



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

North York Central Library – Temporary Closure during Renovation

Date:	December 12, 2016
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to request Toronto Public Library Board approval for a closure of the North York Central Library (NYCL) for approximately three months in order to complete the most disruptive phase of the renovation project. Limited alternate service will be provided in a small storefront location in the North York Centre mall. Sunday service will be provided at both the Locke and Bayview branches as of January 2017 and for the length of the closure. Some holiday children's programs have been relocated to other branches.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the closure of the North York Central Library for approximately three months; and
2. receives the plan for alternate service for the duration of the closure.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

In 2016, a one-time cost to temporarily relocate some of the services and staff is estimated at \$50,000 and will be charged to the approved capital project. The on-going cost of alternate service delivery, including the lease cost of the storefront, will be offset by expected savings resulting from the closure of NYCL.

The Director, Finance & Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and is in agreement with it.

DECISION HISTORY

In October 2000, the Library Board approved a policy on library closures.

The North York Central Library Phase 1 renovation was approved as part of the 2016 capital program.

The award of tender for construction to Struct-Con Construction Ltd. was approved by the Board in May 2016.

BACKGROUND

North York Central Library is a seven-storey, 168,022 square foot building that opened in 1987. NYCL is one of Toronto Public Library's largest libraries and is one of two Research and Reference libraries. North York Central Renovation Phase 1 is one of the approved capital projects for Toronto Public Library. Renovation work on phase 1 began in August 2016.

The primary focus of the renovation is the revitalization of the facility's interior and reprogramming of space to support the delivery of new services to meet the changing needs and expectations of library users. State of good repair issues are also being addressed. The project will complete a retrofit and upgrade to building systems and infrastructure, and address a number of state of good repair needs identified in the 2014 Property Condition Assessment, including an interior renovation.

COMMENTS

Part of the renovation of NYCL includes significant demolition and removal of concrete and steel throughout the building. This phase of construction has been ongoing since November and became progressively more disruptive; it is greater than anticipated. As a result of staff comments about the disruption and dust in the building, an air quality assessment was requested and completed. The report stated that:

Numerical data obtained during the testing indicate that, with reference to the applicable and relevant standards the basic indoor air parameters (CO₂, T, RH and CO) meet the applicable criteria. In other words it can be concluded that the air inside the occupied part of the building is of good quality. The concentrations of airborne dust are at low levels and indicate good separation of construction zone from the occupied areas.

Fungal spore counts indicate the presence of undesirable mould genera, such as Aspergillus/Penicillium and Stachybotrys. These moulds may adversely affect people with pulmonary health problems (e.g. asthmatic), immuno-suppressed, allergic, hypersensitive and elderly. The Library employees who have any of these health problems may feel uncomfortable and may ask for relocation to alternative duties in other library locations. It is recommended that the Library considers such requests. The source of these airborne fungal spores should be investigated and mitigated.

The Library immediately advised staff of the recommendations in the report and offered to relocate any staff affected by the mould. The other recommendations in the report will be implemented.

Given the requirement to relocate some staff as a result of the presence of mould, the excessive disruption that is caused by the ongoing heavy construction and the need to conduct a mould abatement program, the City Librarian determined that it would be better to close NYCL temporarily. This would allow the contractors to complete the disruptive work more quickly and it would also allow for quicker mould abatement. As heavy construction and demolition work is scheduled to continue into February 2017, it is recommended that the NYCL be closed for approximately three months.

Since the policy on branch closures authorizes the City Librarian to close a branch for up to four weeks without Board approval, staff moved to close the North York Central Library as soon as feasible. Given the library closed on December 4, 2016 and a closure of more than four weeks is recommended, Board approval is required to continue the temporary closure.

NYCL staff have been relocated to other locations. Staff identified branches that they wished to be relocated to and these requests were accommodated as much as possible. Some staff are now working at branches impacted by the NYCL closure such as Locke, Bayview, Northern District, Centennial and Fairview. It is expected that these branches will become busier during the closure of NYCL. Staff working in support departments have been reassigned to either the Toronto Reference Library or the Ellesmere service hub. Home library service and Bookmobile staff will remain at NYCL as their work areas are further away from the construction and have been sealed off with additional hoarding. They also spend significant time outside of the library. They now have access to a quiet work area that is isolated from the construction work. Facilities and Shipping staff will also remain on site in order to support the construction work and to manage deliveries of mail and library materials.

While the air quality testing report indicated that the work areas remain safe, because some staff will remain on site, ongoing air quality testing will be completed based on consultations from Public Health. The current report has been made available to staff. All future reports will also be made available.

PLAN FOR ALTERNATE SERVICE

A small 2,000 square foot storefront space in the North York Centre mall is providing alternative library service as of December 12th pending finalization of the lease and the outfitting of the space. Library service is available for hours consistent with the North York Central Library schedule. Service in this location will include:

- holds pick up, registration and circulation;
- limited information service;
- small browsing collection;
- WiFi.

Children's story time programs have been relocated to other branches or have been cancelled.

Additional Sunday service will be offered at Locke and Bayview branches for the duration of the closure at NYCL.

A public communication plan has been developed and implemented. The plan is attached for information. Staff across the system have been provided with information about the closure, including details regarding the alternate service plan.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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