



# Rosemount Expansion and Development Group (READ)



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 12, 2017**

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## **READRosemount: Long-term, Predictable Funding for Libraries Needed**

**Ottawa, ON:** On December 5, 2017, the Ottawa Public Library Board passed its 2018 budget. The budget includes \$2 million to renovate the Rosemount branch — a renovation that will not add space to the already overcrowded library.

As inner core neighbourhoods intensify, there is more pressure placed on existing infrastructure in those communities. The Rosemount Expansion And Development (READ) group, a citizens' advocacy committee for Rosemount Library, urges the City of Ottawa to develop a comprehensive strategic initiative that ensures long-term funding in the city's budget for infrastructure, such as libraries.

The city is calling for greater intensification around LRT stations. In the Kitchissippi neighbourhood around the Tunney's Pasture station, many single family homes are being torn down and replaced with multi-unit residences. While the city's pro-intensification position is laudable, READ believes it is imperative that the necessary supporting infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of the swelling population.

In READ's view, Ottawa City Council's overarching priority is to keep taxes low to the detriment of services and infrastructure. The group believes that the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) board must begin to advocate for the development of a comprehensive long-term capital plan for renewals and new builds, which would provide predictable funding.

READ points to other cities, which are doing exactly this. Winnipeg's city council has a 2017-2023 long-term Library Facility Redevelopment Strategy for nine existing branches in mature neighbourhoods at an estimated cost of \$55-60 million. Edmonton is renewing existing branches along with its main branch as part of a long-term capital plan, which allotted over \$75 million for the renewal, expansion, or renovations of six existing library branches.

In Ottawa, READ points out, the OPL relies on a complex array of funding sources that aren't always predictable. READ urges the city to make a commitment to long-term capital funding to ensure urban infrastructure does not become obsolete. Predictable funding would encourage a focus on planning rather than on searching for funding sources.

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