



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

12.

Northern District Branch – Closure for Renovation

Date:	May 10, 2010
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

Toronto Public Library received funding from the Federal Infrastructure Stimulus Fund to retrofit Northern District Branch. The branch will be closing for approximately four months starting summer 2010. This report requests approval for the closure and for the provision of alternate service for the closure period.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the closure of the Northern District Branch for approximately four months; and
2. approves the plans for alternate service for the duration of the closure.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact beyond what has already been included in the current year's operating budget.

The Director, Finance and Treasurer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

In 2009 Toronto Public Library received 2010 Federal Infrastructure Stimulus Funding to renovate Northern District Branch. The funding stipulates that the project must be completed by March 2011.

(<http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/pdfs/board/09oct19/10.pdf>)

COMMENTS

Length of closure, branch service level and use, community make-up, proximity of nearby branches and budget impact are key considerations in developing alternate service plans.

The Northern District Branch will be reorganized and retrofitted during the closure. The Infrastructure Stimulus Funding allows the Library to achieve state of good repair improvements on the first floor, including the installation of new flooring, shelving, furniture, washrooms and an updated floor plan to accommodate changes in library service since the branch opened in 1975. A number of new elements will be added to the branch including express check-in and check-out, a new computer learning centre, quiet study areas and urban living room. A new teen zone, children's area and an older adult area will be created through a reorganization of space. The state of good repair work affects the main floor of the library only. Library and tenant offices and meeting rooms on other floors of the building will remain open.

The local community is aware of the closure and a community open house is planned for May so that customers can see and comment on the proposed floor plan and design.

Northern District is a large and busy branch which serves a population of 28,000 in downtown Toronto. It also houses a number of Library offices and meeting spaces. There are a number of leased offices in the building.

There are four library branches within close proximity to Northern District Branch, including Locke, Deer Park, Mt. Pleasant and Forest Hill.

Plans for alternate service

The retrofit will take place on the main floor of the library. Tenants will still have access to offices in the basement and on the second floor. Library offices will also be open.

The following plans for service are recommended:

- continue to provide access to second floor meeting rooms;
- continue to provide Summer Reading Club participation through outreach to day camps and programs in the community;
- relocate some library programs to nearby branches;
- direct customers to pick up holds and use branches in close proximity and that are easily accessible by public transit including Locke, Deer Park, Mt. Pleasant and Forest Hill Branches;
- relocate Sunday service to Deer Park.

Prior to the closure, staff will hold an open house in order to answer questions, speak with customers on an individual basis and provide appropriate referrals for library service

during the period of closure. Flyers, press releases and newspaper ads will also be provided to ensure the closure is well publicized.

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SIGNATURE

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