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Approval Level:	CEO	Distribution:	All Employees
Review Schedule:	5 Years (or as required)		

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## **1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Policy is to guide Staff in the development of the Markham Public Library's (the "Library", or "MPL") collection, and in the acquisition of material that is of interest and/or value to existing or potential Library customers.

To inform Library customers of the Policy and principles upon which collection development and selection decisions are made for MPL collections.

## **2. MISSION STATEMENT**

MPL is the community's public library providing customers with the opportunity for success. Its resources, staff, programs and spaces enrich the lives of everyone in the City of Markham. The Library engages with the community to read, study, play, explore ideas, express their creativity and connect with each other.

## **3. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES**

The selection of materials for the Library is driven by principles defined in the Library's *Mission Statement*. MPL will provide customer-driven and customer-focused collections. The selection of materials for the Library is driven by the goal of fulfilling its mission statement.

Ongoing collection development activities are founded on Staff familiarity with existing collections, their awareness of the needs of Library customers, and their knowledge of retrospective, current and future trends in informational and recreational materials suitable for public library use.

Except where limited by law, children are entitled to borrowing privileges and open and ready access to materials and facilities provided by the Library. Parents and legal guardians are responsible for monitoring and determining any limits on the use of Library materials by their children.

The Library endeavours to provide equitable access to its collections through a service delivery model which rationalizes the location, scope and focus of collections in relation to service area needs. In addition, items may be delivered to any branch at the customer's request. The Library materials budget is maximized through coordinated and controlled expenditure.

## **4. POLICY STATEMENT**

The selection of Library materials is driven by the principles defined in the Library's *Mission Statement* as well as those outlined in the Canadian Library Association *Statement on Intellectual Freedom* described in part as follows: "It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity including those which some

elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.”

The Library selects:

- Contemporary materials representing varying points of view and which are of current interest and possible future significance, including materials which reflect current conditions, trends and controversies;
- Materials that inform and increase an individual's ability to function effectively as a member of society;
- Materials that provide an aesthetic experience, stimulate the imagination and increase an individual's potential creativity;
- Materials that expand an individual's understanding of the world in which they live;
- Materials in the two official languages, English and French, as well as materials which reflect the diverse linguistic or cultural heritage of the Markham community;
- Materials in alternative formats that meet the needs of customers with accessibility needs, such as low literacy, vision loss or hearing loss;
- Textbooks and curriculum-related works when they are considered to be useful as an introduction to a subject, are the only source of information, or because their content is considered essential to a library collection;
- Materials that entertain and may enhance an individual's enjoyment of life.

Staff collection development activities are supported by customer feedback, metrics related to collections and usage rates, attention to review media, bibliographies and reviewing tools, consultation with the publishing industry, authoritative discussions of genres or subject areas, and recommendations from Library customers. Activities are responsibly exercised within the context of available funds.

Special consideration is given to materials with Canadian content, that record the Canadian experience or that relate to life in Canada or the lives and works of Canadians.

The Library does not keep, acquire or purchase material that the Canadian courts have found to be obscene, hate propaganda or seditious.

Markham Public Library does not normally purchase materials intended for audiences above the university undergraduate level unless they are the only materials available to meet community demand.

No materials are excluded from selection solely because of the "race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, age, record of offences, marital status, disability, family status, sex, sexual orientation and/or receipt of public assistance" of the creator of the work.

No materials are excluded from selection solely because they may come into the possession of a child.

In adopting this Policy, the Library endorses the *Canadian Library Association's Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom*, the *Ontario Library Association Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual*, and the *Ontario Library Association's Position on Children's Rights in the Public Library*.

The Library, in establishing this Policy, was cognizant of Section 2(b) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* which guarantees everyone the freedom of thought, belief, opinion and expression, including freedom of the press and other media of communication.

## **5. SCOPE**

The “Library Collections and Materials Selection Policy” applies to all material formats including print, non-print, audio-visual and electronic materials.

## **6. DEFINITIONS**

“**Materials**” are all of the items that comprise Library collections regardless of format;

“**Collections**” constitute the Library’s various holdings organized by category, e.g. Fiction Collection, French Collection;

“**Format**” is the medium in which information is presented, e.g. a book, DVD, e-book;

“**Inter-Library Loan**” is the service through which customers can request that items not owned by MPL be borrowed from other institutions, subject to availability and the Inter-Library Loan policies of the lending institutions.

## **7. APPLICATION**

This Policy applies to any Library staff or organization that undertakes the selection or withdrawal of materials for the Library’s collections and to all Library staff involved with accepting and evaluating gifts and donations to the collections.

## **8. SELECTION CRITERIA**

In making selection decisions, Library staff consider the following:

- Popular demand for material;
- Current trends in customer demand regarding content and format;
- Metrics and statistical reports regarding collections and usage trends;
- Suitability of format for Library use, and for customer convenience and ease of use;
- Suitability of subject, style and reading level for the intended audience;
- Relevance to community customers;
- Insight into the human and social condition;
- Importance as a record of the times;
- Relationship to the existing collection and other materials on the subject;
- Currency and reliability of content;
- Reputation, skill, competence or significance of the originator of the work;
- Attention of critics, reviewers and the public;
- Reputation of the publisher or producer;

- Clarity, accuracy and logic of presentation;
- Interests and composition of the community, including linguistic composition as indicated by demographic data;
- Quality of writing and/or visual art;
- Timeliness or permanence of the work;
- Comprehensiveness and depth of treatment;
- Representation of various viewpoints in the collection;
- Purchase price and other budgetary considerations;
- Availability of funds and space.

## **9. NEW FORMATS**

Careful consideration is given to the introduction of new formats to Library collections. Budget considerations, community needs and the probable impact on existing resources are all reviewed before items are selected and introduced to collections in a new format.

The selection of material in any new format may result in the Library's decision to retire specific items or material formats from its collections in order to responsibly accommodate trends in customer demands and/or changes in technology.

## **10. WITHDRAWAL ACTIVITIES**

Collection materials are regularly assessed for their condition, accuracy, currency and usage, within the context of the Library collection, and relevance to Library customers. The withdrawal of materials from any collection is a formal process conducted by knowledgeable staff, according to written guidelines, as a necessary means to maintain collection vitality, size and scope.

Criteria for withdrawal include outdated materials, materials no longer of interest or in demand, duplicates, worn or damaged copies, frequency of circulation, community interest and availability of newer and more up-to-date materials are of prime consideration.

An item that is the subject of a libel action of which the Library becomes aware will be removed from the collection until the action is finally resolved when, depending on the outcome of the action, it will be returned to the collection or permanently withdrawn.

## **11. NO ENDORSEMENT OF CONTENT**

Selection of an item for a Library collection does not constitute endorsement by the Library of either the content or viewpoint expressed in that item.

## **12. ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS**

For customer-information purposes and the guidance of borrowers, films owned by Markham Public Library are labelled with viewer classification codes outlined in the Film Classification Act available from the Ontario Film Review Board. If a viewer classification code is not available from

the Ontario Film Review Board, the Library may use Canadian Home Video Association and the Motion Picture Association of America classification codes.

The Library may control use of any collection material in order to protect items deemed susceptible to theft or damage by customers, or to ensure the widest possible use of materials by Library customers.

The Library does not mark selected materials in order to indicate approval or disapproval of item contents or attempt to expurgate information contained in selected items.

### **13. GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

The Library welcomes gifts of materials from individuals or groups. The same criteria and guidelines that apply to the selection of all Library materials are used to evaluate gifts. It is understood that gifts are freely given without conditions attached, unless specifically negotiated beforehand, and that all donations will be used or disposed of as the Library deems appropriate. Tax receipts are not issued for donations of materials.

### **14. CUSTOMER REQUESTS**

Customers may place formal requests for the purchase of collection materials by completing a *Suggest a Purchase* request on MPL's online catalogue. All suggested purchases are reviewed by Library Staff who applies to the customer request the same selection criteria that are applied to all materials purchased by the Library.

### **15. RESOURCE SHARING / INTER-LIBRARY LOAN (ILLO) SERVICE**

Items that fall outside the Library's selection criteria or that are "out of print" or temporarily unavailable can be requested by Library customers from other library systems by using regular Inter-Library Loan services. Fees for the service occasionally apply. Application for Inter-Library Loan service can be made at any local branch of the Library.

### **16. RECONSIDERATION OF MATERIALS**

The Library believes that a vital society encourages members of its community to actively participate in an open exchange of ideas and opinions. The Library consequently strives to provide the widest possible range of resources within Markham Public Library collections.

The content or manner of expressing ideas in material that is purposely selected to fill the needs of some Library customers, may, on occasion, be considered to be offensive by other customers. The Library recognizes the right of any individual or group to reject MPL material for personal use, but does not accord to any individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of that same material.

Library customers who object to collection items are asked to complete a written request for the reconsideration of the item(s). Request forms are available for this purpose at all Library branches.

Decisions made about challenged materials will be communicated to the originators of the requests following completion of a formal staff review. The final decision concerning Library materials rests with the Chief Executive Officer.

## **17. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The responsibility for selection and maintenance of Library collections rests with the office of the Library's Chief Executive Officer which delegates this professional activity to qualified and knowledgeable staff.

## **18. INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM**

The Markham Public Library adheres to the following statements on intellectual freedom:

*Canadian Library Association Statement on Intellectual Freedom:*

- All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.
- Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom. It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.
- It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the Library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them. Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.
- Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

*Ontario Library Association Statement on the Intellectual Rights of the Individual:*

In affirming its commitment to the fundamental rights of intellectual freedom, the freedom to read and freedom of the press, as embodied in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the Ontario Library Association declares its acceptance of the following propositions:

- That the provision of Library service to the public is based upon the right of the citizen, under the protection of the law, to judge individually on questions of politics, religion and morality.
- That intellectual freedom requires freedom to examine other ideas and other interpretations of life than those currently approved by the local community or by society in general, and including those ideas and interpretations which may be unconventional or unpopular.
- That freedom of expression includes freedom for a creator to depict what is ugly, shocking and unedifying in life.
- That free traffic in ideas and opinions is essential to the health and growth of a free society and that the freedom to read, listen and view is fundamental to such free traffic.

- That it is the responsibility of libraries to maintain the right of intellectual freedom and to implement it consistently in the selection of books, periodicals, films, recordings, other materials, and in the provision of access to electronic sources of information, including access to the Internet.
- That it is therefore part of the Library's service to its public to resist any attempt by any individual or group within the community it serves to abrogate or curtail access to information, the freedom to read, view and listen by demanding the removal of, or restrictions to Library information sources in any format.
- That it is equally part of the Library's responsibility to its public to ensure that its selection of material is not unduly influenced by the personal opinions of the selectors, but determined by the application of generally accepted standards of accuracy, style and presentation.

*The Ontario Library Association Position on Children's Rights in the Library:*

Children in public libraries have the right to:

1. Intellectual freedom.
2. Equal access to the full range of services and materials available to other users.
3. A full range of materials, services and programs specifically designed and developed to meet their needs.
4. Adequate funding for collections and services related to population, use and local community needs.
5. A Library environment that complements their physical and developmental stages.
6. Trained and knowledgeable staff specializing in children's services.
7. Welcoming, respectful, supportive service from birth through the transition to adult user.
8. An advocate who will speak on their behalf to the Library administration, Library Board, municipal council and community to make people aware of the goals of children's services.
9. Library policies written to include the needs of the child.

## **19. RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **CEO / Directors shall:**

- Ensure that they and their employees are acquainted with and comply with this Policy and related policies.

### **Managers / Supervisors shall:**

- Enforce this Policy.

### **Employees / Volunteers:**

- Comply with this Policy.

### **Library Administration shall:**

- Develop and distribute this Policy;
- Update this Policy per the Review Schedule.