



MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: January 14, 2016
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Meeting Date: January 20, 2016
TO: Library Board
FROM: Sandra Singh, Chief Librarian
SUBJECT: 2017-2019 Strategic Plan Consulting Services Contracting Authority

SUMMARY

This report is to update the Board of the plans for the development of the 2017-2019 VPL Strategic Plan and to seek authorization for the Chief Librarian to award a consulting contract related to the Strategic Plan.

PURPOSE

This report is for decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- A. That the Board authorize the Chief Librarian to award a consulting contract for consultants to assist with the development of the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan, source of funds to be a transfer from Reserves or 2016 operating surpluses; and
- B. That Management report back at the February Board meeting on the award of the contract with a full project budget for approval.

POLICY

Section 6 of the Purchasing Policy states that "...The City Librarian can authorize consulting engagements if the gross cost does not exceed \$30,000. All consulting contracts over \$30,000 shall be approved by the Board. All consulting engagements noted in this section will be dealt with in open Board/Council...".

The Library Financial Reserves policy states “...Management is authorized to expend undesignated library reserves up to \$50,000 on one-time projects which support Library objectives without Library Board approval. Expenditures, from undesignated reserves, over \$50,000 require Library Board approval. Staff will provide the Board with an annual summary of disbursements from reserves.”

BACKGROUND

The way people access information, and therefore how patrons use public libraries, is rapidly changing. In 2012, the Library undertook an extensive strategic planning process to renew its vision, mission, and values, to increase their relevance given societal shifts. Further, the VPL developed a set of foundational elements, priorities, goals, and initiatives that has guided the work of the organization from 2013 to 2015.

2016 is a planning year for the organization and a chance, once again, to take stock of how the external landscape has evolved, how the organization’s capacity has shifted, and evaluate where the VPL has the greatest opportunity for continued and extended impact.

The 2017 to 2019 Strategic Plan will build on the success of the last strategic plan. It will aspire to further the same vision, mission, and values. However, it will be informed by new data about the evolving environment in which the VPL operates and its patrons’ changing needs. An increased capacity for change throughout the organization makes it possible at this juncture to seek to empower and enable staff to participate in the ongoing evolution of the Library.

At its October 2015 meeting, the Library Board approved the use of a consultant to work with the Library in developing the next strategic plan. In late November 2015, staff met with members of the CRPD Committee to review the draft RFP for consulting services and in December 2015, the Library posted an RFP for this work.

The successful proponent will have: extensive strategic planning experience; understand, or be able to quickly develop and understanding of, the systemic external changes impacting libraries; and the ability to develop and facilitate an inclusive process for the development of the Plan that engages and empowers VPL’s Board, Staff, and Patrons.

DISCUSSION

The RFP for the consultants closes January 20, 2016. There will be insufficient time between the closing of the RFP and the January Board meeting to properly analyse the responses and bring a recommendation forward for Board approval.

The Library Board awards consulting contracts with a value of more than \$30,000. The Chief Librarian believes that waiting until the February board meeting to award the consulting contract would delay the strategic planning process and negatively impact timeline for community consultation, which needs to be completed by June 2016. As such, the Chief Librarian is seeking a variance to the Purchasing Policy whereby the Chief Librarian is authorized to award this consulting contract.

As per the Board's decision to assign CRPD as the steering committee for the Strategic Plan development, there will be at least two members of the CRPD committee included on the team evaluating the RFP responses. As such there will be Board representation throughout the RFP selection process.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A detailed budget including all expenses for the project (beyond, and including, the cost of the consultant) will be prepared following signing of the consulting contract. This budget will be brought back to the Board for approval at the February meeting. The 2017-2019 Strategic Planning Project will be funded either by a transfer from reserves or through 2016 operating surpluses.

TIMELINES

- January 20 RFP Closes
- February 15 Contract Awarded
- February 22 Project Kick-Off
- Feb-March Discovery and Planning Phase
- April Consultation Begins
- June Consultation Ends and results analyzed
- July First Draft of Strategy Due
- September 5 Second Draft of Strategy Due
- October 3 Final Strategy Due
- October 26 Board Approval of Strategy
- November Project Wrap-Up

FINAL REMARKS

Building on the solid foundation laid through the development and implementation of the 2013-2015 Strategic Plan, the 2017-2019 Strategic Plan will guide the ongoing evolution of the Library. VPL Management looks forward to collaborating with an experienced consultant in the creation of this essential piece of work.