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Purpose

The purpose of Strathcona County Library's collection policy is to guide staff and inform the public about the principles which guide selection of library materials.

Definition of Materials

The word “materials” refers to any object or resource, whether physical or digital, which is acquired by the Library for use by patrons.

Library Materials Normally Lent

The description of library materials normally lent is set out in Schedule B of the Library Bylaw.

Principles

The Library is guided by the Canadian Federation of Library Association’s Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries (ST01) in its collection practices.

The Library is devoted to serving all segments of the community in accordance with its mandate and vision statement.

The Library is committed to the endeavours of offering materials that expand access to Indigenous content and knowledge, and that further understanding about Truth and Reconciliation, in keeping with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s sixty-ninth Call to Action.

The Library strives to maintain awareness of the needs, preferences and trends within its diverse community and impacting society at large. It endeavours to reflect this diversity by selecting materials by creators with a variety of personal, social and political identities and experiences, including those who are part of historically marginalized groups and some materials which may be deemed controversial.

The Library strives to maintain awareness of, and to select, material that reflects current intellectual, social, economic, educational, cultural, environmental and technology trends.

The Library does not advocate or endorse all the ideas and opinions expressed or found in its collection.

Responsibility for Materials Selection

Although the ultimate responsibility for selection is vested in the Library Board, the Board delegates authority to the CEO, to interpret and to guide the application of the policy set by the Board. The CEO authorizes other staff to apply this policy in building collections.

All staff members selecting library materials are expected to keep the collection principles, material sources, and selection criteria in mind and apply their knowledge and experience in making decisions.

Material Sources

The Library works within appropriate financial limits to provide materials for its community. It cooperates with provincial and community agencies to make materials available to the Alberta community at large.

The Library obtains materials from a variety of sources, considering vendor characteristics such as:

- Favourable pricing (e.g. availability of discounts, wholesale opportunities).
- Canadian location or distribution availability.
- Industry-related licensing, vetting, or favourable reviews.
- Reliability, quality and dependability of products and procurement processes.
- Vendor relationships with a variety of publishers appropriate for library audiences.
- Availability and/or support for unique or specialized materials e.g. specific languages or cultures of interest to the community.

Criteria for the Evaluation, Selection, and Deselection of Materials

Selection or deselection of materials is a formal process conducted by knowledgeable staff, according to the collection principles outlined here, and to guidelines specific to each collection.

In building collections to serve the aims of the Library, Collection Plans are developed for the selection and de-selection of all Library materials.

In keeping with the Collection Principles stated above, the Library attempts to acquire a range of materials with the following purposes:

- Materials that support formal and informal learning.
- Materials that entertain and enhance enjoyment of life.
- Materials that stimulate the imagination or increase potential for creativity.
- Materials that build skills and abilities.
- Materials that help people to function effectively as productive members of society.
- Materials that enhance empathy.
- Materials that help people understand themselves and others in the community.
- Materials that enhance capacity to understand the universe, including the experimental or controversial.

All materials, whether donated or purchased, will be examined and evaluated in terms of the principles and purposes above and criteria in the Collection Development Criteria Guideline. For more information about donated materials, see PR 06 Donations and Recognition of Donations Policy.

Deselecting Materials from the Collection

The deselection, or withdrawal of materials from any collection, is a formal process and is a necessary means to maintain collection vitality, size and scope.

Deselected materials will be disposed of by the Library through such means as sale, donation or recycling whenever possible. The organization which, or the individual who, obtains discarded items shall be responsible for the cost related to packaging and transportation.

Materials and Individual Responsibility

Materials selected for the Library's collection will vary to suit the needs of different audiences within the community. Not all materials selected will be suitable for every library audience or for every individual. The Library supports the freedom of the individual to choose which materials to request, review and/or borrow.


Parental or Legal Guardian Responsibility

The Library recognizes the right and obligation of parents or legal guardians to choose which materials are suitable for their children to request, review and/or borrow.

Reconsideration of Collection Items

Questions about the collection are welcome, from Strathcona County residents, and will be treated with courtesy and respect. If concerns or questions arise about an item, staff will follow the steps laid out in the “Concerns About Library Materials or Access to Materials Guideline” and the “Concerns About Library Materials or Access to Materials Procedures.” The Library does not accept requests for reconsideration from non-County residents.

If a Strathcona County resident wishes to submit a written concern, a “Request for Reconsideration of a Library Resource” form is offered and a response is made as detailed in the Guidelines. Unusual concerns will be referred to the CEO; and in exceptional cases, the CEO will present comprehensive information to the Strathcona County Library Board. Responsibility for reconsideration decisions rests with the Board.

Approved by Board Chair	
Date	September 18, 2023