THIRD GENERATION PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Visionary Thinking and Service Development in Public Libraries (to 2020) and Potential Application in Ontario

Report for the Ontario Ministry of Culture

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ontario Ministry of Culture commissioned this report to assist with updating its policy framework for supporting public libraries. The report examines how visionary thinking and services could apply to Ontario’s public libraries by 2020. To prepare the report, the researcher took into account

- Social, economic and technological trends
- A literature review of the ideas of visionary thinkers in the library sector
- Major initiatives where libraries have partnered with other organizations
- Recent library conferences and awards
- Library innovation in Canada and elsewhere
- The Deputy Minister of Culture’s consultations of 2006
- Ontario government priorities.

Research shows that, in communities large and small, public libraries have a strong role in literacy and learning, innovation, community, and prosperity. The title of this report, *Third Generation Public Libraries*, comes from author Shannon Mattern’s concept of public libraries that the public helps to design. This paper extends Mattern’s concept well beyond architecture into partnerships and services.

Through changing times, people have continued to participate in and esteem their libraries. The public library of 2020 will respond to a new social, technological, and economic environment while keeping its enduring values. It will use new tools and partnerships in its traditional roles as part of a lifelong learning system and as an engine of cultural and economic development. It will remain an agent and sign of community and social cohesion. It will respond to Canada’s uniquely “diverse diversity.” It will act on research on reading and learning and make information and communication technology accessible in a democratized and participatory digital universe of uneven quality. It will stimulate creativity in the community and provide exciting public spaces where people can participate and share ideas. Through all these means, the public library will contribute to sustainable prosperity for Ontario and Canada in an increasingly knowledge-based economy.

It is hard to name a public institution that has retained such high rates of participation and esteem amid volatility and change. This report identifies leading examples of innovative practices and services in public libraries in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Nordic countries, Singapore, and Canada. These practices show that, more and more, national governments are acknowledging the value of public libraries through programs, policies and funding. That is not the case at the national level in Canada. However, Ontario can learn from statewide consortia in the US, for example, and from worldwide innovation to improve service delivery and citizen participation. There are differences between jurisdictions, but across Canada and elsewhere, common themes in public library roles and public library innovation do emerge.
Public libraries of the future will be catalysts and leaders in community-based economic development. They will have a strategic role in knowledge-intensive industries like digital media. They will also be mainstays of community-based cultural planning and development. The amount of information available will grow, and much of it will be of questionable value and accuracy. Public libraries will play an increasingly significant role in the literacies of the twenty-first century that enable people to select, assess and use the information that will best meet their needs. As the number of technology devices increases, libraries will enable increased equality of access and participation and help people create and exchange new content. One of the ways libraries will do this is by collaborating, within the library sector and beyond, to develop stronger networks.

Public libraries will continue to be welcoming places of community, both real and virtual. Renewed physical libraries will be exciting and involving spaces. Public libraries will widely adopt research-based approaches. This will enhance their role as the preschooler’s door to reading and learning and will strengthen early learning and family literacy. Initiatives for youth in school and at risk will be staples of future public library service, and youth will thrive in the redesigned spaces.

The public library of the future will work more systematically with partners, including government, to integrate newcomers and socially marginalized people. Based on results from pilot projects of the past decade, libraries will be important in responding to language and other settlement needs. The growing numbers of seniors will enjoy services better customized to their interests and abilities. Services to Aboriginal peoples, on and off reserves, will be responsive and relevant to their needs and preferences. The longstanding role of the public library as society’s informal learning system will change in terms of service delivery, but it will remain constant in its values and commitment to the individual.

Government and private sector roles will also evolve. Governments will have more fully developed partnerships with public libraries. As a result, governments will be able to deliver services in high-priority areas such as youth, early childhood, and immigration more seamlessly and effectively. In partnership with governments, the public library will be an effective advocate for a balanced approach to intellectual property and a robust public domain of ideas.

The private sector will recognize that public libraries have a key role in reaching a huge market of people seeking information and knowledge. Businesses will understand how this applies to testing exportable software and new media in the “home market.” The long relationship between libraries and the publishing industry will thus extend into the future. Other private sector roles will include designing and supporting facilities, collaborating in business and economic development initiatives, and supporting libraries through volunteerism and philanthropy.

Ontario is in a leading position in several strategic areas relevant to this view of the future of public libraries:

- The Knowledge Ontario consortium, which built on the experience of consortia in Canada and elsewhere
• A strategic plan for service to Aboriginal people on reserves
• Growing capacity in library boards and staff through the Southern Ontario Library Service and Ontario Library Service North.

Ontario is rising in the following areas:

• Delivery of government services in public libraries through the Service Ontario partnerships
• Participation in intergovernmental discussion and cooperation.

In other areas, Ontario needs to take steps to ensure that public libraries achieve their potential:

• Systematic and stable provincial framework for children and youth services
• Growing and sustaining Knowledge Ontario
• Multicultural services and collections
• Infrastructure and broadband
• Operating and special funding.

Through leadership in developing and supporting policies, and with reinvestment by the province in operating funding, Ontario has an opportunity to leverage the role of public libraries to achieve maximum benefit for the province. The province could also play a role in interprovincial collaboration to seek partnership with and stable support from the federal government.

Several key policy themes have particularly high potential to advance Ontario’s interests and priorities in the knowledge-based economy to 2020:

• Knowledge Ontario
  Knowledge Ontario is a platform for innovation as well as an information service. Broadening the partnership to include education and post-secondary ministries will be essential to its stability and growth.

• Library buildings
  Public library buildings should be prominent in the infrastructure revitalization programs of all levels of government. In addition, the Trillium Foundation should expand eligibility for grants to include libraries in communities of all sizes.

• Broadband access
  Comprehensive broadband access is important to achieving the goal of equity of access to the full range of technology. It will also have economic benefits.

• Role of public libraries in government programs
  Ontario’s programs for literacy, student success, and youth at risk should comprehensively and explicitly include the role of public libraries.
• **Early childhood learning**
  Public library support for early childhood learning needs coordination and explicit policy attention.

• **Literacy**
  Public libraries have a longstanding and growing role in literacy, including digital literacy. Through interministerial collaboration, Ontario should align this role with other provincial literacy programs.

• **Diversity**
  Ontario is a large territory and has great diversity in its population. It is a challenge to serve hundreds of communities with a full range of resources tailored to diverse needs. Building the capacity in the six large urban public libraries, which serve 40 per cent of Ontarians, would respond not only to diversity in these communities, but would also make resources such as collections and professional expertise available to other communities on a shared basis.

• **Economic development**
  Public libraries have documented potential to contribute to economic development. Ontario has major opportunities to leverage that potential more systematically.

• **Changing demographic profile**
  Population trends show that Ontario will need a stronger policy and program focus on the elderly, persons with disabilities, newcomers, and marginalized people. Knowledge Ontario and new technology will be important tools in responding to changing needs. Interministerial and intergovernmental collaboration will be necessary.

• **Services to Aboriginal people**
  Grassroots planning and models exist to improve services to Aboriginal people on reserves.

• **Government priorities and services**
  With branches in every community, public libraries offer opportunities for government to apply the potential of public libraries in priorities such as health promotion and prevention to make information more available and visible.

• **Copyright**
  Ontario should continue to advocate for carefully balanced copyright laws that respect both creators and users to ensure reasonable access to ideas to promote learning and innovation.

The evidence shows that the exciting vision of innovation described in this report is achievable. Ontario has strong public library foundations on which to build. Achieving the vision will involve the local efforts of public libraries. It will also require the Ministry to renew its library expertise, operating grants, and capacity for interministerial and intergovernmental collaboration. Those elements have dropped sharply in the past 10 to 12 years. Learning and literacy, innovation and strong communities are fundamental to the Ontario of 2020. An innovative, province-wide library system is therefore an attractive government investment.
1.0 BACKGROUND, APPROACH AND SOURCES

The Ontario Ministry of Culture is updating its policies related to supporting public libraries. The Ministry wants to ensure that its policies are positioned for the public library of the future. Having consulted widely with the Ontario public library community, the Ministry continues to build on that momentum.

To assist the Ministry in improving the policy framework and inform its decisions, the Culture Policy Unit retained a consultant (Wendy Newman, Senior Fellow, Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto) to

- Conduct a high-level study and analysis of thinking, trends, and practice regarding public library service in the future (to 2020)
- Analyze the potential to apply innovations in Ontario and the issues relevant to applying them
- Make recommendations.

The consultant

- Identified social, economic, and technological trends in the library environment using a wide variety of sources beyond the library and information sector
- Completed a literature search in library and information science databases
- Reviewed recent awards for outstanding achievement and innovation in public libraries in Ontario, Canada, and internationally to identify common themes
- Examined the publications and websites of leading authors, bloggers, and researchers in the broader library and information environment
- Reviewed the activities and visions of libraries and related organizations in Canada and elsewhere
- Discussed the issues with selected Canadian and international library leaders and researchers
- Reviewed the documentation and transcripts from the Deputy Minister’s 2006 consultations.

The consultant considered this information in the light of the interest and priorities of the Government of Ontario.

Sources are listed in Appendix A, and many are linked to the electronic text in Appendices B to E. Time for this study was limited. The author acknowledges with appreciation that Mary Lou Evans, Rod Sawyer, Aimée Skelton, and Nicole Stewart of the Ministry of Culture generously made themselves available to provide information and consultation.

Shannon Mattern, author of *The New Downtown Library: Designing with Communities* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2007) uses the phrase “third generation
public libraries” to describe the shift to community participation in the design of new public library buildings in the US. The third generation public library building is a multi-use public space. It is an anchor in community development and an icon of the community. It is the product of dialogue and users are active in its design. It does not fit a mold and it may not even “look like” a library. This paper extends the concept beyond the library building to partnerships and services delivered in the real and virtual environments. The third generation public library collaborates with its community. Its programs and spaces change as the 21st century community changes.
2.0 CONTEXT FOR VISIONARY THINKING AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES TO 2020

Ten years ago, people were predicting the paperless office and the end of the post office and the telephone. It is clearly impossible to predict where technology will lead, but it is reasonable to use visionary thought and activity to project the evolution of public libraries to 2020.

This study examines developments in technology, demographics, and the economic, political, and cultural environment. It connects those developments with visionary thought and activity in public libraries and relates them to government priorities, policies, and programs.

The assumption in this study is that the public library of the 21st century will continue to serve the informal education system function it has served since the 19th century. Public library values, as articulated by Michael Gorman and others, will endure—stewardship, service, literacy, rationalism, intellectual freedom, privacy, equity and democracy. Technology changes the tools, not the essence.

To project the future of Ontario’s public libraries, it makes sense to examine projected directions in community, learning, technology and the economy. The highly selective examples below came from authors from Ontario, Canada, and elsewhere. (For further details and references, see Appendix B.)

For experts and experienced professionals, these ideas make sense of otherwise unconnected developments. The categories below are “people,” “technology,” and “economy,” but these categories are fluid and related. Most of the ideas deal in some way with intellectual capital. Intellectual capital is the cornerstone of the knowledge-based economy, and Ontario’s future prospects are tied to it.

People: community and learning

Trends indicate that community and learning will remain the major “people” themes of the public library of 2020. We will pay more attention to the “social capital” deficit and the challenges of growing diversity.

Harvard academic Robert Putnam looks at social capital, or the glue that holds society together. He points to decreasing civic participation (e.g., service clubs, voting) and proposes ways to restore and strengthen it. Public libraries, as community hubs, are a positive venue for and partner in civic engagement.

*Interconnections* is a major study on the use of libraries and museums by the US Institute of Museum and Library Services (released in 2008). That study confirms, yet again, the high level of public trust in libraries.

Keith Banting (Queen’s University) analyzes Canada’s “diverse diversity.” Canada is unique in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in its three dimensions (Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, English/French, multicultural). Banting
sees public libraries as gateways to future participation in society, such that Canadians can live together without having to become alike.

The landmark work of C. Ross, L. McKechnie, and P. Rothbauer (University of Western Ontario) examines the research on the relationships among reading, libraries, and community. Their work highlights the essential role of libraries in stimulating reading and learning. They also show that reading (including reading for pleasure) is still important to Canadians in the digital age.

Scott Bennett (Yale University) observes the growing importance of collaborative learning environments, regardless of the technology tools of the moment.

Technology: participatory media

It is particularly risky to speculate about changes in technology. However, current trends indicate that access will become increasingly imbedded in smaller, cheaper, more powerful and more versatile wireless devices.

One change has particularly transformative implications for the future of libraries: users of information and communication technologies (ICTs) have made a transition from recipients of content to creators of content in a highly democratic and social digital universe.

Both utopians and detractors of this fundamental shift make observations relevant to libraries. At the enthusiastic end of the spectrum, Don Tapscott (Canadian author and entrepreneur) champions the promise of digitally mediated collaboration, on a mass scale, for business and economic development. Libraries are relevant to this view because they create and enable valuable digital content and provide access to barrier-free digital participation. At the other end of the spectrum, Andrew Keen (author of *The Cult of the Amateur: How Today’s Internet is Killing Our Culture*) is alarmed about the amount of inaccurate, superficial, prejudicial, manipulative or anonymous user-generated content. He is concerned about its cumulative impact on culture and learning.

Interestingly, in both the optimistic and the pessimistic views, libraries are major assets to society. As the amount of inaccurate information grows through mass communication, finding accurate and authoritative information will be even more essential for both individuals and society. Libraries have a longstanding role in information literacy (i.e., proficiency in defining questions and finding information and assessing its relevance, authoritative, and value). This role is even more urgent and important in an unregulated and largely unmediated digital universe. Health information is but one urgent case in point. Moreover, even though there is less public attention to it, the digital divide in all its dimensions (e.g., income, education, bandwidth) remains deep and persistent. Public libraries continue to be the preferred strategy for free and universal access to and participation in the digital age.

A recent report by Forrester Research, a US firm specializing in “social technographics,” identifies six categories of online users and reports their age distribution. The most intensive users are “creators” who create web pages, write blogs, or upload videos. The
least intensive are “inactives” who are online but do not participate in any of the social media of Web 2.0. Forrester’s research is a reminder that the public library cannot choose its user base. It must offer services that have at least some relevance and value to the entire spectrum of online users and to residents who do not or cannot (e.g., for reasons of literacy) go online at all.

**Economy: creativity and sustaining prosperity**

The elements of sustained prosperity will continue to be highly relevant to public libraries and the communities that create them. These elements include the central importance of creativity in the economy, the role of learning in an innovative economy, and the need for robust access to ideas.

Richard Florida, celebrated author and newly arrived Torontonian, observes a positive relationship between the presence of many “creative” people, a dynamic environment, and the economic prosperity of cities. He has focused new attention on creativity-stimulating environments. Universal access to ideas, which is the public library vision and ideal, stimulates creativity.

The Conference Board of Canada’s new three-year project on the Canadian economy identifies an increasing need for learning and innovation in Canada. Public libraries originally supported informal adult learning relevant to employment. The “mechanics’ institutes” of the 19th century eventually became publicly supported libraries, many of them in buildings endowed by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. Public libraries continue to stimulate and support lifelong learning through both new and traditional tools.

The latest retail merchandizing techniques have made people expect libraries to be even more sophisticated environments. Consumers prefer “themed” or museum-like experiences, even for such formerly mundane experiences as buying a cup of coffee or visiting a bookstore. They expect similar service hours and excitement in their public libraries. Joseph Pine has termed this the “experience economy.”

Finally, heavily restrictive approaches to copyright increasingly encroach on the commons of ideas in the digital age. (“Commons” originally meant common grazing land.) These approaches limit access to ideas and therefore limit access to library content. This implies a need to focus on the public interest in copyright policy, as articulated by David Bollier, Lawrence Lessig and Michael Geist.

These ideas help to establish the context for visionary thinking and innovation in Ontario’s public libraries to 2020. Library conference programs are only one indicator that public libraries are very aware of the changing landscape. Leading-edge thinkers in all the areas discussed above are frequently keynote speakers at gatherings of the library community. Leading jurisdictions around the world are using these ideas in practical public library innovation. (For additional details, see Appendix C.)
3.0 INNOVATIVE JURISDICTIONS, PRACTICES AND SERVICES

Many very different jurisdictions in the developed world have applied library innovations that are relevant to Ontario’s future in an increasingly knowledge-based economy. Technology, diversity, retail developments, and government priorities (especially in economic and social development) have been among the most significant drivers. Collaboration on a scale never seen before has marked these innovative responses to change.

Across the developed world, the common thread in public library innovation is government interest in a literate, informed, inclusive, and engaged society and recognition of the need for renewed tools and infrastructures to advance that interest. (For details and references on the following sections, see Appendix D.)

3.1 UNITED STATES

Federal government, philanthropy and advocacy groups

The combination of federal government support, philanthropy and advocacy groups has sparked much public library innovation in the USA. Although public libraries are not in the federal jurisdiction, there is strategic and financial federal support for library innovation. The federally funded Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) supports library innovation through grants for leading-edge research, leadership, and library development in the national interest. The “E-Rate,” part of the regulatory framework for the telecommunications industry, ensures subsidized Internet connectivity for public libraries and schools. These supports acknowledge the strategic role of public libraries in American society and allow libraries to respond innovatively to future needs.

Philanthropy and advocacy groups also support innovation in American public libraries. For example, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has funded initial Internet connectivity in public libraries. It has also studied the impacts and challenges of connectivity to better position public libraries for the future.

Libraries for the Future is a non-profit organization that supports innovation and investment in libraries. It links professionals across disciplines (such as health and literacy, or early childhood and architecture) to help devise solutions to new challenges. The Online Computer Library Centre (OCLC), a “nonprofit, membership, computer library service and research organization dedicated to the public purposes of furthering access to the world’s information and reducing information costs,” is active in many countries (including Canada). It is especially strong in the US. Its environmental scanning and advocacy materials help libraries to identify and promote library strengths.

State libraries and statewide collaboration

Libraries have long worked together to leverage resources for maximum local benefit (e.g., the worldwide network of interlibrary lending). However, in the digital age, American libraries have made a quantum leap to new consortium-type mechanisms. Consortia (usually statewide), with the participation of state libraries, have combined the
expertise and resources of local libraries with state funds to negotiate statewide prices for high-quality databases. They provide these databases to all state residents through local library systems. These platforms for collaboration across communities of all sizes enable unprecedented equity of access by residents.

Some statewide consortia, such as Ohio’s, have applied similar economies of scale to other innovations. In fact, the record shows that library consortia created to purchase information resources jointly can be effective springboards for further innovation. Examples include mass digitization of images and texts and specialized information services like homework help. Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Colorado, Minnesota and Georgia are among the leaders in this area.

**Local library as place, partner, and conversation**

American public libraries represent the world’s deepest tradition and biggest canvas for innovation. Among the most innovative systems is the Ann Arbor District Library. The library uses social software (e.g., blogs) to make the library a kind of continuing “conversation” with its citizens. This use of Web 2.0 has implications for future service development as access becomes available through smaller and cheaper devices.

Celebrated new buildings, such as Seattle’s main library, signal a renaissance in public library construction. The continuing high use of library buildings has contradicted pundits who predicted an all-digital future. Indeed, trends reveal that new public library buildings are an important focus of community pride and engagement in addition to improving functionality. Seattle has documented an economic impact of library visitors from outside the area.

Researchers at Northwestern University have identified the branches of Chicago Public Library as models of community building. The Cerritos Public Library in California was designed to provide a “themed” museum-like experience. The Charlotte and Mecklenberg Library in North Carolina collaborated in developing ImaginOn, a combined library and theatre for children. It is another example of a themed space that is highly participative.

These and other examples point to the future public library as an exciting and engaging physical space, and as a provider of responsive, interactive services in the virtual environment.

**UNITED KINGDOM**

**Jurisdiction**

The public library landscape in the UK differs from that in the US and most of Canada in several respects. The UK has no state or provincial level of government responsible for learning-related policy and programs. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) is an agency of the UK government. It provides some funding and broad policy and strategic direction for libraries. However, local (municipal) councils direct library operations and provide the majority of the routine operating funds.
Public libraries in the UK are seeking to reverse a deep decline in collections, services and buildings. Government reports acknowledge the critical role of public libraries in advancing the country’s objectives in reading and learning improvement, community cohesion and inclusiveness, and access to technology. Two recent UK developments toward these objectives are the Reading Agency and Museums Libraries and Archives.

The Reading Agency

The five-year-old Reading Agency is a non-profit organization. It is funded largely through Arts Council England, which is in turn funded chiefly by government. The Reading Agency works with public libraries and other groups to stimulate reading in the UK. One of its innovative approaches is to design or redesign library spaces (using lottery funds) to make them more attractive to youth. Young people are directly involved in the planning well beyond the tradition of consultation on décor and collections. (Moving facility design out of the exclusive grip of architecture and library professionals may be an indication of the future, but it has not yet been evaluated for staying power in such criteria as sustainable operating costs.)

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council

Recognizing the powerful impact of libraries, archives, and museums on creativity and prosperity, the UK government created the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) as a future-oriented focus for national leadership and investment. The new agency has created many tools and programs under its “Framework for the Future” public library plan. The tools are not necessarily innovative (e.g., multiple performance measures), but they may help stimulate innovation by examining public libraries under a greater variety of lenses. What is perhaps most innovative is the scope of the national partnership this government organization leads. It includes the professional association of librarians, the association of local governments, the National Youth Agency, the Reading Agency and others.

Idea Stores

Idea Stores are a new local library development in the UK. They are in new buildings with expanded hours, replacing antiquated public library facilities. The Idea Stores provide both traditional and newer public library services, including access to e-government services and basic short adult education courses. Views of the new name vary. Many North American experts see it as a brand failure (i.e., funding and service was so poor that the public library had to be re-branded).

3.3 Australia

State libraries

Australia provides a valuable comparison with Canada. It has a similar federal system, an Aboriginal presence, urban/rural contrasts and growing multiculturalism. Australian libraries are among the world’s leaders in collaboration and consortium-based approaches to economies of scale and equity across huge distances. (The developers of Knowledge
Ontario considered its models, along with those of model US states discussed above.) The state libraries, which do not have a counterpart in Canada, have developed strong collaborative initiatives. They have also joined forces with their own national library and that of New Zealand to provide such services as “ask a librarian,” available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They have thus pooled resources for what would otherwise be unaffordable.

The State Library of Victoria has been one of the world’s leaders in assessing the value and impact of public libraries. Those efforts culminated in a landmark 2005 report, *Libraries Building Communities*. Among other objectives, the research sought to show the impact of public libraries on achieving various government policy goals. The study showed that public library impacts extended far beyond the classic benefits of providing information in support of learning, recreation and quality of life. The research demonstrated impacts on building relationships and connections in communities, building individual skills, supporting the information economy through learning and skill development, and supporting government policy objectives such as social inclusion.

**Framework for Aboriginal services**

Like Canada, Australia is a world leader in developing services with and for Aboriginal peoples in the interests of rectifying past barriers and achieving future national reconciliation. It has a National and State Libraries Policy framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander library services and collections. Local public libraries, such as Brisbane’s, are particularly active on this front. They may welcome opportunities to collaborate with their Canadian counterparts in the future. Canada might do well to develop a similar national collaborative framework to address major gaps.

### 3.4 NORDIC COUNTRIES

There is a strong tradition of vibrant public library service in Nordic countries. On a world scale, they have highly innovative library communities. The Aarhus Public Library in Denmark, for example, has developed the “Transformation Lab,” a prototype for flexible, intensely interactive future library buildings. It integrates user participation in the design. The national library authority and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation have assisted in this program.

The Helsinki Public Library won the first Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Award for its innovative use of technology in its mobile “information gas stations” and its do-it-yourself library. The latter has publishing workstations and editing rooms for video and music available on site and technical equipment to lend.

The City Library of Malmö in Sweden provides free “loans” of living people (e.g., a gypsy, a lesbian, a Muslim) for 45-minute personal conversations. The purpose of this “Living Library” is to break down barriers and prejudices based on religion, nationality, or job. European libraries in cities with high diversity have adopted the concept. Libraries in London, England have just introduced it, to great media fanfare.
3.5 SINGAPORE

Having made the transition from a developing country in a few short decades, Singapore has positioned itself to thrive in the knowledge economy. Under its national “intelligent island” strategy, Singapore has made major investments in public libraries, including exciting new spaces and leading-edge technology. This has resulted in huge increases in use and membership. Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, referring to the dramatic improvements since 2000, wrote that “on an intelligent island, every pair of hands has to be a pair of thinking hands.”

3.6 CANADA

Federal activity

Unlike the US, the UK, and Nordic countries, Canada lacks a strong federal presence in research, statistics, development, and policy related to libraries. Federal government relationships with libraries do exist and have been highly successful (see local examples below), but they are scattered over many departments (such as Human Resources and Social Development Canada and Industry Canada).

Statistics Canada does not produce comprehensive Canadian library statistics and actually omits libraries from its annual statistics for heritage institutions. The Department of Canadian Heritage tends to focus more attention on museums. The former National Core Library Statistics Program, initiated with 1994 data under the leadership of the former National Library of Canada, has not been published since 2002 (1999 data). As a result, there are no comprehensive statistics for a sector with an estimated capital and operating expenditure (in 1999) of $3 to 3.5 billion.

The major federal government focus on public libraries is through Libraries and Archives Canada, which reports through the Minister of Canadian Heritage.

Library and Archives Canada

The merger of the Public Archives and the National Library created Library and Archives Canada (LAC). The federal government intended the merger to be a transformative change, and deemed LAC the “new knowledge organization.” More seamless and convenient access to the published and unpublished record of a nation is an international trend.

Among its national initiatives, LAC is spearheading the development of a national digital strategy. The proposed collaborative strategy for preserving and providing access to Canadian digital content follows similar initiatives under way for some time in other countries. National digital strategies are a response to concern about the “here today, gone tomorrow” nature of much digital content. Public libraries started digitizing local community content early and effectively and should be part of any future collaborative strategy.
One of LAC’s mandates is to stimulate collaboration within the library and archival sector in Canada. This may well entail future collaboration with the provinces and territories in high priority areas such as multilingual, multicultural, and Aboriginal services. The federal government has not yet activated, with actual funds, LAC’s legislated mandate to provide financial support to libraries.

Provincial/territorial level

The most innovative jurisdictions in Canada have chosen to focus on their areas of particularly high priority.

In British Columbia, literacy and learning are among the provincial government’s top five priorities. The Books for Babies program introduces families of all newborns to library services as a strategy for early learning and promoting family literacy. Through a government-assisted, collaborative “one card” system, BC’s highly mobile residents can benefit from seamless public library services. BC libraries have also collaborated on Ask Away, which provides online information from trained professionals across the province.

The Alberta Library is an innovative collaboration across geographical and institutional lines in the province. It includes public, college, and university libraries and is a powerful force for equity (including urban/rural equity) and learning. Three provincial ministries provide funding. The network shares resources (physical items and province-wide negotiated licences for electronic products), reference services, and technical infrastructure. It also coordinates professional development and advocacy. It has nurtured collaborative approaches to research (e.g., market research on attitudes and participation of Albertans) that helps in planning future innovative services.

Alberta’s SuperNet is a provincial broadband network. All public libraries have free access. This creates a robust infrastructure for the future of library service, despite Alberta’s huge distances and stark contrasts in economy and capacity among its large and small communities. Combined, the Alberta Library and SuperNet create powerful capacity. The combination is friendly to future innovation and collaboration because the organizational and technical networks are in place. No one municipality could create this structure, but all stand to benefit.

(For innovation in Ontario, see sections 5 and 6.)

Local level

Even without federal support, Canada’s local public libraries, especially in urban communities, are innovating in technology, physical plant, community economic and cultural development, and services to high-priority populations. Most of the innovation is concentrated in urban libraries, which have the expertise and management required.

In technology, Canada’s libraries are leaders in forming digital and service consortia to enable equitable access to information (e.g., the Alberta Library, Knowledge Ontario, BC’s InterLink). They have been partners in developing new software to enable greater
participation in creating content (e.g., Bibliocommons in Oakville). They have also been prolific creators of digitized local content that contributes to cultural development (e.g., digitization of the Dionne quintuplets heritage in North Bay).

New and renovated buildings feature innovative, retail-style merchandizing to promote reading and learning (e.g., Richmond, BC) and revitalization of struggling downtown areas (e.g., London, Brantford).

Many urban libraries are innovating to strengthen local economic development. They support small business start-up and job readiness (e.g., Human Resources and Social Development Canada-supported job centres in Hamilton). With support in part from the provincial government, and by collaborating with several urban library systems in Ontario, Toronto Public Library has developed the Virtual Reference Library. The Virtual Reference Library brings selected websites and reference services into one convenient interface. In partnership, Ottawa Public Library’s Bibliothèque de reference virtuelle (BRV) provides an interface and content in French.

Services to special populations, including preschool children, youth, the elderly, Aboriginal people, immigrants and persons with disabilities, are the focus of much innovation. Many new services to respond to diversity involve local partnerships. In these new collaborations, the library’s strengths (e.g., physical place with many locations, technology expertise, knowledge of how people seek information, stability and accountability, high degree of public participation and trust, robust networks) combine with the specialized knowledge, market penetration, and advisory roles of the partner organizations. Partnerships with the library of the Canadian National Institute for the Blind use technology to serve the growing numbers of people with age-related and other vision disabilities. New early childhood learning initiatives (e.g., Every Child Ready to Read in Hamilton and Oakville) apply recent American public library research to strengthen family literacy behaviours. Innovative new co-curricular programs like Homework Help (e.g., Toronto) assist both youth in school and street kids.

Public library innovation has helped Canadian cities respond to growing diversity. New partnerships with immigrant settlement organizations (e.g., Hamilton, Regina, Vancouver, Ottawa, and Toronto) acquaint newcomers with library and other community services. In a partnership with Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC), the “Working Together” pilot program in four Canadian cities deploys specialists to work with marginalized people. These specialists build connections and relationships in the community to ascertain what socially excluded people want and need from libraries. They apply this knowledge to influence change in library procedures and programs. The project has just released its toolkit for other libraries. Ontario’s projected increase in immigration and its strong commitment to inclusiveness mean that this expanded public library role will grow in importance.

Canadian public libraries are already leaders in services to Aboriginal peoples, on and off reserves, but much remains to be done. Regina and Edmonton are among the leaders in innovative services to urban Aboriginal people. They engage elders in their program delivery and in revitalizing their historic commitment to storytelling.
These highlights of worldwide public library innovation show a public institution that has retained its high degree of public participation, trust, and community impact amid a sea change in technology and demographics. Recurring themes appear in these innovations in Canada and elsewhere:

- Technology as an enabler of equity and participation
- Collaboration to create new content and enable wider access to existing content
- Improving traditional and new literacies
- Informal and co-curricular learning opportunities for preschoolers and youth
- Partnership and collaboration to strengthen economic and cultural development
- Renewal of infrastructure to create more flexible spaces
- New services to respond to greater diversity in the population
- Government e-services delivery.

A composite picture of the public library of the future begins to emerge from visionary thinking and trends. It includes expanded roles for the library itself and for government and private sector partners. (For additional details on the libraries and programs, see Appendices D and E.)
4.0 ASSESSMENT AND ANALYSIS: VISIONARY THINKING AND TRENDS

Based on trends in public library innovation, emerging opportunities in technology, and developments in the society that creates and changes public libraries, the library of the future will remain our informal education system. However, in that core role, this venerable and popular institution will use new partnerships and technologies to deepen its market penetration and strengthen its economic and social impact.

4.1 Future Roles of the Public Library

An analysis of visionary thinking and trends yields a picture of the dynamic library of the future, with the partnerships, technologies, and personnel to be more things to more people.

Economic development: It will be a catalyst and leader in community economic development. As small and home-based businesses continue to generate job growth, it will support small business development, alone and in partnership (e.g., with chambers of commerce and municipal economic development departments). It will support the individual learning required for job readiness in a knowledge-based economy.

Cultural development: It will be a mainstay of cultural development, fully integrated into local cultural planning. Communities that have rediscovered the value of their uniqueness will see it as a unique asset that provides cultural resources and stimulates or creates cultural content.

Literacies of the 21st century: In an ever-present but unregulated and largely unmediated digital universe, people will rely on it as an authority (i.e., to identify authoritative sources), a trainer, and a coach on the literacies of the 21st century. Literacies will mean not only the ability to read, but also the ability to distinguish authoritative content from junk and to judge its relevance and usefulness. This has always been fundamental to learning and innovation, but it will become even more essential in a knowledge-based economy that must remain globally competitive. In these new roles, the public library will provide digital information and create new tools for understanding how to select and use information. This will have much greater benefit than “out-Googling Google” by simply making more information available—a role often urged upon the library community.

Technology access and participation: It will be the guarantor of a free and level field so that no one is left behind. It will provide the infrastructure and platform for citizen-generated content and exchange in Web 2.0 or its successors (e.g., the myhamilton.ca portal, a community-wide initiative led by Hamilton Public Library). It will provide information directly, from sources of assured quality and rigour, through its own resources and through partnerships and networks. In other words, it will be where its community is, in both the real and virtual environments, and will be a leader and facilitator in a continuing community conversation.
**Collaboration and networks:** It will be the individual’s entry point to a seamless network of libraries and other organizations that provide access to physical and digital information resources on request. Together, these networks will stimulate development of an integrated, trustworthy and convenient gateway to digital information from all sources relevant to a given searcher. In combining comprehensiveness with usefulness and convenience, it will not just be the free source, it will be the best source—the place to start.

**Partnerships:** It will reach users directly, but it will also reach them indirectly through partners such as archives, museums, galleries, the formal education system, educational media, and business and ethno-cultural organizations. Partners will range from the local to the global, depending on the needs of the community. It will be nimble in responding to partnership opportunities in niches such as immigrant settlement.

**Infrastructure and buildings:** It will be a free, public, exciting, and engaging gathering place, in both real and virtual space. People of all ages will share their own ideas and ideas published in diverse media (text, graphics, sound and video recordings, etc.) The buildings will be community centres, and they will be sources and signs of community ownership and pride. Technical infrastructure, such as radio-frequency identification (RFID: “barcodes on steroids,” combining security and identification on a microchip read by radio waves) or its successors will be common, yielding more efficient and integrated operations.

**Broadband:** Broadband deployment will make high-bandwidth interactive learning applications such as streaming video more universally available. This will ramp up such future-critical functions as staff development, support for distance learners, access to government information and transactions, and job-related skill development for the public.

**Children and youth:** It will be a door to learning for preschool and school age children. It will strengthen essential pillars of the knowledge-based economy, such as early learning and family literacy, directly and through partnerships with other organizations in the learning sector (television, publishing, museums). For youth, it will be a safe, inviting, and vital space, with up-to-date technologies for learning and socializing in both real and virtual space. Specific co-curricular programs like Homework Help will strengthen its impact on youth learning and post-secondary readiness.

**Diversity:** It will be a partner in developing and providing services for high-priority populations like new immigrants, multicultural groups, the elderly, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal peoples, and official language minorities. These high-priority populations will have increased in the Ontario of 2020, and the library will help enable their full participation in the life and benefits of this country.

**Leverage for government:** The partnership and other inherent strengths of libraries will have made them a major lever for governments in their commitments to social cohesion, learning and literacy, innovation, cultural strength, and prosperity. The “brand” of the library as inclusive and trustworthy (recently confirmed in a major US study sponsored by the Institute of Museum and Library Services) and the uniquely high rate of
satisfaction with it (confirmed in four successive Canadian *Citizens First* studies) will make it a natural and sought-after partner for all levels of government. It will continue to collaborate with governments to assist people with government information and transactions.

**Public domain of ideas:** Physically and virtually, it will be a commons of ideas. It will support a robust public domain, with a copyright system that balances user and creator rights without extremes. It will continue to champion open access (peer-reviewed digital information with fewer copyright restrictions) and will be a valued test site for open source software. It will be part of a broad coalition (including, for example, CMEC: the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, libraries, universities, and archivists) advocating the public interest in balanced copyright and intellectual property laws that encourage and reward creativity while ensuring that information is not just another commodity with a price. Its large and varied user community will make it an ideal test bed for Ontario-produced software, including social networking software (e.g., Oakville Public Library is testing Bibliocommons). It will also participate in testing various new media (e.g., art, games).

**The knowledge-based economy:** Having been created in the nineteenth century to model the concept of “smart community” before technology was in place, the public library will be a pillar of the knowledge-based economy of the future. (Canadian exports of knowledge-based products will have largely overtaken exports of raw materials and manufactured goods.) It will nurture a multilingual workforce, which will create exportable new technologies within a dynamic society founded on the skills and expertise of longstanding and new Ontarians.

**Environment:** It has always been a recycling agency, circulating shared resources. It will remain enduringly and efficiently “green” in the digital age.

The financial and policy foundations of the public library of the future will match its importance as a pillar of community economic and cultural development and as an anchor of a learning society. With a foundation of stable public funding that secures its capacity to innovate, the urban public library, in particular, will be able to pursue many sources of special funding for some of its innovative initiatives. The public library was one of the first tax-supported public services created to support learning. The public library of the future will reflect the priorities of the communities and governments of the future.

**4.2 Future Roles of Governments**

The year 2020 will see governments at all levels forming strategic partnerships with public libraries that are appropriate to a knowledge-based economy and a healthy democracy. These partnerships will run the gamut from early childhood learning to services for the frail elderly.

Each level or ministry of government will invest in and benefit from these partnerships according to its mandate, priorities, and distinct capacities in an environment of
information sharing. Some government priorities will likely continue to be important to 2020 and will transcend jurisdiction. These include

- Immigrant settlement
- Early childhood learning
- Equity of opportunity for diverse groups and communities (including language and cultural minorities)
- Youth learning and engagement
- Economic and cultural development
- A vibrant infrastructure
- A robust public domain for creativity in the knowledge economy.

All three levels of government will have invested in effective ways to provide e-government services (information and transactions). They will increasingly depend on libraries for priorities such as providing preventative consumer health information.

Through the operating and capital funding they provide and the board members they appoint, municipal governments will continue to be the principal decision-makers on public library quality. This assumes a continuing governance framework that ensures public input, accountability and responsiveness. Municipal decisions will benefit the whole province if there is solid provincial support for collaboration. All communities strive to be desirable places to live and invest, and libraries will remain essential to the quality of social and economic life. Libraries have distinct governance mechanisms, and municipalities will need to take particular care to include them in municipal strategies and initiatives (e.g., cultural planning).

Provincial governments will continue to be principally responsibility for education in Canada. Ontario’s responsibility for public library legislation dates from the same period (the 1880s) as its free public education laws. In both cases, the rationale for assigning responsibility to the province was equity of access across the province. That rationale implies consistent quality of learning experience across the publicly supported formal and informal learning systems, or across Ontario’s schools and libraries. As the role of learning in Ontario’s future knowledge-based economy grows, the informal learning system of public libraries will be even more important. Technology will provide practical tools to strengthen equity of access. It will also provide governments with economies of scale for reaching the entire citizenry through libraries, from early childhood through post-secondary education to retirement.

Continuing provincial support for library consortia will respond to the public interest in equity and learning. It will engage a huge network in creating and transferring digital content. Provincial support will also respond to the growing public interest in social cohesion in the face of many demographic changes. Finally, it will strengthen workforce readiness as Ontario deals with fundamental shifts in its traditional industries.
Despite the lack of strong federal presence in libraries in Canada compared with other countries, the early experience of Internet access, immigrant welcome and integration, and e-government collaboration will lay foundations of trust and familiarity. This will nurture more collaboration between the federal government and libraries as the country’s needs change. Synergies and economies of scale are possible across regions and across the country to provide equity of access to important information. A present example is federal support for the Canadian Knowledge Research Network (CKRN), which provides scientific databases to all Canadian university libraries. Library and Archives Canada will have the resources to activate its mandated support roles. It will be a focus of federal expertise and demonstrate its understanding of how the assets of public libraries relate to national priorities.

The provinces and territories will recognize their shared interests and the need to engage the federal government. They will agree on their agenda and secure the federal government as an active partner. Together, the provinces and territories and the federal government will draw on the huge potential available in public libraries to advance pan-Canadian priorities.

4.3 Future Roles of the Private Sector

The private sector will continue to have an important presence in public libraries. This will be consistent with private sector interests and public sector processes and accountability.

There is no reason to assume that the close relationship between the public library and the publishing and entertainment industries will disappear. In fact, Canada’s digital media industries afford exciting opportunities for mutual benefit. Canada is a small market beside a giant American publishing and entertainment industry. It is also under pressure from ad-driven international digital publishing. However, the Canadian media industry has the potential to export to the burgeoning English-speaking markets in China and India as the economies of those countries grow between 2008 and 2020.

“Home market” penetration is an essential foundation for exportability. Ontario’s public libraries, which serve most of the population, will provide a test bed for Canada’s knowledge and entertainment products if businesses and governments view this concentration of consumers strategically. (The Canadian popular music industry provides an earlier example. It was necessary to establish a strong home market for Canadian recording artists first. “Canadian content” policy was essential in establishing that strength.) For example, Ontario’s public libraries can provide a test site for technology products such as user interfaces and adaptive technology for persons with disabilities. These products will have huge international markets.

Moreover, Ontario’s public libraries can nurture the creation of multicultural and multilingual content. Developing multilingual exportable knowledge products can give Canada a tremendous advantage over exporters who are less able to integrate immigrants into the economic and educational mainstream. The Canadian publishing industry, historically anchored in Ontario, can continue to strengthen awareness of national authors.
and artists in all media through library collections and active promotion in libraries, which will remain one of the industry’s principal customers.

There will be more variety in the way public libraries are used, and they will be in multi-organization settings more frequently. Thus, another area of future private sector partnership is facility design and development. This is already happening in some cases. For example, the developer covered some capital costs of the Ironwood Branch of the Richmond BC Public Library, located in a mall. In St. George, Ontario, the developer of a housing site actually donated the nearby library building.

The public library of the future will increasingly look to private sector philanthropy to help it deliver new services. Public libraries will continue to be attractive to private sector sponsors because of the high degree of public participation and regard for libraries—a uniquely strong brand loyalty. Already, a major bank sponsors summer reading programs across Canada. However, libraries in one province opted out of this sponsorship. They were concerned that a private business holds the program naming rights. Future partnerships will need to safeguard the non-commercial nature of public spaces as the educational environment of children.

The private sector will also contribute volunteer leadership by supporting employee volunteerism. This is a source of both practical help and library board leadership. Volunteering contributes to the community of the employees and tangibly supports the individual’s work/life balance.

Through business organizations, the private sector will increasingly collaborate with public libraries to provide information and advice to aspiring and existing entrepreneurs, especially in the job-creating small and home-based business sector. According to the Urban Institute’s 2007 report *Making Cities Stronger*, this will be a particularly prominent role for urban public libraries. The report notes the importance of public libraries in both entrepreneur and employee knowledge.

Finally, the public library will continue to be a consumer of technology equipment, software, workstations, digitization, and other operating requirements. It will continue to stimulate consumer purchase of content and technology.

This examination of international trends in library innovation and the projected roles of libraries, governments, and the private sector provides context for gauging the progress of public library innovation in Ontario.
5.0 PROGRESS IN PUBLIC LIBRARY INNOVATION IN ONTARIO

Ontario’s public library community includes the libraries themselves, their associations, their partner organizations (local, provincial, and national), and the municipal and provincial governments. The Ontario public library community has already taken innovative steps in keeping with the trends and projections discussed above. It is leading in some respects, in the middle of the pack in other areas, and behind in still others. The picture is quite uneven, and Ontario’s libraries exist at both extremes of the innovation spectrum.

Many public libraries, especially smaller ones, operate at or below subsistence level. This virtually eliminates their capacity to invest in innovation. Library innovation in Ontario chiefly occurs in cities, where funds, professional and management expertise, and partner organizations are most concentrated.

Ontario is in a leading position in several strategic areas:

Collaboration, consortia, and networks. The Knowledge Ontario start-up is in place. Ontario lagged behind comparable jurisdictions in developing such a system, but benefited from the experience in other jurisdictions. In the comprehensiveness and seamlessness of the system, Ontario improved on earlier models. Involving the school system, not just public and post-secondary libraries, is a distinct asset for Ontario compared with many jurisdictions. This project is a major building block for downstream collaborative projects and a defining condition for equity of digital participation across the province.

Diversity. Many public libraries in Ontario offer successful services for immigrant and multicultural populations. The Working Together pilot project for services to socially marginalized people has now encapsulated what it learned in a toolkit for wider library use. Federal support for 75 settlement workers placed in public libraries to assist immigrant youth and their families in several Ontario communities was announced in March 2008 under the Canada-Ontario Immigration Agreement. Adaptive technology is available in a large number of libraries, particularly for print-disabled patrons. These programs address critical aspects of Ontario’s growing diversity.

Aboriginal peoples. Ontario’s public libraries have a made-in-Ontario foundation poised to provide future services to Aboriginal people on reserves. There is a strategic plan (Our Way Forward), with grassroots input, ready for implementation. There is an advocacy plan to be activated in local communities, and there is a mechanism for direct assistance in the form of operating grants and salary supplements. In addition, services to Aboriginal people off reserve include examples of best practices available for local customizing.

Cultural development. Municipal cultural planning has gained a foothold and is engaging local governments and citizens across the province. It has creative and credible champions. The concept is ripe for public library participation, which will help to give it the widespread implementation its potential warrants.
Capacity-building in the sector. Excellent capacity-strengthening toolkits for local libraries are in place, particularly in smaller communities. The Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) and the Ontario Library Service North (OLS-N) developed the toolkits (e.g., measuring and communicating the impact of public libraries, facilitating community development), which have a reputation for high value and relevance throughout and beyond Canada.

Ontario is rising in innovation in other areas:

Government service delivery. In terms of partnerships with public libraries to provide government services, Ontario’s capacity and performance are increasing. The Service Ontario program is now available in many more libraries. However, the partners will need to address issues that arise in such service partnerships (e.g., agreement on quality and timeliness of service, appropriate funding levels, appropriate branding, reducing and simplifying the paperwork burden).

Capacity-building in the library sector – human resources. Despite major financial challenges, there has been increasing attention to and progress in human resource development in the library sector. SOLS and OLS-N continue to offer programs customized to public library needs. The research for this report found no counterpart to their EXCEL program for leaders without formal library credentials working in small libraries, for example. SOLS is in the early stages of developing a program focusing on leadership, which recent research indicates is a high priority in the Canadian library sector. The Partnership, a coalition of provincial and territorial library associations across Canada spearheaded by the Ontario Library Association, offers affordable distance learning opportunities to staff of all types of libraries. In addition to the obvious value in improving public access to electronic resources, the Ministry’s financial support for improving library bandwidth helps to makes such learning opportunities accessible to staff of small libraries.

Collaboration (across jurisdictions). The Ministry has assumed some leadership in federal/provincial/territorial collaboration on public libraries. Ontario has also been active in interprovincial discussions and mechanisms relevant to public library service. Provinces and territories assign the administration of public library support to various ministries (e.g., education, culture, community development). This illustrates the challenge and the necessity to create a more formalized intergovernmental mechanism.

Ontario is lagging behind in innovation in some areas. However, if Ontario can address policy and other conditions, the potential for innovation in these areas remains high:

Children. Public libraries have a strong role in preschool learning, but Ontario lacks a strategy to take advantage of this strength. The Early Years Centres were largely a missed opportunity. Many of these local services were set up simply as gathering places with collections of children’s books. Some libraries have applied the US’s Every Child Ready to Read program (e.g., Hamilton and Oakville Public Libraries), but there is no systematic evidence-based approach across the province.
Youth. Approaches to youth at risk and co-curricular services such as Homework Help are demonstrably beneficial and highly popular, but they are fragmented. Lack of a provincial framework for youth services that includes public libraries leaves innovation entirely to local partnerships. This will have smaller overall impact in the province. Equity is not achievable in this fragmented pattern.

Collaboration, consortia, and networks. Knowledge Ontario, the chief operating platform for equity and innovation in digital resources and services, operates on strategic funding from the province. This is typical of the “proof of concept” stage of innovation. Nevertheless, all the successful digital initiatives highlighted in this report have continuing funding from higher levels of government. Regional structures such as the Blue Sky Network (Lake Nipissing area broadband, community, and content collaboration) and Halinet (Halton Information Network, a partnership of information providers and educators in the former Halton County) exist in Ontario, but they depend heavily on individuals. There is no general regional structure for institutional collaboration and problem-solving.

Diversity. Despite Ontario’s many innovations in multicultural services, the multicultural collections required to underpin and sustain those services lag far behind. Libraries share small pools of multilingual materials by subscription. This is undoubtedly helpful, but these collections are not permanent. Multicultural collections fall seriously short of current demand and the shortfall will increase. The loss in 1994 of the National Library’s Multilingual Biblioservice, which provided multilingual resources to supplement the collections of Canada’s libraries, created a serious gap that remains unfilled.

Infrastructure and buildings. Infrastructure support and renewal is largely lagging in Ontario’s public library sector. This applies to both new buildings and renovations. Libraries cannot act on many promising possibilities in inflexible or crumbling buildings. To meet future needs, public libraries require more meeting space, collaborative learning space and quiet zones. In First Nations communities, which do not have taxing authority, the lack of capital support is an impediment to innovation in library services.

Broadband. There is a need for consistent high-bandwidth availability and technology infrastructure to support digital resources and learning. Ontario provides valuable subsidies for bandwidth in Ontario’s libraries, but they are a long way from the comprehensive and free broadband available to public libraries in Alberta through its SuperNet.

Capacity of the library sector – innovation support. Funding for innovation in libraries has generally been small and uneven. Libraries in small communities are once again eligible for grants from gaming revenues (Ontario Trillium Foundation), but libraries in larger communities are not eligible for this significant stimulus to innovation and extension of services. The base of the Ministry’s Library Strategic Development Fund (LSDF) grants, though improving, is small considering the number, scope, and opportunities of Ontario’s libraries. Nevertheless, the LSDF has successfully stimulated the development of important services. The volume of high-quality digitized local content now freely available is one example.
Major opportunities to leverage the role of public libraries in such major provincial priorities as literacy, diversity, child development, economic development, and youth require policy development and intensive interministerial communication and collaboration, in addition to provincial reinvestment of funds.

In the Ministry of Culture proper (the ministry’s Ontario Library Service agencies concentrate largely on training and resource sharing), which carries the responsibility for interministerial relations, both the general staffing allocation to public library matters and the number of library experts have dropped by over 200% since the early 1990s. These changes have occurred in a period of exponential growth in both the technology-based capacity of public libraries and the opportunities to leverage public library strengths in provincial priorities led by other ministries.

As the “talking stage” of partnership development requires both detailed knowledge and continuity, this capacity gap poses risks to innovation in critical areas such as early childhood and youth. The staff complement of the two Ministry-funded Ontario Library Service agencies has also been sharply reduced; the training function of these OLSs is material to the capacity of the library sector to innovate. The Ministry of Culture is confident, however, that its new functional structure, introduced in 2008, will ensure the necessary knowledge and processes. This structure includes the Policy Branch (policies, standards, guidelines, and legislation) and the Programs and Services Branch (development and implementation of programs). It is intended, among other goals, to enhance the Ministry’s leadership and policy development capacity and its ability to work with partners inside and outside government.

Finally, the public library innovation described in this report occurs in the presence of stable funding and balanced partnerships with appropriate levels of government. Federal, municipal, and provincial contributions to public library development do not reflect the depth of their shared interests and priorities. There has been a sharp decline in Ontario’s provincial operating grants. Statistics compiled by the Provincial and Territorial Library Directors Council for the 2005 Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Public Library Service show that Ontario is among the lowest in provincial per capita operating grants to libraries. That, and the absence of any significant ongoing federal investment, means that municipalities shoulder disproportionate responsibility. Small libraries at subsistence levels of funding lack the capacity to innovate on their own. Urban libraries coping with growing diversity are tied to the policies of other levels of government, such as immigration levels, without stable commensurate financial support.

Ontario leads in public library innovation in some respects and has no inherent barriers to future innovation. The province is poised for significant reinvestment and progress between 2008 and 2020. This progress will take place in a distinct Ontario context.
6.0 THE DISTINCT ONTARIO CONTEXT OF LIBRARY INNOVATION

The international innovations noted earlier occur largely in countries with a strategic national presence in libraries. The national presence can be financial support of library research and development, building or supporting the technical infrastructure, and establishing a regulatory framework friendly to equity and innovation in learning. The vision for public libraries in Ontario (and Canada) therefore has a distinct context.

Much of the vision of the public library of the future described in this report would benefit from national building blocks not now in place:

- A national broadband network, instead of the current patchwork, is an important condition for innovation. Many now-standard services, like streaming video for interactive learning applications, depend on broadband. A continuing federal presence in connectivity programs, through direct financial support and/or through the regulatory process, would help achieve the vision.

- Activating Library and Archives Canada’s mandate to provide grants to libraries would also stimulate innovation.

- Stable federal funding for immigrant settlement partnerships with public libraries should accompany federal control and encouragement of immigration, along with support for multicultural collections and services.

- Innovation in services and collections for Aboriginal peoples should have federal support for improving library services on and off reserves.

- A national focus for library research and initiatives to underpin library innovation has been central to developments in the US and the UK. A similar approach in Canada would focus on early childhood learning, youth learning and engagement, seniors, economic development support in such areas as business development and employment transition, Aboriginal people, and multicultural groups.

- A national publicly funded strategy is necessary to meet the information access needs of persons with disabilities, especially the growing numbers of people with vision disabilities. All comparable OECD countries have such a strategy, using technology to address access gaps.

National-level funding, recognition of libraries in the regulatory framework, broadband, diversity supports, and research are major enablers of innovation elsewhere. In Canada, these elements are fragmented or altogether missing. Without federal partnership, the provinces, territories, and municipalities are largely on their own to develop systems to meet the complex and changing needs of Canadians. Not surprisingly, the many library organizations try to meet these needs through the voluntary collaboration of individuals and institutions.
In many areas important to libraries in the future, such as multiculturalism, the provinces are not the lead jurisdiction. Several other jurisdictional and organizational features affect the scope and implementation of library innovation in Ontario:

- The vision of thriving communities supported by public libraries includes high visibility and recognition of public library roles within provincial priorities. State libraries and state librarian institutions in the US and Australia have this status.
- Making public libraries eligible for grants from gaming revenues is an impetus for new library initiatives. This has been the case in the UK and in American jurisdictions such as Georgia.
- Improving the philanthropic climate could nurture future development in Ontario and support more risk-taking in libraries. A vibrant philanthropic environment is a particularly distinct feature of the US vision.
- Greater cohesion in policy and program development across provincial ministries would be an ideal backdrop to future initiatives. Ontario is the only province to distribute government public library expertise over a ministry and two agencies. The agencies do not have a mandate to develop cross-ministry policies and programs. This small base makes interministerial work a particular challenge.
- In the Ontario of the future, special populations will remain high priorities (e.g., preschool children, seniors, youth and newcomers). Simplifying government partnership would make opportunities to collaborate to make services such as e-government more manageable.

Much of the public library innovation included in this report occurs in municipalities that have significant flexibility and autonomy. Ontario’s municipal governments are less independent than their American and British counterparts are. Innovation thrives where there are few barriers to opportunities.

Ideally, the municipalities of the future would integrate locally provided services, regardless of governance mechanisms such as library boards. Citizens would then benefit from a full and seamless range of learning, recreational and cultural services. As stresses and strains on the provincial-municipal relationship become less evident, mutual confidence in collaboration would replace discussions about downloading.

Small and home-based businesses will continue to grow in Ontario, and many of them will be knowledge-intensive. At the same time, the competitive environment for Ontario’s exporting industries will require a well-educated work force able to learn new approaches and skills.

Key industries like digital media are particularly information-intensive and knowledge-intensive. They require highly creative entrepreneurs and product developers. Ontario’s well-educated and multicultural workforce is in a good position to expand this sector, and Ontario libraries can be an ideal test bed for digital media products. These and other features of the private sector landscape may well create more opportunities for digital partnerships and collaboration with cultural industries in the future. All imply a growing role for public library support of local and provincial economic development.
These features of Ontario constitute a distinct landscape for public library innovation. Policy development needs to take all of them into consideration to make it possible to identify and develop the most productive opportunities.
7.0 KEY POLICY THEMES FOR THE FUTURE

Achieving the vision of the public library of the future will mean creating, reviewing or updating policy in several key areas. This is necessary to ensure that public libraries fulfill their potential to advance public priorities. Policy should clarify roles, responsibilities and expected outcomes. The result will be greater equity, consistency and assured quality. Much of the following may involve more than one level of government.

Learning and youth. The growth of co-curricular collections and programs for youth in public libraries requires policy on availability, organization, and quality assurance of volunteer-based programs such as Homework Help in public libraries.

Early childhood learning. Research confirms the pivotal relationship between early childhood learning and later understanding and achievement. As Ontario moves to strengthen pre-kindergarten education, it needs a policy framework to articulate the role of public libraries in responding to the learning needs of preschool children.

Ageing. The elderly will become a much larger group in Ontario, and there will be great variation in their interests and capacities. Ontario will need innovative ways to serve larger numbers of the frail elderly in such areas as leisure, health and social connectedness. Public libraries are essential to a community response to this diversity of needs.

Disability. The modern outlook is changing our laws and expectations regarding services to persons with disabilities. Policies on equity of access to information for persons with disabilities need review to keep pace. Public libraries are in an ideal position to participate in developing and implementing adaptive technologies for digital participation. These technologies are a natural counterpart to existing standards for buildings.

Collaboration, consortia and networks. More information is becoming available in digital form, including high-quality data for which users pay. Digital information is easier to share than physical collections are. Policies should articulate principles of resource-sharing among libraries and related institutions.

Infrastructure and buildings. Flexible, engaging, and safe spaces are important to the library of the future. Policy development on public infrastructure renewal should reflect this. Policies should include information infrastructure as a significant component. This needs to be addressed and accelerated at all levels of government.

Broadband. With the persistence of the digital divide and the importance of addressing barriers to participation in digital media, for government service delivery and other purposes important to public policy, there is a need for policy on broadband deployment and availability in public libraries throughout the province. The policy also needs to ensure that public libraries have the capacity they need (e.g., in number and quality of workstations).
**Leverage for government e-services.** The learning experience of early e-government access in public libraries can be drawn upon for policy development that articulates the roles of governments and public libraries in citizen access and establishes mutually agreed parameters and goals.

**Commons of ideas.** Copyright regulation is extremely important to the formal and informal education community in Ontario. It is also important to national bodies such as the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada. Ontario needs to develop a balanced coordinated policy approach to its advocacy on this federally regulated matter.

**Aboriginal people.** The fast-growing population of Aboriginal people, on and off reserves, will require appropriate library services. Ontario already has a strategic plan for service on reserves, which is a major asset.

**Diversity.** Diversity is growing in Ontario. It has many dimensions, including multiculturalism and official language minorities. Meeting diverse needs requires policy development regarding collections and services. It will also require some intergovernmental policy collaboration.

**Cultural development.** Public libraries should be key partners in implementing municipal cultural planning. Policy also needs to ensure that governance mechanisms that place libraries outside the municipal departmental structures do not omit public libraries from cultural planning.

**Collaborations within and among governments.** Meeting the need for lifelong learning in a knowledge-based economy is a shared responsibility. The levels of government need a framework for collaboration on this issue, and ministries within the same level of government need to cooperate. Grants from gaming revenues have been important in library innovation elsewhere. Here, without federal funding and robust philanthropy to stimulate innovation, Ontario should reconsider the policy on eligibility for gaming revenues.

All of these policy themes are essential to the effectiveness of Ontario’s public libraries to 2020. Significant opportunities and challenges are associated with all of them.
8.0 CONCLUSION: RECOMMENDED CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPING A POLICY FRAMEWORK

In developing the policy framework referred to above, the province should concentrate on areas where there is especially high potential to advance communities and the province as a whole in the knowledge-based economy to 2020. The following recommendations for issues to take into consideration are based on that criterion and on Ontario’s priorities in literacy and learning, innovation, student success, strong communities, and prosperity.

Collaboration for equity and excellence. The opportunity posed by Knowledge Ontario is not just provision of information and content services equitably across Ontario, but the platform for collaboration within a sector (public, school, post-secondary) that encompasses formal and informal learning, in an Ontario economy that must become ever more knowledge based. It is also the natural foundation for private sector partnership (e.g., in software development). Knowledge Ontario began with one-time funding. It will require a stable financial foundation and a policy commitment to additional partnerships with education and post-secondary ministries, with which it shares a community of interest, to reach its full potential.

Apart from the obvious and essential element of direct financial support from the jurisdiction, factors critical to the success of consortia include

- Jurisdiction-wide scope and benefit
- Strong governance structures
- Phased-in implementation of services
- Solid grassroots support and participation.

Leading innovative consortia have also benefited from the participation of major university libraries, which have the necessary technology expertise and infrastructure. Multi-organization consortia that combine strengths like technology infrastructure with pooled purchasing power will therefore better meet the future needs of public libraries. The Toronto Public Library’s Virtual Reference Library and Ottawa Public Library’s Bibliothèque de référence virtuelle are significant foundations for collaboration.

Infrastructure and buildings. The vision of the future in this report requires renewed buildings with the flexibility, space, and technology for new programs and services. New and renovated library buildings across North America provide evidence that such buildings are strong people-attractors with demonstrated potential to revitalize neighbourhoods. It has been a challenge to ensure that public libraries are eligible for infrastructure funding. However, Ontario’s program now affirms that libraries are eligible and that municipalities can propose projects of their choice. Given the many competing interests and projects, it remains a challenge to expand eligibility for Ontario Trillium Foundation funding to libraries in communities over 20,000.
**Broadband.** Broadband is essential to an equitable future. Until Ontario has a full broadband network, the Ministry’s subsidy of bandwidth in smaller and remote communities will be essential to equity of access. The free broadband access for public libraries in Alberta is an appropriate precedent for a province the size of Ontario.

**Youth.** The public library remains a prime, easily accessible resource for co-curricular support to youth (e.g., through Homework Help). The Knowledge Ontario partnership makes a common suite of resources available to youth in school and, through public libraries, to youth not in school. This has improved province-wide equity and strengthened student success. Ontario could further leverage public libraries to strengthen co-curricular programs like Homework Help through concerted policy and funding support for expanding programs now concentrated in a few libraries. The number and varying capacities of public libraries across Ontario is challenging. However, building capacity in the six largest public library systems that collectively serve 40 per cent of Ontarians would improve services to a significant segment of the population. Public libraries are accessible and responsive. Ontario should consider this in its approaches to youth at risk. The province should examine some of the approaches for youth at risk in the UK (e.g., specially designed spaces) for their potential application in Ontario.

**Early childhood learning.** Research in the US and pilot programs in Ontario public libraries imply that Ontario would benefit from a concerted and consistent approach to early learning in public libraries. The recent announcement of extended kindergarten in Ontario is an opportunity to review the related policy. The province would need to address uneven capacity in its public libraries. There are not enough children and youth specialists, and strengths are concentrated in urban libraries. Policy development should take into consideration the lessons from the Early Years and Best Start programs. Those programs did not consistently consider public library capacity. The result was limited scope (pilot programs) and the duplication of public library services (e.g., reading promotion, family literacy).

**21st century literacies.** This area requires close interministerial collaboration to align curricular and co-curricular policy and programs. Knowledge Ontario and the Virtual Reference Library (Toronto Public Library) could assist with solutions like integrated search engines. The Ontario government’s recent commitment to strengthening school libraries will help to free the public library from the burden of filling the school library gap. This will enable the public library to concentrate on its co-curricular roles, including content use and creation.

**Economic development.** American studies on the economic impact of public libraries have not been replicated in Canada. However, SOLS has prepared world-class instruments for libraries to capture and communicate individual measures of social and economic impact. Library valuation has moved beyond earlier crude measures of economic multipliers into “balanced scorecards.” These combine financial and non-financial measures. Ontario now has an opportunity to raise awareness of the economic impacts of public libraries (e.g., stimulating small business development, contributing to skill development and job readiness, renewing downtown neighbourhoods) when planning and implementing new policy. A province-wide program to compile and communicate this information will be most useful in raising awareness.
Diversity and special populations. Population trends in Ontario imply that future policy and programs will focus more on the elderly. Given that Minister of Culture is responsible for the Seniors Secretariat, this is an opportune moment to begin to do so. Seniors are, of course, not a homogeneous group. However, age-related disability will increase demand for special services, especially for persons with visual disabilities. With provincial leadership, partnerships with such service providers as the CNIB need to move from ad hoc to systematic. Technology is essential to solutions, and Knowledge Ontario is an ideal platform for collaborating on accessibility technology.

Immigration will continue to fuel the Ontario workforce. Additional federal-provincial collaboration will strengthen Ontario’s capacity to respond to immigrants’ needs. The province can use the experience from pilot programs like Working Together and Immigrant Settlement to develop consistent policy. Through federal-provincial negotiation, funds for municipalities based on the number of immigrants arriving should be available to support public library partnerships, collections and services.

Aboriginal people. Ontario already leads in services to Aboriginal people on reserves. The province could address the needs of urban Aboriginal people by applying lessons learned in Western Canada. As in the case of immigrant settlement and services to marginalized people, there is scope for federal/provincial policy development. Interprovincial collaboration is required to meet the challenge of engaging the federal government in these areas.

Government service delivery. Expanding Service Ontario to several hundred libraries has provided some proof that the concept works. The program is an improvement over the former federal service partnerships in that the public library is receiving some modest funding to acknowledge its role. Ontario could review the experience for potential application in other important, high expenditure areas (such as health promotion and disease prevention information).

The commons of ideas. The Ministry has a community of interest with other ministries, particularly those responsible for formal education, in balanced and reasonable copyright revision. Their relationships with content creators position them ideally to make the case for balance, as the expectations of the creator community have not been met in the recent American experience of copyright revision claimed to have been in their interest. For the Ontario government, the challenge is to articulate the appropriate balance. The province will need to work closely with stakeholders, including the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada, to assert the view that a robust public domain of ideas is essential to future learning and innovation.

In summary, each of these policy areas entails challenges. Many of them arise from the distinct Ontario context. Much of the critical work of policy development requires collaboration and partnership across several large and complex provincial ministries. The work necessarily entails considerable discussion to develop mutual awareness of needs, strengths and options. However, Ontario’s public library system has key assets that are important to Ontario’s future as knowledge-based economy. It has a high degree of public participation and trust. It is a physical and virtual presence throughout the province. It has
proven its ability to use technology strategically and to create new products. It has a deep understanding of information and of how people seek information. An updated provincial policy framework and significant provincial reinvestment to take full advantage of these assets will be a building block of Ontario’s future.
Appendix A: Sources

- Literature search at University of Toronto on international databases
- Review of publications and blogs of leading authors and researchers
- Review of websites of appropriate Canadian, American, Australian, European, and UK organizations and projects
- Review of literature on relevant social, economic, cultural, and technology trends and developments
- Review of Canadian, American, and UK statistics, surveys, and polls
- Past five years of Library Journal “Library of the Year” awards
- Urban Libraries Council awards for youth service
- Discussions with leaders of three leading urban public libraries in Ontario
- Discussions with leaders of three provinces/territories
- Discussions with leading youth/facility developer in the UK
- Discussions with various faculty members, Faculty of Information Studies, University of Toronto
- Documentation (including transcripts) of Deputy Minister’s consultations, 2006
- Speech from the Throne, Ontario Legislature, Fall 2007
Appendix B: Future public library landscape

People:


Diversity – Keith Banting (http://post.queensu.ca/~bantingk/index.htm), of Queen’s University, studies Canada’s uniquely “diverse diversity.” (See his presentation to the Canadian Urban Libraries Council in point form at http://culc.webexone.com/default.asp?link).


Technology:


Data from Forrester Research (a firm researching technology use) is generally available only to purchasers, but a summary of their recent research on social use of the Internet (analyzed by what people are doing, their age and gender) is available by registering at http://www.web-strategist.com/blog/2008/03/21/access-forrester-technographic-data/. This research categorizes Internet users as Creators, Critics, Collectors, Joiners, Spectators, or Inactives, depending on the intensity and nature of their connection with such social software as blogs and peer-generated videos, and identifies the age groups most and least associated with each category.
Economy:

Creativity, culture, and cities; cultural mapping – See Richard Florida (as of 2007, University of Toronto), *The Rise of the Creative Class*, *Cities and the Creative Class*, and *The Flight of the Creative Class*. Florida asserts a strong and positive relationship between the presence of creative people (e.g., high-tech workers, gays), a dynamic environment, and economic development in cities. (See [http://creativeclass.com/](http://creativeclass.com/)).


Appendix C: Innovative and visionary thinkers on public libraries

Public libraries as leaders in community development – Ken Haycock, former Dean of the School of Library, Archival, and Information Science at the University of British Columbia, and now Dean at San Jose State University, has articulated the current and future role of public libraries in community development – proactive leadership and engagement in the economic and social life of the community. Haycock continues to assist library boards and library managers, in particular, in the principles, tools, techniques, and human resource requirements of this community leadership. (See http://204.200.206.210/site/showPage.cgi?page=issues/publiclibraryboards/oltaposition.html.)

Public libraries as technology access enablers and teachers – The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation continues to invest in public library connectivity around the world. As both a parent and philanthropist, Gates has a strong belief in the public library. He sees the importance of its traditional strengths in simulating reading and learning and its role as the principal mitigating agency for the Digital Divide in all its forms, not just those of technical connectivity. (See http://www.gatesfoundation.org/topics/Pages/libraries.aspx) Charles McClure (Florida State) is among the most prominent researchers and consultants to libraries and governments on the design, planning, implementation, management, and evaluation of digital resources and services and their infrastructure requirements. His work appears in some 40 books and 325 papers, widely digested by governments and libraries around the world for their rigour and understanding of strategic context (http://www.ii.fsu.edu/~cmcclure/).

Public libraries and the social web (Web 2.0) – Torontonian Stephen Abram, Vice-President and Chief Strategist for SirsiDynix, the largest library systems company in the world, and former President of both the Canadian Library Association and the Ontario Library Association, interprets the leading edge of technology to the mandate of libraries. He has been one of the foremost integrators of the “social web,” e.g., blogs, wikis, Second Life, virtual information services, into mainstream library services and the commons of ideas. He makes over 90 presentations a year on leading-edge technologies; his blog is one of the most widely consulted in the industry (http://stephenslighthouse.sirsidynix.com/).

The rethinking of reference and information service in the Digital Age – Joe Janes, of the University of Washington’s I-School, founder of the Internet Public Library, is among the most highly regarded architects of the new 24/7 digital information service. (http://www.ischool.washington.edu/people/facdirectory.aspx?id=3122&mode=pics) His course “Rethinking the Library” at has also been offered at the University of Toronto. He has assisted with design of leading collaborative technology-assisted information services in Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Collaboration: one big library, many context-sensitive points of entry, long tail – The developers and supporters of Knowledge Ontario (http://www.knowledgeontario.ca/) have created interconnected provincial-scale initiatives to offer a broad, consistent, and branded package of information resources and services and create new resources and learning experiences for Ontarians across the spectrum of age, location, and educational
and cultural institution. The depth and scale of Knowledge Ontario transcends the “virtual library” concept of earlier cooperative initiatives. These kinds of collaborations enable libraries to have collectively “long tails” – a phrase of Chris Anderson of *Wired* magazine (http://www.thelongtail.com/about.html) to characterize such business models as Amazon.com, which can distribute, through their powerful networks, more otherwise hard-to-find items in small volumes than popular items at large volumes. They also enable service to a far greater range of public library users, e.g., distance learners in degree programs.

**Lifecycle libraries** – Bill Crowley of Dominican University proposes the concept of “lifecycle librarianship,” of libraries as education providers and self-learning facilitators in the midst of tremendous social and technological volatility. In his presentation at the BCLA Conference: *Beyond 2020* in 2007, he urged library and information science educators and practitioners to see learning, rather than information, as their defining context (http://library2020.bclibrary.ca/resources/Crowley_2007.pdf).

**Municipal economic and social catalysts** – Former Winnipeg mayor and urban strategist Glen Murray (http://www.navauthenticity.com/), one of Canada’s foremost advisors on culture and knowledge as economic engines of cities, highlights the importance of public libraries in the economy of communities. Paul Bedford, former head of planning for the City of Toronto, refers to the public library as a metaphor for the kind of city we want to live in. Both articulated these ideas powerfully at a “Think Tank” on public libraries convened by the Deputy Minister of Culture in 2006.

**The “third place”** – Susan Kent (consultant and former director of the public library systems of New York, Los Angeles, and Minneapolis) projects the public library as the “third place” (after home and work) that is a “community space, an informal meeting place, and a place for social interaction” well into the future. “Third places” are free or inexpensive, they may have food and drink available, they are welcoming and accessible places where people can feel at home, and they have “regulars.” (See http://culc.webexone.com/default.asp?link=.)

**The 21st century commons** – Rosemary Griebel and Gerry Meek (Calgary Public Library) spoke at the Conference of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council in 2007 of the public library as commons (originally open and accessible village greens and agricultural lands, gradually lost to enclosure movements that eliminated the right to use these lands as common space; now more broadly used to cover free, open, shared spaces and including virtual spaces, social institutions, and such cultural elements as language, legends, and music). They observed the emergence of “third generation libraries” like Cerritos (California) that are community action centres, more experience oriented (as in Pine’s *Experience Economy*, cited above) and participatory in their design and services, and edgier in their content. (See http://culc.webexone.com/default.asp?link=.)

**“Third generation libraries”** – American academic Shannon Mattern, whose doctoral thesis on the Seattle Public library examined the ideas, ideals, and values embodied in the new Seattle Public Library building, writes of the “third generation” of library buildings in her book *The New Downtown Library: Designing with Communities* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2007). She deems the traditional public library,
represented by the iconic buildings endowed by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie in the early years of the 20th century, “first generation.” Mid-century buildings were designed with greater attention to service points. Third generation public libraries are much more than the placing of an old institution into a new box, but instead reflect new public processes to meet longstanding public library goals within communities. For her analysis of the Seattle experience, see http://www.wordsinspace.net/publications/JAEPrintEd.pdf.
Appendix D: Innovative jurisdictions

UNITED STATES

Federal government, philanthropy and advocacy Groups

The Institute for Museum and Library Services is a federally funded agency whose mission is “to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development.” It does this through studies, grants, and awards. See http://www.imls.gov/about/about.shtm.

The E-Rate is part of the regulatory framework of the telecommunications industry. It ensures subsidized access to the Internet for schools and libraries. For a summary of this program and its impact on public libraries by the American Library Association, see http://ala.org/.

For the programs and services of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in the USA, see http://www.gatesfoundation.org/UnitedStates/USLibraryProgram/. For Libraries for the Future, a nonprofit organization that supports innovation and investment in libraries, see http://www.lff.org/. One example of its investments is its current partnership with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) Design Laboratory and the Louisville (KY) Public Library, to examine emerging needs for library services in order to develop physical design principles for the library of the future. OCLC’s services and programs are available at http://www.oclc.org/programsandresearch/default.htm.

State libraries and statewide collaboration

For leading examples of state library consortia and related initiatives, see:

Ohio – A leading state, Ohio provides OhioLINK (digital resources ranging from scholarly full-text journals to for digital information accessible through colleges and universities and the State Library of Ohio (see http://www.ohiolink.edu/); KnowItNow, a live 24/7 reference/information for everyone in the state and Homework now for K-12 students (see http://www.knowitnow.org); Learning Express Library, offering students and adults 24/7 access to targeted skill-building interactive courses in math, reading, and writing, as well as online interactive tests that prepare them for several types of exams, e.g., grade school achievement, SAT, GED, US Citizenship, and civil service positions (see http://www.winslo.state.oh.us/services/learningexpress.html); the Ohio eBook Project, allowing libraries to provide e-books, e-audiobooks, e-video, and e-music at considerable savings (see http://ohdbks.lib.overdrive.com/6D6F3910-9241-4E3D-B9F0-E59B7F168DE6/10/269/en/Default.htm); Ohio Ready to Read, a program to reach at-risk families with support for early reading and learning, among other collaborative initiatives. State and in many cases federal funds support these initiatives (see http://www.ohreadytoread.org/).
Indiana – INSPIRE (Indiana SPectrum of Information REsources) is Indiana's Virtual Library on the Internet. INSPIRE is a collection of commercial databases and other information resources. This is financially assisted by federal and state grants. (See http://www.inspire.net/.)

Michigan – The Michigan eLibrary includes statewide access to databases in one search, catalogues of Michigan libraries, digitized historical resources pertaining to Michigan, librarian-recommended websites. Among its new features are art museum images that have been rights-cleared for educational and research use. (See http://www.mel.org/SPT--BrowseResourcesNewMeL.php.)

Colorado – Colorado library collaboration is also frequently cited as a model. Initiatives include Ask Colorado, a voluntary consortium of school district and public libraries to provide 24/7 information and guidance on research (see http://www.askcolorado.org); the Colorado Virtual Library, a collaborative project of the Colorado State Library, and the Colorado library community providing the residents of Colorado access to the information resources of the libraries in the state of Colorado (see http://www.aclin.org/).

Minnesota - MnLINK (Minnesota Library Information Network) is a statewide virtual library (see http://www.minitex.umn.edu/mnlink/). Through the MnLINK Gateway, libraries and community members have access to electronic resources including online catalogs from over 20 Minnesota library systems and the Electronic Library for Minnesota (ELM). ELM includes databases made available through collective, statewide contracts.

Georgia – GALILEO, the GeorgiA Library Learning Online system first launched in 1995, provides access to digital resources to all residents through schools, libraries and post-secondary institutions. It has grown from a university-based initiative to an award-winning statewide collaboration. (See http://www.galileo.usg.edu/cgi-bin/homepage.cgi?_cc=1&_id=8e9694c6-1226659879-9797.)

Local library as place, partner, and conversation

See details and examples in Appendix E.

UNITED KINGDOM

A number of public library initiatives in the UK receive lottery support. The Reading Agency, a government funded initiative in the UK to strengthen reading skills, is using lottery funds to help develop HeadSpaces for youth reading in public libraries and other venues. For details on The Reading Agency and the redesign of libraries, see http://www.readingagency.org.uk/. Lottery funding was used to create The People’s Network - the national connectivity and training program in public libraries – several years ago. (See http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk/). The Big Lottery Fund is currently providing £80 million to support the Community Libraries Programme across England, for innovative development of public library buildings and spaces, based on engagement with local communities. One objective of this program is to promote best practice in
community engagement and library design. The Hertfordshire County Council, for example, was awarded £1.4 million from the Big Lottery Fund for Community Libraries in November 2007 to remodel and expand Oxhey Library to provide more space for local activities and learning, to include a flexible community space, a modernized layout and facilities to improve access, a cleaner, greener building, and an architectural focal point in the community. (See http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/prog_community_libraries.)

For information on the development and work of Museums Libraries and Archives (MLA) in the UK, see http://www.mla.gov.uk/home. It is described on the MLA website as “government's agency for museums, galleries, libraries and archives. We deliver strategic leadership in England and in each of its regions and we collaborate with partners across the UK. Our research identifies good practice, which we use to promote improvement. We offer advice, support and resources to funding bodies and other groups to incentivise innovation. Our aim is to raise professional standards and champion better services for users and readers of all ages and backgrounds, whether residents or visitors.”

Idea Stores

For information on the Idea Stores, and in particular the Tower Hamlets example, see http://www.ideastore.co.uk/.

AUSTRALIA


NORDIC COUNTRIES

For details on the examples noted in the report, see Appendix E.

SINGAPORE

For a summary of the Prime Minister’s article, see The Singapore Way at www.mfa.gov.sg/experience/jan2006/images/perspective.pdf. The national Intelligent Island strategy gave rise to a complete overhaul of its public library system, which is centralized and includes the National Library. The rationale for the improvement of public libraries as a strategy to position Singapore in the knowledge economy of the future is included in the Library 2000 report. Goals of this initiative included “establishing Singapore as an international information hub; preserving and promoting Singapore's literary heritage; providing for education, knowledge and research; and promoting a well-read and well-informed society.” See
http://www.nlb.gov.sg/ShowBinary/BEA%20Repository/corporate/Publications/L2000Report. The recommendations of this report have been largely implemented.

CANADA


Library and Archives Canada “collects and preserves Canada's documentary heritage, and makes it accessible to all Canadians. This heritage includes publications, archival records, sound and audio-visual materials, photographs, artworks, and electronic documents such as websites.” For details on the programs and services, see http://www.lac-bac.gc.ca/.

The website also states, “As part of our mandate, we work closely with other archives and libraries to acquire and share these materials as widely as possible.”

For the Canadian Digital Information Strategy, in the consultation stage at the time of writing, see http://www.lac-bac.gc.ca/cdis/012033-1000-e.html. Background as summarized by LAC: “In 2005, Library and Archives Canada (LAC) initiated a dialogue reflecting the range of interests in the digital field, with the goal of framing a Canadian Digital Information Strategy (CDIS). Through a series of meetings, LAC consulted with over 200 stakeholder organizations from a variety of sectors: publishing and media producers, creators, rights bodies, academics, provincial and federal officials, and memory institutions. The consultations culminated in a National Summit in 2006 where a broad consensus on the elements of a national strategy emerged, leading to the development of the Canadian Digital Information Strategy.”

This report includes chapters on library innovation in Ontario. For other jurisdictions referred to in the report, see the following.

For the British Columbia “Books for Babies” program, see http://books4babies.bclibrary.ca/. This program has had some local counterparts in Ontario, e.g., at Ottawa Public Library, but there is not a comprehensive program in Ontario. For information on BC’s “Ask Away,” see http://www.askaway.org/.

For information on the governance and services of Alberta Library, see the Strategic Plan and Annual Reports at http://www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca/. The Alberta SuperNet is described at http://www.albertasupernet.ca/.

Local level

See examples of local programs in Appendix E.
Appendix E: Innovative practices and services: selected examples

The marginalized and underserved – The Working Together pilot (Halifax, Vancouver, Toronto, Regina library systems), in partnership with HRSDC, places librarians in strategic areas of community development to work with the urban marginalized and underserved outside the walls of the library, connecting them to appropriate services and gaining a deeper understanding of their needs and preferences. It is a pilot program, to be wrapped up in spring 2008. The learning from this pilot, which has been captured in a toolkit for other libraries, has significant implications for the urban community of 2020. (See http://www.librariesincommunities.ca/?page_id=8.)

Immigrant welcome and integration – In partnership with local immigrant settlement agencies funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, newcomers meet with settlement workers in public libraries, in their own languages, to address the defined needs of immigrants as established in the Canada-Ontario consultation of 2006. Toronto and Hamilton Public Libraries are among those participating in this model, which connects newcomers to community services and learning opportunities. Since within five years all Ontario’s net labour force increases are expected to come from immigration, such programs will be increasingly essential to Ontario’s future. This integrated response to documented immigrant needs, addressing all stages of the immigrant settlement process, is being expanded to other newcomer reception areas across Ontario. Toronto Public Library achieves extraordinary success in welcoming and engaging newcomers, a priority in its current Strategic Plan. An independent survey of Torontonians in 2006 found that 89% of newcomers (new to Canada within the past 10 years) had used the library within the past year – extraordinary market penetration on a world scale. The “Your Library” video on the TPL website is available in 17 languages. (See http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/mul_index.jsp for Toronto; http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/libraryservices/kids/newcomers/lssp+-+library-siso+settlement+partnership+(new).htm for Hamilton; http://www.biblioottawalibrary.ca/experience/newcan/newcan_e.html for Ottawa.)

Aboriginal services to strengthen language, culture, and community (on reserves) – As Canada’s fastest-growing ethnic group, Aboriginals living on and off reserves have distinct needs and preferences. Public library service on reserves within Canada is generally poor to non-existent; the local financial support base is low and there is no ability to tax. Ontario is a leading jurisdiction in this area, with a targeted program to subsidize public library costs and consultancy service to assist local staff. About one-third of reserves in Ontario have public library service. Through the Ontario Library Service, the Ministry has facilitated the development of a Strategic Plan for public library services on reserves (http://www.ourwayforward.ca/Downloads/First_Nation_Strat_Plan.pdf) and an advocacy plan to assist library staff and supporters to engage decision-makers in their communities in support for the library (see www.ourwayforward.ca/Downloads/First_Nation_Advocay_Kit.pdf). Public library service on reserves has major potential for federal/provincial collaboration.
Aboriginal services (off reserves) – Canada and Australia are world leaders in developing approaches to Aboriginal services. Regina Public Library (http://www.reginalibrary.ca/locations/albert.html) has been a particularly effective innovator among urban public libraries, developing programs and facilities. One key to effectiveness is the direct involvement of the Aboriginal community in service and facility design. Edmonton Public Library is also a leader, implementing the recommendations of its Library Services for Aboriginal Peoples Task Force (http://www.epl.ca/ResourcesPDF/ReportOfTaskForceOnLSAPFeb2006.pdf). Toronto Public Library’s Spadina Branch is another example of targeted services to urban Aboriginals (http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/hou_az_sp.jsp). The Thunder Bay Public Library website reveals a library responding to Aboriginal interests and events, with notices, text, and links of interest (http://www.tbpl.ca/internal.asp?id=87&cid=2233).

The City of Brisbane and the State of Queensland, Australia, have been among the international leaders of services to Aboriginal peoples (http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/about/who/orgchart/ils). Australia has a National and State Libraries policy framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander library services and collections (http://www.nsla.org.au/publications/policies/2007/pdf/NSLA_Policy-20070129-National_Policy_Framework_for_Indigenous_Library_Services.pdf). Library and Archives Canada has been a Canadian focal point for strategic thinking on this front, working together with the Provincial and Territorial Public Libraries Council (PTPLC), but over all, Canada’s national effort is not yet as cohesive as Australia’s. (See http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/aboriginal/index-e.html.)

Experience Library – Cerritos (California) Public Library (based on Joseph Pines’ The Experience Economy, in which the consumer has an immersion experience in a “themed” space, e.g., coffee in distinguished or quasi-theatrical surroundings) opened in 2006. In the new titanium-clad building, museum-quality exhibits such as a huge aquarium and a full-size replica of a dinosaur are combined with an improved collection and technology (200 computer workstations and seating for 1,200 laptop ports). Users can customize display of electronic resources, including extensive in-house local content. (See http://www.ci.cerritos.ca.us/library/experience_library.html.)

ImaginOn – A collaboration of the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenberg Counties (NC) and the Children’s Theatre of Charlotte, ImaginOn places library services for children and theatre in one exciting place that opened in 2005. It is not just a shared space, but instead an original approach to education, learning, and the arts. The project was assisted by philanthropists Joe and Joan Martin. (See http://www.imaginon.org/index.asp.)

Transformation Lab (Aarhus Public Library, Denmark) – With financial support from the Danish National Library Authority and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Public Library of Aarhus has developed the “Transformation Lab” as a prototype for future public library buildings. This unique creative space is featured in a now-famous video on YouTube: http://youtube.com/watch?v=TpFO_L_jA1c. The prototype includes five “labs”: literature, news, music, exhibition, and the public square – all highly interactive, integrating user participation. Some of the lessons learned include the
importance of flexible space and technology, openness of events, and visibility of library users.

**Youth participation** – Visionary examples are designed to engage youth with a variety of tastes and needs. The UK, Singapore, and Stockholm offer international examples of visionary library spaces and services for young people. In the UK, funds from the National Lottery have been accessed by The Reading Agency to fund Book Bars and HeadSpace ([http://www.readingagency.org.uk/young/headspace/](http://www.readingagency.org.uk/young/headspace/)). These library spaces were planned with teen involvement and respond to the distinct preferences of youth for interactivity. Teens earn formal accreditation for their volunteer contributions to HeadSpace. In the Book Bars, young people serve cappuccinos to their peers, along with the recommended reading ([http://www.boox.org.uk/](http://www.boox.org.uk/)). Singapore teens have helped to design new spaces with zones for relaxed, noisy use and for quiet reading. The Teen management Committee, mentored by a librarian, manages the space and the program in this innovative approach, called “Verging All Teens” ([http://www.nlm.gov.sg/](http://www.nlm.gov.sg/)). In Stockholm, the PUNKTmedis in the main library (Medborgarplatsen) has an area used for performances and separate rooms for collaborative work, homework help, and reading for ages 13-19. Ciara Eastell, of The Reading Agency (UK) has prepared a report on the Singapore and Stockholm initiatives at [http://www.ifla.org/VII/s46/conf/2006/Eastell.pdf](http://www.ifla.org/VII/s46/conf/2006/Eastell.pdf). London (ON) Public Library’s award-winning LOLLYPOP program provides special services for youth in a collaboratively designed space and program supported by the LSDF program of the Ontario Ministry of Culture ([http://ogov.newswire.ca/ontario/GPOE/2006/07/05/c8031.html?lmatch=&lang=_e.html](http://ogov.newswire.ca/ontario/GPOE/2006/07/05/c8031.html?lmatch=&lang=_e.html)).

**RAMP and Homework services for Youth** – Toronto Public Library – The collaborative space referred to above has a strong electronic counterpart in the Toronto Public Library’s Ramp for Youth, part of the Library’s website ([http://ramp.torontopubliclibrary.ca/index.html](http://ramp.torontopubliclibrary.ca/index.html)). It is a gateway to information and a platform for discussion. It is designed for in-school and other teens, including street kids. It introduces such highly effective services as the Homework Help for Teens program, offering free personal tutoring to students from Grades 7 to 12 ([http://ramp.torontopubliclibrary.ca/secondary/schoolstuff/homeworkhelp/two-content.jsp](http://ramp.torontopubliclibrary.ca/secondary/schoolstuff/homeworkhelp/two-content.jsp)). Students can visit as often as they want to get homework help from volunteer tutors. The program room is also available as quiet study space. Some program locations also have computer workstations for report preparation or Internet searching. Other forms of Homework Help similar to the Toronto model are being initiated in other Ontario communities. Current plans call for more customized approaches, such as Homework Help program for Somali youth. These programs are visionary approaches to the amelioration of barriers for immigrant and other at-risk youth.

**Services to seniors** – Canada’s distinct demography indicates that seniors will be a much larger proportion of the population. The Canadian Library Association has approved Guidelines for services to older persons. (See [http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Position_Statements&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=3029](http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Position_Statements&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=3029).) Seniors comprise an increasingly heterogeneous group. At one end of the spectrum, early retirement and affluence imply a highly active cohort with diverse interests and time for leisure and participation in digital services. Writer Faith Popcorn, who first popularized the “cooing” trend in North America, refers to this phenomenon as “down-aging.” At the other end of the spectrum, the frail
elderly will need more personally delivered services and assistive technologies (e.g., services in partnership with the CNIB Library for the Blind) in increasing numbers.

**Disability** – Although many Ontario libraries (e.g., Pickering, Brantford) have developed partnerships with the CNIB, there is need for accelerated development in view of the demographics, which imply greater future numbers of citizens with visual and other disabilities. There is a well-developed national proposal for library service to the print disabled, a vision of comprehensive and collaborative service, called “Opening the Book” (http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=News_Item_Documents&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=3463), much in need of government leadership and funding for implementation. In this endeavour, the library community is significantly ahead of government in its vision. There has been surprisingly little government support at any level in Canada for service to the print-disabled. The CNIB is the only national service provider of these services in the western world whose work is not tax-supported.

“**Living Library” and other innovative lending** – The city library in Malmo, Sweden provides access to living people for a 45-minute chat in a project designed to reduce barriers and prejudices about different religions, nationalities, or professions. (http://www.infospeak.org/shows/show2/index.htm) The project was introduced at Denmark's Roskilde Festival in 2000, and has since been tried at a Copenhagen library as well as in Norway, Portugal, and Hungary. The people available to be “borrowed” include a journalist, a gypsy, a blind man, and an animal rights activist. Borrowing is free, and the library will also provide coffee at its café, where the “living books” will answer questions about their lives, beliefs, or jobs. This service has recently spread to London, England (see http://women.timesonline.co.uk/tol/life_and_style/women/the_way_we_live/article3790377.ece). Canadian public libraries are also creative lenders – for example, the Ottawa Public Library lends pedometers and kilowatt metres.

**Applied retail-style merchandising** – Richmond (BC) Public Library’s Ironwood Branch: the “library of the future” (http://www.yourlibrary.ca/aboutus/). This branch located in a mall has broken new ground in branch library service, with displays and collections similar to those in retail stores, available in a comfortable environment called a “living room.” High-tech access and classes are also available. Generally new and refurbished branches in Ontario (e.g., Pickering) and elsewhere apply lessons learned from bookstores’ effective merchandising of the reading experience and the enduring attachment of people to the library as space.

**Information and reference consortia** – Consortia such as Knowledge Ontario’s AskOntario (http://www.knowledgeontario.ca/AskOntario/index.html), Ask Away (BC – see http://www.askaway.org/), and some international partnerships respond to questions posed electronically, by scheduling librarians during normal extended hours. Joe Janes (University of Washington), who founded the Internet Public Library, is among the best-known exponents of this new service dimension, which responds to people wherever and whenever they have need. Consortia help to establish a manageable resource base for these services. These will become even more important as user expectations of convenience rise. With support in part from the provincial government and the collaboration of several urban library systems in Ontario, Toronto Public Library has
developed the Virtual Reference Library, bringing selected websites and library reference service into a convenient interface (http://www.virtualreferencelibrary.ca/vrlOntario.portal?_nfpb=true&_pageLabel=vrl_page_home&click=home). In partnership with the VRL, Ottawa Public Library provides a French interface and content that supports both francophones and students of French (http://www.bibliovirtuelle.ca/).

**Social Web** – wikis, blogs, social networks. There are now so many examples of public library participation in these services that it is arbitrary to highlight examples. However, many leaders cite the work of Ann Arbor District Library as leading in collaborative digital media (http://www.aadl.org/). Its website is largely organized as a “conversation,” inviting user comments and dialogue about library services, online book club, and others. Ann Arbor’s Community Blog enables discussions on events, hobbies and the community. Its catalogue has integrated book reviews and blogs. The Oakville Public Library is piloting the use of Bibliocommons, a social software front end to library catalogues that has been developed as a public/private/non-profit collaboration. (See http://www.bibliocommons.com/.)

**Infrastructure rejuvenation** – There is a currently a renaissance of public library buildings, new and refurbished, especially in the US, where communities must pass bond issues to effectively tax themselves. Among the most prominent examples are the “Libraries for All” program of Seattle, where the community approved $194 million for its (new and world-famous) central and branch libraries (http://www.spl.org/lfa/index.html). In San Jose, a joint capital project brings the City and State University libraries together in a single facility (http://www.sjlibrary.org/). The Grande Bibliothèque in Montreal places the provincial and city libraries together in one building (http://www.banq.qc.ca/portal/dt/a_propos_banq/renseignements_generaux/grande_bibliothèque/rg_grande_bibli.jsp). In Brantford, ON, refurbishing of the Main Library has created additional space for the “virtual university library” managed by the public library and the growing local campus of Wilfrid Laurier University (www.brantford.library.on.ca). In Richmond, BC, the Ironwood Branch of Richmond Public Library (http://www.yourlibrary.ca/aboutus_sub.cfm?lev1=5) represents a visionary example of a community-responsive facility that is overwhelmingly popular with its citizens. The new main library in Whitby, ON (http://www.whitbylibrary.on.ca/) was planned and designed to be an asset to the revitalization of its downtown. The main libraries of London and Brantford, ON, represent award-winning re-uses of abandoned retail stores and are demonstrated people-attractors in their downtown neighbourhoods. The Canadian Library Association has produced a tool kit for libraries to advocate for infrastructure funding (http://www.cla.ca/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Resources&Template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=3684). The Ontario Government announced $2.3 million in library infrastructure support for five public libraries to improve facilities and stimulate economic growth (http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/library/news.htm).

**Broadband** – Urban public libraries tend to be well provided with broadband, making all the learning and interactive benefits available to their users. However, rural and remote
communities, and hence their libraries, still lag far behind. The assistance of the Ministry of Culture Connectivity program administered by the Southern Ontario Library Service makes a substantial difference (see http://www.sols.org/resourcesharing/coolcpa/connectivity/index.htm). While Canada’s OECD comparators have national broadband plans, Canada has fallen still further in broadband availability and does not have a systematic plan to rectify gaps. (It was ninth in 2006, down from second in 2002, and continues to slip.) It has no “fiber to the home” program, in contrast to its comparators. See summary at http://www.canurb.com/media/Presentations/UL_27/StArnaud_B.pdf).

**Government service delivery partnerships** – Partnerships with government are among the “natural paths” for public libraries and are now mainstream. Examples include HRSDC job centres (see Hamilton Public Library example at http://www.myhamilton.ca/myhamilton/LibraryServices/ServicesFor/JobSeekers/Job_discovery_centres.htm), services partnered with CIC and immigrant settlement organizations (see Toronto example at http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/mul_set_index.jsp), Service Ontario (http://www.gov.on.ca/ont/portal/?ut/p/cmd/cs/ee/7_0_A/s/7_0_25H/ s.7_0_A/7_0_25H/ 1/en?docid=EC001067), and the current use of public libraries in BC to register volunteers for the forthcoming Olympic Games. Governments benefit from not only the accessibility and ubiquity of public libraries, but also the superior public trust associated with them. For Canadian data on public satisfaction with public libraries, see the *Citizens First* series of studies sponsored by the Institute for Citizen Centred Service (http://www.erinresearch.com/documents/citizens_first_3.pdf being the most recent that is freely available online) that demonstrate Canadians place public libraries at the top of all non-emergency services noted in the public and private sector. For the most recent American study of the extraordinary trust in libraries and museums, see the 2008 study *Interconnections: the IMLS national study on the use of libraries, museums and the Internet* at http://interconnectionsreport.org/reports/ConclusionsFullRptB.pdf.

**Cultural planning and mapping** – Municipal cultural planning is a growing development in Ontario (http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/about/mcp.htm). It is noted that public libraries are not prominently included in the published examples; however, this is a development with rich potential. Glen Murray and Greg Baeker, partners in the Glen Murray Group, championed the value of municipal cultural planning in a series of local planning workshops in Ontario in 2005. Focusing on the quality of place, embracing new language to broaden and democratize the definition of local culture, adopting a cultural lens to see communities with new eyes, and breaking down silos through partnerships to overcome past cultural fragmentation are among the most effective approaches. Public libraries, with their high public trust and use, their role as social and cultural integrators, and their successes in planning for a changing environment, have a major but hitherto under-recognized role in municipal cultural planning. There is evidence of solid support for culture in communities. A 2007 survey of Canadians by Ipsos Reid, in collaboration with Municipal World, found high support for the role of cultural participation in strengthening Canadians’ relationship with their own personal heritage and their communities, among other findings. (See summary published in *Municipal World* at http://www.ipsos.ca/pdf/Ipsos_Municipal_World_09_2007.pdf.)
Visionary collaboration in environmental scanning – The technological environment is the focus of regular visionary scans at virtually all general library conferences and at such specialized conferences as Access (Canada-wide: see http://access2007.uvic.ca/) and NetSpeed (Alberta: see http://www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca/). The Canadian Urban Libraries Council has inaugurated a biennial conference, beginning in 2007 with diversity in cities (http://culc.webexone.com/). The Salt Lake City Public Library organizes an annual conference called “Thinking Ahead” (http://www.thinkinglibraries.org/).

Early childhood learning – Like adult literacy support, this is the focus of major local collaboration and great success in individual libraries, and has significant implications for early and continuing learning in society. However, most programs are a function of local partnerships, community by community. The Books for Babies program in British Columbia is a province-wide approach to strengthening literacy by reaching the families of all newborns babies in the province (http://books4babies.bclibrary.ca/). There are many versions of this type of program across Canada. Brantford (ON) Public Library (www.brantford.library.on.ca) has worked with teenage mothers to improve reading to young children, in partnership with service clubs and the public health department. Research findings demonstrate a large and positive impact of research-based early childhood programs in public libraries on family literacy behaviours, an impact that actually transcends ethnicity and income. A number of Ontario’s public libraries, e.g., Hamilton, Lanark, and Oakville, have been applying the US-developed Every Child Ready to Read, based on this research, within Ontario. (See http://www.opl.on.ca/)

Library Valuation and Advocacy – Ontario is among the leaders in developing tools for libraries and their supporters to identify the value and impact of libraries and present them strategically as assets to their community decision-makers. SOLS has published two editions of *Your Library’s Contribution to the Community*, a unique resource that has attracted worldwide attention (http://www.sols.org/publications/lctyc/index.htm). The Americans for Libraries Council has produced *Worth Their Weight: an Assessment of the Evolving Field of Library Valuation* for similar purposes in the US. Its examples include works by Charles McClure, who has done investigations in Canadian settings (e.g., Alberta) as well. Valuation has moved from exclusive reliance on economic impact measures to adoption of the “balanced scorecard” concept used by many businesses, covering the financial, social, and environmental impacts, or “social return on investment” (SROI).

Focus on community economic development in urban and small communities – A report sponsored in part by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, *Making cities stronger: public library contributions to local economic development* (Washington, DC, The Urban Institute and the Urban Libraries Council, 2007 - http://www.urban.org/uploadedpdf/1001075_stronger_cities.pdf) highlights four areas of particular public library contribution to economic development of cities: improving early literacy and school readiness; building workforce participation; small business support and reducing barriers to entry; and the positive impact of the library as place for downtowns, commercial areas, and neighbourhoods. The Chicago Public Library’s impact on community building, studied by researchers at Northwestern University, is reported in *The Engaged Library: Chicago Stories of Community Building* (see http://www.urbanlibraries.org/files/ULC_PFSC_Engaged_0206.pdf). In Ontario, OLS-
North has led the development of a toolkit for public libraries as catalysts in community development, giving practical weight and realistic strategies to local boards and staff (http://journal.lib.uoguelph.ca/index.php/perj/article/view/241/557). For libraries in smaller communities, in particular, this may well be the leading capacity-strengthening tool of its kind.

**Mass digitization initiatives and advocacy for the commons** – All types of libraries have a major role in mass digitization initiatives. Public libraries contribute specialized local texts, among other strengths; the Ontario Ministry of Culture has supported many local digitization projects through the Library Strategic Development Fund (http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/library/lsdf.htm). They function as resource creators in this way. The role of public libraries extends as well into providing access to, and advocating for, the commons. Recent media coverage has featured Bernard Margolis, President of the Boston Public Library, and colleagues in a Massachusetts consortium committed to open source rather than restricted Google/Microsoft arrangements (http://www.nytimes.com/2007/10/22/technology/22library.html?_r=8). Grants from the Ontario Ministry of Culture have enabled many public libraries to undertake the digitization of locally and regionally significant material, ranging from local history in the Halinet group (i.e., former Halton County communities; see http://images.oakville.halinet.on.ca/) to poetry in Hamilton.
Appendix F: American state libraries (summary of IMLS report)


The tables show commonalities across states in the types of programs in which the state agencies participate. The review of this information focused largely on (1) electronic services and (2) services of the state agencies for public libraries. For public libraries, there was general support for digitization (63%) and summer reading programs (98%).

About two-thirds of state library agencies provide a range of services and funding to academic libraries, school libraries, special libraries, and to library cooperatives, making comparisons to Canadian jurisdictions difficult.

Electronic

Electronic Networks: There is across-the-board support of electronic networks – one or all of planning, monitoring and operating. (Exceptions: Texas, New Mexico).

- Most state library agencies (46 states and the District of Columbia) planned or monitored the development of electronic networks (table 3). State library agencies in 42 states and the District of Columbia operated electronic networks.

Databases: Across-the-board support of bibliographic databases and full text or data files. (Exceptions: Texas, Oregon, Rhode Island.)

- State library agencies in 47 states and the District of Columbia supported the development of bibliographic databases via electronic networks, and state library agencies in 44 states and the District of Columbia supported the development of full text or data files via electronic networks (table 3)

Digitization: Many state library agencies have digitization programs, unchanged since 2005.

- Thirty-two state library agencies provided funds or facilitated their own digitization or digital programs or services (table 4). Other libraries or library cooperatives received financial support or the facilitation of digitization or digital programs or services in 31 states.

States with the most support for digitization: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, Wyoming.

Electronic access to a union catalogue seems firmly established.
All of the state library agencies, except Nevada and Washington State, facilitated or subsidized electronic access to a union catalog, a list of titles of works, usually periodicals, in physically separate library collections (table 5). Nine state libraries offered union catalogue access via a Telnet gateway, and three (Montana, New York, and Pennsylvania) provided union catalogue access on CD-ROMs.

**Database licensing** was allocated $60.2 million in 2006.

Highest expenditures in 2006 were made by Texas (6.5 million), New Jersey (4.5 million), Alabama (3.7 million), Michigan (3.2 million).

Forty-nine state library agencies reported combined expenditures of $60.2 million for statewide database licensing (table 6). Of these states, Texas had the highest expenditure ($6.5 million) among states that reported expenditures for statewide database licensing. All state library agencies with such expenditures provided statewide database licensing services to public libraries and remote users in their states. At least two-thirds of state library agencies provided statewide database licensing services to all of the other user groups.

**Distribution of funding sources for database licensing**

For 16 state library agencies, 100 percent of their statewide database licensing expenditures came from federal sources (table 7). State funds accounted for 100 percent of six agencies’ (Alabama, Delaware, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, and Wisconsin) statewide database licensing expenditures.

**Internet Access**: Assistance in access to the Internet mostly through training (50 agencies in both years), access to databases (51), and website, discussion boards (51). Direct funding of equipment is lower (29 to 35, with a small increase in equipment in 2006)

All state library agencies facilitated library access to the Internet in one or more of the following ways: providing Internet training or consultation to state or local library staff or state library end users; providing direct funding to libraries for Internet access; providing equipment to libraries for Internet access; providing access to directories, databases, or online catalogues via the Internet; or managing a website, file server, bulletin boards, or electronic mailing lists (table 8).
Public libraries

Services to Public Libraries show some small changes from 2005 to 2006, the difference being chiefly an increase in digitization and virtual reference. Numbers = number of state library agencies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Services – from Table 10A</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation of libraries</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin of grants</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admin of state aid</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Certification of librarians</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect library stats</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting services</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuing ed programs</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperative purchasing</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ILL referral</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library legislation prep/review</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library planning, evaluation</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literacy program support</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCLC Group Access</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preservation / conservation</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reference / referral</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retrospective conversion of bibliographic records</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State standards</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide coordinated digital program or service</td>
<td>22 (Arizona, California, Wisconsin)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide public relations or promotion</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide virtual reference</td>
<td>26 (California, Oregon, Pennsylvania)</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer reading support</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union list development</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Rate discount program</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Public libraries serve all residents of a given community, district, or region, and typically receive financial support, in whole or part, from public funds. All state library agencies provided the following types of services to public libraries: administration of Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants; collection of library statistics; library planning, evaluation, and research; and review of technology plans for the E-Rate discount program (table 10A).

- Nearly all state library agencies provided consulting services, continuing education, interlibrary loan referral services, library legislation preparation or review, and summer reading program support (table 10A).

- Services to public libraries provided by 40 to 45 state library agencies included literacy program support, reference referral services, state standards or guidelines, or statewide public relations or library promotion campaigns (table 10A).

- Thirteen state library agencies reported accreditation of public libraries, and 22 state library agencies reported certification of public librarians in fiscal year (FY) 2006 (table 10A).

- Certain states have a “state coordinated digital program or service”: Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin.

### Revenue and Expenditures

#### Financial Assistance to Libraries

Expenditures of state library agencies, from all sources, for financial assistance to libraries, by type of library/program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Library/Program</th>
<th>2006 (millions $)</th>
<th>2005 (millions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>754</td>
<td>733</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual public libraries</td>
<td>432</td>
<td>409</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library co-ops serving public libraries only</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other indiv. libraries</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library co-ops serving &gt;1 type of library</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single agency or library</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library construction</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other assistance</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Top spenders in 2006 (expenditures from all sources) and percentage to public libraries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>$ millions</th>
<th>% to public libraries or coops serving them</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>California</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>74 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Florida</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maryland</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>65.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Massachusetts</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>20.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>76.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pennsylvania</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>80.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Amount and percentage distribution of Library Services and Technology Act expenditures of state library agencies, by use of expenditure (almost no change from 2005 to 2006).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use of Expenditure</th>
<th>2006 $ millions</th>
<th>2006 %</th>
<th>2005 $ millions</th>
<th>2005 %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>157</td>
<td></td>
<td>152</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library technology, connectivity</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>55.3%</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>55.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with difficulty in using libraries</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>19.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services for lifelong learning</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSTA admin</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>