

Toronto Public Library
Strategic Plan 2016-2019

A young girl with a pink backpack is looking at a woman who is using a 3D printer. The woman is wearing a red t-shirt and has a tattoo on her arm. The 3D printer is printing a blue object. The scene is set in a library or community center.

expanding **access**
increasing **opportunity**
building **connections**

“

I would like to compliment the *amazeballs* staff at my local library branch and in particular, the branch head. She's made this branch (and the YAG program she runs) such a fun and welcoming place! I can't imagine my branch without her. She's also been amazing at finding teen books and content, as well as a really friendly person to talk to! :)

— Sahar A.

”

table of contents

letter from the city librarian and
toronto public library board chair . . . 4

expanding **access**. increasing
opportunity. building **connections** . . . 5

strategic priorities 2016-2019 11

accountability and
reporting framework 25

research and consultations 31

strategic plan committee members

- Councillor Paul Ainslie
- Councillor Ana Bailão
- Mr. Ron Carinci
- Ms. Lindsay Colley
- Councillor Mary Fragedakis
- Ms. Sue Graham-Nutter
- Ms. Pam Laycock (TPL Foundation Representative)
- Ms. Dianne LeBreton (Chair)
- Mr. Strahan McCarten
- Ms. Archana Shah
- Ms. Eva Svec

board members

- Councillor Paul Ainslie
- Mr. Ron Carinci (Chair)
- Councillor Christin Carmichael Greb
- Ms. Lindsay Colley (Vice Chair)
- Councillor Sarah Doucette
- Councillor Mary Fragedakis
- Ms. Sue Graham-Nutter
- Ms. Dianne LeBreton
- Mr. Strahan McCarten
- Mr. Ross Parry
- Ms. Archana Shah
- Ms. Eva Svec

senior staff

- Vickery Bowles, City Librarian
- Susan Caron, Director, Collections & Membership Services
- Elizabeth Glass, Director, Policy, Planning & Performance Management
- Linda Hazzan, Director, Communications, Programming & Customer Engagement
- Alex Hocevar, Director, Digital Services & Emerging Technologies
- Moe Hosseini-Ara, Director, Branch Operations & Customer Experience
- Larry Hughsam, Director, Finance & Treasurer
- Dan Keon, Director, Human Resources
- Pam Ryan, Director, Service Development & Innovation
- Paul Trumphour, Director, Transitional Projects

cover photo: Maker Faire 2016 at Toronto Reference Library

letter from the city librarian and the toronto public library board chair



How people live, work, learn and play is changing, and it's important for the library to change with them so that we can continue to provide relevant library service and have positive impacts on the lives of Torontonians.

That's why every four years, through consultations, surveys and industry research, we identify customer needs, as well as city and industry trends, to tell us how we should be prioritizing our work to make sure that we deliver services and outcomes you have told us are important to you. And of course, the library has an important role to play in helping the city achieve its economic and social goals as well - to improve the quality of life for its residents, and to help make us all more resilient, more knowledgeable, more connected and more successful.

The title of our strategic plan speaks to three significant outcomes we've set out to achieve in the next four years: expanding **access**, increasing **opportunity** and building **connections**. We'll achieve this by focusing on six key priority areas: advancing our digital platforms, breaking down barriers to our services, expanding access to technology, providing more opportunities for continuous and self-directed learning, creating community connections, and transforming our library service to deliver exceptional customer service in the digital age.

Our plan is an ambitious one, responsive to the results of extensive public consultation, and grounded in achievable results. With the plan as our guide, Toronto Public Library is undertaking transformational change, and innovating to deliver better service.

We are very excited about this new Strategic Plan and see it as a great opportunity to enhance the way we deliver our current services and programs. This is also our opportunity to help move the dial on important social, economic, educational and digital challenges the city and its residents are facing, while continuing to serve the needs of our diverse and vibrant library community.

We look forward to serving you better than ever.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vickery Bowles".

Vickery Bowles
City Librarian, Toronto Public Library

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ron Carinci".

Ron Carinci
Chair, Toronto Public Library Board

our six strategic priorities

advancing our **digital platforms**

breaking down barriers to access and driving inclusion

expanding access to **technology and training**

establishing TPL as toronto's centre for **lifelong and self-directed learning**

creating **community connections** through cultural experiences

transforming for 21st century **service excellence**



expanding **access**
increasing **opportunity**
building **connections**

Toronto Public Library serves residents and communities in ways no other institution can. We empower Torontonians to thrive in the digital age and global knowledge economy through expanded access to technology, lifelong learning and diverse cultural and leisure experiences, online, in our branches and in the community. We have the capacity and resources to deliver high quality, customer-focused services where, when and how our customers need them. We continue to be nimble and innovative in the way we deliver services and programs, embracing emerging technology and creating spaces that encourage and support engagement within and between communities.



TPL's 100th, the Scarborough Civic Centre branch

expanding access

here's what expanded access will look like

Easy, local, convenient access to a broad range of library collections and services, **where, when and how** Torontonians need and want them, and an exceptional customer experience at every point of need

The fast pace of busy urban life puts time at a premium, and with changing patterns of work, study and school, Torontonians find it increasingly challenging to access services and participate in daily life. A barrier-free, personalized and customized omni-channel environment to access services, complete transactions and engage with others is no longer a “nice-to-have” but a “must-have”, especially for the more isolated and vulnerable residents of Toronto.

Easy access to educational, social and cultural resources and experiences is not always available equally across the city, creating a success gap and limiting opportunities for people of all ages, at various stages of their lives.

One in five Ontarians reports feeling high levels of “time crunch” in their lives.

Customers use an average of four different channels when interacting with an organization. **92%** expect organizations to offer self-service options.

Only **59%** of Canadian low income households have Internet access at home.



Studying at Cedarbrae branch

increasing opportunity

here's what increased opportunity will look like

Expanded access to current and emerging technology; new experiential, collaborative and eLearning opportunities; and safe after school social and learning environments for children and youth, to help reduce the digital divide; expand Toronto's knowledge, skills and networks; and engage learners of all ages

Building an equitable society means creating opportunities for people to grow, learn and succeed in a variety of ways. Despite living in one of Canada's wealthiest cities – and one of the country's major engines of growth – many Toronto residents do not have equal economic, educational, health and social opportunities that are so critical to achieving prosperity, advancement and overall well-being.

Access to information and pathways to learning can be “great equalizers,” and are foundations for lifelong success. In the 21st century, access to opportunity is increasingly dependent on access to online information and services, current and emerging technologies, social connections and supports for lifelong and self-directed learning.

More than one in SIX Canadian adults have low literacy skills.

Half of children in families with annual incomes under \$30,000 do not regularly participate in out-of-school arts or sports programs.

Technology-enabled teaching and learning practices play a significant role in supporting the development of a full range of 21st century competencies.



Checking out at Woodside Square branch

building connections

here's what building connections will look like

Vibrant, welcoming public spaces that are community hubs, connecting people with people, people with community, community with community and the city as a whole, through engaging cultural, creative, social and leisure experiences and opportunities that are animated and facilitated by library staff, community partners and collaborators

Connection is one of our basic human needs. Whether it's to one another, to community, to culture or as a way to facilitate expression and share experiences, connection is the foundation of a healthy society. More and more, people are feeling disconnected despite today's hyper-engaged, multi-channel world of social media and 24-hour news cycles. Some are isolated due to a lack of access to digital media or local community engagement.

This dearth of opportunities for meaningful connections is adversely affecting people's well-being, civic involvement and overall social cohesion. And with cultural literacy an essential skill for success in a diverse, global society and creative economy, access to rich local cultural opportunities and experiences is so important.

Ontarians have experienced a **23.5%** decline in their social networks in the past ten years.

More than **one in five** Torontonians 55 years and older live alone. **44%** of those age 85 and older live alone.

People who read and participate in cultural activities are more likely to be socially active, volunteer, donate, do favours for others and feel a strong sense of social belonging.

“

Thank you so much for including Lynda.com as part of your services. This is such a smart use of resources. I work in the production industry, and in this economic climate it is increasingly difficult to get a job without previous experience. I have taken advantage of Lynda to “skill up” so to speak, which has opened the doors to opportunities I wouldn’t otherwise have been qualified to seize.
— Sarah C.

”

The library's vision for the future is built on core strengths, clear focus, and enduring values. Children's literacy, preserving the past, lifelong learning, intellectual freedom, equitable access to a diversity of information and ideas, and welcoming and accessible public space. These are as important today as they have ever been and provide a strong and stable foundation on which to build our plan.

vision

Toronto Public Library will be recognized as the world's leading library by informing and inspiring Toronto and its communities, making us all more resilient, more knowledgeable, more connected and more successful.

mission

Toronto Public Library provides free and equitable access to services that meet the changing needs of Torontonians. The library preserves and promotes universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, experience, information and ideas in a welcoming and supportive environment.

values

1. Equity: Accessibility, respect and fairness
2. Diversity: Valuing individual needs, experiences and differences
3. Intellectual Freedom: Guaranteeing and facilitating the free exchange of information and ideas in a democratic society, protecting intellectual freedom and respecting individuals' rights to privacy and choice
4. Innovation: Encouraging creativity, experimentation and the generation of ideas
5. Inclusion: Welcoming participation in decision making and service development by residents and communities
6. Integrity: Open, transparent and honest in all our dealings
7. Accountability: Taking responsibility for our actions and the services we provide
8. Service Orientation: Providing excellent, responsive services.



Enjoying a great read

strategic priorities 2016-2019

Our comprehensive consultation and survey process revealed six clear priorities we will focus on through our 2016 to 2019 Strategic Plan. These priorities will help us evolve the library to meet the many needs of our customers and our city, now and into the future.



advancing our
digital platforms

breaking down barriers to
access and driving inclusion

expanding access to
technology and training

establishing toronto public
library as toronto's centre for
**lifelong and self-directed
learning**

creating **community
connections** through cultural
experiences

transforming for 21st century
service excellence

1 advancing our digital platforms

We will be a model of excellence in digital service delivery in the public sector. We will deliver digital platforms that offer a full range of services to Toronto communities and residents, and create exceptional customer experiences at every point of need.



Enjoying an audiobook at Toronto Reference Library

what we heard

Our customers want to be able to access the library on their own schedules. They want easier, more convenient ways to access their accounts, services, programs and collections across multiple channels – online, in-branch and through mobile technology. And they want more personalized service through those channels, anticipating and reflecting their needs and interests.

our goals

1. Remove policy barriers and redefine our business processes to deliver more and better services online
2. Create a seamless user experience by integrating our digital and in-branch platforms with easy links to face-to-face support
3. Continue to collaborate with public and private partners to drive innovation and improve the way we deliver service
4. Grow public and user engagement through new digital tools and approaches.



some of what you'll see

- Updated privacy policies that will allow TPL to deliver personalized services based on customer use and preferences
- Streamlined and simplified online membership, registration and card renewal
- An Innovation Council advisory group of recognized, industry-leading individuals to inform service development and increase TPL's profile in the tech sphere
- A refreshed tpl.ca, with a new design, more self-serve options, and a better experience on mobile devices.

A virtual reality experience at Northern District branch's Pop Up Learning Lab

delivering on the digital library

Millions of Torontonians visited the Toronto Public Library in 2015 through our digital doors.

31 million+ visits to tpl.ca

4.4 million checkouts of eBooks and other digital content

258,008 views on the library's YouTube channel

13,000+ items added to the library's Digital Archive

2 breaking down barriers to access and driving inclusion

We will break down barriers to access so that Torontonians from all walks of life have easy, local access to the library services they want and need.

TPL booth at Word on the Street 2015

what we heard

Our customers manage a fast-paced urban life where time for independent learning and recreation are at a premium. Changing work, school and study schedules and demands challenge the traditional Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 week. As a result, library customers need fewer barriers to service through accessible hours, flexible and user-friendly technology and support, personalized service options, and reasonable fines and fee structures that don't discourage use.

our goals

1. Increase membership and use by addressing barriers created by fines and fees
2. Develop targeted marketing and outreach strategies to educate and raise awareness of relevant library services at the customer's point of need
3. Increase access to in-branch services and spaces through responsive service hours and new options to expand public and community space
4. Advance State of Good Repair projects to provide welcoming, well-maintained and efficient public spaces
5. Support key City of Toronto priorities and strategies including Poverty Reduction, Youth Equity, Seniors, and Middle Childhood.



some of what you'll see

- Reduced fees and fines across the city with a targeted program in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas
- Open hours in more branches tailored to customer needs, including increased Sunday open hours
- After-hours access to spaces and collections through kiosks, pop up branches, outreach and community events.

North York Central Library's Teen Zone

a library for everyone

Toronto Public Library serves residents from many walks of life and with unique needs.

Since 2007, the library has added **465 new open hours** per week

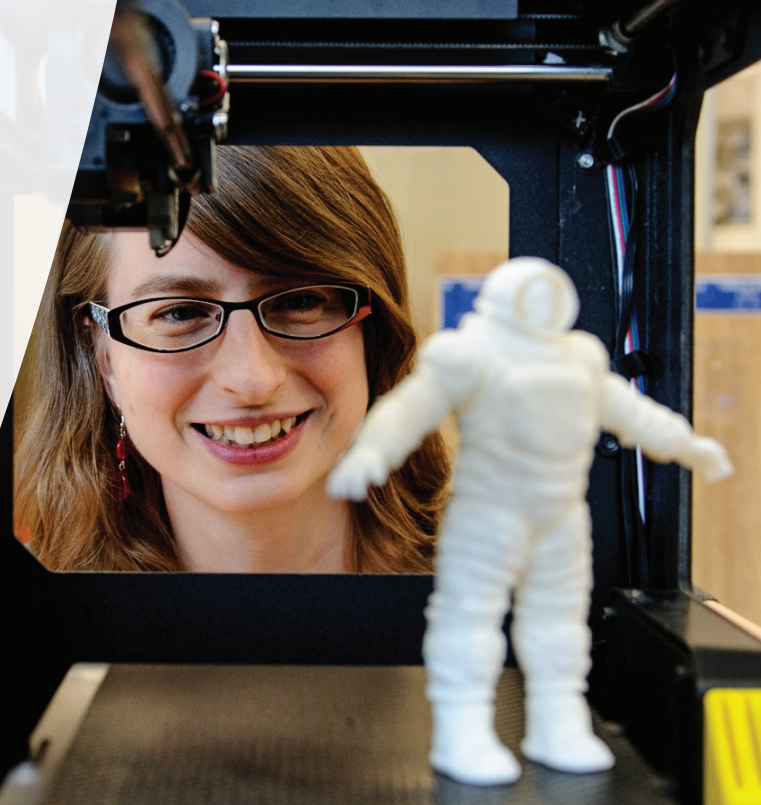
220,000 people attended preschool programs (2015)

83,000 people attended ESL programs (2015)

Adult literacy learners received **12,367 hours** of tutoring (2015)

3 expanding access to technology and training

We will provide access to current and emerging technology, training and expertise to promote digital literacy and inclusion.



Using the 3D printer in the Digital Innovation Hub

what we heard

As a vital part of how they communicate, learn and enhance their social, educational and professional lives, library users are looking for easy and reliable access to current technologies like high-speed Internet and wifi, scanners and computers with the latest software. To stay competitive with today's industry and culture, they also need to understand and use emerging technologies – 3D printers, graphic design hardware and software, audio/visual recording and editing equipment, and even virtual reality and artificial intelligence technologies. From e-content and digital media, to coding and networking, providing access to technology and relevant training opportunities is crucial to supporting traditional and digital literacies.

our goals

1. Meet or exceed public expectations and demand for technology to support school, work and daily life
2. Offer access to new and emerging technologies to support innovation, entrepreneurship and creativity
3. Develop new partnerships to support access to emerging technologies, software and expertise
4. Increase access to one-on-one, group and outreach training and learning opportunities.



some of what you'll see

- Community access to wifi and technology offered through a new Bookmobile
- An expanded wifi hotspot lending program
- New Digital Innovation Hubs and Pop Up Learning Labs available in more branches and communities across Toronto
- New equipment and software in Learning Centres to support expanded digital training programs.

Trying out the green screen during a class visit to the Digital Innovation Hub.

technology at TPL: by the numbers

Toronto Public Library has seen a steady rise in demand and use of technology to access materials and other information. In 2015,

6.7 million sessions on public computers

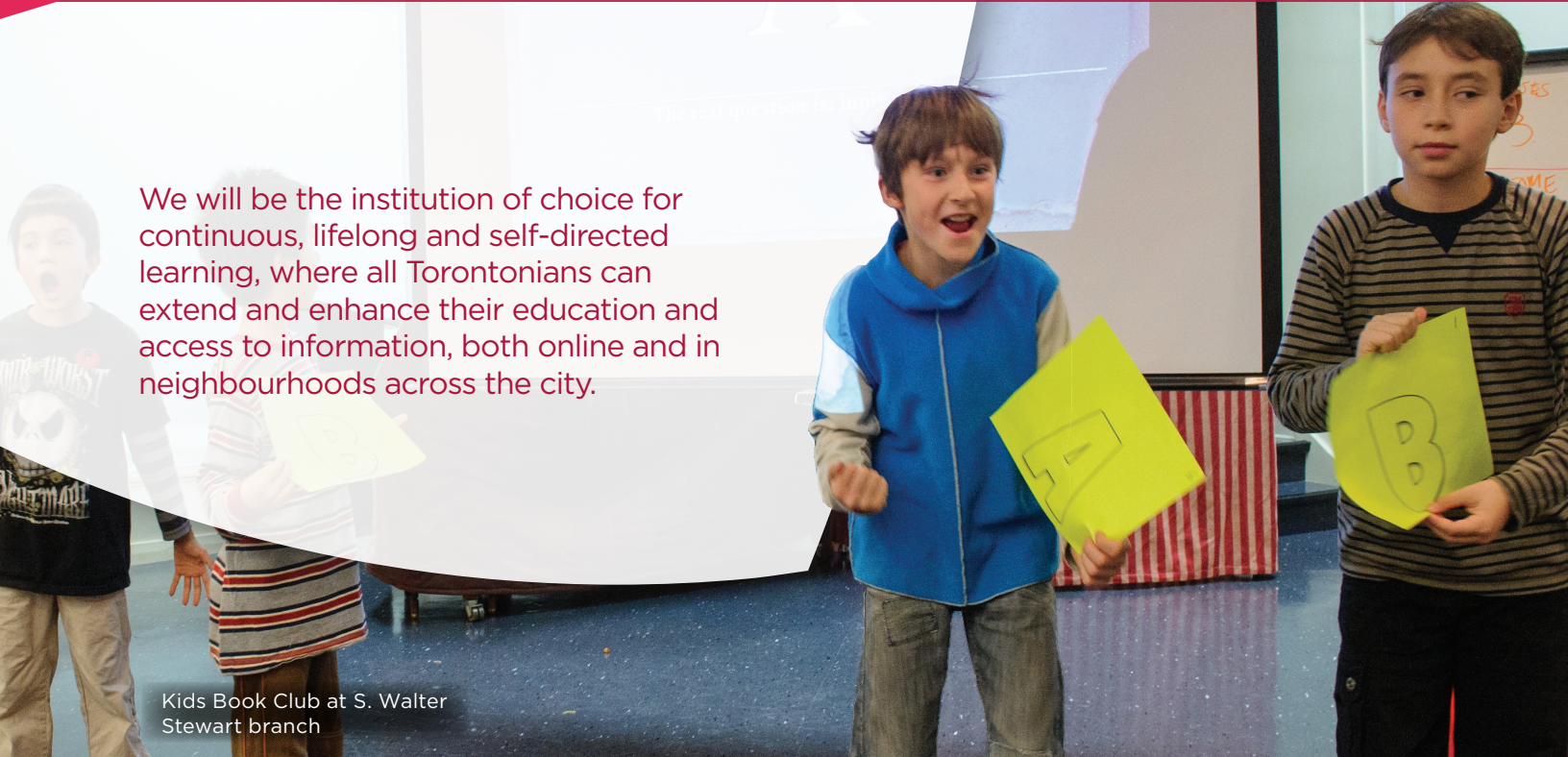
43,000+ people attended technology training programs

58% of Torontonians used a library computer or accessed the library's wireless network

359 people used Digital Innovation Hubs in a typical week

4 establishing TPL as toronto's centre for lifelong and self-directed learning

We will be the institution of choice for continuous, lifelong and self-directed learning, where all Torontonians can extend and enhance their education and access to information, both online and in neighbourhoods across the city.



Kids Book Club at S. Walter Stewart branch

what we heard

Our customers are looking for more and better ways to enhance their learning experiences. They are seeking resources, classes and supports to match their many learning needs and styles – distance and eLearning; mentorship and collaboration; experiential and interactive. They want more and new content from the library, and the technology and spaces to access it, along with the expertise to understand and use it.

our goals

1. Offer broad access to experiential, collaborative, mentored and networking learning opportunities in response to the different ways people learn and the unique needs of local communities
2. Build staff's capacity to deliver eLearning and interactive distance learning services
3. Support children and youth with enriched after school and out of school environments and programs for learning and discovery
4. Help learners of all ages build competencies in multiple literacies.

some of what you'll see

- Telepresence technology which enables interactive distance learning and collaboration
- A new eLearning tool for homework help
- More learning opportunities for children, including after school programs, creative writing camps, and STEM and numeracy programming
- Programs to support financial literacy for customers of different ages, small business owners and entrepreneurs.



Teen volunteers at Toronto Reference Library

the library as learning destination

Tens of thousands of Torontonians use Toronto Public Library as a place to expand their knowledge, upgrade their skills, seek meaningful employment and connect with their community.

13,000+ average visits per month to Lynda.com online learning service (2016)

6,000 people attended Thought Exchange programs (2015)

3,850 visits to Youth Hubs across the city (2016)

4,000 children attended STEM and maker programs (2015)

1,300 people attended small business programs (2015)

5 creating **community connections** through cultural experiences

We will provide access to a range of local and city-wide cultural experiences that engage residents and help them feel connected to their community.



Welcoming Syrian refugees at North York Central Library

what we heard

Our customers want safe, welcoming spaces – in their neighbourhoods and online – where they can come together with others to create and learn, to exchange ideas and to enjoy cultural experiences. They want a destination where they can engage with members of their community, and other communities, that will enrich their daily lives and create meaningful connections.

our goals

1. Create online and in-branch environments that connect neighbourhoods and communities, offering opportunities for partnerships, civic engagement and resident participation
2. Connect creative communities with new technology to help them share their stories and cultures with other Torontonians
3. Facilitate new ways for Torontonians to share their love of reading
4. Build diverse collections in a variety of formats in response to changing community needs.



some of what you'll see

- World-class programming accessible through live streaming, and original online content to complement live programming (e.g. podcasting)
- A new Chinese Community Archive with user and community-generated content
- Support for Syrian refugees settling in Toronto through partnerships with government organizations and community groups
- Augmented and virtual reality elements incorporated into TD Gallery exhibits.

June Callwood Lecture in Toronto Reference Library's atrium

creating connections

Library materials and cultural programs are used by millions of Torontonians, proving these to be popular and important contributions to the community. In 2015,

32 million+ books and other library items were borrowed

207,000 people attended cultural programs

86,000+ families borrowed Sun Life Financial Museum & Arts Passes

14,000+ people attended programs at the Bram & Bluma Appel Salon

6 transforming for 21st century **service excellence**

We will transform the library's capacity and culture to deliver exceptional customer experiences how, when and where our customers want and need them. Torontonians will benefit from a vibrant, revitalized, digitally-enabled and efficiently managed service.

Express checkout at Richview branch

what we heard

Our customers want a library that is innovative, nimble and responsive in the way it delivers programs and services and creates spaces for enhanced engagement, learning and leisure. They want knowledgeable staff that can help them explore and use new and current technologies, and an organization that is transparent and responsible in how it delivers its services.

our goals

1. Align our organizational structure and resources to advance our strategic plan goals, including service innovation, continuous improvement and sustainability
2. Leverage digital infrastructures including Cloud, business intelligence and social media technologies to efficiently deliver great customer service experiences
3. Empower and equip staff with the training and tools to deliver future-focused services
4. Support the Toronto Public Library Foundation in achieving ambitious fundraising goals
5. Cultivate staff engagement opportunities with a 360° approach to input and feedback.

RETURNS

some of what you'll see

- A business intelligence strategy to expand the library's understanding of customer needs and behaviours to improve delivery and relevancy of service
- Increased revenue with the introduction of new venue rental opportunities at Toronto Reference Library and other branches
- Fine payment options at self-checkout terminals.



Friendly staff helping out at Dawes Road branch

an always-improving library

Continuous improvement, innovation and excellence in customer service continue to drive TPL's transformation.

6.3 million holds placed through the website (2015)

11% increase in revenues generated through room rentals (2016)

Operating efficiencies have reduced library materials processing **from 4-6 weeks to 2-3 days**

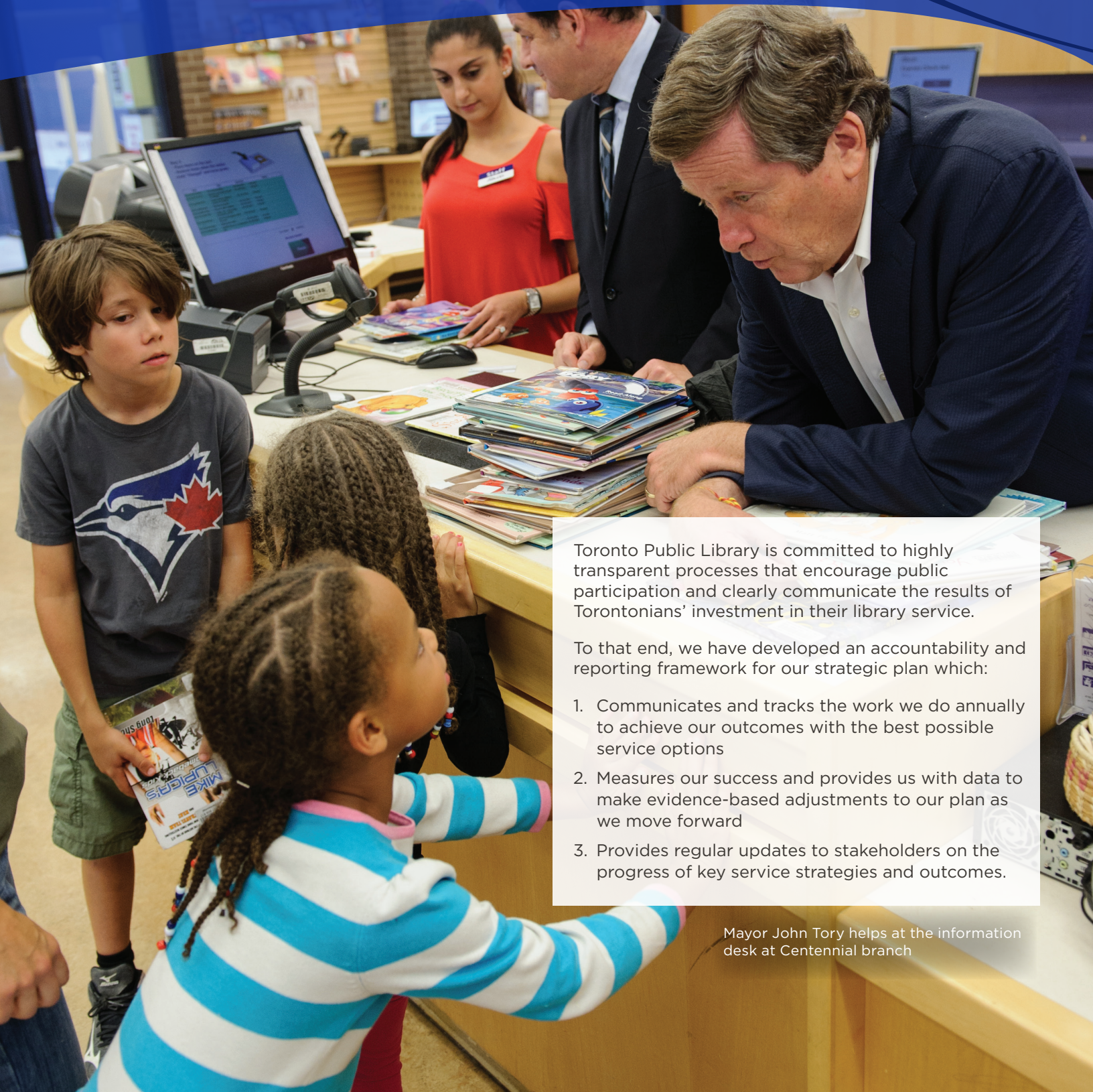
“

I am very impressed how professional and quickly book holds are managed. I am really surprised once I put books on hold, how quickly they get organized and transferred to my home library. I also love the software feature that tells me my ranking on book holds. Thanks!

— Anika

”

accountability and reporting framework



Toronto Public Library is committed to highly transparent processes that encourage public participation and clearly communicate the results of Torontonians' investment in their library service.

To that end, we have developed an accountability and reporting framework for our strategic plan which:

1. Communicates and tracks the work we do annually to achieve our outcomes with the best possible service options
2. Measures our success and provides us with data to make evidence-based adjustments to our plan as we move forward
3. Provides regular updates to stakeholders on the progress of key service strategies and outcomes.

Mayor John Tory helps at the information desk at Centennial branch

1. developing an annual work plan

The strategic plan is a living document. Each year we will review usage patterns, customer feedback and innovative practices in the library and public sector to develop a work plan which delivers on our outcomes with the best possible service options.

Staff will report semi-annually on the completion of initiatives for the year. We will tell you what service enhancements we've achieved, how they were used and how they addressed our outcomes.

2. measuring the results

The Accountability Framework for the library's Strategic Plan includes three measurement tools: a logic model, a balanced scorecard, and a performance dashboard. These tools provide the analysis and metrics which demonstrate how the library is achieving specific outcome targets - for example, improving our online services, expanding open hours, or offering new learning opportunities.

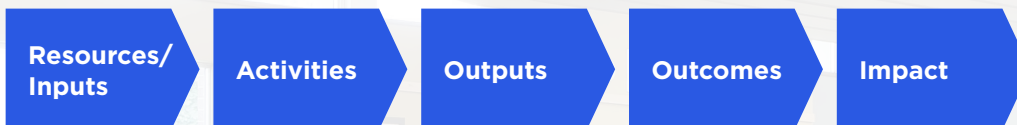
3. moving the dial on key service strategies

The new Strategic Plan responds to the needs and aspirations of Toronto residents and communities, connects to key City strategies, and contributes to their impact. It will also transform our organization to be a modern, customer-focused government service.

The library is committed to providing regular updates to stakeholders on the progress of key service strategies that meet these needs and aspirations.

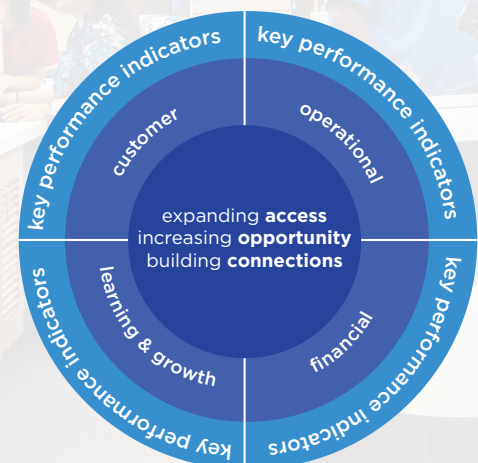
logic models

The logic model framework allows staff to guide program and service development and evaluation, and ensures that resources and activities are appropriately aligned to achieve TPL's strategic outcomes and the City's key strategies.



balanced scorecard with key performance indicators

The overall achievements of the Strategic Plan will be tracked and reported using a balanced scorecard approach, with key performance indicators established under four perspectives: Customer, Operational, Learning & Growth, and Financial.



TPL strategic plan 2016-2019 priorities	city of Toronto key strategies							
	City of Toronto Strategic Actions 2013-2018	Raising the Village	Toronto Middle Childhood Strategy	Toronto Newcomer Strategy	Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy	Toronto Seniors Strategy	Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020	Toronto Youth Equity Strategy
advancing our digital platforms					✓			
breaking down barriers to access, driving inclusion	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
expanding access to technology and training			✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
establishing TPL as Toronto's centre for continuous and self-directed learning		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
creating community connections through cultural experiences		✓		✓		✓	✓	
transforming for 21st century service excellence	✓							

dashboard

Key performance indicators measured through the balanced scorecard tool will be reported visually through a performance dashboard which will show where the library has moved the dial on key performance indicators against set targets.

274,397
(Dec 2016)

269,672
(2015)



Expanded open hours

281,878
(2019)

Customers enjoying a day at Don Mills branch

“

I just got my first e-newsletter. Every item was relevant and of interest. Happy to have a recording of a missed author event. Happy to be reminded of upcoming events at the Reference [Library]. Good to hear about magazines now available. Excellent work. Thanks, eh!

— Judy G.

”

toronto public library's digital strategy

The library's Digital Strategy is critical for us to be able to achieve our strategic plan outcomes. Four key areas of focus will guide our approach to digital and technology, with the goals of modernizing the customer's experience and making the library more nimble, responsive and efficient through strategic partnerships and a transformed back office infrastructure.

- Seamless and integrated
- Personalized and always connected
- Services of choice delivered when and how customers want them

creating the **omni channel** experience

a modernized customer experience

Customers can access channels, products and services in the way they feel most comfortable

- Integrated view of and easy access to TPL's information
- Business intelligence and analytics
- Policy, privacy and security

accessing & using **information**

partnered with the technology community

TPL leverages the technology community in the city to enable and enhance its services

- Realize benefits of back office technology commoditization
- Nimble and responsive technology environment
- Focus on core library functions

leveraging the **cloud**

transformed back office infrastructure

An efficient and effective back-of-house operation enabled by modern systems, processes and training

- Culture of innovation and delivery
- Skills, tools and training
- Speed to market
- Business process re-engineering and change management

investing in **employees**



toronto is...

growing

- The city of Toronto's population grew by **4.5%** between 2006 and 2011, and by 2015 had reached **2,826,497**.
- The population growth rate in downtown Toronto **more than tripled** between 2006 and 2011, as younger residents began choosing downtown over suburban living.

aging

- Seniors make up **14%** of the population, and the fastest-growing segment is adults age 85 and older.

diverse

- **51%** of Toronto residents were born outside of Canada.
- **45%** have a native language other than English or French, and **28%** speak neither English nor French at home.
- **Half** of Toronto's population is made up of visible minorities.
- In 2014, **29%** of new permanent Canadian residents settled in Toronto.

research and consultation



TRADING
LIBRARY
Youth Volunteer Event 2014
Ela

Our research focused on societal trends, usage patterns and City of Toronto strategies. It uncovered issues of importance to Toronto residents, and informed the development of our services and priorities going forward.

We consulted with more than 2,200 people, including residents, community groups and staff. Participants were asked to share their ideas about the library and their thoughts on how to improve service delivery in branch, online and in the community. This input, coupled with our vision, mission and values, helped us to set our priorities as we move the library forward.

We also conducted a survey, done by Forum Research on behalf of TPL, to examine awareness and usage of, and satisfaction with library services, querying more than 1,200 residents, both users and non-users of the library. This was the fourth time the library conducted the survey, enabling comparisons over time.

Youth volunteer event at
North York Central Library



context & trends

poverty

One in five adults and one in four children live in poverty in Toronto. The City's Poverty Reduction Strategy focuses on addressing immediate needs through essential services; creating pathways to prosperity through job creation and investment; and driving systemic change through more accountable and participatory government.

inequality

Toronto has been called a "divided city" with concentrated poverty, unemployment, and other socioeconomic problems in specific geographic areas. The City has identified 31 Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (NIAs) where investments in infrastructure and programs are aimed at strengthening communities and improving outcomes for local residents.

employment: the hourglass economy

Toronto's unemployment rate has returned to its pre-recession level and now sits at 6.9% overall, but the types of jobs available have changed. The "hourglass economy," where employment is

concentrated at the high and low ends of the income spectrum, has created a gap between part-time, low-paid workers and those with high-skilled, high-paying jobs.

For all workers, including those in the high-skill, high-pay sector of the economy, short-term or contract work is becoming common, meaning people have less job security and greater responsibility for their own professional development.

More seniors are remaining in the workforce either by preference or due to financial necessity, but those over age 55 who lose their jobs struggle to find new employment. Access to technology, along with training and support, can help older adults refresh their skills and stay connected.

youth unemployment

Unemployment among youth is significantly higher than for the population as a whole, hovering between 15 and 20% over the past decade. Youth from newcomer, visible minority, indigenous, low income, and LGBTQ communities are more likely to be unemployed.

Barriers to youth employment include a lack of networks, mentors, role models, and

opportunities for meaningful work experience. The City's Youth Equity Strategy seeks to coordinate efforts across different City agencies and departments to address these issues.

education

An educated workforce is key to the city's ability to attract investment and employment. Technology-driven change and an emphasis on continuous learning and other 21st century competencies mean that education is now a lifelong process. Formal education is increasingly supplemented with online courses and tutorials, as well as in-person experiential learning at meet-ups, hackathons and maker spaces.

Schools are changing their traditional emphasis on language-centered learning as part of the "multiple literacies" approach, which recognizes the need to support visual, auditory, spatial, and other learning styles. There is a greater focus on shared learning experiences, interactive skills, and problem solving, with extensive use of multimedia and information technologies.



children and families

The influence of early childhood experiences on success in later life has been widely documented, as have the risks to children growing up with social and economic disadvantages. Services and supports are available to help children and families in Toronto, but the system is complex, fragmented and often difficult for parents to navigate. Organizations across the child and family services sector are coordinating their strategies and developing shared outcomes to better serve Toronto families.

the digital divide and the cost of connectivity

Internet access has become essential to full participation in society. While the divide separating Internet users from non-users has diminished over time, factors including income level, age and education persist as barriers.

Canadian families spend between \$100 and \$212 a month for communications services, depending on household size, and in low-income households, this expense represents, on average,

7.7% of their monthly income – their largest expenditure after shelter, transportation and food.

digital government

In Canada and internationally, governments and their agencies are applying the culture, practices, processes, and technologies of the Internet era to respond to citizens' expectations and deliver services more efficiently and effectively.

By leveraging new developments (including Cloud technology, the widespread adoption of mobile devices and more sophisticated analytics tools), governments seek to improve access to services, increase civic engagement, and better evaluate program outcomes.

lifestyle trends

Despite the constant connectivity new technologies enable, many people report feelings of social isolation. For an aging population, this problem is more acute: 22% of Torontonians age 55 and older, and 44% of those over age 85, live alone.

23% of Torontonians report having high levels of stress. Family, job, and money worries contribute to stress levels, and working adults who care for children or

aging parents struggle with time management. To meet the needs of busy families, services must be convenient and easy to use.

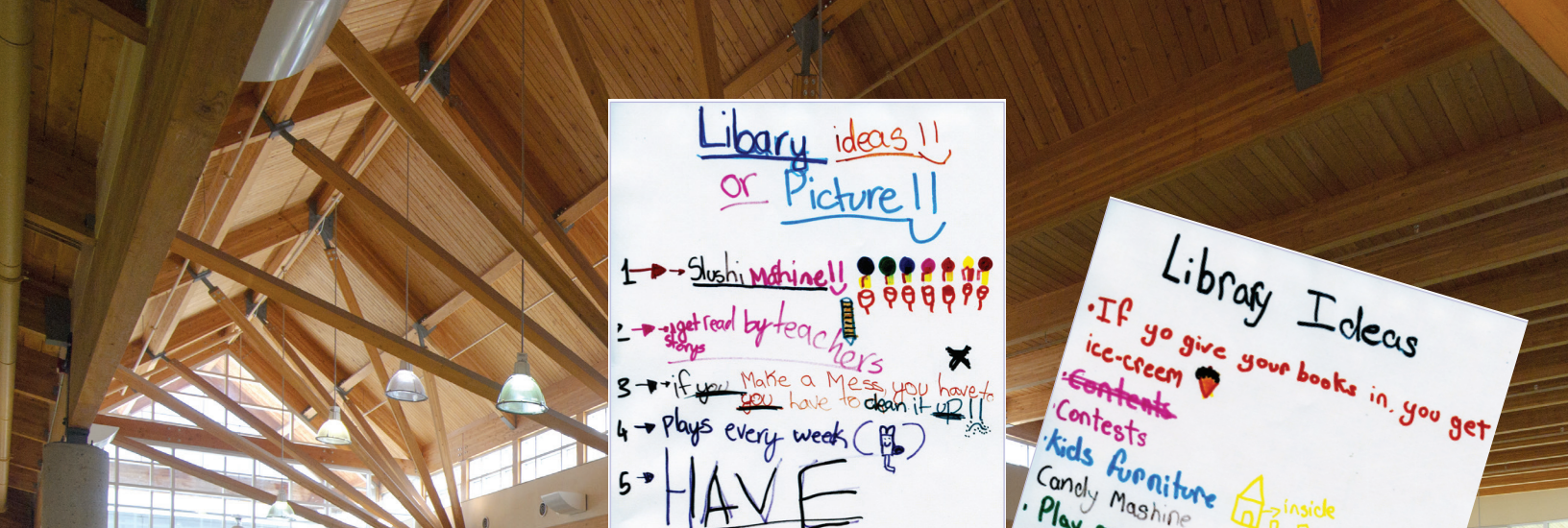
culture

Participation in arts and culture activities has been linked to civic engagement, volunteering, and community connectedness. Toronto residents believe the arts make the city a better place to live, but 55% say cost is a barrier to attending cultural events.

literacy and reading

Reading is a foundational skill for success in education and work. Canada has a higher-than-average proportion of its population at both the high and low ends of the literacy proficiency scale – many Canadians are avid readers, but 17% of the adult population has low literacy skills.

Reading for enjoyment has been linked to benefits ranging from higher incomes to better mental health. Between 2010 and 2014, the percentage of Ontario children who report that they like to read declined from 50% to 47% among students in Grades 3 and 6.



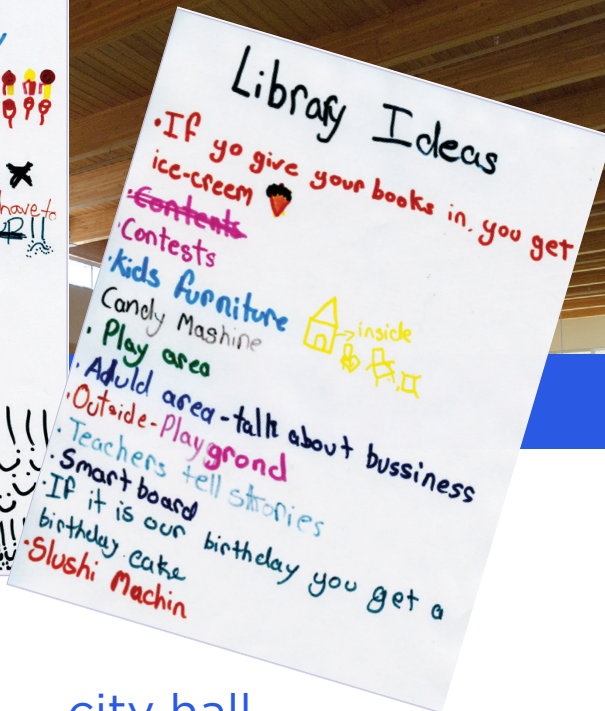
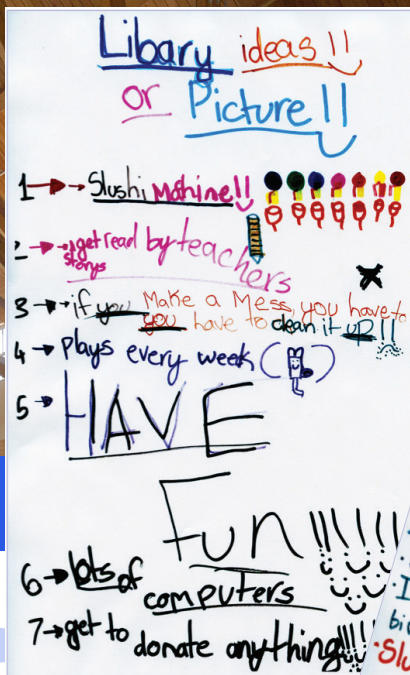
consultation

neighbourhood improvement area (NIA) focus groups

Ten focus groups with residents and community partners were asked to identify barriers to accessing library services and how the library can better respond to the specific needs of their community.

youth focus group

This consultation involved 50 participants from our Youth Advisory Groups (YAGs) from various neighbourhoods across the city. As well, they brought friends who were not library users to share their opinions and impressions of the library and its services. This is the first time TPL has coordinated a cross-YAG meeting, and the resulting information and ideas shared were very enlightening and highly useful in our needs assessment process.



public & private partner roundtables

Two breakfast session roundtables were conducted, with 91 participants in total. One roundtable focused on the library's contributions to the culture sector, and included participants from Royal Ontario Museum, the Gardiner Museum, and Toronto Arts & Culture. The second roundtable focused on ways the library can contribute to and benefit from the technology sector, and included representatives from Cisco, NetDexterity, Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto, Ryerson University, and the Centre for Social Innovation who shared their ideas and expertise.

telephone & online survey of toronto residents

Surveys were conducted by Forum Research via phone and online. There were 1,200 participants in total (600 on telephone and 600 online). The survey focused on awareness, use and satisfaction with TPL services.

city hall drop-in

This session was a combination of information gathering and awareness raising with City Councillors and City staff. It included poster sessions and interactive information sharing as well as online and in-person surveys.

staff and library union local 4948 consultations

We had 35 participants who shared their insights about the library with an external facilitator. This group focused primarily on priorities relating to transforming the library's capacity and culture and how that would inform delivery of services and programs in all their forms in the future.

a day in the life of TPL

On an average day in 2015, there were...



90,000
items
borrowed



85,000
online visits



50,000
visits to library
branches



12,000
ebooks
downloaded



18,000
computer
sessions



2,500
people attending
library programs



9,000
wifi sessions

Customer reading at
Brentwood branch

a city and its library

In 2015, Toronto Public Library commissioned a public and visitor survey as part of its 2016-2019 Strategic Plan consultation process. Here are some highlights.

best

Toronto Public Library is the biggest and busiest urban public library in the world

#1

Worldwide

- Circulation per capita
- Visits per capita
- (#3 Total circulation and total visits per capita)

North America

- Total circulation
- Circulation per capita
- Total visits
- Visits per capita

Canada

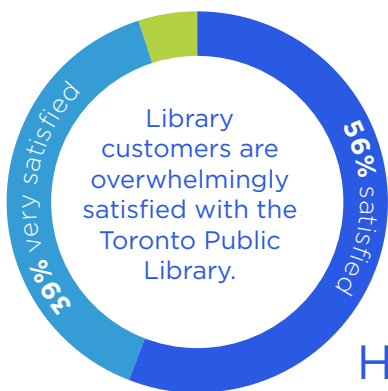
- Total circulation
- Total visits
- (#2 Visits per capita
- #6 Circulation per capita)

valued

TPL customers overwhelmingly value their library and its welcoming, responsive and helpful service

Responsive : **95%**

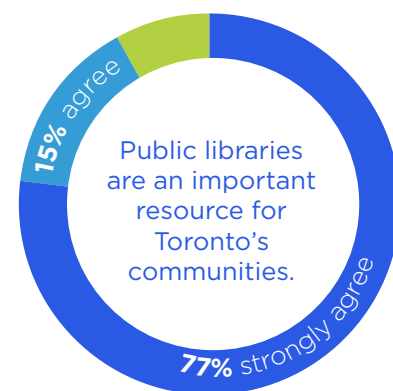
Welcoming : **89%**



Helpful : **94%**



Valued : **92%**



busiest

Every day, thousands of Torontonians use the library in all kinds of ways

70%

of Torontonians used the library



1 in 5

Torontonians visit a library branch at least once a week

102.1 million uses



3.2 million wifi sessions
6.7 million computer uses



18 million visits to library branches



925,400 people attended
37,000 programs



32.5 million items borrowed



31 million visits to tpl.ca



26% increase in the use of ebooks

Program attendance

Standard reference requests

Wireless use

In-library use

Workstation user sessions

Visits

Circulation

Virtual visits

sources

ACORN Canada. Internet for All: Internet Use and Accessibility for Low-Income Canadians. January 2016.

<https://www.acorncanada.org/sites/acorncanada.org/files/Internet%20for%20All%20report.pdf>

City of Toronto. Backgrounder: 2011 Census: Age and Sex Population Counts. May 29, 2012.

http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/social_development_finance_administration/files/pdf/censusbackgrounder_ageandsex_2011.pdf

City of Toronto. Backgrounder: 2011 National Household Survey: Immigration, Citizenship, Place of Birth, Ethnicity, Visible Minorities, Religion and Aboriginal Peoples. May 9, 2013.

http://www1.toronto.ca/city_of_toronto/social_development_finance_administration/files/pdf/nhs_backgroundunder.pdf

City of Toronto. Backgrounder: 2011 National Household Survey: Income and Shelter Costs. September 2013.

<http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/Social%20Development,%20Finance%20&%20Administration/Shared%20Content/Demographics/PDFs/Reports/nhs-backgroundunder-income-shelter.pdf>

City of Toronto. Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy.

<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contenton-ly?vgnextoid=faeabf088412e410VgnVCM10000071d-60f89RCRD&vgnnextchannel=de8f727e05c79410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

City of Toronto. Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020.

<http://www1.toronto.ca/wps/portal/contenton-ly?vgnextoid=a69036e9f77d2510VgnVCM10000071d-60f89RCRD&vgnnextchannel=42653745ba9a9410VgnVCM10000071d60f89RCRD>

Hill Strategies Research Inc. "Social Effects of Culture: Detailed Statistical Models." July 23, 2008.

<http://www.hillstrategies.com/content/social-effects-culture-detailed-statistical-models>

OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies. PIAAC in Canada. 2013.

http://www.piaac.ca/docs/PIAAC2013/web_deck_of_findings_EN.pdf

Ontario Trillium Foundation and University of Waterloo Faculty of Applied Health Sciences. How Are Ontarians Really Doing? A Provincial Report on Ontario Wellbeing. April 2014.

https://uwaterloo.ca/canadian-index-wellbeing/sites/ca.canadian-index-wellbeing/files/uploads/files/ontarioreport-accessible_0.pdf

Parature. 2015 U.S. State of Multichannel Customer Service. July 31, 2015.

<http://www.parature.com/multichannel-customer-service-infographic/>

Polyani, Michael et al. Divided City: Life in Canada's Child Poverty Capital. 2016 Toronto Child and Family Poverty Report Card. November 14, 2016.

<http://www.childcarecanada.org/documents/research-policy-practice/16/11/divided-city-life-canada%E2%80%99s-child-poverty-capital>

Province of Ontario. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. The Ontario Culture Strategy: Telling our stories, growing our economy. 2016.

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-culture-strategy-telling-our-stories-growing-our-economy>

Province of Ontario. Towards Defining 21st Century Competencies for Ontario.

http://www.edugains.ca/resources21CL/About21stCentury/21CL_21stCenturyCompetencies.pdf

National Endowment for the Arts. Art-Goers in Their Communities: Patterns of Civic and Social Engagement. NEA Research Note #98. October 2009.

<https://www.arts.gov/sites/default/files/98.pdf>

National Reading Campaign. Pleasure Reading Survey. November 20, 2013.

<http://www.nationalreadingcampaign.ca/research/pleasure-reading-survey/>

People for Education. Reading enjoyment on the decline in Ontario schools. January 9, 2012.

<http://www.peopleforeducation.ca/pfe-news/reading-enjoyment-on-the-decline-in-ontario-schools/>

Public Interest Advocacy Centre. No Consumer Left Behind: A Canadian Affordability Framework for Communications Services in a Digital Age. January 2015.

<http://www.piac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/PIAC-No-Consumer-Left-Behind-Final-Report-English.pdf>

Toronto Arts Foundation. Toronto Arts Stats 2016.

<http://www.torontoartsfoundation.org/knowledge/toronto-arts-stats>

Toronto Child & Family Network. Raising the Village: Measuring the Well-Being of Children and Families in Toronto. Part 1: Developing Shared Outcomes. November 2013.

http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/Children's%20Services/Files/pdf/R/raising_the_village-part_1_developing_shared_outcomes-full_report_2013.pdf

Toronto Foundation. Toronto's Vital Signs Report 2016.

<http://torontosvitalsigns.ca>

City of Toronto. The Toronto Seniors Strategy: Towards an Age-Friendly City. 2014.

<http://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/Social%20Development,%20Finance%20&%20Administration/Shared%20Content/Seniors/PDFs/seniors-strategy-fullreport.pdf>

City of Toronto. Youth Equity Strategy.

<https://www1.toronto.ca/City%20Of%20Toronto/Social%20Development,%20Finance%20&%20Administration/Attachment%201%20-%20TYES%20Creative%20Report.pdf>

Province of Ontario. Education Quality and Accountability Office. Provincial Elementary School Report 2016.

<http://www.egao.com/en/assessments/results/assessment-docs-elementary/provincial-report-elementary-contextual-2016.pdf>

Statistics Canada. Labour Force Characteristics, unadjusted, by census metropolitan area. Accessed November 30, 2016.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/101/cst01/lfs04f-eng.htm>

“

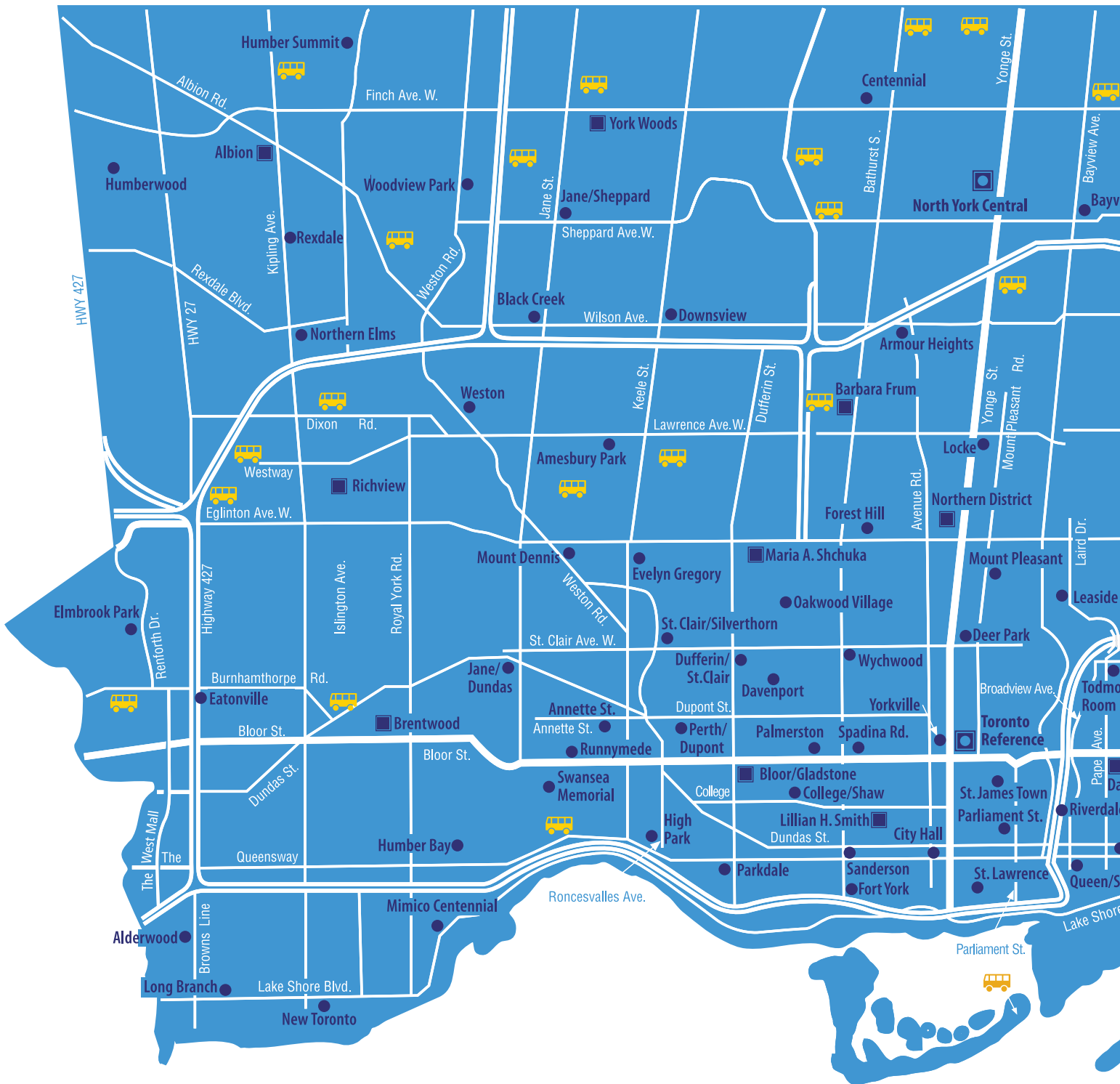
What's most exciting about Scarborough Civic Centre [branch] is its pure expression of the role of today's public libraries.

Elegant architectural gestures reach out toward the city while transparent glass edges bring the vibrancy of public space indoors.

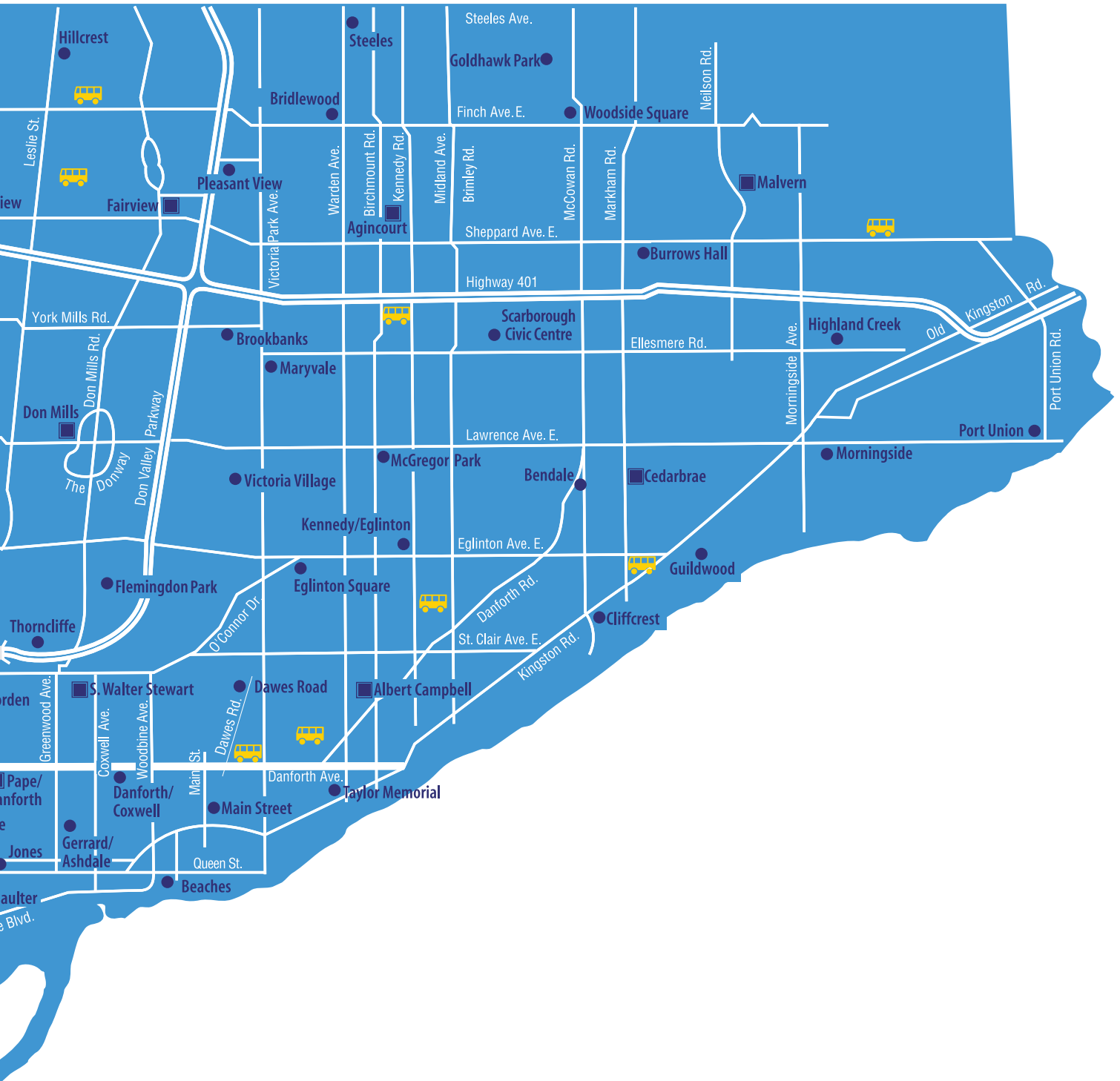
With its 100th branch, TPL has beautifully realized the role it plays in the evolution of the commons in 2015, where the light is abundant and the wifi is free.

- Daniel Rotsztain,
The Globe and Mail
May 22, 2015

”



- Neighbourhood branches
- District branches
- ◻ Research & Reference libraries



 Bookmobile stops



Cedarbrae branch
Credit: Steven Evans

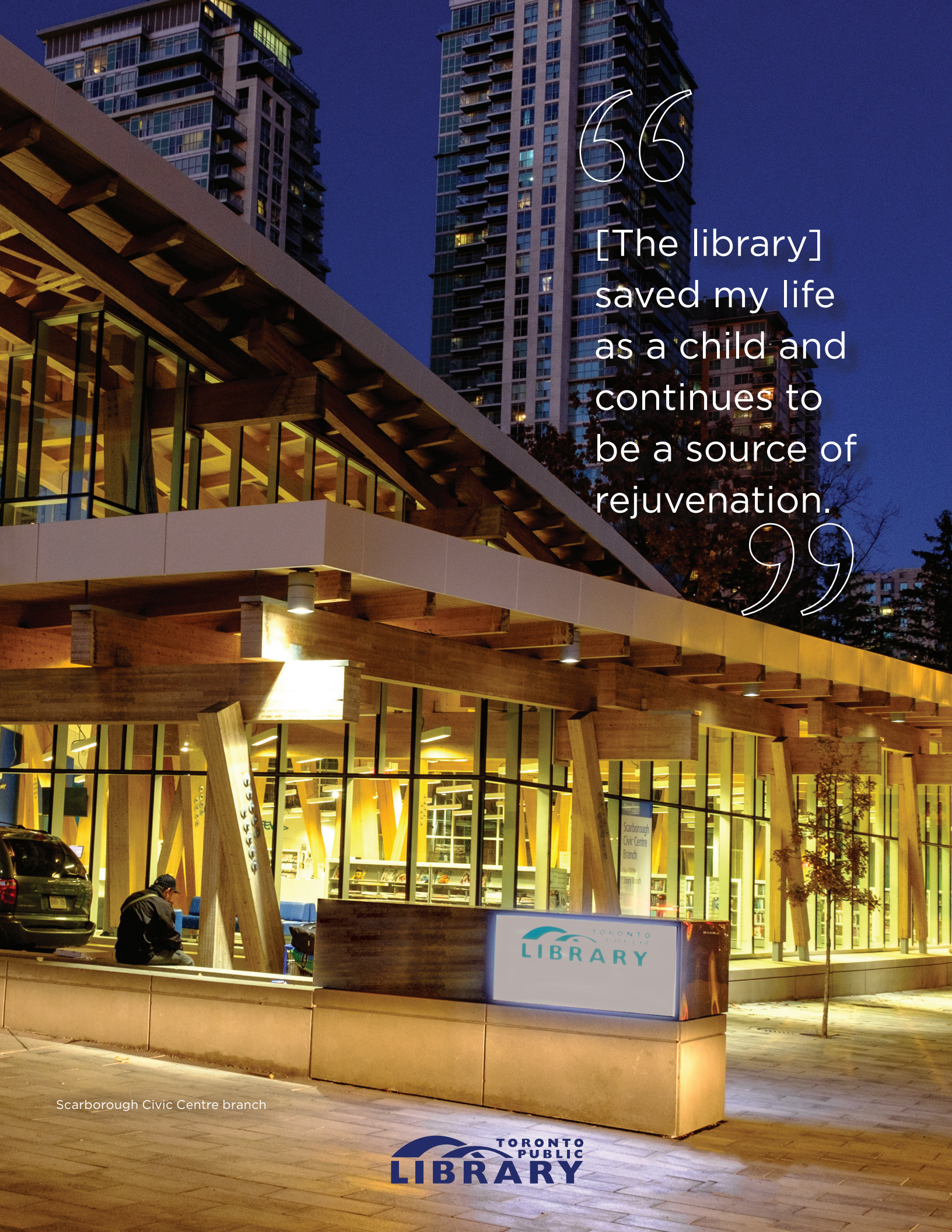


“

At the streetlight in front of the library, while I sat in my car waiting to turn left, a girl and her mother who had just left the building were crossing in front of me. The girl, about seven years old, was clutching a large picture book to her chest. And in my headlights, she was dancing: twirling and laughing and hopping up and down. Celebrating, in a way, another Monday evening at the library.

- Edward Keenan,
Toronto Star
October 26, 2016

”



“

[The library]
saved my life
as a child and
continues to
be a source of
rejuvenation.

”

Scarborough Civic Centre branch

