

**BOARD OF LIBRARY
COMMISSIONERS**

VALERIE LYNNE SHAW
PRESIDENT
LINDA BLANK
VICE-PRESIDENT

KELLY BESSER
HIRAM SIMS
VACANT

RAQUEL M. BORDEN
BOARD EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

CITY OF LOS ANGELES
CALIFORNIA



KAREN BASS
MAYOR

**LOS ANGELES
PUBLIC LIBRARY**
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

RICHARD J. RIORDAN
CENTRAL LIBRARY
630 WEST FIFTH STREET
LOS ANGELES, CA 90071

(213) 228-7515 Phone
(213) 228-7096 TDD
(877) 488-4327 TDD
(TOLL FREE NO.)

JOHN F. SZABO
CITY LIBRARIAN

April 23, 2024

The Honorable Bob Blumenfield, Chair
City Council Budget, Finance and Innovation Committee
c/o Luigi Verano, Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2024-25

Dear Councilmember Blumenfield:

The Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) welcomes everyone, and we are proud to meet residents where they are, offering programs and services tailored to help them achieve their goals. Whether it is at the landmark Central Library, our 72 branch libraries or online at lapl.org, LAPL provides free and equitable access to books, information and technology to enrich, educate and empower our diverse communities.

The Mayor's proposed Fiscal Year 2024-25 budget includes initiatives, programs and services to engage Angelenos through our vibrant civic spaces where we focus on lifelong learning, meeting the needs of residents of all ages and backgrounds equitably. By leveraging libraries as trusted neighborhood gathering places for everyone, LAPL connects residents with the resources to help them succeed. In this next fiscal year, the Library will prioritize the following:

- Welcoming and Safe Spaces
- Digital Access and Equity
- Equitable Access to Library Services for All Angelenos
- Diverse Collections
- Staff, Facilities and Technology

The Library remains committed to ensuring patrons and staff feel welcome and safe at our libraries. This budget includes funds to support our trauma-informed approach through the Library Experience Office, as we continue to serve the most vulnerable in our City, including people experiencing homelessness. The Library's first two Social Workers have made a measurable impact, and we are seeing positive results as Community Service Representatives bring their lived experience to our patrons.

This budget seeks capacity development with funds for staff training in conflict and dispute de-escalation and the administration of Narcan for opioid overdoses. These functions are critical to complement traditional security measures with alternatives to address workplace disturbances. The Library will also continue working with mental health and social service providers to connect the most vulnerable patrons with resources that can improve their lives and well-being and overall safety within libraries.

The Library has a long history of being a leader in technology, anticipating and preparing to meet patron needs. As we provide digital access and work toward digital equity in the City of Los Angeles, this budget delivers access through the deployment of mobile technology and funds free Wi-Fi and computers at all of our locations. The Library's Tech2go program offers loans of laptops and hotspots so patrons and their families can get online from anywhere. Our libraries also provide access to printers, copiers and scanners along with digital literacy classes and extensive online courses available for free with a library card. The Library strives to provide equitable access to all Angelenos.

This year, LAPL is proud to celebrate the 10th anniversary of our Career Online High School program. LAPL was the first public library in the nation to offer adults the opportunity to earn their high school diploma and career certificate online for free. The flexibility to complete the work for a diploma anytime, anywhere helps students to manage their responsibilities and the priorities of family and work. To date, we have had 944 graduates complete the program, and hundreds more are currently enrolled and taking advantage of this life-changing service!

The Library encourages lifelong learning for all, and we support even our youngest residents through the Read, Baby, Read! program, where the Library distributes early literacy materials, board books and library cards through hospitals and birthing centers. The Library's Student Success card in partnership with Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) provides automatic access to a library card for all LAUSD students, including those enrolled in adult school. The Library's Teens Leading Change program empowers young adults to identify, plan and execute civic engagement projects to have leadership opportunities and implement their own projects to positively benefit their communities. LAPL has an active STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) program, featuring Neighborhood Science to inspire residents to explore and learn about the natural world and wildlife around them. The Library recently welcomed 25,000 people to our Maker Faire, along with more than 200 exhibitors to celebrate science, creativity, invention and fun!

This budget provides funding for the Library to help Angelenos with financial literacy, health-centered programming, workforce development and guide them on their path to citizenship. LAPL's New Americans Initiative has a welcome station in every library and six New Americans Centers where patrons can make individual appointments for immigration and naturalization assistance with experts in the field.

This budget includes funding for Library books and digital content to deliver an expanding collection of materials that is accessible, diverse, equitable and inclusive. Additional funds in this budget will help meet demand for digital content as LAPL is the number one public library in North America for the circulation of e-books and audiobooks. Surpassing 12

million downloads in 2023, Angelenos love LAPL's robust offerings that boosted access to education, information and opportunities.

Finally, this year's budget proposal includes a focus on preparing for the future of LAPL. In an ever-changing world, the Library is known for being nimble and adapting to benefit our patrons. With sustainability at the forefront, this budget directs funding for repair, maintenance and upkeep of the Library's facilities including water filling stations as well as HVAC electrification and roof and flooring improvements in addition to various facility needs.

LAPL connects people and ideas while fostering a culture of welcoming, belonging and community in order to prioritize equity and meet the needs of all Angelenos.

This budget also provides for the Library's ongoing Facilities Planning process that will help LAPL evaluate our libraries and identify recommendations for capital improvements so we can determine how best to serve Angelenos. During this fiscal year, the Library will launch a Strategic Planning process, working with staff, patrons and other community stakeholders to identify needs and set goals for the next five years. This budget also calls for investment in communications efforts, procurement processes and staff development. Beyond books, LAPL is in the public service and people business, and staff is the Library's greatest asset.

As directed by Measure L, the proposed budget contains funds for the Library to reimburse the General Fund more than \$97 million for both direct costs (utilities, custodial services, building maintenance, refuse collection, sidewalk repairs, security services, etc.) and indirect costs (retirement, fringe benefits, and central services). For Fiscal Year 2024-25, these direct and indirect costs comprise 38.03% of the Library Budget. The Library is eager to continue providing outstanding service in the next fiscal year, and LAPL does not have any additional budget requests.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact me or Assistant City Librarian Susan Broman at (213) 228-7515.

Thank you for your support of the Los Angeles Public Library. It is my absolute privilege to lead this tremendous organization and to serve the people of the city of Los Angeles.

Sincerely,



John F. Szabo
City Librarian

cc: Honorable City Councilmembers
Board of Library Commissioners
Carolyn Webb de Macias, Chief of Staff, Office of Mayor Bass
Jacqueline Hamilton, Director of Neighborhood Services/Sr. Advisor
Matt Hale, Deputy Mayor, Finance, Operations and Innovation

The Honorable Bob Blumenfield, Chair

April 23, 2024

Page 4 of 4

Bernyce Hollins, Senior Budget Director

Sharon Tso, Chief Legislative Analyst

Matthew W. Szabo, City Administrative Officer

Maria Gutierrez, Chief Administrative Analyst, CAO

Rafael Garcia, Administrative Analyst, CAO

Madeleine M. Rackley, LAPL Business Office Manager

Heather Smith, LAPL Assistant Business Office Manager