

**Scarborough Centre Branch and Civic Centre Precinct
Parking**

Date:	April 20, 2009
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform the Board about parking requirements for the new Scarborough Centre Branch and to request that the Board endorse discussions with the Toronto Parking Authority (TPA) about increasing the supply of parking available at the Scarborough Civic Centre Precinct, with the proviso that such discussions and developments do not create undue delays in the construction of the new library branch.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. requests the Toronto Parking Authority to consider constructing a Toronto Parking Authority parking lot as outlined in the feasibility study prepared by ZAS Architects Inc.; and
2. directs Library staff to work with the Toronto Parking Authority and the City of Toronto to facilitate the provision of a parking supply as outlined in Option A or B of the Library feasibility study, provided that the library project is not unduly delayed.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The project to construct a new 15,000 sq. ft. library branch in the Scarborough Centre area on City-owned land is included in the approved capital budget and scheduled to begin in 2009 for a total cost of \$8.2 million.

The parking options discussed in this report are not part of the Library's approved capital budget for this project.

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

DECISION HISTORY

As the Board is aware, plans have been underway for a number of years to locate a library branch in the Scarborough Centre area. At its meeting on March 25, 2008 it approved locating the branch at 150 Borough Drive subject to the completion of a satisfactory agreement with the City of Toronto. On January 19, 2009 the Board approved continuing the work toward securing this site. Scarborough Community Council endorsed the proposal to build a library branch at this site at its meeting held on February 9, 2009; its report was adopted by City Council on February 23, 24 and 25, 2009.

COMMENTS

From discussions with the City, the Library understands that approximately 30 spaces of parking are required at the Scarborough Centre Branch to meet planning requirements, given that parking is available in the surrounding area.

As noted in the report to the Board on January 19, 2009, the City is seeking to expand available parking in the Civic Centre Precinct. Immediately to the east of the library's site is a City-owned two-level deck parking lot for City staff. This site has been identified as a potential development site and should it be sold and/or developed in the future, an alternate solution will be required to accommodate City staff parking. In addition, the intensive development of the Scarborough Centre over the past 20 years has generated increased demand for visitor parking in the area.

In the summer of 2008, the Library retained a consultant, ZAS Architects Inc., to complete a feasibility study to determine whether a library branch could be built at the 150 Borough Drive site. The consultant was asked to include parking in his study.

In the feasibility study, the consultant shows three options for parking. The first option shows 28 covered spaces at grade, directly below the second floor of the library. We believe this would meet planning requirements. The additional options, included in the March 20, 2009 communication to the Board from Councillor DeBaeremaker demonstrate that it is possible to create between 200 and 300 underground spaces (Attachments 1 and 2). The feasibility study has been shared with staff at the Toronto Parking Authority. As a result of preliminary discussions, we understand that TPA may be willing to construct and operate a combination of above ground and underground spaces totalling approximately 50 spaces altogether at the site, and provide opportunity for future expansion. The sketch in Attachment 3 shows how this could be accomplished.

The Toronto Parking Authority currently has a presence in the Scarborough Centre on-street with its "Pay and Display" machines. In a report to Scarborough Community Council on March 26, 2009, the Director of Community Planning for Scarborough District notes, "A parking garage beneath the library would increase the public parking supply within the Centre and allow both the TPL and the TPA to take advantage of the construction savings to be gained from a joint venture. Further expansion of the parking garage may also address future needs for parking at the Civic Centre."

It is important that the parking issue be resolved in a timely fashion so that the library project can proceed. There is a large and growing population of residents in the neighbourhood who do not have adequate library services according to Board-approved branch planning standards. Furthermore, as endorsed by City Council, the Scarborough Centre Branch project is being submitted for funding under the Federal Infrastructure Program. In order to be eligible for the funding, the library project must be ready to proceed immediately.

The feasibility study shows that the library can be built with sufficient covered spaces at grade to meet requirements for the library. Creating underground parking, estimated at between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per spot, is a major undertaking and is not included within the Library's budget. We are hopeful that TPA will proceed with this project, either on a smaller scale with options for future expansion or on the larger scale shown in Options A or B.

It should also be noted that the plans for the Scarborough Centre Branch will facilitate pedestrian, bicycle and public transit access and use. In addition, the Board has requested Toronto Transit Commission for a transit stop at the site of the Branch.

In the long term, it is in the Library's interest that the supply of public parking in the Civic Centre Precinct is increased. Demand for public parking already exceeds available supply at times. If there was agreement to proceed with the larger option at this time, library users would not be faced with the disruption of the construction for expansion in the future. However, the TPA option with fewer spaces certainly meets library requirements and provides opportunity for future expansion.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

- Attachment 1: Parking Option A (231 spaces)
- Attachment 2: Parking Option B (332 spaces)
- Attachment 3: Parking Option (49 spaces)