

Music School at Site of York Woods Library

Date:	February 28, 2022
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to inform the Toronto Public Library Board of a proposal for Community Music Schools of Toronto (CMST) to build a music school at the site of the York Woods library.

Under the City of Toronto's Centralized Real Estate Service Delivery Model, City Council has the authority to make decisions concerning the use of real estate under the jurisdiction of the Library Board. Although Council has recently endorsed the construction of a music school at the site of the York Woods library, pending a feasibility review to be undertaken by the City Manager, Library Board approval will also be required to allow this initiative to proceed.

Pending the successful conclusion of the feasibility review, staff will bring back a report with the results requesting Board approval. This is expected to be completed later this year.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There should be no financial impacts resulting from this initiative as all costs related to the project, both capital and operating, should be fully funded by CMST. A satisfactory operating and cost-sharing agreement will ensure that CMST pays for its share of costs.

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

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PLAN

Staff will determine appropriate strategic alignment and potential partnership opportunities pending the results of the feasibility review and will address alignment with strategic priorities in the follow-up report coming to the board later this year.

DECISION HISTORY

At the meeting of February 2 - 3, 2022, City Council considered Member Motion MM39.16 *Establishing a Music School at York Woods Library* (Attachment 1) and adopted recommendations which: endorsed the building of a music school at the site of the York Woods library; directed the City Manager to perform a feasibility review with stakeholders; and directed the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration to commence community consultation for the project.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

CMST is a charitable organization founded in 1999 with a mission to help Toronto youth access high quality music education. CMST music programs are geared towards students ages 3 to 18 and are heavily subsidized to provide families who would not normally have access to music education due to their financial situation. Students participating in CMST programs have access to instruments, music education, mentorship, and performance opportunities in a safe, supportive and creative environment.

In summer of 2019, Councillor Perruzza (Ward 7), approached TPL with a proposal for the [Regent Park School of Music](#) (renamed to Community Music Schools of Toronto) to locate a music school in the Jane Finch community as a part of expanding its community reach and serving the residents in this community. CMST looked at various sites throughout the community and felt that the site of the York Woods library located at 1785 Finch Avenue West would be most suitable. At that time, the school did not have available funding for the project. It was noted that building a music school is outside of the mandate and authority of the Library Board and under the City or Toronto's Centralized Real Estate Service Delivery Model, City Council has the authority to make decisions concerning the use of real estate under the jurisdiction of the Library Board.

In April 2021, Councillor Perruzza once again contacted TPL regarding a more complete proposal for CMST to build a music school at the site of the York Woods library as they had secured a substantial donation from a private donor to fund the construction of the music school. As the decision regarding the music school is outside of the mandate or authority of the Library Board, discussions were held with CMST,

Councillor Perruzza, and various City departments and agencies including Social Development, Finance & Administration, Economic Development & Culture, Corporate Real Estate Management, Legal Services, Planning and CreateTO to determine the best approach forward.

At the meeting of February 2 - 3, 2022, City Council considered MM39.16 *Establishing a Music School at York Woods Library* and the recommendations were adopted.

COMMENTS

The York Woods library is currently undergoing a substantial renovation, which includes improvements to the layout of the branch, providing better access and allowing the introduction of additional and improved services, including a digital innovation hub, an instrument music lending library, a KidsStop, an improved e-learning lab and a relocated and improved Youth Hub. As a part of the renovation and to ensure more natural lighting, many new windows have been added to the south façade of the building. There is still work to be done to determine where on the site the new standalone building for the music school will be situated. However, any new buildings placed on the site of the York Woods library should not interfere with or detract from the improvements and/or the ongoing renovations currently being undertaken on the library.

Under the City of Toronto's Centralized Real Estate Service Delivery Model, City Council has the authority to make decisions concerning the use of real estate under the jurisdiction of the Library Board, and although Council has recently endorsed the construction of a music school at the site of the York Woods library, Board approval will also be required to allow this initiative to proceed.

The City Manager has been tasked with conducting a feasibility review of the music school proposal with stakeholders. TPL will be an active participant to ensure that the Library Board's interest and concerns are addressed, including:

- the construction of the music school should be completely managed and funded by CMST and have no negative financial impact for TPL;
- the construction of the music school should not interfere with or detract from the improvements at York Woods library;
- the continuing operations of the music school should be completely funded by CMST and should have no negative impacts on TPL;
- a satisfactory operating and cost-sharing agreement, including any contributions for capital requirements, to be negotiated with CMST;
- while it is within Council's authority to approve the construction of a music school on Library property and to negotiate a lease or occupancy agreement

with CMST, the Library Board's authority and interests should continue to be respected throughout the process.

Pending the successful conclusion of the feasibility review, staff will bring back a report with the results requesting Board approval. This is expected to be completed later this year.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

Vickery Bowles
City Librarian

Attachments

Attachment 1: Notice of Motion, MM39.16 Establishing a Music School at York Woods Library - by Councillor Anthony Perruzza, seconded by Mayor John Tory

ATTACHMENT 1

Notice of Motion

MM39.16	ACTION			Ward: 7
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Establishing a Music School at York Woods Library - by Councillor Anthony Perruzza, seconded by Mayor John Tory

*** Notice of this Motion has been given.**

*** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.**

Recommendations

Councillor Anthony Perruzza, seconded by Mayor John Tory, recommends that:

1. City Council endorse the building of a music school at the site of the York Woods Library and direct the City Manager to engage all of the relevant City of Toronto divisions, the Toronto Public Library and the Community Music Schools of Toronto to explore the feasibility of building a music school at this site.
2. City Council direct the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration together with all relevant stakeholders, to commence a community consultation/engagement for this project.

Summary

Community Music Schools of Toronto have expressed interest in building a music school to serve the Jane Finch community at the site of the York Woods Library located at ***2600 Finch Avenue West**. Community Music Schools of Toronto has been engaging the Jane Finch community and the local Councillor in these discussions since 2019. Community Music Schools of Toronto have a funder to build a music school at this location.

Background Information

Member Motion MM39.16

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2022/mm/bgrd/backgroundfile-175615.pdf>)

***Please note that the address listed above is incorrect. The address for York Woods Library is 1785 Finch Avenue West. The error has been reported to the City Clerk's office for correction.**