

St. James Town Branch – Closure for Minor Renovation

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

SUMMARY

St. James Town branch will be closing for renovation in the late spring of 2019. This report requests the approval for the closure of approximately two to three months. There is also a planned closure and renovation that will occur at the nearby Parliament Street branch. Staff will ensure that this closure will happen after the reopening of the Parliament Street branch.

The interior renovation will include the increase of public seating by adding a new laptop bar; replacement of the service desk and reconfiguration of the door into the staff room to improve efficiency and address health and safety issues.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the closure of the St. James Town branch for approximately two to three 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 St James Town branch minor renovation is part of the Library's approved capital budget.

COMMENTS

The St. James Town branch will be closed for approximately two to three months. The closure is expected to begin in the spring of 2019 after the planned renovation for the nearby Parliament Street branch is complete as these locations share many customers.

St. James Town branch is a busy neighbourhood branch, serving a current population of approximately 27,917 (2016 census data). The branch borders on the Regent Park Neighbourhood Improvement Area. The branch was opened in 2004 and has been a very busy and popular location since that time.

Interior renovation will include:

- replacement of carpet throughout the branch;
- reconfiguration of public computer workstations to improve the customer experience;
- replacement of service desk, relocation of self-service checkout and interior book drop;
- re-location of the door into the staff work room in order to improve efficiency and health and safety for staff;
- addition of a new laptop bar with access to electrical outlets;
- some shelving and furniture will also be replaced as part of the project.

PLAN FOR ALTERNATE SERVICE

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

- staff will direct users to pick-up holds and use nearby branches in close proximity with easy TTC access including Parliament Street; St. Lawrence; Toronto Reference Library, and Yorkville branches;
- expanded hours at St. Lawrence branch to 62 hours per week;
- expanded programming at St. Lawrence branch;
- continuation of 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 and the Wellesley centre;
- partnership with the Rekai Centre to offer book club, children's programming and other programs;
- maintenance of contact with community groups and agencies;
- continuation of participation in key community events;
- utilization of 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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