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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: Alta Vista Branch Closure for Lifecycle Project

OBJET: Fermeture de la succursale Alta Vista pour le projet cycle de vie

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Approve the temporary closure of the Alta Vista branch for six (6) weeks beginning June 2024 to undertake facility improvements; and,**
- 2. Approve modified service delivery to the Alta Vista community at the Jim Durrell Recreation Complex, for the duration of the closure, as further described in this report.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa :

1. **Approuve la fermeture temporaire de la succursale Alta Vista pour six (6) semaines à partir de juin 2024 afin de procéder à des améliorations des installations; et,**
2. **Approuve la modification de la prestation de services à la communauté d'Alta Vista au Complexe récréatif Jim Durrell, pendant la durée de la fermeture, tel que décrit dans le rapport.**

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 holds accountability for the full range of decisions affecting the organization.

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. 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. OPL Board policy #002 – Delegation of Authority, Section 25, indicates that temporary branch closures fall under the responsibility of the CEO. Decisions regarding closures, however, are to be made in "...keeping with the branch closure policy" by the CEO or delegate. This policy outlines the approval authorities for closures of 10 business days or less, and those of more than 10 business days. Temporary closures of more than 10 days must be approved by the OPL Board.

The purpose of this report is to seek OPL Board approval for the temporary closure of the Alta Vista branch due to the complete replacement of the roof and two rooftop heating and cooling units that service the building.

DISCUSSION

In 2020, a Building Condition Audit (BCA) on the Alta Vista branch was conducted by J. L. Richards & Associates. The audit included a review of the condition of the existing roof and the rooftop heating and cooling units (RTUs). The BCA report indicated two of the three RTUs were at the end of their expected service life as they were manufactured in 2001. RTU #3 was deemed to be in good working order as it was replaced in 2015. In

addition, the roof assembly had excessive water ponding in the center section, while evidence of leaks was observed on the facility's interior.

The scope of the repairs includes a full roof replacement including the roofing membrane, vapour barrier, and insulation, correction of the roof slopes to provide adequate drainage and remove the ponding, replacement of the roof drains, full replacement of the two dated RTUs, and more.

As a result of the above-mentioned work, the ventilation to the building will be insufficient for staff or the public to safely remain indoors. Furthermore, the roofing work will result in significant noise the potential for odours (given lack of ventilation). Although mitigations can be taken to reduce the odours, previous roof replacements have demonstrated that the mitigation measures are not sufficient and have resulted in discomfort for staff and clients.

Additionally, access to the site will be very difficult as much of the parking spaces and grounds of Alta Vista will be occupied by construction dumpsters, cranes, and other large equipment and materials necessary to undertake the work.

To ensure some level of service continuity to the community, staff developed a plan to accommodate modified services at an alternative location during the closure.

Staff identified and explored several options for providing temporary services including the Heron Road Community Center, mobile services, a vacant retail podium located nearby, and Jim Durrell Recreation Complex (JDRC).

Option 1: Heron Road Community Centre – While the location is ideal, the facility is currently serving as an overflow shelter and not available for OPL use.

Option 2: Bookmobile services, with a mini bookmobile parked on the Alta Vista branch site on Fridays and Saturdays. Due to lack of access for additional vehicles, and the impact of construction on the site, this is not recommended. Furthermore, staff will not be permitted to access the interior of the building for the duration of the project which eliminates washroom access for staff on site.

Option 3: Vacant retail space. This space requires a significant amount of setup including full IT cabling and OPL network setup, complete window coverings, and power and data installations. This option is not recommended due to significant setup investments and staff resources for a relatively short shutdown period.

Option 4 (Recommended): modified services provided at the JDRC, 1265 Walkley Road. The JDRC is located 1.5 km from the Alta Vista branch (approximately 15 minutes walking distance), near an LRT station, on a major bus and road network, and with ample parking.

There are two spaces within JDRC available for OPL use. The Ellwood Hall is recommended to be used for OPL programming throughout June. The hall is spacious and encased with windows, allowing natural light to flow through. The branch will be offering babytime and family storytime throughout the month. Dates and times will be posted on the OPL website.

The Ellwood Hall has been booked for public events such as weddings, anniversaries, etc. sporadically throughout the project timeframe. As such, the remaining recommended services would be offered in the JDRC Boardroom, and would include:

- Holds pickup;
- Express Collection (mini);
- Children's collection browsing (mini); and,
- Staff assistance.

It should be noted that there are limitations with the JDRC Boardroom; it is accessed through the ice rink and located a short walk from the main entrance. OPL recognizes that the Boardroom space is not fully accessible and does not provide a clear pathway for mobility devices as the ice rink does not have an accessible door operator installed and the flooring is rubber matting. The entry door into the Boardroom is also not equipped with an accessible door operator. To mitigate the challenges, staff will be stationed at the entrance of the ice rink to aid clients requesting guidance to the Boardroom or to retrieve holds on the client's behalf. Additionally, clients can access either of the two closest alternative branches.

Furthermore, OPL recognizes that the JDRC Boardroom location poses further challenges such as the potential for loud noise during the library's opening hours due to its proximity to the rink.

Despite these limitations, OPL is keen to provide library access to the community throughout this period as the community has already seen a temporary reduction in other City services. Staff are committed to working with the community to reduce the service impacts and barriers to service as much as possible.

For clients who prefer to access full library services, both Sunnyside branch, located 3.3 km away from the Alta Vista branch at 1049 Bank Street and Greenboro branch, located 5.4 km from Alta Vista branch at 363 Lorry Greenberg Drive are available.

Once approved, a robust communications plan will be established including social media, posters, and direct email to clients whose “home” location in the library’s database is the Alta Vista branch. In addition, staff will work with the local community groups and service agencies, as well as the local Councillor, to ensure information regarding the closure and temporary location is shared widely.

CONSULTATION

The development of this report required consultation with several OPL and City departments including Finance and Business Services, Technology Services, Alternative Services, Recreation, Culture and Facilities Services (RCFS), and Infrastructure and Water Services (IWSD). Staff also met with Councillor Marty Carr, Ward 18 (Alta Vista).

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

Ottawa Public Library complies with the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, (2005)* in its operations. Clients will be advised of the nearest alternate locations which are accessible to them during this time in addition to the alternate services being provided within the Jim Durrell Recreation Complex.

BOARD PRIORITIES

There are no direct impacts on the Board Strategic Priorities. Noting that the Board has identified a priority to “Identify and address barriers to service,” the plan to provide alternate services for the Alta Vista branch closure seeks to help reduce barriers to service during this time.

BUSINESS ANALYSIS IMPLICATIONS

The business analysis considerations associated with this report include a possible decline of operational metrics and key performance indicators due to less client usage for this project's duration.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The costs of the repairs are budgeted in the lifecycle capital budget for OPL facilities, as managed by the City of Ottawa.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

As with any lifecycle project, there is a risk of unknown aspects that are only apparent once the construction work has commenced. This risk has been mitigated to the extent feasible by a thorough analysis during the design phase. Should additional issues be uncovered, or a supply delay occur with materials and equipment, the risk is a longer period of closure, and may present additional costs to the Lifecycle program and/or OPL.

Furthermore, a unique risk to a roof replacement project is weather related impacts which may result in project delays. Should a longer closure be required, the Board and public will be advised.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

DISPOSITION

If approved, staff will proceed with the closure and implementation plan.