



SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA

Date: 11/25/2024
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Locations: [Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – ID# 882 0971 1131 and
Menlo Park Library
800 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

Members of the public can listen to the meeting and participate using the following methods.

How to participate in the meeting:

- Access the meeting, in-person, at Menlo Park Library
- Access the meeting real-time online at:
[Zoom.us/join](https://zoom.us/join) – Meeting ID 882 0971 1131
- Access the meeting real-time via telephone at:
(669) 900-6833
Meeting ID 882 0971 1131
Press *9 to raise hand to speak

Subject to Change: The format of this meeting may be altered or the meeting may be cancelled. You may check on the status of the meeting by visiting the city website menlopark.gov. The instructions for logging on to the webinar and/or the access code is subject to change. If you have difficulty accessing the webinar, please check the latest online edition of the posted agenda for updated information (menlopark.gov/agendas).

Special Session

A. Call To Order

B. Roll Call

C. Presentations and Proclamations

C1. Library programs: Enrichment through experiences ([Attachment](#))

D. Regular Business

D1. Approve the meeting minutes from the October 21, 2024 meeting ([Attachment](#))

D2. Recommend updates to the library collection development policy ([Staff Report LC-2024-036](#))

D3. Approve the 2025 Library Commission meeting calendar ([Staff Report LC-2024-037](#))

D4. Ad-hoc subcommittee update ([Staff Report LC-2024-038](#))

E. Informational Items

E1. Library and community services department statistics and recent activities ([Staff Report LC-2024-039](#))

E2. Library Commission tentative agenda calendar ([Attachment](#))

F. Commissioner Reports

F1. Individual Commissioner reports

G. Adjournment

At every Regular Meeting of the Commission, in addition to the Public Comment period where the public shall have the right to address the Commission on any matters of public interest not listed on the agenda, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during the Commission's consideration of the item.

At every Special Meeting of the Commission, members of the public have the right to directly address the Commission on any item listed on the agenda at a time designated by the Chair, either before or during consideration of the item.

If you challenge any of the items listed on this agenda in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or before, the public hearing.

Any writing that is distributed to a majority of the Commission by any person in connection with an agenda item is a public record (subject to any exemption under the Public Records Act) and is available by request by emailing the city clerk at jaherren@menlopark.gov. Persons with disabilities, who require auxiliary aids or services in attending or participating in Commission meetings, may call the City Clerk's Office at 650-330-6620.

Agendas are posted in accordance with Government Code §54954.2(a) or §54956. Members of the public can view electronic agendas and staff reports by accessing the City website at menlopark.gov/agendas and can receive email notification of agenda and staff report postings by subscribing to the "Notify Me" service at menlopark.gov/subscribe. Agendas and staff reports may also be obtained by contacting City Clerk at 650-330-6620. (Posted: 11/21/2024)



LIBRARY PROGRAMMING

Library Commission – Nov. 18, 2024



LIBRARY PRESENTATION SERIES

Staff is preparing a series of presentations to the Library Commission. All dates and topic are tentative and are subject to change:

Library Overview:
Who We Are and What We Do
September 2024

Library Outreach:
Bringing the Library to the Community
March 2025

Library Programming:
Enrichment through Experience
November 2024

Library of the Future:
What's next for Libraries and for MPL
May 2025

Library Statistics:
What Does the Data Tell Us?
January 2025

Library Budget:
Collection Development and Operations
July 2025

OUR FOCUS TODAY

Above and beyond the books on the shelves, libraries engage with and cultivate community. Programming is critical to this interpersonal approach. Today, we are talking about:

- What program engagement looks like at our libraries
- Making the library welcoming for teenagers
- How and why we train staff to provide storytimes
- Other programs we offer, and some attendance statistics

“Bad libraries build collections. Good libraries build services (of which a collection is only one). Great libraries build communities.”

– R. David Lenkes,
@rdlanke

WHY LIBRARY PROGRAMS?

Libraries are books. And people. And connections.

People have different learning styles, and we try to satisfy their need for information, and their curiosity—and even spark further curiosity—in different ways.

The experiences we offer can add depth, texture, and context to book learning, as they lead participants to our other resources to learn more.

Our youth and family programs bring school assembly-style programs to the entire community, in a time when fewer schools are able to share these learning resources.

Program attendees learn about our other available resources, as they get to know the library environment and staff.



ENGAGEMENT WITH THE LIBRARY

Building Community Connections

Listening to our current patrons: we learn more about them, and they about us, when we share experiences. Both parties benefit.

Seed Library: When we wanted to launch a Seed Library, one mention at a library program led to an attendee stepping forward. Our thriving program (including monthly Garden Talks) is led by this volunteer and another she brought in.

A 20-something man in tech attended a beading workshop, and expressed gratitude for something to do with his hands that did not involve a keyboard. He provided insight as to the best timing for events for people in his field.

Cultural programming often brings in first-time users of our library, introducing them to our offerings, and allowing them to share their cultures with us, and our presenters, and each other, providing ideas for further opportunities.



TEEN PROGRAMMING

- Purpose of teen programming:
 - Shows teens how to interact with the library space and library staff
 - Provide important social experiences to the public
- Offering a mix of programming:
 - Passive programming: D&D sheets, coloring, and themed posters
 - Active programming: teen films, video game sessions, Teen Book Group, and volunteer opportunities



STORYTIME

“Baby’s first book group,” and consistently our most popular program! Storytime introduces early literacy concepts and a group experience for the children, and modeling prompts for reading at home for the caregivers, setting the stage for a lifelong relationship with the library.

Successful in-house training program

- Born of necessity in the early pandemic
- Emphasis on intentionality, all-are-welcome inclusivity, cleaving to the purpose of the activity
 - Early literacy
 - Anti-bias
- 5 “graduated classes” since 2020
- Allows for interchangeability of storytimers with internal consistency of quality, message, and format
- Positive feedback from trainees

Our Storytimes

Belle Haven Library:

- Tuesdays at 7:15pm
- Fridays at 5:15pm
- Saturdays at 10:15am

Menlo Park Library:

- Thursdays at 10:15am
- Fridays at 10:15
- Saturdays at 11:15am

City Child Development Facilities

- Menlo Children’s Center (MCC): Tuesdays at 9:30am
- Belle Haven Youth Center (BHYC): Tuesdays at 4:15pm
- Belle Haven Child Development Center (BHCDC):
Wednesdays at 9:30am



STATISTICS AND STAFFING

- Emphasis on expertise – both from staff and outside presenters
- Average attendance across events:
 - Storytimes at Alma St: 47
 - Book Groups: 17
 - Monthly event attendance: 1,006
- Library Adventure:
 - July 18, 2023: 200
 - February 2, 2024: 278
 - July 24, 2024: 212
- Summer Lawn Events: 221 average attendance
- BHCC weekend events since opening: average 65 per event





JUST A FEW MORE OF OUR PROGRAMS

Weekly	Monthly	Recurring	A few times a year	Once a year
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Storytime (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday) • Teen Media Days (Wednesdays and Friday) • English Conversation Club (Tuesdays and Saturdays) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiction • Sci-Fi/Fantasy • Mystery • Melanated Women Read • Youth Book Groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle Grade Book Group • Teen Book Group • Garden Talks • Global Language Storytime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informational Lectures and Workshops • Hands-on programs mixing learning with creation • Virtual Museum Visits • Cooking Lessons • Live music, in both performances for all ages and First Concert Series for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Library Adventure (at the Menlo Park Library in July and at the Belle Haven Library in February) • Bookish Trivia • Raise a Glass • Stuffed Animal Sleepover • Author visits • Special exhibitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health Month (collaborative with San Mateo County Health) • Summer Reading Game • Puppetry Festival • Storytelling Festival • Library Reads Banned Books (in October for Banned Books Week) • E-Resource Night



THANK YOU



REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – DRAFT

Date: 10/21/2024
Time: 6:30 p.m.
Locations: Teleconference and
Menlo Park Library
800 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025

A. Call To Order

Chair Orton called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.

B. Roll Call

Present: Crockett, Herrick, Orton, Shafer, Westcott, Wise
Absent: Pollack
Staff: Library and Community Services Director Sean Reinhart, Assistant Library and
Community Services Director Nick Szegda

C. Public Comment

None.

D. Regular Business

D1. Approve the meeting minutes from the September 16, 2024 meeting (Attachment)

ACTION: Motion and second (Wise/ Herrick), to approve the minutes from the September 16, 2024 meeting, passed 6-0 (Pollack absent).

D2. Ad-hoc subcommittee update (Staff Report LC-2024-032)

The Ad-hoc Subcommittee provided an update on their charge to identify a methodology for achieving Commission work plan item No. 2.

- Moira Cullen spoke in support of the “library of things” provided at some libraries.

ACTION: Motion and second (Wise/ Shafer), to establish an ad-hoc subcommittee consisting of Commissioners Crockett, Herrick and Westcott, to continue work toward achieving Commission work plan item No. 2, passed 6-0 (Pollack absent).

E. Informational Items

E1. Library and community services department updates (Staff Report LC-2024-033)

The Commission requested that the suggestion box comments be sorted by location and date received.

E2. Library and community services department strategic plan 2024-26 (Staff Report LC-2024-033)

E3. Library Commission tentative agenda calendar and list of annually recurring agenda items (Staff

Report LC-2024-034)

ACTION: By acclamation, the Commission added the following items to the tentative agenda calendar:

- 2025 Commission meeting calendar review – November 2024
- Department budget review – April 2025
- Ad-hoc subcommittee work plan approval – August 2025
- Staff report on improving Star Library ranking – unscheduled

F. Commissioner Reports

F1. Individual Commissioner reports

Commissioner Herrick reported out on meeting with library commissioners serving in Daly City and San Mateo.

Chair Orton reported out on the new Library Foundation president and the ad-hoc subcommittee's work with the foundation.

Commissioner Crockett reported out on the Friends of the Library board meeting.

G. Adjournment

Chair Orton adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Assistant Library and Community Services Director Nick Szegda



STAFF REPORT

Library Commission

Meeting Date:

11/25/2024

Staff Report Number:

LC-2024-036

Regular Business:

Recommend updates to the library collection development policy

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Library Commission (LC) recommend updates to the library collection development policy (Attachment A). The updates are to include language in the policy consistent with a new state law, the California Freedom to Read Act (AB 1825).

Policy Issues

As a duly appointed advisory body to the City Council, the Library Commission may review and recommend updates to library and community services policies and procedures as the need arises.

Library and community services departmental policies establish rules, expectations, and procedures for the operation and public use of department programs, services, facilities, and resources. Policies are available for public review in person at City of Menlo Park (City) libraries, recreation facilities; and online at the City website (Attachment B).

Background

On Sept. 29, Governor Newsom signed into law the California Freedom to Read Act (AB 1825). AB 1825 requires public library jurisdictions to establish, adopt, and maintain a written and publicly accessible collection development policy for its libraries by January 1, 2026. The bill requires the adopted policy to be sent to the State Librarian and authorizes the State Librarian or their designee to provide technical assistance to public libraries in developing their collection development policy. A link to the full text of AB 1825 is provided in Attachment C. A link to a California State Library webpage about AB 1825 is provided in Attachment D.

Analysis

The City of Menlo Park's library collection development policy was last updated on Feb. 28, 2022. The policy is generally updated every five years or as the need may arise. The purpose of the library collection development policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selection and retention decisions about library materials are made.

To assist with their review, the California State Library has asked California public library jurisdictions to update their collection development policies to include the following specific statements verbatim from the text of AB 1825:

1. The "collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs."

2. The “public library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.”
3. “Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.”
4. The “right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences” is acknowledged.

Staff has added the above four statements to the updated library collection development policy in Attachment A. No other updates to the current policy are required by AB 1825, and no other substantive updates to the updated policy are recommended at this time.

Staff recommends that the Library Commission recommend the updated policy in Attachment A. Revisions to the current policy are presented with inline markup showing additions in underline and deletions in ~~strikethrough~~, followed by a clean version of the full policy showing all revisions incorporated.

Impact on City Resources

As an advisory body to the City Council, the Library Commission does not authorize resource allocations. City budget authorizations are the sole purview of the City Council. There is no substantive impact to the City’s general fund related to the topics in this report.

Environmental Review

The policies in this report are not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as they will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. Library collection development policy
- B. Hyperlink: Library and Community Services department policies and procedures webpage. menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Library-and-Community-Services/About-us/Policies-and-procedures
- C. Hyperlink: Full text of AB 1825. leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billTextClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240AB1825
- D. Hyperlink: California State Library information webpage about AB 1825. library.ca.gov/services/to-libraries/freedom-to-read-act/

Report prepared by:
Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director

LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Library and Community Services
 800 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025
[tel 650-330-2504](tel:650-330-2504) menlopark.gov



Purpose and Goals

The mission of the Menlo Park Library is to be the city's focal point for information, learning, and culture and to enrich lives through collections, programs, and expertise of the Library. In order to enact this mission, the Library acquires and makes available materials which inform, educate, entertain and enrich persons as individuals and as members of society. As no library can possibly acquire all print and non-print materials, every library must of necessity employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. It is the goal of the Library to provide a high quality collection of books and other materials, in a variety of formats, for all ages, that is responsive to the needs and interests of the community it serves. The Menlo Park community is made up of people with a wide range of backgrounds, tastes, interests, and attitudes, and the collection must reflect the diversity therein. The purpose of this policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selection and retention decisions are made.

Freedom of Access

To support an informed public, the collections shall represent diverse points of view, and may include materials that some members of the public consider to be controversial in nature. The Library will provide free and equitable access to library collections to all users, despite individual or group prejudice or offense about a particular item or type of material. The Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in materials included in the collection. The inclusion of an item is not to be considered an endorsement, official or otherwise, by the Library. Menlo Park Library adheres to and supports the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statement (see Appendix A) as official library policy. Our librarians are obliged to oppose the efforts of anyone to abridge the public's right to read. The Library staff believes that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy. Children are not limited to the children's collection, although this collection is located in a separate part of the library to facilitate use. Parents or guardians are responsible for a child's reading and library use – this is not the Library's responsibility.

California Freedom to Read Act (AB 1825) statements

1. The collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.
2. The public library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.
3. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.
4. The "right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences" is acknowledged.

The Library's Collection

Menlo Park Library's primary service area is the incorporated City of Menlo Park. The Library operates two physical locations for Menlo Park Library: the Main Library (Main) and the Belle Haven Branch Library (Branch). The Library provides public access to physical books and periodicals, audiovisual media in various formats, electronic resources including eBooks, resource databases and streaming content, and other items of interest to Menlo Park residents including but not limited to vegetable and flower seeds, athletic equipment, portable computers, and other items as need and interest may arise.

At any given time, a significant portion of the Library's collection is in circulation, i.e. checked out to individual borrowers, including to borrowers that reside in other cities who have requested Library materials through the Peninsula Library System interlibrary loan and delivery consortium in which the City of Menlo Park is currently a member. When not in circulation to borrowers, the majority of the items in the Library's physical collection are housed at Main, it being the larger central facility of the two locations. The

Mail location is tailored to and prioritizes the interests and needs of City of Menlo Park residents. The Branch's physical collection is smaller prioritizes the needs and interests of the immediate neighborhood of which the Branch is located. The Library collections are consistently and timely maintained to these standards to the greatest extent feasible within the available resources.

Inter Library Loan and Delivery

Budget and space limitations preclude the Library from duplicating the specialized and comprehensive collections that exist elsewhere in the broader Bay Area. Instead, the Library offers its patrons access to a greatly expanded collection via the interlibrary services of the Peninsula Library System (PLS) and LINK+. PLS is a consortium of 35 city, county, and community college libraries in San Mateo County that allows patrons of the member libraries to search a joint catalog of member library holdings, borrow and return books at any library in the system, and use other joint library services. LINK+ is a consortium of public and academic libraries in California and Nevada whose members loan one another available items from their collections.

Selection

"Selection" refers to the act of identifying and evaluating specific items for addition to the Library's collection. Selectors are responsible for choosing titles which fit in with the evaluation criteria in this plan, and help the Library fulfill its mission. Selection is a discerning and interpretive process, involving a general knowledge of the subject and its important literature, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, and a recognition of the needs of the community. Staff members selecting library materials are assisted by reviews from reputable sources, authoritative discussions of the subject, popular demand, requests of library patrons, and circulation statistics and trends. The Library selects resources based upon the principle of open access to materials for all; materials are not excluded due to frank or controversial content. Decisions are made solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection.

Evaluation of Criteria

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following criteria, which are applied as appropriate across all subjects, languages, material types, and formats:

- Accuracy of information and depth of content
- Quality, including accuracy, clarity, originality of thought, literary merit or artistic excellence
- Reviews in professional or popular media
- Popular interest and community demand
- Cost and availability
- Suitability of physical format and durability for heavy library use
- Skill, competence, and purpose of the author
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries
- The work's presence in standard bibliographies or indexes
- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Ability to meet the needs of the community; appropriateness to interests and skills of intended audience
- Relation to existing collections and other material on the subject
- Material's contribution to a diversity of viewpoints and cultural perspectives
- Items with local emphasis or significance

The Library collects a range of general-interest materials. Owing to budgetary and space constraints, the Library is unable to maintain a collection used for academic research or the pursuit of highly specialized and professional interests. The Library's collection is non-archival, but does contain City of Menlo Park documents that are required by law to be on display to the public for specific periods of time. Materials are acquired in multiple formats when appropriate, including print, audiovisual, and digital resources. For any given work, the determination of which format(s) is acquired is based --in part--on factors such as the work's intended audience and its intended purpose. When all other factors are equal, ease of access by and broadness of appeal to the public should be the primary consideration in choosing formats. New

formats shall be considered for the circulating collection when a significant portion of the community population has the necessary technology to make use of the format. User demand, cost per item, ease of use, equipment requirements, storage requirements, staff requirements for processing, maintenance, and training, and availability of items in the format are also factors that are considered in the adoption of a new format.

The library does not purchase the following materials:

- Costly books of little demand
- Textbooks (unless they are of general interest and the best in the subject field)
- Family genealogies
- Books that are not professionally bound
- Books that are self-published
- Highly obscure or specialized works
- Rare books
- Items that require original cataloging
- Vanity press publications
- Obsolete formats such as cassettes, vinyl records, and VHS tapes

Staff will also consider items in terms of their ability to provide balance to the collection and their availability via LINK+ and intersystem loans from other PLS libraries. The library recognizes the importance of acquiring materials in formats that can be utilized by City of Menlo Park residents with disabilities. The Library will seek to match community demand with the existing collections of such materials. Multiple copies of items may be purchased in response to user demand as evidenced by number of holds, anticipated popularity, and repeated requests. The Library will only add items to its collection that conform to U.S. Laws (e.g. copyright, trade laws). Generally, the library is limited to selecting works that are currently in print and available through customary domestic trade suppliers.

Purchase Suggestions

Purchase suggestions from library users are welcome and all suggestions are given serious consideration. Suggestions are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials, and are not automatically added to the collection. If the title is acquired, the library card holder will be given the first opportunity to borrow the item. Review or solicitation copies submitted for consideration as potential acquisitions are accepted under the same terms as those for donated items.

Donations

Gifts of books and other library materials in good condition are accepted by the Library and evaluated for inclusion in the collection using the same criteria that are used for materials acquired by purchase. Gifts which do not meet the Library's evaluation criteria and policies may be refused. Donated books that are not added to the Library's circulating collection may be given to Friends of Menlo Park Library, an independent nonprofit charitable organization for their fundraising book sales or, alternatively, the books may be given away. The Library is under no obligation to add a donated item to the collection nor to notify the donor of the disposition of that item. Donors cannot impose conditions relating to any gift either before or after the Library accepts the gift. Donation-receipt forms are available upon request at the time of donation and are completed by donors. Values are assigned by donors, not by library staff. Donations to the library may be eligible for tax donations; check with your tax advisor.

Monetary Donations

The Library may accept monetary donations, lifetime gifts and bequests. All such offers will be subject to review by the Library Director or their designee before they can be accepted, and offers may be referred instead to the Library's partner charitable nonprofit organizations e.g. Friends of Menlo Park and/or Menlo Park Library Foundation. While the Library welcomes gifts designating funds for specific audiences or types of materials in the collection, the designation of funds for specific titles may not be accommodated if such titles are inconsistent with the Library's selection criteria.

Collection Maintenance

The Library's collections are regularly evaluated to ensure that the materials they contain remain current and in good condition, and that they continue to reflect the interests and needs of the Library's patrons. Collection maintenance is undertaken with as much care and consistency as the initial selection of materials. Maintenance is critical to keeping the collections current, attractive, responsive, diverse, and useful to the needs of the community. In the pursuit of maintaining an up-to-date, useful collection, statistical tools such as circulation reports, collection turnover rates, and hold fill rates are studied to determine how the collection is being used and how it should change to answer patron need. Periodic visual inspections of the collections themselves also help selectors determine how and to what extent individual items and categories of works are being used and which materials are candidates for withdrawal, minimal repair, or replacement.

Withdrawing Materials

Material withdrawal is an important part of collection development. Systematic deselection is required to keep the collection responsive to patron needs, to ensure its vitality and usefulness to the community, and to make room for newer materials or newer formats. Items are withdrawn from the collection with the same degree of attention as initial selection. Withdrawal of library materials is vested in the Library Director who authorizes qualified staff to perform this process. Librarians must use their professional judgement when determining which items to deselect. The staff will evaluate the library's collection for discarding of materials that are one or more of the following:

1. Obsolete: outdated, factually inaccurate, or misleading, or superseded by new information
2. In poor physical condition: worn, damaged, or lost
3. No longer relevant to the needs and interests of the community: not in high demand, low circulation frequency

Other factors influencing the withdrawal of an item may include space limitations, altered scope of the collection, ease of access to materials through PLS or LINK+, and holding a higher number of copies of a particular item than are necessary. Withdrawn items may be offered to the Friends of the Library for resale, given away or donated, or recycled.

Repurchasing Materials

Materials that have been lost or damaged may be replaced using the same criteria as for initial selection. Replacement of lost, stolen, or withdrawn materials is not automatic. The decision to replace is influenced by:

- The number of copies the Library owns
- The availability of newer materials on the subject
- Existence of adequate coverage of the subject
- Item circulation numbers
- Popular demand for the title
- Availability of space
- Cost and availability of replacement copy
- If the item is a core collection title, or significant in its subject area

Requests for Reconsideration

The Library welcomes expression of opinion about its collection. Residents of the City of Menlo Park may raise an objection to a book or other materials in the library by submitting a Request for Reconsideration form with a written explanation of their objections, citing specifics from the material in question. These requests are forwarded to the selection librarians, who evaluate the recommendation and decide upon the actions to be taken, in relation to the library's mission statement and the selection criteria of this collection development policy. After evaluation, a response will be made by the Library Director within 30 days of receiving the formal objection.

Review

This collection development policy will periodically be evaluated and revised as times and circumstances require. Comments and suggestions from the public or library staff should be submitted to the Library Commission for consideration. This collection development policy will be reviewed no less often than once every five years.

Policy history

Action	Date	Notes
Policy adoption	May 10, 2002	Library Commission recommended
Policy updated	May 20, 2019	Library Commission recommended
Policy updated	February 28, 2022	Library Commission recommended
<u>Policy updated</u>	<u>November 25, 2024</u>	<u>Administrative update</u>

APPENDIX A

American Library Association Statements

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

The Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an

orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the

suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers

LIBRARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Library and Community Services
800 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025
menlopark.gov



Purpose and Goals

The mission of the Menlo Park Library is to be the city's focal point for information, learning, and culture and to enrich lives through collections, programs, and expertise of the Library. In order to enact this mission, the Library acquires and makes available materials which inform, educate, entertain and enrich persons as individuals and as members of society. As no library can possibly acquire all print and non-print materials, every library must of necessity employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. It is the goal of the Library to provide a high quality collection of books and other materials, in a variety of formats, for all ages, that is responsive to the needs and interests of the community it serves. The Menlo Park community is made up of people with a wide range of backgrounds, tastes, interests, and attitudes, and the collection must reflect the diversity therein. The purpose of this policy is to guide librarians and to inform the public about the principles upon which selection and retention decisions are made.

Freedom of Access

To support an informed public, the collections shall represent diverse points of view, and may include materials that some members of the public consider to be controversial in nature. The Library will provide free and equitable access to library collections to all users, despite individual or group prejudice or offense about a particular item or type of material. The Library neither approves nor disapproves of the views expressed in materials included in the collection. The inclusion of an item is not to be considered an endorsement, official or otherwise, by the Library. Menlo Park Library adheres to and supports the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and Freedom to Read statement (see Appendix A) as official library policy. Our librarians are obliged to oppose the efforts of anyone to abridge the public's right to read. The Library staff believes that the right to read is an important part of the intellectual freedom that is basic to democracy. Children are not limited to the children's collection, although this collection is located in a separate part of the library to facilitate use. Parents or guardians are responsible for a child's reading and library use – this is not the Library's responsibility.

California Freedom to Read Act (AB 1825) statements

1. The collection meets the broad and diverse interests of the community and respects both the library's autonomy and their specific community needs.
2. The public library serves as a center for voluntary inquiry and the dissemination of information and ideas.
3. Library materials should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people, and should present diverse points of view in the collection as a whole.
4. The "right of the public to receive access to a range of social, political, aesthetic, moral, and other ideas and experiences" is acknowledged.

The Library's Collection

Menlo Park Library's primary service area is the incorporated City of Menlo Park. The Library operates two physical locations for Menlo Park Library: the Main Library (Main) and the Belle Haven Branch Library (Branch). The Library provides public access to physical books and periodicals, audiovisual media in various formats, electronic resources including eBooks, resource databases and streaming content, and other items of interest to Menlo Park residents including but not limited to vegetable and flower seeds, athletic equipment, portable computers, and other items as need and interest may arise.

At any given time, a significant portion of the Library's collection is in circulation, i.e. checked out to individual borrowers, including to borrowers that reside in other cities who have requested Library materials through the Peninsula Library System interlibrary loan and delivery consortium in which the City of Menlo Park is currently a member. When not in circulation to borrowers, the majority of the items in the Library's physical collection are housed at Main, it being the larger central facility of the two locations. The

Mail location is tailored to and prioritizes the interests and needs of City of Menlo Park residents. The Branch's physical collection is smaller prioritizes the needs and interests of the immediate neighborhood of which the Branch is located. The Library collections are consistently and timely maintained to these standards to the greatest extent feasible within the available resources.

Inter Library Loan and Delivery

Budget and space limitations preclude the Library from duplicating the specialized and comprehensive collections that exist elsewhere in the broader Bay Area. Instead, the Library offers its patrons access to a greatly expanded collection via the interlibrary services of the Peninsula Library System (PLS) and LINK+. PLS is a consortium of 35 city, county, and community college libraries in San Mateo County that allows patrons of the member libraries to search a joint catalog of member library holdings, borrow and return books at any library in the system, and use other joint library services. LINK+ is a consortium of public and academic libraries in California and Nevada whose members loan one another available items from their collections.

Selection

"Selection" refers to the act of identifying and evaluating specific items for addition to the Library's collection. Selectors are responsible for choosing titles which fit in with the evaluation criteria in this plan, and help the Library fulfill its mission. Selection is a discerning and interpretive process, involving a general knowledge of the subject and its important literature, a familiarity with the materials in the collection, and a recognition of the needs of the community. Staff members selecting library materials are assisted by reviews from reputable sources, authoritative discussions of the subject, popular demand, requests of library patrons, and circulation statistics and trends. The Library selects resources based upon the principle of open access to materials for all; materials are not excluded due to frank or controversial content. Decisions are made solely on the merits of the work in relation to the building of the collection.

Evaluation of Criteria

All materials, whether purchased or donated, are considered in terms of the following criteria, which are applied as appropriate across all subjects, languages, material types, and formats:

- Accuracy of information and depth of content
- Quality, including accuracy, clarity, originality of thought, literary merit or artistic excellence
- Reviews in professional or popular media
- Popular interest and community demand
- Cost and availability
- Suitability of physical format and durability for heavy library use
- Skill, competence, and purpose of the author
- Relationship to materials in other area libraries
- The work's presence in standard bibliographies or indexes
- Contemporary significance or permanent value
- Ability to meet the needs of the community; appropriateness to interests and skills of intended audience
- Relation to existing collections and other material on the subject
- Material's contribution to a diversity of viewpoints and cultural perspectives
- Items with local emphasis or significance

The Library collects a range of general-interest materials. Owing to budgetary and space constraints, the Library is unable to maintain a collection used for academic research or the pursuit of highly specialized and professional interests. The Library's collection is non-archival, but does contain City of Menlo Park documents that are required by law to be on display to the public for specific periods of time. Materials are acquired in multiple formats when appropriate, including print, audiovisual, and digital resources. For any given work, the determination of which format(s) is acquired is based --in part--on factors such as the work's intended audience and its intended purpose. When all other factors are equal, ease of access by and broadness of appeal to the public should be the primary consideration in choosing formats. New

formats shall be considered for the circulating collection when a significant portion of the community population has the necessary technology to make use of the format. User demand, cost per item, ease of use, equipment requirements, storage requirements, staff requirements for processing, maintenance, and training, and availability of items in the format are also factors that are considered in the adoption of a new format.

The library does not purchase the following materials:

- Costly books of little demand
- Textbooks (unless they are of general interest and the best in the subject field)
- Family genealogies
- Books that are not professionally bound
- Books that are self-published
- Highly obscure or specialized works
- Rare books
- Items that require original cataloging
- Vanity press publications
- Obsolete formats such as cassettes, vinyl records, and VHS tapes

Staff will also consider items in terms of their ability to provide balance to the collection and their availability via LINK+ and intersystem loans from other PLS libraries. The library recognizes the importance of acquiring materials in formats that can be utilized by City of Menlo Park residents with disabilities. The Library will seek to match community demand with the existing collections of such materials. Multiple copies of items may be purchased in response to user demand as evidenced by number of holds, anticipated popularity, and repeated requests. The Library will only add items to its collection that conform to U.S. Laws (e.g. copyright, trade laws). Generally, the library is limited to selecting works that are currently in print and available through customary domestic trade suppliers.

Purchase Suggestions

Purchase suggestions from library users are welcome and all suggestions are given serious consideration. Suggestions are subject to the same selection criteria as other materials, and are not automatically added to the collection. If the title is acquired, the library card holder will be given the first opportunity to borrow the item. Review or solicitation copies submitted for consideration as potential acquisitions are accepted under the same terms as those for donated items.

Donations

Gifts of books and other library materials in good condition are accepted by the Library and evaluated for inclusion in the collection using the same criteria that are used for materials acquired by purchase. Gifts which do not meet the Library's evaluation criteria and policies may be refused. Donated books that are not added to the Library's circulating collection may be given to Friends of Menlo Park Library, an independent nonprofit charitable organization for their fundraising book sales or, alternatively, the books may be given away. The Library is under no obligation to add a donated item to the collection nor to notify the donor of the disposition of that item. Donors cannot impose conditions relating to any gift either before or after the Library accepts the gift. Donation-receipt forms are available upon request at the time of donation and are completed by donors. Values are assigned by donors, not by library staff. Donations to the library may be eligible for tax donations; check with your tax advisor.

Monetary Donations

The Library may accept monetary donations, lifetime gifts and bequests. All such offers will be subject to review by the Library Director or their designee before they can be accepted, and offers may be referred instead to the Library's partner charitable nonprofit organizations e.g. Friends of Menlo Park and/or Menlo Park Library Foundation. While the Library welcomes gifts designating funds for specific audiences or types of materials in the collection, the designation of funds for specific titles may not be accommodated if such titles are inconsistent with the Library's selection criteria.

The Library's collections are regularly evaluated to ensure that the materials they contain remain current and in good condition, and that they continue to reflect the interests and needs of the Library's patrons. Collection maintenance is undertaken with as much care and consistency as the initial selection of materials. Maintenance is critical to keeping the collections current, attractive, responsive, diverse, and useful to the needs of the community. In the pursuit of maintaining an up-to-date, useful collection, statistical tools such as circulation reports, collection turnover rates, and hold fill rates are studied to determine how the collection is being used and how it should change to answer patron need. Periodic visual inspections of the collections themselves also help selectors determine how and to what extent individual items and categories of works are being used and which materials are candidates for withdrawal, minimal repair, or replacement.

Withdrawing Materials

Material withdrawal is an important part of collection development. Systematic deselection is required to keep the collection responsive to patron needs, to ensure its vitality and usefulness to the community, and to make room for newer materials or newer formats. Items are withdrawn from the collection with the same degree of attention as initial selection. Withdrawal of library materials is vested in the Library Director who authorizes qualified staff to perform this process. Librarians must use their professional judgement when determining which items to deselect. The staff will evaluate the library's collection for discarding of materials that are one or more of the following:

1. Obsolete: outdated, factually inaccurate, or misleading, or superseded by new information
2. In poor physical condition: worn, damaged, or lost
3. No longer relevant to the needs and interests of the community: not in high demand, low circulation frequency

Other factors influencing the withdrawal of an item may include space limitations, altered scope of the collection, ease of access to materials through PLS or LINK+, and holding a higher number of copies of a particular item than are necessary. Withdrawn items may be offered to the Friends of the Library for resale, given away or donated, or recycled.

Repurchasing Materials

Materials that have been lost or damaged may be replaced using the same criteria as for initial selection. Replacement of lost, stolen, or withdrawn materials is not automatic. The decision to replace is influenced by:

- The number of copies the Library owns
- The availability of newer materials on the subject
- Existence of adequate coverage of the subject
- Item circulation numbers
- Popular demand for the title
- Availability of space
- Cost and availability of replacement copy
- If the item is a core collection title, or significant in its subject area

Requests for Reconsideration

The Library welcomes expression of opinion about its collection. Residents of the City of Menlo Park may raise an objection to a book or other materials in the library by submitting a Request for Reconsideration form with a written explanation of their objections, citing specifics from the material in question. These requests are forwarded to the selection librarians, who evaluate the recommendation and decide upon the actions to be taken, in relation to the library's mission statement and the selection criteria of this collection development policy. After evaluation, a response will be made by the Library Director within 30 days of receiving the formal objection.

Review

This collection development policy will periodically be evaluated and revised as times and circumstances require. Comments and suggestions from the public or library staff should be submitted to the Library Commission for consideration. This collection development policy will be reviewed no less often than once every five years.

Policy history

Action	Date	Notes
Policy adoption	May 10, 2002	Library Commission recommended
Policy updated	May 20, 2019	Library Commission recommended
Policy updated	February 28, 2022	Library Commission recommended
Policy updated	November 25, 2024	Administrative update

APPENDIX A

American Library Association Statements

Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries that make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

The Freedom to Read

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an

orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. *It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. *Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the

suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers



STAFF REPORT

Library Commission

Meeting Date:

11/25/2024

Staff Report Number:

LC-2024-037

Regular Business:

Approve the 2025 Library Commission meeting calendar

Recommendation

Staff recommends that Library Commission (LC) approve a meeting calendar for calendar year 2025 (Attachment A).

Policy Issues

City Council policy #CC-23-004 outlines the policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities of City commissions and committees, including scheduling of meetings.

Background

The LC typically meets at 6:30 p.m. on the third Monday of each month. Occasionally the regular LC meeting date falls on a major holiday, for example during January and February which can result in rescheduling or cancelling meetings. The Parks and Recreation Commission occasionally jointly meets with the LC on matters of interest to and within the purview of both advisory bodies, which can result in changes to the LC's regular meeting dates.

Analysis

Staff recommends that the LC approve a meeting calendar for 2025 (Attachment A). Approving a meeting calendar for the full year will help to avoid conflicts with other advisory body meetings and will provide advance notice to commission members and the general public when meetings are scheduled to take place.

Impact on City Resources

As an advisory body to the City Council, the LC does not authorize resource allocations. City budget authorizations are the sole purview of the City Council. There is no substantive impact to the City's general fund related to the topics in this report.

Environmental Review

This report is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

A. Draft proposed LC calendar 2025

Report prepared by:
Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Report reviewed by:
Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director



LIBRARY COMMISSION MEETING SCHEDULE 2025

JANUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

FEBRUARY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	

MARCH

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

APRIL

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

MAY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28*	29	30	31

JUNE

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

JULY

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

AUGUST

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

SEPTEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

OCTOBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

NOVEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

DECEMBER

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15*	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			



STAFF REPORT

Library Commission

Meeting Date:

11/25/2024

Staff Report Number:

LC-2024-038

Regular Business:

Ad-hoc subcommittee update

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the Library Commission (LC) receive an update from the ad-hoc subcommittee (Attachment A).

Policy Issues

The LC may establish subcommittees of less than a quorum of the LC members in order to support and/or expedite the full LC's review and consideration of matters within the LC's purview. Standing subcommittees that have continuing subject matter jurisdiction or a meeting schedule established by the LC are subject to the Brown Act (see Government Code §54952(b)). Ad hoc or temporary subcommittees are advisory by nature, temporary, formed to complete a specific task, and will disband automatically upon completion. Ad hoc subcommittees are informal, and their meetings are not subject to the open meetings act.

Background

On Aug. 19, the LC established an ad-hoc subcommittee, defined its scope, and assigned LC members Crockett, Herrick, and Westcott to serve on the subcommittee.

On Sept. 16, the ad-hoc subcommittee provided a brief report of their activities to the LC.

On Oct. 21, the ad-hoc subcommittee provided a presentation of their activities to the LC, completing their original task. The LC re-established the ad-hoc subcommittee, and re-assigned LC members Crockett, Herrick, and Westcott.

Analysis

Scope of work

At their Oct. 21 meeting, the LC assigned the sub-committee's scope of work as follows:

- Continue to work toward achieving Library Commission work plan goal #2: Review library programs and services, identify potential service gaps for specific age groups or affinity groups, and advise to fill needs to create the "library of the future."

Activities report-out

The ad-hoc subcommittee met on Oct. 30 and Nov. 13, and has prepared a report-out of their activities which they will present to the LC on Nov. 25 (Attachment A).

Impact on City Resources

As an advisory body to the City Council, the LC does not authorize resource allocations. City budget authorizations are the sole purview of the City Council. There is no substantive impact to the City's general fund related to the topics in this report.

Environmental Review

This report is not a project within the meaning of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines §§ 15378 and 15061(b)(3) as it will not result in any direct or indirect physical change in the environment.

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

A. Ad-hoc subcommittee report

Report prepared by:

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Report reviewed by:

Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director

Library Systems Improvement Project – 2014-2020

Background Summary

Reviewing past City Council meeting agendas, what follows are links pertaining to the Library System Improvements Project (LSIP) from 2014-2020, accompanying summary notes and highlighted text pulled from City Council Meeting documents.

As general background, the LSIP started with partial funding in 2014-15 from the Library Foundation for a needs study (which was then bid out by the City). The 2017 City Council study session at the conclusion of this needs study prompted the offer of a philanthropic gift from builder John Arrillaga. Feedback at subsequent public meetings brought the need for a new facility in the Belle Haven neighborhood to the fore, and the City combined the main library and branch library efforts into a single project. In October 2018, Mr. Arrillaga withdrew his offer. Space needs studies were completed for both the main (March 2017) and the branch (April 2019) with the attendant public outreach for each. In October 2019, Facebook offered to collaborate with the City to build a Belle Haven facility. The main library portion of the Library System Improvements project was put on hold when Facebook's offer was accepted in January 2020.

Timeline, links to City Council documents and other info – below are links to full City Council Meeting documents along with short summary notes and highlighted text pulled from those City Council meeting documents.

March 28, 2017 – Main Library Space Needs Study – study session

Contains large space needs study completed by Noll & Tam, Architects. Following this presentation John Arrillaga stepped forward with his offer to build a new library on the Burgess Campus.

The Menlo Park Library Foundation pledged \$90,000 for this study.

This project was funded in the City's FY 2014-15 Capital Improvement Program with a budget of \$130,000 (\$90,000 from the Library Foundation) which was increased to \$164,210 for completion in FY 2016-17.

July 18, 2017 – accept philanthropic offer from John Arrillaga

Mr. Arrillaga pledged to build a new main library and to pay for any costs that exceeded a \$20million contribution from the City After his offer, a number of community members asked about using the donation to pay for a new library in Belle Haven, where the need for a new facility was greater.

City Council approved receipt of a formal philanthropic offer from John Arrillaga to assist in the construction of a new main library building to be located on the Civic Center Campus.

As proposed by Mr. Arrillaga, the City would provide the first \$20 million in funding for the development of a new 48,000 square foot library on the Civic Center Campus.

Expediting the project is part of Mr. Arrillaga's proposal. The total estimated cost to develop the new library with an underground parking garage is \$55 million.

August 22, 2017 – approve next steps for construction of new main library building

Ballot measures were considered as part of a funding package to pay for the City's portion of the cost of building new libraries.

Serving the educational needs of the Menlo Park community is a core mission of the Menlo Park Library. Modern libraries are shifting to meet community demands for different kinds of learning – from spaces designed primarily to house collections, to people-centered spaces better suited to provide experiential learning experiences and opportunities for lifelong learning.

To this end, three recent studies concerning library services contained recommendations for an improved library space. The Library's 2015 operational review recommended improved library space, an updated strategic plan and a facility needs assessment. The Library's 2016 Strategic Plan recommended that the City pursue a new, state-of-the-art library space. The Library Space Needs Study concluded that an additional 11,000 square feet of space was required to fulfill the goals set out in the Library's Strategic Plan.

Throughout the planning process there has been significant input from members of the Library's stakeholder groups and from the community at large. Community participation has been key in developing the goals set by the Library Strategic Plan and the resultant space requirements set out in the Library Space Needs Study. The results of the Space Needs Study were presented to the City Council during a study session on March 28, 2017. In April 2017, Mr. John Arrillaga approached City staff with a philanthropic offer to assist.

October 10, 2017 – approve next steps for library system improvements

Council looked to move forward with improvements to both libraries, with the library on the Burgess campus funded by the Arrillaga gift

The next steps for the Main Library portion of the system improvements are the approval of the siting and uses for the main library building, followed by initiating a schematic design process.

May 22, 2018 staff report – approve next steps library system improvements

The City Council directed staff to work with the Library Subcommittee on a siting and uses evaluation for the Main Library. The City hosted three public siting and uses meetings to gather community feedback on the siting and possible uses of an improved main library building. That process is complete.

The City hosted a South Bay libraries tour of the Los Gatos Library and Palo Alto Mitchell Park Library to provide the opportunity to see and hear information about the facility and programming uses at other modern local libraries.

Recommended action

Staff recommends that City Council consider and approve the following items related to the Library Systems

Improvements project:

1. Finalize the needs assessment for the Belle Have Library branch
2. Approve the Laurel Street site for the new main library building which would include the addition of a large community room/City Council meeting room to the project and other components that the City Council believes should be included
3. Direct staff to work with architecture team to develop schematic designs for the Main Library
4. Direct staff to explore funding mechanisms for the system improvements project

[October 2, 2018](#) – Almanac article on Arrillaga withdrawal of offer

[October 9, 2018](#) – Belle Haven Library needs assessment

[January 19, 2019](#) staff report – proposed Library System Improvements project scope, planning process, goals, and tentative timeline.

After Arrillaga withdrew his offer for the main library, the City folded in the branch library replacement. That was further behind the main library (no space or needs study for the branch at that point). 2019 was the continuation and then the finish of the branch space needs study.

New main library

The withdrawal of Arrillaga's philanthropic pledge is a financial setback; however, it provides the opportunity to conduct the City's traditional community-oriented planning and design work process that a project of this nature and scope requires. Some aspects of the project were placed on a fast track in response to the pledge, resulting in community members protesting that the project was moving too fast and that the City was not as responsive to community input as it should have been for a project as far-reaching and impactful as this. Now that the pledge is no longer a driving factor, there is more time and flexibility to proceed with the next steps of the project in a way that actively involves and engages community members in every step of the process. The initial research and study phase (Phase I) for the main library component of the LSIP project was completed with the finalization of the Main Library Space Needs Study in March 2017. When the Belle Haven Space Needs Study is completed and presented to City Council April 9, 2019, the top two major LSIP project components will be at the same stage of development at the same time. This fortuitous alignment presents the opportunity to achieve efficiencies, system integration, and economy of scale in the preliminary design process (Phase II) by moving both LSIP project components forward under the same design contract. Staff anticipates presenting options and potential next steps to City Council April 9, potentially including a request for authorization to issue a RFP or RFQ for architectural design services and preliminary design (Phase II) for the main library in parallel with and under the same design contract as the Belle Haven branch library, which would remain the first priority.

[March 26, 2019](#) – Info item on BH branch library space needs study (Item J-1, pp 120)

April 16, 2019 – Review of BH space needs study and request for RFP for conceptual design (Item H-2, pp 109). Council approved the space needs study and RFP issuance for conceptual design.

October 2019 – Facebook announces intent to collaborate with the City and build the BHCC.

December 10, 2019, staff info item on Facebook offer

December 16, 2019 – written offer from Facebook received.

January 28, 2020 – City approves collaboration and formally accepts offer.

The main library portion of the Library System Improvements project was put on hold when Facebook's offer was accepted. The money set aside under the larger LSIP project was then used to help pay the city's portion of the BHCC construction.

10/13/2020 – considering which additional amenities to include in the construction of BHCC
<https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2020-meetings/agendas/20201013-cc-agenda-packet.pdf>

11/10/2020 – funding options for city portion of BHCC
<https://menlopark.gov/files/sharedassets/public/v/1/agendas-and-minutes/city-council/2020-meetings/agendas/20201110-cc-agenda-packet.pdf>

Ad-Hoc Committee Task Schedule and Responsibilities Update 11/19

Ad-Hoc Committee Task Schedule and Responsibilities

Update 11/19

Task	Due Date	Lead Responsible	Status
Present			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarize What does the Library Do Now – Map Strengths and Weaknesses of Present 	March 2025	Brian W/Kim C	
Meet Library Staff Staff Report Library of the Future (June 2025)	June 2025		
Library Support Groups Friends of the Library Menlo Park Historical Society Menlo Park Library Foundation		Kim C Jessica Carol O	
Summarize Former Plans New Library	Dec. 2024	Kim C/Carol O.	Completed
Benchmark: Visit Libraries Benchmarking Template Hayward Library Visit Carmel / Burlingame / Palo Alto / Simsbury CT / Worthington Ohio / Atherton / Redwood City / Los Altos	March 2025	Michael H Michael / Kim/ Brian	Dec. 11
Information Search for Libraries		Michael H / Scott Slater	
Star Ranking : Dimensions / Where Menlo Park Stands – Strength and weaknesses / What would Menlo Park need to do to get the highest Rating?	February	Nick	
Library Survey review	March		

Task Schedule and Responsibilities

Task	Due Date	Lead Responsible	Status
Future			
What should the Library of the Future Do - Map	May	Brian W /	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus Groups Meet Constituents : Young Children/Teens/Families/ Seniors/College? -/ Businesses / Schools 	April	Brian W /Kim C /Michael H	
Meet/ Brainstorm Library Staff			
Information Search for Libraries			
Review Literature on Library of the Future and their role			
Library Staff Report : Library of the Future	May		



STAFF REPORT

Library Commission

Meeting Date:

11/25/2024

Staff Report Number:

LC-2024-039

Regular Business:

Library and Community Services department statistics and recent activities

Recommendation

City staff recommends that the Library Commission (LC) review and provide feedback on the statistics and recent activities in the Library and Community Services (LCS) department outlined in this report.

Policy Issues

As a duly appointed advisory body to the City Council, the LC is charged with advising the City Council on matters related to the City's libraries.

Background

LCS provides a wide range of lifelong learning and recreational opportunities for Menlo Park residents of all ages, abilities, and lived experiences. Programs and facilities include public libraries, recreation and sports, early childhood education, after-school programs, summer youth camps, older adults (senior) services, athletic fields and courts, community events, and aquatics.

Analysis

Departmental statistics: October 2024

LCS collects statistics related to department activities. These data help to inform decision-making and improve services for the community. Monthly statistics for October 2024 are provided in Attachment A. Some noteworthy statistics include:

- Belle Haven Library number of patron questions answered more than doubled from October 2023 (244 questions answered) to October 2024 (521 questions answered)
- Belle Haven Library programs almost tripled from October 2023 (7 programs with 116 program attendees) to October 2024 (25 programs with 326 attendees)
- The Halloweek! community event series attendance and activities expanded in 2024:
 - The Halloween Hoopla parade and carnival's attendance increased approximately 36% from 2023 (estimated 1,100 attendees) to 2024 (estimated 1,500 attendees)
 - The Pumpkin Splash added a second location at Belle Haven Pool in addition to Burgess Pool in 2024, increasing total attendance approximately 50% from 2023 (estimated 101 attendees at one location) to 2024 (estimated 150 attendees at two locations)
 - A new Trunk or Treat event was added at Belle Haven Community Campus in 2024, and proved instantly popular, drawing a higher-than-anticipated attendance of approximately 215 people.
- The October 2024 compilation includes a new statistic that tracks the numbers of new City recreation client accounts, which are used by people to enroll in recreation classes and summer camps, purchase tickets to events, and apply for facility rentals, among other functions. The number of new recreation

client accounts increased 77% from October 2023 (215 new accounts created) to October 2024 (380 new accounts created)

- Staff is preparing to add more data points to these monthly reports starting in January 2025, including customer service feedback and "library of things" circulation statistics. Suggestions for additional statistics are welcomed.

Library of things: Seed lending libraries

Part of the City of Menlo Park's "library of things," the seed lending libraries operate as community seed exchanges in which borrowers can "check out" a wide variety of vegetable and flower seeds to plant in their gardens for home use (Attachment B). The seed lending libraries are housed in repurposed library card catalogs at both of Menlo Park's library locations. There, visitors can find heritage seeds, gardening workshops, education and resources to grow food and foster community resilience, self-reliance and a culture of sharing.

Seed borrowers are encouraged to record their seed "check outs" in paper logbooks. There have been 865 log entries in 2024 to date (Oct. 31), averaging around 86 log entries per month. The seed lending libraries feature a wide variety of seeds, and nearly all varieties eventually find borrowers. Flowers are among the most popular varieties, as are California Natives and easy fast-growing vegetables like tomatoes and beets.

The seed lending libraries are primarily supported by dedicated, hardworking volunteers who help to sort, label, and replenish the seeds, as well as to host monthly garden talk sessions and twice-yearly community seed swap events. Menlo Park Library Foundation provides funding support.

Pilot program: Makerspace drop-in hours

The City of Menlo Park has launched a pilot program to make the Makerspace at Belle Haven Library available for drop-in, casual use. The pilot program is in response to community interest and in preparation for future "Open Lab" hours planned in 2025.

The Makerspace is available for casual, drop-in use during times Belle Haven Library is open, except when the Makerspace is otherwise scheduled for organized programs, classes, workshops, or rentals. Makerspace drop-in hours are subject to change daily depending on room availability and the schedules for organized activities; visitors may contact the library for information about the availability of drop-in hours on any given date.

Located on the second floor of the new Belle Haven Community Campus, the Makerspace at Belle Haven Library is a dynamic multi-use space that can accommodate a range of community programs including traditional arts and crafts, technology-aided creative work, and hands-on workshops. The Makerspace is regularly programmed with free community programs, including free programs for seniors and youth, as well as fee-based creative and educational classes. The Makerspace and its outdoor terrace also are available for rentals; hourly rental rates are listed in the City's master fee schedule.

The pilot program Makerspace drop-in hours are intended to be casual and self-guided in nature:

- No specific organized activities and no staff support for projects are provided during drop-in hours
- Library staff are always stationed in the adjacent second floor library within view of the Makerspace
- During the pilot program, in-house Makerspace equipment and materials are not available during unsupervised drop-in hours (Open Lab is coming in 2025)
- Makerspace drop-in visitors should bring all their own materials and equipment with them and remove them when they leave
- Typical materials or equipment a visitor might bring include drawing paper, non-toxic paints and brushes, knitting materials, puzzles, model kits with non-toxic glues and paints, a laptop and

headphones, or simply a book to read.

Visitors should check the library use guidelines to understand the prohibited materials that are not allowed in the Makerspace, which include but are not limited to: food and drink, noxious and/or toxic substances, oversized items, weapons, items that generate disruptive noise, and items that present health and safety hazards. Visitors are welcome and encouraged to share the space, help keep it in good working condition for all to enjoy, and share feedback and ideas to help inform the planning of activities and projects for the future "Open Lab" hours.

When launched next year, the "Open Lab" hours will include supervised access to in-house Makerspace equipment such as sewing machines, a large-format scanner, high-performance computers, Cricut smart cutting machines, fiber arts, painting and drawing tools. "Open Lab" hours will include trained staff on hand to assist users with their projects.

Report-out: Job fair at Belle Haven Community Campus

On Nov. 13, the Belle Haven Community Campus hosted a successful job fair event organized by Menlo-Park-based nonprofit JobTrain. The event drew over 250 attendees who interacted with 26 local organizations seeking new workers. Participating organizations included the City of Menlo Park, County of San Mateo, Meta Platforms Inc., Palo Alto Childcare, Child Care Careers, Drew Pharmacy, JLL, and Stanford University Dining Hall. Meta also provided funding support toward the event's costs.

Attendees had the opportunity to meet recruiters from local employers, get a free professional portrait, sign up for LinkedIn Premium for free, enter a prize drawing, and enjoy music and food. Qualitative feedback from attendees about the event was overwhelmingly positive. Several attendees expressed that the new campus is an ideal location for a job fair and expressed interest in hosting more job fairs at the location in the future.

Belle Haven Youth Center playground now open to the public on weekends

Located at the new Belle Haven Community Campus, Belle Haven Youth Center (BHYC) is a school-age childcare program that provides licensed after-school care for children in kindergarten through fifth grade, as well as a full-day summer camp program. The BHYC features a fenced-in playground that is dedicated for the exclusive use of BHYC students on weekdays when the students are present, as required by BHYC's childcare license.

In response to community interest, the BHYC playground is now open to the public on weekends, when the BHYC students are not present. The playground's new public access hours are Saturdays and Sundays, 9:00 a.m. to sunset. The playground equipment is recommended for children aged 5-12 years. Members of the public can access the playground on weekends by using the outdoor gate located on the Kelly Park side of the Belle Haven Community Campus building.

Winter holiday-themed community events

The City of Menlo Park is preparing to host two family-friendly community events on traditional winter holiday themes. All are invited to enjoy and celebrate together on the following dates:

- Light up the Season at Fremont Park, Friday, Dec. 6
- Photos with Santa at Belle Haven Community Campus, Saturday, Dec. 14

Light Up the Season

Menlo Park residents are invited to ring in the holiday shopping season with a festive "winter wonderland" themed event in downtown Menlo Park. Visitors will enjoy free family-friendly entertainment, youth performances, hot cocoa and cider (quantities limited) and the lighting of the big oak tree. Visitors are highly

encouraged to shop and dine at local Menlo Park businesses while they are downtown for the event. All ages are welcome. This event is rain or shine on Friday, Dec. 6, from 5:30-7 p.m. at Fremont Park, Santa Cruz Ave. at University Dr. (Attachment B)

Photos with Santa

This beloved family event will be held in a new location in 2024, at Belle Haven Community Campus. Attendees are encouraged to bring their cameras and come together for holiday cheer with a delicious breakfast, fun holiday crafts and photos with the North Pole's most famous inhabitant. Advance reservations are required – tickets are \$5 per person. This event is rain or shine on Saturday, Dec. 14, from 8:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at Belle Haven Community Campus, 100 Terminal Ave. (Attachment C).

Public Notice

Public notification was achieved by posting the agenda, with the agenda items being listed, at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.

Attachments

- A. October 2024 statistics
- B. Hyperlink – Seed Lending Library webpage. menlopark.gov/Government/Departments/Library-and-Community-Services/Library/Account-services/Seed-Lending-Library
- C. Hyperlink – Light up the Season community celebration. menlopark.gov/Citywide-calendar/Community-events/20241206-Light-Up-the-Season
- D. Hyperlink – Photos with Santa community event. menlopark.gov/Citywide-calendar/Community-events/20241214-Photos-with-Santa

Report prepared by:

Ashley Walker, Management Analyst

Nick Szegda, Assistant Library and Community Services Director

Report reviewed by:

Sean S. Reinhart, Library and Community Services Director

CITY OF MENLO PARK
LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
STATISTICS – OCTOBER 2024

ATTACHMENT A

Table 1. Library items circulated

Location	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
800 Alma St.	43,407	41,761	44,732	45,775	43,546	47,636	43,829	44,715	46,477	46,388	47,706	44,318	**
413 Ivy Dr. / BHCC*	877	850	929	846	1,043	1,217	980	1,051	2,442	3,048	2,528	2,142	**
Total online / digital	11,598	11,598	12,082	12,977	11,862	12,227	11,547	12,204	12,910	18,284	19,394	18,490	**

*Between Apr – May 2024, Belle Haven Library was relocated from 413 Ivy Dr. to the Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC).

**October circulation data was not available by the time of this report's publication, but will be provided in the next report..

Table 2. Library cards

	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
New library cards issued – MP residents	150	139	122	158	170	117	158	122	263	259	244	207	186
Total MP resident library cardholders	22,020	22,327	22,133	22,415	23,177	23,369	22,715	22,826	23,273	23,169	23,340	23,444	23,431

Table 3. Library patron questions answered

Location	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
800 Alma St.	3,046	2,977	3,169	3,342	3,167	3,360	3,118	3,105	3,761	3,653	3,482	3,182	3,283
413 Ivy Dr. / BHCC*	244	244	255	273	204	244	201	250	600	586	463	429	521

*Between Apr – May 2024, Belle Haven Library was relocated from 413 Ivy Dr. to the Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC).

Table 4. Library holds filled (item requests)

Location*	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
800 Alma St - Incoming holds	4,076	3,760	3,861	4,419	3,895	3,871	3,597	3,953	3,930	3,897	4,054	4,189	4,123
800 Alma St - Outgoing holds	3,062	3,171	2,688	3,471	3,074	3,311	3,122	3,078	3,293	3,091	3,897	3,064	3,035
413 Ivy Dr. / BHCC - Incoming holds	154	120	87	158	116	78	72	47	109	167	227	194	162
413 Ivy Dr. / BHCC - Outgoing holds	190	177	160	191	144	175	154	22	23	6	10	11	26

*Between Apr – May 2024, Belle Haven Library was relocated from 413 Ivy Dr. to the Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC).

Table 5. Library foot traffic (gate count)

Location*	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
800 Alma St.	13,541	12,580	12,283	14,060	13,183	15,066	12,763	12,949	14,038	14,699	14,408	13,262	13,304
413 Ivy Dr. / BHCC	1,248	1,148	1,041	1,050	981	1,220	875	*Not yet installed	4,101	3,863	3,266	3,117	3,221

*Between Apr – May 2024, Belle Haven Library was relocated from 413 Ivy Dr. to the Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC).

Table 6. Library program attendance

	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
Total program attendance	1,121	754	798	1,000	1,163	993	1,080	1,171	998	1,174	1,248	795	798
800 Alma St.													
# of programs	36	37	31	31	26	27	37	34	36	27	37	31	39
800 Alma St.													
Total program attendance	116	158	125	48	144	110	59	68	331	498	298	190	326
413 Ivy Dr. / BHCC*													
# of programs	7	9	8	6	7	8	5	5	10	29	29	22	25
413 Ivy Dr. / BHCC*													

*Between Apr – May 2024, Belle Haven Library was relocated from 413 Ivy Dr. to the Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC).

Table 7. Preschool child development – enrollment

Location	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
Menlo Children's Center	23	26	28	27	29	33	38	37	41	40	39	28	28
Belle Haven Child Development Center	50	53	60	56	62	62	63	63	63	63	35	43	44

CITY OF MENLO PARK
LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
STATISTICS – OCTOBER 2024

Table 8. School age child development (after school enrichment) – enrollment

Location	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
Menlo Children's Center - After School	30	34	33	36	36	36	32	32	53	43	30	30	31
Belle Haven Youth Center	54	54	54	52	52	52	52	52	45	45	67	55	55

Table 9. Senior Center services

	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
Lunches served	642	422	315	511	521	435	-	243	683	866	914	1,113	1,132
Grocery boxes distributed	460	230	230	460	460	460	-	230	460	460	460	460	460
Senior shuttle trips	1,200	1,057	761	1,126	1,170	1,162	-	614	1,466	1,745	1,618	1,660	1,786

*Senior Center was closed during April and part of May 2024 to relocate to Belle Haven Community Campus

**In a previous report, the data provided for Lunches Served in Sep. 2024 was incorrect. The Sep. 2024 data has been corrected in this report.

Table 10. Older adults / seniors class enrollment

Location	Summer 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2023-24	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Fall 2024*
700 Alma St – Enrollment - residents	437	421	113	21	25	25
700 Alma St - Enrollment - non-residents	264	269	100	11	11	11
700 Alma St # of senior classes offered	14	14	14	2	2	2
100 Terminal Ave. – Enrollment - residents	-	-	-	264	116	109
100 Terminal Ave. – Enrollment - non-residents	-	-	-	44	72	54
100 Terminal Ave. – # of senior classes offered	-	-	-	17	16	14

*The Fall 2024 season is still in progress and data shown is not yet final.

Table 11. Recreational classes

Location	Summer 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2023-24	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Fall 2024*
700 Alma St. - Enrollment – residents	166	297	356	323	206	485
700 Alma St. - Enrollment – non-residents	67	152	150	107	114	196
700 Alma St. - # of classes offered	73	57	48	48	56	57
700 Alma St. - # of instructors	28	21	20	20	20	26
100 Terminal Ave. - Enrollment – residents	-	-	-	103	99	120
100 Terminal Ave. - Enrollment – non-residents	-	-	-	19	22	27
100 Terminal Ave. - # of classes offered	-	-	-	16	16	14
100 Terminal Ave. - # of instructors	-	-	-	9	9	10

*The Fall 2024 season is still in progress and data shown is not yet final.

Table 12. Gymnastics classes

	Summer 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2023-24	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Fall 2024*
Enrollment – residents	416	490	740	814	577	817
Enrollment – non-residents	174	158	159	257	285	342
Classes offered	80	93	95	114	114	120

*The Fall 2024 season is still in progress and data shown is not yet final.

CITY OF MENLO PARK
LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT
STATISTICS – OCTOBER 2024

Table 13. Sports classes

Location	Summer 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2023-24	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Fall 2024*
600 Alma St - Enrollment - resident	242	76	265	26	113	177
600 Alma St - Enrollment - non-resident	181	11	114	80	101	113
600 Alma St - # of classes offered	40	3	17	4	11	28
600 Alma St - # of instructors	10	3	7	2	5	6
600 Alma St - Drop-in basketball visits	172	359	633	665	474	295
600 Alma St - Drop-in volleyball visits	513	505	927	542	930	202
600 Alma St - Leagues – individual registrations	1,239	156	224	458	180	380
600 Alma St - Leagues – team registrations	111	35	31	70	18	65
100 Terminal Ave. - Drop-in basketball visits	-	-	-	28	169	23
100 Terminal Ave. - Drop-in volleyball visits	-	-	-	26	58	65
100 Terminal Ave. - Drop-in Fitness Center	-	-	-	512	877	343

*The Fall 2024 season is still in progress and data shown is not yet final.

Table 14. Facility rentals

Location	Summer 2023	Fall 2023	Winter 2023-24	Spring 2024	Summer 2024	Fall 2024*
700 Alma St. - Rentals - residents	18	24	23	21	0	18
700 Alma St. - Rentals – non-residents	76	62	81	73	19	25
100 Terminal Ave. - residents	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10
100 Terminal Ave. - non-residents	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	4
Athletic field rentals (hours reserved)	1,042	785	722	1146	560	703

*The Fall 2024 season is still in progress and data shown is not yet final.

Table 15. Recreation client accounts

	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
New recreation client accounts	215	335	895	412	327	844	451	515	490	558	1,216	523	380
Total recreation client accounts	5,798	6,013	6,348	7,243	7,655	7,982	8,826	9,277	9,792	10,282	10,840	12,056	12,579

Table 16. Large-scale community event attendance

Location	Oct. 2023	Nov. 2023	Dec. 2023	Jan. 2024	Feb. 2024	Mar. 2024	Apr. 2024	May 2024	Jun. 2024	Jul. 2024	Aug. 2024	Sep. 2024	Oct. 2024
Black Liberation Month Celebration 2/11	-	-	-	-	256	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spring Fest – Burgess Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Small child's egg hunt - Arrillaga Rec. Center	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-
Egg Hunt – Burgess Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	450	-	-	-	-	-	-
BHCC Grand Opening	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,000	-	-	-	-	-
Juneteenth	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	-	-	-	-
4 th of July Parade and Celebration	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,200	-	-	-
Summer Concert – Fremont Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	270	-	-
Summer Concert – Fremont Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	230	-	-
Summer Concert – Fremont Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	244	-	-
Summer Concert – Fremont Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	222	-	-
Summer Concert – Fremont Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	-	-
Summer Concert – Fremont Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	550	-	-
Summer Concert – Kelly Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	300	-	-	-
Summer Concert – Kelly Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	80	-	-
Summer Concert – Kelly Park	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	330	-	-
Trunk-or-Treat	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	215
Halloween Hoopla	1,100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,500
Pumpkin Splash	101	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	150
Light Up the Season	-	-	750	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Photos with Santa	-	-	300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

LIBRARY COMMISSION
TENTATIVE AGENDA SCHEDULE
November 25, 2024

MEETING DATE*	TENTATIVE AGENDA TOPICS**
March 18, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belle Haven neighborhood library book survey results • Commission attendance report • Comparative library statistics • Policy updates: bulletin board policy; exhibits and displays policy; user account privacy policy
April 22, 2024 (4 th Monday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select commission chair and vice-chair • Recommend the LCS department strategic plan 2024-26 • Onboarding new commissioners • BHCC project updates • City-run childcare program updates
May 22, 2024 Joint meeting w/ PRC 4 th Wednesday Location: BHCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHCC start of operations
June 17, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study session: Prepare updates to the LC work plan • Consider assigning commissioner liaisons to library affinity groups • Recommend departmental policy: Library meeting room use policy
July 15, 2024 Location: BHCC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study session: Prepare a report-out to City Council on the LC work plan 2023-24 • BHCC operational updates • Individual commissioner reports
August 19, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend updates to the LC work plan 2024-25 • Establish an ad-hoc subcommittee focused on community library needs • Update on departmental goal to achieve Star Library rating
September 16 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on City-run childcare programs • Staff presentations: Library overview • Update on Commission informational liaison assignments • Ad-hoc subcommittee update
October 21, 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad-hoc subcommittee update • Preliminary results of child care needs assessment survey • Review departmental strategic plan
November 25, 2024 (4 th Monday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: Library programs • Ad-hoc subcommittee update • Approve the 2025 Library Commission meeting calendar • Policy update: collection development policy
December 18, 2024 (Joint meeting w/ PRC) (3 rd Wednesday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year in review • Open house / social
January 27, 2025 (4 th Monday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: Library data • Policy update: makerspace user policy • Library accreditation / benchmarking update
February 24, 2025 (4 th Monday)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •
March 17, 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation: Library outreach
Unscheduled future topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BHCC updates • Review of library survey collection tools • Presentations: Collection development; Library of the future

* Library Commission meetings are held at 6:30pm on the third Monday of the month unless otherwise specified.

** All dates and topics are tentative and subject to change