

Strathcona County Library Report on Equitable Public Access to E-Books and E-Audiobooks**Report Purpose**

To seek Council support for Strathcona County Library's efforts to urge e-book and e-audiobook publishers to institute fair, transparent and flexible lending models for public libraries.

Recommendation

THAT the Mayor, on behalf of Council, sign the Canadian Urban Libraries Council's statement of support titled *Statement on Equitable Public Access to E-Books*.

THAT the Mayor, on behalf of Council, send a letter to the Minister of Canadian Heritage asking the federal government to investigate barriers faced by libraries in acquiring digital content, highlighting the problems posed for vulnerable and other demographic groups in Canada, and asking the government to develop a solution that increases public library access to digital content across Canada.

Our Prioritized Strategic Goals

Goal 1 - Build strong communities to support the diverse needs of residents

Report

Seventy-nine elected officials from North American cities and counties have signed the enclosed Statement on Equitable Public Access to E-Books championing the urgent need for equitable e-book pricing and access for public libraries. This statement was issued in direct response to Macmillan Publisher's embargo on e-book sales to libraries that went into effect on November 1. Now libraries cannot purchase more than a single copy of new e-book titles from Macmillan for the first two months after the e-book's initial publication. This is the just the latest action by multinational publishers that is intensifying gaps between the haves and have nots in communities of all sizes with their restrictive licenses and excessively high prices.

Developed by Canadian Urban Library Council/Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada in partnership with its American counterpart, the statement serves as a platform for city and county leaders to show their support for the vital role that libraries play in building educated communities and bridging digital and print divides, and to add their voices to the call for e-book publishers to eliminate discriminatory lending models for libraries.

Other Impacts

Policy: n/a

Legislative/Legal: n/a

Interdepartmental: n/a

Master Plan/Framework: n/a

Enclosures

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| 1 | Report on Equitable Public Access to E-Books and E-Audiobooks |
| 2 | Canadian Urban Libraries Council Statement on Equitable Public Access to E-Books |
| 3 | Draft Letter to the Federal Minister of Canadian Heritage |