



Media Release

## **Bradford West Gwillimbury Public Library eliminates fines for remainder of 2020**

Bradford West Gwillimbury (July 20, 2020) – The Bradford West Gwillimbury Public Library will not be charging late fines for the remainder of 2020 to better support residents in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Eliminating late fees is a simple but direct way for the Library to better support our community members throughout the pandemic,” said Jennifer Harrison, Chair of the BWG Public Library Board. “Over the past four months, Library staff have worked diligently to provide innovative programming online and through Curbside Service. We look forward to the fall and are focused on reducing financial barriers to Library services and ensuring respect for local residents’ hard-earned money.”

“We always work to responsibly steward the Library’s budget and this was especially true this spring as we faced the COVID-19 lockdown,” said Jonathan Scott, Vice-Chair of the Board and Chair of the Finance Committee. “That fiscal discipline allows us to make this significant change to ensure we are supporting community members by removing financial barriers to Library Services as families are struggling through this time of economic uncertainty.”

The Library Board announced this past spring that its Finance Committee is tracking between \$180,000 to \$400,000 in potential savings from the COVID-19 closure, including deferring planned capital projects, reducing utility costs and other natural savings. Removing late fees means the Library forgoing roughly \$17,000 in planned revenue for 2020 and is entirely funded by the accrued savings.

“Fines are a significant barrier for many members of our community and we are committed to equitable access to resources and collections. From families who might not be able to commit to bringing back materials on time, to teens in low-income families, we have a responsibility to marginalized members of our community and eliminating late fines will make a real difference,” said CEO Matthew Corbett.

The Library will not be charging fines for overdue materials for the remainder of 2020. This does not apply to lost or damaged material, but will apply to overdue fees for books, DVDs, audiobooks and all other circulating material.

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