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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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Submitted by / Soumis par:

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File Number: OPLB-2023-0912-10.2

SUBJECT: Facilities Framework Gap Analysis and Prioritization Criteria

**OBJET: Analyse des lacunes du cadre des installations et critères de
priorisation**

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Receive the gap analysis, as attached in Document 1, and further described in this report;**
- 2. Approve changes to the Equity scoring matrix, as further described in this report;**
- 3. Approve changes to the Distance scoring matrix, as further described in this report;**
- 4. Approve the prioritization list, as attached in Document 2 – Table 2, as further described in this report;**

- a. **Direct staff to reassess the prioritization list with new data provided by the Neighbourhood Equity Index, and to report back if there are significant differences;**
5. **Approve the closure of capital order # 910218 Carlington Community Branch and direct staff to return the remaining balance to the Library Reserve; and,**
6. **Direct staff to deliver the complete Facilities Master Plan to the Board in Q1 of 2025.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil d'administration (C.A.) de la Bibliothèque publique (BPO) d'Ottawa :

1. **Prenne connaissance de l'analyse des lacunes, jointe en tant que Document 1 et décrite plus en détail dans ce rapport;**
2. **Approuve les modifications apportées à la matrice de notation de l'équité, telles que décrites dans le rapport;**
3. **Approuve les modifications apportées à la matrice de notation de la distance, telles que décrites dans le rapport;**
4. **Approuve la liste de priorisation, jointe en tant que Document 2 - Tableau 2, et telle qu'elle est décrite dans le rapport;**
 - a. **Dirige le personnel à réévaluer la liste de priorisation avec les nouvelles données fournies par l'indice de l'équité des quartiers et de faire un compte-rendu s'il y a des différences significatives;**
5. **Approuve la clôture de l'ordre d'investissement n° 910218 pour la succursale communautaire de Carlington et dirige le personnel à retourner le solde restant à la Réserve de la Bibliothèque;**
6. **Dirige le personnel à remettre le Plan directeur sur les installations au Conseil au premier trimestre de 2025.**

BACKGROUND

In keeping with the *Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c.P.44* (the Act), and other relevant statutes, laws, and good governance practices, the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Board (the Board) holds accountability for the full range of decisions affecting the organization.

Furthermore, as per the Act Section 19 (1)(a), a Board may "...with the consent of the appointing council ... (a) acquire land required for its purposes by purchase, lease, expropriation or otherwise; (b) erect, add to or alter buildings; (c) acquire or erect a building larger than is required for library purposes, and lease any surplus part of the building; and (d) sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land or building that is no longer required for the board's purposes."

As per OPL Board policy #002 – Delegation of Authority, the Board is responsible for approving key strategic frameworks, and the CEO holds authority for the implementation. In addition, the Board is responsible for approving the allocation of capital resources. As stewards of the public good, it is staff's responsibility to work with the OPL Board in planning for, and securing capital funds to, maintain existing facilities, renew/retrofit existing facilities, and build new facilities.

In September 2016, the OPL Board received and approved report OPLB-2016-0181 Facilities Framework and Investment and Growth Planning. The document set out to provide a Facilities Framework; confirm OPL's Branch Renewal Priorities (2016- 2021); and identify OPL's New Library Building Priorities. The 2016 Facilities Framework was intended to provide staff with an approach to ensure that existing library facilities are properly maintained, renewed and/or retrofitted to deliver modern day library services that meet customer needs, and to describe and define when and where new library facilities are built. However, while the document provided for drivers of change in general terms there were no established criteria to support decision-making and priority setting. As such, in 2020 staff committed to developing a complete Facilities Master Plan to support asset management, address current demands and future growth needs, enable long-term sustainability and fiscal ability to manage requirements.

In April 2022, the Board approved OPL's new Service Delivery Framework (SDF) (OPLB-2022-0503), which describes the overarching services offered as well as the ways the public can access those services. The SDF identified five service categories: Collections, Expertise, Programs, Spaces, and Tools, and identified the three channels

of delivery: Virtual, Facility, and Mobile. The Facilities Framework identifies OPL's approach to facilities to support the delivery of in-person services at OPL locations.

In November 2022, the Board approved the Facilities Framework (OPLB-2022-1108-10.2). As part of that report, staff were directed to use the approved decision criteria to complete an assessment of library facility gaps and to report back to the Board no later than Q3 2023 with the prioritized list.

The purpose of this report is to report back to the Board with the findings from the gap analysis (Document 1), to seek Board approval for changes to the Decision Matrix and approval of the prioritization list (Document 2), to obtain approval to proceed with closing one capital account, and to provide an outline of the next steps for the development of the Facilities Master Plan.

DISCUSSION

OPL's Facilities Master Plan (FMP) is intended to combine results and outcomes from the Facilities Framework and the Asset Management Plan, as described below. The FMP is unique and specific to OPL and developed within the Ottawa context with consideration of the wide geographic boundaries, the City's New Official Plan, and library-specific industry trends including the role of libraries as public spaces. The Facilities Framework outlines OPL's approach to the Facility Channel, as per the Service Delivery Framework. It is one way that OPL delivers services to clients.

OPL's Facility Framework outlines a two-step decision process to inform prioritization for new facility development. Step 1 is the Gateway Criterion which identifies neighbourhoods with a facilities gap based on the neighborhood's proximity to an existing public library branch. Neighbourhoods identified by Step 1 – Gateway Criterion subsequently progress to Step 2, to be assessed against the Prioritization Criteria, which consider three factors: equity, distance, and growth. Each neighborhood is assessed against these factors using a weighted decision matrix to reach a prioritization score, with neighborhoods ultimately ranked by score.

Step 1 – Gateway Criteria and Results

As per the approved framework, third-party data from the Ottawa Neighbourhood Study (ONS) was used to conduct the gap analysis. OPL staff engaged the ONS to conduct the analysis, using 2021 census data. A "pseudo-household" (PHH) methodology

(distributed across road networks) was developed to determine the average distance for each neighbourhood to access an existing OPL branch. PHHs do not represent actual households but are placed along road networks and are assigned populations based on the most recent 2021 Statistics Canada census at the most accurate level available, and so are intended to give a reasonable approximation of a region’s population distribution.

Following that, gaps were identified using the approved Gateway Criteria: an urban gap is identified when a neighborhood’s average distance to an OPL location is greater than 3 kms and a rural gap is identified when a neighborhood’s average distance to an OPL location is greater than 15 kms.

In total, 106 neighbourhoods within the city of Ottawa were assessed, with 30 meeting the Gateway Criterion: 29 urban and 1 rural. The results also show that Ottawa’s overall current average travel distance to an OPL location is 3.25 kms.

Table 1 outlines the list of neighbourhoods with gaps and their respective average travel distance. The list is in a descending order from largest to smallest distance gap. A full list of all neighbourhoods with their respective average travel distance to an OPL location can be found in Document 1 – ONS Gap Analysis.

Table 1 – Gateway Neighbourhood List

Neighbourhood Name	Current Avg. Distance (km)
VARS (Rural)	21.55
FINDLAY CREEK	7.66
RIVERSIDE SOUTH - LEITRIM	6.72
BROOKSIDE - BRIARBROOK - MORGANS GRANT	6.46
RIDEAUCREST - DAVIDSON HEIGHTS	6.45
STONEBRIDGE - HALF MOON BAY	5.53
TREND-ARLINGTON	5.41
CHAPMAN MILLS	5.16
MERIVALE GARDENS - GRENFELL GLEN - PINEGLEN - COUNTRY PLACE	5.08
CRYSTAL BAY - LAKEVIEW PARK	5.03
BRIDLEWOOD - EMERALD MEADOWS	4.75
OLD HUNT CLUB	4.55

CHAPEL HILL SOUTH	4.5
CARDINAL CREEK	4.12
BAYSHORE	3.92
CONVENT GLEN - ORLEANS WOODS	3.81
OLD BARRHAVEN EAST	3.74
STITTSVILLE NORTH	3.73
PORTOBELLO SOUTH	3.72
QUALICUM - REDWOOD	3.69
QUEENSWOOD - CHATELAINE	3.65
LESLIE PARK - BRUCE FARM	3.64
RIVERSIDE PARK - MOONEYS BAY	3.58
KANATA LAKES	3.45
CARLETON HEIGHTS-COURTLAND PARK	3.37
BLOSSOM PARK - TIMBERMILL	3.31
RIVERSIDE PARK SOUTH - REVELSTOKE	3.31
CRAIG HENRY - MANORDALE	3.22
STITTSVILLE EAST	3.15
BRITANNIA	3.13

Step 2 – Prioritization Criteria

As per the Facilities Framework, the 30 neighbourhoods that were identified in the gap analysis proceeded to evaluation through Step 2 – prioritization criteria.

Equity – The equity lens considers relative equity, as identified on the Neighbourhood Equity Index (NEI) coordinated by the Social Planning Council of Ottawa. The equity index tool assesses and compares neighbourhood differences that impact wellbeing. There are 28 indicators categorized into five domains (economic, health, social and human development, physical environment, and community and belonging). Using this data, an overall Index Score is provided to each identified neighbourhood. As per the Step 2 prioritization criteria, the matrix scoring approved by the Board is as follows:

Table 2 – Approved Equity Scoring

Prioritization Criteria	Description	Weight	Scoring Criteria
Equity	<p>The area is identified as a priority in the Neighbourhood Equity Index (NEI). Total equity score based on 5 domains combined: Economic, health, social and human development, physical environment, and community and belonging.</p> <p>Data Source: NEI</p>	3	<p>10 Points – strong equity concern</p> <p>6 points – possible equity concern</p> <p>2 points nominal equity concern</p> <p>0 points – no equity concern</p>

When applying the approved equity scoring to the neighbourhoods identified in Step 1, staff discovered that current scoring criteria could be made more objective. OPL’s approved Equity Matrix criteria provides for zero points for neighbourhoods that have no equity concerns, however, no neighbourhood receives a perfect score for equity as per the NEI. As such, when applying the criteria as approved, staff found inconsistent results. See findings in Document 2 – OPL Prioritization Schedule: Table 1 – Prioritization Matrix 1.

Staff recommend that the Board approve changing the equity matrix scoring to better align with the NEI definitions, reducing subjectivity and increasing impartiality, as identified in Table 3.

Table 3 – Recommended Equity Scoring

Prioritization Criteria	Description	Weight	Scoring Criteria
Equity	<p>The area is identified as a priority in the Neighbourhood Equity Index (NEI). Total equity score based on 5 domains combined: Economic, health, social and human development, physical environment, and community and belonging.</p> <p>Data Source: NEI</p>	3	<p>10 Points – Red</p> <p>8 points – Yellow</p> <p>4 points – Light Green</p> <p>2 points – Dark Green</p>

In addition, the neighbourhood definitions used in the NEI were different from those used in the ONS. The NEI data is based on 2016 census data and ONS mapping. ONS neighbourhood definitions are based on 2021 census data and the ONS Generation 3 mapping. To ensure that analysis could continue and not delay the prioritization, staff developed an overlay of ONS neighbourhoods and NEI neighbourhood definitions for the purposes of this report. The neighbourhood definitions were combined to match ONS Generation 3 maps and the average equity score was calculated. The results can be found in Document 2 – OPL Prioritization Schedule: Table 2 – Prioritization Matrix 2 in the “Matrix Equity Score” column with an asterisk next to the neighbourhoods where the average equity score was applied. An updated NEI matrix is set to be released in early 2024. Staff will monitor the release of the updated NEI and conduct a secondary analysis, reporting any changes in the prioritization to the Board.

As per the prioritization weighting, equity is a weight of three (3). Once all equity scores were calculated for each neighbourhood, they were multiplied by three (3) to give the final equity score. Final weighting is noted Document 2 – OPL Prioritization Schedule: Table 2 – Prioritization Matrix 2 in the “Equity Weight Score” column.

Distance – The distance lens is based on the proximity to the nearest library branch. Neighbourhoods that are closer to a branch receive lower scores, with those furthest

away receiving higher scores. As per the approved Prioritization Matrix, distance calculations use the average distance from a neighbourhood threshold, as identified in the gateway criteria. The average distance provided from ONS during the Gateway phase was analyzed for the purposes of scoring. For example, a neighbourhood within the urban transect with an average distance of 4.6 kms to a library branch would receive a score of 4.6 under the “distance criteria” column (not yet weighted).

Table 4 – Approved Distance Scoring

Prioritization Criteria	Description	Weight	Scoring Criteria
Distance	Compare and prioritize neighbourhoods based on the proximity to the nearest library branch. A neighbourhood average is used to calculate the gap. Data Source: ONS	2	Actual distance will be used.

In analyzing the actual distance of neighbourhoods to library branches, staff identified that application resulted in an imbalance between rural and urban transects, to the advantage of rural neighbourhoods. The natural landscape for rural communities commonly equates to farther travel distances and was one of the key reasons rural transects have a different access threshold than urban (rural = 15 kms, urban = 3 kms). Vars was the only rural neighbourhood identified in the gap analysis phase with a distance of 21.55 kms from library services (as shown in Table 1 – Gateway Neighbourhood List). As a result, the outcome of the prioritization criteria saw skewed results due to the average travel distance being much higher than the identified urban neighbourhoods. To better balance scoring, staff recommend that the Board approve changing the distance criteria from the actual distance for the neighbourhood to the distance in excess of the respective gateway criteria. This allows for true comparison of gaps, effectively absorbing the distance represented by the gateway criteria. Using the same example as above, a neighbourhood within the urban transect with an average distance of 4.6 kms to a library branch would receive a score of 1.6 under the “distance criteria” column (4.6 – 3 = 1.6). See Table 5 below.

Table 5 – Recommended Distance Scoring

Prioritization Criteria	Description	Weight	Scoring Criteria
Distance	Compare and prioritize neighbourhoods based on the proximity to the nearest library branch. A neighbourhood average is used to calculate the gap. Data Source: ONS	2	Distance in excess of the respective gateway criteria will be used.

As per the prioritization weighting, distance is a weight of two (2). Once all distance scores were calculated for each neighbourhood, they were multiplied by two (2) to establish the weighted distance score. The results can be found in Document 2 – OPL Prioritization Schedule: Table 2 – Prioritization Matrix 2 in the “Distance Weight Score” column.

Growth - Growth planning was conducted in partnership with the City of Ottawa and Hemson Consulting. The growth analysis forecasts population growth in Ottawa neighbourhoods through to 2036; this data is consistent with data being used by the City for other growth-related decisions. Using the same methodology as Hemson, OPL staff projected further to 2046 (a 25-year period) to align with the long-range intentions of the Facilities Master Plan. Of the 30 identified neighbourhood gaps, five (5) were found to have expected growth greater than 25% within the next 25 years. The results can be found in Document 2 – OPL Prioritization Schedule: Table 2 – Prioritization Matrix 2, in the “Growth Weight Score” column.

Step 2 - Prioritization Criteria – Analysis and Results

The approved prioritization criteria versus the recommended prioritization criteria, as identified in this report, led to similar results overall. However, the recommended prioritization is more objective and provides equitable scoring for all neighbourhoods with a gap identified, regardless of geographic transect (e.g., urban, suburban, rural). The key difference is the placement of the rural neighbourhood (Vars) within the overall prioritization list. Using the November 2022 Board-approved scoring, Vars is first in overall priority, whereas using the recommended scoring, Vars ranks ninth. In both

cases, the order of the remaining (urban) neighbourhood prioritization remains consistent. The complete analysis and scoring for both the approved and recommended prioritizations can be found in Document 2 – OPL Prioritization Schedule: Table 2 – Prioritization Matrix 2, in the “Total Score (Sum)” column and further ranked in the “Rank” column.

Staff recommend that the Board approve the prioritization list as presented in Document 2 – Table 2, and that the information be used to inform decisions regarding capital projects related to facility needs. This includes both currently approved projects and future projects.

Furthermore, staff recommend that the OPL Board approve the closure of capital order # 910218 Carlington Community Branch and direct staff to return the remaining balance to the Library Reserve. This capital account holds \$200,000 to explore developing a facility in this neighbourhood. Based on the prioritization criteria as outlined in this report, and if approved by the Board as presented, the Carlington neighbourhood does not meet the 3 kms threshold.

Next steps

The prioritization list presented in this report addresses both legacy gaps in facility service provision as well as projected gaps based on growth. The Asset Management Plan (to be presented to the Board in Q2 2024) will be used to evaluate existing facilities using the building and site criteria. These two elements will combine into an overarching Facilities Master Plan that will identify projects (including lifecycle and renovations) for the next 25 years. Staff will use information from the prioritization list as well as the AMP to develop the overarching Facilities Master Plan. This includes assessing OPL’s current facilities using the branch and site criteria, and identifying neighbourhood synergies (e.g., opportunities for new facilities that will address multiple gaps simultaneously, opportunities for lifecycle or facility rationalization, etc.).

Staff will develop recommendations for facilities projects that can be funded using Development Charges, and the revised Development Charge Project List will be presented to the Board in Q4 2023 prior to public consultation with developers.

Staff will report back to the Board with the overarching Facilities Master Plan in Q1 of 2025.

CONSULTATION

Consultation included members of the OPL Board Ad-Hoc Committee on Finance and Facilities (Trustees Rawlson and Fisher), and ex-officio member Chair Luloff. In addition, colleagues from the Planning, Real Estate & Economic Development department in the City of Ottawa.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Ottawa Public Library complies with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005) in its operations. There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

BOARD PRIORITIES

The recommendations in this report align with the Board's strategic directions and priorities #1- Redesign the Library Experience, specifically to develop the physical space experiences.

BUSINESS ANALYSIS IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct business analysis implications of this report.

A variety of data sources were used in developing the gap analysis and the prioritization matrix for the Facilities Framework, as referenced in the document itself and approved by the Board. In particular, the Ottawa Neighbourhood Study, Neighbourhood Equity Index, and Hemson Consulting Ltd were consulted. In keeping with inclusive data principles, all populations are included in the data.

Future decisions will be driven by the Prioritization Matrix and applied in conjunction with the Asset Management Plan, with required data analysis conducted using internal and external sources as described throughout the Facilities Framework.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial implications associated with the Facilities Framework required to deliver public library services in neighbourhoods identified with gaps area are as noted throughout the report. Financial implications associated with the Carlington capital costs are as noted within the report, which will result in an increase of the Library Reserve of \$200,000.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Risk management and mitigation strategies are noted throughout the report and further detailed here.

There is potential that the data from NEI is no longer relevant to the neighbourhood definitions as studied. The risk is that the equity of the neighbourhoods is skewed and will require revision when the NEI is updated. Staff have accounted for this and will monitor the release of the updated NEI and conduct a secondary analysis, reporting back to the Board if there are significant differences.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 ONS Gap Analysis

Document 2 OPL Prioritization Schedule

DISPOSITION

If approved, staff will amend the Facilities Framework accordingly, and return to the Board in Q1 2025 with the Facilities Master Plan.