



To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee **Date:** March 8, 2012
From: Cathryn Volkering Carlile **File:**
General Manager - Community Services
Re: **Richmond Public Library Strategic Plan**

Staff Recommendation

1. That the Richmond City of Readers Strategic Plan 2011-2014 be updated by the Richmond Public Library in consultation with the Community and;
2. That City staff present a revised Strategic Plan to Council in 2013.

Cathryn Volkering Carlile
General Manager - Community Services
(604-276-4068)

Att: 1

FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY		
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

On November 14, 2011 Richmond City Council adopted the following referral motion:

That staff provide comment and recommendations regarding the process for finalization of the Richmond Public Library Strategic Plan.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Present the “Richmond City of Readers Strategic Plan 2011-2014” (Attachment 1) and provide some analysis as to the information included; and
- Recommend next steps regarding the process for finalizing the Library Strategic Plan.

Analysis

The Richmond City of Readers Strategic Plan 2011-2014 has been prepared by the Richmond Public Library and outlines five strategic goals for the next three years (2011-2014):

1. Supporting reading in our community
2. Use technology to connect readers
3. Develop collections to meet popular demand
4. Offer programs that inform and inspire
5. Create friendly, welcoming facilities

As these are the goals of the Library they do not need to be approved by Council however, it is important that given the relationship between the Library and the City that the Strategic Plan works within Council’s Term Goals.

City staff reviewed the Library’s Strategic Plan and met with Library staff to discuss the plan. Library staff explained that the Library is currently experiencing a number of significant changes such as the impact of technology, the make up of the community, and the type and delivery of Library programs.

The Library recognizes that it will need to work differently in the future to respond to these changes. The present plan is intended to be a fluid document and is not traditional in its approach as it does not provide action items, budgets, nor is it guided by community consultation.

In looking at how to best prepare for upcoming changes, staff recommend that the Library revise the existing strategic plan with a more rigorous strategic planning process, community consultation and include representatives from the City in the process.

Library and City staff felt that revising the strategic plan to best identify new and emerging needs and forecast responses to the significant changes the Library is experiencing, that a comprehensive consultation process be completed. Including City representatives in the strategic planning process will help the Library to be better aligned with Council’s Term Goals as well as

other City planning documents such as the Wellness Strategy, Social Planning Strategy and Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Master Plan.

The Richmond Public Library is very influential in its ability to transform lives and literacy has a positive influence on the social and economic well being of the community. Looking towards the future, Library staff identified a need to build a closer connection between the Library and the City, and it was felt that better aligning the Library's services with the City's would assist in meeting the changing demands of Richmond's growing population.

The Richmond City of Readers Strategic Plan 2011-2014 and its five strategic goals for the next three years serve as indicators for areas in need of attention and lay the foundation from which a revised strategic plan can begin. Library and City staff anticipates this process to take approximately a year. Once completed, staff will present a revised strategic plan to Council for their review.

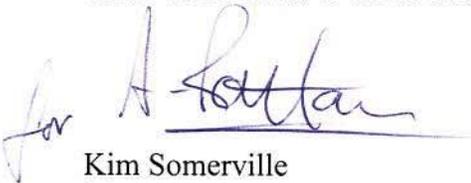
Staff has requested \$110,000 in the one time additional level to prepare a feasibility study for the library system. Staff would recommend that this funding be considered in the upcoming one time additional level process and also include a comprehensive community consultation on library services in addition to confirming future facility requirements.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact at this time.

Conclusion

The Richmond Public Library is recognized internationally for its excellence and continues to receive awards for its innovative programs and services. To meet the growing demands of Richmond's population and to respond to the significant changes such as the impact of technology, the make up of the community and the type and delivery of programs, it is recommended that the Library revise it's strategic plan to ensure it is grounded in community consultation, works within Council's Term Goals and lays out the priorities and goals for the future to continue to serve our city of readers.



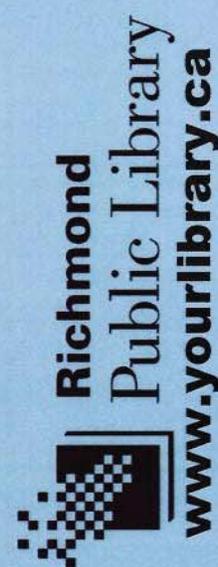
Kim Somerville
Manager, Arts Services
(604-247-4671)

KS:ks



RICHMOND - CITY OF READERS

Strategic Plan 2011-2014



MESSAGE FROM PAT WATSON, BOARD CHAIR



Go Anywhere. Learn Anything. Read Every Day.

This year marks 35 years of Richmond Public Library serving the community. Since our inception, our goal has been to support beginner readers, lifelong readers and everyone in between. Over the years, we have witnessed the evolution of reading from the printed word in books, to reading on computers, e-readers and other handheld electronic devices. Despite these dramatic changes, the fundamental value of reading prevails and continues to play a crucial role in achieving our full potential. The library is in the unique position to transform lives and communities by encouraging and celebrating the power and joy of reading. Literacy has a powerful effect, not only on individuals, but also on the economic and social well-being of the entire community.

The people of Richmond love their library. National library statistics confirm that more people borrow more materials from our library per capita than any other large urban library in Canada. We truly are a city of readers. However, numbers are only one measure of the community's support. As you can see from the quotes throughout this document, our customers have a heartfelt connection with the library and its staff. Richmond Public Library is recognized internationally for its excellence and continues to receive awards for its innovative services and programs. However, part of being successful includes a critical review of what has been accomplished to date and developing a strategic plan that lays out priorities and goals for the future.

During our strategic planning process the following questions were asked:

- Where can we make the greatest difference?
- How can we work collaboratively with other organizations?
- What are customers asking for?
- What barriers prevent effective library use?

In addition, we solicited comments from customers, community organizations and staff on how to improve services.

Our findings resulted in five strategic goals:

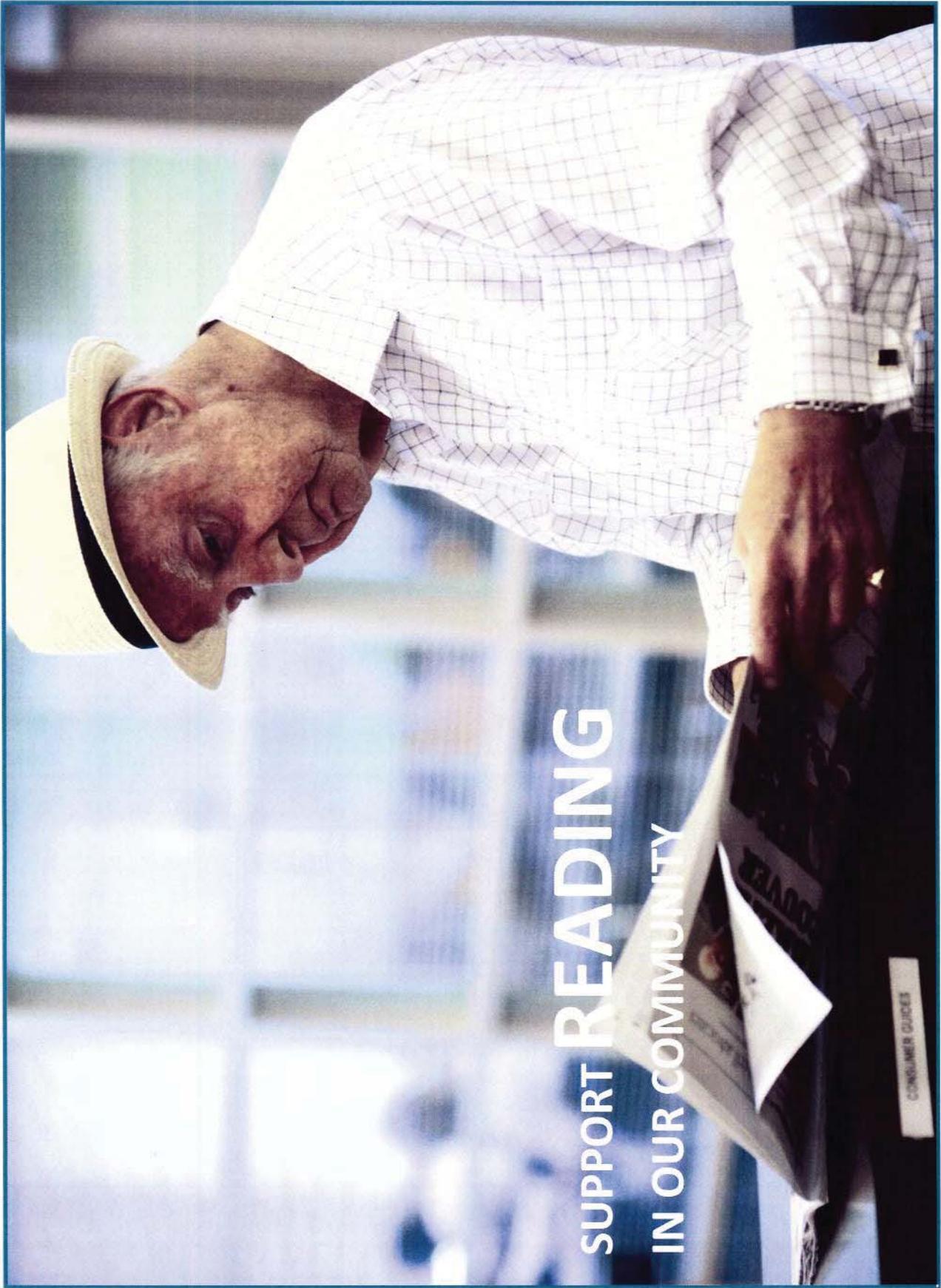
- Goal 1: Support reading in our community
- Goal 2: Use technology to connect readers
- Goal 3: Develop collections to meet popular demand
- Goal 4: Offer programs that inform and inspire
- Goal 5: Create friendly, welcoming facilities

The Library Board and staff look forward to working with Mayor and Council, city staff, our community partners, and our many generous donors to achieve these goals. And if the past is any indicator of the future, we anticipate many more years of invigorating challenges, innovations and change. Our focus will always be on our city of readers.

Thank you for reading this important document and keep enjoying our wonderful library!



“ A father came to tell us that his daughter had just been evaluated for English language comprehension and had scored a perfect 5. When the instructor asked what preschool she attended, she said, ‘I go to the library. That’s my preschool.’ ”



GOAL 1: SUPPORT READING IN OUR COMMUNITY

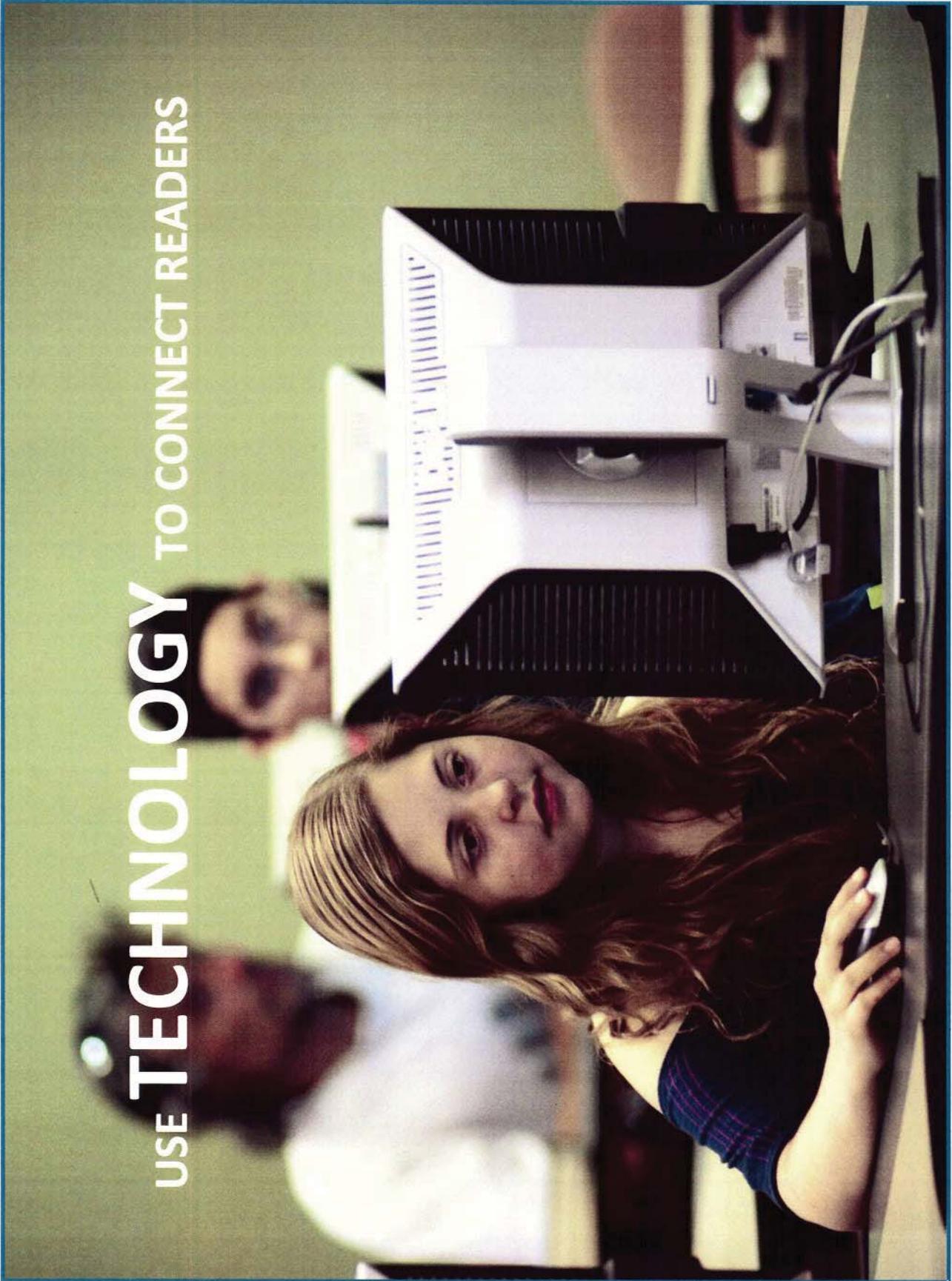
Work with community partners to promote and support reading; especially to reach out and serve populations currently not using the library's resources and services. Many of these organizations work with vulnerable groups dealing with low income, low literacy and other life challenges that inhibit them from using the library.

Activities

- Enhance the effectiveness of existing partnerships.
- Identify new partners that will encourage reading and use of the library's resources.
- Identify barriers for underserved populations and find solutions to encourage them to use library services.
- Celebrate and promote the joy and value of reading by enhancing reading programs and finding new ways to highlight our collections.

“Years ago, as a young single mother of small boys, the library was an oasis of calm in a very chaotic life. Welcoming. Free. Interesting. Stimulating. A place where I could stop saying no, sorry honey, we can't afford that right now, but Yes! We can borrow books and movies - go ahead and choose! Yes! Let's stay and listen to a story! Yes, we'll come back next week.”

USE **TECHNOLOGY** TO CONNECT READERS



GOAL 2: USE TECHNOLOGY TO CONNECT READERS

Provide customers with access to the technology and skills required to navigate information and connect with people throughout the world.

PRCS - 54

Activities

- Ensure that customers have access to reliable computers with up to date software.
- Take advantage of social media technologies that will help us connect to customers and let readers connect to each other.
- Offer instruction on technology from basic computer courses to eBook downloading and advanced online database research.
- Continue to improve the library's website to reflect the needs and interests of readers.
- Develop virtual reference and customer service support systems to improve customer convenience.



*My mom has been here for 2 decades, and if it weren't for the computer classes available, I don't think she would ever learn!!!
Thank you!!!!*

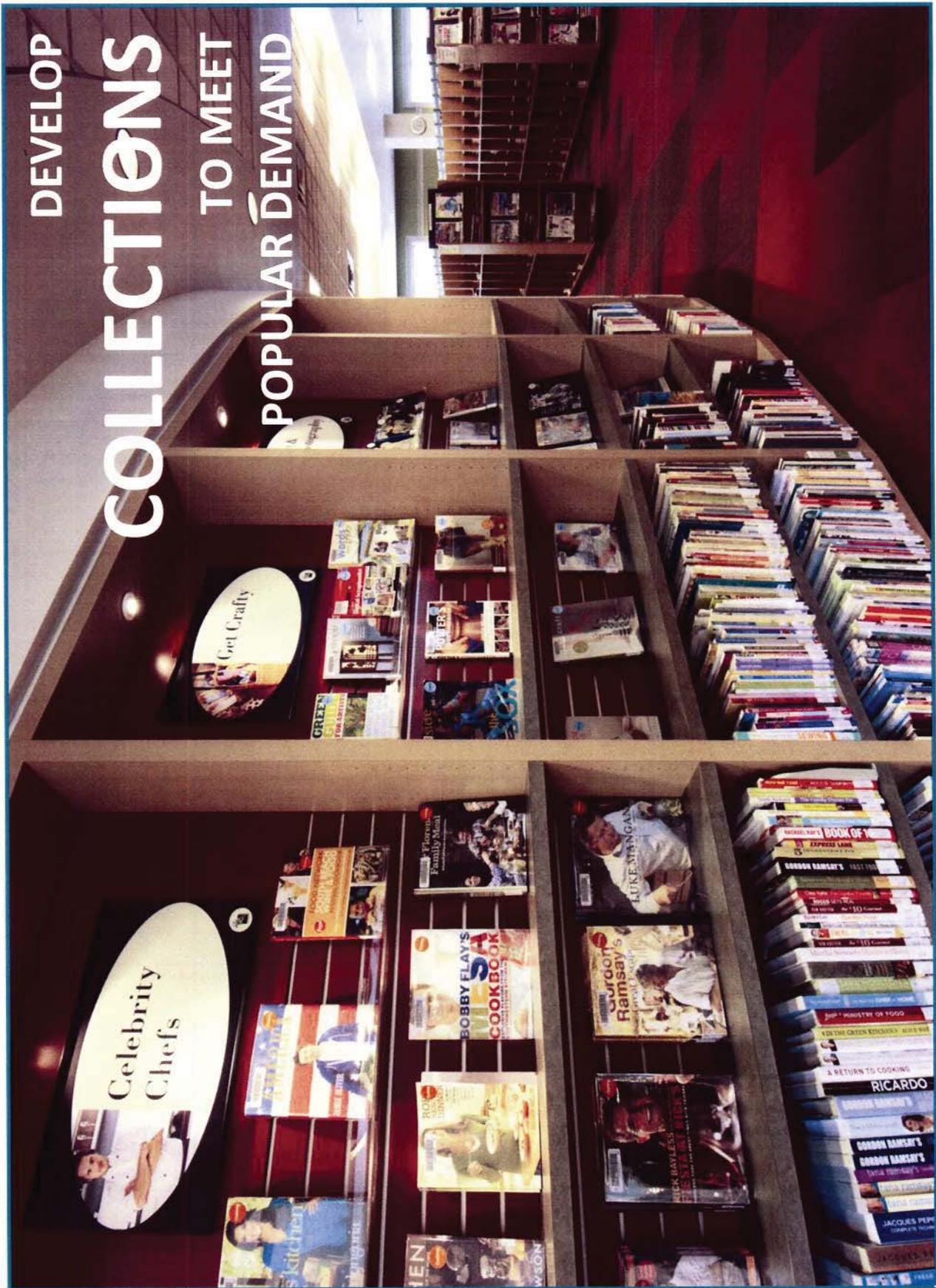


DEVELOP

COLLECTIONS

TO MEET

POPULAR DEMAND



GOAL 3: DEVELOP COLLECTIONS TO MEET POPULAR DEMAND

Help children, teens and adults find books and other materials to stimulate their imagination and foster lifelong learning at a variety of reading levels, and in various languages.

Activities

- Refresh and expand the merchandising of collections to highlight and increase the use of library materials.
- Continue to ensure popular material is widely available to meet the demand of customers.
- Further develop collections in languages other than English to reflect the demographics of our community.

“ *Our library is a fabulous place, with an excellent collection and friendly staff. What would I like? More of the same - bigger libraries with even more books, movies and CDs.* ”



GOAL 4: OFFER PROGRAMS THAT INFORM AND INSPIRE

Provide Richmond residents, regardless of reading ability or ethnic background, with programs to expand their interests, skills and knowledge.

PRCS - 58

Activities

- Continue to develop unique and appealing programs for youth that encourage a love of reading.
- Support literacy and reading readiness through the library's own programs as well as with community organizations involved with literacy.
- Offer programs that celebrate the diverse cultures of our community.
- Offer programs that support newcomers to Canada.
- Encourage community experts to present programs of interest to the community.

“

When I was a new mom with my first child, I found support through a network of other new moms during babytimes and storytimes. They don't give you an instruction manual for being a mom, but at least with the library, you can find resources about parenting, find recipe books to cook the family a decent meal, travel books to take them on a well planned vacation, videos for family night, and the Summer Reading Club to encourage the kids to read during their vacation.

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GOAL 5: CREATE FRIENDLY, WELCOMING FACILITIES

Ensure that people of all ages feel welcome in their local branch by providing a comfortable, engaging environment and friendly, helpful staff. Plan all policies and activities with the customers' needs and benefits in mind.

Activities

- Create warm, welcoming and safe public spaces.
- Offer exceptional customer service to ensure that everyone feels at home in their branch.
- Provide ongoing staff development that promotes passion and enthusiasm for reading.
- Work with the City of Richmond to plan branch development and expansion to meet growing needs.
- Promote the “greening” of the library and its operations and set an example for conserving resources and protecting the environment.

“ I like to come to the library every day. It's a part of my life and I feel comfortable coming here. ”

RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD 2011



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Approved May 2011 by the Richmond Public Library Board