


TORONTO STAFF REPORT

February 18, 2005

To: City Council

From: Joseph P. Pennachetti, Chief Financial Officer & Treasurer
Josephine Bryant, City Librarian, Toronto Public Library

Subject: Service Enhancement for At-risk Neighbourhoods
2005 Toronto Public Library (TPL) Operating Budget

Purpose:

Policy and Finance Committee at its meeting on February 15, 2005 requested staff to report directly to Council on the additional requests for Service Enhancement for At-risk Neighbourhoods that impacts the 2005 Budget Advisory Committee Recommended Operating Budget for Toronto Public Library.

Financial Implications and Impact Statement:

Policy and Finance Committee considered the request to implement this enhancement in part or whole with the costs detailed in the table below.

2005 Budget Request	Increase in Open Hours	2005 Impact	2006 Impact	Total Annual Cost
Malvern	Add Monday service	\$ 77,600	\$ 155,100	\$ 232,700
York Woods (Jane/Finch)	Add Friday evening service	\$ 29,000	\$ 58,000	\$ 87,000
Albion (Jamestown)	Add Friday evening service	\$ 24,000	\$ 48,000	\$ 72,000
Teen Specialist + Expenses (one position)		\$ 47,700	\$ 45,000	\$ 92,700
Total		\$ 178,300	\$ 306,100	\$ 484,400

There are no alternative funding sources available to fund these additional costs within the City's Budget Advisory Committee Recommended 2005 Operating Budget. These enhancements cannot be funded within the Library's existing budget.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that this report be received for information.

Background:

During the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) review process, there was some confusion about the status of these service enhancements in the Library's budget. It was subsequently clarified that these enhancements were not recommended by BAC. As a result, at the February 15, 2005 meeting of Policy and Finance Committee (P&F), a motion was made to add the proposed funding for all or some expanded services at 3 at-risk Library Neighbourhood locations to the Library Board's 2005 operating budget. P&F recommended that the motion be referred to staff to report to Council on this matter.

Comments:

The TPL Board requested \$178,300 in 2005 for service enhancements to strengthen service for at-risk neighbourhoods. Two enhancement components were identified: (i) a staff position for a Teen Services Specialist; and (ii) increases to branch open hours in three neighbourhoods identified in the Mayor's Community Safety Plan - Malvern, Albion (Jamestown) and York Woods (Jane/Finch) branches.

These enhancements directly support key components of the Library Board's strategic plan and reflect needs identified through community consultation. They are consistent with Council priorities, particularly targeting at-risk neighbourhoods and youth. The proposed open hours enhancements will add service to Malvern branch so that this branch is open on Mondays and will add service on Friday evenings at Albion and York Woods branches. In addition to Sunday hours from September to June, all three branches will be open Monday to Saturday, including five evenings.

Residents in these priority neighbourhoods will have increased access to library service. Access to library branches is important in providing safe public space in local communities where people of all ages can come for free access the Internet, books, magazines and newspapers, find a place for quiet study or refuge, study in a group, attend reading improvement programs, attend homework clubs and access community meeting rooms. Access to library service provides opportunities for newcomers, youth, children and seniors – people from all ages and walks of life. Increased branch open hours respond to community needs and demand. They also maximize the investment in local branch facilities by making them more accessible to the communities they serve.

Good library programs that operate successful outreach to those at high risk offer a protective factor to help build youth resilience. This reflects a strong primary prevention approach and builds on work to encourage youth engagement. A Teen Services Specialist will provide the staff resources needed to develop programs, train staff and spearhead community liaison and outreach for youth.

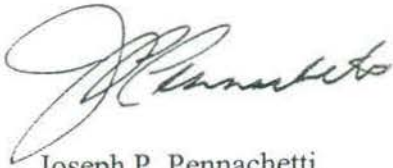
Conclusion:

Adding a Teen Services Specialist and increasing branch open hours in three neighbourhoods identified in the Mayor's Community Safety Plan will strengthen these communities, improve programs and services for youth and increase access to these local branches, which are important community cornerstones. However, as no alternative funding sources has been identified, the approval of this request would result in an additional operating budget pressures to the Budget Advisory Committee Recommended 2005 Operating Budget.

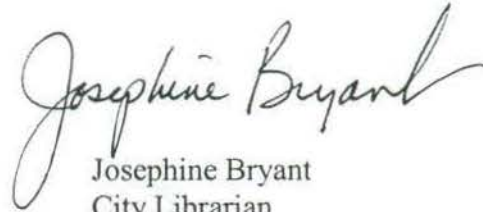
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