REPORT TO: STRATFORD PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING DATE: OCTOBER 16, 2023
FROM: KRISTA ROBINSON, CEO
SUBJECT: DRAFT COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

In accordance with the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44, s. 3(3), the Stratford Public Library is under the management and control of the Library Board. The Library Board is responsible for the establishment, maintenance and regular evaluation of all framework, governance, and operational policies required to provide guidance and direction for the successful administration and operation the Stratford Public Library.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

During the 2022 Strategic Planning process, the Board deemed it important for the library to have a strong and representative Collection Development Policy. This policy was an objective recommended to support Strategic Direction 5, Intentionally Supporting our Team.

A collection development policy provides guidelines that help librarians select, acquire, evaluate, and maintain the materials in their library collections. A collection development policy is based on the library's mission, goals, user needs, and library budget. One of the main advantages of having a collection development policy is that they provide a clear and consistent framework for making decisions about the library collection. They can help librarians avoid duplication, bias, gaps, and outdated materials. They can also help librarians justify their choices to stakeholders, such as board members, the municipality, or patrons.

The proposed Draft Collection Development Policy is an Operational Policy and provides structure to support staff decisions relating to collections, but we believe it also provides enough flexibility to adjust procedures as formats change and internal practices are amended.

In a time where libraries are seeing dramatic increases in materials and topics being challenged by people and groups, it is important to have a guiding document to defend our choices, yet provide the means for the public to voice an objections. As such we have included a Material Reconsideration Form as part of this policy.

This policy includes reference to the *Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries* which SPL adopted in 2015 and reaffirmed in 2021. It is included as Schedule A.

The policy working group for October has reviewed and provided input to this document.

BOARD ACTION
Submitted to the Board for review and approval.

	POLICY: **Collection Development**		POLICY NO: **OP 08**
Stratford PUBLIC LIBRARY	POLICY LEVEL: **Operational**	LAST REVIEW / REVISION DATE:	SCHEDULED REVIEW DATE: October 2027

Library Collection Development

The Stratford Public Library is an equitable, safe and welcoming environment where anyone can explore, learn, create, connect, and be inspired. To accomplish this, the Library provides a broad range of print and digital resources for users of every age and ability.

Through its collections, the Library encourages reading, helps develop literacy skills, and fosters life-long learning. The collections inform, entertain, enhance and enrich individual lives. The collections:

- support informational and recreational reading, viewing, listening and engagement
- stimulate the imagination and empower creativity
- increase an individual's ability to succeed and participate actively in the community

The Library's collection development strategies are aligned with the values set out in the Library's Strategic Plan and with the goal of ensuring that the breadth and depth of the Library's collections are both reflective and inclusive of the diversity within our community. To ensure that content is discoverable, accessible, and responsive to different needs, the Library continually seeks new ways of making resources available, by evaluating and implementing emerging formats, technologies, and curation strategies.

In considering resources for inclusion in the collection, Library staff exercise their professional judgment, using criteria such as currency, accuracy, availability, imaginative quality, appeal and the unique contribution that each resource makes to the overall collection. When making selection decisions, the whole of a work or a resource is always considered rather than a part.

Other criteria include:

- the expressed and anticipated needs and interests of Stratford's diverse community
- recommendations made by critics, reviewers, industry journals and other authorities
- the suitability of the subject, style, presentation and reading level to the intended audience
- representation of Canadian and local perspectives
- representation of important movements, genres or trends
- supports SPL's commitment to learning and action for Truth and Reconciliation
- supports equitable access to individuals with disabilities
- insight into the human condition and social realities
- cost and availability
- space priorities
- availability of the material elsewhere
- the suitability of the form for library use
- copyright and rights management

Requests by individual patrons for the inclusion of particular resources can be considered by the Library through the application of the criteria in this policy.

Ultimate responsibility for the policy that determines and guides selection and access of materials rests with the Board. The task of selection is delegated to the Chief Executive Officer who directs this activity to qualified and knowledgeable staff.

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The Board recognizes that this policy is carried out in compliance and with due regard for all applicable legislation.

Intellectual Freedom

- Stratford Public Library endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries (Appendix A). The Stratford Public Library selects materials based on the belief that individuals have the right to access all expressions of knowledge, opinion and creativity. Such freedom of access to information is essential to the health and development of a democratic society.
- We acquire and make available a wide range of materials, representing all significant points of view, including those which express controversial or unpopular ideas. Inclusion in the collection does not constitute endorsement by the Library.
- While recognizing the right of individuals and groups to criticize selections, we must not allow the freedom of choice within the Library to be limited by the personal views of any group or individual.

Parental Responsibility

Responsibility for children's or teens' choice and use of resources rests with their parent(s) or legal guardian(s). Selection for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children or teens may access resources their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) may consider inappropriate. The Library believes in the freedom of the individual and the right and obligation of parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to guide, develop, interpret, and maintain their own code of values in their family. The Library will not limit individuals' access to content included in its collections.

Resource Sharing and Interlibrary Loans

The Library participates in resource sharing initiatives and Interlibrary Loans to ensure members have the greatest possible access to resources of interest to them.

Deselection

Deselection is a vital part of building and maintaining a living and responsive collection. The Library actively and continuously tracks and appraises the performance of our collections, to balance both immediate demand and long-term user needs. Removal of items from the collection through active weeding is integral to this process. Material of local historical importance and interest is retained where the content has enduring worth.

Gifts and Donation

The Library may accept donations of books, CDs and DVDs by local authors and creators and other materials that offer a perspective on Stratford and region if it is cost-effective to do so. Donated materials would be reviewed and may be added to the Library's collections in accordance with this Collections policy.

Reconsideration of Library Materials

Library staff will review the selection of specific materials upon written request from any member of the public. A completed copy of the form, "Request for Reconsideration of Library Material" (Appendix B) is reviewed by the appropriate librarian(s) in light of the criteria outlined in this policy. A written response will be provided to the originator of the request. A member may appeal the decision to the CEO.

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Related Documents:

- Canadian Library Association's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries
- Public Library Act, R.S.O. 1990
- LB 05 Delegation of Authority

ORIGINAL DATE ADOPTED		Review Cycle	Once Per Term
APPROVAL HISTORY			
DEVELOPED BY	Krista Robinson		

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APPENDIX A

Canadian Federation of Library Associations

Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations recognizes and values the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms as the guarantor of the fundamental freedoms in Canada of conscience and religion; of thought, belief, opinion, and expression; of peaceful assembly; and of association.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations supports and promotes the universal principles of intellectual freedom as defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which include the interlocking freedoms to hold opinions and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

In accordance with these principles, the Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms that all persons in Canada have a fundamental right, subject only to the Constitution and the law, to have access to the full range of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, and to express their thoughts publicly. Only the courts may abridge free expression rights in Canada.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations affirms further that libraries have a core responsibility to support, defend and promote the universal principles of intellectual freedom and privacy.

The Canadian Federation of Library Associations holds that libraries are a key institution in Canada for rendering expressive content accessible and affordable to all. Libraries are essential gateways for all persons living in Canada to advance themselves through literacy, lifelong learning, social engagement, and cultural enrichment.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, in accordance with their mandates and professional values and standards, libraries provide, defend and promote equitable access to the widest possible variety of expressive content and resist calls for censorship and the adoption of systems that deny or restrict access to resources.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and foster free expression and the right to safe and welcoming places and conditions. To this end, libraries make available their public spaces and services to individuals and groups without discrimination.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and defend privacy in the individual's pursuit of expressive content. To this end, libraries protect the identities and activities of library users except when required by the courts to cede them.

Furthermore, in accordance with established library policies, procedures and due process, libraries resist efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Library employees, volunteers and employers as well as library governing entities have a core responsibility to uphold the principles of intellectual freedom in the performance of their respective library roles.

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APPENDIX B

Material Reconsideration Form

Stratford Public Library, recognizing that it serves a varied community with a wide diversity of tastes and convictions, welcomes expressions of concern about the content of items held in its collection.
We ask you to please complete all sections of the form below so that we can fully understand your specific concerns regarding the item.

The item in question will be submitted for review. Library professionals will evaluate the item and examine published reviews assessing its merit. You will receive a written reply detailing the Library's considered decision and any action that may have resulted from your request as soon as possible.

Material for Reconsideration
Date:Click or tap here to enter text.
Title: Click or tap here to enter text.
Author: Click or tap here to enter text.
Publisher: Click or tap here to enter text.
Type of Material: Click or tap here to enter text.

Your Information
Name: Click or tap here to enter text.
Address: Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone: Click or tap here to enter text.
Email: Click or tap here to enter text.
Are you speaking for:
☐ Yourself
☐ On behalf of an Organization
Please provide the name of the organization: Click or tap here to enter text.

What concerns you about this work?
Click or tap here to enter text.

Are there specific pages, or a timestamp for video or audio, to which you object?
Click or tap here to enter text.

Did you read, watch, or listen to the entire work?
☐ yes
☐ no
Have you seen / heard any promotions or read any reviews about this work? If so, please identify.
Click or tap here to enter text.

Are there any additional comments you would like to make?
Click or tap here to enter text.

Thank you for taking the time to express your concerns to us. Please return this form to the Stratford Public Library or email it to us at askspl@splibrary.ca

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