



**Joint Powers Authority Governing Board**

Rick DeGolia, Atherton

Julia Mates, Belmont (Vice Chair)

Karen Cunningham, Brisbane (Chair)

Antonio López, East Palo Alto

Art Kiesel, Foster City

Deborah Penrose, Half Moon Bay

Maurice Goodman, Millbrae

Tygarjas Bigstycck, Pacifica

Sarah Wernikoff, Portola Valley

Sara McDowell, San Carlos

Warren Slocum, San Mateo County

Dick Brown, Woodside

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**San Mateo County Library Joint Powers Authority  
Governing Board Agenda  
September 16 2024, 8:15 a.m.**

Meetings of the Joint Powers Authority Governing Board will be held in-person and by teleconference pursuant to Government Code Section 54953(b). Members of the public are able to join this hybrid meeting remotely via the Zoom platform by using the link below or in person at a meeting location identified below.

<https://SMCL.zoom.us/j/94752020323?pwd=VkdESUVsa3ZUODQrSjdyUDAwc1pYZz09>

Or Telephone: +1 669 900 6833 Meeting ID: 947 5202 0323 Password: 406000

**Meeting Locations:**

Library Administration, 125 Lessingia Court, San Mateo, CA 94402

Residence, 751 Kelly Street, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

In compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, the County will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. If possible, please give three (3) business days advance notice of any accommodation needs by contacting Priscilla Bermudez at (650) 339-2247 and/or [bermudez@smcl.org](mailto:bermudez@smcl.org) or call the California Relay Service (711).

For the benefit of individuals who are sensitive to fragrances, please refrain from wearing fragranced or scented products.

In addition, members of the public may also email written public comments in advance of the meeting to Priscilla Bermudez at [bermudez@smcl.org](mailto:bermudez@smcl.org). Your email should include the specific agenda item on which you are commenting or note that your comment concerns an item not on the agenda. The Board will make reasonable efforts to read into the record all emails received before the meeting. All emailed written comments, regardless of when received, will be included in the administrative record.

If you believe the County has not met your rights under Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact Anne-Marie Despain at (650) 312-5245 and/or [despain@smcl.org](mailto:despain@smcl.org) or call the California Relay Service (711).

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|-------|---|-------------|
| I.    | <b>Call to Order</b>  | Action      |
| II.   | <b>Public Comments</b>  | Information |
| III.  | <b>Consent Agenda</b>   | Action      |
|       | <b>A. Approval of the June 17, 2024 Meeting Minutes</b>         |             |
|       | <b>B. Investment Report for FY 2023-24</b>                      |             |
|       | <b>C. Grant and Fundraising Report for FY 2023-24</b>           |             |
|       | <b>D. Director's Report</b>                                     |             |
| IV.   | <b>Strategic Planning Report</b>                                | Action      |
| V.    | <b>Proposed Uses of Restricted Library Funds</b>                | Action      |
| VI.   | <b>Approval of the Final FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget</b>          | Action      |
| VII.  | <b>Governing Board Members Announcements</b>                    | Information |
| VIII. | <b>Closed Session: Public Employee Performance Evaluation</b>   | Information |
|       | <b>Closed Session pursuant to Government Code Section 54957</b> |             |
|       | <b>(Director of Library Services)</b>                           |             |
| IX.   | <b>Adjournment</b>  | Action      |

**2024 Governing Board Meetings: November 4**  
**2024 Operations Committee Meetings: October 29**



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San Mateo County Libraries Joint Powers Authority  
Governing Board Meeting  
Minutes of June 17, 2024

Board Members Present:

Elizabeth Lewis, Atherton  
Julia Mates, Belmont  
Art Kiesel, Foster City  
Deborah Penrose, Half Moon Bay  
Tygarjas Bigstyck, Pacifica  
Sarah Wernikoff, Portola Valley  
Sara McDowell, San Carlos (Chair)  
Dick Brown, Woodside

Staff Present:

Anne-Marie Despain  
Lindsey Freeland  
Priscilla Bermudez

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- I. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 8:15 a.m. by Chair McDowell.
  - II. Public Comments. None.
  - III. Consent Agenda. The Consent Agenda included the Approval of the February 5, 2024 Minutes, Approval of the April 29, 2024 Joint Meeting Minutes, Approval of the May 20, 2024 Meeting Minutes and the Approval of the Friends and Foundation MOUs.  
  
Motion: Approve the Consent Agenda without changes. Passed (MSP: Penrose/Brown).
  - IV. Adoption of the Recommended Budget FY 2024-25. Financial Services Manager Lindsey Freeland provided a brief overview of the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget that was presented at the May meeting. Total Revenue is \$42,048,011 and Net Appropriations, or the total operating budget, is \$51,717,961. Operating Reserves total \$5,072,673 and Capital Reserves total \$21,991,933, in compliance with the Library JPA Fund Balance Policy. Annual priorities include developing a new strategic plan, supporting the well-being and growth of our library champions, reaching more community members through intentional outreach and marketing efforts, elevating adult and youth literacy efforts, increasing access to technology and hands-on learning, creating welcoming and inspiring spaces and prioritizing resilience in our facility's operations. The budget includes several key projects and the addition of three new library assistant positions to support central divisions and systemwide initiatives. Key projects include updating furniture and shelving in our facilities and making strategic investments to bolster building resiliency, upgrading library conference rooms to be hybrid meeting compatible, piloting privacy pods in libraries, purchasing assets to enhance outreach efforts including two additional library outposts and five outreach vehicles, expanding adult literacy services, programs and outreach and designing new makerspaces.

Member Lewis asked whether the two new library outpost locations have been identified. Director Despain mentioned that planning is focused on unincorporated communities with limited access to existing library locations, such as Pescadero, Mid-Coast and Woodside. Member Brown congratulated the library staff on the increase in usage and inquired about the demographic breakdown of usage, noting that collection and computer allocations don't seem to correlate with the usage increase. Director Despain responded that the library is currently analyzing systemwide and community-specific data, which will be presented at future JPA meetings and in the annual report presentations at council meetings. Financial Services Manager Freeland confirmed that this year's budget includes a modest increase for digital materials, with significant allocations made since 2018-19. Member Brown emphasized his support for allocating resources to digital services and the need for a more user-friendly experience for accessing digital collections. Chair McDowell thanked the staff for the detailed breakdown of fixed assets in the report and asked for clarification on the purchase of the five new outreach vehicles.

Motion: Approve the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget and Fund Balance Policy. Passed (MSP: Bigstyck/Penrose).

- V. Director's Report. Director Despain shared several highlights from the Director's Report, including the launch of *My Summer Adventure* program, a brief update on strategic planning, news about the first Library Outpost opening at the Pacifica Sanchez Library, celebrations for National Library Workers and Volunteer Week, and personnel announcements. Member Penrose raised concerns about banned books and suggested discussing the library taking a public stance on this issue. Director Despain referenced the recent board approved Materials Access and Selection Policy, which states that we uphold the Library Bill of Rights and will protect equitable access to library materials and the freedom to read and inquire without restriction. Member Bigstyck asked for an update on Empower Cards and inquired about WiFi capabilities at other library outposts. Chair McDowell asked about a public relations partnership with AMF, and Director Despain provided additional information. Chair McDowell also mentioned the potential for utilizing electric billboards along Highway 101 for library service promotions, which are offered to certain member cities for free advertising annually. Member Brown expressed interest in innovative approaches to engage diverse user bases, including seniors, non-tech-savvy individuals, and non-English speakers. Finally, the board recognized and celebrated four staff members for their significant years of service, ranging from 10 to 21 years.
- VI. Election of the Governing Board Officers. Chair McDowell shared that this will be her last meeting as Chair and that it has been a wonderful pleasure working with staff over the past two years. She invited nominations from the floor for positions of Governing Board Chair and Vice Chair. Member Mates nominated Vice Chair Cunningham for Chair; no other nominations were received. Chair McDowell nominated Member Mates for Vice Chair; no other nominations were received.

Motion: Approve Vice Chair Cunningham to serve as Governing Board Chair. Passed (MSP: Mates/Bigstyck). Motion: Approve Member Mates to serve as Governing Board Vice Chair. Passed (MSP: McDowell/Penrose).

- VII. Governing Board Member Announcements. Member Bigstyck encouraged members to attend the Library Outpost grand opening.
- VIII. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 8:57 a.m.



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To: JPA Governing Board  
From: Anne-Marie Despain, Director of Library Services  
Lindsey Freeland, Financial Services Manager  
Date: September 10, 2024  
Meeting: September 16, 2024  
Re: Investment Report for FY 2023-24

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne-Marie Despain".

## Background

On September 12, 2009, the Governing Board adopted the Library Joint Power Authority (JPA) Investment Policy. The purpose of the Investment Policy is to provide guidance and protection to the Library JPA's cash and investments and promote prudent financial stewardship. It is also the policy of the Library JPA to diversify its investment portfolio to ensure the maximum safety of the Library's assets. The Library JPA shall have funds not required for immediate expenditure invested in compliance with state law and this policy.

The criteria for selecting investments in order of priority are:

- Safety of Principal
- Liquidity
- Yield

In order to minimize risk, the Library JPA's portfolio includes:

- The San Mateo County Investment Pool (SMCIP)
- The State of California Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF)

As outlined in the Library JPA Investment Policy, the Library Director shall submit an annual investment report to the Governing Board on the status of the Library JPA's investment portfolio. The report will provide information as to the types of investment, the amount of money invested within the two investment instruments, maturity dates, and interest rate yield on investments in accordance with the Government Code. The report shall also state if the Library JPA investments are in compliance with this policy and able to meet its cash flow obligation. The investment policy is reviewed periodically and was last approved by the Governing Board on September 18, 2023.

## Discussion

The Library JPA is a voluntary participant in the San Mateo County Investment Pool which is regulated by California Government Code Section §53600 under the oversight of the County Treasurer. Included in SMCIP's investment portfolio as outlined in its [Investment Policy](#) are: U.S. Treasury Securities, U.S. Government Agency/Government Sponsored Enterprises, Commercial Paper, Negotiable Certificates of Deposit, Bankers Acceptances,

Collateralized Certificates of Deposit, Mortgage and Asset Backed Securities, US Instrumentalities, CA Municipal Obligations, Repurchase Agreements, Local Agency Investment Fund, Mutual Funds and Local Government Investment Pools.

In FY 2023-24, Library JPA funds averaging \$41,701,131 were invested with the San Mateo County Investment Pool, producing an average yield of [3.66](#) percent. Interest earnings in FY 2023-24 totaled \$1,512,454.

The Library JPA is a voluntary participant in the Local Agency Investment Fund, which is regulated by California Government Code Section §16429 under the oversight of the Treasury of the State of California. Included in LAIF's investment portfolio as outlined in its [Investment Policy](#) are: U.S. Treasury Securities, Federal and Supranational Agency Securities, Bankers Acceptances-Domestic/Foreign, Certificates of Deposit, Collateralized Time Deposits, Commercial Paper, Corporate Bonds/Notes, Repurchases and Reverse Repurchases, and Negotiable Orders of Withdrawal.

In FY 2023-24, Library JPA funds averaging \$2,287,546 were invested with the Local Agency Investment Fund, producing an annual average yield of [3.93](#) percent. Interest earnings totaled \$93,945.

Both SMCIP and LAIF maintain a large percentage of their investments in U.S. Treasury Securities representing obligations issued by the U.S. Government for which the full faith and credit of the United States is pledged for the payment of principal and interest. Neither SMCIP nor LAIF invest in derivative products. In order to minimize risk, the average length of maturity of the funds with the pools (duration a financial asset is held) is limited and outlined in their respective Investment Policies. As a participant in both SMCIP and LAIF, Library JPA funds are always liquid and available.

On an ongoing basis, cash flow requirements are reviewed to ensure that the investment portfolio remains sufficiently liquid to enable the Library JPA to meet all reasonably anticipated operating requirements. Library JPA investments are in compliance with the Library JPA Investment Policy, and the portfolio contains enough liquidity to meet expected expenditures.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Combined SMCIP and LAIF interest earnings for FY 2023-24 totaled \$1,606,399. Library JPA investments are in compliance with the Library JPA Investment Policy, and the portfolio contains enough liquidity to meet expected expenditures.

### **Recommendation**

Recommend JPA Governing Board accept the Investment Report for FY 2023-24 and review and approve the Investment Policy with no revisions. Operations Committee members present at the September 10, 2024 meeting concurred with this recommendation.

### **Attachment**

Investment Policy

## **INVESTMENT POLICY**

The purpose of this investment policy is to provide guidance and protection to the San Mateo County Library Joint Powers Authority's (Library JPA) cash and investments, and promote prudent financial stewardship.

The basic premise underlying the Library JPA's Investment Policy is to ensure that money is always available when needed. It shall also be the policy of the Library JPA to diversify its investment portfolio to ensure the maximum safety of Library JPA assets. The Library JPA shall have funds not required for immediate expenditure invested in compliance with state law and this policy.

### **Investment Criteria**

The criteria for selecting investments in order of priority are:

1. Safety of Principal: Safety of principal is the foremost objective of the investment program. Cash and all investments should be undertaken in a manner that seeks primarily to ensure the preservation of capital.
2. Liquidity: Sufficient cash balances and investments amounts shall remain liquid to meet the required timing of all operating requirements that may be reasonably anticipated including cash outflows for operating expenses and funding of capital projects.
3. Yield: The cash investment portfolio shall be designed with the objective of attaining a reasonable or market rate of return, taking into account the primary objectives of safety and liquidity.

### **Prudent Investor Standard**

The Library JPA adheres to the guidance provided by the "prudent investor standard," which obligates a fiduciary to ensure that investments shall be made with the exercise of that degree of judgment and care, under circumstances then prevailing, which persons of prudence, discretion and intelligence exercise in the management of individual business matters, not for speculation but for investment. Exercise of prudence considers the probable safety of capital as well as the probable income to be delivered.

This standard of prudence shall be applied in the context of managing an overall portfolio. Investment officials acting in accordance with written procedures and the investment policy and exercising due diligence shall be relieved of personal responsibility for an individual security's credit risk or market price changes, provided that the deviations from expectation are reported in a timely fashion, and appropriate action is taken to control adverse developments.

## **Acceptable Investment Instruments**

Investments will be made in several instruments to lessen risk by diversifying the Library JPA's portfolio. The Library JPA's investment portfolio may include the following instruments:

1. The San Mateo County Investment Pool (SMCIP)
2. The State of California Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF).

## **Reporting**

The Director of Library Services shall submit an annual investment report to the JPA Governing Board on the status of the Library JPA's investment portfolio. The report will provide information as to the type of investment, the amount of money invested with various institutions, purchase and maturity dates and interest rate yield on investments in accordance with the Government Code. The report shall state if the Library JPA investments are in compliance with this policy and able to meet its cash flow obligation.

## **Delegation of Authority**

Pursuant to Government Code 53600 et. Seq., with the annual adoption of this Investment Policy, the JPA Governing Board assigns the responsibility of determining the portion of surplus funds to invest in the State of California Local Agency Investment Fund (LAIF) to the Director of Library Services. Daily management responsibility of the investment program may be delegated to the Financial Services Manager, who shall establish procedures for the operation consistent with this investment policy. Business controls shall be established within the organization that utilizes adequate signature controls, separation of duties and adequate audit trail of cash disbursements and transfers of cash balances.

## **Adoption**

This policy shall be reviewed periodically with the JPA Governing Board to ensure adequacy related to the objectives of safety, liquidity and yield and its adherence to applicable laws. The JPA Governing Board will review and approve all changes to this policy.

Approved by the Library JPA Governing Board on September 18, 2023



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To: JPA Governing Board  
From: Anne-Marie Despain, Director of Library Services  
Lindsey Freeland, Financial Services Manager  
Date: September 10, 2024  
Meeting: September 16, 2024  
Re: Grant and Fundraising Report for FY 2023-24

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### Background

On February 6, 2006, the JPA Governing Board authorized the Library Director to approve the acceptance of grants as stated in Article II of the Bylaws for the Library Joint Powers Authority. Article II states that the JPA shall "Authorize the submission of applications for federal, state, local, and private grants and approve acceptance of such grants as are received, and allow for the delegation of this responsibility to the Library Director" and "Accept contributions, or authorize the Library Director to accept contributions, of money or property to the Library system and make appropriations in accordance with any limitations imposed by the contributors on the appropriate distribution and use of such gifts, and the Library JPA budget."

An annual report is provided to the Library JPA Governing Board and Governing Board summarizing grants awarded during the fiscal year.

### Discussion

Grant opportunities present themselves throughout the year and range from small grants designed to support activities at one library to larger grants that support systemwide initiatives.

While we actively seek grant support for existing and approved major initiatives, as a matter of practice, the organization does not apply for grants that establish new programs that will require ongoing funding requirements.

During the period of July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024, the Library JPA was awarded four grants:

- \$82,493 from California Library Literacy Services to support adult literacy services throughout our library communities and family literacy enhancements for children enrolled in subsidized preschools.
- \$119,806 from the California State Library to enhance Lunch at the Library programs and provide enhanced summer opportunities, including field trips to local farms for families in East Palo Alto and North Fair Oaks as well as community meal site locations in Colma and San Bruno.

- \$9,000 from the California State Library to serve and support the needs of informal childcare providers with information, resources, and community connections during East Palo Alto and North Fair Oaks Stay and Play library programs.
- \$2,500 NASA Inspires Futures for Tomorrow's Youth to reach groups historically underrepresented in STEM fields, specifically Hispanic or Latino communities, and offer youth-focused space science-themed programs.

The total grant revenue awarded in FY 2023-24 was \$213,799. For comparison, in FY 2022-23 we were awarded \$457,327, and in FY 2021-22 we were awarded \$291,314.

As outlined in the Library JPA Agreement, the Governing Board is authorized to form and appropriately associate with one or more nonprofit organizations devoted to developing additional resources and funds to enhance operations and support San Mateo County Libraries. We are fortunate to have support from our ten Friends of the Library groups. In FY 2023-24, the Friends donated \$421,853 to support local programs and services, including a \$296,254 donation from the Millbrae Friends to help fund the construction of the new Millbrae Library makerspace. The Foundation for San Mateo County Libraries was established to complement the work of the Friends and focus on supporting systemwide initiatives and capital projects. In FY 2023-24, the Foundation began preparing for a significant capital campaign to support a new library in East Palo Alto, including hiring a consultant, funded through Measure K dollars, to complete a capital campaign feasibility study.

In FY 2024-25, we will be collaborating with Friends and the Foundation to support the globally recognized Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, makerspaces in Belmont, Foster City, and San Carlos and to focus on increased support for new libraries in East Palo Alto and Pacifica.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with accepting this report.

### **Recommendation**

Recommend Library JPA Governing Board accept the Grant and Fundraising Report for FY 2023-24. Operations Committee members present at the September 10, 2024 meeting concurred with this recommendation.



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To: JPA Governing Board  
From: Anne-Marie Despain, Director of Library Services  
Date: September 10, 2024  
Meeting: September 16, 2024  
Re: Director's Report

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This report summarizes significant library operations and program activities that have occurred since the last meeting of the Governing Board. Services and activities are aligned with our Strategic Plan Goals.

**We are leaders in establishing a foundation for early literacy and supporting exploration and growth at every stage of life.**

My Summer Adventure

Summer at our libraries has always been a time of excitement, and this year we added a dash of adventure. Our newly redesigned summer program invited kids, teens and adults to set their own goals and explore the world through books, nature, and unique experiences. With vibrant artwork by award-winning local artist Shawn Harris, our community blazed their own trails, returning with journals filled with incredible stories.



We aimed to remove barriers and empower youth to embark on learning journeys shaped by their abilities, interests, and access. Our goal was to boost participation and create an inclusive, equitable experience for all ages.

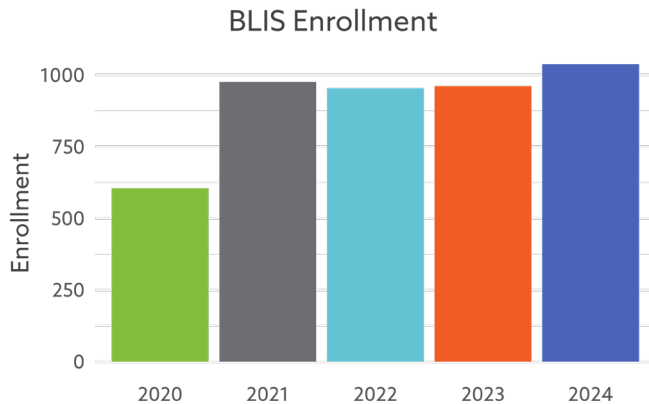
To help us achieve this, we welcomed 29 high school interns from our local communities. These summer interns played a vital role in reaching underserved populations and infusing our spaces with youthful energy and creativity. One intern shared, "I really enjoy how professional and also fun this internship is. I feel like I've learned lots of new skills that I can carry with me for future jobs."

We also inspired our community to explore the great outdoors in exciting new ways. Partnering with County Parks, we hosted 22 programs where park rangers introduced new users to their local parks. From coastal story times and junior ranger activities to hikes and visits from performers, we brought the adventure outside to showcase the awe-inspiring nature around us. We hosted 102 amazing outdoor experiences this summer, for a total of 652 adventurous summer programs.

To celebrate the joy of being outdoors and the inspiration found in our libraries, we distributed limited-edition library cards, tote bags, stickers, and bubbles across our communities. Program participants are also entered to win a \$1,000 college scholarship or an Annual County Parks Pass, ensuring they can continue their adventures all year long.

### Big Lift Inspiring Summers

This year marked the 9th anniversary of Big Lift Inspiring Summers. We proudly served 1,038 children from rising kindergarten to rising 3rd grade across eight school sites in six school districts. We also expanded access, resulting in a 10% increase in program completion compared to last summer.



We successfully mitigated summer learning loss, with students gaining an extra month of progress in literacy. Additionally, youth discovered joy and learning through engaging, child-directed STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) experiences both in and out of the classroom.

This summer, children explored a variety of professions they can aspire to, including meeting elected officials like JPA Governing Board Chair Karen Cunningham and Pacifica Mayor Pro Tem Sue Beckmeyer. We also highlighted diverse career paths in public service. During library field trips, youth interacted with local librarians to learn about their journeys, engaged with rangers at County Parks, and discovered our makerspaces and maker team through on-site Makermobile visits.

Bringing the Makermobile to all was a summer highlight, deepening the hands-on, child directed learning children encounter in the classroom. Children collaborated to unleash their creativity, building rollercoasters and ice cream shops out of giant foam blocks, and embraced a growth mindset through various gravity challenges. During the special activities with our maker team, youth actively applied and developed the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills taught in the afternoon STEAM curriculum.

Each summer, families consistently share positive feedback and stories about their child's summer participation. They highlight how the relationships with library facilitators and the active learning through STEAM activities impact their child's development. Based on feedback from parents, 95% noted that their child discovered a greater joy for learning and exploration through the program. Several parents mentioned that their child continues to recreate STEAM projects at home using materials found around the house.



Additionally, 92% of families reported that their child gained self-confidence, and 91% observed improvements in their child's communication skills.

The free Big Lift Inspiring Summers program remains a valuable resource for families year after year. One caregiver expressed their gratitude, saying, "Thank you for the program. As a single mom, I couldn't do it without your support. Summertime is always challenging with only one income and one parent. Thank you!"



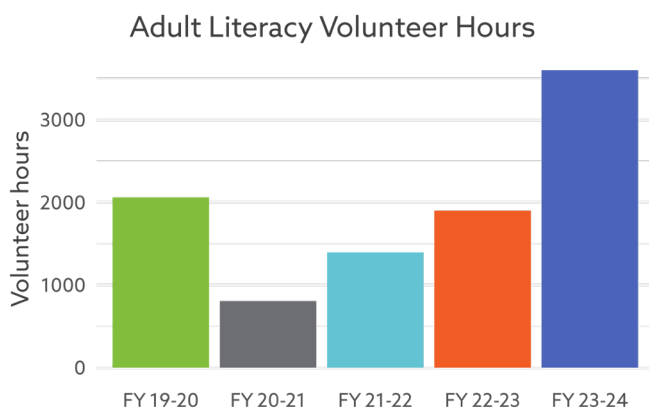
Dolly Parton's Imagination Library

Through the amazing support of our Friends of the Library groups and leadership from the Foundation for San Mateo County Libraries, we are delighted to announce the countywide launch of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, a first in the Bay Area. Through this partnership, any family in the county can sign up to receive free high-quality books for children from birth until age five. Each month, children receive a new book in the mail to help build their home library and further their love of reading. The county is home to over 40,000 youth ages 0-5 and we hope to register 20% of this population in the first year. We are excited to bring this amazing program to San Mateo County and continue our quest to help children develop their early literacy skills. In just the two weeks since we launched the program, we have already engaged over 2,000 young children in the program.

Adult Literacy

It has been an exceptionally rewarding year for the adult learning programming. Staff are making substantial progress in rolling out expanded offerings to the community, as well as internally working to grow and develop these services.

102 volunteers paired with 133 learners with 1:1 tutoring for their reading and writing skills across 11 different libraries and online. Staff have successfully expanded our traditional 1:1 adult literacy program nearly 70% over last year, to now support 78 tutor learner pairs.

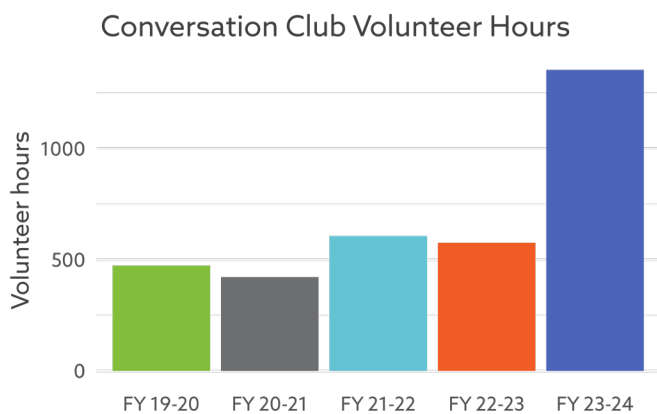


Tutor support volunteers were able to dedicate 3,601 hours of their time to advancing literacy in our county. Learner accomplishments include passing the citizenship test, gaining new employment, getting a promotion, starting college, obtaining a driver's license, and learning all the letters/sounds of the alphabet. Currently, 35 learners have been assessed and are awaiting placement with a tutor.

Laura, a 20-year resident of East Palo Alto started as a learner in our literacy program while working as a part-time housekeeper. She was recently hired as a program assistant at a local nonprofit after working with her tutor for nine months. "The library is providing important services to the community," she told staff.

In fiscal year 2023- 2024, we proudly supported our community through robust English language learning classes and partnerships. In North Fair Oaks alone, we hosted two recurring English classes to offer more than 900 hours of group support. As we continue to expand, we have successfully provided 239 English classes, both online and in five community libraries, as well as collaborated with a community partner to bring classes to Pescadero. These classes had a total attendance of 3,981. Participants are always grateful to be a part of our English classes and are interested in additional opportunities to continue learning.

English conversation clubs help adults practice their speaking and conversation skills in small groups with the support of 26 volunteers and their fellow learners. Our volunteers collectively devoted 1,354 hours, assisting 1,058 participants through our online clubs and in person across six community libraries.



After a lengthy search, we successfully hired an experienced literacy consultant to advise on strengthening and expanding our existing programs and recommend areas for growth. That work concluded in August, and we are now beginning the work of implementing the consultant's recommendations. To power those recommendations, we are opening recruitments for additional approved positions to support vital growth areas of

supporting incarcerated populations, high school diploma or equivalent attainment, and outreach and volunteer management.

### Senior Services

Effectively engaging seniors in high-interest topics has become a key focus for our staff. Recent meetings with senior stakeholders and feedback from a senior focus group have highlighted the need for a refreshed approach. In response, a dedicated team has been formed to create customized content and curate information specifically for seniors in our communities.



Several new initiatives are in development, with a focus on the upcoming general election, the arts, and health considerations. CalMatters Voter Education will offer interactive sessions before the November elections, focusing on local ballot issues and encouraging group discussions about propositions. The Draw Together Silver Series will feature arts and creativity programs designed for older adults, fostering community through interactive sessions. Advance Healthcare Directives workshops, hosted in partnership with the UCSF's evidence based PREPARE program, will raise awareness about advanced healthcare directives, provide educational insights and assist with the completion of directives.

## **We understand community needs and promote meaningful library services as solutions.**

### Video Games

Starting September 26th, every day at San Mateo County Libraries will be game day with the launch of our new video game collection. We are expanding our range of entertaining, cultural, and enriching materials to include video games—an increasingly popular storytelling medium that offers dynamic information and educational experiences.

More than 500 Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 5, Xbox Series X games will be available to checkout, as well as more than 40 consoles to meet initial demand. As with many of our Library of Things collections, games and consoles will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Dive into the excitement with *Super Smash Bros Ultimate*, embrace your inner Gryffindor with *Hogwarts Legacy*, create a dream island in *Animal Crossing: New Horizons*, or swing through New York in *Marvel's Spider-Man 2*.

### Sustainable California Libraries Grant

We have been awarded a State Library LSTA grant in the amount of \$80,414 to provide sustainability, tree walks, and urban gardening programming at the North Fair Oaks, East Palo Alto and Millbrae Libraries, as well as climate justice presentations at the Atherton and the Portola Valley Libraries. We are partnering with local urban forestry organization Canopy to advance equity in enjoyment of local natural resources.

About 8 in 10 California adults say climate change is a top concern or one of several important concerns for them personally. The purpose of the Sustainable California Libraries grants is to fund services, programming, and educational opportunities focused on sustainability and climate resilience.

## **We cultivate an active presence and create spaces that support discovery, enrich lives, and uplift the community.**

### Library Outpost Ribbon Cutting Ceremony

We are thrilled to share that the Library Outpost ribbon-cutting ceremony on July 23 was a remarkable success. Library staff are happy to report that the community's excitement for the Outpost continues.

We were honored to have a diverse group of attendees, including Assembly Member Marc Berman, Brisbane Council member and Library JPA Chair Karen Cunningham, Pacifica Mayor Sue Vaterlaus, Mayor Pro Tempore Sue Beckmeyer, Pacifica Council member and Library JPA Governing Board member Tygarjas Bigstycyk, members of the Pacifica Library Friends and Advisory Committee, and many other officials and community members. The event was further enhanced by the festive presence of the Makermobile and delicious ice cream from Mr. Softee.



We would like to acknowledge library staff for their months of collaborative effort with the City of Pacifica, Group4 Architecture, and other contractors to bring the Outpost to fruition. Staff are currently working on a comprehensive service plan for the Outpost that will serve as a guide for the operation of future Outposts.

The new Outpost in Pacifica stands as a testament to our commitment to extending library services beyond traditional walls and hours. Currently, discussions are underway to expand outposts to unincorporated areas in midcoast, Pescadero and Woodside.

### Atherton Library Children's Garden

In response to feedback from the Atherton community, we are expanding the Atherton Children's Garden project from 1,600 SF to 6,500 SF. The expanded garden will feature exciting design elements such as a willow tree hut, a boulder mound, a log tunnel, a plank scramble, reflective mirror elements, movable tables and benches, exterior storage, and an ADA ramp with pathways. The design team will now focus on creating detailed plans to integrate these features into an inclusive and vibrant garden space, with final plans expected to be completed this fall. Library staff will collaborate with Town staff on the next steps for construction. We are excited about these developments and look forward to bringing the garden to life.

### East Palo Alto Library Project

In collaboration with the City of East Palo Alto, we are working to make sure plans for the new library meet the needs and goals of the community. Noll & Tam Architects and Contigo Communications began their community outreach campaign in July by interviewing stakeholders who represent key demographics in East Palo Alto. On August 27, all residents were invited to share a meal and participate in an evening workshop. Engaged community members heard an update in English and Spanish on the project and had the opportunity to ask questions and share their thoughts and aspirations for the new library. Kids were welcome to join and had a blast creating their own dream libraries out of wood, paper and other craft supplies. This important input will inform the future services and design of the library. Next steps include development of the final conceptual design later this year.



### Public Awareness Campaign

We are excited to expand our partnership with AMF Media Group as we gear up to launch a comprehensive multilingual brand awareness campaign this October. This initiative will utilize both digital and traditional advertising to amplify the presence of our Libraries across the county.

Our digital approach includes algorithm-driven placement for both static and video ads, enhanced by Deep AI to maximize our reach. We'll also employ behavioral, geo-proximity, and contextual targeting, as well as paid social media and search engine marketing, to actively engage our community. Additionally, we are exploring further avenues in traditional advertising.

In tandem with this campaign, our communications team is creating a new "Welcome to the Libraries" webpage, designed to introduce new cardholders to the extensive range of services and resources our libraries offer.

AMF will also perform an SEO audit of our website using Google Analytics, providing insights that will help us improve our connection with the community through search engine optimization.

### Library Personnel News

We are excited to share the following personnel announcements:

Shana Bird has accepted the position of Library Assistant at the Atherton Library. Shana previously served as a Library Aide at the Foster City Library. Shana holds a bachelor's degree in psychology/education from the University of California Los Angeles.

Lynne Fetter has accepted a promotion to Librarian at the Atherton Library. Lynne previously served as a Library Assistant at the Belmont Library. Lynne holds a MLIS from San Jose State University and a bachelor's degree in English from Willamette University.

Neuf Narisaranukul has accepted the position of Library Assistant at the Foster City Library. Neuf previously served as a Library Aide at the Foster City Library. Neuf holds a bachelor's degree in communications from Chulalongkorn University and a master's degree in public and media relations from Michigan State University.

Caila Parodi has accepted the position of Management Analyst with Youth and Family Services. Caila has managed The Big Lift Inspiring Summers program for the past several years. She holds a bachelor's degree in social science from Westmont College.

Justin Pham has accepted the position of Librarian in the Access Services Division. Justin joins us from the City of Santa Clara where he worked as a Librarian. Justin holds a bachelor's degree in media studies from the University of California, Berkeley, and a Master of Library and Information Science from San Jose State University.

Francisco Ramirez has accepted the position of Librarian at the Millbrae Library. Francisco joins us from the Alameda County Government where he worked as a Library Technician. Francisco is bilingual in Spanish and holds a bachelor's degree in business administration, management information systems and a MLIS from San Jose State University.

Welcome and congratulations to all our Library Champions!

FY 2023-24 Invoices and Contracts Over \$50,000

The [County's Open Data Portal](https://checkbook.smcgov.org) (checkbook.smcgov.org) continues to provide an easily accessible view of library expenditures and activity data to both the public and policymakers and a list of invoices with a total amount of \$50,000 or more that were paid or executed between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024 is provided below.

| <b>Vendor</b>            | <b>Amount</b>  | <b>Description</b>   |
|--------------------------|--|--|
| Carahsoft                | 104,833  | Zoom Licenses and Phones Annual Fee  |
| City of Daly City        | 381,523  | Annual Contribution for Colma & Broadmoor service areas  |
| City of Millbrae         | 322,186  | Friends Supported Makerspace Costs   |
| Community Playground     | 266,292  | Outpost Landscaping, Furniture, Site Work, & Installation  |
| Coupa                    | 62,663   | Procurement Software Annual Fee  |
| Dell                     | 373,653<br>525,570<br>56,991                                 | Staff Laptop Replacement<br>Public Chromebooks & Outreach Laptops<br>Maker Laptops   |
| Envisionware             | 163,953  | Outpost Lending Machine Final Payment  |
| Kanopy                   | 75,000   | Digital Stream Resources Annual Fee  |
| Kaseya                   | 52,900   | Windows Software Systems Management  |
| Midwest Tape             | 360,000  | Hoopla Digital Resources Annual Fee  |
| Peninsula Library System | 574,848<br>353,341<br>249,568<br>215,920<br>78,430<br>58,763 | Annual Automated Network Charges<br>Library Deliveries Annual Fee<br>Overdrive Annual Fee<br>Windows License Upgrade<br>Adobe Licenses<br>Automated Material Handling Services |
| Porter Corporation       | 99,590   | Library Outpost Canopy   |
| Ross McDonald            | 53,999   | East Palo Alto Shelving  |
| Verizon                  | 107,489  | Hotspot Replacements & Service   |

State News

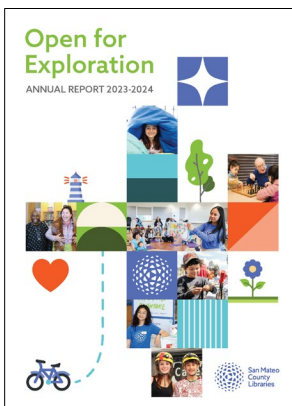
The 2024-2025 State Budget was passed earlier this year and though the State Library and other advocates were successful in saving some library resources that were scheduled to lose funding, some significant cuts were made to two State Library-funded programs - Lunch at the Library and the California Library Services Act (CLSA). Fortunately, these cuts will not affect our ability to provide library services; in particular, we are moving forward with meals at the library in several of our locations. In addition, there is a state ballot measure on the November ballot that we are watching closely - [Proposition 5](#). If passed, this measure would lower the voting threshold from 66.7% to 55% for local public infrastructure bonds.

### Libraries in the News

- [Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library launches in San Mateo County](#) (eastbaytimes.com)
- [County kids can now access Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library](#) (smdailyjournal.com)
- [Pacifica celebrates Sanchez Library Outpost](#) (coastsidenews.com)
- [San Mateo County Libraries brings summer learning outdoors](#) (almanacnews.com)
- [Libraries have bugs: Critters spark curiosity](#) (coastsidenews.com)
- [Legislation proactively works to combat the growing trend of book bans](#) (sonomasun.com)
- [How to Start a Book Club: 10 Tips from Experts](#) (bestlifeonline.com)
- [New York’s First Black Librarians Changed the Way We Read](#) (nytimes.com)
- [10 Things You Didn’t Realize You Can Get for Free with Your Library Card](#) (bestlifeonline.com)
- [More States Are Passing Book Banning Rules. Here’s What They Say](#) (nytimes.com)
- [Al on the Horizon](#) (libraryjournal.com)

### Staff Development Day

Every year, we close our libraries so that staff can gather for an inspiring day filled with activities to promote motivation, wellness, and professional growth. We are excited to announce that this year’s Staff Development Day will take place on Thursday, October 10. Themes will be centered around our strategic planning work. All libraries and customer care will close so that all staff may participate in this full-day training event. As has been past practice, the public will be provided early notification of this closure.



### Annual Report

We are thrilled to share our 2023-2024 Annual Report and would like to thank the Governing Board and Operations Committee, our Friends of the Library groups, the Foundation for San Mateo County Libraries and generous donors, our dedicated volunteers, remarkable staff and many partners who supported another successful year. The stories and photos included this year provide an exciting glimpse into the incredible work and innovative mindset that drives our system. This impactful report will be shared with all JPA members, stakeholders and library partners and is available at [2023-2024-Annual Report](#).



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To: JPA Governing Board  
From: Anne-Marie Despain, Director  
Carine Risley, Deputy Director  
Date: September 10, 2024  
Meeting: September 16, 2024  
Re: Strategic Planning Report

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## Background

On September 14, 2015, the Library JPA Governing Board approved San Mateo County Libraries' 2015-2020 Strategic Plan. The plan established new vision and mission statements as well as three strategic goals. On February 8, 2021, the Governing Board accepted staff's recommendation to extend the current strategic plan to 2025 due to COVID-19 and the difficulty of community engagement efforts. The current plan has remained remarkably relevant and flexible, which has been instrumental in navigating a highly variable environment and the needs of a constantly changing community.

In FY 2023-24 and again this fiscal year, the Governing Board approved work to develop a new strategic plan as part of our annual budget priorities. The current FY 2024-25 budget approved by the JPA Governing Board on June 17, 2024, included the following priority:

*Complete robust strategic planning work to develop a new vision, mission and strategic goals for the future. Implement our new Strategic Plan to ensure our work responds to the priorities identified through community and stakeholder outreach and engagement efforts.*

Strategic planning efforts began in early 2024 with the selection of InterEthnica, a Bay Area-based business owned and operated by women of color, to partner with us and help lead our planning process. Library staff and InterEthnica have collaboratively developed a nine-month engagement process. We look forward to achieving a plan that not only shapes the future of San Mateo County Libraries, but also helps deepen our understanding and connection to those we serve.

## Discussion

### Strategic Planning Process Update

Library staff and InterEthnica have been hard at work engaging our stakeholders and communities. The approach has been grounded in the importance of understanding the communities in our service area, equitable and inclusive engagement with stakeholders, and ensuring that everyone's voice — both internal and external — plays a pivotal role in shaping the library's future. While our original goal was to complete the plan by July 2024, we have extended the timeline and anticipate having a final plan completed by November 2024.

The San Mateo County Libraries Strategic Planning process consists of five phases:

- Comprehensive Analytical Research and Discovery
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Extensive, Inclusive, and Multicultural Engagement
- Socializing Finding and Strategic Plan Draft Development
- Collaborative Refinement and Final Plan Presentation

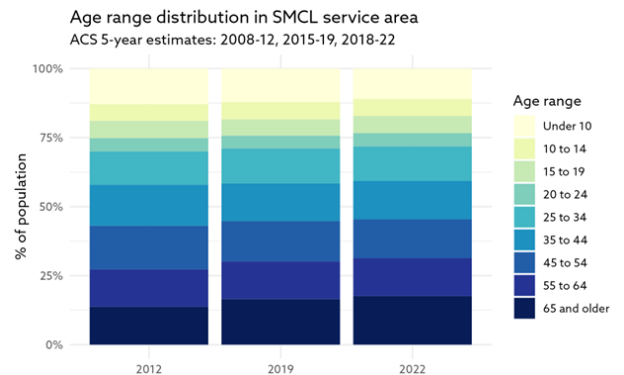
The following important work has now been completed in this process.

Comprehensive Analytical Research and Discovery

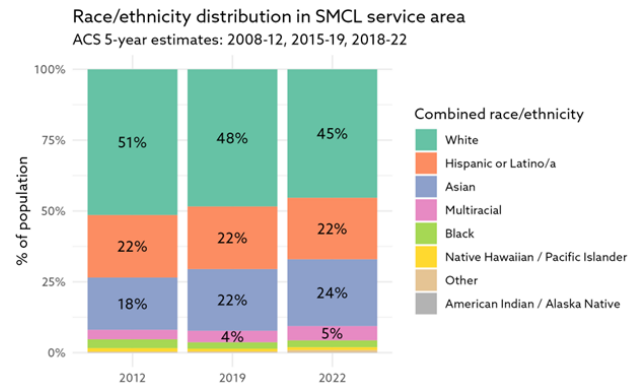
This phase focused on conducting a thorough research and discovery process. We updated our demographic analysis to help identify gaps in reach and generate key insights to current and emerging trends in library science, public service, technology, and community interests. Our organization and public library trends were analyzed to identify opportunities to strengthen current library work or expand thinking into new areas.

The following summarizes key findings from the updated demographic analysis:

- The total population of the service area is estimated at 278,969. The library service area population makes up 37% of the total county population, a proportion that has appeared to remain steady since 2012.
- 18% of the service area population is now 65 or older, up from 16% in 2015-2019. In absolute terms, the population 65 and older has grown about 5% since 2015-19, from 46,700 to 49,035.
- The other notable shift in age distribution also contributes to a service area that is, on average, getting older: children under 10 make up 11% of the service area population as of 2018-22 estimates, down from 12% in 2015-19 and 13% in 2008-12. In other words, the estimate of the under 10 population has changed about -11% since 2015-19, from 34,487 to 30,750.



- Broadly speaking, the overall makeup of the service area by race and ethnicity is similar to that of prior estimates, with the vast majority of residents falling into the White (45%), Hispanic or Latino/a (22%), and Asian (24%) categories. White residents continue to make up the plurality of the service area, and the relative balance of Asian and Hispanic or Latino/a residents has shifted towards Asian in recent years.



- There continue to be clear disparities in household income by race and ethnicity. Households with Asian and non-Hispanic White householders within the service area tend to have higher typical incomes than those with Hispanic or Latinx or Black householders.

The following summarizes key findings from the public library trends and organizational analysis:

- A wave of innovation is evolving the landscape of public libraries, from AI-powered services to creative community engagement strategies.
- Data-informed decision making is key, and libraries need to collect the right data: data that highlights need, opportunity, and/or historical and systemic marginalization.
- Service at the Point of Need - Ensuring library services are infused throughout the community celebrates the wide range of uses a library patron may employ with the library and provides significant opportunity to work in partnership with others.
- Staff in public libraries across the nation report stress and feelings of burnout, a trend that was reflected in internal stakeholder feedback.
- To support staff capacity, measure service/program progress, and assist in prioritization, we should further establish a system for evaluating the outcomes and impact of our various service offerings.
- Staff capacity for transformational work may be freed up by implementing technological innovations and a refreshed approach to providing choices in how community can use services (some that involve staff engagement and others that are automated) thereby empowering community members with options.

### Stakeholder Engagement

In the internal stakeholder phase, we engaged with library staff, volunteers, and the JPA Governing Board and Operations Committee through interviews and workshops. This included discussions with public service staff, leadership, and partners, as well as small group discussions or workshops aimed at understanding internal perspectives and insights.

InterEthnica led engagements with the JPA Operations Committee and Governing Board as well as our Foundation Chair and Friends of the Library Presidents. To gain a thorough perspective, in-depth interviews were conducted with 22 staff members throughout the organization, input was solicited on vision boards at all locations, and 139 staff participated in completing engagement worksheets. Three library staff workgroups were engaged in small group discussions. All staff were invited and encouraged to provide input and participate in the engagement processes.

Ultimately, over 24 engagement opportunities of various types were offered, with more than 150 participants. Stakeholder engagement helped us focus on the core of what should be included in the strategic plan by discussing service gaps, recent patron changes, and goals and aspirations for San Mateo County Libraries.

The following summarizes key themes from the robust stakeholder engagement efforts:

- Community Support and Engagement: Stakeholders emphasized the importance of tailored efforts to meet community needs, expanding partnerships, addressing geographic barriers, engaging under-represented demographics such as teens, Spanish speakers, and young adults, and enhancing communications to engage local communities.
- Technology and Digital Inclusion: Staff highlighted equitable access to technology and digital literacy programs while providing state-of-the-art tech resources and experiences.
- Mental Health and Social Services: Libraries are seen as having evolved to play a crucial role in addressing mental health, homelessness, and social isolation.

- Physical Spaces: Community libraries need modernized and adaptable spaces that can cater to a range of community needs, from quiet study areas to vibrant communal spaces.
- Internal Communications and Decision Making: Staff desire more inclusive decision-making processes that involve all levels of the organization.

### Extensive, Inclusive, and Multicultural Community Engagement

Wide-ranging inclusive engagement activities included community-wide multilingual street interviews, in-library and online surveys; five focus groups that deepened the conversation with Spanish speakers, Chinese (Cantonese) speakers, teens, parents, and seniors, and individual interviews with community leaders representing our diverse communities. At the special joint Operations and Governing Board Meeting members provided guidance on focus group population and ideas for community groups to include in interviews.

In March, we launched a targeted public survey designed by InterEthnica to begin community interviews. Community engagement was gathered in three ways: in-person via street interviews, surveys out in the community, and in-person at libraries with a goal to include feedback of 3,500 community members.

Staff facilitated 1,000 street interviews--these in-depth documented conversations took approximately 20 minutes each and occurred throughout our service area in English, Spanish and Mandarin and Cantonese. Locations throughout the service area included laundromats, food distribution sites, places of worship, and varied businesses and grocery stores such as India Cash and Carry, Cardenas Market, Grocery Outlet, Dollar Tree, Mercado mi Familia, Paletería Los Manguitos, and Chavez Supermarkets. Staff engaged people at a wide variety of events including Dignity on Wheels Laundry, No Strings Attached Breakfast, Cafesito, and Table of Plenty; they also engaged clients at partner agencies including MidPen Housing, Samaritan House, SMC Works Employment Services, and ALAS.

In addition to these efforts, staff engaged the community through surveys both out in our communities and inside our libraries. Partners like the Housing Authority, our local school districts, and senior centers have been key in engaging participants outside of our libraries. Inside our spaces, staff have been gathering the input of a diverse cross-section of library users—from desktop computer users to literacy learners to teenagers and families.

The extended three-month community engagement process helped us more successfully hear from populations underrepresented in current library users and strategize who to include in focus groups and interviews. Thanks to staff's tireless efforts and dedication to the community, we successfully met our ambitious participation goal and engaged more than 3,500 community members.

The following summarizes key findings from a combination of all community surveys and interviews:

- 11% of respondents have a household income of \$75,000 or less.
- 69% percent of respondents, regardless of income level, indicated they experience one or more of the following:

- Actively seek additional work to make ends meet.
- Live paycheck to paycheck.
- Cannot afford an emergency expense right now.
- Can pay their bills for some months and not others.
- Will have to move if their rent is raised.
- Community members expressed that existing free community spaces that offer free internet and places to study, work or use the internet are “excellent.”
- Respondents indicated that what would be most helpful for community members to feel more confident using technology would be free classes on how to use computers, smartphones, tablets, and the internet.
- 87% of respondents are interested in cultural events.
- More than 50% of respondents are interested in building community at local events or meetups.
- 55% of respondents go to the library that is closest to them, while 20% go to the library that has the resources or programs they want to participate in.
- 31% of respondents prefer library communication through email communication, 28% social media, 10% in person at the library, 10% text messages and 10% mail.
- 11% of respondents have not used any in-person library services in the last two years and 23% have not used any online library services in the last two years.
- 41% of respondents stated something prevents them from using the library.
- Preference for using libraries in person or online shows that 40% prefer in person, 32% online, and 28% have no preference. There is variance in these preferences across age groups with teens having a stronger preference for online services and seniors for in-person services.
- Over 98% of respondents have a favorable opinion of San Mateo County Libraries.

This summer has also been dedicated to InterEthnica’s focus group and community stakeholder interview engagements. Focus group sessions elicited deep insights and perspectives from Spanish and Chinese-speaking community members, seniors, teens, and parents. The goal of the focus groups was to ensure that populations underrepresented in current library users, street interviews, and surveys had an opportunity to provide their feedback.

The following summarizes key findings from the focus groups:

- Participants across all groups consistently envision the library as transcending its traditional book role into a multi-functional community space.
- Across all demographics, participants underscored the importance of library spaces that can support a diversity of needs.
- The Spanish speaking focus group emphasized the importance of communicating in multiple languages and personalized assistance.
- Highlights from the parent focus group included the need for multilingual support, educational services, and a hub that brings together community resources.
- Insights from Chinese participants included the desire for culturally sensitive approaches and the importance of welcoming library environments that reflect their culture.
- Teens envisioned our libraries as creative places to explore personal interests and support academic goals.
- Seniors shared a desire for more senior-tailored offerings that cater to supporting them in their daily lives and expand their social connections.

To better understand the perspectives of local leaders, stakeholder interview opportunities were extended to leaders across such areas as non-profits, education, faith-based organizations, and more. Organizations interviewed included: Catholic Charities, Nuestra Casa, Samaritan House, A TEAM Homeschool Community, Boys and Girls Club, St. Francis Church, Mental Health Association of San Mateo County, Casa Circulo Cultural, Unitedly, Renaissance, Villages of San Mateo County, Local Collab for Literacy, Gilead, Taylor Middle School PTA, and Puente.

The following summarizes key findings from the stakeholder interviews:

- Several interviewees highlighted a growing demand for mental wellness services, particularly within the Latinx, Chinese and LGBTQ+ communities.
- Many organizations interviewed appreciate the diverse programs and safe environments that we provide.
- The theme of awareness and communication emerged, with many interviewees highlighting that community members are often unaware of the services by libraries, as well as their own organizations; organizations are looking for partnership opportunities with the library to spread awareness about organizational services for the community and to support the Library in sharing information about library services to their communities.
- Cultural and socioeconomic factors were identified as a factor in impacting library use.
- There was strong consensus among interviewees on the potential for libraries to expand partnerships with local organizations.

#### Socializing Findings and Strategic Plan Draft Development

Initial analysis of survey response patterns and additional demographic considerations is complete. Analysis of insights and data collection will support the process of drafting a plan. Based on the insights and data collected, we are developing a comprehensive San Mateo County Libraries strategic plan, aligning with the identified needs and aspirations of the community and stakeholders, as well as taking into consideration library and larger community trends.

Key activities currently in progress include:

- Engagement Findings and Q&A session presented by InterEthnica to library staff.
- Library managers lead more than 20 staff meetings to provide an update on the strategic planning process, discuss key findings, and seek further input into the mission creation process.
- Engagement Findings presented by InterEthnica to Library JPA Operations Committee and Governing Board.
- InterEthnica will lead collaborative work and recommend adaptations to the mission and vision statements and leadership will workshop strategic goals based on final community analysis including comparisons to previous work, input from stakeholders, and key findings from all phases of the strategic planning process.
- All staff will engage in sharing library mission stories and exploring a draft strategic plan at our annual Staff Development Day.

### Collaborative Refinement and Final Plan Presentation

This exciting last phase involves refining the strategic plan through collaborative feedback from library stakeholders, ensuring the plan's relevance and effectiveness, and building buy-in for the final plan. Staff will formally present the completed strategic plan for approval to the Operations Committee and Governing Board at upcoming Library JPA meetings in October and November.

### **Fiscal Impact**

There is no fiscal impact associated with accepting this report.

### **Recommendation**

Recommend JPA Governing Board accept the Strategic Planning Report. Operations Committee members present at the September 10, 2024 meeting concurred with this recommendation.

### **Attachment**

InterEthnica Strategic Plan Engagement Findings

# Strategic Plan Engagement Findings

Presented by InterEthnica

JPA Governing Board Meeting September 16, 2024



## Engagement Goals

What were our goals?

**Engage  
1000s of  
residents**

Hear from diverse  
demographics

Hear from regular library  
users

Reach across San Mateo  
County geography

Hear from residents who do  
not use libraries

Gather quantitative &  
qualitative data

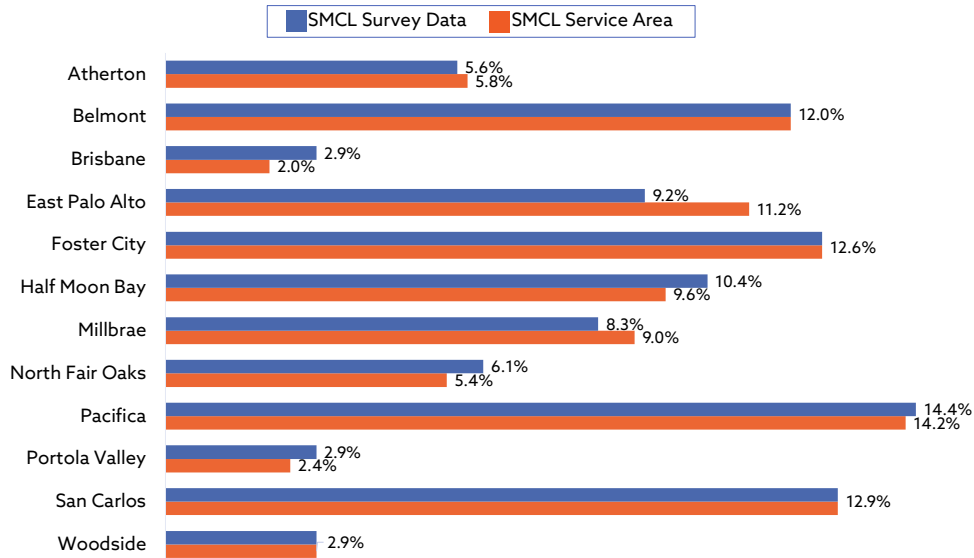
Engage in direct feedback

**3,500 Street  
Interviews &  
Online Surveys**

**5 Focus Groups  
~20 Interviews**

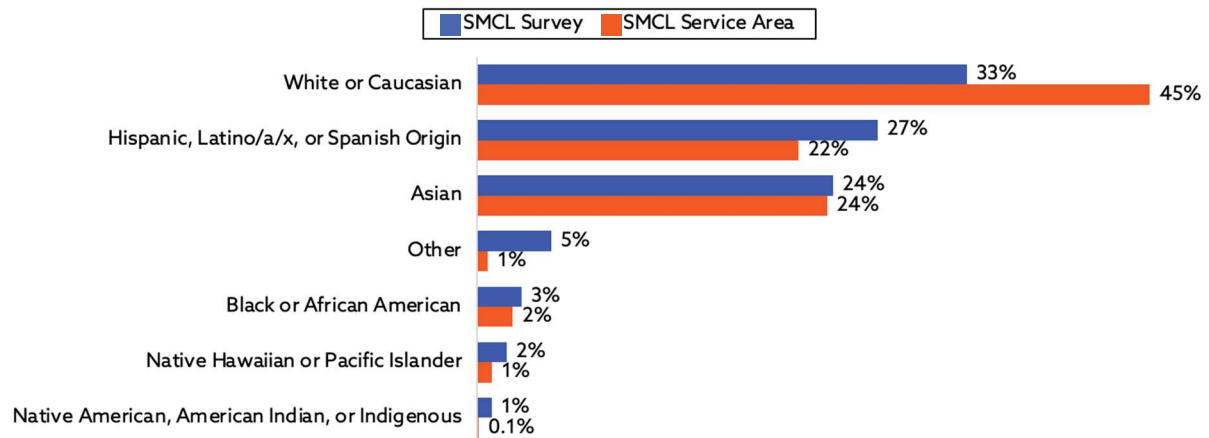
**24 Staff Engagement Opportunities**

## Demographics: Community Reach



3

## Demographics: Race/Ethnicity



Multiple select question 4

## Demographics: Language

**39%** of respondents speak another language

**21%** of respondents speak Spanish

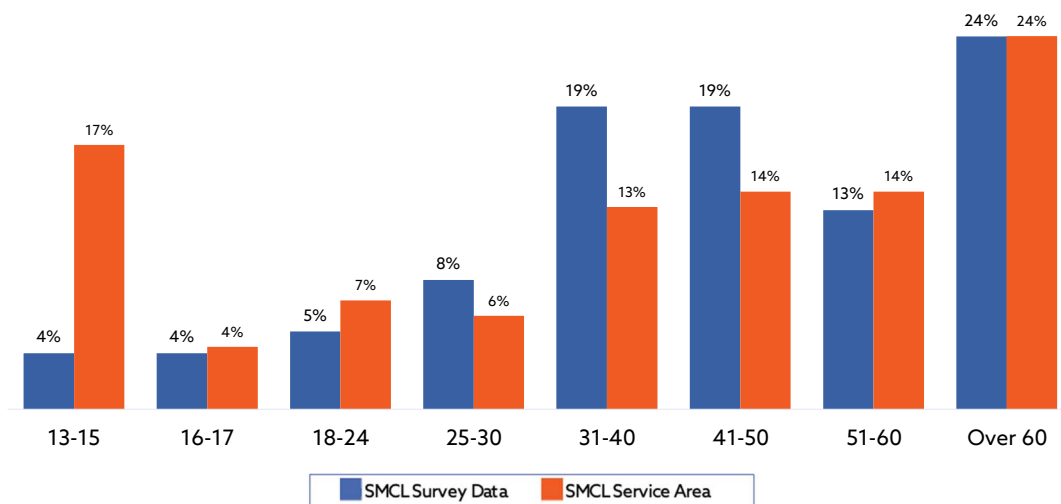
**18%** of respondents speak a language other than Spanish or English (Chinese, Asian Pacific Island Languages, and Russian)

In the last SMCL survey in 2020, **12%** of respondents were Spanish-speakers compared to this survey, with **21%** Spanish-speaking respondents.

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## Demographics: Age

### Age



6

## Demographics: Income

**11%** of respondents have a household income of \$75,000 or less

**69%** of respondents, regardless of income level, indicated they experience one or more of the following:

- actively seek additional work to make ends meet
- live paycheck to paycheck
- cannot afford an emergency expense right now
- can pay their bills for some months and not others
- will have to move if their rent is raised

7

## Key Findings

8

## Spaces: Community Spaces

What could a free community space provide?

Workshops, Classes,  
Programs (499  
comments)

Cultural Inclusivity  
(109 comments)

Safety & Security  
(79 comments)

Physical Health  
(79 comments)

Tools (printers,  
sewing machines,  
etc.)  
(77 comments)

Food, meals, cafés  
(63 comments)

*This question did not mention the library.*

*"cultural, history  
classes, and  
opportunities to  
connect with and  
learn from members  
of the community."*

*"...cultural arts  
festivals of many  
different cultures  
would be  
TREMENDOUSLY cool  
and exciting."*

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## Spaces: Envisioning the Perfect Library

**Teens:** a "cozy living room" atmosphere for relaxation and socializing

**Parents of Children Ages 0-13:** a family-oriented library with child-friendly areas and adult spaces

**Seniors:** a "warm and welcoming community hub" for social activities and skill development

**Spanish-Speakers:** a culturally-inclusive library that feels like home

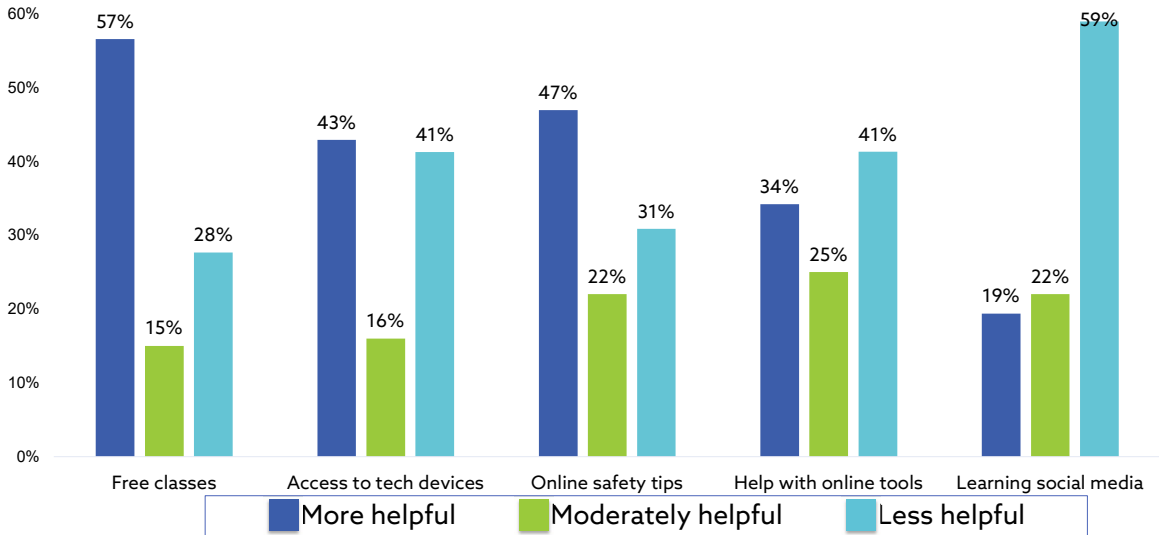
**Chinese-Speakers:** a multi-functional community hub with recreational facilities

*"...arriving when  
you get to your  
mom's house—  
you feel safe,  
you feel  
welcome"*

10

## Technology

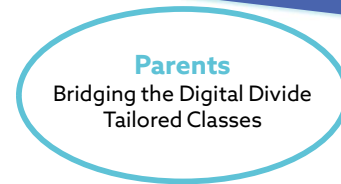
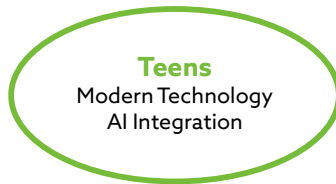
What would help community members feel more confident using technology?



11

## Technology

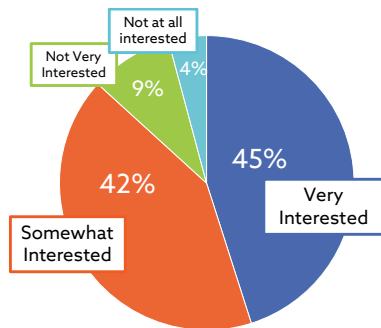
*"SMCL is doing a good job of closing the digital divide by providing access to technology for diverse groups, from children to newcomers."*



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## Resources: Cultural Events

How interested is the community in participating and attending cultural events that feature different ethnic heritages?

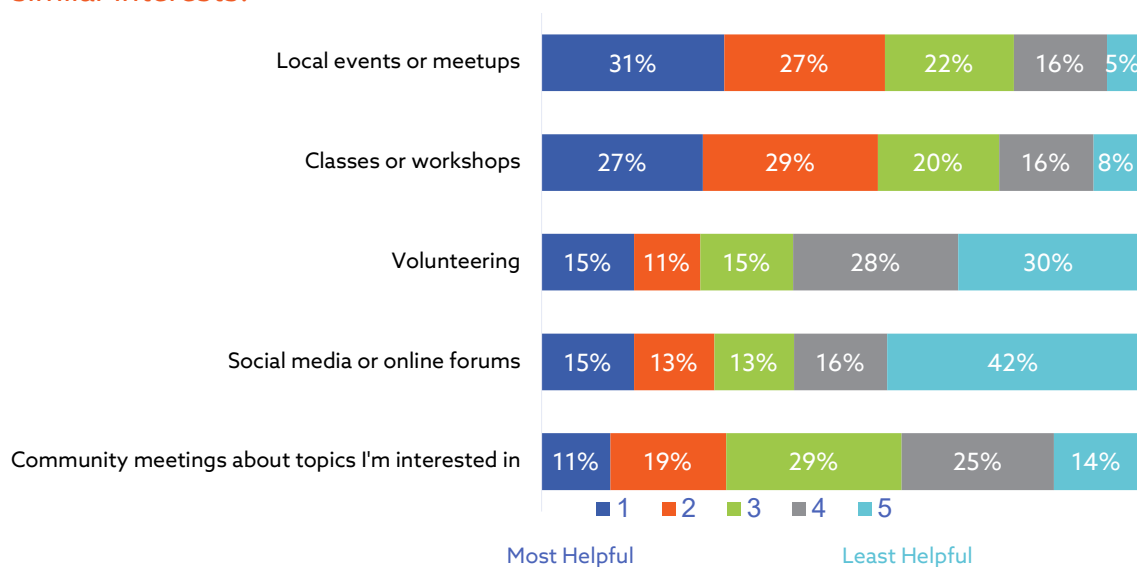


**87%** of respondents are interested in cultural events.

*" Each culture highlights its own unique traditions, like Mexico's Day of the Dead...Guatemala has a different event entirely...events can represent all these diverse cultures."*

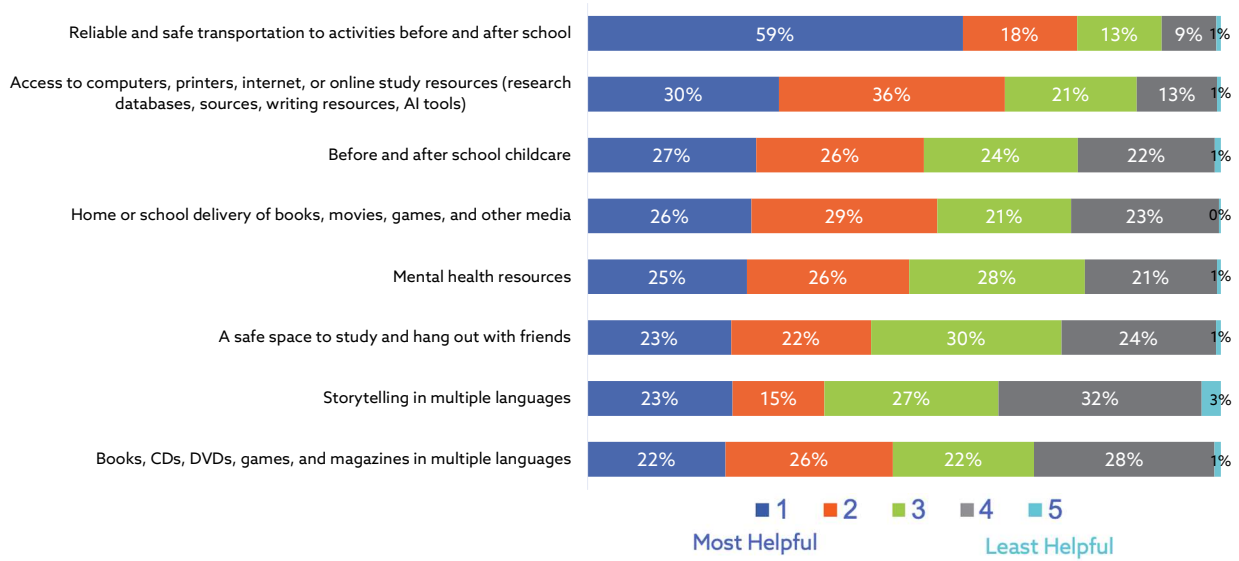
## Resources: Building Community

How would community members like to connect with or meet new people with similar interests?



## Resources: Services for Youth

### What resources would be the most helpful for youth?



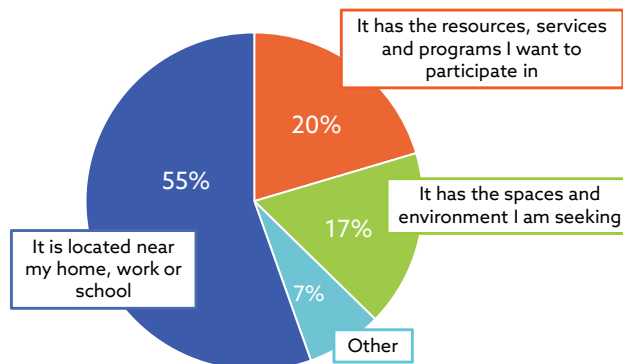
15

## Use: Choosing which Library to Visit

### What helps patrons decide which libraries they will go to?

**55%** of respondents go to the library that is closest to them.

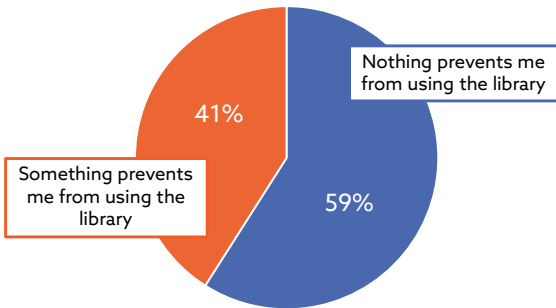
**20%** go to the library that has the resources and programs they want to participate in.



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## Barriers: Are respondents experiencing barriers to library use?

**59%** of respondents stated they do not experience barriers in using the library.



Of those who are experiencing barriers:

**30%** Library resources are not available at the times they need them.

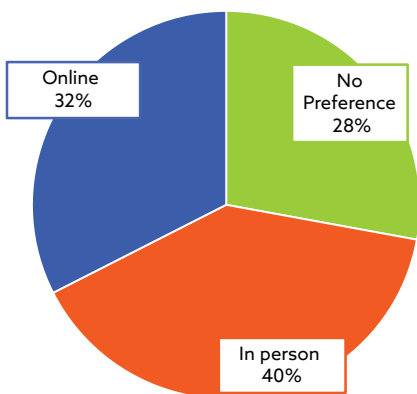
**28%** Have never heard of these resources

**14%** Difficult/impossible to travel to the library

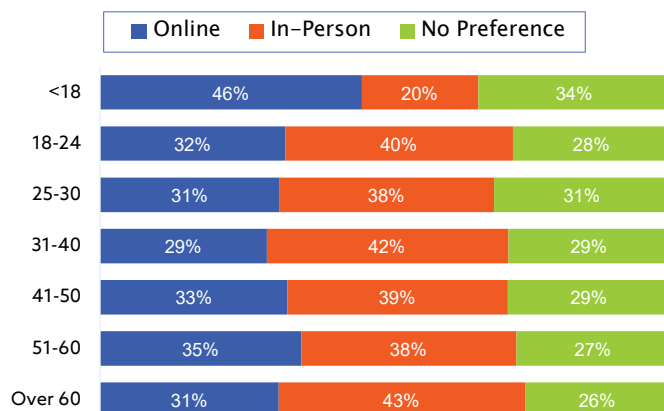
**10%** Services I need are not in my language

## Preferences: Using Libraries In-Person vs. Online

### Overall



### By Age



**Favorability**

**98%** of respondents have a favorable opinion of San Mateo County Libraries.

**Thank you**



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To: JPA Governing Board  
From: Anne-Marie Despain, Director of Library Services  
Lindsey Freeland, Financial Services Manager  
Date: September 10, 2024  
Meeting: September 16, 2024  
Re: Proposed Uses of Restricted Library Funds

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne-Marie Despain".

## Background

Section VI. D. of the San Mateo County Library JPA (Library JPA) Agreement states the following:

- 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Agreement, for each fiscal year the Library service revenue allocated to libraries in each member city shall not be less than the estimated library property tax revenue attributable to property located in that city. Subject to paragraph 2, below, in the event that the allocated library service revenue for a member city exceeds the amount required to maintain the minimum library service for that member, such excess funds shall, after deduction of any activities approved by the Governing Board for library related expenditures within that city, be restricted and held by the JPA for library related activities within that member city including but are not limited to, facility maintenance, facility remodeling or expansion, increased service hours, or increased material and equipment purchases, as mutually agreed by the Library JPA and the city council of that member city.*
- 2. In the fiscal year following the completion and opening of the new Atherton Library, excess funds, after deduction of any activities approved by the Governing Board for library related expenditures within a member city, shall be split 50%-50% between the Library JPA and the member city to which those excess funds are attributable.*

In accordance with this provision and as approved by the Library JPA Governing Board, at the end of each fiscal year, Library property tax funds in excess of the amount required to operate a community library, are distributed and held by the Library JPA in separate trust funds.

## Discussion

For FY 2023-24, amounts totaling \$3,749,487 were set aside in Library trust accounts: \$1,791,379 in the Atherton Library Trust Fund; \$1,043,882 in the San Carlos Library Trust Fund; and \$914,226 in the Woodside Library Trust Fund.

Total restricted Library property taxes currently held in trust accounts by the Library JPA and members total \$14,545,764.

Members that qualify and are interested in using restricted Library funds to support community library related activities in the current fiscal year must provide the proposed use of library funds to the Library JPA and obtain Governing Board approval.

Proposed uses of restricted Library JPA Funds in FY 2024-25 total \$2,688,603. Member proposals for discussion and approval include:

Atherton Library

Atherton Library Trust Funds as of June 30, 2024 total \$2,408,744 (\$246,645 held by the Town of Atherton and \$2,162,099 held by the Library). The Town of Atherton proposes to utilize restricted Library JPA funds in an amount estimated at \$1,005,902 as detailed below:

| Type/Category                   | Description  | Proposed Use<br>FY 2024-25 |
|---------------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Facility Repair and Maintenance | Maintenance, repairs, vector control, locks, and landscaping | 61,902                     |
| Building Maintenance Staff      | Building maintenance manager                                 | 50,000                     |
| Contract Management             | Contract for building services maintenance                   | 19,000                     |
| Custodial Services              | Contract janitorial services                                 | 75,000                     |
| Utilities                       | Electricity and water  | 145,000                    |
| Facility Improvements           | Power resiliency, art display and insurance                  | 127,000                    |
| Children's Nature Garden        | Construction and project management                          | 528,000                    |
| Total Proposed Expenditures     |  | \$1,005,902                |

If approved, funds in this amount will be retained in the Atherton Library Trust. Remaining funds of approximately \$1,156,197 will be returned to the Library JPA to pay back the one-time advancement to the Town of Atherton, resulting in a remaining balance of \$1,713.

Foster City Library

Foster City Library Trust Funds as of June 30, 2024 total \$193,177. In addition, \$110,160 in excess funds are held by the Library JPA to support building a new makerspace. The City of Foster City proposes to utilize restricted Library JPA funds in an amount estimated at \$40,700 as detailed below:

| Type/Category               | Description  | Proposed Use<br>FY 2024-25 |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Facility Maintenance        | Updating three curb ramps to current ADA standards | 40,700                     |
| Total Proposed Expenditures |  | \$40,700                   |

Portola Valley Library

Portola Valley Library Trust Funds as of June 30, 2024 total \$1,377,806 (\$28,792 held by the Town of Portola Valley and \$1,349,014 held by the Library JPA). The Town of Portola Valley proposes to utilize restricted Library JPA funds in an amount estimated at \$86,251 as detailed below:

| Type/Category                   | Description                    | Proposed Use<br>FY 2024-25 |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Facility Repair and Maintenance | Maintenance and repairs        | 20,500                     |
| Custodial Services              | Contract janitorial services   | 15,000                     |
| Utilities                       | Electricity, gas, water, sewer | 37,628                     |
| Overhead Allocation             | Annual Town staff support      | 13,123                     |
| Total Proposed Expenditures     |                                | \$86,251                   |

San Carlos Library

San Carlos Library Trust Funds as of June 30, 2024 total \$4,205,160 (\$1,575,939 held by the City of San Carlos and \$2,629,221 held by the Library JPA). The City of San Carlos proposes to utilize restricted Library JPA funds in an amount estimated at \$1,377,300 as detailed below:

| Type/Category               | Description                                      | Proposed Use<br>FY 2024-25 |
|-----------------------------|--|----------------------------|
| Facility Upgrades           | Second Floor Library Remodel/<br>Makerspace Area | 252,300                    |
|                             | Bathroom and kitchen upgrades                    | 500,000                    |
|                             | Roof Upgrade for Solar Panels                    | 250,000                    |
|                             | Parking Garage Cameras                           | 375,000                    |
| Total Proposed Expenditures |  | \$1,377,300                |

Woodside Library

Woodside Library Trust Funds as of June 30, 2024, total \$6,360,878, (\$43,024 held by the Town of Woodside and \$6,317,854 held by the Library JPA). The Town of Woodside proposes to utilize restricted Library JPA funds in an amount estimated at \$178,450 as detailed below:

| Type/Category               | Description   | Proposed Use<br>FY 2024-25 |
|-----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Utilities                   | Water, power, and sewer                             | 29,000                     |
| Contract Services           | Janitorial services and landscaping                 | 40,000                     |
| Facility Improvements       | Updates to the buildings and grounds                | 20,000                     |
| Overhead Allocation         | Town staff support, insurance, and<br>other support | 89,450                     |
| Total Proposed Expenditures |   | \$178,450                  |

The 50:50 split provision first applied to new excess funds identified at the end of FY 2022-23, resulting in \$130,585 being subjected to the provision. At the September 12, 2023 Operations Committee meeting, members recommended the formation of a subcommittee to review and develop processes for implementing the new provision. At the September 10, 2024 Operations Committee meeting the following implementation recommendations were approved.

- Establish a trust fund for Library JPA Excess Funds resulting from the 50:50 provision, which will provide an easy way to separate and track these funds.
- Use actuals or a contractual obligation for approved activities before the split. This will ensure the 50:50 provision is calculated on uses that occurred during the fiscal year for which they were approved.
- Disallow proposed uses for restricted library reserves, approved uses should be for actual expenditures and activities.
- Disallow proposed uses in future fiscal years. If a proposed use is not completed during the fiscal year for which it is approved, members must bring back the item for approval as a proposed use the next fiscal year.

### **Fiscal Impact**

Proposed uses of restricted Library JPA Funds in FY 2024-25 total \$2,688,603. There are sufficient restricted Library JPA funds available to cover these requests.

### **Recommendation**

Recommend JPA Governing Board approve the proposed uses of restricted Library Funds in FY 2024-25. Operations Committee members present at the September 10, 2024 meeting concurred with this recommendation.



To: JPA Governing Board  
 From: Anne-Marie Despain, Director of Library Services  
 Lindsey Freeland, Financial Services Manager  
 Date: September 10, 2024  
 Meeting: September 16, 2024  
 Re: Approval of the Final FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget

### Background

The San Mateo County Library JPA Budget serves as the annual financial plan, an operations guide, and a communications tool. On June 17, 2024, the FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget was approved by the JPA Governing Board.

The table below outlines activities associated with the budget process:

| Budget Process Key Dates |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| December                 | Budget Development Begins   |
| February                 | Mid-Year Report is Submitted to the Library JPA Governing Board     |
| May                      | Recommended Budget is Submitted to the Library JPA Governing Board  |
| June                     | Recommended Budget is Approved by the Library JPA Governing Board   |
| September                | Final Adopted Budget is Approved by the Library JPA Governing Board |
| September                | Final Adopted Budget is Approved by the County Board of Supervisors |

The proposed FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget includes final adjustments to distribute resources and support our key priorities this year, which are to:

- Complete robust strategic planning work to develop a new vision, mission and strategic goals for the future. Implement our new Strategic Plan to ensure our work responds to the priorities identified through community and stakeholder outreach and engagement efforts.
- Support the well-being and growth of our library champions and amplify their talents.
- Reach more community members through intentional outreach and marketing efforts.
- Elevate adult and youth literacy efforts and develop responsive programs to empower and cultivate a community of learners.

- Increase access to technology and hands-on learning in our innovative makerspaces and makermobile to advance digital equity.
- Create and update libraries to include vibrant, welcoming spaces that inspire creativity, collaboration, and exploration.
- Prioritize resiliency and sustainability in our facilities and operations to bolster our ability to provide essential services during emergencies.

## Discussion

The FY 2024-25 Recommended Budget approved by the JPA Governing Board on June 17 and implemented on July 1 totaled \$78,782,567. Based on fiscal year-end closing activities and updated information, the proposed FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget now totals \$89,834,096. Below are the most significant changes in the FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget:

### Sources:

- Taxes (\$40,696,327 to \$41,084,616): There is an increase of \$388,289 due to rollover of Measure K funds so a claim can be processed in the new fiscal year.
- Intergovernmental Revenue (\$688,510 to \$768,510): There is an increase of \$80,000 for a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant from the State Library to implement programming to support sustainability, tree walks, and urban gardening.
- Fund Balance (\$36,734,556 to \$47,309,462): Fund Balance reflects the carry forward of reserves, unanticipated revenues, and unspent appropriations at the close of the fiscal year. After year-end close, Fund Balance is increased by \$10,574,906. The increase is partly due to revenues exceeding budgeted amounts, including Excess ERAF and Interest Earned. Unspent appropriations attributable to project delays and staffing vacancies also contributed to additional Fund Balance.

### Requirements

- Salaries and Benefits (\$26,501,129 to \$26,619,890): There is an increase of \$118,761 due to health benefits cost increases and the reclassification of two vacant positions to better support operational needs.
- Services and Supplies (\$20,626,758 to \$21,131,660): There is an increase of \$504,902 primarily due to budgeting rollover of unspent Friends and other donation funds from prior years.
- Other Charges (\$2,908,810 to \$3,069,788): There is an increase of \$160,978 due to rolling over State Library grants funds of \$106,174 for the North Fair Oaks restroom project to be transferred to the County and other increases to County service charges.
- Reserves (\$27,064,606 to \$37,330,848): There is an increase of \$10,266,242 which represents the additional rollover from FY 2023-24 Fund Balance that is not allocated to

one-time expenditures. Operating Reserves total \$5,100,464 and meet the JPA Fund Balance policy of setting aside 15% of Net Appropriations, net one-time expenditures. Capital Reserves total \$32,230,384. Capital Reserves are assigned to anticipated projects that are financially significant. Currently, \$16.3 million are assigned, including \$7 million for furniture, fixtures, and equipment (FF&E) for future new libraries in East Palo Alto (\$2.5 million), North Fair Oaks (\$1.5 million), and Pacifica (\$3 million). Future refinement of these assignments may occur to ensure sound fiscal management and responsiveness to evolving service needs.

Key initiatives for FY 2024-25 include upgrading the technology in our library conference and small meeting rooms; expanding adult literacy services, programs, and outreach; purchasing assets to enhance outreach efforts, including two additional library outposts and five outreach vehicles; piloting privacy pods in libraries; updating furniture and shelving in our facilities and making strategic investments to bolster building resiliency; enhancing services for older adults; and designing new makerspaces.

Planning efforts are underway to finalize plans for several major projects, including procuring a new bookmobile, adding a children's garden at Atherton, creating new makerspaces at San Carlos, Foster City and Belmont, and the addition of library outposts. When plans are finalized, any costs anticipated for FY 2024-25 not included in the FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget will be brought back to the Library JPA for consideration and approval at a future meeting.

Staff appreciate the leadership and guidance provided by both the JPA Operations Committee and Governing Board in pursuing high quality, innovative library services and looks forward to implementing the activities funded in the FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget.

Looking ahead to FY 2025-26, we are excited to bring budget proposals to augment staffing and implement new programs and initiatives in line with our new Strategic Plan.

### **Fiscal Impact**

The proposed Adopted Budget for FY 2024-25 is balanced and totals \$89,834,096. Changes from the Recommended Budget approved in June to the proposed Adopted Budget are described above and in the attached FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget Summary.

### **Recommendation**

Recommend JPA Governing Board approve the Final FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget. Operations Committee members present at the September 10, 2024 meeting concurred with this recommendation.

### **Attachment**

FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget Summary

## San Mateo County Libraries

## FY 2024-25 Adopted Budget Summary

|                                 | FY 2023-24<br>Actuals | FY 2024-25<br>Recommended | FY 2024-25<br>Adjustments | FY 2024-25<br>Adopted |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Sources</b>                  |                       |                           |                           |                       |
| 1000 Taxes                      | 45,429,636            | 40,696,327                | 388,289                   | 41,084,616            |
| 1500 Use of Money and Property  | 1,618,877             | 371,216                   | -                         | 371,216               |
| 1600 Intergovernmental Revenues | 2,071,370             | 688,510                   | 80,000                    | 768,510               |
| 2000 Charges for Services       | 14,395                | -                         | -                         | -                     |
| 2500 Interfund Revenue          | 270,515               | 286,958                   | 8,334                     | 295,292               |
| 2600 Miscellaneous Revenue      | 802,597               | 5,000                     | -                         | 5,000                 |
| <b>Total Revenue</b>            | <b>50,207,391</b>     | <b>42,048,011</b>         | <b>476,623</b>            | <b>42,524,634</b>     |
| 3333 Fund Balance               | 42,640,445            | 36,734,556                | 10,574,906                | 47,309,462            |
| <b>TOTAL SOURCES</b>            | <b>92,847,836</b>     | <b>78,782,567</b>         | <b>11,051,529</b>         | <b>89,834,096</b>     |
| <b>Requirements</b>             |                       |                           |                           |                       |
| 4000 Salaries and Benefits      | 23,298,014            | 26,501,129                | 118,761                   | 26,619,890            |
| 5000 Services and Supplies      | 17,213,432            | 20,626,758                | 504,902                   | 21,131,660            |
| 6000 Other Charges              | 4,359,475             | 2,908,810                 | 160,978                   | 3,069,788             |
| 7000 Fixed Assets               | 634,235               | 1,645,557                 | -                         | 1,645,557             |
| 7500 Other Financing Uses       | 33,218                | 35,707                    | 646                       | 36,353                |
| <b>Gross Appropriations</b>     | <b>45,538,373</b>     | <b>51,717,961</b>         | <b>785,287</b>            | <b>52,503,248</b>     |
| 8000 Intrafund Transfers        | -                     | -                         | -                         | -                     |
| <b>Net Appropriations</b>       | <b>45,538,373</b>     | <b>51,717,961</b>         | <b>785,287</b>            | <b>52,503,248</b>     |
| 8500 Operating Reserves         | 4,709,726             | 5,072,673                 | 27,791                    | 5,100,464             |
| 8700 Capital Reserves           | 42,599,737            | 21,991,933                | 10,238,451                | 32,230,384            |
| <b>Total Reserves</b>           | <b>47,309,463</b>     | <b>27,064,606</b>         | <b>10,266,242</b>         | <b>37,330,848</b>     |
| <b>TOTAL REQUIREMENTS</b>       | <b>92,847,836</b>     | <b>78,782,567</b>         | <b>11,051,529</b>         | <b>89,834,096</b>     |