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To: Toronto Public Library Board – June 6, 2005
From: City Librarian
Subject: **West Region – Adjustment of Branch Open Hours**

Purpose:

To seek Toronto Public Library Board approval for an adjustment to branch open hours in the West Region in conjunction with the re-opening of Long Branch in the Brentwood District.

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

There is no financial impact as a result of the recommended changes.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board approve the changes in branch open hours for the West Region as outlined in Attachment 1.

Background:

In January of 2005, Long Branch in the West Region closed for renovations for a period of six to eight months. It is currently scheduled to re-open in the fall of 2005.

The closure and re-opening of Long Branch has provided an opportunity to review and revise not only the hours for Long Branch, but also other branches in the Brentwood and Richview Districts in the context of the Library's long-term plans for branch open hours.

Guidelines have been developed in accordance with the Service Delivery Model to enhance access and assist the Library in moving to harmonized open hours as opportunities arise. For small neighbourhood branches such as Long Branch, the Library seeks to provide:

- a band of 40 open hours, over 5 weekdays (excluding Sunday)
- Monday as the closed day

In addition, for both district and neighbourhood branches, the Library has been working to achieve:

- 8:30 p.m. as the latest closing time
- Saturday hours from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

As an example, in keeping with these guidelines and in conjunction with the 2004 budget process, last year the Board approved a change in the closing time for four branches in the West Region, moving it from 9:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. In addition, at its meeting of February 14, 2005, the Board also approved an adjustment to hours in the West Region in keeping with these guidelines, and in conjunction with the re-opening of Northern Elms.

Comments:

The current number of open hours for the neighbourhood branches in the Brentwood District total 195 per week divided among five branches – Alderwood, Humber Bay, Mimico, Long Branch, and New Toronto. The hours at Alderwood, a joint public/school library, have been set at 47 hours per week to insure the provision of library service to Sir Adam Beck School as well as the local community. Each of the other neighbourhood branches in the district accounts for 37 hours per week.

The proposed changes will achieve consistency with most other branches across the system by moving to an 8:30 p.m. closing time (currently 8:00 p.m.) and a 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Saturday (currently 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.) for all five branches. They will standardize all branches except Alderwood at the recommended 40-hour per week band for small neighbourhood branches and institute Monday as their closed day. As noted above, Alderwood's hours will continue to reflect the need to provide library service to the school; it will be open for 48 hours per week and, aside from Sunday, will not have a closed day.

These changes to the Brentwood District will leave only two West Region branches, Eatonville and Elmbrook Park in the Richview District, without harmonized hours. It is therefore recommended that their hours should also be changed at this time. Elmbrook Park, a small neighbourhood branch, would join the Brentwood neighbourhood branches in moving from a 37 to a 40-hour week with Monday as its closed day. Eatonville is a large neighbourhood branch whose 57-hour open schedule is identical to those of Albion, Brentwood, and Richview. It is proposed that Eatonville join these district branches in moving to a 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Saturday.

The changes, as outlined in Attachment 1, will increase open hours to customers in the Brentwood District by 13 hours per week and in the Richview District by four hours per week. Moving to eight hours a day allows for more efficient scheduling of staff and, as a result, the increase can be achieved with no financial impact.

The new open hours affecting those branches in the Brentwood and in the Richview Districts will be instituted in September, following the Labour Day weekend.

Conclusion:

The recommended adjustments in open hours for the West Region will be consistent with hours in similar branches across the city, and will move the Library further in meeting its service harmonization objectives regarding branch open hours.

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Josephine Bryant
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List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Proposed Branch Open Hours Changes – West Region