help.

Though Clark has been a librarian for a long time, the enthusiasm she feels for Bezazian is evident. Staff throughout the system appear energetic and proud of their work. Adequate funding, the active support

of the mayor, and an effective library commissioner no doubt contribute to morale. But as Mary Clark, Anne Ayres, Tom Stark, and others talk about their jobs, you sense their excitement at doing something new and valuable, being in on the creation of a new, more active role for the librarian.

### Bridging the Digital Divide

That elderly woman's struggle with the online financial aid form exemplifies two main elements of the problem of what is called the digital divide. One is that many people still do not have computers, computer skills, or access to the Internet. The other is that institutions increasingly assume that "everybody" uses computers. So the computer have-nots, who often lack other advantages, too, are left behind by the information revolution, locked out of opportunities to improve their situation. Case in point: the grandparents and parents who do not live near a library where the staff will help them fill out a form on the computer to get financial aid for their children or to seek critical services and information.

The rooms full of computers on several floors of the Harold Washington Library Center, the five hundred new Internet-access computers added in 2000 alone at the Chicago Public Library, the computer classes, and the paid "cybernavigators" support what the library considers one of its critical roles: to bridge the digital divide, at least to some extent, by making computers and the Internet available to people who have no private access to them. So the computer and Internet developments that some believed would kill public libraries actually provide new reasons for going to them. (Buried in the death-of-the-library prediction is that false assumption that "everybody" has a computer at home, along with, probably, a parallel assumption that "everybody" can afford to buy books.) "I cannot imagine how I could have ever learned computers without the library's help," a Hispanic man states as he searches for information on how to apply for a mortgage online. "I am forty-five years old and wasn't

born in this country. My English is very good. But I have no computer. I can come here, use a computer, and get help.”

The prediction that the World Wide Web would kill libraries ignores another essential role of the public library in the Internet age. The almost inconceivable variety of information available online is a mixed blessing, as even casual Internet users quickly discover. Finding a few needles of useful, reliable information in vast haystacks of junk calls for precisely the skills that librarians have always had. In the past, people counted on them to locate and evaluate printed information; now they look to librarians for help in making sense of what they find on the Internet, and for distinguishing good information from bad. The reference librarians whose job it is to answer every question phoned in to the library report that they get as many questions as ever, but the questions have gotten more sophisticated as Internet use has increased. Many people find answers on the Internet to questions they used to ask librarians—phone numbers and addresses of institutions, sources of quotations, basic facts of science and geography. Now they ask the questions that arise after they get answers to the simple ones, along with asking which electronic sources of information are reliable and which are not. The techno-utopian belief that access to unlimited information automatically translates into understanding and knowledge has proved to be false. Trained guides are more important than ever, and libraries provide them.

In serving as a gateway to the Internet, the Chicago Public Library finds itself in the middle of the current societal debate about how to deal with the openness of that new medium for all types of human expression, including pornography and every imaginable prejudice and hatred. On the same weekend that members of the Neighborhood Writing Alliance read their work at the Bezazian Branch, CPL press secretary Margot Burke was fielding calls from reporters looking for the library’s reaction to a group of South Side clergy who were protesting the library’s Internet policy and demanding that filters be installed on computers to shield children from pornography and other inappropriate material. Consistent

with the views of the American Library Association, the Chicago Public Library opposes filtering. In addition to pointing out that critics usually overestimate the extent of the problem—patrons rarely access pornography sites in the library—Burke presents the reasons for the CPL’s position: that filtering software (most of it based on keywords) works poorly, locking viewers out of sites offering, for instance, medical information, as well as pornographic ones; that the public library is in the business of providing, not limiting, access to information; and that blocking full Internet access at the public library offends against the founding democratic principle of that institution in the United States—that all residents, not only those who can afford to buy books, computers, and Internet connections, deserve equal access to information.

### The New Third Place

As our glimpses of the branches in Chicago show, the new neighborhood library functions as a kind of community center, a place where people get to know one another, where communities find themselves. The book discussions, readings, and classes, the homework help after school, the nods and hellos people exchange when they see each other at the library for the second or fifth or twentieth time, the librarians greeting people by name, and even the artwork that reflects the talents and interests of the neighborhood all contribute to the connections that bind people in community. Death-of-the-library scenarios define libraries as information repositories. If they were no more than that, then their eventual displacement by more convenient electronic repositories would make persuasive sense. But the library is a gathering place, too, like an old town square or the corner grocer Anne Ayres remembers. People may go to the library looking mainly for information, but they find each other there. Although the World Wide Web holds out the promise of online communities and cyberspace main streets (a subject we look at a bit in Chapter 11), those electronic “places” do not—or not yet—give people the ability to meet face-to-face or to connect with others in the community



merely by being there, part of the scene, even when they do not actively participate.

In *The Great Good Place*, Ray Oldenburg describes what he calls the “third place,” a place that is neither work nor home where people can spend time together.<sup>4</sup> The café, the pub, the neighborhood tavern, the old-fashioned drugstore-with-soda-fountain are some of the examples he uses. A good third place makes few demands on the people who gather there, beyond requiring them to abide by some basic local rules (for instance, that individuals and especially newcomers will not dominate the conversation). A third place is a neutral ground where people from different walks of life in the community can meet and get to know one another, having in common perhaps only their desire to frequent this particular place.

Oldenburg laments the disappearance of many third places in America. Prohibition and a lingering association between alcohol and dissipation undermined the old beer gardens and many of the taverns that used to be community meeting places. The replacement of local shops by chain stores and single-use zoning that puts housing, workplaces, and retail establishments in different areas have eliminated the corner drugstores and the coffee shops where people met one another and found out what was happening in the neighborhood. (Starbucks and other café chains represent a partial countertrend.) Television keeps people at home in the evening, when in the past they would have sought one another’s company in a third place.

The crowds at cafés—even at some uninviting corporate café chains—attest to the continuing need people feel for third places. The Chicago libraries help meet that need. Although Oldenburg does not include it in his catalogue of third places, the branch library shares many third-place characteristics. It welcomes everyone who abides by its basic rules of appropriate behavior. It recognizes as “regulars” people who come, say, more than a couple of times a month. It provides opportunities for meeting and conversation. It is a place where you can discover what is happening in the neighborhood. Granted, the library is not as

purely a social place as the coffee shop or tavern—it may be more purposeful than the ideal third place. But the CPL has made its neighborhood branches meeting places for the community. Keeping quiet with your eyes on a book no longer represents what happens in the library. And, like other third places, these neighborhood branches mirror their communities, showing residents who they are collectively.

### One Chicago, One Library, Many Branches

Nancy Pearl, executive director of the Washington Center for the Book, came up with the idea of mobilizing the residents of a city to read the same book at the same time. Seattle did it first, where the program was known as “If All of Seattle Read the Same Book.” Rochester, New York, and then dozens of other cities followed suit. New York City made news for rejecting the idea, the letters and columns of its newspapers full of indignation at the thought of diverse individuals being “forced” to read the same book and of literature being made to serve a social purpose. But Chicago embraced the idea.

Chicago’s 2001 choice, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, was checked out of branch libraries more than eight thousand times over the course of a couple of months. Bookstores sold thousands more copies—*To Kill a Mockingbird* was on the Barnes & Noble top ten list for two months. The library published a study guide, handed out “Are you reading *Mockingbird*?” buttons, scheduled book discussions and showings of the movie version of the story, and organized a mock trial to match the trial in the book (the trial advertised on paper fans with wooden handles, like those people might have used in a southern courthouse years ago). Tens of thousands of people read the book. The library collected stories of read-aloud sessions between parents and their adolescent children, of classroom discussions about prejudice, of strangers striking up conversations when they saw one another with the book. The library’s deputy commissioner, Kathy Biel, reports having a conversation for the first time with people she had seen for years on her commuter train when they no-



ticed her *Mockingbird* button and started talking to her about the book. A Chicago high school junior named Neil recalled, "I was reading the book for school and my mom decided to read it with me. We had very different views of the book, and so we joined a book group at the library to see who was right." Who *was* right? "We both were," he said with a smile. "And neither of us was."

For its second book, the Library chose *Night*, Elie Wiesel's fictional account of a boy's experience of the Holocaust. That program in the spring of 2002 included a talk by Wiesel, discussions in classrooms and libraries (some of the latter attended by Holocaust survivors with their own memories to share), related stories in the newspapers and on public radio, and simultaneous book discussions in Starbucks cafés throughout the city.

In most cities that have tried the one book, one city idea, libraries see the program mainly as a strategy for encouraging reading. The Chicago version shares that aim but has a larger one, too, consistent with the library's role as a force for social connection and social improvement. Mary Dempsey talks about the program's moving reading into the "public domain" and giving a "public voice" to what is usually considered a private activity. (Note the similarity to the Texas IAF's strategy of "making private pain public.") Library staffers delight in telling stories of conversations between people drawn together by the book, and of book discussion groups where people who have known one another casually or not at all exchange stories from their lives. "One Book, One Chicago" expresses the goal: to discover or build unity in a diverse city.

Why does a program that cannot get off the ground in New York City thrive in Chicago? One senior CPL staff member describes Chicago as "New York without the attitude" (a distinction that we suspect many New Yorkers would proudly acknowledge). It may be truer and more useful to say that Chicago feels like a very large and very diverse midwestern town, with a small-town friendliness and civic pride, and a small-town sense of joint ownership of public institutions. Commissioner Dempsey says, "People choose to live in this city because of its free institutions: the

parks, the libraries, the lakefront." Though Chicago has its competing constituencies and serious tensions over racial and economic differences, it feels like a place where people still have a common, democratic stake in the life of the city.

It feels like a small town, too, in the closeness of its networks of relationships. Dempsey says, "In Chicago, there are two degrees of separation, not six." Those networks have helped the library develop partnerships with public and private institutions. In addition to maintaining close ties with schools, the library works with the police and the Housing Authority to address neighborhood problems. It develops joint programs with the zoo and museums, and it worked with the Department of Sewers to create a "Down the Drain" program that would teach citizens about the history and workings of the sewer system. It offers free passes to the Art Institute of Chicago and each summer distributes more than thirty thousand lawn tickets to the jazz and classical concerts at the Ravinia Festival, while helping to develop music education programs to spur children's interest in serious music. Dempsey explains that Ravinia (the summer home of the Chicago Symphony) entered into partnership with the library because it feared the festival was becoming too elitist. She says, "We can reach people in the steel mills and the barrios that they can't. They are one place; we are seventy-eight buildings."

In the lower-level rotunda of the central library, these words of Chicago's late mayor Harold Washington are worked into a circular design in the marble floor:

Chicago . . . has brought together black and white, Asian and Hispanic, male and female, the young, the old, the disabled, gays and lesbians, Moslems, Christians and Jews, business leaders and neighborhood activists, bankers and trade unionists—all have come together to mix and contend, to argue and to reason, to confront our problems and not merely to contain them.

Yes, these are the words of a politician, but one not afraid to raise potentially controversial issues—for instance, to include gays and lesbians

in his list of diverse citizens and to invite argument and contention, not merely the kind of intolerance that ignores differences and avoids contact with people of other races, classes, religions, or sexual orientation. These particular words are embedded in the design of the central library because they express one of the Chicago Public Library's core missions: to reflect and serve the diversity of the city's residents while helping those residents discover the sympathies and interests that unite them.

## BETTER TOGETHER

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**CITY OF HAMILTON**  
**CITIZEN SATISFACTION SURVEY**  
**- Executive Summary Report -**

Prepared for: City of Hamilton

November, 2004

Prepared by: Market Probe Canada

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## **Background and Objectives**

- The City of Hamilton was newly created in 2001 following the amalgamation of the former City of Hamilton, the City of Stoney Creek, and the Towns of Ancaster, Dundas, Flamborough and Glanbrook.
- The downloading of responsibility for social and other services from the Provincial level, and erosion of the tax base have placed considerable pressure on City finances, making resource allocation a priority for City Council and the Corporate Management Team.
- The City commissioned Market Probe Canada to conduct an opinion survey of 1,200 residents, with the following objectives:
  - Quantify use of City of Hamilton services and programs
  - Assess satisfaction with the City of Hamilton overall and in seven specific service areas
  - Rank the acceptability of specific user fees to residents
  - Understand residents' perspectives on taxation and service provision
  - Understand residents' perceptions of an acceptable tax increase for 2005
  - Measure which downtown improvement initiatives would most increase visits to the core
- Market Probe Canada is a Canadian company which has been providing marketing research services to private sector and government clients in Canada for more than 20 years. It is part of the Market Probe family of companies.

## **Method**

- This survey was conducted using industry standard sampling procedures for public opinion surveys and can be considered broadly representative of the opinions of citizens of Hamilton.
  - Telephone survey of 1,200 residents of the City of Hamilton between August 17 and September 8, 2004
  - Error margin of  $\pm 2.8\%$
  - Participants qualified if had lived in Hamilton for at least one year
  - Random proportionate sample - each household in Hamilton with a telephone listing had an equal chance of being asked to participate

- Age and gender quotas based on Statistics Canada data to ensure representative age within gender
- Compliance rate of 49% is high compared with typical consumer surveys (10-20%)
- 5.6% of contacts were ended due to language difficulties

### **Key Observations - Use of City Services**

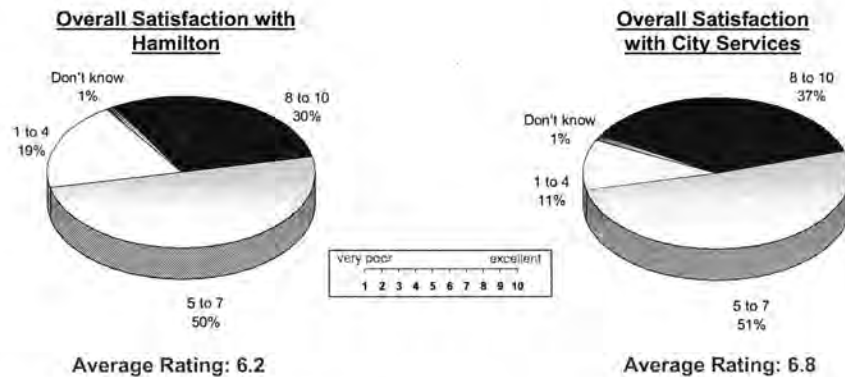
- Among the City services assessed, most had used leaf and yard waste collection (65%) and bulk goods collection (59%) in the past year. More than one-third had used the City of Hamilton website (37%), household hazardous materials disposal (35%) and HSR, excluding DARTS (35%). 9% had used social services.
- Among City Cultural and Recreational facilities, the most likely to have been used in the past year are city parks (74%), public libraries (69%), trails like the beach trail (63%), Copp's Coliseum (57%) and the Farmers' Market (56%). Results also show that seniors centres are used by 9%, public golf courses by 21% and public hockey arenas by 25%.
- One-in-five Hamilton residents have a household member enrolled in organized City of Hamilton recreation programs in the past year, with 12% of all households in children's recreational programs and 10% in aquatics programs.
- Among residents, 32% say they attended the City's Canada Day Fireworks in the past year, 20% attended RBC Aquafest, and 6% attended First Night Celebrations.



## Key Observations - Overall Satisfaction Factors

### Overall Satisfaction with Hamilton and Hamilton City Services

- Residents rate their overall satisfaction with Hamilton as 6.2 on average, using a 10-point scale, where 1 means *very poor* and 10 means *excellent*. Residents rate their overall satisfaction with City services at 6.8 on average.



### Factors Linked to Residents' Perceptions of the City

- Market Probe analyzed responses on 10 factors to determine their influence on citizens' perceptions of Hamilton. These factors are listed below in order of importance. They are accompanied by ratings that indicate "how the City is doing" in these areas.

#### Factors that Influence Citizens' Perceptions

#### How the City is Doing\*

##### Whether Hamilton...

Factor	8 to 10 Satisfaction Rating	Average Satisfaction Rating
• offers a pleasant living environment	38%	6.5
• provides vision and direction for the future	18%	5.3
• promotes civic pride	24%	5.7
• provides a safe community	37%	6.5
• provides cultural and recreational programs	40%	6.8
• provides basic services such as roads, water and garbage collection	43%	6.6
• provides economic growth and job creation	14%	5.2
• protects the environment	22%	5.5
• renews the downtown core	12%	4.1
• provides social services and access for disadvantaged residents	34%	6.4

## Factors Linked to Residents' Perceptions of City Services

- The responses in 7 service areas were analyzed to determine their influence on overall perceptions of City services. These areas are listed below in order of importance. They are accompanied by ratings that indicate "how the City is doing" in each.

### Service Areas that Influence Citizens' Perceptions

### How the City is Doing

#### Whether Hamilton does a good job providing...

	8 to 10 Satisfaction Rating	Average Satisfaction Rating
• Communication with residents	45%	7.0
• Culture and Recreation programs, facilities and events	57%	7.5
• Roads and Traffic	22%	6.0
• Parking and Bylaw enforcement	29%	6.3
• City Parks and Open Spaces	43%	7.0
• HSR	56%	7.5
• Waste and Recyclables collection	63%	7.6

## Key Observations - Taxes and User Fees

- Residents believe that the City has a responsibility to provide services for both disabled and economically disadvantaged residents, regardless of their ability to pay, as shown by agreement with the following statements:
  - The City has a responsibility to ensure that people with disabilities can use all public services (84% agree; 6% disagree; 10% neutral)*
  - The City has a responsibility to pay for public services that disadvantaged residents could not otherwise afford (59% agree, 23% neutral, and 18% disagree)*
  - It is appropriate that City facilities in inner city neighbourhoods have lower user fees (47% agree; 27% disagree; 26% neutral)*
- The potential new or increased user fee which has the most support from residents is an increased user fee on *public golf courses* (35% rate 8-10 for acceptability, while 31% rate 1-4). Other potential areas to consider user fees, in descending order of acceptability to residents, are as follows:
  - New fee on bocce courts (28% rate 8-10 for acceptability; 39% rate 1-4; 33% neutral)
  - New fee on public tennis courts (28% rate 8-10; 37% rate 1-4; 33% are neutral)

- Increased fee on hockey ice rates (19% rate 8-10; 47% rate 1-4; 34% neutral)
- Increased fee on museums (16% rate 8-10; 44% rate 1-4; 40% neutral)
- Increased fee on public swimming pools (15% rate 8-10; 51% rate 1-4; 34% neutral)
- New fee on library cards (18% rate 8-10; 54% rate 1-4; 28% neutral)

Neutral ratings (5-7) are not shown.

- Of all residents, 32% had visited a Municipal Service Centre in the past year. Most residents (60%) favour leaving the Service Centres open rather than closing them to save tax dollars.
- Residents tend to disagree with attitudinal statements that suggest the possibility of higher taxes or user fees. More disagree than agree with each of the following:
  - *I am willing to pay higher taxes to have better services (26% agree; 50% disagree; 24% neutral)*
  - *I would be willing to pay more tax dollars to enforce bylaws that ensure owners maintain their property (31% agree; 46% disagree; 23% neutral)*
  - *The City should implement user fees that cover the total cost of providing a service or program (24% agree; 45% disagree; 31% neutral)*
- Residents also tend to disagree that *the City should allow community groups to use City owned property at no charge (24% agree; 45% disagree; 31% neutral)*. Thus, there appears to be a balance to be struck between minimizing user fees and charging a fair amount to provide residents with services.
- The average *reasonable property tax increase* given for next year by residents is 2.4%, but 33% say that no increase would be reasonable. There are three notable findings surrounding the suggested increases:
  - Those contributing most to the tax base (property owners, employed, higher incomes) propose smaller increases
  - Those who visit the downtown more often propose larger increases
  - Those who are satisfied with Hamilton and with City services propose larger increases, suggesting that a tax increase will be more acceptable if residents perceive they are getting value from the City

### **Key Observations - Spending Initiatives**

- Hamilton residents tend to support more spending on economic development and urban revitalization, although their opinions on taxation indicate they may not have considered the source of this funding. Overall, more agree than disagree with each of the following statements:
  - *The City needs to spend tax dollars to attract and retain businesses and create jobs (69% agree; 12% disagree; 19% neutral)*
  - *To encourage development downtown, the City should give businesses breaks on taxes and fees (55% agree; 25% disagree; 20% neutral)*
  - *The City should use tax dollars to fund Hamilton's waterfront (49% agree; 20% disagree; 31% neutral)*
  - *The City should use tax dollars to fund Hamilton's downtown core (46% agree; 25% disagree; 29% neutral)*
  
- Residents currently visit the downtown core 5.7 times per month on average. In terms of how downtown revitalization dollars should be spent, the factors which residents say are most likely to result in more downtown visits are as follows:
  - *More or better shopping (79% say they would visit more often)*
  - *A cleaner downtown (77% say they would visit more often)*
  - *More free parking (76% say they would visit more often)*

### **Conclusions**

- The areas with the most influence on residents' overall perceptions of the City of Hamilton tend to satisfy higher level needs, connoting leadership and vision, civic pride, involvement and effective communication.
  
- The data suggest the City can't just look at usage figures to assess what is most important to residents. Residents believe the City has a responsibility to provide services to the disabled and economically disadvantaged, to promote the downtown core, and to support economic development and job creation.
  
- Communication with residents is a cornerstone in determining perceptions of the City, and the ratings indicate that communication could be strengthened. It may also be a means to express community leadership and vision.

- Culture and Recreation Programs, Facilities and Events are a City strength, and contribute substantially to overall perceptions of the City.
- Waste and Recyclables Collection and HSR receive relatively strong ratings, but improvement could be made in the areas of Roads and Traffic, and for Parking and Bylaw Enforcement.
- New or increased user fees are clearly viewed as undesirable, but residents also indicate that an appropriate balance needs to be achieved. They voice the least objection to the following:
  - Increased fee on public golf courses (supported by more than those opposed)
  - New fee on bocce courts
  - New fee on public tennis courts
  - Increased fee on hockey ice rates
- Most favour leaving the Municipal Service Centres open, which may also enhance perceptions of City communications.
- Residents tend to support taxpayer funded revitalization efforts for the waterfront and the downtown core.
- The downtown is likely to benefit more from spending on cleanliness, free parking and more or better destinations than it is from increased policing or downtown cameras.

**Hamilton Public Library  
Environmental Scan  
November, 2004**



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## City of Hamilton 2004 Environmental Scan

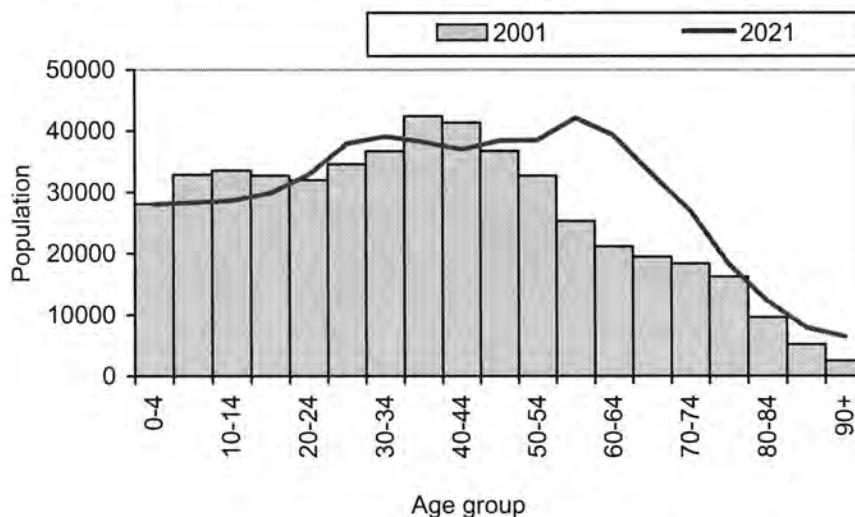
City of Hamilton staff prepared an Environmental Scan for Council members. It was presented to Council on September 8, 2003. The information in this section is taken from that Environmental Scan. The complete scan can be found on the city's website (<http://www.hamilton.ca>)

### Population Projection

The population bulge in 2001 is between the ages of 30 and 49 years. It will move to the 50 to 69 years age group by 2021.

In 2021, there will be a comparatively smaller proportion of children and youth aged 0 to 19 years in the population and a comparatively larger proportion of the older population aged 50 years and older.

Figure 1: Population by age group 2001, Population projections by age group 2021, City of Hamilton



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001; Ontario Ministry of Finance, Population Projections for 2021.

**Description:** Population composition by age for 2001 and population projections for year 2021 in the City of Hamilton. Projections are based on Ministry of Finance Population Projections. These will be revised shortly and will increase for Hamilton.

## Distribution of Population and Employment Growth

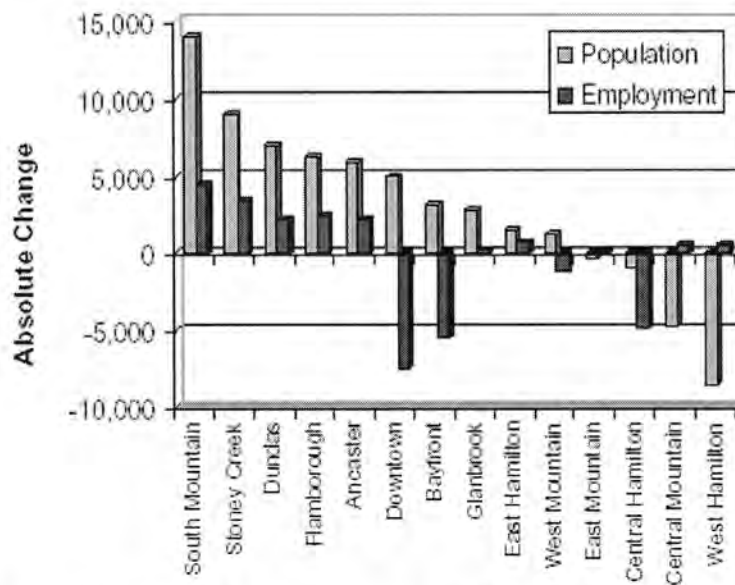
Job retention and expansion are required to stabilize and diversify the local economy and reduce live-work commuting distances.

There is a growing disparity between where people live and where they work in Canada. This disparity is accentuated in Hamilton due to job losses in the industrial sector and the low rate of job growth in suburban districts. Job growth in both suburban and older employment districts is needed to address this live-work imbalance.

The population of older City neighbourhoods is declining with reduced levels of urban renewal (from 1970s rates) and aging citizens. The pattern of neighbourhood population decline is likely to become more significant and widespread in the future.

Disparity between the demand for community services in new areas and the concentration of existing service facilities in older areas will become more significant (e.g. school closure issues may become more widespread).

Figure 2: Population Growth by Employment 1991 – 2001



Source: *Transportation Tomorrow Survey*, reported by IBI for *Transportation Master Plan (2004)*



## Income of Hamilton residents

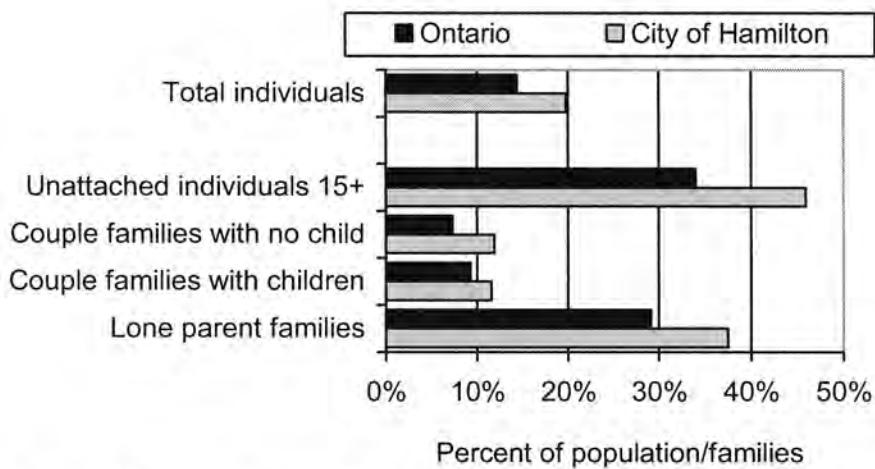
Almost twenty percent of Hamilton residents subsist on an income below the low income cut-off thresholds. This is a substantially higher percentage than for Ontario as a whole.

Hamilton has a larger percentage of families with low incomes than the province. This is true of all family types.

Almost half of the unattached individuals in Hamilton have low incomes.

Lone parent families are over three times as likely to have low incomes than couples with children.

Figure 3: Individuals with low incomes and families with low incomes by type of family, City of Hamilton and Ontario, 2000



Source: Census 2001, Statistics Canada

**Description:** Individuals and families with income below the low income cut-offs (LICOs), described as percentage of individuals in private households with household income below the LICOs for a variety of family types: unattached individuals, couples with and without children, and lone parent families.

**Private household** refers to a person or a group of persons (other than foreign residents) who occupy a private dwelling and do not have a usual place of residence elsewhere in Canada.

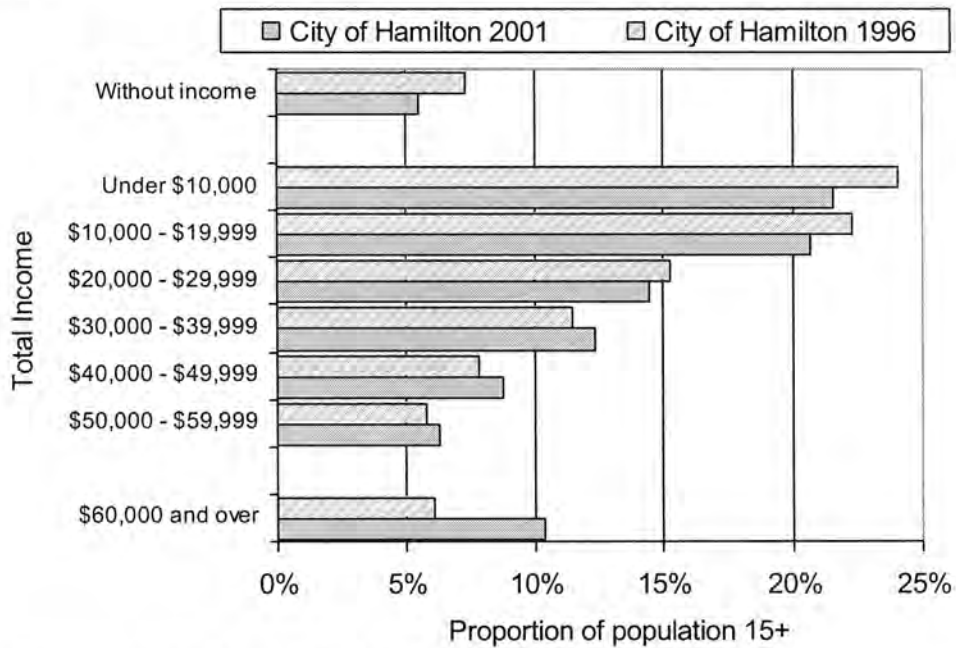
**Low Income Cut-offs** are income levels at which households, families or unattached individuals spend at least 20% more than average on food, shelter and clothing. LICOs are based on size of family and the size of the city of residence. Low Income Cut Off is the threshold to define low income used by Statistics Canada. The LICO point is the amount necessary for material survival.

## Income of Hamilton residents II

Over 10% of Hamiltonians 15 years and over receive an annual income of \$60,000 or higher. This is a substantially greater percentage than seen in 1995.

Compared to data from the 1996 Census, a smaller proportion of Hamilton residents 15 years and older have an income of under \$20,000 per year. The proportion with an income under \$20,000 still remains almost half of the total population.

Figure 4: Total income of persons 15 years of age and over, City of Hamilton, 2000



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001

**Description:** The total income for individuals 15 years of age and older received during the calendar year 2000 from any source, expressed as a percentage of all persons 15 years of age and older.

**Total income dollars** received by Hamiltonians 15 years and over during calendar year 2000 broken down by source, expressed as percentage of the total.

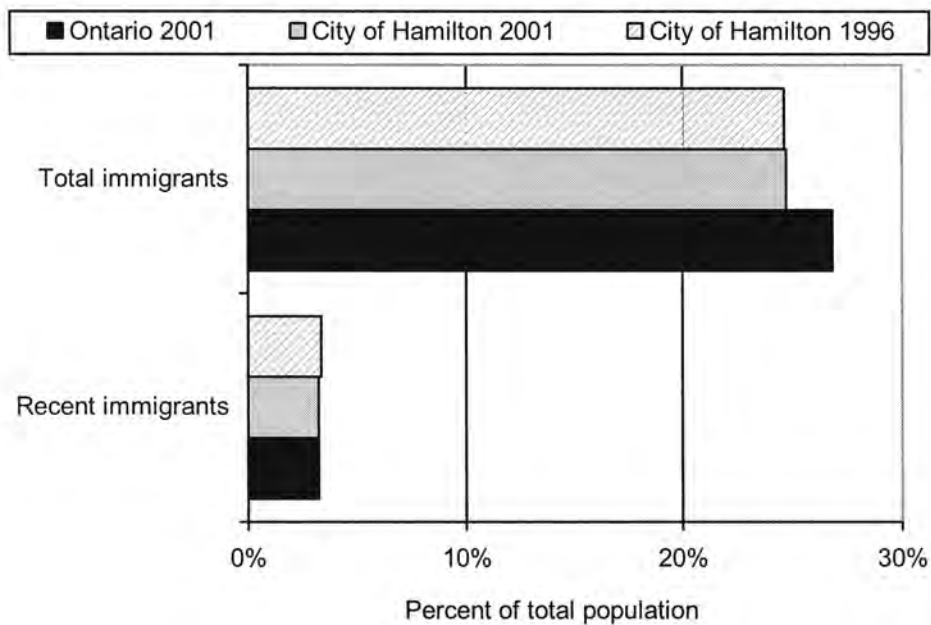
## Immigration and Ethnic Origins, an Overview

A quarter of the Hamilton population is foreign-born. This is a smaller proportion than that of Ontario residents.

The percentages of recent immigrants in the Hamilton population are consistent with the provincial percentages.

The proportion of non-permanent residents increased in 2001 when compared to 1996.

Figure 5: Total and recent immigrants, City of Hamilton and Ontario, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2000/01.

Description: Percentage of foreign-born and Aboriginal peoples among population.

*Total immigrants* refer to the percentage of people who are, or have been, landed immigrants in Canada.

*Recent immigrants* are landed immigrants who have come to Canada in the 5 years previous to the Census day.

## Immigration and Ethnic Origins, Changing Patterns

While the actual number of immigrants arrive annually is not large (1999 – 2571 people, 2000 – 3167 people, 2001 – 2767 people) over a 10 year period the total (about 34,545 people) is significant. (*Hamilton Spectator*, January 22, 2003)

40% of the immigrants to Hamilton since 1991 have been Asian. (Source: the *Hamilton Spectator*, January 11, 2003) 60% come from the top ten countries.

Most immigrants settle initially in the downtown area and the former Stoney Creek/Hamilton border. (Source: The *Hamilton Spectator*, January 11, 2003).

Based on the 2001 Census, new immigrants are between the ages of 25 – 44 and better educated with post-secondary education is common.

A recent examination of immigrants in Hamilton, prepared by the *Hamilton Spectator*, October 11, 2003 provides relevant information that can help tailor services to meet immigrant needs:

- Attracting immigrants is probably the number one thing Hamilton can do in terms of making sure the economy stabilizes over the longer term and grows.
- Less than 2% of immigrants arriving in Canada after 1991 came to Hamilton vs. 5% arriving pre 1961. The result is a foreign born population that is older than in many other centers and that is shrinking relative to the overall population. 25% are 65 or older vs. Canadian average of 19%.
- Hamilton's immigration mix is disproportionately skewed towards the refugee class. In 2000, 1 in 3 immigrants coming to Hamilton was a refugee compared to 1 in 8 for Canada.
- Only 15% of Hamilton's immigrants are in the skilled worker class vs. 24% in Toronto.
- Hamilton's immigrants are getting poorer compared to 20 years ago, and the dive into poverty is more severe than in many other major centres. In 2000, 20% of immigrant lived below Statistics Canada's low-income cut-offs compared to 16% in 1980.
- 42% of the immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1996 and 1999 were poor.

Figure 6: "The fastest growing group of immigrants between the 1996 and the 2001 census were"

Area of Origin	Total numbers as of 2001	Number arriving since 1996
Czech and Slovak	1,900	600
Yugoslavia	13,840	3,035
Iraq	2,260	1,050
West Central Area/Middle East	1,365	670
China	2,905	1,155
Philippines	3,535	875
India	5,430	1,305
Pakistan	1,930	795



Figure 7: Declining groups in the same census period were:

Area of Origin	Total numbers as of 2001	Number leaving since 1996
Guyana	1,235	265
Germany	5,410	725
Netherlands	5,665	525
United Kingdom	1,490	2975
Thailand	270	200

## Immigration and Ethnic Origins, Country of Birth

The top countries of birth for the recent immigrant population of Hamilton (those that have immigrated to Hamilton between 1996 and 2001) are Yugoslavia (10.3%), China (7.6%) and Iraq (6.7%). This represents a shift from our historical patterns of immigration. The top countries of birth for recent immigrants are quite different for Hamilton and Ontario

Figure 8: Country of Birth for Immigrants, City of Hamilton and Ontario 2001

COUNTRY OF BIRTH	City of Hamilton	Ontario
Yugoslavia	10.3%	2.0%
China, People's Republic of	7.6%	12.8%
Iraq	6.7%	1.6%
Pakistan	6.5%	6.5%
India	6.3%	10.9%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	6.3%	1.4%
Philippines	3.8%	4.9%
Croatia	3.6%	0.6%
Romania	2.4%	2.2%
United States	2.2%	2.7%

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, 2000/01.

Description: Top countries of birth for recent immigrants to Hamilton and the corresponding proportions for Ontario

*Recent immigrants* are landed immigrants who have come to Canada in the 5 years previous to the Census day.

## Labour Force by Industry/Commuter Surplus or Deficit

The Hamilton employment profile is strongly influenced by the manufacturing industry, where there has been a 45% job loss since 1981.

About 2/3 of the City's replacement job growth has been in the private sector. Most private sector job growth has been in food & accommodation and transportation industries where average wages are lower than the manufacturing jobs lost.

A larger percentage of Hamilton's labour force works in manufacturing, construction, education, health care and social assistance compared with the rest of Ontario.

Approximately 25% of the City's labour force commuted daily to jobs in other communities in 2001. The 1981-2001 growth in the proportion of in-commuters to Hamilton from other communities indicates that the number of locally employed Hamilton residents did not change over two decades, despite a 20% increase in population.

Figure 9: Labour force & Population, City of Hamilton 1981-2001

<b>Population</b>	<b>411,445</b>	<b>490,268</b>	<b>78,823</b>	<b>19%</b>
Resident Employed Labour Force	196,220	232,225	36,005	18%
Resident Not in Labour Force or Unemployed	215,225	258,033	42,808	20%
All Primary	3,485	3,115	-370	-11%
Manufacturing	70,705	39,085	-31,620	-45%
Wholesale trade	7,925	7,060	-865	-11%
Construction	11,310	12,150	840	7%
Transportation, storage, communication & utility	14,206	21,720	7,514	53%
Retail Trade	23,740	24,790	1,050	4%
Finance, insurance and real estate	8,865	10,630	1,765	20%
Business Services	6,315	8,230	1,915	30%
Accommodation, food and other services	17,549	27,055	9,506	54%
Government service	7,255	7,705	450	6%
Education, health and social services	30,880	43,505	12,625	41%
<b>Total jobs in Hamilton</b>	<b>202,235</b>	<b>205,045</b>	<b>2,810</b>	<b>1%</b>
Activity Rate	0.492	0.418	-0.073	-15%
Out-Commuting	24,340	57,185	32,845	135%
In-Commuting	30,845	33,950	3,105	10%
<b>Net Commuter Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>6,505</b>	<b>-23,235</b>	<b>-29,740</b>	

Source: Statistics Canada, Census 1981 and 2001. Adjusted by P&D Dept staff.

**Description:** A comparison of the changes that took place between 1981 and 2001 in Hamilton's overall population and labour force by industrial category. Because of changes to the definitions of industries between the 1981 & 2001, city staff have adjusted the census information which introduces a small rate of error in the statistics for individual industries.

## Commuter Surplus/Deficit

There were more people leaving Hamilton than coming to Hamilton to work in 2001. This deficit doubles roughly every five years. By 2031, 50% of the labour force or 125,000 people per day may be traveling out of the community to work.

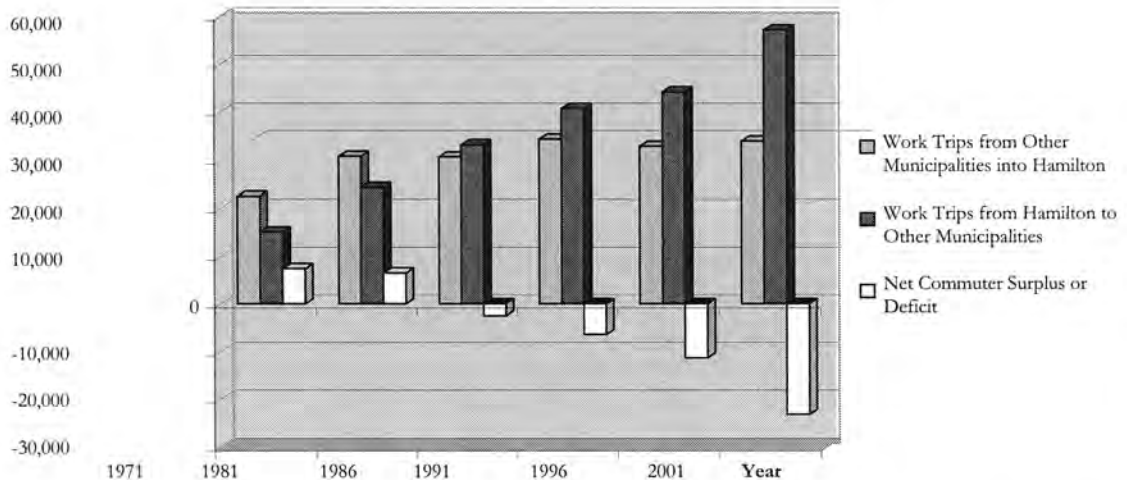
Infrastructure expenditure will not be able to offset the documented societal and environmental costs of out-commuting, such as reduction in community participation, sedentary-related health affects, air quality related health effects, lost time with family members, and stress.

Facilitating out-migration will not resolve the City's current high reliance on residential property tax due to the residential versus non-residential split in the assessment base, nor will it resolve the imbalance in the City's cost to provide services to new residential construction.

Having a live/work balance is important for community development, environmental protection and personal and municipal economic stability, all of which would contribute to quality of life in Hamilton.

Figure 10: City of Hamilton Commuter Surplus/Deficit 1971 – 2001

Number of Trips



**Source:** 2001-Statistics Canada; and Statistics Canada census data as reported in *All in a Day's work, Commuter Trends and Patterns for Hamilton-Wentworth, Vol 1 Main Report*, Region of Hamilton-Wentworth Community Planning and Development Division, June 1999

**Description:** Net Commuter Surplus/Deficit based on number of work trips into the City of Hamilton from other municipalities versus number of work trips to other municipalities outside of the City of Hamilton.

## Education

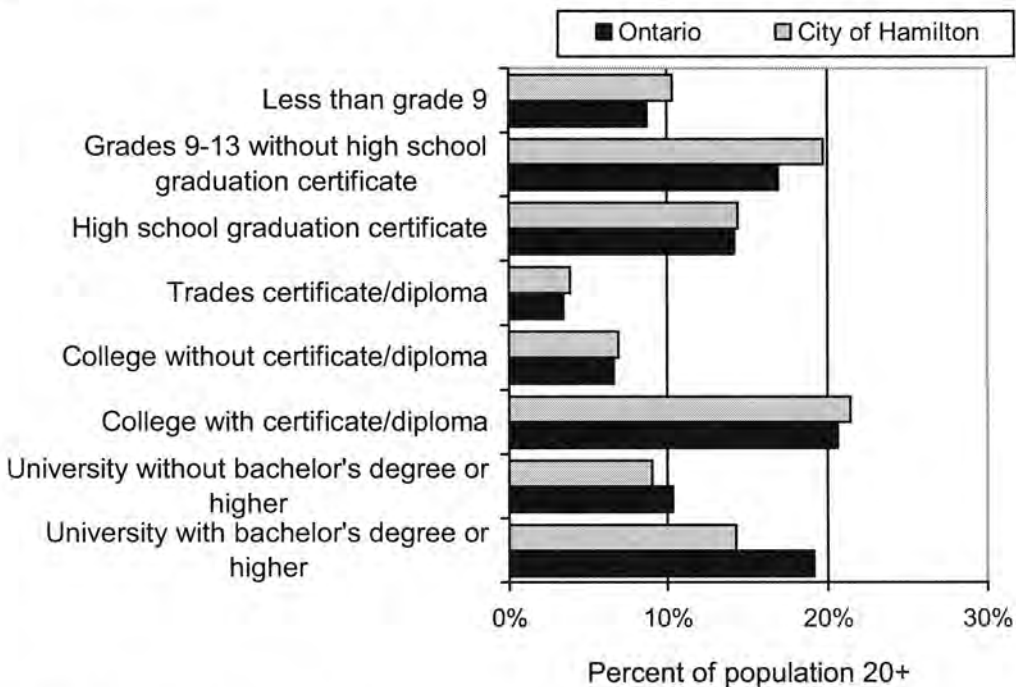
Almost a third of Hamiltonians 20 years of age and over have not attained a high school graduate certificate.

A higher percentage of Hamilton residents report less than high school or high school education when compared to Ontario as a whole.

In Hamilton, there were a higher percentage of residents who report a trades or college education than in Ontario.

The percentage of Hamilton residents with some or completed university education is below the provincial average.

Figure 11: Population 20 years and older by highest level of education obtained, City of Hamilton and Ontario, 2001



Source: *Census 2001, Statistics Canada.*

**Description:** Proportion of the population 20 years of age and older in each category of highest level of schooling attained.

Comparison of 1996 and 2001 data is not possible due to changes to the Census categorization of education levels in 2001.



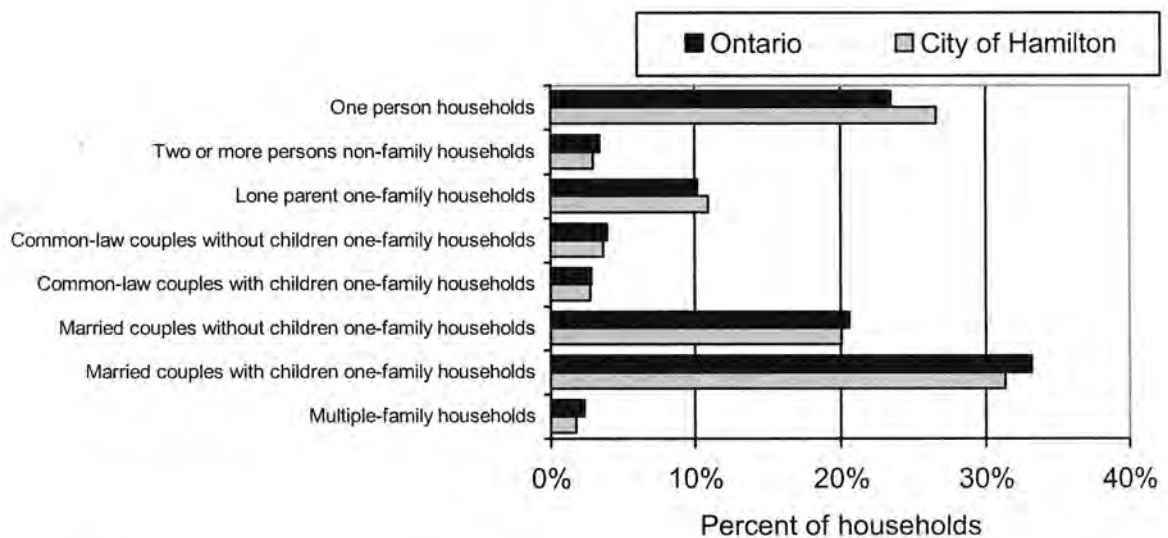
## Family Structure

Over half of households in Hamilton are married couple one-family households with or without children and greater than thirty percent of Hamilton households are made up of married couples with children.

A quarter of Hamilton households are comprised of one person living alone.

The breakdown of household types in Hamilton is similar to that of Ontario with a few exceptions. A smaller percentage of Hamilton households consist of married couples with children and a higher percentage of households consist of a single person living alone. Hamilton also has a higher percentage of lone-parent households.

Figure 12: Private households by household type, City of Hamilton and Ontario, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada, Census 2001

**Description:** Person or a group of persons who occupy the same private dwelling, by household type (one-family household, multiple-family household, or non-family households), expressed as a percentage of all households.

**One-family household** refers to a single census family with or without other non-family persons including: married couples with or without children, couples living common-law with or without children, or lone parents living with one or more children.

**Multiple-family household** refers to a household with two or more census families (with or without additional non-family persons).

**Non-family household** refers to either one person living alone or to a group of two or more people who share a private dwelling, but who do not constitute a census family.

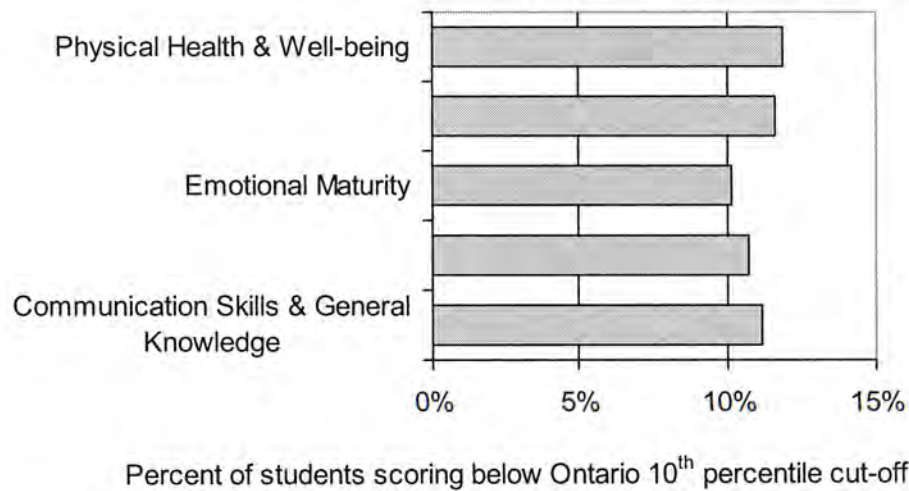
## Early Childhood Development

Investments in early childhood development critically affect health, well-being and competence throughout an individual's life and help to improve young children's readiness to learn.

In 2002, more than 10% of Hamilton senior kindergarten students scored below the provincial 10<sup>th</sup> percentile cut-off mark in each of the five developmental domains. The highest percentage of Hamilton's students scored below the 10<sup>th</sup> percentile cut-off in the Physical Health and Well-being domain.

It is important to understand the Early Development Instrument (EDI) results in the context of other socio-economic and health measures. Strong differences between Hamilton's neighbourhoods have been revealed in the EDI results and could be used to inform local level planning.

Figure 13: Percent of students with scores below the Ontario 10<sup>th</sup> percentile cut-off by EDI Domain, City of Hamilton 2002



Source: *Early Development Instrument, Hamilton 2002.*

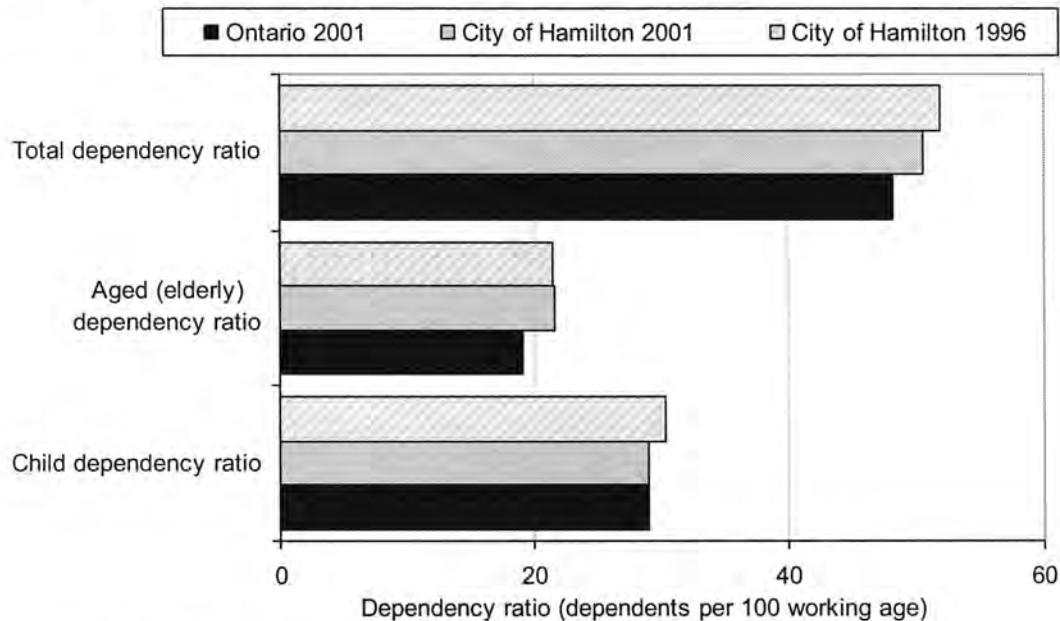
## Dependency Ratio

For every 100 working adults in Hamilton there are 29 child dependents and 22 elderly dependents, or approximately 1 dependant for every 2 working adults. As the population ages, the number of dependents will grow.

Since 1996, Hamilton's child dependency ratio has decreased but the aged dependency ratio has remained constant.

Hamilton's aged dependency ratio is slightly higher than the provincial average. The elderly dependency ratio will likely increase as baby boomers reach retirement age.

Figure 14: Child, aged (elderly) and total dependency ratio, City of Hamilton and Ontario, 2001



Source: *Census 2001, Statistics Canada*

**Description:** A dependency ratio is a comparison of the populations considered dependent (children aged 0 to 14 and the elderly aged 65 and over) to the population of working age (aged 15 to 64).

This ratio is presented as the number of dependents for every 100 people in the working age population.

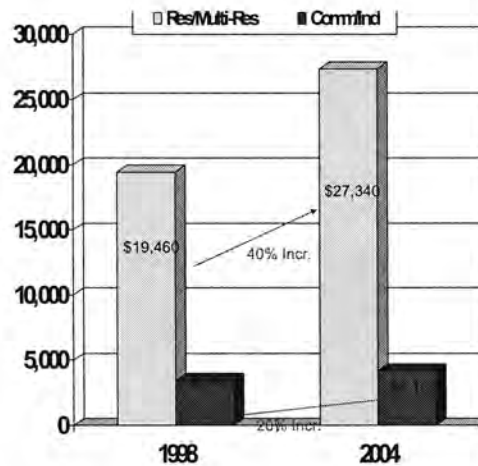
Dependency ratios are indicators of areas that are economically stressed due to the higher number of people who are likely economically dependent when compared to those who are likely to be earning a wage.

## Shift in Assessment Base

Between 1998 and 2004, structural changes in the economy have resulted in a shift in the City's assessment base from the commercial/industrial sector to the residential sector. Residential taxpayers pay a larger portion of the costs.

From 1998 to 2004, the residential/multi-residential assessment base increased by approximately \$19.5B, or 40%, whereas the commercial/industrial assessment base increased by half this amount or approximately \$4.2B.

Figure 15: Trends in Unweighted Assessment 1998 – 2004, CVA Totals - \$ millions



Increase in assessment includes growth, change in values (reassessment).

Source: *City of Hamilton.*

## 2001 Market Probe Study

A number of Ontario public library systems, including Hamilton, funded a 2001 study that was conducted by Market Probe. The purpose of the study was to determine if some of the findings in American research, such as that conducted by the Benton Foundation<sup>1</sup> were relevant to the Canadian setting. Market Probe interviewed over a thousand Ontario residents. The study demonstrated that trends found in the United States are not only present in Canada but, probably because the study was conducted several years later, these trends seem to show even more momentum.

The entire Market Probe study is available through HPL's administration.

Market Probe divided respondents into four distinct categories. Interestingly, the 1007 respondents were almost evenly self-divided into these same four groups. The four groups are:

### *Seekers*

Tend to be affluent and well-educated, and who are positive toward the library, and are heavy library users. Seekers will not support library funding unless their needs are met. Market Probe suggested that the support of this group is crucial to libraries.

### *Traditionalists*

Tend to have kids and less education and who have fair low expectations. The risk with this group is that they tend to see only the traditional functions of the library as relevant.

### *Supporters*

Tend to be older and female and who are enthusiastic backers. They need to know that the library is doing a good job of equalizing societal differences. Their support is only at risk if the library is perceived as ineffectual.

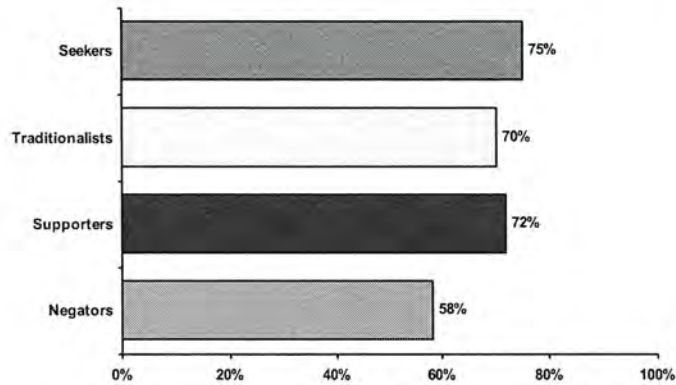
### *Negators*

Tend to be younger, affluent and male and who have written-off the library. Market Probe suggested that libraries needed to minimize the size of this group.

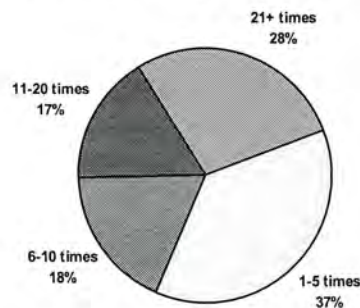
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<sup>1</sup> *Buildings, Bytes and Books* was published by the Benton Foundation and funded by the Kellogg Foundation. A copy of the report can be found at: <http://www.benton.org/publibrary/kellogg/buildings.html>

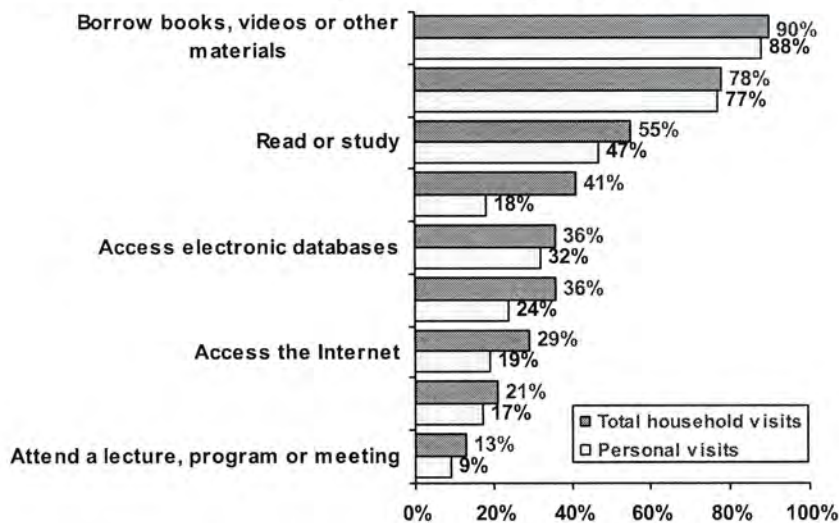
## Respondents who used the library in the past year, by type



## Number of annual visits by those who used libraries, by type

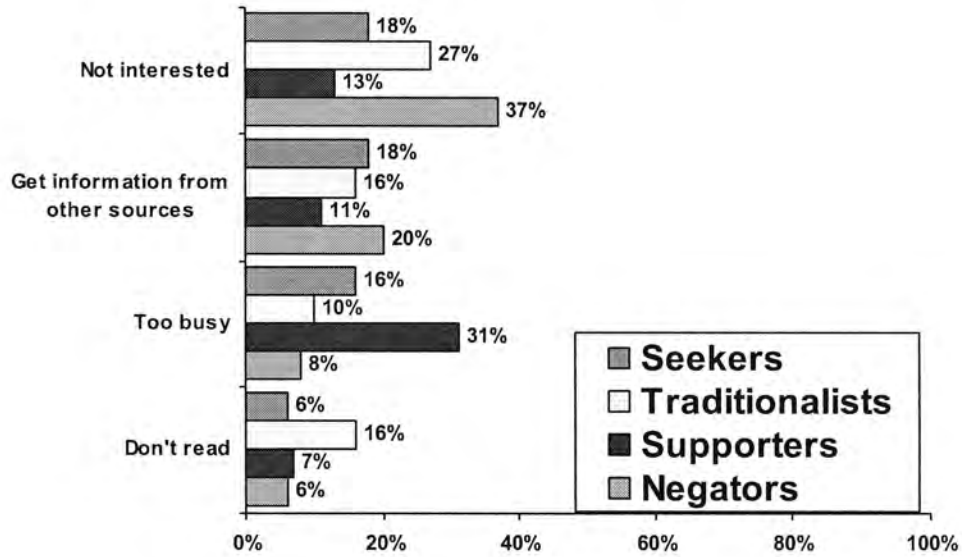


## Main reason for using the library, by type

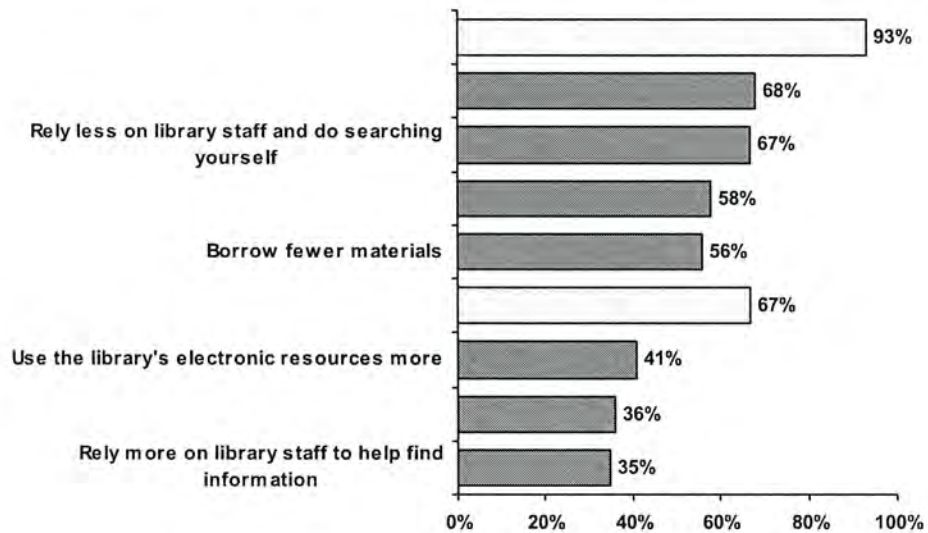




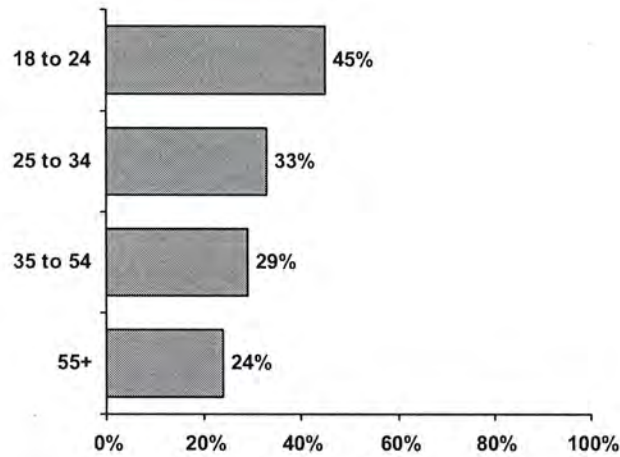
## Main reason for not using the library, by type



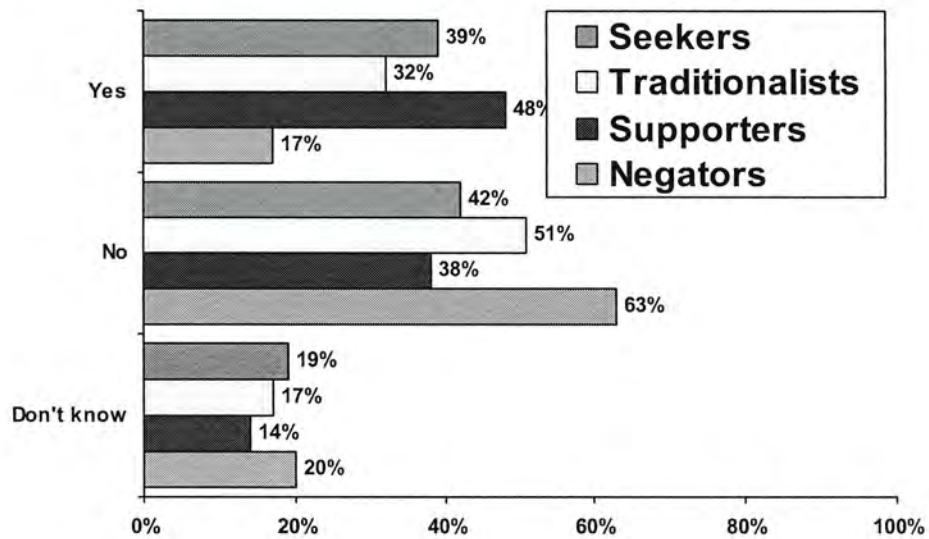
## Ways that the Internet has changed library use



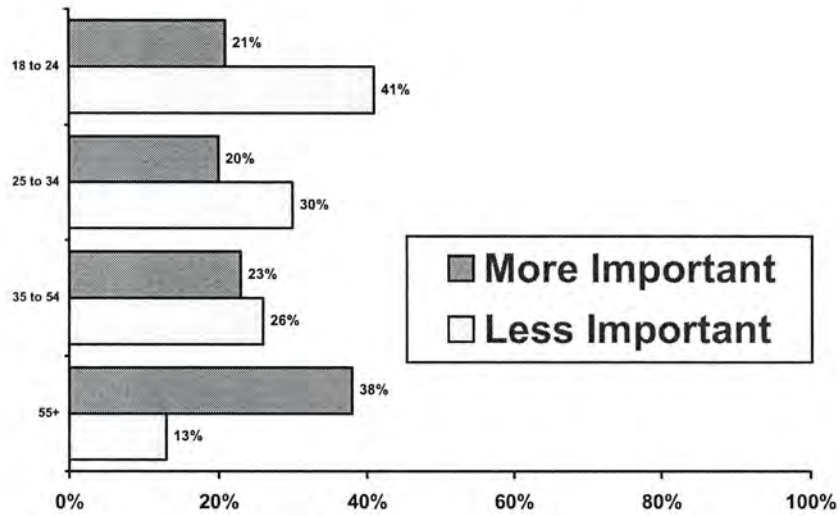
## Use the library less because of the Internet, by age



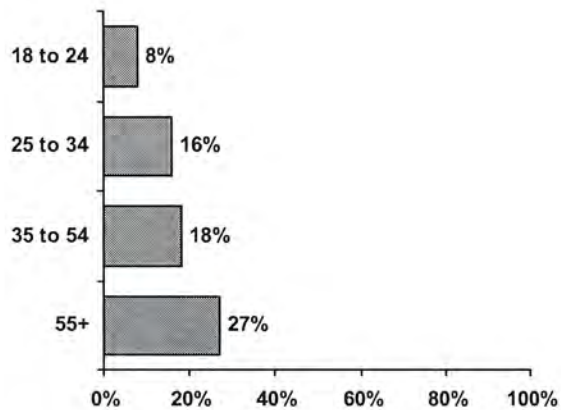
## Could the library help you to use the Internet more effectively?



## Future Importance of the library, by age



## Heavy library use (20+ visits a year) by age



## The 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan

OCLC is a large American company that provides bibliographic services to libraries around the world. It produces and publishes extensive research concerning libraries. *The 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan: Pattern Recognition* is intended to identify and describe global issues and trends that are impacting and will impact libraries around the globe. It is intended as a “high-level” document to describe the landscape and to inform and stimulate discussion. A copy of the entire report is available through HPL’s administration.

Wilson, Alane, Editor, *The 2003 OCLC Environmental Scan: Pattern Recognition*, Online Computer Library Centre, Inc, Dublin, Ohio, 2004.

### The Social Landscape

#### **Self Service: Moving to Self-Sufficiency**

“In less than half a decade, consumers worldwide have learned to become efficient on-line shoppers. Studies now show that many of the early roadblocks of on-line exchange – slow access, poor customer service, lack of security – have largely been eliminated. Almost half of the U.S. population purchased books online in 2002.” (Page 5)

#### **Satisfaction**

“Surveys confirm that information consumers are pleased with the results of on-line activities.” (Page 7)

#### **Seamlessness**

“The traditional separation of academic, leisure and work time is fusing together into a seamless world aided and supported by nomadic computing and information appliances that support multiple activities.” (Page 9)

### The Economic Landscape

#### **Slow economic growth worldwide**

“While long-range economic outlooks show recovering growth worldwide, there is little evidence that governments in industrialized countries are likely to see substantial revenue increases to reverse the funding cuts required during the past two years.” (written in January, 2004) (Page 17)

## **A silver lining – shared infrastructures**

“Some librarians interviewed for this report indicated that budget constraints could have a positive, liberating impact on libraries as it would force decisions avoided in more comfortable times.” (Page 25)

## **The Research and Learning Landscape**

### **Proliferation of e-learning**

“Once synonymous with distance learning, e-learning has quickly evolved to include not only courses that are taught primarily online and over a distance, but also those that include traditional, *building-based* courses that have been enhanced with electronic elements.” (Page 55)

### **Lifelong learning in the community**

“We often hear it said that libraries (and librarians) select, organize, retrieve and transmit information or knowledge. This is true. But those are the activities, not the mission of the library. . . . We do them to support learning.”<sup>2</sup> (Page 58)

## **The Library Landscape**

### **Staffing**

“Not enough young professionals are entering the profession to replace the retirees. . . . the changing demographics of this landscape will provide serious challenges to institutions. . . . Library staffing shortages could allow libraries to reorganize more easily and hire specific and new skill sets.” (Pages 72-73)

### **New Roles**

“Among the many new roles libraries are assuming is the role of library as community center. Not just warehouses of content, they are social assembly places, participating in their larger communities by building information commons, hosting poetry contests, digitizing city council minutes and positioning themselves as the knowledge management experts within their peer groups.” (Page 75)

### **Accommodating users**

“While there are some outstanding examples of libraries making efforts to take services and content to users, it is still the case that most library users must go virtually or physically to the library.” (Page 76”

### **Traditional versus nontraditional content**

Clifford Lynch is quoted in the report as stating “Rather than considering how to redesign or recreate or enhance libraries as digital libraries, we might usefully focus our attention on the human and social purposes and needs that libraries and allied cultural memory institutions have been intended to address . We must be careful not to overly emphasize the parts of this knowledge ecosystem that are familiar, that we are

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<sup>2</sup> IDC, Worldwide Corporate Learning eLearning Forecast and Analysis, 1999 – 2004 (2001). As quoted by Cerint Technology Group, [www.certint.com/company/The\\_Worldwide\\_Corporate\\_eLearning\\_Market-IDC.pdf](http://www.certint.com/company/The_Worldwide_Corporate_eLearning_Market-IDC.pdf) and Margaret Driscoll, IBM Mindspan Solution

comfortable with intellectually, socially and economically, to the exclusion of the new, the unfamiliar, the disturbing, the confusing.”<sup>3</sup> (Page 78)

### **Collaboration**

“If the last few decades of library and information developments have taught us anything, then it’s surely that the really significant advances, and the most meaningful and lasting solutions, are cooperative ones.”<sup>4</sup> (Page 83)

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<sup>3</sup> Clifford Lynch, “Reflections Towards The Development of a Post-DL Research Agenda,” paper presented to the National Science Foundation invitational workshop Post-Digital Libraries Research Futures (Chatham, MA: June 15 – 17, 2003)

<sup>4</sup> Reg Carr, The Future of Libraries and Collections: Keynote Address to the Fiersole Collection Development Retreat: Oxford, July 20, 2000





# 2004 OCLC Information Formats Trends: Content, Not Containers

This fall, 2004 OCLC report is at <http://www.oclc.org/reports/2004format.htm>

## Content Explosion

It is estimated that the worldwide traffic in e-mail messages that contain content the user wishes to receive will double between 2004 and 2006 (Page 4)

It is estimated that, by 2007, cell phones will be available to 82% of U.S. residents, 92% of those in the U.K., 82% of those in Australia, and 72% of those in New Zealand. (Page 5)

The “microcontent” business that caters to mobile devices is booming. (Page 5)

## New Voices

“Social Publishing”, open content electronic publishing that is not hidden by firewalls or passwords, is on the rise. (Page 6)

“The future of libraries is being shaped today by emerging technology that is transforming the way information is created and disseminated . . . More and more, users want granular pieces of information and data, at the moment of need, in the right format . . . The mantra will be: Everything, everywhere, when I want it, the way I want it.”<sup>5</sup>

## Print Formats

There is a “massive shift” to electronic media for entertainment and information but print won’t disappear anytime soon (Page 9)

The Book industry is experiencing increased production (in the number of titles) with decreased demand overall. (Page 9)

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<sup>5</sup>“Trend Alert: The Future of Libraries,” *Info.AboutInfo* Briefing, Outsell, Vol. 7, January 9, 2004, p.2.

## A Quiet Revolution (U.K.)

Library services in the U.K. are partly a federal responsibility, and there is a 10 Year federal strategic plan (*Framework for the Future*). The following comments are taken from a 2004 MLA (Museums, Libraries and Archives) brochure written on behalf of the Minister responsible for public libraries. While the comments are written in the present tense, they almost act as Vision statements. This summary includes excerpts from each cited priority. The brochure and the *Framework for the Future* is at: <http://www.mla.gov.uk/action/framework/framework.asp>.

### Relationship to schools

“Children who are introduced to books and reading at an early age do better at school. As well as helping their reading and speech development, it improves their attention span and concentration. By making libraries into places that appeal to children and young people, they help create an extra dimension in learning.” (Page 3)

### Libraries as safe places

“Libraries are safe places, where everyone is welcome and receives equal respect. They are places where it is hard to feel alone or cut off, and help is always on hand from friendly library staff, who act as mentors, coaches and guides.

“For people under pressure, libraries not only provide a refuge, but also the opportunity to improve their lives. Teenagers can study without fear of interruption. Unemployed people can apply online or look up job ads in the local newspaper.

“The library service reaches out through mobile libraries, volunteers and satellite units to hospitals, residential care homes and to people who are house-bound.

“Libraries are well used by many of those who are most hard to reach in our communities. Libraries are a powerful tool for social inclusion.” (Page 4)

## **Creating safer and stronger communities**

“Libraries act as a community hub, where people can meet friends, share experiences, find out about other community events. This makes them ideally placed to support civic renewal, drawing people into the centre, creating a living heart for the village, town or city.” (Page 5)

## **Promoting healthier communities**

“For many library users, particularly some of the more vulnerable people in our society, visiting the library and reading for their own pleasure contribute to their personal sense of well-being.

“There is strong evidence that reading benefits mental health and provides a welcome escape for those suffering from depression.

“Libraries often work with local health professional. All libraries have books and information on healthy living. Some libraries hold ante-natal classes and provide a range of books specially geared toward pregnancy and birth; other promote and participate in community projects and health and well-being.” (Page 6)

## **Promoting the economic vitality of localities**

“Improving adult literacy; teaching people to use computers; giving the unemployed access to information about job opportunities, these are just a few of the well-established ways in which libraries contribute to the economic health of the community.

“In addition, they are valuable resources for companies – especially small businesses – needing statistical information, news and business intelligence.” (Page 6)

# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter



Toronto Public Library's Strategic Plan 2004–2007



# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Toronto Public Library Board Members

Gillian Mason, *Chair*  
 William Booth, *Vice-Chair*  
 Meyer Brownstone  
 Councillor Gay Cowbourne  
 Councillor Janet Davis  
 Rick Goldsmith, CA  
 Mizan Ibrahim  
 Mark Nightingale  
 Councillor Kyle Rae  
 Councillor Karen Stintz  
 Councillor Sylvia Watson  
 Mitchell Weisberg

## Library Directors

Josephine Bryant, *City Librarian*  
 Anne Bailey, *Director, Branches*  
 Suzanna Birchwood, *Director,  
Marketing & Communications*  
 Vickery Bowles, *Director, North/East  
Region*  
 Nancy Chavner, *Director, South/West  
Region*  
 Ron Dyck, *Director, Information  
Technology & Bibliographic Services*  
 Larry Hughsam, *Director, Finance &  
Treasurer*  
 Dan Keon, *Director, Human Resources*  
 Linda Mackenzie, *Director, Research &  
Reference Libraries*  
 Jane Pyper, *Director, Planning, Policy  
and City-Wide Services*  
 Heather Rumball, *President,  
Toronto Public Library Foundation*

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# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter



## Message from the Mayor



I've always felt that libraries are a civic treasure. They connect people to their communities, inspire imagination, foster culture and support the love of learning.

For over 120 years, Toronto Public Library has served the residents of Toronto, connecting people and communities. During this time, the Library has excelled in the traditional public library role — giving residents access to high quality information and leisure materials. 120 years ago there was no Internet, no electronic databases, no CDs and no DVDs; but the Library has embraced each new technology as it became available ensuring our residents can keep up-to-date in a changing world.

By providing such solid service, the Toronto Public Library has contributed to the strength of our city. But it has done more than that: it has provided opportunities for citizens and communities to engage and participate in our neighbourhoods and it has fostered participation and inclusiveness. In the Library's strategic plan, *Urban Stories: The Next Chapter*, city-building continues to be a high priority, for which, I personally, am grateful.

I am confident that for the next 120 years the Library will continue to support our citizens and help build the city of the future, for the future. Visit your local library branch and see for yourself how *Urban Stories* reflects our common vision.

Mayor David Miller

## Spotlight on City Livability

The Canadian Urban Institute (CUI) recently recognized the Library's enormous contribution to the social development, cultural landscape and economic growth of Toronto. On May 26, 2004, CUI announced that the Library had received the inaugural *Urban Leadership Award for City Livability*.

Mayor David Miller, who participated in the event, noted his pleasure at the recognition for the Library. The award recognizes organizations or individuals dedicated to making cities more livable by finding new ways to enhance public places and spaces and by instilling confidence about personal safety and security. The Library was nominated for the award by TD Bank Financial Group, a long-time Library supporter. TD sponsors the Library's annual, citywide Summer Reading Club and the TD Gallery in the Toronto Reference Library.





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## What You Told Us

*"Public libraries are the one public forum in which all members of society have equal opportunity to learn, to grow, and to contribute to society."*

*"The library is of vital importance to the community. It must be maintained if we are to remain a literate society."*

*"The public library is one of the central pillars of a great city. It is a way for citizens to keep growing and learning; a means through which any individual can gain access to information, literature and new worlds, no matter what their economic status."*

*"What the city spends on its public library system is an investment in its citizens and its future."*

*"Those of us who don't have the money for expensive language classes, for expensive textbooks, for expensive educational services, make use of the library not only for enjoyment, but for learning and activities crucial to our self-improvement and employability."*

## Welcome to Urban Stories: The Next Chapter

*I*t was the best of times, it was the worst of times. So begins one time-honoured story of urban life, Charles Dickens' *Tale of Two Cities*. Although Dickens referred to the time of the French Revolution, in many ways his famous first line could apply to contemporary Toronto. We, too, are experiencing a time of great opportunity and great challenge.

The "urban stories" of today are made richer and yet more complicated by an urban landscape where over 100 languages are spoken and over half of our newcomers speak a home language other than English.

We've heard your urban stories and this strategic plan is our response and our blueprint for constructive action. We will continue to make the best of the world's literature available to you — along with the best research and non-fiction materials, free high-speed Internet and a variety of programming for people of all ages. This plan outlines new initiatives to meet your evolving needs.

The Toronto Public Library operates close to 100 branches across the city, serving residents in at least that many languages. Students, newcomers, job-seekers, children, leisure readers, seniors and babies all use the library to meet their information and leisure needs.

And what a challenge to do everything you have asked within the current tight fiscal environment. The Library has felt increasing pressure to provide the same level of service — and more — in spite of the rising cost of books, technology and infrastructure, and limited funds.

To all those Toronto residents who shared with us their vision of the Library, a heart-felt thanks. In addition to confirming the importance of the Library in your lives, you gave us most of the ideas for this multi-year strategic plan. A special thanks also to the Board members who worked so hard with us on making this

# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

strategic plan a reality: Toronto Public Library Board members William Booth (Vice-Chair), Meyer Brownstone and Mizan Ibrahim; and Toronto Public Library Foundation Board Chair Janet McKelvey.

We can't eliminate the challenges of contemporary urban living, but we can help you access the information and resources you need. With your help, we can continue to build our great Library system, and with it, strengthen our city, our residents and our collective future.



Josephine Bryant  
*City Librarian*



Gillian Mason  
*Chair, Toronto Public Library Board*



## Our Vision

Toronto Public Library inspires the spirit of exploration, the joy of reading and the pursuit of knowledge for people of all ages and backgrounds, beginning with the very young.

As cornerstones of our neighbourhoods, our libraries connect people to each other, to their community and to their hopes and dreams.

Our rich resources provide the opportunity for everyone to treasure the past and to create a future that is full of possibility.

The Library promotes and enriches the democratic, cultural, educational and economic life of our diverse and evolving city.



# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Spotlight on Children

Research shows that literacy, learning and success start in the earliest years of life.

That's why the library puts tremendous resources into delivering thousands of high-quality programs for kids. Programs featuring engaging rhymes, stories and so much more attract youngsters to the Library – and introduce them early to the magic of reading.

Programs, including English Can Be Fun, Kids@Comptuers, Leading to Reading and Homework Clubs, help kids across the city.

From home, youngsters enjoy Dial-A-Story, 416-395-5400, which now features stories in English, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Cantonese and Mandarin – with Polish in the works.



Starting in 2003, a remarkable cooperative effort has involved Kiwanis service club volunteers in storytime sessions conducted by Library staff at local agencies in under-served communities.

## Our First Strategic Plan

The Library's first strategic plan focused on four broad pillars: supporting children and youth; developing our collections and services; enhancing our branches in recognition of their vital role as community cornerstones; and building the virtual library to reflect the growing emphasis on new information technologies. We worked closely with the City, the Toronto Public Library Foundation and community partners to achieve shared goals.

Going into our second strategic plan, we remain fully committed to defending universal access to high quality library service. We will maintain services for residents of all ages and backgrounds, beginning with the very young. And we will continue to provide our core service – our excellent collection of books and materials - and many of the successful initiatives from our first plan, including the expansion of reading support programs for children, the enhancement to the Library's website and Virtual Reference Library and the improvement of our large branch network. (See Appendix for more about the Library's achievements.)





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter



## Engaging Toronto's Citizens

As is most fitting for a public library, this strategic plan was a collective effort of Toronto residents, library stakeholders and staff. In the spring of 2003, the Toronto Public Library Board approved a public consultation plan. It outlined a number of activities to invite and encourage all Toronto residents to participate in planning the future of their library.

### Phase One: Understanding Our City

The first step in the strategic planning process was to understand the changes in our city that affect the demand for library service. We conducted extensive research on demographic trends and library usage patterns and interviewed library staff about the changing needs of our users. This research was presented at a planning day with Library Board members. Three major public forums featuring panel discussions were held to generate further discussion on the Library's future direction.



Almost 1,400 Toronto residents attended forums (such as this one at the Toronto Reference Library), participated in focus groups or faxed and emailed us their feedback.

## Fast Facts

Toronto Public Library circulates more items and handles more public visits than any other public library system in North America. We are the second busiest library system in the world (second only to Hong Kong!). Consider these fast facts from 2003:

- Walk-in visits: 16.6 million
- Virtual visits: 17.3 million
- Items borrowed: 28.6 million
- Holds filled: 3.7 million
- Number of registered borrowers: 1.55 million

## Fast Facts about Strategic Plan Consultations

- 8 public meetings
- 8 staff forums
- 3 stakeholder roundtables
- 92 comments via the Web
- 441 written comments
- 1,384 total participants



# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Spotlight on Seniors

In its first strategic plan, the Library focused on targeted user groups, including seniors. We currently maintain collections at hospitals, seniors homes and other institutions for the aged. We deliver library materials to people who are unable to leave their homes. We are always expanding our collection including books on tape and large print material. We offer enlargeable fonts on our public computers, one-on-one Web training sessions and large screen computer monitors at all our branches.

Toronto Public Library's efforts were recognized recently by the Canadian Library Association. The 2004 W. Kaye Lamb Award for Service to Seniors recognizes a library that has developed an ongoing service, program or procedure of benefit to seniors.

## What You Told Us

*"The library helps seniors stay actively involved socially and intellectually ...this can be a cruel, lonely City but for the convergence that TPL provides."*

*"As a senior, I enjoy the library to learn new things that I didn't have time for when I was younger or to travel to places where I would never be able to go."*

## Phase Two: Responding to the Changing Needs of Our City

In January, the Library Board approved the *Strategic Plan Public Consultation: Big Idea Workbook* as a framework for the second stage of public consultation. The *Workbook* identified four areas of strategic focus:

1. Promoting books and culture
2. Addressing the needs of youth
3. Supporting newcomers
4. Meeting the needs of low-income neighbourhoods.

We posted the *Workbook* on the Library website and made available materials in English, French, Chinese, Tamil, Hindi and Spanish. Because the Library works collaboratively with a wide variety of city and community agencies, we invited stakeholders to attend one of three roundtables to comment on our priority areas and to suggest service strategies where we could work together. Focus groups were held for library staff to review public input and to develop goals and strategies.

## Phase Three: Communicating Our Draft Strategic Plan

Our third phase of public consultation involved communicating our draft strategic plan via the website and through five public meetings. Public meetings included an overview of the planning process and the priority areas, followed by discussion.

Through the consultation process for the strategic plan, we heard from almost 1,400 people.



# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Key Priorities 2004-2007

We heard what you had to say about the essential role of libraries, and we developed our four key priorities based on your input. These are:

1. Books and culture
2. Youth
3. Newcomers
4. Low-income neighbourhoods

Clearly, Toronto residents value our books and branches but also recognize that the Library must respond to the demands of our changing city. Listed below are our goals and the strategies we will implement to meet those goals.

### 1. Books and Culture

Not surprisingly, books and culture are Toronto residents' first priority for the Library.

#### **GOAL: Increase spending to build collections and improve access**

The Library will: build collections that reflect the diversity of interests, cultures and languages in the city; entertain and educate by offering a full range of both fiction and non-fiction; help people learn English, build literacy skills and further education; and offer a variety of formats including CDs, DVDs and large print. Access to all our collections is obviously key; the Library will improve the online catalogue and look for new and creative ways to help users find the materials they need.

With French as one of Canada's official languages, the Library will continue to build our collection of French books, videos and other material, increase the number of French programs and expand outreach to schools. Summer Reading Club materials are already available in both official languages and the Library will actively promote this children's reading initiative to both French and English immersion schools.

## What You Told Us

"Remember, one of the wonders of the world was the great library at Alexandria!" (I learned that in a library!)"

"If we can't go to books and reference materials, how can we learn?"

"In this new information society, the libraries are the playgrounds for the mind."

"With easy access to the Internet, people are getting away from reading books. Library services to promote Literacy are essential."

"Entertain and educate – people want the library to build both fiction and non-fiction collections to keep people informed and to support formal education (high school and post secondary) and informal education."





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Spotlight on Collections

With almost 11 million items in our collection, it's hard to believe that the most common request from our public consultation is "more books." As a public library we are faced with the challenge of satisfying competing interests — meeting the needs of the very young, the elderly, speakers of Canada's official languages, speakers of over a hundred other languages and dialects, leisure readers, job seekers and newcomers to Toronto.

Even within our multilingual audience, there exists a multitude of appetites to whet and to please. Some borrow items in languages other than English because English is not their mother tongue. Others borrow multilingual materials hoping to maintain fluency in a second language.

And buying more books is only part of the solution — you told us you also wanted more in other formats — DVDs, CDs, books on tape. We will continue to monitor changing technologies to best meet your needs.

**GOAL: Champion and promote reading; contribute to Toronto's literary culture**

More than just a repository of books, Toronto Public Library aims to become a centre for literary events in the City. The Library will encourage reading through innovative activities and events in the branches and beyond. The Library will also offer and support book clubs and book discussion groups.



Toronto residents browse the shelves in search of a "great read."

**GOAL: Broaden Torontonians' access to the City's civic and cultural life**

Engaging citizens in the civic and cultural life of the City, by holding public forums on topics of interest, has become an increasingly important role played by the Library. Free of any partisan agenda, the Library empowers the City's residents by providing free access to ideas and debates through high profile speakers, authors and cultural events. The Library will forge strong partnerships and participate in cultural events in the City and its neighbourhoods. But we won't abandon the past — the Library will continue to preserve and promote our cultural heritage through the development, digitization and display of our rare and historical Special Collections.

# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter



## 2. Low-Income Neighbourhoods

The gap between high-income and low-income neighbourhoods is increasing; Toronto's poor are getting poorer. A Toronto Public Library card is a passport to career and education information and leisure materials well beyond many household budgets. The Library is one of our society's great equalizers, allowing all Toronto residents access to almost 11 million items, free high-speed Internet and a huge range of electronic resources.

- Over 20 percent of Toronto households have incomes below the poverty line.
- Almost 70 percent of the GTA's low-income families live in Toronto.
- The median income in Toronto's 12 poorest neighbourhoods fell from \$43,600 annually in 1990 to \$36,800 in 1999. The median income in Toronto's 12 wealthiest neighbourhoods rose from \$114,200 to \$125,600 over the same period.

**GOAL: Provide library service that meets the needs of low-income neighbourhoods in identified areas (high priority branches)**

Experience shows that each neighbourhood has a distinct character and distinct needs. Outreach and consultation with the community is a priority to ensure that library services — including hours of operation, collections and programs — meet community needs. We heard that access to quiet study space was important and the Library will make every effort to increase access to public space.

We will extend innovative literacy and reading support programs and collections and enhance our Leading to Reading and Homework Clubs. Providing access to employment-related information, as well as improved access to computers, online information, software and training, will be a priority.

## What You Told Us

*"With the growing poverty level in the city of Toronto and also the growing cost of books, Toronto Public Library provides an excellent source of reference material."*

*"I have been going through a really tough period. I have had to do vast amounts of research to upgrade my skills; I cannot afford to "go out," or buy books/magazines/CDs/videos related to achieving my goals. I literally do not know what I would do without the library's resources and comfort."*

*"No cuts to human services are easy to make, but what a tragedy to make cuts in the one program that targets all members of our community. In the face of all the other challenges so many members of our community face, let's not take away their right to learn."*





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Spotlight on Community Partnerships

Toronto Public Library recognizes the power of collaboration and works cooperatively with government, not-for-profit and private sector organizations.

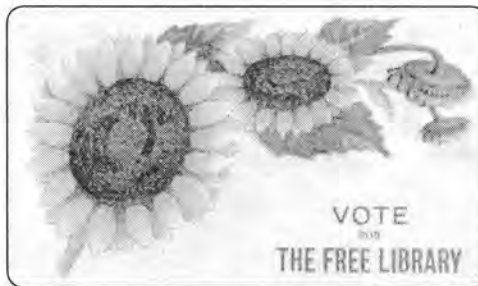
As an example, in 2004, with financial support from Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, the Library has undertaken a new project in the Flemingdon Park and Thorncliffe communities. *Working Together: Community Library Connections*, a three-year project involving libraries in Vancouver, Regina and Halifax, will develop and test models for working with marginalized or economically disadvantaged communities.



The Library's Leading to Reading Program is available to Toronto children experiencing difficulties with reading including this group of kids from homeless families.

### **GOAL: Increase our contribution to community capacity building**

As a municipal institution and community partner, the Library sees city-building as a priority. The Library will contribute to building strong neighbourhoods and help foster a sense of community belonging and identity by expanding outreach to, and partnering with, community agencies. We will be an active player in community networks, resource groups and neighbourhood events. Empowered residents with equal access to resources can break down barriers, ensuring that Toronto is a healthier city.



This 1882 campaign card for the free public library in Toronto shows that the Library has a long tradition of community support and free access to information.

# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter



## 3. Newcomers

Half of Torontonians were born abroad, and eight in 10 new immigrants have neither English nor French as their mother tongue. Successful settlement in this country depends, absolutely, on language skills, finding a job and continuing educational opportunities.

- Forty-three percent of Toronto's population identify themselves as belonging to a visible minority (2001).
- Almost 19 percent of Toronto residents speak a language other than English or French at home. The most common home languages include Chinese (Mandarin and Cantonese), Italian, Tamil, Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Persian (Farsi), Punjabi and Vietnamese.
- Newcomers face barriers to finding employment as a result of accreditation demands and language.



By partnering with settlement agencies, including CultureLink, the Library provides a safe space for newcomers at this English Conversation Circle program.

### **GOAL: Contribute to the successful adaptation of newcomers to Toronto**

Many newcomers tell us that a trip to the public library is first on their list of things to do after they find housing. The Library will continue to contribute to the successful adaptation of immigrants to Toronto through enhanced outreach to newcomers. We will enhance and expand access to settlement information to meet the needs of newcomers. As well, staff will expand access to services and programs in languages other than English.

## What You Told Us

*"For a newcomer like me, the library not only provides me with books to read and videos to watch, it is also a place that displays social equality in the sense that people, no matter what social or economic class, are given equal access to information. This...distinguishes a democracy from an autocracy."*

*"It has been a year away from my home but Toronto Library has kept me close to the music, culture and ethnicity of my country."*

*"As a recent arrival to Toronto, I am struck by this city's cosmopolitan nature, and by the fact that its libraries serve so many populations. I often visit the Toronto Reference Library, and I see people from every walk of life... including so many people who are obviously learning English as a second language."*

*"I cannot speak good English. But let me tell you one thing — Toronto Public Library means A LOT to us. I am a new immigrant and I cannot live here easily if we do not have the library service like this."*





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## More Fast Facts

In 2003:

- 400,000 children and teens attended library programs
- 11 million items, including 7.5 million books
- 1,800 public access computers (1,300 provide free, high-speed Internet access)
- more than 60,000 volunteer hours per year
- 32 Bookmobile stops across Toronto
- 40 active multilingual collections
- 67 percent of children in Toronto have library cards

### ***GOAL: Help to address barriers to employment for immigrants***

The Library will provide support to newcomers in gaining proficiency in English through our English as a Second Language collections and a variety of co-sponsored programs. The Library will improve access to Canadian accreditation information and other job-related materials so that newcomers can contribute their skills and experiences to Canadian society as soon as possible. We will continue to promote volunteer opportunities at the Library to help newcomers gain Canadian experience and break down barriers to employment.



Toronto Public Library provides Internet training in other languages (e.g. Cantonese and Mandarin), in addition to English, in order to help meet the needs of newcomers.

# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter



## 4. Youth

Not only have the numbers of young people in Toronto increased, but youth also face new challenges in education, in the workplace and on the streets. The urban stories of youth in our city depict both challenges and successes but one thing is clear — the Library must work harder to encourage youth to use our resources. Our challenge is to make young people feel welcome.



One public consultation on our strategic plan focused on the needs of youth — and featured young people in a panel discussion.

- The number of Toronto youth aged 15–19 grew by 7.1 percent between 1996 and 2001.
- This group is projected to continue growing — by a whopping 17.4 percent by 2006.
- Toronto youth perform poorly in Grade 10 literacy tests.
- Toronto is faced with increasing youth alienation and violence.

## What You Told Us

*"The Toronto Public Library is a lifesaver for me. As a student, I depend tremendously on its resources. And its exhaustive collection is so helpful in everything from research to travel to academics."*

*"My friends and I stop by the library after school and check out all the new books and magazines. I usually end up taking home a big stack of novels. I lose myself in the stories. It also gave me the opportunity to try something new. I could just pick up a book and learn how to knit or learn about India's history."*





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## What You Told Us

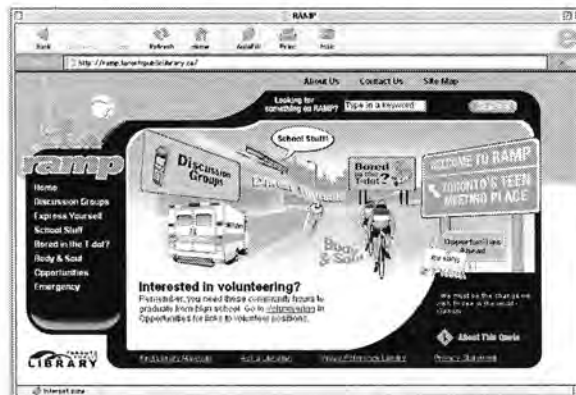
*"I think it is ridiculous that (some) libraries are closed Sundays. Sunday is an obvious day for school kids and people who work during the week."*

*"As a retired teacher who knows firsthand of the devastation of school libraries, I definitely support books and other media for youth of all ages."*

*"Young people need a place to go to research their studies and feel safe."*

## **GOAL: Create library services that address the needs of youth**

The Library aims to increase the number of youth who are regular users of the library and who have library cards. Part of reaching this objective is ensuring that the Library is welcoming and relevant to youth — involving youth directly in the planning, delivery and evaluation of library services is critical. Many Toronto Public Library branches have established YAGs — Youth Advisory Groups — for just this purpose. Such groups have the added advantage that they enable teen YAG members to become advocates and promoters of the Library to their peers. The Library will also increase outreach to agencies serving youth, especially youth at risk.



*ramp*, the Library's website for youth, offers access to a wide range of topics of interest to teens.

Providing library spaces, designed in consultation with youth, as safe places to read, use a computer or study will contribute to making young people feel that the public library is sensitive to their needs. Finally, the Library will continue to build online services for teens and an online community in recognition of the fact that youth, more than any other group, rely heavily on the Internet for their information and leisure needs.

## **GOAL: Encourage youth to read**

Research shows that adults tend to return to many of the leisure activities of their youth. Getting young people to include reading on their agendas now may well establish a lifelong habit. To encourage teen readers we will enhance our collections, especially those of high

# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

interest to younger people including graphic novels, magazines, comics and electronic formats.

Teen literature will also be promoted through the use of readers' advisory and literary events geared to youth. Strategies to assist youth in increasing their literacy skills will be explored.

**GOAL: Support youth in school, career development and employment**

Working with the local school boards, the Toronto Public Library will reach out to junior and high school students, teachers and parents to promote the Library's online services. Helping students develop strong research skills is key to success in later life. The Library will expand access to homework clubs, user education, online librarian assistance and tutoring. Youth have also indicated a need for expanded access to quiet study space in the library and to word processing and the Internet.

By expanding our reference materials on market trends and career information, we will ensure that our supporting role in young people's lives does not stop at graduation — wherever possible, the Library will assist youth in making the transition to adulthood. The Library will also provide direct employment for youth in both part-time and summer programs.

**GOAL: Expand access to high quality volunteer experiences for youth throughout the city**

Creating and expanding placement opportunities for youth provides young people with employment experience of benefit both to their long-term career development and, potentially, to the Library. Involving youth in branch reading programs including Leading to Reading and Homework Clubs additionally benefits the participating children. The Library will develop programs and outreach events geared to youth in order to ensure that youth volunteer experiences are of maximum benefit to all.



## Spotlight on Children

Getting library cards into the hands of children got a boost during the past three years with the launch of an innovative, annual awareness and library card sign-up campaign targeting junior and senior kindergarten children.

Supported, in 2003, by the TD Bank Financial Group, the Start Smart package of information encourages parents to bring their children into the library to register for their own library card.





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## What You Told Us

*"I am continually amazed and appreciative of the good attitude of the librarians, despite the lack of resources. They do a great job and are true professionals."*

*"Librarians perform an essential service of helping members of the community access information."*

*"The buildings and staff represent a warm place, literally and figuratively, a meeting place, an enriched school day, an opportunity to read in a language other than English, ESL resources and a source of simple human contact with a dignity denied in many other places."*

*"Support library staff in their efforts to pursue professional development opportunities, extra specialist training, etc. This benefits all of us who use Toronto Public Library services."*

## Our Operating Principles

Achieving our goals and ensuring that the Toronto Public Library continues to meet the needs of all Toronto residents depends on more than good intentions and effective public consultation. Both budgetary and staffing considerations impact on the implementation of all Library programs and services. Providing up-to-date and well-rounded collections costs money — more every year because of inflation. Knowledgeable and well-trained staff are essential to the effective delivery of programs and services — information is only valuable if one can access the right materials in a timely fashion.

### ***GOAL: Support the essential role of staff in achieving the Library's strategic objectives***

The Library will evaluate its capacity to deliver expanded services and programs and work towards implementing changes as necessary. The need for diversity in the workplace as a reflection of the public we serve is a priority already supported; the introduction of a formal employment equity program will further this commitment.

Developing a comprehensive strategy for staff development is critical in enabling staff to reach their full potential and in ensuring that other goals of this plan are achieved. Training and mentoring programs, secondments and career path development are part of the Library's comprehensive staff development strategy.

### ***GOAL: Preserve and maintain the legacy of public buildings and public space***

Through consultation, we heard how much residents value their local library and heritage buildings. We will preserve and maintain our buildings in a state of good repair so that they can be enjoyed by residents today and in the future.



# URBAN STORIES:

## The Next Chapter



***GOAL: Ensure that the priorities of the Strategic Plan are reflected and integrated with the budget-planning process***

The Library will re-allocate existing resources to advance strategic priorities where the opportunity arises. The Library will also take advantage of alternative funding opportunities including grants, corporate and community sponsorships and public donations. The Library will ensure that funding for capital projects matches our strategic priorities by providing appropriate physical space in communities.

***GOAL: Ensure governance structures and relationships support the direction and democratic quality of the Strategic Plan***

The Toronto Public Library Board recognizes that good governance includes a commitment to the principles of participation, responsiveness, transparency, equity, inclusiveness and accountability. We will develop policies and practices that encourage and facilitate civic engagement and public participation.

### Next Steps

***Develop action plans for each of our priority areas.***

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***Use the action plans as the basis for our annual budget planning.***

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***Provide an annual report to the public on achievements.***



# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Our Mission

Toronto Public Library provides free and equitable access to library services that meet the changing needs of the people of Toronto.

Toronto Public Library preserves and promotes universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment. New technologies extend access to global information beyond library walls. Toronto Public Library upholds the principle of intellectual freedom.

Effective partnerships enhance library service throughout the City. Toronto Public Library is accountable for the effective management of library resources and for the quality of library service offered to the people of Toronto.

# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter



## **Our Values**

### ***Accountability***

Responsible for our actions

### ***Creativity***

Encouraging innovation in how we undertake our work

### ***Equity***

Accessibility, diversity and fairness in the treatment of all individuals

### ***Integrity***

Open and honest in all our dealings

### ***Participatory***

Inclusive and involving in decision-making

### ***Respect***

Valuing individual needs, experiences and differences

### ***Vision***

Looking beyond where we are today

### ***Service Orientation***

Providing quality customer-driven services

### ***Intellectual Freedom***

Encouraging the free exchange of information and ideas in a democratic society





# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

## Appendix

### Achievements from the First Strategic Plan (2000–2003)

#### Begin with Children and Youth

In response to the growing number of children in the city, to the rate of child poverty and to public input, the initial pillar of the Library's first strategic plan focused on building and promoting services to children. A primary goal was the promotion of reading among children. 185,000 TD Summer Reading Club packages were made available to Toronto's children and more than 30,000 kindergarten children were encouraged to register for a Library card. As a result, the number of children registering for a Library card increased by 13 percent and circulation of children's materials increased 11 percent.

A second goal was to support and encourage children in learning to read. The number of locations offering reading support programs, including Leading to Reading and Homework Clubs, doubled. More than 8,500 children received intensive one-on-one support in enhancing their reading skills. Another benefit was the considerable expansion in volunteer and summer employment opportunities for youth offered by the Library.

A third goal was to extend outreach to targeted groups of children. English Can Be Fun, a program offering support to newcomer children in learning English, was expanded from 12 to 23 locations, reaching 1,974 children. Children in families receiving social assistance were reached through the Toronto Social Services Kids@Computers Scholarship Program. In addition to the introduction to the electronic services offered by the Library, this initiative provides children with new computers in their home. Over 4,000 children benefited from the program over three years.

Although services to primary school children were emphasized, youth were reached through the high school outreach campaign

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promoting use of the Library's online services to students in Grade 11. More than 33,000 students and 3,500 teachers participated in the program contributing to a 210 percent boost in virtual visits in the years the program ran. A second focus was increasing youth involvement in planning Library services. Youth Advisory Groups were expanded across the city.

## **The Best in Collections and Services**

Expanding collections was a key message generated by public consultation on the strategic plan. The Library Board was successful in increasing the Library's collections budget by 12 percent from \$13.5 million in 2000 to \$15 million in 2003. To provide better access to new and popular materials, browsing collections of materials, known as Best Bets, were introduced. Large Best Bets collections are available at five locations and smaller ones at 25 locations. Material in these collections is available at the owning branch only and cannot be reserved.

Services for newcomers were established citywide with the extension of ESL classes in partnership with the Toronto District School Board and the Toronto Catholic District School Board. The Library entered into a key partnership with SEPT (Settlement and Education Partnership in Toronto). With funding from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the program places settlement workers from a variety of agencies in schools during the school year and in libraries and community centres during the summer. The number of branches participating almost doubled from 15 to 29 with 5,143 newcomers receiving settlement information in many languages and an introduction to Toronto Public Library.

## **Your Local Library: The Community Cornerstone**

A key theme emerging from the consultation on the first strategic plan was the vital importance of local branches to neighbourhoods. During the life of the plan, the Library Board was successful in increasing its capital budget from \$6.4 million in 2000 to \$9.6 million in 2003, with recognition from the City of Toronto that a



# URBAN STORIES: The Next Chapter

\$10 million annual capital budget is required to address the Library's ongoing state of good repair requirements.

As a result of the improved capital budget, 68 branches received upgrades including flooring, painting, shelving, roofing and heating and lighting improvements. In addition, three branches were reconstructed: Maria A. Shchuka, Eatonville and Leaside; and two were relocated: Bayview and Black Creek. Local communities were consulted on all changes through meetings and open houses. A customer feedback form was introduced in Library branches and on the website.

The first two floors of the Toronto Reference Library were renovated to include the Toronto Star Newspaper Room, the Digital Design Studio and two Le@rning Centres.

Bookmobile service was expanded in the east and west regions of the City, with an increase in stops from 24 to 32.

## **The Virtual Library**

The number of computers available for public use was increased substantially at all branches. With the Y2K rollout, a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and funding from Industry Canada's Urban Community Access Program, standardized computer equipment was introduced. The Toronto Reference Library introduced the Digital Design Studio and the Information Commons. Five computer classrooms were added as part of branch renovations to extend access citywide. Overall the number of public access computers increased from 1,117 in 2000 to 1,824 in 2003, a 63 percent increase; of those, 1,325 offered Internet access in 2003.

The Virtual Reference Library offers access to subject portals, which guide users to the best sites on the Internet. Several gateways were added including *Ontario History Quest*, *Canadian Theatre Record*, *SmallbizXpress*, *Historicity: Toronto Then and Now* and *NewsConnect*. Usage of these gateways has grown significantly and the Library has received numerous awards for them.

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The number of licensed databases increased from 40 to 78 with standard offerings at the research and reference, district and neighbourhood branches.

## **Supporting the Library's Strategic Directions**

Over the past four years, the Toronto Public Library Foundation and Friends groups have raised \$6.6 million through donations, sponsorships and grants. Much of this funding directly supported initiatives in the first strategic plan including: programs and services targeted toward children and seniors; expansion of special collections; and enhanced electronic services. The number of volunteer hours contributed by residents of Toronto directed toward these initiatives has increased substantially. The newly amalgamated Library system has built its profile in the city through media, marketing campaigns and participation in literary events.

In 2003, Toronto Public Library helped the SARS recovery effort by lobbying to rescue the ALA/CLA Conference when it was in danger of being cancelled. The conference attracted 17,500 attendees and injected \$30 million into Toronto's economy.

Performance measures and key achievements from the Strategic Plan in 2003 illustrate that Toronto Public Library continues to be one of the largest and busiest public library systems in the world and it is anticipated that this trend will continue.