

TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY 2009 OPERATING BUDGET

Budget Reductions Not Recommended

Temporary or Permanent Branch Closures

Branch closures can be accomplished in the following ways:

- delay reopening a branch after the renovation is complete;
- rotating temporary closures to generate staff savings;
- close a branch permanently.

Branch closures negatively impact on specific communities served by the closed branches. Access to services as well as safe and welcoming public space would be completely eliminated in the neighbourhoods impacted. This selectively penalizes certain neighbourhoods. Experience has shown that when the reopening of a branch has been delayed to save costs, the construction schedule also tends to be negatively impacted.

Eliminate Specific Programs

Most of TPL's programs promote literacy and reading for children, youth and adults, many of them new Canadians. Programs such as Leading to Reading, Adult Literacy, Story Time Outreach, TD Summer Reading Club, High School Outreach and Homework Help Clubs all receive significant support from the TPL Foundation or from the use of volunteers. From a financial and operational perspective, eliminating programs which receive significant external support is not advisable and would result only in small savings. Further, these cuts would impact most on vulnerable groups.

Home Library Service

The Home Library Service primarily serves customers who are physically challenged and are unable to leave their home. Cancelling the Home Library Service would negatively impact an extremely vulnerable group.

Bookmobile Service

The Bookmobile service provides library services in areas which do not have reasonable access to a branch or which are considered priority neighbourhoods. Eliminating this service would result in no library service to certain neighbourhoods, many of them considered priority.

Increased Gapping

TPL's gapping target is 2.9%, or \$3.9 million, which is significantly higher than the City overall average of 1.9%. TPL has been hard pressed to manage this high gapping target, especially in light of the significant 26% increase in activity over the last nine years and with no additional staff after the nearly 200 full time equivalents eliminated on amalgamation. Increased gapping means less front line staff and this will result in fewer staff to assist customers, longer lines and longer wait times for materials. Increased gapping could also result in closing service desks and unexpected temporary branch closures.