

**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-2017-1004

**SUBJECT: Hours of Operation Survey results**

**OBJET: Heures d'ouverture - Résultats du sondage**

#### **REPORT RECOMMENDATION**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this report for information**

#### **RECOMMANDATION DU RAPPORT**

**Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa prenne connaissance de ce rapport à titre d'information.**

#### **BACKGROUND**

As per Board policy 002-OPLB Delegation of Authority (DOA), the CEO is delegated the responsibility to "set or modify administrative and operational policies," including hours of operation. As the Board is responsible for reviewing and recommending annual budget estimates to City Council, it is also important that the Board be aware of any changes to the hours of operation that may have the potential to impact future budgets.

The OPL last reviewed library hours shortly after amalgamation. In 2004, harmonization of hours for large- and medium-sized branches was implemented. In 2005, the

operating budget provided for small improvements to rural branch hours and services. No major changes have been implemented since 2005.

OPL's current hours of operation vary across the 33 branches, ranging from 12 to 63 hours a week, with 10 locations open Sunday afternoons from September to early June. Customers regularly request that OPL hours of operation be extended on weekends and branches be open on Sundays year-round. Similar suggestions were made through the 2013 Imagine Campaign. To support this anecdotal feedback, OPL has embarked on a project to obtain quantitative and qualitative data.

As received by the Board at the April meeting, the 2017 Work Plan included a project to determine the best way to optimize hours of operation while remaining within the current budget envelope. This is a multi-step initiative, which began with obtaining public input. This report provides a summary of the results of the public consultation on the OPL's hours of operation.

## **DISCUSSION**

The future relevance of OPL depends on its capacity to adapt, revise, and integrate frameworks to support our customer service model and fulfill customer demand for access to spaces. This includes being open at times that have the greatest benefit to the majority of customers.

Nanos Research was retained by the OPL to conduct public consultation among residents of the City of Ottawa to help identify customers' preferences regarding library use and operational hours. This was a multifaceted consultation, which included web surveys for cardholders, library customer focus groups, and hybrid telephone and online surveys for the general population.

Based on the combined results of the public consultation conducted by Nanos Research, the following preferences regarding days and hours of operation were identified:

- Saturdays and Sundays are the most important days of the week for the library to be open
- Morning and early afternoon are the most important times to be open on the weekend
- Most respondents would like branches to be open on Sundays year-round
- Mondays and Fridays are the most important week days for library use

- Mornings and evenings are the most important hours of the weekday for library use
- Hours of operation should be consistent Monday to Friday

Input was consistent across both active cardholders and the general population, save for one area: most active cardholders selected Mondays as their preferred day of the week, whereas the general population preferred Fridays.

The majority of cardholders who participated in the survey are satisfied or mostly satisfied with the hours of operation of their primary branch. Many residents who are not cardholders feel they do not need public library services, or do their research online; they would likely not become cardholders if the hours of operation better met their schedule.

## **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will analyze the data and prepare options for consideration to best address customer feedback regarding OPL's hours of operation. While hours of operation are delegated to the CEO as per Board Policy OPLB-002, staff recognize that the Board should be aware of the changes, especially if they have the potential to impact budgets. Any changes to the hours of operation will come to the Board for information and, where significant, will be brought forward for consideration and approval.

## **CONSULTATION**

More than 5,500 participants provided input through the multifaceted consultation, specifically: 5,259 self-selected customers via the online cardholder survey, 60 cardholders through six focus groups, and 400 residents through the general population online random survey.

The supporting documentation regarding the public consultation was reviewed and discussed with the OPL Management Group and Senior Management.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report. All public consultations met accessibility requirements and documentation is AODA compliant.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no technology impacts associated with this report.

## **BOARD PRIORITIES**

This report aligns to the following strategic directions in the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan: SPACES for community, collections, and creation: Sustain collaborative and flexible physical spaces across the Library system; and, SUCCESS through learning, literacy and innovation: Align Library services in support of customer needs.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

1. Appendix 1 - Key findings from the research: Research Summary, submitted by Nanos to the Ottawa Public Library, August 2017
2. Appendix 2 - Preferred Ottawa Public Library hours of operation: Focus Groups Summary - Document 1, submitted by Nanos to Ottawa Public Library, June 2017
3. Appendix 3 - Preferred Ottawa Public Library hours of operation: Cardholders Survey Summary - Document 2, submitted by Nanos to Ottawa Public Library, June 2017
4. Appendix 4 - Preferred Ottawa Public Library hours of operation: GenPop Survey Summary – Document 3, submitted by Nanos to Ottawa Public Library, July 2017

## **DISPOSITION**

Staff will analyze the data and prepare options for consideration to best address customer feedback regarding OPL's hours of operation. While hours of operation are delegated to the CEO as per Board Policy OPLB-002, staff recognize that the Board should be aware of the changes, especially if they have the potential to impact budgets. Any changes to the hours of operation will come to the Board for information and, where significant, will be brought forward for consideration and approval.