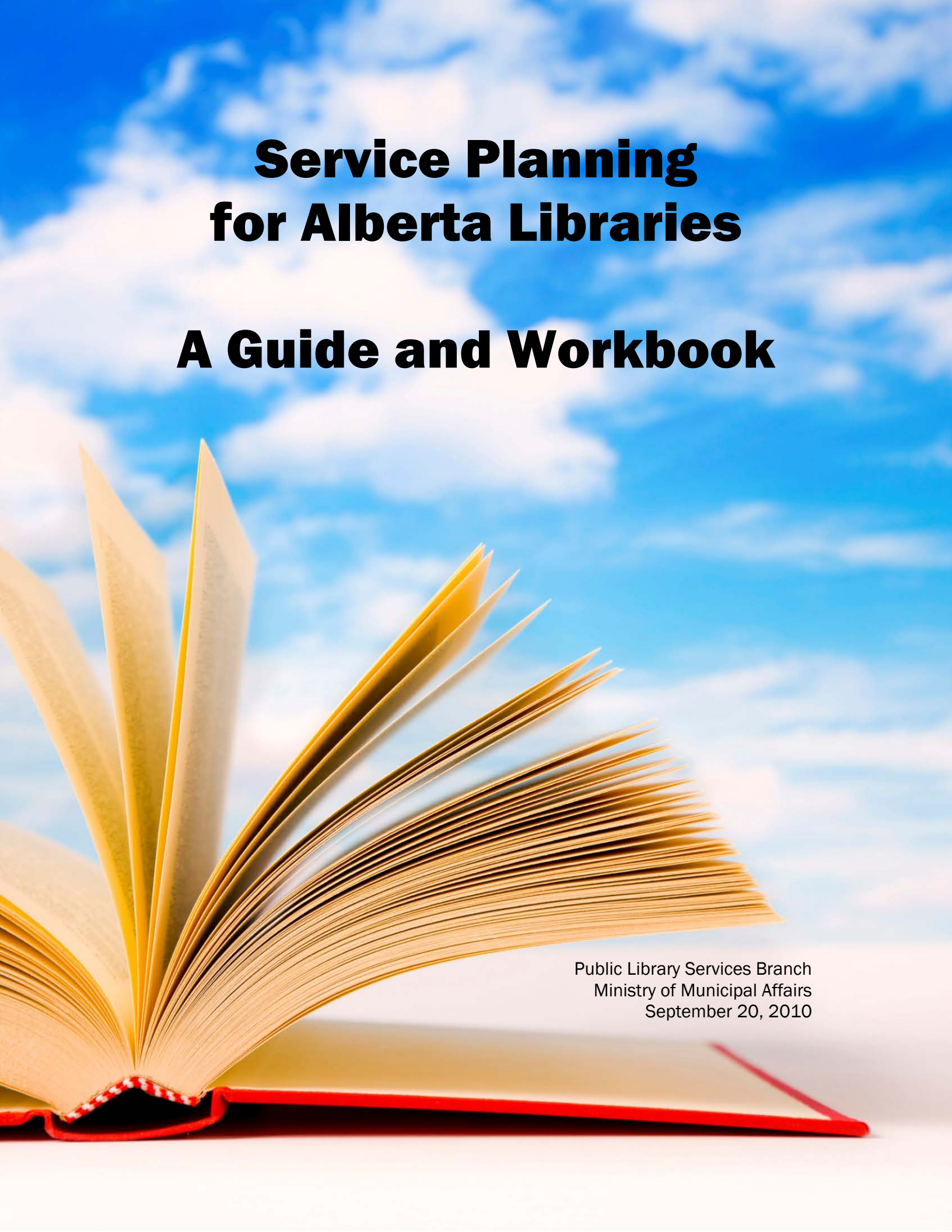


# **Service Planning for Alberta Libraries**

## **A Guide and Workbook**



Public Library Services Branch  
Ministry of Municipal Affairs  
September 20, 2010

## **Welcome to Service Planning for your library!**

Dear Alberta public library trustee, manager or staff member,

This is a guide to planning for Alberta public libraries. It is based on the book *Strategic Planning for Results* by Sandra Nelson.<sup>1</sup>

The Planning for Results approach described here is recommended to Alberta libraries for the following reasons:

- It is an industry-standard best practice. It is endorsed by the Public Library Association, which is associated with the Canadian Library Association and the American Library Association.
- It is appropriately focused on community needs. Libraries must respond to their customers rather than their internal needs and institutional world view. Planning for Results puts community needs in the driver's seat.
- It is designed for libraries. Other strategic planning guides are generic and don't address the situation and politics of public libraries.
- It is easy to follow. All the steps, down to specific meeting agendas, are defined. Libraries just need to follow the process.
- It fits legal requirements. Alberta libraries are required to provide specific planning documents to the government to receive funding. The Planning for Results process defined here will ensure those requirements are met.

This guide is a simplified and condensed version of the Planning for Results process. It has been made as simple and easy to follow as possible.

This guide and a planning toolkit is available at [www.albertalibraries.ca](http://www.albertalibraries.ca). You can also contact us to learn about the support that is available to you.

Good luck and we look forward to working with you.

Public Library Services Branch  
Alberta Municipal Affairs  
[www.albertalibraries.ca](http://www.albertalibraries.ca)

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<sup>1</sup> Nelson, S. (2008). *Strategic Planning for Results*. Chicago: American Library Association.

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## Introduction

### **How to use this workbook and do planning:**

- Learn about Strategic Planning for Results from this workbook and other sources such as training that is available to Alberta libraries and the book *Strategic Planning for Results*.
- Follow the steps and use the templates in this workbook.
- Contact your library system and the Public Library Services Branch of Municipal Affairs for more information and assistance.

### **The Planning for Results approach in a nutshell:**

- Start with community needs;
- Determine which needs can be met by the library;
- Pick library service responses that meet those needs;
- Write goals and objectives that put the service responses into action.

### **Legal requirements**

The Libraries Regulation, AR141/98 states

**13(1)** In managing and controlling a municipal library, a municipal board or intermunicipal library board shall

a) Within 3 years of being established, develop and file with the Minister a plan of service with a mission statement and goals and objectives based on a needs assessment of the municipality or municipalities served by the board, and

b) Annually review its plan of service.

**(2)** A municipal board or intermunicipal library board shall file with the Minister a copy of its current plan of service with goals and objectives not less frequently than every 5 years following the date on which the plan was previously filed with the Minister.

To summarize, libraries are legally obligated to produce a plan of service based on a community needs assessment. The process explained in this binder will result in a plan that meets these legal requirements.

## **How Strategic Planning for Results works**

Strategic Planning for Results is a way to look at your community's needs and pick library services that meet those needs.

The process goes as follows:

- The library board decides to do planning and develops a plan for doing so.
- The library picks leaders from outside the library to be on a Community Planning Committee (CPC).
- The CPC studies the community and creates a description of the community as it is, a vision for its future, and list of community needs.
- The CPC reviews the library as it is and a list of Library Service Responses describing the range of services that public libraries in Canada deliver. (There are 18 defined service responses and they capture at a high level the full range of things that public libraries normally do.) A short list of service responses that meet the local community's needs are selected by the CPC.
- The library board and staff review the findings and recommendations of the CPC and consider the implications of implementing the selected service responses including what it would take to do them and how existing services would be impacted by the change (particularly which services would be downsized or phased out.) The results are communicated to the CPC.
- The CPC considers the library's input and produces their final recommendations.
- The library board approves the final list of service responses.
- "Goals" and "objectives" are created that specifically describe how the generic service responses will be delivered by the library. (Goals are community benefits, and objectives are measurable steps towards goals.)
- The library prepares for organizational change.
- The plan is written and approved.

All these steps are laid out in 6 sections of this workbook:

1. Plan to Plan
2. Identify Service Priorities
3. Set the Stage
4. Describe the Future
5. Communicate the Plan
6. Additional Information

# 1

## Plan to Plan

### **Description**

During this stage you will prepare for planning by defining what you are going to do, who is going to do it and when it will be done.

### **Results**

The following should be done during this stage:

- A “plan for planning” should be written that everyone involved knows about and understands. The plan should include
  - a calendar with meeting dates and deadlines
  - a task list showing what needs to be done and who will do it
  - a communication plan.
- The planning initiative should be approved by the Board.
- The Community Planning Committee should be selected and recruited.
- A staff orientation meeting should be held.

### **Roles**

The library Board, manager and staff participate in this stage.

It is useful to designate a person to be the Planning Co-ordinator – this will be the person who monitors activities and progress, organizes things, collects information and makes sure everything happens. This could be a board member or library manager or this role could be delegated to an external consultant or staff member

### **To Do List**

- Train Board in Strategic Planning for Results
- Write Plan for Planning including calendar, task list and communication plan
- Approve plan (Board)
- Appoint a Planning Coordinator
- Find a facilitator for Community Planning Committee meetings
- Hold staff orientation meeting
- Recruit Community Planning Committee members

## **Training**

Training in Strategic Planning for Results for your library board, manager and perhaps some staff is a smart way to begin your planning initiative. Training is available from the Public Library Services Branch, from library system consultants or from other Alberta library professionals. Contact the Public Library Services branch for more information.

## **Plan for Planning**

If you don't have a plan, you can't expect results. You can document all parts of your plan including objectives, justification and budget, but at minimum you should put the following in writing:

- A calendar with meeting dates, due dates and the time ranges when different activities will occur. A good way to do your calendar is to start with the two CPC committee meetings and build other dates around them.
- A task list that shows who is responsible for doing what.
- A communication plan.

There are templates at the end of this section to assist you in creating these documents.

## **Community Planning Committee selection**

The Community Planning Committee (CPC) is a group of community leaders, from outside the library, who will analyze the community's needs and recommend library service responses. The commitment is to attend 2 full-day meetings.

You should identify potential CPC members who represent different community groups that you want to reach out to. CPC members can represent different groups, e.g. one member could represent both homeschoolers and small business owners.

Your CPC should not be much bigger than a dozen members or so. Prioritize your list of potential members and stop when you have recruited enough.

Set the dates of your CPC meeting dates before you recruit members, and if a person can't make the meetings move on to the next prospect. It is too difficult to try and juggle dates with many busy people. Set the dates for several weeks after you will be phoning prospects to increase people's availability.

You will need a skilled facilitator for the CPC meetings. Contact the Public Library Services Branch if you need assistance finding a facilitator.

There is a template at the end of this section to assist you in selecting CPC members.

**Communication Plan**  
**[Library Name] Planning Project**

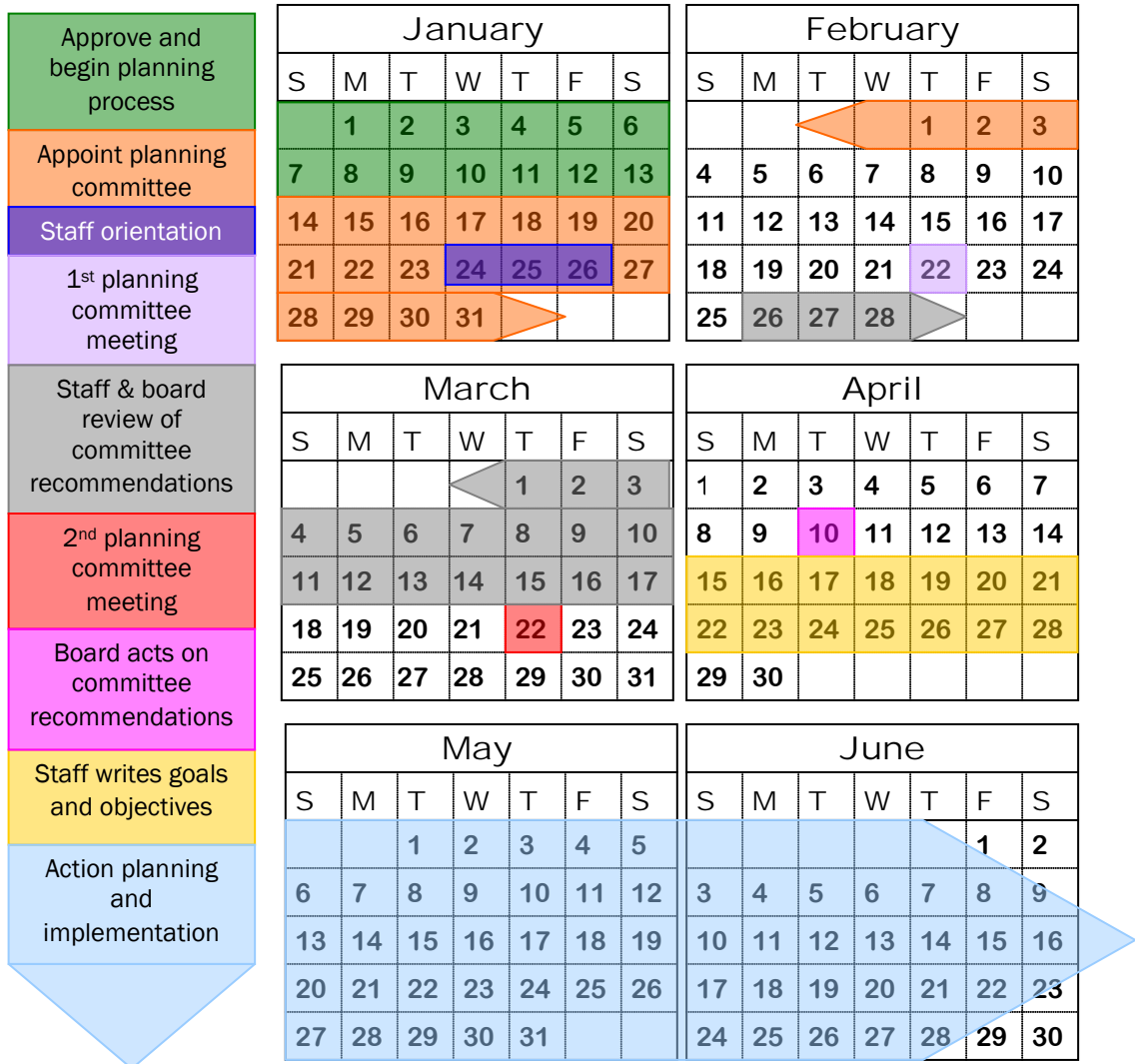
**Stage 1: Plan to Plan**

	<b>Why do they need to know about this step?</b>	<b>What do they know now?</b>	<b>What will they need to know?</b>	<b>When do they need to know it?</b>	<b>How will they be informed ?</b>	<b>Who will be responsible for informing them?</b>
<b>Board</b>	[Need to formally approve plan]	[Initial and draft plans]	[Final plan]	[Before board meeting]	[Reports on project in board meeting package]	[Library manager]
<b>Library manager</b>	[Will be responsible and involved]	[Know about initiative]	[Board's thoughts on plan]	[At board meeting]	[Via discussion]	[n/a]
<b>Library staff</b>	[Will be involved and affected]	[Have heard through the grapevine about initiative]	[The formal plan and what impact it will have on them, their role in process]	[Before board approves a finalized project plan]	[All staff email; half day meeting]	[Library manager]
<b>Community Planning Committee members</b>	[They don't]	[Nothing]	[Nothing]	[N/A]	[N/A]	[N/A]
<b>Public</b>	[They don't]	[Nothing]	[Nothing]	[N/A]	[N/A]	[N/A]

Repeat for stages 2-5



**Calendar**  
**[Library Name] Planning Project**



**Task List**  
**[Library Name] Planning Project**

<b>Task</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
[Coordinate project, monitor progress, report issues to Board]	[Library manager]	[Jan on]
[Write project plan]	[Manager]	[Jan 5]
[Finalize and approve plan]	[Board]	[Jan 9]
[Organize staff meeting]	[Manager]	[Jan 16]
[Build prioritized list of CPC members]	[Board]	[Jan 16]
[Recruit CPC members]	[Board]	[Feb 2]
[Prepare and mail CPC information packets]	[Manager]	[Feb 9]
[Organize CPC meeting 1]	[Manager]	[Feb 16]
[Facilitate CPC meeting 1 and document results]	[Facilitator - TBD]	[Feb 23]
[Organize staff review of CPC findings]	[Manager]	[Mar 2]
[Report to Board on staff reaction to CPC]	[Manager]	[Mar 5]
[Review CPC findings and staff reaction, write response to CPC]	[Board]	[Mar 16]
[Organize CPC meeting 2]	[Manager]	[Mar 16]
[Facilitate CPC meeting 2 and document results]	[Facilitator - TBD]	[Mar 23]
[Review CPC final recommendations and findings, finalize library Service Responses]	[Board]	[Apr 10]
[Write Goals and Objectives based on Service Responses and CPC findings]	[Manager and staff]	[Apr 28]
[Write draft plan]	[Manager]	[May 4]
[Finalize and approve plan]	[Board]	[May 8]
[Send copy of plan and thank you to CPC members]	[Board]	[May 25]
[Send press release on plan results to media]	[Manager]	[May 25]
[Put plan on website]	[Manager]	[May 25]
[Implement plan]	[Board, Manager, Staff]	[May on]

# 2

## Identify Service Priorities

### **Description**

During this stage the Community Planning Committee (CPC) will analyze the community's needs, and together with staff and Board will pick library Service Responses that meet those needs.

The CPC will make preliminary recommendations after a first meeting, then final recommendations after some back and forth communication with the library. The Board then finalizes the library's Service Responses.

### **Results**

The following should be done during this stage:

- CPC has a first meeting in which it defines community needs and picks library Service Responses.
- Staff and Board review selected Service Responses.
- CPC has a second meeting to consider information provided by library and make final recommendations on Service Responses.
- Board finalizes library Service Responses.

### **Roles**

The CPC Committee, the Board and staff are active during this stage. The CPC committee determines the community needs, and together with the Board selects the Service Responses that the library will focus on. The Board and Staff inform the CPC of the implications of taking on the Service Responses that the CPC is considering.

### **To Do List**

- Organize CPC meetings #1 and #2: confirm attendance of committee and facilitator; arrange venue, food, coffee, snacks; arrange materials (projector, flip charts etc) in consultation with facilitator
- Send CPC members an information package before meeting #1
- Hold CPC meeting #1, document results and send to Board
- Share CPC findings with staff, document staff input and send to Board
- Send CPC members a report/reaction from the Board before meeting #2
- Hold CPC meeting #2, document results and send to Board
- Finalize library's chosen Service Responses

## **Service Responses: Introduction**

Service Responses are descriptions of services that a public library might offer its community. There are 18 predefined Service Responses that capture at a strategic level all the services that a public library would typically offer.

What is the value of the Service Responses? Why put these titles on the services your library provides? The Service Responses provide the following benefits:

- They let your Community Planning Committee and your library know everything that modern public libraries typically do. This lets you pick and prioritize from the full range of possible services, not just what you are familiar with.
- By picking a small number of Service Responses as priorities for your library, you focus on doing a few things well that your community really needs, instead of doing a lot of things not so well that your community might not really need.
- Service Responses are named and described in a visionary, appealing way that helps inspire your funders and customers. If you describe what you do in the language of Service Responses, you are more likely to appeal to non-library people than if you use library language.
- The full Service Responses include a lot of useful information that helps a library implement services effectively. For example, they include descriptions of what technology, collections and staff skills are required to support the service.

The 18 Service Responses are all appealing and valuable, and it is tempting to pick a large number of them for your library because they sound like great things to do. This is a mistake. Even the largest libraries cannot do everything well, and smaller libraries can only excel at a few things. Pick Service Responses to fill identified community needs, and limit yourself to a few (perhaps three or four for a town library).

Your selected Service Responses will become the library's priorities during the life of your plan. Resources should be allocated to support and grow these service priorities. In a world of static funding, this means that resources need to be reallocated from lower priority services and activities. When considering new initiatives, a first question should be "Does this new thing support the service priorities defined by our choice of Service Responses?"

## Library Service Responses

These describe at a high level the varied services that public libraries as a whole deliver in response to community needs.

1. **Be an Informed Citizen: Local, National and World Affairs** – Residents will have the information they need to support and promote democracy, to fulfill their civic responsibilities at the local, provincial and national levels, and to fully participate in community decision making.
2. **Build Successful Enterprises: Business and Nonprofit Support** – Business owners and nonprofit organization directors and their managers will have the resources they need to develop and maintain strong, viable organizations.
3. **Celebrate Diversity: Cultural Awareness** – Residents will have programs and services that promote appreciation and understanding of their personal heritage and the heritage of others in the community.
4. **Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access** – Residents will have high speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.
5. **Create Young Readers: Early Literacy** – Children from birth to 5 will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write and listen.
6. **Discover Your Roots: Genealogy and Local History** – Residents and visitors will have the resources they need to connect the past with the present through their family histories and to understand the history and traditions of the community.
7. **Express Creativity: Create and Share Content** – Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment.
8. **Get Facts Fast: Ready Reference** – Residents will have someone to answer their questions on a wide array of topics of personal interest.
9. **Know Your Community: Community Resources and Services** – Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.
10. **Learn to Read and Write: Adult, Teen and Family Literacy** – Adults and teens will have the support they need to improve their literacy skills in order to meet their personal goals and fulfill their responsibilities as parents, citizens and workers.
11. **Make Career Choices: Job and Career Development** – Adults and teens will have the skills and resources they need to identify career opportunities that suit their individual strengths and interests.
12. **Make Informed Decisions: Health, Wealth and Other Life Choices** – Residents will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.
13. **Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning** – Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.
14. **Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing and Listening for Pleasure** – Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options.
15. **Succeed in School: Homework Help** – Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.
16. **Understand How to Find, Evaluate and Use Information: Information Fluency** – Residents will know when they need information to resolve an issue or answer a question and will have the skills to search for, locate, evaluate and effectively use information to meet their needs.
17. **Visit a Comfortable Place: Physical and Virtual Spaces** – Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking.
18. **Welcome to Canada: Services for New Immigrants** – New immigrants and refugees will have information on citizenship, English/French language learning, employment, public schooling, health and safety, available social services and any other topics that they need to participate successfully in Canadian life.

## **The First CPC Meeting**

The first CPC meeting is 5 hours long and typically includes either lunch or dinner. The CPC committee should attend along with the library manager and a board member

A skilled facilitator is crucial for the success of this meeting: it is a long meeting with an ambitious agenda that requires consensus from a group that has not met before.

The CPC should receive an information package before this meeting, including any community information that will be useful to their work (e.g. municipal plan, community demographic information).

The first meeting will cover the following items:

- Introduction and Orientation to Strategic Planning for Results process
  - Introductions
  - Review of information package
  - Review of Strategic Planning for Results
- Defining ideal state of community via vision statements
- Defining current conditions in the community
  - SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/Opportunities/Threats) analysis
- Determining community needs
  - Gap Analysis: gap between current conditions and future vision
- Review of the current state of the library (presentation by library manager)
  - Demographics of library users: % of community, ages etc.
  - Visitor count, circulation, program attendance statistics
  - Description of programs, services and collections
  - Description of facilities, number of staff and position types
  - Budget information
  - Awards or honours
- Introduction of Service Responses
- Selection of recommended Service Responses to meet community needs
  - Shortlisting of community needs that library can meet (needs decision tree)
  - Selection of Service Responses

A participants' meeting agenda and a facilitator's agenda are included at the end of this section.

After the meeting, someone (probably the facilitator or planning coordinator) should prepare a report that summarizes the work and decisions of the committee, including the vision statements, SWOT analysis results, community needs and selected service responses. This report should be sent to the CPC members and the Board, and the results should be shared with library staff.

## **Staff and Board Reaction to the CPC's Report**

It is important that staff react to the CPC's initial report, both to increase their ownership and acceptance of the final plan and also to contribute their knowledge. The Board also needs to react to the CPC, which is serving in an advisory capacity to the Board who will make final decisions.

The library manager should set up channels for staff to contribute their thoughts, perhaps including meetings, blogs or discussion boards with room for entry of comments and email threads. Meetings may have to be structured and facilitated to allow the orderly gathering of everyone's input.

Staff and Board input should include evaluation of the recommended service responses and the service responses that were not prioritized; the implications of the recommended service responses on existing services; consideration of what could or would be discontinued to enable new services; how to reallocate resources; and other advice the staff wants to communicate to the committee.

SWOT analysis of each recommended Service Response is a very good way to identify how ready the library is to deliver that service, what challenges and benefits await and how appropriate the library finds that service.

Staff and Board's reaction to the CPC's initial work can be communicated to the CPC via a report and presentation given to the CPC at the beginning of their second meeting.

## **The Second CPC Meeting**

Like the first, the second CPC meeting is five hours long, includes a meal and requires a facilitator.

The second meeting will cover the following items:

- Review of first meeting and selected Service Responses
- Committee members' thoughts since first meeting
- Effect of Preliminary Service Responses on library (i.e. staff and board reaction)
- Discussion and selection of final service response recommendations

The facilitator or planning coordinator should summarize the CPC findings in a report to the Board. The CPC's work is complete after the second meeting.

## **Board Finalization of Service Responses**

Upon receiving the final report of the CPC committee, the Board should finalize the library's Service Responses by accepting the CPC's recommendations or adjusting them if necessary.

## **AGENDA**

First meeting of the [Library Name] Community Planning Committee  
[Date] 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

### Meeting Objectives

- Participants will understand the roles and responsibilities of all participants in the Planning for Results process
- Participants will describe the ideal future for [community name]
- Participants will identify the current strengths and weaknesses of [community name] and potential opportunities or threats that might affect achievement of ideal future
- Participants will identify community needs that must be addressed to reach the ideal future of the community
- Participants will develop an understanding of library as it currently is
- Participants will make a preliminary selection of future library service priorities

### Meeting Agenda

10:00	Introduction to Planning for Results Defining the Ideal Future: Vision Statement Review of current community situation: SWOT analysis
12:00	Lunch
12:30	Determining Community Needs Review of library as it currently is Introduction of Library Service Responses Preliminary selection of future service responses for [library name]
3:00	Adjourn



## **FACILITATORS' AGENDA**

First meeting of the [Library Name] Community Planning Committee  
[Date] 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

### Meeting Objectives

- Participants will understand the roles and responsibilities in Planning for Results process
- Participants will describe the ideal future for [community name]
- Participants will identify the current strengths and weaknesses of [community name] and potential opportunities or threats that might affect achievement of ideal future
- Participants will identify needs that must be addressed to reach the ideal future of the community
- Participants will develop an understanding of library as it currently is
- Participants will make a preliminary selection of future library service priorities

### Meeting Agenda

10:00	Call to order Introductions (all)
10:15	Planning for Results: Presentation by Facilitator Handout: Planning for Results Handout: Planning Responsibilities Handout: Planning Timeline (library's planning calendar)
10:30	Defining the Ideal Future: Vision Statement – small groups and round-robin reporting Handout: Demographic Data in Committee Information Packet Handout: Community Vision Workform
11:45	Review of current community situation: SWOT analysis – small groups Handout: Community SWOT Analysis Workform
12:00	Working Lunch served – round-robin reporting from SWOT analysis
1:00	Determining Community Needs Handout: Needs Decision Tree
1:15	Review of library as it currently is: Library manager's presentation Handout: Library data in committee information packet PowerPoint presentation
1:45	Introduction of Library Service Responses – Presentation by Facilitator Handout: Service Responses
2:15	Identify Preliminary Service Responses – Group
3:00	Adjourn

## **Community Planning Committee Meeting #1 Handout: Planning for Results and Planning Responsibilities**

### Planning for Results is a planning process developed for libraries.

- It is community-based. It begins by asking key community stakeholders to define a vision for the community serviced by the library and to identify what needs to happen to reach that vision. Community needs provide the framework to selecting library services that meet real needs and contribute to achieving the community vision.
- It includes eighteen library Service Responses that capture the range of services that libraries typically offer. A library selects a limited number of Service Responses that fill community needs; these become the library's service priorities.
- There is a strong emphasis on measurement and evaluation, including
  - Number of people who use a service or program
  - Users' perceptions of the service or program
  - The difference services and programs make in individual user's knowledge, skill, attitude, behaviour or condition
  - The number of units of library service delivered (circulation, number of programs presented, etc.)
- It includes strategies for managing change. Altering established services and ways of doing things can be difficult and risky for an organization. Preparing for change and transformation is part of this process as it should be for any planning initiative.

### Planning Responsibilities:

- The Community Planning Committee, the library board and library staff all play a role in Planning for Results.
- The Community Planning Committee is most active at the beginning, assessing community needs and selecting library service responses that meet community needs.
- The library board and staff are most active later in the process, selecting service responses and picking goals and objectives that put the service responses into action.

**Community Planning Committee Meeting #1 Handout:  
Community Vision Workform**

Instructions:

Picture your community ten years from now. Imagine that your community and its people have been successful beyond belief. Your community is a place everyone is proud to call home. Now describe what makes it so wonderful. What benefits do people receive from living here? Why do people value those benefits? Think about children, teens, adults and seniors. Consider different educational levels, incomes, ethnicities, religious groups, lengths of residence, professions, etc. List the benefits and results that different groups receive in this ideal future version of your community.

Group	Benefits and Results of living in ideal community
[Children]	[Will receive the education they need to secure employment that provides a living wage.]

**Community Planning Committee Meeting #1 Handout:  
Community SWOT Analysis Workform**

Instructions:

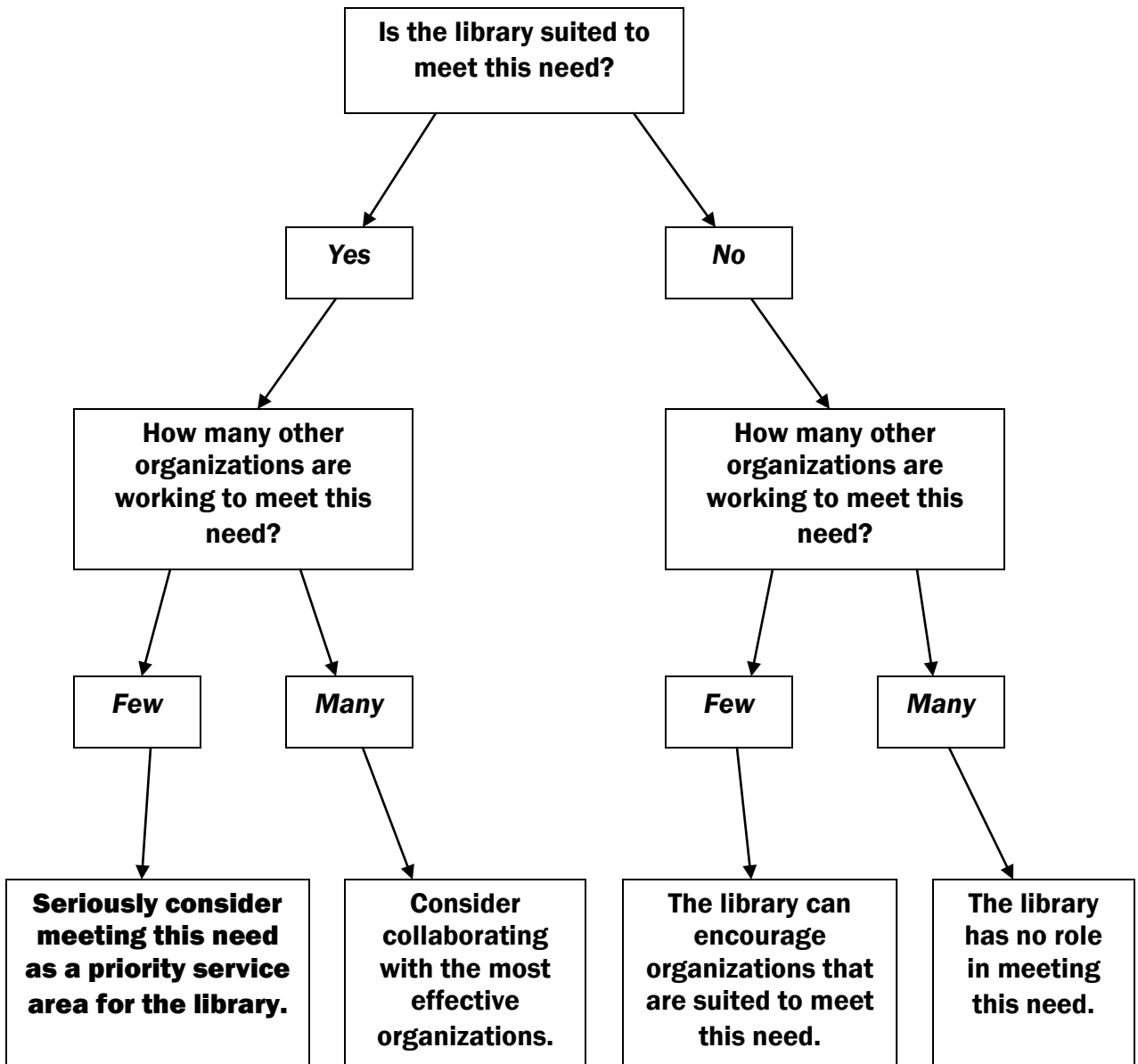
Use this form to record the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that will affect your community's ability to achieve the vision statements you have identified.

<b>A – Support achieving the vision</b>	<b>B – Obstruct achieving of vision</b>
<p>A1 – Community Strengths (Record the current conditions in the community that support achievement of the vision.)</p>	<p>B1 – Community Weaknesses (Record the current conditions in the community that will obstruct achievement of vision.)</p>
<p>A2 – External Opportunities (Record the conditions outside the community that support achievement of the vision, now or in the future.)</p>	<p>B2 – External Threats (Record the conditions outside the community that will obstruct achievement of the vision now or in the future.)</p>

Community Planning Committee Meeting #1 Handout:

Needs Decision Tree

Instructions: Take each identified community need and run it through the Needs Decision Tree to see if the library should play a part in meeting the need.



**Community Planning Meeting #1 Handout:**

Picking Library Services That Meet Community Needs

<b>Community Need</b> <i>Start with an identified community need.</i>	<b>Service Response</b> <i>What service response(s) meet the need?</i>	<b>Library Activities</b> <i>What things would the library do to meet the need?</i>	<b>Priority</b> <i>1 (low) to 10 (high)</i>	<b>Comments</b> <i>Other things the library should consider, e.g. potential partners</i>

## **AGENDA**

Second meeting of the [Library Name] Community Planning Committee  
[Date] 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

### Meeting Objectives

- Participants will discuss the preliminary service responses selected during the first meeting
- Participants will learn how the adoption of the preliminary service responses would affect current library services and resource allocation
- Participants will make final selection of library service responses to recommend to the library board
- Participants will identify potential target audiences for each service response

### Meeting Agenda

10:00	Where are we now: review of first meeting Thoughts since meeting 1 The effect of the preliminary Service Responses on the library
12:00	Lunch
12:30	Further discussion of Service Responses Selection of final Service Responses in priority order What's Next?
3:00	Adjourn

## **FACILITATORS' AGENDA**

Second meeting of the [Library Name] Community Planning Committee  
[Date] 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM

### Meeting Objectives

- Participants will discuss the preliminary service responses selected during the first meeting
- Participants will learn how the adoption of the preliminary service responses would affect current library services and resource allocation
- Participants will make final selection of library service responses to recommend to the library board
- Participants will identify potential target audiences for each service response

### Meeting Agenda

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| 10:00 | Call to order<br>Thoughts since Meeting 1 (round-robin discussion)  |
| 10:30 | Effects of preliminary Service Responses on library – presentation by library manager<br>Handout: Report from library board and staff<br>Including SWOT analysis of each preliminary service response |
| 12:00 | Lunch served  |
| 12:30 | Further discussion of Service Responses (group discussion)  |
| 1:00  | Selection of final Service Responses in priority order (consensus/voting process<br>Led by facilitator)   |
| 3:00  | Adjourn (early adjournment likely)  |



# 3 Set the Stage

## **Description**

During this stage the library prepares for the changes that must accompany implementation of a new plan. Change is stressful and the difficulties of change must be confronted to minimize the risk of failures. This is often referred to as “Change Management”. It can begin at the same time stage 2 is occurring.

The other action in “Set the Stage” is to consider the library’s mission statement and any other vision statements such as values. This should be done after stage 2 is complete – the library’s service Responses should drive and influence the mission statement and vision, not the other way around.

## **Results**

The following should be done during this stage:

- The library staff should be consulted about their thoughts on the library, the planning process and upcoming changes.
- Library managers and supervisors should judge how ready the library is for change.
- Plans to create a positive environment for change should be developed including training for key staff in how to support and implement change.
- The communication plan should be reviewed.

## **Roles**

The library management and staff are primarily involved in this stage.

## **To Do List**

- Consult with staff about the library and the planning process.
- Hold meeting with library management and supervisors to discuss organizational environment and plan for positive change.
- Review communication plan.
- Hold training meeting with library supervisors and key staff to discuss how to support change.
- Form ad hoc team and hold meeting to update or create mission statement.
- Report results to library board.

## **Building Readiness for Change**

A new plan should involve changes to a library's service and to what library staff do while working. Changes of this sort are stressful, difficult and risky. You need to put time and effort into preparing your library and building readiness for change.

It is hard to say exactly what your library should do because it depends a lot on your local organizational culture and situation. In general terms, you should begin with an assessment of how ready the organization is for change today. This will help identify the specific challenges you need to deal with.

To assess readiness for change, staff attitudes should be determined. This can be done via a survey or a staff meeting that seeks answers to the following questions:

- How satisfied are staff with their jobs, the library, and the service delivered to the community
- How open are staff to changing things? Do they accept that change is necessary? Are they worried about change?
- What is required to make them accept change?
- What do they think is required to make change successful?

The same questions should be asked of managers and supervisors.

If this is done in a meeting, these meetings should be facilitated by someone who will ask the questions, guide the discussion and capture what is said.

To build readiness for change, the results of the previous discussion should be considered and ideas to deal with the identified challenges should be put in to practice. Some actions that will help meet typical challenges are:

- Communicate with staff about what is happening, sell them on the plan and involve them in the process.
- Listen to staff concerns and respond to them (without abandoning changes and improvements that your community deserves).
- Let staff know when decisions have been made and what exactly they need to do to support changes.
- Develop new procedures and train staff where necessary.
- Support staff as they deal with changes.

### Richard Beckhard's Formula for Change:

Dissatisfaction with the status quo, a vision for the future and concrete first steps towards the vision must all be present and outweigh resistance in order for meaningful change to occur.

### PCI change management model:

Change depends on a strong justification; people engaged; leadership from the top; understanding and commitment of middle level staff; personal connection and behaviour change in front line staff; and sensitive support of people as they learn to adapt.

## **Review the Communication Plan**

Communication is critical and you should ensure your communication plan includes everything your staff needs to learn about, accept, internalize and implement change.

## **Consider the library's Mission Statement**

The Planning for Results process does not emphasize mission statements or other vision statements. However, Alberta libraries are required by legislation to include a mission statement in the Plan of Service they file with the provincial government.

The mission statement should flow from the community needs and service responses of the library. It should summarize what the library does for the community

Since the mission statement simply summarizes the decisions that were made during service response selection, it can be quickly developed by a small ad hoc working team. If organizational culture and sensitivities require staff presence on the team, a staff member can be included. The team should meet once and develop a mission statement during the meeting.

## AGENDA

[Library name] Staff Meeting

[Date] [Time]

### Meeting Objectives:

To assess the library's readiness for possible changes to services by asking staff for their thoughts and opinions.

### Meeting Agenda:

- 10:00            Update on Planning for Results initiative (library manager)
- 10:15            Guided discussion:  
                  What are your thoughts and opinions on the library as it is today?  
                                  Services offered to community  
                                  Efficiency of operations  
                                  Organizational culture  
                  What are your thoughts on possible changes?  
                                  Is change necessary/appropriate/acceptable?  
                                  Is the library prepared for change?  
                                  What concerns/fears/reservations about change do you have?  
                                  What does the library need to do to prepare for change?
- 12:00            Lunch

## FACILITATOR'S AGENDA

[Library name] Staff Meeting

[Date] [Time]

### Meeting Objectives:

To assess the library's readiness for possible changes to services by asking staff for their thoughts and opinions.

### Meeting Agenda:

- 10:00            Update on Planning for Results initiative (presentation by library manager)
- 10:15            Guided discussion: Flipchart recording of questions and answers  
                  What are your thoughts and opinions on the library as it is today?  
                                  Services offered to community  
                                  Efficiency of operations  
                                  Organizational culture  
                  What are your thoughts on possible changes?  
                                  Is change necessary/appropriate/acceptable?  
                                  Is the library prepared for change?  
                                  What concerns/fears/reservations about change do you have?  
                                  What does the library need to do to prepare for change?
- 12:00            Lunch (brought in by library)

# 4

## Describe the Future

### **Description**

During this stage you will consider how to implement your selected Service Responses. You will write goals and objectives that put the responses into action, determine how to measure progress and work with library units on priorities.

### **Results**

The following should be done during this stage:

- Write and prioritize Goals and Objectives that define how the library will implement the selected Service Responses.

### **Roles**

The library management and staff are primarily involved at this stage.

### **To Do List**

- Define the group that will work on writing goals and objectives, and the role that other staff will have.
- Hold staff meetings to consult on goals and objectives.
- Finalize goals and objectives.
- Prioritize goals and objectives with staff in library units.
- Communicate results to board.

## Goals and Objectives

In this planning process, goals and objectives have distinct definitions:

A *Goal* is the benefit your community (or a target population within your community) will receive from library service.

An *Objective* is the way the library will measure progress toward a goal.

In other words, a goal is something you are going to do for the community, stated in community-oriented terms, and an objective is the way you are going to do it, stated in library-oriented terms.

## How to Write Goals

Goals will be based on the service responses selected for your library. There will be one or more goals for each service response.

A goal should take the form of a sentence which includes the target audience being served, and the benefit that audience will receive. For example:

*Children will discover the joy of reading.*

Target audience	Benefit
-----------------	---------

You should consult the documentation that came from the Community Planning Committee when developing goals for selected service responses. The committee may have had specific target audiences and benefits in mind when they selected service responses.

There is no magic number of goals that a Plan of Service should include. Too few lacks ambition, and too many can't be done effectively. A half-dozen to dozen might be reasonable.

## How to Write Objectives

Objectives will be based on the goals developed above. There will be one or more objectives for each goal.

An objective should take the form of a sentence which includes a measure, a target and a time frame by which the target should be met. For example:

*Two hundred children will attend Mother Goose programs in 2011.*

Target	Measure	Time frame
--------	---------	------------

## **Types of measures**

A measure is a real-world result that says something about whether a goal is being reached, that can be observed and quantified. A measure can be expressed in some quantifiable way, often numerical. For example, the number of people entering the library could be used as a measure of library use.

Several types of measures can be used in your objectives:

Input measures involve things your library puts in to delivering library service. The number of books the library purchases, for example, is an input measure. Inputs are easy to accurately define, but they are somewhat disconnected from the benefits the community receives (for example, the number of books purchased is irrelevant if no one uses them.)

Output measures involve your community's use of the library. The number of books checked out, for example, is an output measure. Outputs are reasonably easy to define, and they are focused on the community's use of the library, so they are very good measures.

Outcome measures involve the changes that your library services create in the community. The increase in knowledge that book borrowers experience, for example, is an outcome measure. Outcomes are very powerful but they can be difficult to measure and measurements can be subjective. They are good measures if applicable.

## **Types of targets**

A target is the level you hope a measure will achieve. For example, 1000 visitors could be a target for the monthly total of library visitors.

You can use specific or relative targets. Specific targets (e.g. "1000 people will visit the library monthly" or "Library visits will increase by 5%") are good because they are defined and success (or the lack thereof) will be clear. However, if a specific target is not based on good evidence or analysis, it is somewhat arbitrary.

Relative targets (e.g. "More people will visit the library in 2011 than in 2010", or "People will be satisfied with library services") can be vague and difficult to evaluate. However, they might be appropriate in libraries which haven't done much measurement or evaluation in the past, as a first step towards more rigorous measurement and goal-setting.

**Goal Writing Worksheet**

Service Response: \_\_\_\_\_

Service Response Description: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Goal's target audience: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal vision statement (optional - freeform description of goal): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Benefit to target audience: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Goal:** (write as a sentence starting with the target audience, ending with the benefit they will receive)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**Objective Writing Worksheet**

Service Response: \_\_\_\_\_

Goal: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible measures:

1) \_\_\_\_\_

2) \_\_\_\_\_

3) \_\_\_\_\_

Selected measure: \_\_\_\_\_

Target: \_\_\_\_\_

Time frame: \_\_\_\_\_

**Objective:** (write as a sentence including time frame, the target and the measure)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# 5 Communicate the Plan

## **Description**

During this stage you will write the strategic plan / plan of service and communicate the plan.

## **Results**

The following should be done during this stage:

- Write the plan and obtain approval from the board.
- Develop a communication plan.

## **Roles**

The library management and staff are primarily active in this stage, with input from the board and the Community Planning Committee.

A single person takes primary responsibility for writing the plan.

## **To Do List**

- Pick a person to write the plan in consultation with others.
- Write the plan.
- Review plan with community planning committee, library director, managers and staff.
- Ensure plan meets provincial standards.
- Submit plan to board for approval.
- Define target audiences for communication.
- Develop a communication plan.
- Communicate with target audiences.

## **Who should write the plan?**

The strategic plan should be primarily written by one person. Others must be consulted heavily but it is difficult for a group to write a readable, compelling document that flows.

The writer should have strong editorial and writing skills, plus a willingness and ability to write and rewrite to build consensus. The project co-ordinator, library manager and library board members could all be candidates for the writing role.

Microsoft Word has a Track Changes feature (found under the Tools menu) which can be useful for group review. When Track Changes is turned on, all edits to a document appear in a different colour and deletions are shown in the margins. This allows reviewers to make changes that can be seen easily by others.

When multiple revisions are being made, it helps to clearly identify versions. This can be done by putting a version number or the revision date on the document. The electronic document name can include the revision number (e.g. "Strat Plan ver 0.1 Jan 5 2011") but remember to indicate the version on any printed documents that are distributed, by putting the document name in a header or by manually inserting the version number and date on the cover page before printing.

## **Provincial standards for library plans**

The Introduction to this workbook includes a short description of what your plan must include to satisfy provincial requirements. To summarize, each public library must submit a Plan of Service based on a community needs assessment that includes a mission statement, goals and objectives.

## **The communication plan**

The finished plan, and information about the plan, should be communicated to the target audiences that need to know about it.

A communication plan should be developed. This is a continuation of the communication plan that was developed for the initiative in step 1, Plan to Plan. The template from step 1 can be used again at this point.

When your plan is complete, you will likely want to send copies to your Community Planning Committee members, your municipality and to the Public Library Services Branch of Alberta Municipal Affairs. You will likely also want to put a copy on your website and announce the plan to your local media.

# 6 Additional Information

## **Description**

This section includes additional information, templates, sample plans and other resources that might be useful in your planning process.

## **Contacts**

The Public Library Services Branch supports planning efforts in Alberta public libraries. For information on services that are available to you, contact us at 780-427-4871.

Our website is at [http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/alberta\\_libraries](http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/alberta_libraries)

## Template for a basic library Plan of Service

Cover page: [Library name] Plan of Service  
[Date range covered by plan, eg. "2010-2012"]  
Approved by [library board name] [date approved]

Introduction:	Letter / introduction by board Chair Plan of Service purpose and process followed
Library profile	Description of library, history, present collection/circulation/use statistics, current programs and services, any significant conditions (e.g. changes to facilities expected, etc.)
Results of community input	Findings of CPC including community needs and selected library service responses
Mission statement	Mission statement
Goals and Objectives	Listing of goals and objectives
Conclusion	Final statements

**Phone Call Script  
Recruitment of Community Planning Committee Members  
(Provided by Lac La Biche County Library Board)**

Hello, this is [name of caller]. Today I'm calling on behalf of the [library name]. Every 3 – 5 years Library Boards are required by the Provincial Government to write a strategic plan. The provincial model invites members of our communities to contribute and actively participate in identifying the needs of our entire community. In turn this information will help us focus and identify and support those library services that we should focus on to support meeting community member identified needs.

Due to your history of community involvement, community knowledge and contribution, your name was suggested as a Community Planning Focus Group member. The commitment involves attending just two five hour sessions hosted by a facilitator on [date]. Participants are required to attend both planning sessions in order for the planning process to work.

Would you be willing to participate and assist us in this important process as we identify and plan for the many exciting opportunities for library services in our communities? Do you have any questions?

***{if they agree}*** Prior to the first meeting an information package will be circulated to help you to prepare. What address should we send any correspondence to and what phone number would you prefer we reach you at?

Please feel free to contact [library manager name] at [contact number] should you need to follow up with anyone on this project.