



STAFF REPORT ACTION REQUIRED

Parliament Street Branch – Closure for Minor Renovation

Date:	February 25, 2019
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

Parliament Street branch will be closing for an interior renovation in the spring of 2019. This report requests the approval for the closure of approximately 1-1/2 to two months. The St. James Town branch is also going to be renovated during this time period, but will not be closed until the Parliament Street branch reopens.

The renovation will refresh the adult areas with new flooring and shelving; the adult computer area will be reconfigured to allow for more space per workstation; an isolated study area will be opened up; and shelving height reduced to improve staff sightlines and health and safety in the branch.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the closure of the Parliament Street branch for approximately 1-1/2 to two months.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the budget.

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

DECISION HISTORY

The Parliament Street branch minor renovation is part of the Library's approved capital budget.

COMMENTS

The Parliament Street branch will be closed for approximately 1-1/2 to two months. The closure is expected to begin in the spring of 2019. There is also a planned closure for the nearby St. James Town branch in close proximity to Parliament Street. Staff will ensure the two locations are not closed at the same time, which would impact library service delivery to this part of the City.

Parliament Street branch is a busy neighbourhood branch, serving a current population of approximately 40,663 (2016 census data). The community served by the branch includes part of the Regent Park Neighbourhood Improvement Area.

The branch is an approved future capital project 2018-2027 for possible relocation and expansion. The timeline for that major capital work has design commencing in 2021 and closure for construction sometime in 2023. In the mean time, the branch requires immediate work to maintain a reasonable state of good repair and address ongoing health and safety issues.

The project will include:

- reconfiguring the adult computer area to allow for more space per workstation that addresses issues around personal space and crowding for customers; this will also improve staff supervision of area;
- replacing carpet with polished concrete for better ongoing maintenance as carpet in the area is badly worn and stained;
- replacing shelving for adult collections with lower shelving to improve staff sightlines;
- opening up an isolated study area;
- adding two new laptop bars that overlook the streetscape at the windows;
- replacing existing study tables with furniture that includes access to power for customers to charge their devices.

All furniture and shelving elements will be able to be re-used as part of the future major capital project.

PLAN FOR ALTERNATE SERVICE

For the duration of the closure the following alternate service plans will be in effect:

- direct users to pick-up holds and use nearby branches in close proximity with easy TTC access, including St. James Town, St. Lawrence; Toronto Reference Library, and Yorkville branches;
- expand hours at St. James Town branch to 62 hours per week, plus maintaining their Sunday service;
- expand hours at St. Lawrence branch to 62 hours per week;
- increase programming at St. Lawrence and St. James Town branches;
- continue to provide outreach services such as Kindergarten Outreach, promotion for Summer Reading Club, visits to schools, child care centres, after school programs, parent/child programs, and outreach to clients of community agencies;

- maintain contact with community groups and agencies identifying service needs and planning for services to be delivered at the re-opening of the branch;
- continue to participate in key community events;
- utilize social media throughout the closure to promote library services and keep users updated on the progress of construction.

Prior to the closure staff will hold an open house to answer questions, speak with customers on an individual basis and provide appropriate referrals for library services during the closure. The local Councillor has been informed of the alternate service plan.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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