Branch Library Roles in the Amalgamated Library System

Prepared by the Organizational Structures and Branch Roles Transition Team

July 13, 2000

January 24, 2001 – Incorporating Branch Library Tier Placement as of January 2001 - Appendix. B

Branch Library Roles

Phase 1: January 2001 – January 2004

Residents of the *New* City of Hamilton will expect to find an attractive integrated library system that offers a selection of materials meeting a variety of needs. They expect the public library to meet their general informational and recreational needs as well as support their research. They also increasingly expect to access an increasing array of library services from their home, business or school.

The residents of the *New* City of Hamilton form a very diverse community with very different needs. The new amalgamated system will need to serve communities such as the inner-city library with challenges of literacy and integration of new immigrants, to suburban libraries with strong demand for recreational and informational services, to rural communities with the unique challenges of distance and size.

Phase 1: This report is the first attempt to describe the services offered by the Amalgamated Library System. It groups "like with like" for planning purposes. Its primary use is a practical one -- to get the new system up and running. **It cannot, and does not, replace detailed and systematic library planning**. This report covers the period from 2001 - 2004.

Phase 2: Under the direction of the new Amalgamated System Library Board, there will be a formal review of all facilities with public consultation. This detailed and systematic branch facilities study will provide an in-depth analysis of the branch facilities, based on community growth, usage patterns (including head counts, information questions, circulation, etc.). It will focus on future potential. When this study is undertaken there will be a track record of all three systems using the same statistical counts and the impact of the removal of the political boarders will be evident.

The Working Paper on Branch Roles for the Amalgamated Library System:

- Provides a "big picture" overview of how the amalgamated library system will look for the use of the transition working groups.

- Expects other Transition Working Groups (such as Collections) to further refine the model and expand the descriptive definitions.

- Provides a framework to address resource allocation issues, while recognising that additional criteria and information is necessary.

- Builds on the history of library service planning of the former municipalities.

- Provides an integrated approach to the delivery of services.

- It is descriptive not prescriptive.

- Provides a structure for determining equitable access to library services across the new system.

- Recognises that this is a starting point and does not replace detailed and systematic library planning.

It assumes that:

- There will be common service elements within each tier. (For example, staffing could be the same for all libraries within a tier.)

- Each library will be responsive to its community's needs by designating its resource inputs to appropriate pre-selected roles.

- The district libraries (tier 3) are determined by a combination of factors as distance from other libraries, service requirements, and resources available and that size (or use) alone does not make them a district library.

- The service role of the Central Library will not significantly change.

- An increase in circulation will not automatically move a branch to a new tier. It is possible that a lower tier branch could have a higher circulation than a higher tier branch.

- The descriptors of service hours, staffing, etc. are "big picture" concepts demonstrating relativity. Actual changes to service hours and staffing levels will be determined by a more rigorous analysis based on resources available, community needs, etc.

The Service Tiers

The model provides for a range of services based upon size of library and community need. The Amalgamated Library System will have four tiers of library service, forming a continuum of service. The model begins with Tier 1 describing the smallest unit of service and builds to Tier 4 describing city-wide services. Throughout all tiers, customer service, collections, staff expertise, technology and administrative support are constant.

Tier 1   This describes the smallest service group[1], the **neighbourhood library** serving a population of less than 20,000 residents. These libraries are valued as a focal point for community identity, a community meeting place, and particularly in rural areas, the most visible evidence of their municipal tax dollars at work. They provide a convenient access to the resources of the entire library system. Core children's services (including programs), and services to targeted groups such as seniors or immigrants may be stressed. Collections are relatively small and rotate frequently reflecting community demand. Core replacement list materials form the majority of the children's and reference collections. Electronic information resources provide access to a broad range of reference materials. Within Tier 1 the **rural** libraries and the **urban** libraries are differently described with respect to such factors as distance from another library and population size. In the future, it is expected that Tier 1 will also include library services delivered through **community partnerships** so that the residents of small communities can conveniently access the resources of the library (collections, electronic information, etc.).

Tier 2   **Community Libraries** are best described as the mid-sized, convenient, community-based library that is the backbone of the library system. These libraries serve communities between 20,000 - 40,000 population and focus their services on recreational and informational needs, providing access to materials and children's services. Their collections, based upon demand, support browsing and general information. They build upon the Tier 1 collections to provide a broader range of materials. Convenient access, the provision of electronic information, children's programming, and community meeting facilities are all part of their mandate.

Tier 3   This describes the **District Libraries**. These large libraries serving populations over 40,000 people are strategically located to provide extensive collections, services and facilities to parts of the city distant from the Central Library. Their extensive collections serve recreational and informational needs through a mix of circulating and frequently-used reference materials. District libraries have an important role in supporting the "information infrastructure" of the library system through collection development and provision of in-depth collections and staff expertise. They complement, but do not duplicate, the Central Library. They provide a full-range of services for children and adults. They provide more in-depth services suitable for, and supported by, a large population base. They differ from a community library by providing a broader range of services to a different community that may come from a distance because of convenient access.

Tier 4   Services[2] designed to meet needs across the entire city are included in Tier 4 and includes the concept of "the library without walls". The **Central Library** will be the

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[1] The neighbourhood Bookmobile is another example of Tier 1 service that is outside the scope of this report.
[2] Other Tier 4 services, including the **Visiting Library Services**, DISH, the **on-line catalogue,** the **web site,** off-site access to **electronic information resources**, and **Bookmobile** service, are not included in this report.

reference/resource library for the entire new city. The Central Library's collection will include extensive reference materials in addition to circulating items, and provide the long-term in-depth collection. There will be specialised information services such as Special Collections, Disability Information Services, and the QUIC information service. The Central Library also purchases and rotates special format collections including large print, talking books, and multilingual items. Within the Central Library the *"Branch on 4"* provides neighbourhood library services (*Tier 1*) to the immediate community living/working around the Central Library.

Tier Profiles

The profiles are intentionally mutually exclusive for descriptive purposes. In practice, few branches fit into the tiers exactly as described. For example, some branches have larger facilities than their population base or circulation would indicate.

Criteria	Tier 1- Neighbourhood		Tier 2 - Community Libraries	Tier 3 - District Libraries	Tier 4 - Central and System Services
	1A (rural)	1B (urban)			
Population[3]	<10,000 Serves one village and surrounding rural area	10,000 - 20,000	20,000 - 40,000	40,000+	Entire city
Distance[4] from other library (measured by the most direct route)	Several km.	>1.6 km.	> 2.5 km.	>2.5 km. 6 - 10 km. to another district library or Central Library	
Radius served[5]	Radius of several km.	1 km.	1.6 km. (1 mile)	Serves defined geographic area. This area may encompass Tier 1 & 2 libraries.	Entire city

[3] In a formal planning process population, information would include some measure of future growth of a community. The minimum population size of 10,000 for an urban neighbourhood is arbitrarily chosen and may need revision.

[4] Travel Time between locations could be an additional factor for Phase 2 analysis.

[5] Other factors to be studied in Phase 2 include transportation routes and physical barriers such as highways, the escarpment, etc.

Facilities	<3000 sq. ft No meeting facilities for public and staff use	5,000+ sq. ft. One meeting room for public and staff use.	15,000+ sq. ft. Variety of meeting rooms for public and staff use	Central Library (162,000 sq. ft.)
Collection Size	Up to 20,000 - 30,000 items Rotating collection according to community needs and space	35,000 - 60,000	75,000+	500,000+
Collection Scope	Popular and current materials in variety of formats Children's materials based upon core replacement lists Core reference collection (print and electronic)	Popular materials in variety of formats with enough depth to collection to satisfy browsing needs for both adults and children Basic print reference collection	Popular and in-depth collections Collections should be able to fill requests from neighbourhood and community branches Good reference collection (not duplicating Central's role)	Comprehensive collection of circulating/ reference materials
Holdings	No responsibility for long-term collection storage	Some resp. for storing collections after best-seller category for 5 - 10 years, depending upon topic.	Significant resp. for maintaining system's collection of materials	Confirm continued role of Central Library for collection development
Electronic Access Points	Number of access points as space allows.	5 - 10?	10+ Public training facilities	Many access points throughout the building Public/staff computer training facility.

Annual Circulation [6]	<75,000	75,000+	200,000+	400,000+	1,000,000+
Service Hours/ week[7]	18 - 24 hrs. May not be open every day	<35 May not be open every day	Generally 40 - 50 hours per week No Sunday service	Generally 50+ hours Open more evenings than tier 2 Sunday service	70 hours Should be open Mon - Thurs evening Sunday service
Staff complement (in FTE's) Staff time available for programming	No librarian 1.5 - 3.5 X time slots [8]	No librarian 2.5 - 3.5	Librarian/ manager 4 - 8 [9] X+2 time slots	2+ librarians/ one is a manager 10+ X + 4 time slots	Staff complement includes those providing city wide services such as VLS. X + 4 time slots

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[6] It is possible for a library in a lower tier to have higher circulation than a library in a higher tier.

[7] These hours do not match those of an existing library system; this illustrates service hours could be differentiated between tiers. The final decision is dependent upon staff resources available.

[8] The timeslot concept ensures that there will be enough staff to do a certain number of programs per week at a location, according to tier. Within the timeslot the location could choose the balance between adult and children's programs, or the core children's programs to be offered. The proposed +2, and +4 are examples only. The actual number to be determined according to resource availability.

[9] Two-storey buildings (e.g. Kenilworth, Sherwood, Dundas, Waterdown) require additional staffing and hence have higher operating costs.

Direction for Branch Service Development 2001—2004

Although few branches fit perfectly within a tier, each has been placed according to "best fit". There will be significant changes to these placements over time as population grows in some areas of the new city and library services adjust in response.

Current Branch Tier Groups (See Appendix B for the Branch Library Tier Placement as of January 2001)

Tier 1A	Tier 1B	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
10 libraries	5 libraries	7 libraries	3 libraries	1 library
Binbrook Carlisle Freelton Greensville Lynden Millgrove Mount Hope Rockton Sheffield Winona	Barton Locke Picton Stoney Creek Valley Park	Ancaster Concession Kenilworth Red Hill Sherwood Westdale Waterdown	Dundas Saltfleet Terryberry	Central

Possible Branch Tier Groups 10 Years from Now

Tier 1A	Tier 1B	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
8 libraries	5 libraries	7 libraries	6 libraries	1 library
Carlisle Freelton Greensville Lynden Millgrove Mount Hope Rockton Sheffield	Barton Locke Picton Stoney Creek Winona	Binbrook Concession Kenilworth Red Hill Sherwood Valley Park Westdale	Ancaster Dundas Saltfleet Turner Park Terryberry Waterdown	Central

This Branch Role definition is the first step in describing the services to be offered by the *New* Hamilton Public Library. It groups "like with like" for planning purposes. Its primary purpose is a practical one — to get the new system up and running.

A detailed branch facilities study **(Phase 2)** will follow under the direction of the new Library Board. By then further information, such as the impact of the removal of political borders upon library use, common statistical information for the new library system, school changes, will be available. Community input will be sought.

In previous planning decisions, both the Hamilton Public Library and Wentworth Libraries had determined that additional neighbourhood libraries not be built. Both systems were concentrating on adding facilities for large populations and with refurbishing and relocation of existing facilities. Given this, these **broad directions for service planning** have been identified for the period of 2001 - 2004. The Amalgamated Library System will:

■   Shift resources and harmonise services according to this model. All present resources will be required to provide the flexibility necessary to implement this. 2001-2004 will be a transition period.

■   Focus on the development of district libraries in partnership with other community agencies (e.g. Turner Park, 2003). Sufficient resources will be required to enable shifts between libraries to meet the new service challenges. The three district libraries will require resources to develop their potential. Until Turner Park opens (2004) the two neighbouring libraries (Sherwood and Terryberry) will require a resource allocation over and above what is required for their communities to provide services to the adjacent area.   Other libraries have the potential for becoming a district library (e.g. Waterdown) and the implications of this must be determined. It should be noted that when Turner Park opens that the population served by both Terryberry and Sherwood will drop. Terryberry will stay within the population of a district library and Sherwood's community will be the size appropriately served by a community library.

■   Assume that there will be no new Tier 1 branch locations and that current Tier 1 branches will be renovated, or relocated, in stand-alone facilities only where there is no community partner for service delivery.

■   Continue with the relocation and refurbishing of existing libraries as required. (E.g. Ancaster, Red Hill and Locke are scheduled for 2000/2001)

Appendix A – Members of the Organisational Structure and Branch Roles Working Group

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Branch Tier Groups – January 2001

Tier 1A	Tier 1B	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
10 libraries	6 libraries	7 libraries	2 libraries	1 library
Binbrook Carlisle Freelton Greensville Lynden Millgrove Mount Hope Rockton Sheffield Winona	Barton Locke Picton Stoney Creek Valley Park Waterdown	Ancaster Concession Dundas Kenilworth Red Hill Sherwood Westdale	Saltfleet Terryberry	Central

Neighbourhood Clusters

A   Barton –office location, Picton, Valley Park, Stoney Creek, Winona

B   Locke – office location, Carlisle, Freelton, Greensville and Lynden

C   Millgrove – office location, Waterdown, Rockton, Sheffield, Mount Hope, Binbrook.