



For Immediate Release
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Library Closures Loom in Ten Ottawa Communities

Ottawa, Ontario –The Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association (Friends) is calling on community members to contact Ottawa City Hall and help prevent the closure of ten community branches throughout the greater Ottawa area. Friends has launched a campaign titled “SOS Ottawa Public Library – Save Our Services” to have the Ottawa Public Library exempted from across-the-board budget cuts imposed by City Hall. The budget cuts would force the library to close ten branches, have remaining branches close one day a week, fire over 60 staff members, and reduce the materials available for circulation.

Prior to City Hall’s announcement of the budget cuts, the Ottawa Public Library had already voluntarily taken the initiative to find operating efficiencies and reduce expenses to ensure a responsible budget while still meeting the increasing service needs of growing communities. Additional library budget cuts could not be implemented now without closing branches and dramatically reducing services.

“Our library branches offer vital support for youth and students, seniors, newcomers to Canada, researchers, small businesses and other important and growing sectors of our community,” said Friends President Lori Nash this morning, following the City Council Meeting at which the potential branch closures were announced. “Ottawa residents and businesses simply cannot keep pace in a global knowledge-based economy without access to a strong library service and the essential research tools it provides.”

Nash is asking community members who do not want to see community library branches closed to email City Hall or mail an SOS postcard, which is available inside Ottawa library branches. Councillor Jan Harder has volunteered to accept the messages and postcards and present them to Council and the Mayor during budget discussions. Messages can be sent to Jan.Harder@ottawa.ca or Councillor Jan Harder, 110 Laurier Avenue West, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 1J1.

Branches slated for closure unless the library is granted a reprieve from the budget cuts include Centennial, Fitzroy Harbour, Munster Hamlet, Osgoode, North Gower, Blackburn Hamlet, Elmvale Acres, Vanier, Rosemount, and Vernon.

For more information about the SOS campaign and how to speak up and let City Hall know that Ottawa residents want to keep their library branches open, please visit the Friends of the Ottawa Public Library Association website at www.ottawapubliclibraryfriends.ca.

– 30 –

For more information, please contact:

Lori Nash, Friends President at lori.nash@rogers.com or call 613-824-5385

Karen Luttrell, Friends Public Relations Volunteer at karen.luttrell@gmail.com or 613-276-4344