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JOHN F. SZABO
CITY LIBRARIAN

April 22, 2025

The Honorable Katy Yaroslavsky, Chair
City Council Budget and Finance Committee
c/o Mandy Morales, Office of the City Clerk
Room 395, City Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90012

MAYOR'S PROPOSED BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-26

Dear Councilmember Yaroslavsky:

The challenging start to 2025 has shown Los Angeles' resilience, and in response to the devastating wildfires, I am proud the Library has demonstrated our unwavering commitment to serving our communities. Following the heartbreaking destruction of our Palisades Branch, the Library's outreach staff mobilized immediately, bringing library service to Angelenos in need. Everyday library services became particularly necessary as people faced uncertainty—charging stations, public computers, laptops and mobile wifi hotspots. This disaster response serves as a reminder that the Library is nimble, always supporting communities and helping to fill in the gaps for people.

The Los Angeles Public Library (LAPL) is proud to welcome everyone to the landmark Central Library, our 72 branch libraries, and online at lapl.org. LAPL is committed to providing free and equitable access to books, information, technology, and vibrant civic spaces focused on lifelong learning and helping people pursue their dreams.

The Mayor's proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2025-2026 budget includes resources for the Los Angeles Public Library to continue our dynamic, innovative programs such as: free, accredited high school diplomas for adults through the Career Online High School program, our New Americans Initiative immigrant and citizenship assistance, the Student Success Card program, digital equity resources to help Angelenos get online, our Adult Literacy program, sustainability efforts, and the tens of thousands of programs and services that support families throughout the City.

The Library remains committed to ensuring patrons and staff feel welcome and safe at our libraries. This budget continues our trauma-informed approach through the Library Experience Office, as we serve the most vulnerable in our City, including people experiencing homelessness. With staff social workers, community service

representatives who bring their lived experience, our contracts with mental health and social services providers, staff training in conflict and dispute de-escalation and the administration of Narcan for opioid overdoses, the Library continues to adapt to challenges and respond with empathy and understanding.

By leveraging libraries as trusted resource centers, the Library engages residents of all ages and backgrounds and connects them with the resources they need to succeed.

LAPL begins encouraging lifelong learning even at birth through Read, Baby, Read! where the Library distributes early literacy materials, board books, and library cards through hospitals and birthing centers. Engaging storytimes remain educational and entertaining staples in libraries throughout the City, and our robust STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) program inspires young Angelenos to explore their worlds through various hands-on activities. In addition to online tutoring, homework help, and college workshops, the Library's Teens Leading Change program empowers young adults to identify, plan, and execute civic engagement projects to make a difference and positively benefit their communities. The Library is committed to meeting the needs of children, teens, and their families and caregivers.

As directed by Measure L, the proposed budget contains funds for the Library to reimburse the General Fund nearly \$94 million for both direct costs (utilities, custodial services, building maintenance, refuse collection, sidewalk repairs, security services, etc.) and indirect costs (retirement, fringe benefits, and central services). For Fiscal Year 2025-26, these related costs comprise 34.8% of the Library's budget. Knowing that other city departments face significant budget challenges, LAPL is mindful of potential impacts on service delivery.

The Library looks forward to providing outstanding service in the next fiscal year, and does not have any budget revision requests.

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

Thank you for your support of the Los Angeles Public Library. It is an honor and privilege to lead this organization and serve the people of Los Angeles.

Sincerely,



John F. Szabo
City Librarian

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

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