



CLIMATE EMERGENCY MOBILIZATION OFFICE CHIEF HEAT OFFICER



June 5, 2024

TO: The Honorable Katy Yaroslavsky, Chair
The Honorable Tim McOsker, Vice Chair
The Honorable Bob Blumenfeld, Member
The Honorable Kevin De Leon, Member
The Honorable Nithya Raman, Member
The Honorable Members of the Energy and Environment Committee

c/o Eric Villanueva, Legislative Assistant
Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

SUBJECT: **Board of Public Works, Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO) and Chief Heat Officer Report relative to Council File No. 23-1380, relative to deploying and coordinating cooling facilities in the City, including the City's cooling centers at public libraries, recreation centers and facilities, and senior and adult centers, to operate as cooling and resilience centers, and related matters.**

BACKGROUND

Council File (CF) No. 23-1380¹: On April 5, 2024, the City Council adopted the Energy and Environment Committee Report² from CF 23-1380 (as amended March 8, 2024 by Blumenfeld-Rodriguez, Motion 5A³) relative to deploying and coordinating cooling facilities in the City, including the City's cooling centers at public libraries, recreation centers and facilities, and senior and adult centers, to operate as cooling and resilience centers, and related matters.

The Energy and Environment Committee Report instructed the Climate Emergency Management Office (CEMO), with the assistance of the Department of Recreation and Parks, Library Department, Department of Aging, Department on Disability, Emergency Management Department, Chief Legislative Analyst (CLA), and the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), to report with recommendations, including associated costs, for more effectively deploying and coordinating cooling facilities in the City, including the City's cooling centers at public libraries, recreation centers and facilities, and senior and adult centers, to operate as cooling and resilience centers. This item was amended by Council before approval to include the General Services Department and the Bureau of Engineering in assisting the Climate Emergency Management Office with their report on cooling facilities.

¹ See [Council File \(CF\) No. 23-1380](#) for additional information on this matter.

² CF 23-1380: [Energy and Environment Committee Report \(March 8, 2024\)](#).

³ CF 23-1380: [Amending Motion 5A, Blumenfeld-Rodriguez \(April 3, 2024\)](#).

RECOMMENDATION

City of LA Pilot for Libraries as Augmented Cooling Centers for 2024 Heat Season

Los Angeles' primary and most dangerous climate hazard is **Extreme Heat**. The Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO) in the Board of Public Works (BPW), along with the support of the Emergency Management Department (EMD) and Los Angeles Public Libraries (LAPL), proposes a pilot that prioritizes five (5) libraries with additional cooling services and resources in targeted areas of greatest public health risk during Extreme Heat events. CEMO prioritized these sites using our [CEMO Heat Risk Maps](#), UCLA Heat Maps, The Measure of Access, Disparity and Equity (MADE), also known as the City of Los Angeles' Equity Tool, and the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA)'s CalEnviroScreen 4.0, then analyzed which libraries were located in some of the highest heat risk areas with dense populations. It has been determined that most of us need only a few hours of respite from extreme heat for our bodies to recover and avoid injury, as such, this pilot does not include 24-hour shelters, which would be necessary for wildfires or other forms of disasters that make it impossible to return home. Even a few hours extra during a heat wave in a nearby public facility can make all the difference for most Angelenos.

Five (5) LAPL sites were selected and identified for this initiative. CEMO recommendations are based on the potential for the City library sites to reduce public health risk from heat and provide support as resilience hubs/cooling centers. The five pilot sites will be activated under the same criteria as current augmented cooling centers as identified within the City of Los Angeles Adverse Weather Annex. The threshold for activation will be a National Weather Service (NWS) issued Excessive Heat Warning. We intend to measure excess visitors during heat waves, augment operation hours on Sundays (for the selected non-Regional libraries in the pilot), distribute water and multilingual heat safety outreach materials, and offer heat awareness workshops through our multilingual librarians.

This pilot will also help to convey that all libraries serve as a refuge from extreme heat and that internal systems of communications are critical to harm reduction during heat waves. The role of public libraries in public health is important and growing across the nation: from helping community members register for Affordable Healthcare Act insurance and hosting educational programming on physical, mental, and behavioral health issues, to serving as support locations to social workers providing more direct services.⁴

Libraries have recently served an additional role in public health: functioning as cooling or warming centers when extreme and dangerous temperatures occur within a region, which is happening more frequently. Our City of Los Angeles libraries have been performing many of these functions for years, yet our most impacted communities still are not aware of how libraries can provide refuge from the heat, with enhanced cooling, hydration stations, and other valuable resources and activities. Our LAPL General Manager John Szabo and EMD General Manager Carol Parks have graciously supported the concept of this pilot, and it is with their support and collaboration that CEMO proposes the following five (5) libraries under this pilot to learn from and to provide for an informed plan of expansion in future years.

⁴ [U.S. Public Libraries Serve as Cooling Centers in Extreme Weather](#)

Five (5) Recommended Pilot Libraries to Serve as Augmented Cooling Centers during Extreme Heat Activation

Please note: All will be open on Sundays 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm for cooling services when an Excessive Heat Warning is issued. The two augmented Non-Regional Libraries of Chinatown and Pacoima will open their community rooms only for cooling services, not for regular Library branch services.

- 1) **[West Valley REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY \(CD 3\)](#)**
19036 Vanowen Street, Reseda, CA 91335
High Heat Risk, Very High Priority (MADE)
- 2) **[Exposition Park - Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY \(CD 8\)](#)**
3900 S. Western Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90062
Med-High Heat Risk, High Priority (MADE)
- 3) **[San Pedro REGIONAL BRANCH LIBRARY \(CD 15\)](#)**
931 S. Gaffey Street, San Pedro, CA 90731
High Heat Risk, Very High Priority (MADE)
- 4) **[Pacoima Branch Library \(CD 7\)](#)**
13605 Van Nuys Boulevard, Pacoima, CA 91331
High Heat Risk, High Priority (MADE)
- 5) **[Chinatown Branch Library \(CD 1\)](#)**
639 N. Hill Street, Los Angeles, CA 90012
Medium Heat Risk, Very High Priority (MADE) *(also included due to the large concentration of Single Room Occupancy (SRO) residents that rely on the library for cooling who are seniors, a High Heat Risk population as per the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC⁵))*

Purpose: This pilot will help the City to improve cooling and heat safety outreach and services and measure how we reduce heat risks, such as excess heat caused deaths and emergency room visits in the regions served by the five (5) target public libraries. Four (4) of the libraries have been selected through their Extreme Heat Equity scores, our City's Equity Index (MADE) and represent the areas of highest injury and death during heat waves in Los Angeles. The fifth library, Chinatown, although rated at Medium Heat Risk, was selected because we know that the many seniors who live in SRO housing without AC in Chinatown rely on the City's public library to keep cool, especially during heat season. Also, this library is located at a geographic midpoint between other library locations in the City, and has a recently renovated community room space. Chinatown (and Pacoima) do not regularly operate on Sundays, but would be opened for cooling services for the same Sunday hours as Regional Libraries during Extreme Heat activation periods, if this project is approved.

Our overarching goal is to learn from this pilot while protecting Angelenos from hospitalizations, preventable heat related deaths, and correlated cost burdens (both to individuals and to hospitals), along with averting preventable mortality by increasing heat safety resources in

⁵ [CDC About Heat and Your Health](#)

areas of greater vulnerability, so that in future years, we can consider additional libraries in heat-vulnerable areas of the City of LA to be open augmented hours on Sundays and Holidays during heat waves.

Methodology: In order to select the five (5) target libraries for this pilot initiative, LAPL site locations were evaluated for their current equity score, along with extreme heat, public health, and environmental risk criteria.

First, the site locations were evaluated based on the [City of LA's Equity Index and Tool - Measure of Access, Disparity, and Equity \(MADE\)](#). The Equity Index supports the identification of communities that should be prioritized for investment so all Angelenos can thrive, assessing nine indicators across key City policy areas, including: Community Connection and Safety, Economic Vitality, Education and Employment, and Health and Environment. Since higher values of the index score indicate neighborhoods with greater priority for allocation of resources, target libraries were sought in either the High (8-10) or Very High (6-8) priority scores.

Secondly, site locations were evaluated using the [UCLA Heat Maps tool](#), which assesses communities at greatest risk of harm during heat waves according to both daily excess number of emergency room (ER) visits and rate of excess ER visits (number of visits per 10,000 persons per day) due to extreme heat. A third filter was to assess library sites and the areas they serve using [CA OEHHA's CalEnviroScreen 4.0](#), and determine whether or not the library was located in (or within a quarter mile) of a census tract in the top 10% of those having environmental risk factors, such as pollution burden. As mentioned earlier, Chinatown was selected because seniors predominantly live in SROs without AC in that area, anecdotal information reflects high use of libraries by these populations, and seniors are listed by the CDC as one of the most vulnerable communities to extreme heat.

Additionally, three (3) regional libraries in these high heat risk areas were prioritized, since regional libraries already have Sunday hours from 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm. Finally, an equitable Citywide geographic distribution was sought so that locations were divided up amongst different Council districts, and represented across the City from the Valley to San Pedro, ensuring residents would not have to travel excessive distances when seeking heat relief.

In the end, all five (5) libraries that were selected for this pilot project have High (2 libraries) or Very High (3 libraries) priority scores for investment via MADE, four (4) libraries are at the highest levels of heat risk (3 libraries at High Heat Risk, 1 library at Medium-High Heat Risk) for number of excessive ER visits according to UCLA Heat Maps, and all five (5) libraries are located in (or within a quarter mile) of the top 10% of environmental risk according to CalEnviroScreen 4.0.

There are also three (3) regional libraries selected that already have some Sunday hours of operation, with site locations distributed geographically across the City with two (2) in the Valley (West Valley Regional and Pacoima), one in South LA (Exposition Park - Dr. Mary McLeod Bethune Regional), and one (1) in San Pedro (San Pedro Regional). The fifth library selected is the Chinatown Branch library, which while at medium heat risk according to UCLA Heat Maps, is at a midpoint geographically between the Valley, South LA, and San Pedro locations, and serves seniors who heavily rely on the library for cooling during heat waves. The Chinatown

Branch library also provides meals and social workers for seniors as part of the resilience and social support services that LAPL currently offers. Additionally, the Chinatown library recently renovated the community room and is able to serve up to 150 individuals in its enhanced space.

These combined actions aim to reduce heat-related illnesses, enhance quality of life and livability of communities, and improve overall ability to respond to extreme heat events. Applying more heat-focused solutions in these prioritized areas will serve as a model for the City to leverage transformational investments; thus, not only reducing health disparities but also increasing catalytic investments into these historically disinvested areas of Los Angeles.

Evaluation: In order to make more data informed decisions, we must improve extreme heat qualitative data collection. This pilot will coordinate data collection, analysis, and reporting from librarians. LAPL will collect data on use of the libraries during heat waves and CEMO will conduct a survey with libraries both during and after heat season, to evaluate lessons learned and make suggestions for the following years. The goal beyond expanding services this heat season would be to add more libraries with these additional resources over time, further expanding our Citywide augmented cooling center network. Recreation and Parks facilities are very busy from early June to mid-August with summer youth camps while LAUSD and other schools are not in regular session, and have not been able to provide the capacity the City needs during Heat Season as cooling centers, making LAPL support all the more critical.

Protocols: EMD General Manager Carol Parks and Chief Heat Officer Segura will oversee the drafting of a protocol for the activation of these pilot augmented cooling centers that aligns with our Adverse Weather Plans as well as our Emergency Operations. This will also include instructions for GSD to facilitate HVAC and electricity service on Sundays for the pilot libraries when heatwave alerts are activated by the City. This will be key for socializing the pilot and ensuring that EMD staff and the Adverse Weather Task Force are aligned and aware that these additional libraries will be available.

a. Proposed Pilot Project Activities (Staffing/Supply Budget will be separate)

Project Tasks	Project Activities and Results
Outreach: Heat Resilience Materials and sharing of hydration flasks to visitors who need improved water access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide Heat Resilience Materials in multiple languages, centered on preventing heat-related injuries and equitably empowering community health educators and the community
Outreach: Marketing, Earned Media, Ad Campaign, Education, Mobilization, Materials Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share our extreme heat risk map to show resource gaps for the City of LA and adapt into Cool Spots LA App - Develop annual LAPL Heat Resilient LA campaign plan - Adapt Heat Resilience Materials in multiple languages to distribute and reach populations at greatest risk in the DAC areas of Los Angeles - Develop annual social media for Libraries to share with their constituents - Improve the searchability of Libraries as cooling centers
Training: Librarian Preparation and Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Equip and inform librarians on how to manage excess visitors seeking refuge from heat. Coordination with LAHSA, LAPL, Security, and Social Workers will be critical. The Chief Heat Officer will offer awareness to library managers to share with librarians.
Implementation: Community Outreach and Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage librarians to distribute community-centered Heat Resilience Materials and other developed heat resilience material to provide educational resources - Assign areas / community rooms to serve as cooling spaces
Implementation: Library-focused Heat Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Libraries will support and execute our annual Heat Relief 4 LA campaign, annual social media and earned media campaign, and annual ad campaign - Lead heat-focused health risk / health awareness campaign - Evaluate performance metrics and refine strategy annually to expand reach and connect communities with resources to become more prepared to respond to extreme heat events
Data and Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase and improve extreme heat qualitative data collection with annual focus groups and surveys - Coordinate data collection, analysis, and reporting
Amenities that these five (5) Libraries will be required to serve as Augmented Cooling Facilities on Sundays	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Air Conditioning, Phone Charging Stations, Water Storage and Water Reserves - Tents outside to serve those who prefer to be outside with their pets, chairs for outside tents and water distribution - Additional operations costs (staffing, potential overtime) for extended Sunday hours for non-regional libraries

b. Staff Costs for LAPL to Staff two (2) Non-Regional (Augmented) Libraries - Pacoima and Chinatown - on Sundays for the same hours (4) as Regional libraries (1:00 pm - 5:00 pm) during Extreme Heat events and activation, plus one (1) additional hour of setup time for non-porter staff.

Please note: Opening these non-regional branches as augmented branches during heat activation under this pilot will be for cooling services only - no regular library operations (i.e. checkout services) will be available.

Item Description	Hourly Rate	Staff Hours per Activation Date	Staff Costs per Activation Date	Total Heat Activation Dates (Estimated)	Total Staff Costs for Two (2) Augmented Libraries
One (1) SENIOR LIBRARIAN (6153)	\$167.06	5	\$835.30	8	\$13,364.80
One (1) LIBRARIAN II (8335)	\$141.32	5	\$706.60	8	\$11,305.60
One (1) ADMINISTRATIVE CLERK (1358)	\$86.67	5	\$433.35	8	\$6,933.60
One (1) CONTRACT SECURITY GUARD	\$50.76	5	\$253.80	8	\$4,060.80
One (1) PORTER SERVICE	\$115.00	4	\$460.00	8	\$7,360.00
SUBTOTAL STAFF COSTS PER AUGMENTED LIBRARY PER ACTIVATION DATE:			\$2,689.05	N/A	N/A
SUBTOTAL STAFF COSTS FOR TWO (2) AUGMENTED LIBRARIES PER HEAT ACTIVATION DATE:			\$5,378.10	8	\$43,024.80
TOTAL STAFF COSTS FOR TWO (2) AUGMENTED LIBRARIES FOR EIGHT (8) ESTIMATED HEAT ACTIVATION DATES:					\$43,024.80

c. Supply Budget for all Five (5) Libraries to operate as Augmented Cooling Centers under the Pilot (and total Pilot Project Costs):

Item Description	Cost per Item	Total Items per Library	Total Cost for All Five (5) Libraries
Tents/chairs for day use from third-party (i.e. CORE or other third party) for 80 activation hours, including set-up and breakdown (SUBCONTRACTOR)	\$5,000.00	1	\$25,000.00
20 packs of collapsible, BPA-free soft hydration flasks (10 flasks per Pack, 200 flasks total per library) to be distributed by LAPL (VENDOR)	\$20.00	20	\$1,999.00
Heavy Duty 13-Port USB 3.0 Hub, with AC Adapter for additional charging of devices onsite during Heat Emergencies (VENDOR)	\$70.00	5	\$1,749.75
Multi-Charging Cables to support charging of devices while onsite during Heat Emergencies (VENDOR)	\$17.00	5	\$424.75
Portable Chargers, to assist with spacing and overcrowding of charging stations while onsite during Heat Emergencies (VENDOR)	\$17.99	5	\$449.75
Multiport USB Charging 22-Ports Charging Station for Multiple Smart Devices, Noninterference Multiport Desktop Charger (VENDOR)	\$119.99	2	\$1,199.90
Heavy-Duty Multi-Port Charging Tower (VENDOR)	\$2,500.00	1	\$12,500.00
Red Cross First Aid Kits (VENDOR)	\$63.00	1	\$315.00
10x10 Pop-Up Tents for use by LAPL when external parties are not supplementing extended hours (VENDOR)	\$109.99	2	\$1,099.90
Sun Shades for LAPL exterior for additional outdoor shading (VENDOR)	\$27.68	2	\$276.80
SUPPLY BUDGET FOR FIVE (5) PILOT LIBRARIES TOTAL:			\$45,014.85

d. Total Pilot Project Costs

STAFFING BUDGET FOR TWO (2) NON-REGIONAL (AUGMENTED) PILOT LIBRARIES FOR EIGHT (8) SUNDAY ACTIVATION DATES SUBTOTAL:	\$43,024.80
SUPPLY BUDGET FOR ALL FIVE (5) PILOT LIBRARIES SUBTOTAL:	\$45,014.85
TOTAL PILOT PROJECT COSTS:	\$88,039.65

Conclusion: Based on the need to activate the proposed pilot outlined in this Report Back in time for this Heat Season, CEMO is focusing this Report Back and proposed pilot on the Council's instruction to increase public use of available facilities (Libraries) and outreach strategies. Greater maintenance and infrastructure support and related costs likely would need to be considered if the pilot were expanded after this heat season, but LAPL and General Services Department (GSD) have confirmed to CEMO that under the scope of this current pilot, no additional maintenance and infrastructure support or costs would be needed to support the three regional libraries currently operating on Sundays and to augment operation hours of the two additional non-regional libraries for no more than four hours on Sundays.

The most critical considerations that would need to be given for Extreme Heat Activation would be that LAPL Facilities would need to be alerted no later than 3:00 p.m. on Thursdays prior to an expected weekend Extreme Heat Activation so that power could be kept on at the two non-regional libraries on Sundays.

There are four additional areas instructed for Report Back that will be addressed in the forthcoming Heat Action and Resilience Plan (HARP), for which CEMO has just completed the Heat Action Framework and will be sharing publicly in the near future.

Sincerely,



MARTA A. SEGURA, M.P.H.

Chief Heat Officer and Director,
Climate Emergency Mobilization Office (CEMO)

Board of Public Works

cc: Deputy Mayor Nancy Sutley, Mayor's Office of Energy and Sustainability
Deputy Mayor Randall Winston, Mayor's Office of City Infrastructure
Deputy Mayor Jacqueline Hamilton, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Deputy Mayor Brian Williams, Mayor's Office of Public Safety
Karo Torossian, Chief of Staff, Council District 2
Anna Hovasapian, Deputy Chief of Staff, Council District 2
Patrick Ma, Policy Aide, Council District 2
Aura Garcia, President, Board of Public Works
General Manager John Szabo, Los Angeles Public Library
Susan Broman, Assistant City Librarian and Assistant General Manager, Los Angeles Public Library
Joyce Cooper, Division Librarian and Director of Branch Library Services, Los Angeles Public Library
TJ Knight, Acting Executive Officer, Board of Public Works
Raoul Mendoza, Assistant Director, Bureau of Contract Administration
Amy Clarke, Climate Emergency Mobilization Office, Board of Public Works

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