



To:                   Toronto Public Library Board – September 23, 2002

From:                City Librarian

Subject:             **S. Walter Stewart District Library – Possible Relocation**

Purpose:

To inform the Toronto Public Library Board of the feasibility of moving the S. Walter Stewart Library to the East York Civic Centre and request approval to submit a business case supporting the relocation to the City's Property Management Committee for consideration.

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

The current project for the renovation of the S. Walter Stewart Library is in the Library's capital budget, slated to begin in 2004 at a cost of \$4.2 million. The result of a preliminary assessment of the East York Civic Centre has determined that the S. Walter Stewart Library could be relocated to the Civic Centre for the same cost.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

- (1)    the Toronto Public Library Board approve the submission of a business case for the relocation of the S. Walter Stewart Library to the East York Civic Centre, to the City's Property Management Committee;
- (2)    the business case be contingent on no rent being paid at the East York Civic Centre;
- (3)    the public be consulted about the possible relocation as part of the consultation process on the future of the East York Civic Centre; and
- (4)    the appropriate Library officials be authorized and directed to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Background:

The existing S. Walter Stewart District Library is 26,137 square feet and owned by the Toronto Public Library Board. At its July 15, 2002 meeting, the Library Board received a letter from Deputy Mayor Case Ootes requesting consideration of relocating the S. Walter Stewart Library to the East York Civic Centre. Staff was asked to respond to this request.

Comments:

With the assistance of architectural and engineering services, staff has undertaken a preliminary assessment of the East York Civic Centre to determine the suitability of a portion of the Civic Centre for Library operations. In addition, a cost estimate for the possible relocation was developed for budget purposes. The result of the assessment is that there are options for locating a 25,000 - 30,000 square foot library to the Civic Centre utilizing one or more floors. Cost estimates for the relocation cannot be finalized without actual space identified within the Civic Centre. However, it has been determined that options are possible that would not exceed the \$4.2 million budgeted for the existing S. Walter Stewart Library.

Public consultation meetings on the future of the East York Civic Centre are planned over the next few months. With the submission of a business case to the City's Property Management Committee, the Library is in a position to participate in this larger process and gather feedback from the public about this possible relocation. Staff would ensure Library customers are notified of this process and encourage their participation.

Staff has determined that Library service would benefit from the relocation to the Civic Centre:

- With the Library at the major intersection of Coxwell and Mortimer, there is much greater street visibility. In addition to the community being more aware of the Library, it also will have improved public transportation and building access.
- The current S. Walter Stewart Library is in a circular building. Sight lines and use of space will be greatly enhanced by moving to a location that allows for layout of a more effective floor plan.
- By locating in a building with other municipal services, there is convenience for the community as well as shared parking, lobby, community meeting and other space;
- More opportunities for partnerships and shared programs are created by being in a joint facility.
- Moving from a 42 year-old to a 12 year-old building means that future costs for building maintenance are reduced.

Conclusion:

Staff has done a preliminary assessment of relocating the S. Walter Stewart Library to the East York Civic Centre. Based on the suitability of the space, cost estimates and benefits to Library service, staff is recommending that a business case supporting the relocation be submitted to the City for consideration. The public would be consulted about this possible relocation as part of the process being undertaken about the future of the East York Civic Centre.

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List of Attachments:

Not applicable.