

## Media Release

### **EPL Chief Executive Officer Linda Cook announces retirement**

#### **Change in leadership to take effect mid-2015**

For immediate release:

**EDMONTON, AB, Oct. 29, 2014** – After 18 years at the helm of the Edmonton Public Library (EPL), Chief Executive Officer Linda Cook has announced her retirement. She will leave EPL mid-2015, at which time a new CEO will be introduced.

“My time with EPL has been truly memorable, invigorating and rewarding; it’s been a very difficult decision to leave such a respected organization,” said Cook. “I hold EPL, our customers and staff in high regard and will miss interacting with them on a daily basis.”

Under Cook’s leadership, EPL has become an award-winning modern library with a rich history of innovation and risk-taking. EPL was named 2014 Library of the Year, which is the highest honour that can be bestowed upon a library and a prestigious recognition in which all staff take great pride. Cook has also received several awards and distinctions herself, including the Canadian Library Association 2014 Outstanding Service to Librarianship Award and the Library Association of Alberta 2014 President’s Award.

After obtaining her master’s degree in library and information studies at the University of Alberta in 1987 and serving as Director of the Yellowhead Regional Library, Cook joined EPL as CEO in 1997. During her time at EPL, the library has seen an evolution of its services, collections and programs – many of which have been recognized locally, nationally and internationally. Many library firsts in Canada and North America have been initiated at EPL under Cook, such as implementing self-checkouts, hiring Community Librarians at each branch, installing lending machines at an LRT station and university campus, and opening an outreach office in the downtown location. The initiative of which she is most proud is the implementation of free memberships in March 2013.

“Linda Cook’s commitment to excellence is evident through the success of the Edmonton Public Library,” said Mayor Don Iveson. “As a library user, former city councillor and EPL board member, and now mayor, I’d like to thank her for the mark she has left on the Edmonton Public Library which is not only an integral part of our city but a trailblazer in the library world. I have no doubt her great vision will continue under new leadership.”

“Linda Cook embodies the talent, passion and dedication all staff emulate at the Edmonton Public Library,” said Ellen Calabrese-Amrhein, Chair of the EPL Board of Trustees. “Her knack of pushing

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the envelope has turned our city's public library system into one that is always leading the way. She will be missed though the library's innovative and adaptable spirit will continue."

EPL's *We Share* motto is fundamental to Cook when it comes to her knowledge, experience and expertise, as she is an Adjunct Associate Professor at the University of Alberta and has also volunteered with many library associations, including the Canadian Library Association, Library Association of Alberta, Canadian Urban Public Libraries Council and The Alberta Library, among involvement in many other local organizations. She intends to champion EPL in her retirement through volunteer opportunities, such as the Milner Library Revitalization Project.

"Our leadership team and staff are incredibly talented," said Cook. "I can say without reservation our tradition of excellence and innovation will continue. I'm eager to watch and applaud EPL in the coming years as a continued brilliant leader in our city."

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#### **About the Edmonton Public Library**

The Edmonton Public Library (EPL) is proud to be [2014 Library of the Year!](#) From March 2013 to March 2014, EPL celebrated 100 years of service to our great city. We've come a long way since 1913 when books were all you could find on our shelves... and we're just getting started! Today, EPL carries everything you care about. We are Edmonton's largest lender of all manner of information and entertainment. Our professionally trained staff take you beyond Google with the knowledge, discernment and desire to help you navigate a universe of information. The second most visited place in Edmonton, every year we host over 14 million in-branch and online visits across our 17 branches and website. We deliver our incredible content to you everywhere – in the library, at home or on your handheld device. Unmatched access and unrivalled value – that is today's EPL. EPL is a registered charity and relies on donations to enhance services. Spread the words. [www.epl.ca/donate](http://www.epl.ca/donate).

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