



## REPORT TO THE LONDON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

**MEETING DATE: May 21, 2008**

Session:	Public Session
Subject:	Library Mobile - Update
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Presented By:	Susanna Hubbard Krimmer
Purpose of Report	For Receipt and Information Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that this report be received.

### ISSUE/OPPORTUNITY

This summer London Public Library will be on the move ... literally. From June 1 through to the end of October, with an evaluation period to be completed in November, LPL will pilot a "Library Mobile".

The vision for the "Library Mobile" is to support library community engagement and development by improving the nature and status of outreach services. The "Library Mobile" will travel throughout the city to reach out to children, youth, adults, and seniors - our library customers and non-users - in neighbourhoods across the City of London. The "Library Mobile" will also participate in city-wide festivals, events and activities with a focus of bringing the **LPL Value Promise** into the community.

### BACKGROUND

For many years, library bookmobiles of all types and sizes have provided people with library services. Bookmobiles have often been used to serve communities that do not have ready access to a library. For many years, LPL did provide a bookmobile service. Research shows that numerous libraries across Canada and the United States still offer well-used bookmobile services. The exciting news is that the use of information technology - computers, Internet, wireless access, digitized content, cell phones, etc. - has had a profound impact on the services available to bookmobile customers.

### PILOT PROJECT

In February 2008, in alignment with the **London Public Library Strategic Plan**, the Library approved the **2008 BSC Project Priorities** including a feasibility plan for a "Library Mobile". In March, a "Library Mobile" BSC Project Team, consisting of Julie Brandl, Delilah Deane Cummings, Anna Dundas, Mary McEwen, Maria Forte, Jennifer Hesse, Lindsay Holdsworth, Lynda Kirkham, Margaret Maciejewski, Kevin Moore, Brian Rhoden, Arlene Thompson, Beth Whitney, Terry Wilkes, Lindsay Sage and Susanna Hubbard Krimmer, created a service vision and developed the framework for the pilot project.

The "Library Mobile" will move away from a strong emphasis on traditional service delivery streams (such as collections and lending). For example, we will increase our capacity to meet literacy and learning needs using new technologies and services on board. In addition to its community outreach function, the "Library Mobile" will be used as a marketing vehicle in conjunction with some special promotional efforts, i.e. a community-wide "Get Carded" recruitment campaign during Ontario Public Library Week.

Kevin Moore, in his role as Community Outreach & Program Services Librarian, has been assigned as the project leader and will lead the group in developing:

- Outreach priorities for the pilot phase including target neighbourhoods and audiences, support to key service initiatives, venues such as festivals, events, etc.;
- A Service Delivery Model (Reference, Referral and Reader Services; Collections and Lending; Technology; Programming and Outreach Service delivery);
- An operational plan including staffing levels, volunteer support, on-board furniture, equipment and resources;
- A communications plan including publicity and promotion; and
- Project evaluation methodology and metrics to test progress, results and success.

## **FUNDING**

The pilot project is being resourced using existing library resources and through fund development, for instance:

- A vehicle already owned by the library is being outfitted with minor enhancements, such as a retractable awning.
- Staffing is being funded from a recent bequest donated to support public service.
- Three laptops have been donated by IBM.
- Additional fund development opportunities in the way of advertising are being explored to offset the cost of the service. We have applied for a LIBRO Community Builder grant to aid in the cost-covering effort but will not hear of the results of this highly competitive grant program until late June.

## **MARKETING AND DEVELOPMENT**

In order to maximize the impact of the LPL message and presence in the community through the "Library Mobile", the vehicle will be fully screened with LPL branding and advertising, as well as partner advertising, i.e. IBM logos. The "Library Mobile" will also be given a distinct name and brand (under development) in order to create positive buzz for its presence at community events. We will feature LPL merchandise for sale on the "Library Mobile", as well as giveaways tailored to the specific needs of our outdoor audience.

A media launch event will be done in the Rotary Reading Garden in June (date to be determined) and subsequent "on location" updates will be sent to the local media bi-weekly. We are also exploring the feasibility of having an ongoing video blog on our website to both promote upcoming mobile library activities and locations, and to feature exciting and fun events from the project.

## **ASSESSMENT OF PILOT PROJECT**

Staff will report on the project and make recommendations for next steps based on the assessment of the success of the pilot and a business case, with costing, should ongoing service be deemed desirable and feasible. A report will be made to the Library Board on December 10, 2008.

