

# Collection Development Policy

## Policy Statement

This policy serves to assist library staff in building a diverse collection of materials that meets the reading, listening and viewing needs of its patrons. The Library acts to fulfill its mission by selecting, acquiring, organizing, maintaining, and providing access to a collection of materials and electronic resources that address the interests and needs of the members of a diverse and complex community.

## Policy Purpose

This policy serves several vital purposes, including:

- Guides library staff in making decisions about the selection, management and preservation of library materials, and in allocating library budgets
- Informs the public of the principles that govern collection development at Sterling Municipal Library
- Constitutes a public declaration of the Library's commitment to the principles of free access to ideas and information by providing collections that reflect a variety of viewpoints

## General Principles

### Intellectual Freedom

The library makes available a wide diversity of ideas and viewpoints in support of an informed citizenry and a democratic society. The Library recognizes and supports the individual choice and judgment of its patrons in seeking information, and upholds the freedom of library users to read, view, and listen. Therefore, Sterling Municipal Library incorporates as part of its collection development policy the following documents of the American Library Association:

- The Library Bill of Rights
- The Freedom to Read Statement
- Free Access to Minors
- The Freedom to View Statement
- Statement on Labeling

Selection of materials does not constitute or imply agreement or approval by the Baytown Library Board or the City of Baytown of the content, viewpoint, implications or means of expression of materials included in the Library's collection. Decisions to select or retain an item are based on the merits of each work or information source as it relates to the goals and coverage provided by the collection. The Library considers the value of each item in its entirety and within the context of the collection, not on specific passages or sections in the item itself.

## **Access**

The Library makes its collections available to all patrons regardless of origin, age, background or views. Full, confidential and unrestricted access to ideas, information and the creative experience is of vital importance to every citizen. Reading, listening, and viewing are individual, private matters. While anyone is free to select or reject materials for themselves or their own minor children, the freedom of others to read or inquire cannot be restricted.

Children are inquiring individuals and have open access to all collections, media and services of the Library in their search for information and entertainment. Selection and development of resources will not be limited because of possible exposure to children and teens. The Library and its associated authorities do not serve *in loco parentis*. Responsibility for children's use of Library collections rests solely with their parents, guardians or caregivers.

## **Labeling**

Sterling Municipal Library follows the American Library Association's Statement on Labeling and recognizes that labeling is an attempt to prejudice attitudes by describing, designating and/or segregating materials. No materials will be marked, labeled, restricted, sequestered, or altered to show approval, disapproval, or judgment as to suitability of content for particular audiences. Materials will be classified and organized based only on intended and suggested audience reading levels that best facilitate access and use by library patrons. Materials will not be excluded, removed, proscribed or suppressed because of their creator's origin, background, or views, or because they represent a particular aspect of life, frankness of expression, or controversial subject matter.

## **Request for Reconsideration**

Because in a pluralistic society, tastes and opinions differ, some materials the Library acquires may be offensive to certain patrons. In a democracy that incorporates the rights of free press and speech into its basic system of law, the minority does not have the prerogative to curtail the free access to published materials by the majority. Just as important, the majority does not have the right to curtail free access to published materials by the minority of the individuals. If, however, a patron objects to material held by the Library, he may submit a Request for Reconsideration of library materials. In no instance will material be removed on demand. All considerations of Requests for Reconsideration to remove materials will be reviewed using the principles of this selection policy statement as a guide.

On receipt of a written request for reconsideration of library material, the City Librarian will confer in person or by telephone with the patron making the request. If agreement cannot be reached regarding the disposition of the material, the patron will be asked to submit specific objections in writing. This information will be mailed to each Library Board member and to the City Manager. Library staff will provide to the Library Board and City Manager annotations from professional journals, information on reserves, and

information regarding the levels of circulation on the particular title involved to accompany this Request for Reconsideration.

The request for removal or reclassification will be discussed at the next Board meeting. The Board will use Material Selection and Circulation policies as a basis for discussion of the action to be taken on the Request for Reconsideration.

In the event that the Board members and the City Librarian conclude that the item in question should remain in the collection with the same classification, and the complaining party takes legal action to remove the material, the municipal officials will be requested to provide support for the defense of decision of the trustees and staff.

### **Collection Overview**

Sterling Municipal Library strives to supply materials in a wide range of subject areas and formats for Baytonians of all ages. The Library maintains a popular fiction collection that spans a variety of genres including general fiction, romance, mystery, western, and science fiction, providing multiple copies of bestsellers and popular titles whenever possible. A sizeable non-fiction collection is also maintained, with emphasis on popular and heavily used collections such as travel, crafts, how-to books, materials related to health and diet, psychology and self help. In addition to the circulating non-fiction collection, the Library also maintains a broad reference collection. The reference collection aims to provide patrons with up-to-date information on general topics relating to religion, philosophy, culture, science, medicine, technology, art, literature, history, geography, and language. A selection of both popular interest and specialty magazines is also maintained, as well as local, state, and national newspapers.

In addition to selecting and maintaining a print collection, the Library also makes available an audio-visual collection that includes non-fiction videos and DVDs, popular and classic film and television DVDs, language learning CDs and software, and audio books. The Library also subscribes to a variety of online databases.

Service to children and teens is integral to the Library's mission, and maintaining current collections that meet their educational and recreational needs is a core part of library service. The Library recognizes its responsibility to make available a representative selection of fiction and nonfiction materials on subjects of interest to, or relating to, children from birth to age 18. The children's collection includes fiction and nonfiction books suitable for children from birth through age eleven, focusing on early and primary readers, picture books, beginning chapter books, popular and award winning fiction titles and nonfiction books that meet recreational and educational needs. Talking books, popular films, educational software and magazines are also included in the children's collection. The teen collection includes fiction and nonfiction books suitable for young adults ages 12 through high school, and focuses on popular and award winning fiction titles, talking books, magazines and nonfiction books on popular topics such as self-help, true stories, health and fitness, recreational sports, biographies, poetry and art.

The Library embraces the responsibility of providing both recreational reading and information in languages spoken by a significant percentage of the local population.

The Library does not attempt to furnish materials needed for formal courses of study offered by elementary and secondary schools or institutions of higher learning, or to furnish textbooks.

The Library and its staff cannot assume the role of museum curator or archivist. It does not fall within the Library's mission to maintain collections of collector's items. While the Library does include materials of local history and genealogy, items will not be isolated from the remainder of the Library collection nor be governed by policies separate from the Library in general.

### **Material Formats**

To meet the needs of the patrons we serve, Sterling Municipal Library makes information available in a variety of formats. The following types of materials will be selected according to the established selection criteria:

- Books
- Periodicals/Serials, newspapers
- Maps and clippings of local interest
- Government documents
- Recordings, including audio cassettes and compact discs
- Video cassettes and discs
- Computer software
- Electronic databases

### **Selection of Library Material**

Sources for selection decisions include, but are not limited to: published reviews; publisher or vendor catalogs; advertisements; user requests or recommendations. Ultimate responsibility for materials selection rests with the City Librarian who operates within the Collection Management Policy approved by the Baytown Library Board. The Associate of Library Public Service oversees the selection process and tracks the materials budget to insure a flow of new materials throughout the year according to budget allocations.

### **Selection Criteria**

In combination with their subject knowledge and professional expertise, librarians utilize a variety of selection tools, including published reviews, recommendations made in publisher or vendor catalogs, advertisements, and patron requests, to evaluate materials for selection. The standards listed below are used to guide selection decisions. An item need not meet all criteria to be selected.

**General Criteria**

- Relevance to both observed and anticipated community needs and desires
- The extent to which the item supplements, expands on, or supports the existing collection rather than duplicates it
- Reputation and qualifications of the author, creator, or publisher of the work
- Local significance of the author or creator of the work
- Suitability of format or physical form for library use
- Cost relative to the value the item contributes to the collection
- Space required relative to the value the item contributes to the collection

**Content Criteria**

- Relevance of the information to immediate local requirements
- Evaluation of the currency and accuracy of the information contained
- Comprehensiveness of treatment, including breadth and depth
- Consideration of the work as a whole, rather than a specific passage or passages
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Skill and purpose of author or creator
- Representation of important movements, subjects, genres, or trends of local, regional, national or global significance
- Long-term or historical significance or interest

**Electronic Format Criteria**

Additional criteria are considered when selecting materials available in electronic formats.

- Ease of use of the product
- Accessibility to multiple users
- Access to needed equipment
- Enhancement of the print equivalent (if any) in terms of speed, flexibility, combinations of search terms, or general utility
- Continued access to retrospective information when necessary or desirable
- Reduction of space requirements over print products
- Reduction in number of copies of a print source when purchased for multiple locations

### **Gifts and Donations: Materials**

The Library is grateful for gifts and donations of gently used and new materials ***in good condition***. All gifts and donations of materials become property of the Library. Gift materials that enhance the Library's collection according to the selection criteria outlined in the collection development policy may be added to the collection. Not all gifts will be selected for retention. If a gift is integrated into the collection, the Library reserves the right to decide the conditions of display, housing, access and withdrawal of material. Donated items ***in good condition*** that are not included in the Library's collection will be placed in the Friends of the Library book sale. All gifts and donations are final. Materials not added to the collection ***will not be*** returned to the donor. Donated items in poor condition, items the Library does not accept, and items not sold in a reasonable amount of time will be recycled or discarded.

The Library does not accept the following items:

- Books and magazines with yellowed, torn and dirty pages, mold, grime and bug damage
- Books with broken spines and missing dust jackets
- Compact discs and DVDs that are scratched and missing components
- Cassette tapes and VHS tapes that are damaged
- Books older than 10 years
- Magazines older than one year
- National Geographic Collections
- Textbooks
- Records
- Computer Software

Sterling Municipal Library will not appraise gift materials for tax purposes. The Library will, upon request of the donor, provide an acknowledgement of receipt of the gifts indicating only the number of items donated and a statement of the type of the materials donated (i.e. hardback or paperback books, DVDs, VHS tapes, magazines, talking books).

### **Memorials, Honorariums and Monetary Gifts**

Sterling Municipal Library accepts monetary gifts, and will purchase materials for memorials and honorariums. Checks should be made out to Sterling Municipal Library and accompanied by the appropriate form. The Library does not accept physical material for memorials or honorariums. Patrons may suggest a subject area of interest for their memorial, honorarium or monetary gift. Library staff will then select materials from that subject area that best meet the mission and purpose of the collection development policy. Bookplates with an appropriate inscription will be provided for memorials and honorariums. Patrons may request to be notified when the Library receives materials purchased with their donation. Once a memorial, honorarium or monetary gift is made it becomes the property of the Library.

## **Collection Maintenance**

To maintain attractive, active, current and useful collections, Library staff continually evaluates materials to assess their relevance to the collection, the public, and the statements of this policy. Library staff strives to select and maintain items that patrons will enjoy and use, and makes every effort to ensure that the information contained in the collection is accurate and up to date. Like all public libraries, Sterling Municipal Library engages in the process of weeding, or de-selection. De-selection is an essential element of collection development. The process of de-selection allows librarians to examine items for condition, datedness and use. The Library's print collection is limited by the space available to house it, and collections should change over time to reflect changes in the community and in the library's goals. Weeding is a continual evaluation of resources intended to remove items that are no longer useful from the collection.

Factors considered in retiring material from the Library's collection include, but are not limited to:

1. Poor physical condition
2. Lack of use
3. Out of date information
4. Multiple copies of titles no longer in demand
5. Old editions replaced by newer revisions
6. Availability of similar material
7. Local community needs
8. Space within the Library's collection

Material retired from the Library's collection will be placed in the Friends of the Library book sale. Items in poor condition, or items not sold in a reasonable amount of time, will be recycled or discarded.

## **Replacement and Mending**

The Library does not automatically replace all materials withdrawn due to loss or damage. Lost or worn items may be replaced if they meet the selection criteria outlined in this policy. Replacement decisions are based on cost, demand, availability of newer materials on the subject, value of the work to the collection, and number of copies in the collection. Library materials in poor physical condition are mended only if the item cannot be replaced and the information is useful to library patrons and relevant to the Library's collection.