



STAFF REPORT INFORMATION ONLY

Toronto Reference Library Lower-Level Renovation Project - Award of Construction Contract

Date: March 23, 2026
To: Toronto Public Library Board
From: City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to seek Toronto Public Library Board approval to award a construction tender to BDA Inc. for the Toronto Reference Library (TRL) Lower-Level Renovation Project.

The project includes demolition and full interior renovation, excluding furniture, of approximately 14,000 square feet of the lower level of TRL which is used as staff space for the Toronto Public Library (TPL) Human Resources (HR) and Finance teams. The project will modernize and make more efficient use of this office space and address accessibility requirements and state of good repair work needed in the space. This space was last renovated over 20 years ago, and was damaged following a small fire and subsequent flood in 2025.

The total value of the contract award and commitment with BDA Inc. is \$2,891,997 excluding HST, which is comprised of the tender amount including cash allowance of \$355,000 plus a 10% contingency of \$262,909.

The Toronto Reference Library will remain operational during the renovation. The construction area in the lower level will close for approximately six months, starting April/May 2026, with alternate work arrangements being made for staff currently working out of this space.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves a commitment with BDA Inc. for the TRL Lower-Level Renovation Project with a total value of \$2,891,997 excluding Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) comprised of:
 - a. an award of construction tender, being the lowest compliant bid, at a cost of \$2,629,088;
 - b. a 10% contingency of \$262,909.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The total value of the contract award and commitment with BDA Inc. is \$2,891,997 excluding HST, which is comprised of the tender amount including cash allowance of \$355,000 plus a 10% contingency of \$262,909.

Funding for the award is available within the Toronto Reference Library SOGR capital program in the approved 2026-2035 Capital Budget and Plan.

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

DECISION HISTORY

At its meeting on February 23, 2026, the Library Board adopted the report titled [2026-2035 Capital Budget and Plan - Adoption](#), which outlined the TPL 2026-2035 Capital Budget and Plan as approved by City Council, including the Toronto Reference Library project with 2026 cash flow and future year commitments of \$21.558 million for various SOGR projects in the Toronto Reference Library including the Lower-Level Renovation project.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The lower-level spaces at TRL that are the subject of this award are used as office and workspaces for the HR and Finance teams at TPL. The furniture, ceiling tiles, light fixtures, and carpeting are original, dating back to the construction of the building. The layout of the offices and workstations is outdated, having last been renovated over 20 years ago. The existing design and layout does not maximize the available space and is not barrier-free. A modernization project for these work areas was previously contemplated and considered as part of the broader TRL capital planning project.

In January 2025, a small fire occurred at the Toronto Reference Library ground floor Learning Centre which is located directly above the space in question. This triggered the sprinkler system which flooded the HR and Finance spaces below. Measures were taken to repair and remediate water damage, including mold testing, to ensure the area could be used by staff while the renovation's scope and requirements were determined. As a result of the damage, the full renovation project was accelerated and consists of demolition and interior renovation, including new meeting rooms, office spaces, workstations, carpet, paint, and accessible furniture.

COMMENTS

Renovation of the offices will enhance and modernize the workspace, addressing accessibility requirements, including height adjustable work surfaces, wider aisles and doors, to meet the latest Ontario Building Code and AODA requirements.

The renovation will improve the functional layout of the space by improving team adjacencies, repurposing underutilized spaces, adding four additional shareable meeting rooms, one new shared staff kitchenette, new filing and copy rooms, and a new space for the Learning and Development team.

Construction Tender Process and Timeline

TPL issued a Request for Tender (RFT) on January 30, 2026, for construction services related to the interior renovation of TRL's lower-level staff space.

For the recommended contract award, the following requirements have been met:

- The procurement process was conducted in accordance with the Board's Purchasing Policy, with a Request for Tender (RFT) issued in accordance with the instructions to the bidders, and bids were received electronically using TPL's e-procurement solution.
- Eight prequalified construction firms from TPL's pre-established roster for general contractors were invited to submit tenders for project 265-25-TPL-RFT on January 30, 2026.
- Eight bidders attended the mandatory site visit on February 6, 2026.
- Eight compliant bids were received before the submission deadline on February 26, 2026.
- The firm recommended for award is the bidder with the lowest bid meeting the specifications and meeting all requirements of the RFT.
- Library staff have reviewed the submission from BDA Inc. and found the price to be reasonable in relation to the complexity of the project.

Construction Timeline

Construction is expected to take place for approximately six months. The HR and Finance offices will close in April/May 2026 with no anticipated service interruptions to branch operations. The HR and Finance staff will be provided with alternate work arrangements, including alternate workspace at TRL, until the project is completed. Staff will be informed of the changes to their work location and will be provided with regular construction updates. There will be no impacts to business operations for the two departments or library services at the Toronto Reference Library during construction.

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SIGNATURE

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