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AGENDA REPORT

TO: Sabrina B. Landreth
City Administrator

FROM: Gerry Garzón
Director of Library Services

SUBJECT: 2015 Library Commission Annual
Report

DATE: April 8, 2016

City Administrator Approval

Date:

4/14/16

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council accept this regarding the Annual Report from the Oakland Public Library Advisory Commission, covering the period from January 2015 to March 2016. Chairperson Kathryn Sterbenc will present the report and answer questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerry Garzón
Director of Library Services

For questions please contact Gerry Garzón at 238-6608.

Attachments
--LAC 2015 Annual Report

Item: 3
Life Enrichment Committee
April 26, 2016

April 26, 2016

**LIFE ENRICHMENT COMMITTEE
Oakland City Council**

Subject: Annual Report of the Library Advisory Commission

Vice Mayor Campbell Washington and Members of the Committee:

The Library Advisory Commission hereby reports on its activities for the period since the last formal report to the Committee (January 2015).

Introduction

The Library Advisory Commission (LAC) is dedicated to increasing awareness of the Oakland Public Library's role as a vibrant community center, education partner, and unwavering source of information and inspiration. The Commission is also diligently working on multiple projects to safeguard the library's financial future, ensuring that these critical programs and services will continue to be available to all present and future Oakland residents.

The LAC strives to fulfill its mandated duty "to advise and make recommendations on the operation and future development of the library system and to act as a liaison between the Library Department and the Mayor and City Council." We also are vigilant in providing citizen oversight of Measure Q parcel-tax expenditures, a duty assigned by City Council to the Commission in 2004.

The following report details how the Commission has represented the City of Oakland and its libraries to city and state policy makers and the broader library community. Individually, each commissioner takes an active role in relaying to staff the variety of library needs of the many Oakland neighborhoods we represent.

LONG-TERM FINANCIAL STABILITY

For the past five years, the LAC has intensely focused its strategic goals on the pursuit of long-term financial stability for the Oakland Public Library (OPL). Page 2 of this report provides **OPL's Historic Financial Trends and Budget Breakdown for Fiscal Years 2004-15.**

OAKLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY FUNDING BY SOURCE: HISTORIC TRENDS AND CURRENT BUDGET BREAKDOWN



PREPARED BY: The Library Advisory Commission
PREPARED FOR: The Oakland City Council
DATA SOURCE: OPL Annual Funding: General Fund vs. Measure Q Fund, prepared by Gene Tom (CFO of OPL)

June 10, 2014

Fig. I and Fig. II:

Pie Charts describing proportion of total budget contribution broken out by funding source. Note that where General Fund (GF) and Measure Q contributed equally in FY04-05, Measure Q is now bearing a much

Fig. I: OPL Funding by Source FY04-05

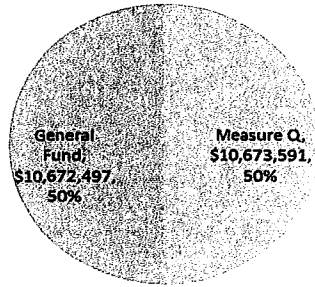
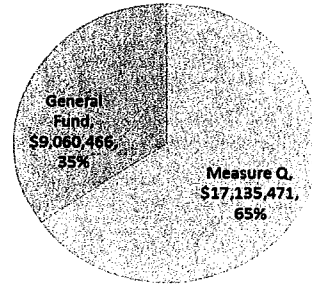


Fig. II: OPL Funding By Source FY14-15



broader portion of the library's budget. While both Measure Q and the Library budget have grown alongside a growing Oakland, the GF contributions have instead dropped.

Fig. III: Yearly Contribution to OPL Budget from General Fund

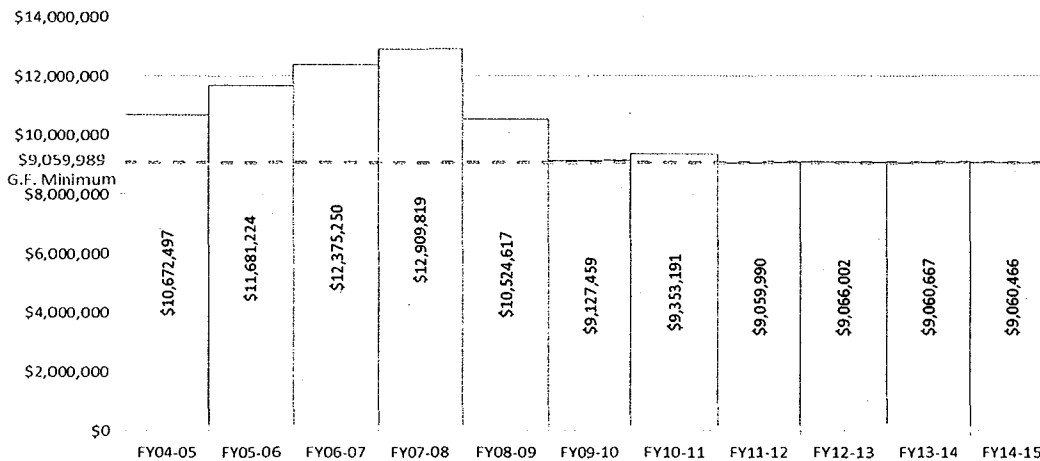
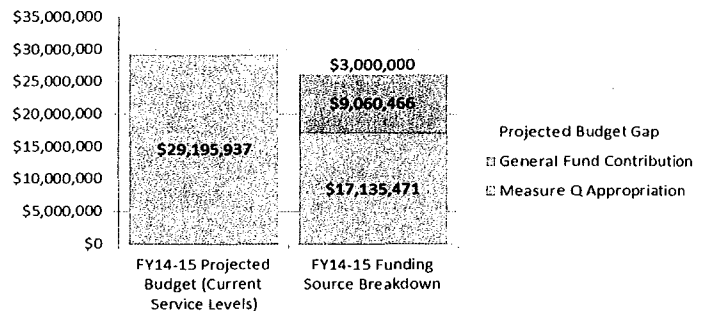


Fig. III: The General Fund contribution to the OPL budget had been steadily increasing prior to the recession. However, with the recession, GF contributions dropped to the \$9.1 million minimum level as required to access Measure Q funds. Since that time, GF fund contributions have remained at that minimum, not growing with growing needs, not to mention recovering to pre-recession levels.

Fig. IV: With GF contributions reduced to the \$9.1 million minimum since the recession, OPL has both cut back on services (such as by losing its 6th day of service) and has dipped into its own reserve. Currently, the library is running at a \$3M deficit, clearly seen in FY14-15 breakdown of projected budget versus projected sources. With FY14-15, OPL's reserve, tapped into year after year, will have run out. Any future budget gap, if not met with GF contribution, will necessitate further service cut-backs. This can include reduction in hours, collections, and/or branch closures.

Fig. IV: Projected FY14-15 Budget Gap (If Maintaining Current Service Levels)



Oakland Public Library's Current Funding Status

As approved by the City Council, over 60 percent of the Oakland Public Library's annual operating budget is currently funded from parcel-tax revenue received via *The Library Services Retention and Enhancement Act of 1994, as Amended in 2004* (Measure Q). Unfortunately, since Measure Q was never intended to be the primary source of funding for library services in Oakland, the amount of additional Measure Q parcel-tax revenue received each year does not fully cover the 60 percent budgeted, creating a substantial recurring structural deficit that continually threatens to force staff reductions or branch closures. We are grateful to Mayor Schaaf, Council President McElhaney, Vice Mayor Campbell Washington, Council Member Kalb, and the rest of the Council for filling the budget gap in the FY2015-17 budget.

Twice in the past five years, library supporters determined the most effective solution to the library's continuing budget shortfalls would be to place a measure on the ballot to amend Measure Q. However, library supporters were asked both times to delay that effort to avoid competing with ballot measures addressing citywide issues deemed even more critical. In 2014, the issue was public safety and restoring the police force, and library advocates consented to then-Mayor Quan's request to stand down.

In February 2016, Mayor Schaaf asked library supporters to delay their ballot initiative as she pursues an infrastructure bond measure, partially focused on restoring Oakland's aging infrastructure, particularly crumbling streets and sidewalks and worn, outdated public spaces. Library advocates understand the prioritizing of infrastructure and would prefer to pursue a long-term OPL budget solution with the mayor's support, as well as that of Library Administration. The urgency of finding a short-term solution to OPL's continuing budget shortfall is temporarily alleviated by Mayor Schaaf's commitment to push for that to be filled once again in the FY2017-19 budget, unless there are unanticipated and seemingly insurmountable events of fiscal hardship for the City. The estimated annual Measure Q budget shortfall (structural deficit) is currently projected to increase to about \$2.0 million per year.

Library supporters are now committed more than ever to pursue a parcel-tax ballot measure in 2018 – because as the rest of the city's infrastructure weakens due to lack of maintenance funding, so go our Main Library and our 17 branches. A new tax measure would help address capital needs as well as operations. We have prepared a photo report (Attachment B) to illustrate the scope and severity of the unfunded capital improvements that currently challenge OPL patrons when they walk into our branches to access library services.

Increasing Use and Polling Results

As stated in OPL's 2014-15 Annual Report, 258,343 Oaklanders, or 52 percent of the current population, have library cards. More than 301,000 uses of public computers and Internet were logged, along with more than 2.6 million checkouts of library materials. OPL's website received over 2 million visits.

In polling funded by Friends of the Oakland Public Library and conducted by the Lew Edwards Group with Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin, Metz & Associates in February 2016, 79 percent of respondents said they would “definitely” or “probably” support a \$49 parcel tax for 20 years. Even after hearing statements for and against the measure, support levels stood at 75 percent with a margin of error of +/-4.9 percent.

In the polling, library support for children and students are a top concern, as are safety and technology. Oakland’s libraries provide a safe place for children and teens to do their homework and participate in afterschool programs. More than seven in 10 respondents had visited OPL in the past year. As well, constituents view library services being provided as important to maintain or increase.

LAC’s Goals for 2016

In lieu of seeking to amend Measure Q to address OPL’s unmet financial needs, the LAC is working to maximize OPL inclusion in two projects currently being developed by city leaders: impact fees on new development and the proposed infrastructure bond measure.

Impact Fees on New Development

The library’s 2004 Master Facilities Plan established a service standard of at least 0.7 square feet of public library space per capita. This is mid-range for service levels of comparable library systems. OPL has less than half of that. At this level, OPL does not meet basic community needs, nor can it institute needed efficiency measures for operational sustainability.

OPL’s Unfunded Capital Improvement Projects for 2015-20 total almost \$423 million. This includes:

- Providing new and upgraded libraries.
- Adding electrical and data upgrades.
- Replacing elevators that constantly break down.
- Installing public restrooms where there are none.
- Replacing sinking foundations.
- Anchoring high shelving that will collapse like dominoes in an earthquake.

Library commissioners understand the importance of affordable housing and its priority for impact fees. In fact, many of the families and children who live in our affordable-housing communities depend heavily on OPL. We need to ensure that they have suitable facilities, with sanitary restrooms; operating elevators; adequate study areas; non-soiled carpets and clean furniture, and a well-maintained infrastructure. Today, this is not the case.

The Impact Fee Study projects that by 2040, Oakland’s population will increase by almost 26 percent and households by 29 percent. Oakland’s current and projected population growth will impact many of the city’s services, including those of OPL and its facilities. Additionally, many new Oakland residents come from communities such as San Francisco with robust and well-funded library systems. They expect comparable library services in well-maintained facilities. Currently, that is not what they will find.

As of March 30, the Library Commission supports Council President McElhaney, Vice Mayor Campbell Washington, Council Member Guillen and Council Member Kalb in their motion that adopts a citywide Housing, Capital Improvement and Transportation Impact Fee Ordinance for the City of Oakland. The legislation includes additional funding for capital improvements, including libraries, in Zones 1 and 2 for new residential development impact fees, to begin Sept. 1, 2016, instead of being phased in later. The legislation would be implemented in Zone 3 in 2019.

Proposed Infrastructure Bond Measure

As shown in the accompanying photo report, there is desperate need for maintenance and repairs throughout the OPL system. Maintenance has gone unfunded for years, resulting in conditions that raise public-safety issues and may put the library in violation of state and federal regulations. Here is a partial list of examples:

- Elevators break down frequently and take weeks or months to repair, making facilities inaccessible to persons with disabilities and families with strollers (Golden Gate, Temescal). The Dimond Branch's elevator has been reported by OPW as needing replacement.
- With facilities more than 50 years old, galvanized supply pipes are completely clogged with corrosion scale and no longer allowing water flow. They must be cut out of the wall and replaced – or bypassed on the exterior of the wall.
- Cast-iron drain pipes in the Main Library, which is more than 60 years old, are also showing signs of corrosion. These are in interior walls, which must be opened up to access the pipes.
- Inadequate electrical and data capabilities impede expansion of technology services for patrons and staff (i.e., charging stations, Wi-Fi accessibility and printing, more computers, etc.). In some branches, power strips are taped to tabletops in an attempt to meet citizens' needs.
- Some branches, such as Elmhurst and Melrose, are closed regularly during the summer due to excessive heat and inadequate ventilation (no air conditioning or other means of cooling the building). This blocks access to critical programs and services such as Summer Lunches, Storytime, Summer Reading, etc., for residents of the already underserved areas of the city who need them most.
- Degrading adhesive in ceiling tiles causes them to fall on patrons and staff.
- Broken windows take weeks or months to replace.
- Mounted wall clocks are hardwired to a broken system that can't be fixed, so they do not tell correct time to staff or patrons (Main/Rockridge).
- Worn furniture and carpets; poor lighting; old, drab paint, and poor custodial maintenance in many of the branches has made them dirty and unappealing and raises safety concerns.

At the City's presentation of the potential infrastructure bond measure, the PowerPoint included only \$12 million dedicated to the library's capital improvement projects – or 2 percent of the total bond measure. Meanwhile, OPL's Main and branch libraries struggle to meet their patrons' needs with almost \$423 million in unfunded capital improvements.

We urge the city to find a way to include additional funding in the bond measure to address these critical issues before they become even more dangerous and costly to resolve.

Planning for a New Main Library

Library advocate and former City Administrator Henry Gardner says it best:

“No city is a great city without a great library. Oakland was among the very first to establish a public library (second in the state) and has a long and distinguished history of service to the people of Oakland. It is way past time for us to build a new downtown library that speaks to our aspirations as a community and the provider of very important educational resources to children, youth and adults. The residents of Oakland are willing to support it, and we need to make it happen. We need to be committed to doing the things we can to make Oakland a first-class city, and this is one of them.”

During the city's current “Fix It First” era, library advocates will work to keep the need for a new Main Library in planners' minds. To that end, library advocates participated in the city's Downtown Oakland Specific Plan meetings and will continue expressing this urgent need to city staff. Oakland's population has increased, and library services have evolved, creating a pressing need for a new Main Library in a revitalized downtown.

The current Main Library:

- Is more than 60 years old and was built for a different era.
- Is poorly organized, with major areas disconnected from each other and off-limits to the public.
- Offers only a fraction of the seating needed by patrons.
- Does not support modern technology and media, as its infrastructure dates back to the time of paper and typewriters.
- Does not meet current safety, health or comfort requirements with its dated building systems.

A new Main Library:

- Will allow for expanded collections of every type to provide premier library services for children, school-age students, teens, and lifelong learners.
- Will allow OPL to connect residents with local history, while collecting that history and preserving it properly.
- Will draw people downtown for innovative educational opportunities.
- Will link millions of patrons with the tools and resources needed to provide enjoyment, enrich lives and strengthen our community, connecting them with information, ideas and experiences.

- Will allow auditorium space to support the wide range of literature, arts and community events that further solidifies the Main Library's role as a major cultural institution.
- Will become a destination point for lunch and evening programs and events for downtown residents.
- Will become a major investment in public education. Education advances our array of interests, from business climate to quality of life.
- Will allow group study rooms for needed literacy tutoring and visiting school groups for information literacy training.
- Will be a gathering place, a community center, a place that gives us the portals to discover who we are and what we can be. When we make use of a library, it becomes part of us.
- Will allow Oakland Public Library to be strengthened as the research and specialized-collections destination and the premier educational and cultural resource for Oakland.

The San Francisco Controller's Office in September 2015 released a study, "Reinvesting and Renewing for the 21st Century: A Community and Economic Benefits Study of San Francisco's Branch Library Improvement Program." This study found that for "every \$1 invested in the San Francisco Branch Library Improvement Program, the city realized a return of between \$5.19 and \$9.11." <http://sfpl.org/pdf/about/commission/ReinvestingRenewing.pdf>

Summary

Meaningful inclusion in the city's infrastructure bond measure and new-development impact fees would substantially aid the economic vitality of the City of Oakland per the study referenced above from the City of San Francisco. Inclusion also would aid OPL in continuing to provide vital programs and services, until a long-term financial solution can be obtained via a parcel-tax ballot measure in 2018.

LAC Accomplishments, January 2015-April 2016

We wish to thank and acknowledge our current commissioners, as well as those who ended their terms on the Commission since the previous report to the Life Enrichment Committee (Attachment A). Highlights of the Library Advisory Commission's activities and accomplishments from the past 16 months include the following:

- Conducted a Public Hearing on June 4, 2015, in City Hall's Council Chambers entitled, "Oakland Libraries Open Doors for Oakland's Youth." The hearing highlighted stories from four promising young Oaklanders whose lives were changed by Oakland Public Library. The KTOP video of the hearing is available at <https://vimeo.com/131702034>. Hearing participants were:
 - La Vonte Cockerham, Library Aide
 - Sophie Elkin, 2014 Oakland Youth Poet Laureate
 - Andrea Guzman, Ready, Set, Connect! Program Manager
 - Leanna Nguyen, 11th-grader, Oakland School for the Arts

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- Worked with Library Administration to nominate Council Member Kalb for the California Public Library Advocates' annual Award for Outstanding Elected Local Official. Kalb accepted the award in Pasadena in November 2015 with an LAC member present. Kalb has repeatedly pushed for increased funding for OPL since taking office in January 2013.
- Collaborated with Save Oakland Library and Friends of the Oakland Public Library to produce the OPL Advocate T-shirt. The shirt, designed by OPL Children's Librarian Amy Martin, is available for a suggested \$15 donation at FOPL's Bookmark Bookstore, the Main and several branches. It not only visually identifies library advocates and raises public awareness of OPL, it raises funds for future OPL advocacy. And it goes with everything.
- Won an American Library Association/United for Libraries grant to receive a customized, two-day training entitled "Citizens-Save-Libraries." United for Libraries Executive Director Sally Gardner Reed traveled to Oakland in February 2015 to meet with a dozen library supporters and provide the training.
- Organized and conducted Public Speaking Workshops and Elevator Speech Workshops throughout the year, led by Commissioner Barbero, for all library advocates to build skill sets.
- Commissioner Bernstein attended the American Library Association's Annual Conference in San Francisco in 2015 and won a \$5,000 grant for OPL from Dollar General. The raffle occurred during a session about approaching foundations for funding. Several other commissioners also attended the ALA Conference.
- Commissioner Barbero participated in meetings with Assemblymembers Rob Bonta and Tony Thurmond (or their staff) as part of the 2015 Library Legislative Day in the District.
- Commissioners Sterbenc, Perkins and Bernstein represented the City of Oakland during National Night Out in August 2015.
- Hosted its Third Annual Holiday Mixer at the African-American Museum & Library at Oakland in November 2015.
- Created an OPL Bookmark that features multiple photos of OPL's branches and patrons, along with basic information about how the library is currently funded.
- Continues to create and distribute a regular e-newsletter, the OPL Advocate, to an ever-growing number of library supporters.
- Continues to recruit and train a diverse Commission (age, ethnicity, gender, etc.).
- Continues to build relationships with state and national library groups, including the California Library Association, California Public Library Advocates, the California State Library, EveryLibrary, and the American Library Association.
- Received continuing education on library issues and policy by hearing presentations on:
 - Fund-raising for Library Services
 - OPL's Services for Children and Teens
 - Overview of Branch Friends Groups & Resources for Starting Friends Groups
 - OPL Master Facilities Plan and concept for a new Main Library
 - "A Day in the Life of a Branch Manager"

CONCLUSION

The LAC will continue to work closely with the Library Director and elected officials to ensure that the public has a voice in how decisions are made about the future of public libraries in Oakland. We will maintain focus on ensuring that adequate library programs and services are available for Oakland's underserved and isolated communities. Above all, we will continue to pursue long-term sustainability and the restoration of lost OPL service hours for all Oaklanders.

Respectfully submitted,



Kathryn Sterbenc, Chairperson
Library Advisory Commission

Attachments – 2

A: LAC Roster

B: Photo Report (PowerPoint)

ATTACHMENT A

Acknowledgment of Commissioners who served from January 2015 to April 2016

The LAC thanks the following individuals who ended their terms on the Commission since the previous report to the Life Enrichment Committee (January 2015):

Ruby Bernstein
Roy Chan
Shanthi Gonzales
Grant Inaba
Jeanine Shimatsu

List of current commissioners:

Kathryn Sterbenc, Chairperson
Rebekah Randle, Vice Chairperson
Ain Bailey
Victoria A. Barbero
Traci M.S. Griffin
April Harper
Ken Lupoff
Lesley Mandros Bell
Rosa Montgomery
Susanne M. Perkins
Andrew Racle
Charles Sanchez
Noelle Tu Duong