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Report to / Rapport au:

Ottawa Public Library Board
Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa

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**SUBJECT: Permanent Modification of Hog's Back and Carleton Heights
Bookmobile Stops**

**OBJET: Modification permanente des arrêts de bibliobus Hog's Back et
Carleton Heights**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Public Library Board, effective Thursday, July 6, 2023:

- 1. Approve permanently modifying the Hog's Back bookmobile stop by discontinuing this stop; and;**
- 2. Approve adding the Hog's Back time to the existing Carleton Heights bookmobile stop.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa, en vigueur le jeudi 6 juillet 2023:

1. **Approuve la modification permanente de l'arrêt de bibliobus Hog's Back en supprimant cet arrêt; et,**
2. **Approuve l'ajout de temps qui a été consacrée à Hog's Back à l'arrêt de bibliobus existant de Carleton Heights.**

BACKGROUND

As per Ottawa Public Library ("OPL" or "the Library") Board policy 001-OPLB, Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Trustees, the OPL Board ("the Board")'s role includes reviewing and approving major strategies, plans, and decisions, and is further defined in policy 002-OPLB Delegation of Authority to include "Permanently ...modify bookmobile stops..."

The Alternative Services Delivery Framework 2016-2020, approved by the Board in September 2015, guided reviews of Bookmobile stops and Board approved changes:

- Alternative Services Bookmobile Stops, OPLB-2016-0142
- Bookmobile Stop Changes, OPLB-2017-1003
- Alternative Services Priorities, OPLB-2018-1102

In November 2018, the Board approved the Alternative Services Priorities (OPLB-2018-1102), which confirmed continued investment in bookmobile services.

A formal review of the bookmobile schedule has not been conducted since 2018 (Alternative Services Priorities, OPLB-2018-1102). Since this review, Bookmobile stops were paused from March until June 2020, and experienced intermittent schedule modifications due to pandemic-related changes. Subsequently, the regular schedule resumed in February 2022 with some modifications. The 2019-2022 Alternative Services Board Ad hoc Committee endorsed continuing with the current interim Bookmobile schedule pending a more fulsome review.

In May 2022, the Board approved the Service Delivery Framework (SDF) (OPLB-2022-0503), a foundational document that describes the overarching services offered by OPL, as well as the ways the public can access those services. OPL identified three (3) service channels through which its services are delivered, of which one is the Mobile Channel. The key document for this channel at OPL is the Mobile Framework (currently named the Alternative Services Framework), and the 2022 report noted that this

Framework was being refreshed via an Ad hoc Committee and is included as part of Phase 6 of the SDF.

Library staff are reviewing the draft Mobile Framework, and the relevant Ad hoc Committee responsible for providing input, the Service Framework Ad hoc committee of the Board, has been struck (Trustees Brown and Bradley). Staff expect the Ad hoc committee to begin meeting later in 2023, and a draft Mobile Framework will subsequently be tabled at a Board meeting prior to public engagement, before returning to the Board for approval in 2024.

In the interim, due to on-site issues, staff have determined that the Hog's Back bookmobile stop is unable to continue in its current location. The purpose of this report is to obtain Board approval for the recommended permanent modifications of the Bookmobile stops, namely discontinuing the Hog's Back bookmobile stop (885 Meadowlands Drive) and allocating the timeslot to the neighbouring Carleton Heights stop (~~960 Silver Street~~ **1665 Apeldoorn Avenue**). Any subsequent recommendations regarding the Bookmobile schedule will come forward to the Board based on the development of the Mobile Framework.

DISCUSSION

Since the end of pandemic restrictions, business at the plaza where the Hog's Back stop is located has increased. As the plaza becomes more established and more spaces become leased by businesses, finding available parking for the Bookmobile has become increasingly difficult. The increased presence of vehicles, combined with snow clearing issues, can make it difficult to park and provide clear access for clients to the vehicle.

In addition to these observations, Bookmobile staff were approached in November 2022 by the landlord requesting OPL find an alternate location. The bookmobile has been allowed to remain on-site until a new location is secured.

The Hog's Back bookmobile stop is part of a Thursday route that includes three stops in geographic proximity:

1. Ledbury Banff (2084 Banff Avenue) from 3:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. (1.25 hours)
2. Hog's Back (885 Meadowlands Drive) from 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. (1 hour)
3. Carleton Heights (1665 Apeldoorn Avenue) from 7:15 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. (1.25 hours)

The Hog's Back stop dates from 1986; it has been at the Meadowlands location since July 2017 and was previously located at 991 Dynes Road (the former McGregor Easson Public School). Average usage in the pre-pandemic years of 2018/2019 was 11 clients per visit, which is consistent with a mid-range performing stop. However, Hog's Back visitor traffic failed to return to pre-pandemic levels, hosting an average of six (6) clients per week in 2022.

Library staff explored several alternate locations for the Hog's Back stop, including nearby charitable or educational organizations with similar mandates and client bases. These options were considered within the parameters approved by the Board in the 2016-2020 Alternative Services Framework, particularly the potential for partnerships and the suitability of the location, as well as distance from the existing Hog's Back stop and the safety for clients and staff of each potential new location.

Carleton Heights, at 1.3 km, is the nearest stop to Hog's Back. It is conveniently situated outside the Carleton Heights Community Centre, a City-owned and operated location which offers a wide selection of recreation activities geared at all ages. OPL currently has a partnership agreement with the City regarding this and other bookmobile stops on City property. The Carleton stop dates from 1991; it has been at this location since July 2017 and was previously located at 1660 Prince of Wales (Carleton Heights Public School). Average use in the pre-pandemic years of 2018/2019 was 12 clients per week which is consistent with a mid-range performing stop. Carleton Heights stop has experienced an increase in visitors since resuming in 2022, averaging 14 client visits per week in 2022.

Upon consideration of all options, staff recommend cancelling the Hog's Back stop, and allocating additional time to the nearby Carleton Heights bookmobile stop for the following reasons:

- The stops are in close proximity and have some overlap: an analysis of recent client use indicates that some current clients of the Carleton Heights stop live in Hog's Back, suggesting some overlap in the two stops' client bases. Between 10% - 20% of transactions at the Hog's Back stop come from clients living in Carleton Heights.

- This location will improve client and staff safety by eliminating current risks, largely related to crowding and visibility, at the Hog's Back stop and providing the nearest, safest, and most convenient alternate location among options considered.
- Allocating the current one (1) operating hour at Hog's Back stop plus 15 minutes travel time to the existing Carleton Heights stop, enabling OPL to extend library services in this community by 1.25 hours resulting in a total of two hours at Carleton Heights.

The new schedule for this route would thus be as follows:

1. Ledbury Banff (2084 Banff Avenue) from 3:00 p.m. - 4:15 p.m. (1.25 hours)
2. Carleton Heights (**1665 Apeldoorn Avenue**) from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. (2 hours)

Next steps

If approved, the Hog's Back bookmobile stop will be discontinued effective June 30, 2023. The last date for service at Hog's Back will be Thursday, June 29. Starting July 6, the Carleton Heights stop will be adjusted to 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm.

In preparation for this, staff will prepare a communications plan for launch in June 2023. Public communications will include updates to the OPL website, paper bookmarks and schedules, posters, word of mouth promotion, emails to clients, and submissions to Councillor and community newsletters. Staff will also update the existing partnership agreement for Carleton Heights, update the OPL dedicated "No Parking" zones at 1665 Apeldoorn with City Bylaw, and update staff schedules.

As mentioned earlier in this report, plans are underway for a more fulsome and holistic review of bookmobile stops and schedules as part of the Mobile Framework. Staff expect a draft Mobile Framework to be tabled at a Board meeting prior to public engagement, before returning to the Board for approval in 2024.

CONSULTATION

Informal consultations about this bookmobile stop schedule have been conducted with River Ward Councillor Riley Brockington, the current location partners at Hog's Back and Carleton Heights stops, clients of the affected stops, and OPL staff.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Ottawa Public Library complies with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005)* in its operations. (OPL) is committed to providing inclusive and barrier-free access to information, documentation, programs, and services. Approving this report will increase accessibility by relocating service hours from a privately-owned parking lot to a City-owned community center with multiple accessible features.

BOARD PRIORITIES

Maintaining service in a suitable location in this neighbourhood aligns with the Strategic Direction to “assess the impacts of barriers to service.”

BUSINESS ANALYSIS IMPLICATIONS

Both qualitative and quantitative data was used to compile elements of this report: for instance, circulation and foot traffic statistics, user comments, analysis of distance and travel time (car, walking, transit) between Hog’s Back and potential new locations, analysis of Hog’s Back and Carleton Heights users by postal code. Staff have an ongoing requirement for both usage statistics and population mapping data to continue to review the performance of bookmobile stops.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal impediments to implementing the recommendations in this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There is a risk that some existing Hog’s Back clients may not visit the new combined stop. It is anticipated that this risk is minor as issues with this stop as described in the report have already led to a decline in usage at Hog’s Back and a migration of clients to Carleton Heights.

Approving the recommendations in this report will improve staff and client safety by eliminating risks at the Hog’s Back stop and providing the safest alternate location among options considered.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

DISPOSITION

If approved, staff will initiate the operational changes required to permanently modify the Hog's back and Carleton Heights bookmobile stops, including discontinuing the Hog's Back stop and adding time to the Carleton Heights stop.