

PLANNING FOR LIBRARY SERVICE



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The information in this *Sourcebook for small public libraries* should be used with a companion booklet entitled, *Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Public Libraries in Northern Ontario: A How-to Manual*, Ontario Library Service-North, 1994. Throughout the publication, reference is made to the services of Ontario Library Service-North. Libraries located in southern Ontario should use the services of the Southern Ontario Library Service.



The public library is one of the most important services in a community. It provides cultural, recreational, informational and educational services to all members of the community. Planning is the process by which the library board and staff ensure that the community is being served and that its needs are met.

Planning involves assessing the present situation, deciding which direction to take and determining how to get there. The result is a strategy for library development. A planning document becomes today's design for tomorrow's action.

WHY PLAN?

Just as people need to plan for their education or career, a formal, effective planning system is needed in all types and sizes of libraries. With shrinking budgets and technological changes, the library board and staff must plan carefully to meet the changing needs of their communities.

Many small municipalities do little formal planning for services and often do not commit to long-range plans beyond council terms. This lack of planning need not hinder the development of long-term plans for the library. The library, like the individual, can only progress by setting objectives and by putting the objectives into action in the form of a planning document or formal plan.

The benefits of planning are many. Planning:

- ensures that the community and the library staff and board understand why the library is there and what it is trying to achieve.
- investigates the needs of the community and ensures that the library board and staff respond to those needs without unnecessary duplication of services available elsewhere in the community.
- ensures continuity of services regardless of changes in personnel, be it among board, staff or council members.
- encourages long-term commitment to library services among key decision-



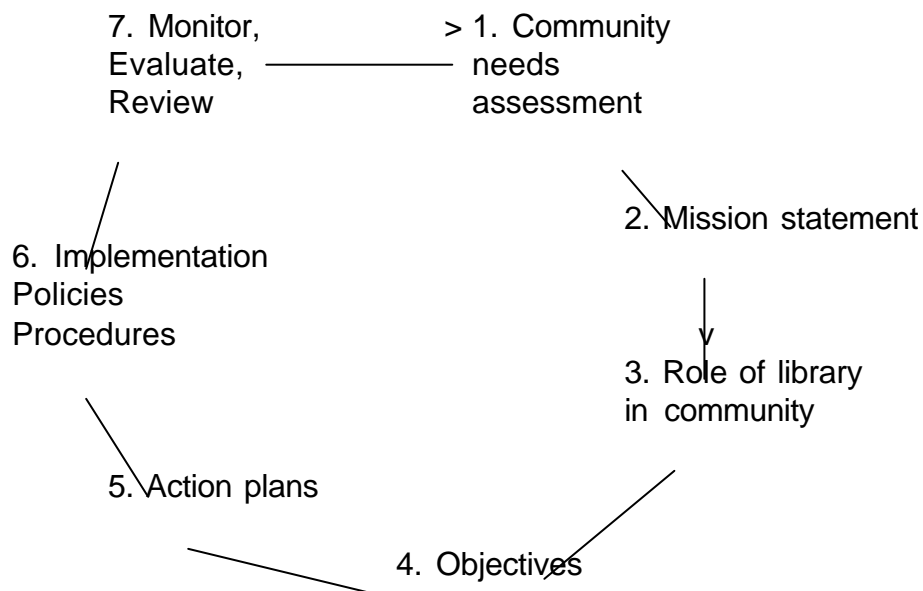
makers in the community.

- ensures the library's ability to respond to changing needs and trends in the community.
- affirms to council that library funds are being spent in a deliberate and responsible manner.

Planning follows a cycle which takes the library from a needs assessment to its mission statement where the role of the library may be clearly defined in order to set objectives which may then be implemented as procedures. The final stage of this cycle is a review and evaluation of the mission, goals and objectives.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

Planning follows a cyclical pattern because it is an ongoing process. The plan itself, once formulated, is not static. Instead, it is flexible and open to change as the community changes. The planning cycle is generally described in the following manner:



The planning process can be used to develop either long-term or short-term plans for the



library. Short-term plans usually coincide with the accounting year and are closely tied to the annual budget for that year. By comparison long-term plans are generally considered to be plans for 3, 5 or 10 years.

Short-term planning involves setting annual objectives and action plans. Annual budgets are based on these objectives. Often called operational planning, short-term planning reflects the day-to-day operational decisions that need to be made. Short-term plans must be flexible and, especially for the small library, alternative plans are important. Annual budgets are rarely a sure thing and short-term plans may have to be revised considerably.

Long-term plans are usually in the form of a master plan of development for the library. In a long-term plan, the library assesses the community and identifies the services, resources and programmes required by the community and then formalizes plans in the form of objectives for a particular period. Long-range planning is complicated by the uncertainties of the future. These uncertainties can be reduced by using data on expected industrial growth, population projections, community composition, etc., to develop definitive library goals.

Factors to consider in future planning are:

- changes in client population and client needs
- new service demands and technological developments
- economic factors, such as changes in funding levels, rate of inflation, materials and equipment costs, and personnel costs
- political factors, such as possible new legislation, municipal amalgamation or boundary changes, changes in funding formulas or levels of support, and community action



Library planning is the major responsibility of the library board. In fact, some new models of library governance, such as the Carver model, say that planning is the only function of a board. This board function is re-enforced in Section 20(a) of the *Public Libraries Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990, chapter P.44* (formerly called the *Public Libraries Act, 1984*) which states that library planning is the responsibility of the library board. Any plans for the library must be approved by the board before they can be implemented.

WHO PLANS?

Library staff can encourage this by:

- reporting to the board on changing patterns in library usage
- providing information on planning and why it is important
- conducting a board workshop on the planning process

While the major responsibility of the library board is planning, some library boards have a standing committee to initiate and monitor the planning process. From time-to-time, library boards may pull together an ad-hoc committee to handle a major review of the library or to gather information for a needs assessment.

The ad-hoc planning committee

The work of a special or ad-hoc planning committee is best carried out by a broadly-based community advisory committee. Since planning involves assessing the needs of the community and the role the library will play in meeting those needs, the community has a right and a responsibility to be involved.

The planning committee is a working group, small enough to make interaction and individual input feasible, and large enough to provide a broad representation of interests. A committee of not more than 6 to 8 persons willing to make a strong commitment to the planning process is recommended. Ad-hoc planning committees are described in greater detail in Chapter 2, and particularly Exhibit 4, of the companion publication *Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Public Libraries in Northern Ontario: A How-to Manual*.

The chief executive officer (CEO) is a member of the committee, and perhaps its



chairperson. The CEO has the ultimate responsibility for implementing the committee's decisions as approved by the board, and so his or her participation is important. The CEO also communicates to the committee the current situation and constraints of the library, and brings back the committee's and board's discussions and decisions to the library staff.

As the decision-makers for the library, it is very important that the board be the driving force on the planning committee. This type of planning committee is, in fact, an advisory committee with no authority to commit the library to implementing the plan. Involving board members in the planning process ensures informed representation and greater commitment at the board level.

Similarly, members of council should be represented on the planning committee since council may be asked to commit funds to implement the plans for the library.

Potential sources for other members for this special/ad hoc committee

include the major groups in the community as well as library interest groups. For instance:

- planning groups from the municipality
- community, business and service organizations
- local school or college officials
- users of the library (may be from a "Friends of the Library" group)
- non-users of the library (may be from one or more of first three groups in this list)
- where appropriate, minority groups, the disabled, or other special interests

Planners should be chosen with regard to their willingness to make the necessary commitment of time, interest and effort. A good, interactive planning group makes planning exciting as well as productive.

Continuity of membership is also an important factor in productivity. If some members leave the committee, care must be taken when deciding to replace them. The



committee will have developed a rapport which may be disrupted with the addition of new members. Consider carefully if the interests of the departing members are not adequately represented by remaining members.

Terms of reference

The first step in initiating planning is to establish terms of reference for the ad-hoc planning committee. Terms of reference are generally developed and proposed by library staff and should include:

- **Background**

Information explaining why the board has decided to undertake this process should be provided. This may include reference to the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44* Section 20(a), and particular trends such as projected growth in the community. This section also cites library documents which should be considered such as the library's previous plan, mission statement, policies, etc.

- **Purpose**

This section details the purpose of the committee, such as the preparation of a 3 or 5 year plan for the library or the completion of a community needs assessment.

- **Resources**

It is important to state the resources available to the committee including staff time, access to volunteers, special help for data collection, funding, and use of consultants.

- **Membership**

Membership should be expressed in terms of the interest groups to be represented (e.g., municipal council, town planner, library board) and the number of individuals from each group. It should be clearly stated if specific positions must be represented (e.g., CEO of the library). The size of the committee should also be stated.

- **Reporting schedule**

A schedule of reports to be received by the board should be specified. Generally, written reports summarizing activity to date and recommendations are required at



each major step in the planning process (i.e., mission statement, community needs assessment, etc.). Board approval should be required at these steps in order to move on to the next. This ensures that the committee has board support at each step and reduces the possibility of miscommunication.

Sample 1: Terms of reference for Ad-hoc Planning Committee

The terms of reference must be approved by the board, before any action can be taken. A method for calling the first meeting should also be confirmed. All of these actions are achieved through board motion.

Meetings of the Planning Committee

As with all meetings, the agenda and supporting documentation should be prepared and distributed at least one week in advance of the meeting.

For the first meeting, the agenda will concentrate on the terms of reference for the committee, chairperson and secretarial responsibilities, and general information about planning and about the library.

General information about the library should include copies of documents which relate to planning, for example, statistics which demonstrate trends from year to year, both for the community and the library. This type of information helps the committee get its bearings and begin to determine a course of action. It is the role of staff to guide the committee in this process.



The planning committee may be assigned to examine particular aspects of the planning process. One of the elements of the planning process is a **community needs assessment**. A needs assessment is not really planning but rather it is information that is needed to plan -- it is a tool used in preparation for planning.

Needs assessment is the process of taking a methodical look at a community and its needs in order to determine what these needs are, whether or not the library is serving them, and how the library can serve these needs in the future. A community needs assessment is necessary for the library to develop long-range plans.

In many cases, the library can, and should be part of the whole town plan or recreation plan.

In some of the literature this element of the planning process is called **market analysis**. In *Creating a Financial Plan: A How-to-do-it Manual for Librarians* by Betty Turock and Andrea Pedolsky (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1992), the authors describe market analysis as:

“...a means of defining your library’s customers precisely, identifying their needs, and determining whether their numbers are growing, declining, or staying constant. It measures the appeal your library’s services have for various target groups and suggest barriers - real or perceived - that deter people from seeking out and using them. It looks for evidence of how interested your target audiences are in the services you currently provide or might project for the future.” (page 61)

What to collect

Community profile

Information on the community must be collected as part of the needs assessment process. A community survey which determines the composition of the community (education, employment, population patterns, etc.) and measures the community’s satisfaction with library service will assist the library in developing a master plan.



Library profile

A picture of the recent and current state of the library services and costs must also be collected as part of the information base. Information on the library resources, services, programmes and facilities should be collected. The objective of the Library Profile is to determine how responsive your services are to your community by providing a picture of current performance. The profile is put together through the analysis of data derived from such sources as input or output measures; staff, user and non-user surveys; and individual and focus group interviews.

Input measures refer to the volume of resources coming into the library to support a programme or service. Data is gathered on library income (e.g., grants) and the uses to which it is put (e.g., hours open, volumes held, volumes added).

Output measures refer to the magnitude of service provided by the library. Data is gathered on such items as active registration, circulation, in-library use of materials, reference transactions and attendance at programmes. The most comprehensive guide on output measures is a publication entitled, *Output Measures for Public Libraries* (listed on page 24 of this *Sourcebook*).

Information sources

Information will come from a variety of sources including:

- internal sources of data such as historical data relating to library operations, reports of levels of activity, and surveys of library users
- governing bodies which have jurisdiction or influence over those factors influencing the library
- sources of information on new developments and trends within the library profession
- surveys of the client community on adequacy of present programmes and services and desired new programmes and services
- published demographic data
- community-based information sources such as newspapers, publications of the



chamber of commerce, census figures, school surveys
More information on sources can be found in chapter 3, particularly Exhibit 7, of *Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Public Libraries in Northern Ontario: A How-to Manual*.

Focus groups and surveys

Focus groups and surveys are often used to collect information for the community profile and library profile. The **focus group** is a relatively new arrival on the data collection scene. By bringing together individuals who represent the target population, focus groups let you tap into the feelings and ideas of library users or potential library users.

Another way to consult with the community is through the use of **surveys**. A publication entitled, *Assessing Your Community for Library Planning*, (Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications, 1987) described surveys in this way:

“Surveys represent a process of asking a series of predetermined questions to a sufficient number of selected individuals so that the answers to the questions can be taken as representing the views of a much larger population”. (page 18)

In *Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Public Libraries in Northern Ontario: A How-to Manual*, chapter 4 provides guidance on how to design a public consultation and community survey process and appendix B provides a sample public library survey. Sample questionnaires are also available from the Ontario Library Service.

It is important when choosing to do a survey, that everyone has a clear idea of what is to be achieved. The purpose of the survey, the type of information needed, the individuals or groups from whom information must be collected, the resources needed for the survey, and the deadline, all dictate the choice of survey methodology. When planning a survey/questionnaire, it is also important to choose a sample that is the most appropriate size and type. More information on this survey size is provided in **Sample 2** at the end of this *Sourcebook*.

Community needs assessment is an integral and critical part of the planning cycle as it establishes the link between the community and the library’s mission, roles and



MISSION STATEMENT

objectives.

Mission statements, sometimes referred to as the '**statement of purpose**', provide an overall theoretical framework on which subsequent planning can be based. In the mission statement, the board should describe as explicitly and concisely as possible its philosophical understanding of the library service that it intends to provide in the community for which it has been established.

The mission statement answers the question, "What does the library do?". By doing so the mission statement provides a clear definition of the library's business in the community, gives the reason for the library's existence and provides a long-term vision of what the library intends to do. The mission statement is flexible, however, and should never be regarded as a final declaration of library philosophy. It should be reviewed as part of the regular cycle of planning.

For the small library, this statement of purpose is critical. Library services may be placed in competition with sports or recreation. The board and library administrator must be prepared with a clear understanding of the library's purpose which will enable them to determine how it fits into the other community programmes.

With guidance from staff, the mission statement is drafted by the planning committee. The mission statement is an individual library issue -- there is no particular statement that could be directly applied to all libraries. A sample mission statement is printed as **Sample 3** at the end of this *Sourcebook*.

A mission statement influences the overall plan for the library. In formulating the mission statement, we give ourselves a guide for taking decisions while maintaining a continuity in objectives and activities. Plans for specific projects or services use the library's mission statement, community needs assessment and the statement of the library's role in the community as a basis.

Since mission statements are very broad definitions of the library's purpose, there is a need to develop more specific roles and objectives as a refinement of the mission statement. The mission statement should commit the Board to a line of action but the statement should be flexible enough to permit review at least once every three years.



Another step in the planning cycle is to use the information obtained in the needs assessment to define the **role of the library in the community**. This step involves comparing the services the library could potentially provide, and the results of the community needs assessment with the resources available. With this step those services which the library will actually provide are determined.

ROLE OF THE LIBRARY

A great deal of research has gone into library planning, and the resources listed on pages 24 to 26 of this *Sourcebook* reflect that trend. The following eight roles are defined in *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries* by Charles R. McClure*:

Community Activities Centre: The library is a central focus point for community activities, meetings, and services.

Community Information Centre: The library is a clearinghouse for current information on community organizations, issues, and services.

Formal Education Support Centre: The library assists students of all ages in meeting educational objectives established during their formal courses of study.

Independent Learning Centre: The library supports individuals of all ages pursuing a sustained programme of learning independent of any educational provider.

Popular Materials Library: The library features current, high-demand, high-interest materials in a variety of formats for persons of all ages.

Preschoolers' Door to Learning: The library encourages young children to develop an interest in reading and learning through services for children, and for parents and children together.

Reference Library: The library actively provides timely, accurate, and useful information for community residents.

Research Centre: The library assists scholars and researchers to conduct in-depth studies, investigate specific areas of knowledge, and create new knowledge.

* *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures*. Prepared for the Public Library Development Project by Charles R. McClure, Amy Owen, Douglas L. Zweizig, Mary Jo Lynch and Nancy A. Van House. Chicago: ALA, 1987.



A small library would have difficulty fulfilling all eight roles listed on the previous page, therefore, one of the most important functions of the planning committee is to select which roles can be fulfilled. A small library must focus on certain roles to be able to do them well.

Selecting roles for the library

Role selection may be done in a variety of ways. The most straightforward is to merely rank, in order of priority, the eight roles suggested on the previous page.

In reviewing the rankings, the planning committee should consider the following questions:

- Which roles are most important within the context of the library's mission statement?
- Can the needed resources be found?
- Which community needs are most pressing and could be fulfilled by the library (opportunities)?
- Are library resources (staff, funds, facilities) already in place to enable fulfillment of these roles (library strengths)?

The experience of one public library in selecting roles for the library is described in **Sample 4: Role selection process**, which is printed at the end of this *Sourcebook*.

The goal of these discussions is to reach consensus on which **two to four roles** are most important for the library. These roles then become the focus for the period of the plan. Roles not chosen for emphasis are placed on a maintenance basis. Any services which fall under these roles are usually maintained, but not enhanced, at least for the duration of the plan, or may not be offered at all.

Determining the mission and the role of the library, establishes what the library will be and do, and allows the next phase of the planning process to begin.

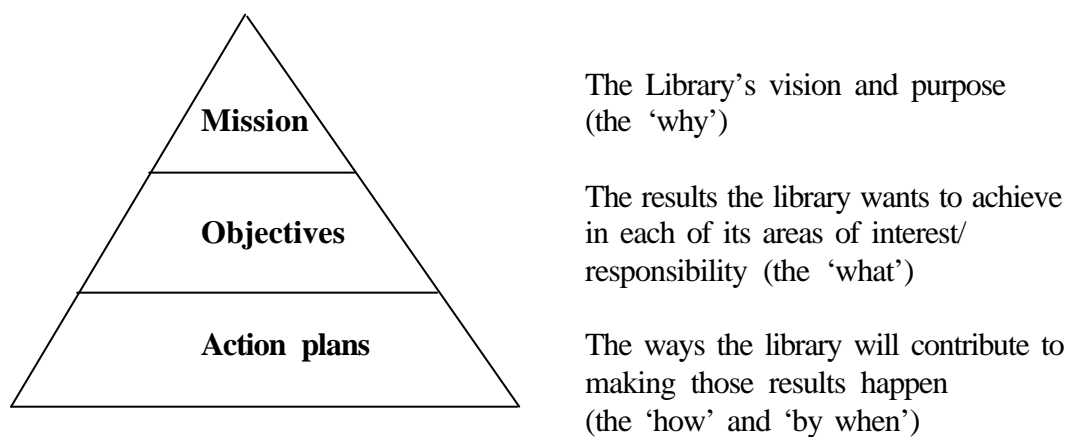


The next phase of the planning process involves developing **objectives** and an **action plan**.

Objectives identify the specific, measurable and desired future outcomes that are designed to contribute to the successful fulfilment of the library's mission.

Action plans identify specific activities required to achieve the objectives. The actions described may range from short-term, one-time tasks to long-term ongoing tasks. Action plans define actions, responsibilities and timing.

In Exhibit 16 of *Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Public Libraries in Northern Ontario: A How-to Manual* three of the components of the planning process are described in this way:



Objectives and action plans are essential in the planning process because they identify important areas of activity for the library and establish targets of performance within those areas. More specifically, objectives and action plans:

- guide the actions of decision makers
- inform the community and library staff about what service activities will be emphasized
- help in assessing the performance of the library and demonstrating accountability



Developing objectives

Typically, objectives fall into three groups:

- developing new services or operations: for example, to establish three new programmes for young adults during the current fiscal year
- maintaining or improving the quality of an existing service or operation: for example, to increase the circulation of children's material by 9% by the end of the current fiscal year
- eliminating or minimizing existing problems: for example, to reduce the number of library materials stolen this calendar year by 10%

Identifying and selecting activities

As part of the plan, activities and services which will help to achieve the objectives must be identified and selected. When possible, this task is best undertaken with the help of staff members who likely already have ideas for new activities/services and ways of improving current services or extending the target groups.

For each objective in order of priority, all current services and activities which may contribute to fulfilling the objective should be identified. Wherever these activities might be improved or further developed to advance the objective, a note should be made. For each objective, any new activities or services should be noted.

The following questions are taken from *Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries*. These questions can be used to help in the assessment of activities.

- Are adequate resources available to implement this activity?
- Which activities best accomplish the objective at the least cost?
- Does the activity capitalize on library strengths and avoid potential



weaknesses?

- Will library staff be committed to the success of the activities, and do they have the necessary competencies to implement them?
- Will other library services suffer if the activity is implemented?
- Will implementing the activity call for significant reallocations of library resources?
- Have such activities been used successfully in similar libraries?

If the objective is an **improved reference collection**, for instance, the action plan might include the following actions:

- To replace one encyclopaedia set in the current year.
- To update all almanacs to the current year.
- To increase the reference collection by 10 volumes in the current year.

By setting specific actions, the objective has been brought closer to its fulfilment. The time period for these actions has been set. Further steps involve the assignment of responsibility for undertaking these actions and obtaining or assigning the necessary funds to carry out the actions of replacing an encyclopaedia set, updating the almanacs and adding volumes facilitating the expansion of the reference collection.

In Exhibit 17 of *Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for Public Libraries in Northern Ontario: A How-to Manual*, two more examples of action plans are provided.

Preparing a written plan



The last major task for the ad-hoc planning committee is the preparation of the planning document which draws the collected information together. The two major purposes of this planning document are to:

- record the findings and recommendations of the ad-hoc planning committee
- communicate this information to the library board, the municipal council and the community

Generally, the CEO drafts an initial version of the plan for discussion by the committee. The committee makes any changes, approves the document and forwards it to the board.

Ad-hoc planning committees are frequently disbanded at this point. While they may be called together again following a period of implementation (usually one year), in many cases the board simply assumes the committee's role.

IMPLEMENTA- TION

Once the objectives and action plan have been prepared, they are must be presented to the board in a planning document. With board approval obtained, it is now the role of the staff, in consultation with the board, to implement the plan. Implementation involves:

- developing policies if none exist
- developing procedures

Developing policies



In the planning process, **policies** follow the setting of objectives and the action plan. Policies are rules of conduct created to implement plans which have been established to realize the objectives. All institutions require policies to govern what they do.

Every policy statement made by the board is a public assertion of the way in which it interprets its determined role in the community. Policy statements translate the objectives for the staff and community at large. For example, a collection development policy informs the public about the kinds of materials and formats that will be acquired for the collection. In general, policies:

- define the role of the library board within the community
- enable the board to perform with purpose and consistency
- provide assurance that the best interests of library users and library staff are being met

It is important that policies are set in writing to clarify issues and to avoid inconsistency in decision-making. There are several advantages to written policies:

- they are available to the staff, the board and the public in the same form
- they can be referred to so that anyone who wishes can check the policy
- misunderstandings can be resolved by reference to the policy
- ensure equal treatment of all staff and patrons
- they can more readily be disseminated to all who are affected
- they can be taught to new employees more easily
- the process of writing forces administrators to think more sharply about the policy, thus achieving further clarity

Written policies are especially important in a small library where often only one staff member is present with no supervisor available to substantiate a policy. If a patron



becomes frustrated or angry, a written document may be referred to.

In order to avoid an over-rigid approach to library service, some precautions should be taken when making and implementing policy:

- staff should know the rules and the reasons for them -- explaining why a policy exists will assist staff in better enforcing policy with judgement
- exceptions to rules should be made especially in small libraries where personal service is an important part of library service and when genuine reasons exist which will not establish an unfortunate precedent
- policies should be reviewed as a regular part of the planning cycle -- rules become outdated, communities change and funding may vary

Written policies are necessary in many areas of library administration and service. Policies should be written in these broad areas:

- Board administration
- Personnel including paid staff and volunteers
- Facilities use including maintenance and community use of facilities
- Collection development including selection, acquisition and weeding
- Library service in areas such as reference and circulation

Information on policies can also be found in other resources. For instance, information on employment policies can be found in the *Sourcebook* entitled ***Administration 4: Personnel***. A sample policy for collection development is printed in the *Sourcebook* entitled, ***Collection Development and Management 1: Policy and Planning***.

The specifics of library policies are described in great detail in a Canadian publication by Lorraine Williams entitled, ***The Library Trustee and the Public Librarian: Partners in Service*** (Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1987).

For further information on policy-making, as well as sample policies, contact the staff at the Ontario Library Service.

Developing procedures



Once policies are set by the library board, library staff can develop procedures and make decisions within the realm of established policies. **Procedures** are specific directions, established by the staff, to implement the library policies. For example, selection and acquisition procedures implement the collection development policy. Procedures provide a clear list of tasks to be completed and the order in which they are to be done. Procedures also clarify new tasks, new emphasis in an activity and particular statistics which must be kept. How the activity will be evaluated is also clearly specified.

To differentiate between objectives, action plans, policies and procedures, consider the following example:

Information services

Objective:

To improve the reference collection.

Action plans:

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>	<u>Timing</u>
To replace one encyclopaedia set	CEO	Current year
To update almanacs	CEO	Current year
To increase the reference collection by 10 volumes	CEO	Current year

Policies:

The CEO is responsible for updating the reference collection.
Almanacs will be removed from the reference collection when they are two years old.

Procedures:

The almanacs purchased for the library collection will be placed on standing order with the Ontario Library Services Center in Waterloo.

Monitor



MONITOR, EVALUATE AND REVIEW

The most straightforward method of monitoring is to check that the tasks are being accomplished according to the timetable. This check should be done regularly so that problems may be detected and remedied early on.

It is also important to monitor the data collection. This data will be used to measure progress towards achieving the objective and must therefore be accurately kept.

Evaluate

Evaluation is generally conducted annually or at the end of a period specified in an objective. Evaluation has two major components:

1. Evaluation of the extent to which an objective is achieved
2. Evaluation of the related activities

The first component answers the question, “Did we achieve our objective?” The second component answers, “to what extent did this activity help/hinder achievement of the objective?”

To answer, “Did we achieve our objective?” the most straightforward procedure is to look at the measures put in place and compare the situation before and after implementation of the activities. For instance, with the objective of increasing young adult visits per year by 4%, compare the number of visits made before with those made after the implementation of the activities designed to achieve this objective. Did young adult visits increase by 4%?

Assessing the activity’s contribution towards an objective may best be done by periodically checking progress toward the objectives while the activity is going on.

Review

Once the evaluation is complete, staff report to the board on the progress made in fulfilling the objectives. The report should relate directly to the planning documents



and include:

- a list of objectives and activities undertaken during the period
- an assessment of progress towards the objectives
- an assessment of the activities
- recommendations regarding objectives and activities for the next period.

As a result of this review, the board establishes the library's priorities for the next period.

This review process usually occurs annually and coincides with the library's budgeting process. This enables new objectives and activities to be implemented in line with its fiscal year.

Most library plans are designed to cover a three year period. While they can be longer or shorter, this can pose a problem. Plans of shorter duration place a considerable burden on the board, and longer plans do not keep pace with changes in the community, particularly in the latter years of the plan.

As the end of a plan approaches it is important to have a new plan developed to replace it. Consequently, in addition to annual reviews, the library must be prepared to conduct a major review every two to three years. This major review may entail the same degree of effort as the original plan, or it may be conducted on a more modest scale. Nonetheless, it is important that a new plan be developed to ensure that the library continues to play an appropriate role in the community.

Starting over

Throughout the planning process, a good amount of data has been collected for use in the community and library profiles. This data, and the resulting analysis, should give



a picture of the library, how it fits into the community it serves, how well it is serving its current users, and whether there are new audiences to recruit and introduce to what the library has to offer. The question, 'How well are we doing?' should now be answerable. It should be possible to determine whether and where there is room for improved or additional programmes and services in the future. But this question should be asked on an continuous basis.

Planning is an on-going process. It is not something you can do just once. The planning cycle continues as library plans are updated with the changing times and conditions. The planning process now needs to be repeated.

RESOURCES

The American Library Association (ALA) has published a number of helpful publications on the topic of planning. The first of an important group of publications was written by V. Palmour, M. Bellassai and N.V. DeWath and published in 1980 under the title, *A Planning Process for Public Libraries*.

Since the publication of that book, there have been several companion publications from the Public Library Development Program of the American Library Association. These are designed to assist public library planning committees in the areas of planning, measurement and evaluation. The titles are:

Planning and Role Setting for Public Libraries: A Manual of Options and Procedures. Prepared for the Public Library Development Project by Charles R. McClure, Amy Owen, Douglas L. Zweizig, Mary Jo Lynch and Nancy A. Van House. Chicago: ALA, 1987.

This book provides the definition, process, and resources to improve the individual public library management and evaluation processes. Sample public library roles are provided and explained in some detail.



Output Measures for Public Libraries: A Manual of Standardized Procedures. 2nd edition. Prepared for the Public Library Development Program by Nancy A. Van House, Mary Jo Lynch, Charles R. McClure, Douglas L. Zweizig and Eleanor Jo Rodger. Chicago: ALA, 1987.

The use of output measures to evaluate public library services is the focus of this handbook. Twelve output measures are described in easily followed detail. This publication is particularly useful as library staff try to deal with the quantitative aspects of the planning process.

Output Measures for Public Library Service to Children: A Manual of Standardized Procedures. Virginia A. Walter. Chicago: ALA, 1992.

The focus of this publication is on methods of assessing the quality of library services offered to children. The basic output measures of the 1987 'regular' version have been altered to reflect library services to children aged 14 years and younger, as a segment of the total service population of any public library. This is a collaborative project of the Association for Library Service to Children and the Public Library Association for the Public Library Development Program.

In 1993, the American Library Association published two companion books. One is the study and the second, the workbook. The authors also published a journal article on this theme. "The Grail of Goodness: The Effective Public Library" by Thomas Childers and Nancy A. Van House appeared in *Library Journal*, October 1, 1989, pages 44 - 49.

Van House, Nancy A. and Thomas Childers. ***The Public Library Effectiveness Study: The Complete Report.*** Chicago: American Library Association, 1993.

In contrast to output measures, which are numerical measures of the volume of particular kinds of services, the criteria for effectiveness are perceptions of a given library's value as viewed by various people who have some stake in the library. This study contains detailed statistical analysis of a study on "effectiveness" of public libraries.

Childers, Thomas and Nancy A. Van House. ***What's Good: Describing Your Public Library's Effectiveness.*** Chicago: American Library Association, 1993.

The core of this workbook is A.M.P.L.E., A Model of Public Library Effectiveness, which is a table of the 61 evaluative criteria used in the author's survey "The Public Library Effectiveness Study". Concerned with questions of value and perception, this workbook explains how to define what various groups connected with a public library want it to do and then asks what doing it well would mean in qualitative terms.



Turock, Betty J. and Andrea Pedolsky. *Creating a Financial Plan: A How-to-do-it Manual for Librarians*. New York: Neal-Schuman, 1992.

Although the focus of this publication is financial planning, there are several good sections on market analysis and general library planning.

In 1987, a document entitled, *Assessing Your Community for Library Planning* was published by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications. Although now out of print, the publication was widely distributed to public libraries in Ontario as well as through the EXCEL programme.

In 1990, a planning document entitled, *One Place To Look: The Ontario Public Library Strategic Plan*, was released. The document was prepared by the Ontario Public Library Strategic Planning Group and co-sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Culture and Communications and the Ontario Library Association. While this document is intended for the entire public library community, rather than an individual library, it is a good example of a planning document. There is a statement of purpose for Ontario's public libraries followed by goals, objectives and a number of recommendations or action points. A Strategic Directions Council has been established to implement some of the recommendations contained in the document.

Other Ontario documents on strategic planning and needs assessment include:

Focus on the Future: Needs Assessment and Strategic Planning for County and Regional Libraries: A How-to Manual. Study commissioned by C.A.R.M.L. (County and Regional Municipality Librarians) Toronto: The Randolph Group, July 1992.

Ontario County Libraries: Survey of Policy and Procedures. Toronto: Ministry of Citizenship and Culture, 1986.

Most of these publications are available for loan from the Ontario Library Service. The ALA publications can be purchased from the Canadian Library Association, 200 Elgin St., Suite 602, Ottawa, Ontario K2P 1L5. The cost is approximately \$20.00 per book.

Remember that the staff at the Ontario Library Service are available to help with any aspect of the planning process.



Samples

1. Terms of reference for the Ad hoc Planning Committee
2. Survey information from ***Assessing Your Community for Library Planning***
3. Mission statement
4. Role selection process