



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Creating a New Strategic Plan: 2025-2029

Date: December 4, 2023
To: Toronto Public Library Board
From: City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the process and timeline for developing a new strategic plan for 2025-2029, seek approval for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee Terms of Reference and appoint members to the committee.

The goal of the 2025-2029 strategic plan is to create a shared vision and strategy that will guide the organization over the next five years. The proposed timeline for this process is twelve months. The process begins in December 2023 with striking the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and approval of the proposed timelines and development plan. The process ends in December 2024 with approval of the new 2025-2029 strategic plan.

Prior work, including preliminary research, was completed to inform this comprehensive process. The key milestones of this process include:

- Conducting an environmental scan and research;
- Developing and implementing a phased consultation and engagement plan;

- Creating draft strategic priorities;
- Developing a strategy map;
- Identifying success measures to gauge progress;
- Developing an execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan; and
- Approving the final strategic plan, execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the proposed process and timeline for the creation of a new strategic plan 2025-2029 as outlined in Attachments 1 and 2;
2. approves the Strategic Planning Steering Committee Terms of Reference as outlined in Attachment 3; and
3. appoints Library Board members to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report has no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget.

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and agrees with it.

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

Approval to create a new Strategic Plan will enable Toronto Public Library (TPL) to continue to fulfill its legislated mandate of providing a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the unique needs of the community.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The process and timeline for the new strategic plan for 2025-2029 have been developed considering TPL's Equity Statement and the City's equity lens, which ensures ongoing integration of access and the removal of barriers for equity-deserving groups in the City of Toronto. Accessibility and engagement of equity-deserving groups will be key components of the consultation and engagement process for the development of the strategic plan. The approach strives to achieve equitable outcomes for all, and that all benefit equally from programs and services delivered by TPL.

DECISION HISTORY

TPL is creating its seventh strategic plan. The Library Board has already approved six strategic plans in the past.

At its meeting on [June 26, 2000](#), the Board approved [Creating the Future: Treasuring the Past. Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2000 – 2003](#)

At its meeting on [June 24, 2004](#), the Board approved [Urban Stories: The Next Chapter. Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2004 – 2007](#)

At its meeting on [June 16, 2008](#), the Board approved [Our Shared Story: Writing the Future of Toronto's Library. Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011](#)

At its meeting on [November 29, 2012](#), the Board approved [Read. Learn. Create. Deliver: Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2012 – 2015](#)

At its meeting on [December 14, 2015](#), the Board approved [Expanding access. Increasing Opportunity. Building Connections. Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2016-2019.](#)

At its meeting on [November 25, 2019](#), the Board approved [TPL: Vital to Toronto. Building success, resilience and well-being for our city. Toronto Public Library Strategic Plan 2020-2024](#)

ISSUE BACKGROUND

TPL's vision aspires to be recognized as the world's leading library by informing and inspiring Toronto and its communities, making Torontonians more resilient, more knowledgeable, more connected and more successful. As the city continues to grow and evolve, the Library plays an increasingly important role in providing the vital ingredients that Torontonians need to thrive.

To advance its vision, the Library is developing a new five-year strategic plan that will guide and shape its work. The plan will be informed by a comprehensive environmental scan, ongoing engagement, and consultation with staff, the public, and stakeholders.

The strategic plan describes the value and outcomes that the Library will deliver to Toronto's residents and communities. It is developed based on the following strategic planning principles:

1. Grounded in TPL's vision, mission, values, Statements and brand;
2. Responsive to City and community needs;
3. Integrated with the community;
4. Outcome-focused, actionable and drives continuous improvement.

COMMENTS

The proposed process and timeline for the new strategic plan are detailed in Attachment 1 and 2. Preliminary research has been completed to inform the process. The proposed process will begin in December 2023 and conclude in December 2024. The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will meet five times in 2024, and there will be regular updates to the Board throughout the process. The proposed milestones for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee and Board input and approval include:

- approval of strategic plan process and timeline (December 2023);
- review environmental scan and scenario planning progress and consultation plan (January 2024);
- review environmental scan report and phase one internal consultation report (March 2024);

- review phase one external consultation report, SWOT analysis and alignment with risk assessment, and draft strategic priorities, strategy map and strategic objectives (May 2024);
- review phase two consultation report, draft strategic plan and success measures (outcomes and KPIs), and draft execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan (October 2024);
- approval of final strategic plan, execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan (December 2024).

Public and Stakeholder Consultation

TPL's Public Consultation Policy requires that consultation be considered during the strategic planning process. This is an opportunity to ensure that library services are aligned with the needs of Torontonians and contribute to the social, economic, and democratic life of the City. The consultation plan will include broad and rigorous engagement with a range of groups, including staff, current customers, non-library users, experts, library sector professionals, community partners and industry stakeholders.

The first phase of consultations will help identify draft priorities. The second phase of consultations will refine and validate these priorities, and is scheduled to conclude in August.

The consultation plan will also incorporate recent feedback from staff, the public, and stakeholders and build on initiatives and strategies already underway. The aim of this plan is to encourage broad participation by integrating it with city, community, and library events wherever possible. Additionally, a third-party, public survey of Toronto residents will be conducted to gather demographic data and measure awareness, attitudes, needs of library services among users, infrequent users, and non-users.

Strategic Planning Steering Committee

Reporting to the Library Board, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee provides leadership and oversight of the strategic planning process, provides input, and recommends the draft strategic plan to the Board for approval. The Board Chair and Vice Chair are automatically appointed to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee. A minimum of three Board Members and a Toronto Public Library Foundation Board Member will also be appointed to the Committee. The Terms of Reference are included for approval in Attachment 3.

The first meeting will be held in early January, and a total of five meetings are planned in 2024.

Committee members are asked to make a commitment to participate in the Strategic Planning Steering Committee through to the end of 2024. As part of the Board's Procedural By-law, the Board will review the Board committees at the first meeting of each calendar year.

CONTACT

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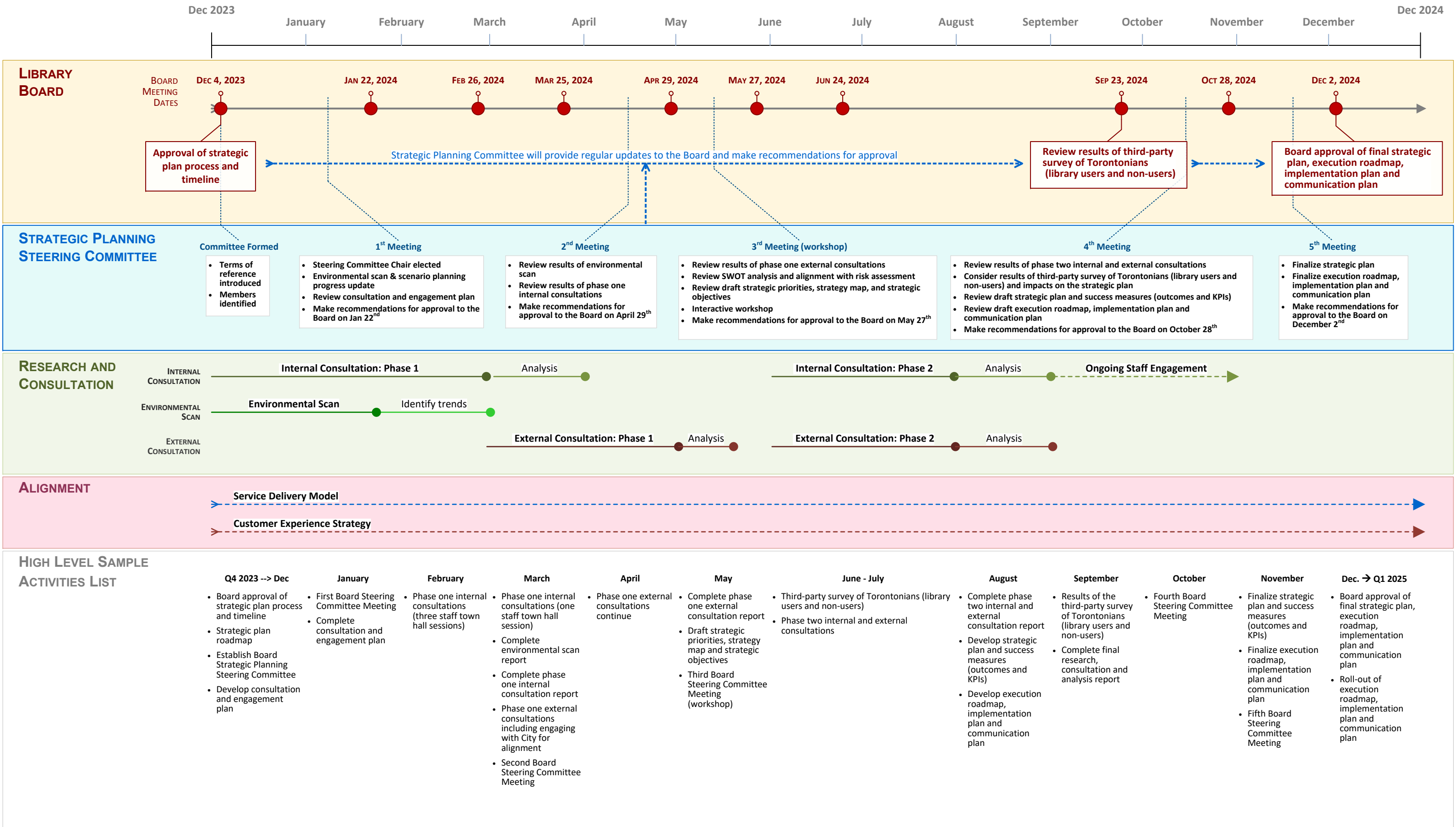
SIGNATURE

Vickery Bowles
City Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Strategic Plan 2025-2029 Roadmap
Attachment 2: Strategic Plan 2025-2029 Roadmap (accessible format)
Attachment 3: Strategic Planning Steering Committee Terms of Reference

2025-2029 Strategic Plan Roadmap





2025-2029 Strategic Plan Roadmap

This document is an accessible text-only version of the 2025-2029 Strategic Plan Roadmap diagram.

List of 2023 and 2024 Board Meeting Dates

- 2023: December 4
- 2024: January 22, February 26, March 25, April 29, May 27, June 24, September 23, October 28, December 2

Library Board Milestones

Date	Milestone
December 4, 2023	Board approval of strategic plan process and timeline including Strategic Planning Steering Committee Terms of Reference (members identified)
September 23, 2024	Review results of third-party survey of Torontonians (library users and non-users)
December 2, 2024	Board approval of final strategic plan, execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan
Note: The Strategic Planning Steering Committee will provide updates to the Library Board throughout the process and make recommendations to the Board for approval.	

Strategic Planning Steering Committee Milestones

Date	Milestone
December 4, 2023	Committee is formed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference introduced • Members identified
January 2024	First meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steering Committee Chair elected • Environmental scan and scenario planning progress update • Review consultation and engagement plan • Make recommendations to the Board for approval on January 22, 2024

Date	Milestone
March 2024	Second meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review results of environmental scan • Review results of phase one internal consultations • Make recommendations to the Board for approval on April 29, 2024
May 2024	Third meeting (workshop) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review results of phase one external consultations • Review SWOT analysis and alignment with risk assessment • Review draft strategic priorities, strategy map, and strategic objectives • Interactive workshop • Make recommendations to the Board for approval on May 27, 2024
October 2024	Fourth meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review results of phase two internal and external consultations • Consider results of third-party survey of Torontonians (library users and non-users) and impacts on strategic plan • Review draft strategic plan and success measures (outcomes and KPIs) • Review draft execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan • Make recommendations to the Board for approval on October 28, 2024
November 2024	Fifth meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize strategic plan • Finalize execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan • Make recommendations to the Board for approval on December 2, 2024

High Level Timeline of the Development Process

Phase	Activity	Details
Research and Consultation	Internal Consultation	The planning for internal consultation sessions, including staff town halls, started in September 2023. The Steering Committee will receive the results of the first phase of the consultations in March 2024. The staff engagement and consultation process will continue throughout the development of the strategic plan in 2024, with the second phase wrapping up in August 2024.
	Environmental Scan	The research for the environmental scan started in September 2023 and will continue until March 2024. The results of the scan will help us identify potential trends and themes that will be valuable in guiding the strategic planning process. This includes scenario planning, SWOT analysis, and alignment with risk assessment and Risk Register.
	External Consultation	During the first phase of external consultations, draft priorities will be formed based on the input received. The second phase will involve further refining and validating these draft priorities, with the process concluding in August 2024. The consultation process will consist of a third-party survey of Toronto residents, industry roundtables, and focus groups to gather input and insights.
Alignment	As the strategic plan for 2025-2029 is developed, efforts will be made to ensure its alignment with other internal frameworks, strategies, and processes, including TPL's Customer Experience Strategy and Service Delivery Model. Staff will be kept informed about this process and the plan's development through a communication strategy and plan, so that everyone has a clear understanding.	

High Level Sample Activities List by Month

Date	Milestone
July to August 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary research • Planning of environmental scan
September to November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine environmental scan focus areas • Develop consultation and engagement plan
December 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board approval of strategic plan process and timeline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Strategic plan roadmap • Establish Board Strategic Planning Steering Committee
January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Board Steering Committee Meeting • Complete consultation and engagement plan
February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase one internal consultations (three staff town hall sessions)
March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase one internal consultations (one staff town hall session) • Complete environmental scan report • Complete phase one internal consultation report • Phase one external consultations, including engaging with the City to align with their strategies and priorities • Second Board Steering Committee Meeting
April 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase one external consultations continue
May 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete phase one external consultation report • Draft strategic priorities, strategy map and strategic objectives • Third Board Steering Committee Meeting (workshop)
June to July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Third-party survey of Torontonians (library users and non-users) • Phase two internal and external consultations
August 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete phase two internal and external consultation report • Develop strategic plan and success measures (outcomes and KPIs) • Develop execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan
September 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of the third-party survey of Torontonians (library users and non-users) • Complete final research, consultation and analysis report
October 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fourth Board Steering Committee Meeting

Date	Milestone
November 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize strategic plan and success measures (outcomes and KPIs) • Finalize execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan • Fifth Board Steering Committee Meeting
December 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board approval of final strategic plan, execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan
December 2024 to March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll-out of execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan



Strategic Planning Steering Committee Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Toronto Public Library will embark on a new strategic planning process during the course of 2023-2024, which will cover the period 2025–2029. Reporting to the Library Board, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee provides leadership and oversight of the strategic planning process, provides input, and recommends the draft strategic plan to the Board for approval.

Mandate

Reporting to the Library Board, the Strategic Planning Steering Committee will support the Board's legislated mandate to deliver comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community's unique needs as outlined in the Public Libraries Act by:

- Providing leadership and oversight of the strategic plan;
- Reviewing and providing input into the environmental scan;
- Reviewing and providing input into the consultation and engagement plan;
- Reviewing and providing input into the strategy map and strategic objectives;
- Reviewing and providing input into the execution roadmap, implementation plan and communication plan;
- Providing input and recommending the draft strategic plan to the Library Board for approval.

Structure

The committee membership is open to all Board members interested in joining the committee:

Members:

- A minimum of three (3) Board members;
- Board Chair (ex-officio voting member);
- Board Vice Chair (ex-officio voting member);
- Toronto Public Library Foundation Board member.

Chair:

- The Committee will elect the Chair of the committee.

Staff support for the Strategic Planning Steering Committee:

- City Librarian;
- Director, Policy, Planning & Performance Management (PPPM);
- Director, Branch Operations & Customer Experience (BOCE);
- Manager, Strategic Planning;
- Manager, Strategy Development & Implementation;
- PPPM and Communications, Programming & Customer Engagement (CPCE) department staff.

Meetings

Schedule:

- The Committee will meet on an as-needed basis;
- All members of the Library Board will be notified of, and may attend, all committee meetings;
- The Committee will function until the Strategic Plan is approved by the Board.

Agenda and Minutes

- Notice of meetings will be forwarded at least five (5) business days in advance of the meeting;
- The agenda and minutes of committee meetings will be kept in accordance with the [Board Procedural By-law](#);

- Minutes of the last meeting of the committee as constituted will be approved by the Board and confirmed by the Committee at the subsequent meeting.

Procedural Rules

The rules applicable to Board meetings in the [Board Procedural By-law](#) apply to committee meetings except that:

- There is no time limit for meetings;
- The rules of procedure for Committee of the Whole will apply.

Quorum

- The quorum for the Committee is a majority of the voting members.

Public and Closed Sessions

- All meetings of the committee are open to the public. A meeting or part of a meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter is a confidential matter in accordance with Appendix A of the [Board Procedural By-law](#);
- Before holding a meeting or part of a meeting that is closed to the public, the Chair shall state by resolution the fact of the holding of the closed meeting, and the general nature of the matter to be considered at the closed meeting;
- No person will disclose the deliberations or discussions that occurred at a closed meeting unless the Board has authorized that disclosure.

Latest Revision

- December 4, 2023