

**Adjustment of Branch Open Hours – 2009**

<b>Date:</b>	November 24, 2008
<b>To:</b>	Toronto Public Library Board
<b>From:</b>	City Librarian

**SUMMARY**

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The purpose of this report is to recommend adjustments to branch open hours at five locations. Hours increases are proposed for Jane/Dundas, St. Lawrence, Thorncliffe and Urban Affairs. Hours will also be realigned at Alderwood to better match community needs.

The hours in these branches have been reviewed and revised in the context of the Board’s plan to expand branch hours and the Strategic Plan. Jane/Dundas reopened in February 2008 following a renovation that introduced self-service circulation and improved workflows and operations. The new arrangement has been successful over the last ten months, and allows hours to be further increased without additional costs. At St. Lawrence, increased hours are part of a long-term plan to improve service to this growing community. In preparation for relocation to a larger facility, an additional staff person will be added to the branch in 2009 facilitating an increase in hours. Thorncliffe will be re-opening in 2009 after significant renovations and more staff will be added because it will be doubling in size. The additional staff and the increased efficiency of the branch make the increase in hours possible. The schedule changes at Urban Affairs and Alderwood are the result of an assessment of use patterns and community consultation.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:**

1. approves the changes in branch open hours for Jane/Dundas, Alderwood, and Urban Affairs as outlined in Attachment 1; and
2. approves the changes in branch open hours for St. Lawrence and Thorncliffe, subject to the approval of the 2009 Budget; and
3. authorizes and directs the appropriate staff to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

## **Implementation Points**

At Alderwood, Jane/Dundas, and Urban Affairs, the change will take effect on January 5, 2009. The changes will be advertised locally and appear in *What's On* and *Hours and Locations*. The changes in hours at Thorncliffe will take effect when the branch re-opens in fall 2009. It will be communicated to Library customers as part of the branch promotion for re-opening. Press releases, local advertising, flyers and the TPL website will highlight the change. At St. Lawrence, the change will take effect in the fall of 2009, when staffing increases. It will be advertised locally and system-wide.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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At Jane/Dundas, the service hours can be expanded with no additional operating costs as a result of the 2009 renovation that introduced self-service check-out and a more efficient branch layout. The increase of hours at Urban Affairs and the realignment of hours at Alderwood have no financial impact.

The hours increases at St. Lawrence and Thorncliffe are subject to approval of the 2009 budget. Additional staff have been requested at these locations to support the capital program.

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this Financial Impact Statement and is in agreement with it.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

At the January 16, 2006 meeting, the Library Board adopted a plan to expand branch open hours across the City. The first phase of the implementation, approved at the June 19, 2006 Library Board meeting, was completed in January 2007. At the November 12, 2007 Board Meeting, increases in hours at Jane/Dundas, S. Walter Stewart and Woodside Square were approved for January 2008. These further adjustments build upon the principles of the first phase, including increases in hours where possible at no additional operating cost.

## **ISSUE BACKGROUND**

A review of branch open hours is undertaken in conjunction with all major capital renovation projects. Jane/Dundas re-opened in February 2008 following a renovation that introduced self-service circulation and improved workflows and operations. The St. Lawrence relocation to a larger facility is part of the 2009 Operating Budget and the 2009 – 2013 Capital Budget and Plan. Thorncliffe closed for construction in December 2007 and is scheduled to re-open in 2009.

The guidelines that were developed as part of the Board's plan to expand branch hours, assist the Library in moving to harmonized open hours as opportunities arise. The renovation and redesign of these branches provides an opportunity to review and revise their open hours in the context of the long-term plan. All three branches incorporate

elements to improve workflow, operations and self-service. At St. Lawrence, additional staffing in advance of the relocation begins the transition to enhanced service meeting the needs of the growing community.

Branch hours are also reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that they meet the needs of the users. At Alderwood and Urban Affairs, an assessment of use patterns led to community consultation on open hours.

## **COMMENTS**

### **Jane/Dundas**

Located in the western part of the city, Jane-Dundas re-opened after a renovation in February of 2008. Weekly open hours increased from 51.5 hours to 55 hours at that time. The improved layout and the introduction of self-service check-out service have increased the branch's efficiency. Ongoing evaluation indicates that service hours can be further increased at the branch without additional cost. As outlined in Attachment 1, 3.5 additional hours per week will be added, to provide service on Wednesday evenings. This brings Jane/Dundas to 58.5 hours per week, moving it closer to the 62 hours per week in the open hours plan.

### **St. Lawrence**

The St. Lawrence Branch is a small branch serving a growing community, and will also serve the new population in West Donlands and East Bayfront. With substantial population growth, including 15,840 in the immediate neighbourhood, the current branch is inadequate to meet local needs. Relocation to a larger facility is part of the 2009 Operating Budget and the 2009 – 2013 Capital Budget and Plan, and was submitted to the City as part of a Waterfront Revitalization Operating Budget Impacts Report. In the meantime, longer hours will help to meet demand. An additional staff person funded as part of the of the St. Lawrence relocation capital project makes this possible. Currently the branch is open 40 hours per week from Tuesday to Saturday. The changes will increase the weekly hours to 50.5 and add service on Mondays.

### **Thorncliffe Park**

Thorncliffe Branch is a busy neighbourhood library that serves a priority neighbourhood. Before its closure, it was open for 50.5 hours per week from Monday to Saturday. This branch will be more efficient to operate when it re-opens and it will have more staff as part of the capital project funding. The changes recommended will add more morning and evening service. The hours will increase to 62 per week from Monday to Saturday, moving it closer to the 65.5 hours per week in the open hours plan.

### **Urban Affairs Library**

The Urban Affairs Library, located at Metro Hall, provides research level services for the public and a specialized corporate research service for City of Toronto staff. It is currently open for 46 hours per week beginning at 10 a.m. during week days and offers service on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday evenings. After a review of library operations and staff schedules, it was determined that a small increase in open hours

could be achieved within current staff resources. Under the proposed schedule, the library will open half an hour earlier in the mornings. This change will provide better service to customers who work at Metro Hall or in the vicinity. Usage patterns and a survey conducted in the branch indicate that day time users would prefer that the library were open earlier in the day. An additional two and half hours of service per week will move the library closer to the open hours of the Toronto Reference Library and ultimately the open hours plan.

## **Alderwood**

Alderwood Branch is located in a shared facility with the Toronto District School Board, Parks and Recreation, and a day-care. The branch is open 50.5 hours per week and offers evening service on Mondays and Tuesdays. Moving service from Tuesday evening to Thursday evening will better serve the community. Thursday is the busiest night at the Parks and Recreation swimming pool and the school schedules its major events on Thursday nights. Informal consultation with the users in the branch also indicates a preference for Thursday nights. Tuesday evening service would continue to be available on the Etobicoke Lakeshore at the Long Branch and Mimico Centennial Branches.

The proposed schedule changes have been reviewed with Toronto Civic Employees' Union Local 416 CUPE.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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Jane Pyper  
City Librarian

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Proposed Branch Open Hours Changes