



8.

STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Open Hours and Programming Expansion Options

Date:	October 16, 2012
To:	Budget Committee
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide the Budget Committee with options for expanding open hours and library programming with an investment of \$250,000. Options for adding hours both during the week and on Sundays have been identified, along with the programming opportunities that each option provides.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The options for hours and library programming expansion presented all cost approximately \$250,000 per year and would be a pressure to the operating budget. Four additional full-time equivalents (FTEs) would be required for the Weekday Hours Option.

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and is in agreement with it.

DECISION HISTORY

At its September 12, 2012 meeting, the Budget Committee approved the motion:

That the 2012 Operating Budget be deferred to the October meeting of the Budget Committee and that staff report back to that meeting on the following:

- a) *an outline of how a \$250,000 increase would be invested in i) an expansion of open hours; and ii) an expansion of library programming.*

ISSUE BACKGROUND

In January 2006 the Library Board adopted the Open Hours Vision outlined in *The Best Thing a Library Can Be is Open: Update on Branch Open Hours* report. Since June 2006 when the Board approved an implementation plan, open hours have increased by 321 hours per week. This has been achieved through a combination of efficient

scheduling practices and implementation of self-service circulation in many of our branches. The Open Hours Vision and its implementation plan were distributed to the Toronto Public Library Board at its June 25, 2012 meeting.

Promoting greater participation in library programs was one of the goals in the Library's 2008 – 2011 Strategic Plan. During these years, program attendance increased by 18.5% reflecting an overall expansion of programming with a particular focus on children's and cultural programming.

COMMENTS

Options for adding hours both during the week and on Sundays have been identified, along with the programming opportunities that each option provides. The options were developed within the context of the Open Hours Vision.

Option 1 - Weekday Hours

The weekday hours option adds Monday morning and/or Friday night hours at 7 District Branches and the Toronto Reference Library. The 7 District Branches with added hours would be Albert Campbell, Albion, Barbara Frum, Brentwood, Don Mills, Maria A. Shchuka and York Woods. An amount of 34.5 hours per week for a total of 1,794 hours per year would be added. This would standardize hours at all District and Research and Reference (R&R) branches at 69 hours/week, including Sundays. Equity of access would be improved across the City. Four additional FTEs would be required.

Standardizing hours at the R&R and District Branches was the priority for hours expansion identified in the Open Hours Vision implementation plan. These large, busy branches offer the largest collections and the most service to users, and they are geographically distributed across the City. Adding hours at these locations has the greatest impact on the largest number of people. Usage statistics show that Monday morning hours are among the busiest morning hours of the week at branches that are open at this time. Friday night service is currently concentrated in the former cities of Toronto and Scarborough with only a few locations open in other parts of the City. More evening service has been requested by customers during the new Strategic Plan consultation. In addition, it would be easier to communicate about branch open hours schedules if hours were standardized at the R&R and District branches. The standardized 8:30 p.m. weeknight close would also serve as a building block for late night library service in the future.

Additional programming could be offered during these hours. An estimated 360 additional programs would be offered each year, an average increase of 7% over 2011 at these locations. Adding programs at TRL and District branches during the week enables the Library to build on existing weekday audiences using staff who have experience conducting programs for the local community. Children's programs would be added on Monday mornings (except at TRL) and adult programs would be offered on Friday nights.

This weekday expansion of open hours would be achieved through the additional \$250,000 of funding and through greater scheduling efficiencies generated by the lengthened service day.

The schedule of open hours can be found in Attachment 1.

Option 2 - Sunday Hours

Three options for expanding Sunday service have been developed. Currently Sunday service is offered at 27 branches for 37 Sundays per year. Sunday work is offered on a voluntary basis as additional hours at a premium rate and it does not add to the permanent staff establishment.

Option 2A - Lengthen the Sunday season from 37 to 41 Sundays per year at the existing Sunday branches. This would be 4 more Sundays at 27 branches. Additional Sundays would be offered in June, December and on a couple of holiday weekends when the Library is currently closed. This would add 94.5 hours per week on each of the 4 additional Sundays for a total of 378 additional hours per year. Attachment 2 is a calendar showing what the longer Sunday season would look like in a typical year.

Option 2B - Offer year-round Sunday service at 8 branches by adding 7 or 8 Sundays during July and August (depending on when Canada Day falls). The 8 branches offering year-round Sunday service would be Toronto Reference Library, North York Central Library, Cedarbrae, Lillian H. Smith, Richview, Albion, Malvern, and Northern District. Attachment 3 is a calendar showing what year-round Sunday service would look like in a typical year. This would add 28 hours per week on each of the summer Sundays for a total of 196 or 224 additional hours per year depending on when Canada Day falls.

Option 2C - Offer Sunday service at an additional 6 neighbourhood branches with the current schedule of open hours. This would add 21 additional hours per week during the 37-week Sunday season for a total of 777 additional hours per year. Sunday service would be offered at a total of 33 branches. The new Sunday locations would be Bridlewood, Centennial, Runnymede, Sanderson, Weston and Woodside Square. Beaches could also be considered in place of Sanderson. These branches were identified based on the Open Hours Vision, local needs, busyness and geographic distribution. Attachment 4 shows the current Sunday season that would be offered at 6 more locations.

While Option 2C offers the largest number of Sunday hours, the hours are added to small neighbourhood branches that offer a limited range of services. Both Options 2A and 2B expand hours at larger locations that offer more services, larger collections, more computers and more study space. The service impact of Options 2A and 2B is greater.

Maps identifying the Sunday locations for each option can be found in Attachments 5, 6, and 7.

There would be no increase in programming with the expansion of Sunday hours. Sunday staffing levels are not sufficient to allow for service beyond circulation and reference, both of which are extremely busy. Sunday programming does not have an established audience. A Sunday children's storytelling program was piloted over several years and then discontinued because of lack of attendance.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Jane Pyper
City Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Option 1 – Weekday Hours Expansion

Attachment 2: Option 2A Calendar – 4 More Sundays at Current Sunday Branches

Attachment 3: Option 2B Calendar – Year Round Sunday Service at 8 Branches

Attachment 4: Option 2C Calendar – Sunday Service at 6 Additional Branches

Attachment 5: Option 2A Map – 4 More Sundays at Current Sunday Branches

Attachment 6: Option 2B Map – Year Round Sunday Service at 8 Branches

Attachment 7: Option 2C Map – Sunday Service at 6 Additional Branches