

Malvern Branch Expansion – Youth Hub Initiative

Date:	June 15, 2009
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

This report informs the Board about the Malvern Branch Expansion - Youth Hub Initiative, and requests approval for Library staff to sign the Agency Agreement between the Initiative’s Trustee (the Toronto Public Library Foundation) and the Youth Initiative Group, as a representative of one of the partnership agencies, if required.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the Area Manager for Malvern, Cedarbrae and Albert Campbell districts, signing the Agency Agreement on behalf of the Youth Initiative Group, if required.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The Malvern Branch Expansion - Youth Hub Initiative is part of the approved Capital Budget for 2009-2010 for a total cost of \$2.25 million.

Funding for this project has been achieved through the City’s Partnership Opportunities Legacy Fund (POL Fund) and through the Youth Challenge Fund (YCF). The POL Fund has provided \$1.1 million for the outdoor plaza and the construction of the youth hub. The Youth Challenge Fund has committed a total of \$1,790,961.26, with \$1.15 million for capital costs and the remainder, \$640,961.26 for program costs over a three-year period.

The space will be part of the branch, and TPL will pay facility operating costs estimated to be approximately \$30,000 per year which are included in the approved operating budget.

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

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Through its involvement in the Neighbourhood Action Partnership in the Malvern community, the Library has provided support to the drafting of a proposal for funding to build a youth space at the Malvern Branch. At its meeting in December 2008, the YCF Board approved \$1.79 million for this project.

COMMENTS

In December 2008 the Youth Challenge Fund Board approved a proposal for funding the development of a new youth-designated, youth-governed space for Toronto's marginalized and racialized young people in the priority neighbourhood of Malvern. The proposed space will provide much needed supports, services and a safe space for disengaged youth to develop positive relationships, leadership and life skills.

The proposal is for a 3,770 square foot expansion of TPL's Malvern Branch, which will extend along the south wall of the gym of the Malvern Community Recreation Centre. The expansion, known as The S.P.O.T. (Success, Power, Opportunity, Teamwork), will house community-based youth programming geared toward underserved and unengaged youth in the Malvern community. A ProTech Media Centre, sponsored by Microsoft, will be part of the new youth space.

The new space will serve as a location for mentorship, leadership and capacity building opportunities for racialized and under-served youth. The space expansion will create direct employment opportunities during all phases of its development and implementation, including the construction period.

The governance of the space is currently under development; the final structure will adhere to YCF's criteria of youth-led and youth-driven governance. At a minimum, the governance body will be comprised of 50 percent plus one youth representation, in addition to adult allies who bring relevant expertise to support the initiative.

The new space will provide programming and activities directly to 200 youth a year, while benefiting 1,200 youth a year through accessible drop-in programming in a safe space. Programming will be developed and delivered in a collaborative manner, bringing together the resources of grassroots organizations, such as HOODLINC and Lost Lyrics, with those of well-established organizations, such as Malvern Family Resource Centre and Toronto Public Library, enhancing their collective ability to provide meaningful and effective support to youth. Programming will focus on employment skills, development and training, leadership development, mentoring, networking, and arts. All programs will be free to participants.

The primary service group will be male and female youth aged 11 - 24 in the Malvern neighbourhood. In particular, youth who are under-served, isolated, out of school, racialized and/or newcomers, vulnerable to violence and to being involved in the criminal justice system, will be targeted.

Toronto Public Library's Role

TPL is supporting this process as a key community partner. In June 2008, TPL retained the services of Architect Phillip H. Carter, who worked on the 2005 Malvern Branch renovation and expansion, to conduct a feasibility study to determine whether the youth space could be added to the library. The youth space will be built as an expansion of the library, and will include adjustments to the library entrance and book drop to accommodate it. TPL staff will manage the design and construction process. Library staff is assisting the process through providing meeting space, proposal writing, administrative support, communications support, and youth capacity building support. The City Librarian provided letters of support for the YCF funding application.

YCF and the Youth Initiative Group (the group responsible for submitting the application) have selected the Toronto Public Library Foundation (TPLF) as the Trustee for this project. The Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the United Way (for YCF) and the TPLF is currently being developed. This MOA includes, as Schedule A, an Agency Agreement for the disbursement of funds between the Sponsoring Agency (TPLF) and the Youth Initiative Group. The Library's Area Manager for Malvern, Cedarbrae and Albert Campbell districts who was the contact person to represent the agency partners in the funding proposal to YCF, may be asked to sign the Agency Agreement on behalf of the adult partners of the Youth Initiative Group. A youth representative will also be asked to sign.

Once the construction of the youth space is complete, TPL will continue to provide support through programming and organizational support through participation on the Steering Committee. TPL will also pay the facility operating costs.

The creation of this youth hub will extend the Library's ability to develop responsive services to meet the needs of youth in this neighbourhood and to partner with youth-serving agencies, following the directions outlined in the current strategic plan. The expansion will be Toronto Public Library space.

Additional Partners

The following organizations have been involved with this initiative:

- **HOODLINC Youth Organization** - a local grassroots organization that provides educational and mentorship services to disengaged youth who have faced significant challenges;
- **TAIBU Community Health Centre** – is a multidisciplinary team consisting of healthcare professionals; they are identified as a program partner in the delivery of health services;

- **Centennial College’s HYPE Program** - is a program for underserved youth who have been disengaged from the education system, to have an opportunity to have a positive experience;
- **Malvern Family Resource Centre** – one of Malvern’s cornerstone agencies, providing support to families and youth for over 25 years;
- **City of Toronto** –The City of Toronto’s Partnerships Opportunities Legacy Fund is committing \$1.1 million for the creation of the S.P.O.T. and an outdoor entrance plaza for the community;
- **City of Toronto, Parks Forestry and Recreation Division** – the Malvern Community and Recreation Centre has been a community focal point for youth for more than 30 years providing recreation and capacity building opportunities for youth in Malvern;
- **Urbanology Magazine** – is a nationally distributed urban lifestyle magazine that was started by local Malvern youth. Urbanology is known for providing opportunities for mentorship, internships, volunteerism and portfolio growth for youth interested in journalism, photography, graphic design and business;
- **Literature for Life** - is a magazine “written for young mothers by young mothers”; it engages young mothers as both contributors and writers using their interests and needs to inform the content.

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SIGNATURE

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