

City to explore opportunity to join ORL with community input

(Penticton, BC – April 2, 2026) –Penticton City Council will consider a proposal that looks at options for how public library services are delivered in the community.

After an internal review, staff will ask Council for direction to continue exploring a potential shift from Penticton’s current municipal library model to a regional service model through the Okanagan Regional Library.

If Council supports further exploration, the next phase would focus on public information, consultation and engagement with the Library Board, library staff and the broader community. Any change to the library service model would require voter approval through a referendum.

“Council is not being asked to change how library services are delivered today,” said Angela Campbell, general manager of corporate services. “This proposed next phase is about understanding options, sharing information early and making sure the community has a clear voice before any future decision is made.”

Under provincial legislation, public libraries can operate either as municipal libraries or as part of a regional system. City staff reviewed both models to understand service levels, costs and governance implications to understand which model would provide the best value to the citizens of Penticton. The analysis found that a regional model could provide access to expanded collections, digital resources and region-wide borrowing, while maintaining local autonomy in service delivery at the Penticton library branch and reducing the financial burden to our taxpayers.

“Our public library is one of the most valued public services in our community,” said Kelsey Johnson, general manager of community services. “If Council chooses to continue this work, our focus will be on transparency, listening and making sure people understand what this could mean — and what it would not mean — before they are asked to vote.”

The report notes that a regional model would not result in the closure of the Penticton library or a reduction in services. The City would continue to own the library building, while operations would be delivered through the regional system. Preliminary financial analysis indicates the model could create efficiencies and potential cost savings for taxpayers, with costs reflected differently on property tax notices.

If Council directs staff to proceed, public engagement will begin in early April and help inform whether a referendum question should be brought forward for consideration as part of the Oct. 17, 2026 general election.

The April 7 Council meeting begins at 1 p.m. and is open to the public. The full report is available in the meeting agenda on [penticton.ca](https://www.penticton.ca).

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