



CITY OF FULLERTON

Fullerton Public Library Board of Trustees

Ellen Ballard
President, Fullerton Public Library Board of Trustees
353 West Commonwealth Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92832

August 25, 2022

The Honorable Fred Jung
Mayor, City of Fullerton
303 West Commonwealth Avenue Fullerton, CA 92832

Dear Mayor Jung and Members of the City Council:

I am writing to report on the Fullerton Public Library's condition as of June 30, 2022. This update fulfills the Board of Trustees' requirement to annually update the council per Fullerton Municipal Code 2.16.060.

As you are aware the Library has been responsive to the needs of the public before, during and now as we move in to a new phase of COVID-19. Bringing back in-person programming is a big part of the library's presence in Fullerton:

- PreSchool Storytime, Baby & Toddler Storytime,
- Family and Adult Movie Matinees,
- Monthly North Orange County Boardgamers Game Day in conjunction with So Cal Game Connection,
- Small business and entrepreneurial programs from SCORE Orange County,
- Personal finance and financial literacy workshops with the Credit Union of Southern California

The library staff and the supporting community continue to make excellent use of the library's annual appropriation.

Priorities, Changes & Transitions

Our priority here at the Library continues to be serving the educational, cultural, business, and recreational needs of Fullerton's residents and visitors.

THE EDUCATION COMMUNITY



Circulation Services

Fullerton Public Library strives to provide equitable and barrier-free access to information and library services. Although fines and fees may be a source of library revenue, there is much debate concerning their effectiveness in encouraging the return of materials, their public relations effects, and to minimize the need for staff to manage and collect fines and fees. Research proves that monetary fines present an economic barrier to access of library materials and services, and there is mounting evidence that indicates eliminating fines and fees increases the return of valuable library books and materials, library card adoption, and library usage.

As a first step towards the possible elimination of fines and fees and striving for cashless transactions at the Fullerton Public Library (FPL), the Board of Trustees (with the City Council's approval through the annual budget process) have directed staff to extend our pilot project eliminating several of the Library's fines/fees beginning with the effects of COVID-19 on the library circulation. **Patrons still must pay for lost or damaged materials**, yet do not have to pay additional fees for overdue items. This is in line with the adoption of fine free policies by the County of Orange as well as the cities of Orange, Huntington Beach, Santa Ana and Buena Park and Placentia District Libraries as well as the regional libraries of Los Angeles and many libraries across the country.

It has been our experience that users are more conducive to returning valuable library materials after our calm and welcoming phone and in-person conversations that reinforce our City's desire for the Library to continue as a positive force for literacy in this, the Education Community. We believe the benefit of concentrating on the welcoming return of materials and the increased use of the library as a force for community wellbeing will continue to more than prove its value.

Children's Services

- The library transitioned to a monthly STEM kit for school-aged children in grades 1-4 in August of 2021. From August 2021 to June 2022, the Children's Division distributed more than 800 activity kits to children and families.
- The library transitioned to a monthly early childhood take-and-make craft kit for children ages 3-6. From August 2021 to May 2022, the Children's Division distributed over 1000 kits to children and families.
- The library resumed the Fall (October-November 2021) In-n-Out Burger Cover to Cover Reading incentive program with the traditional in-person paper log format. The Children's Division enrolled 298 participants and had 127 children complete all three prize levels.
- The library was able to resume live in-person preschool storytime program in November 2021. Children's librarians presented a 6-week session of programming for 3- to 6-year-olds with a total of 129 participants.

- The library conducted our Winter Reading Club online with in-person prize pick-up from December 14, 2021, to January 15, 2022. 177 children enrolled in the program, with 62 participants completing all prize levels—an impressive 35% completion rate.
- After a programming pause due to rising Covid-19 cases, the Children’s Division resumed preschool storytime programming for 3- to 6-year-olds in March 2022. Staff conducted weekly programs through May 12, 2022, with a total of 447 participants.
- Children’s Librarians conducted outreach, with visits to the Boys’ and Girls’ Club of Fullerton West Valencia in February and March. In May 2021, Staff promoted library services and Summer Programs to parent workshop groups at Orangethorpe and Maple elementary schools. Due to COVID instead of Children’s Librarians visiting every K-3 classroom. Children’s Staff partnered with the Adult Services Division to create a Summer Reading Program promotional video which was shared with the Fullerton School District and the community at large. This was in lieu of our past practice of personally visiting every K-3rd grade classroom in the Fullerton School District.
- In June 2021, the library began the 2022 Summer Reading Club. Participants enroll online and pickup prizes in the library. The children’s division is conducting an in-person preschool storytime for 3- to 6-year-olds. We have transitioned our early childhood take-and-make craft kits back to a weekly format with distribution to our storytime participants. In addition, children’s staff resumed the highly anticipated Baby and Toddler storytime for our 0- to 3-year-old patrons and families, as well as a weekly family movie matinee on Tuesdays in July.

Adult, Teen, Local History, and Circulation Services

- Resumed of in-person computer services with 15 internet workstations and printing services.
- Wi-fi hotpots are available for check-out by library patrons.
- Weekly community outreach to the Fullerton Downtown Market and special events at the Fullerton Community Center.
- Innovative digital outreach via YouTube and social media, including our California Library Association PR (Public Relations) Excellence Award-winning Captain Info video series.
- Local History Services reopened for 8 hours per-week of in-person services beginning in March of 2021.
- Rolled out with the help of Technical Services the California Parks Pass Program where library card holders can check out and “like” a book, earning a one-day parking pass allowing access to most California State Parks.

Technical Services with the assistance of all Library Divisions

- Roll out of a new library website funded initially and on an ongoing basis by the Fullerton Public Library Foundation.(See Funding Opportunities)

Library Operation Plans

The Library is operating on a 5-day schedule for public access to the library Tuesday-Thursday 11 AM to 7 PM and Friday and Saturday from 10 AM to 5 PM. A few administrative staff work Monday through Friday. This is using a minimum of staff for our 36 open hours down from our past seven day operation at 61 open hours. As the city budget process has shown, we are in need of a few key full-time positions and need some more part-time positions. City HR is working with the Library on these recruitments.

Children's Services

- Monthly STEM kits for our school-age patrons will continue for the foreseeable future.
- In September 2022, children's staff plan to conduct Fall sessions of both Preschool and Baby and Toddler Storytimes.
- In October 2022, Children's staff plans to participate in the In-n-Out Burger Cover-to-Cover program.
- In December 2022, staff will conduct the Winter Reading Club, using the READsquared online platform.
- Staff will evaluate the family movie matinee program and transition to a monthly evening or weekend format.

Adult Services

- Continue with current programming and outreach to the community.
- Return to the presentation of Town and Gown and Distinguished Speakers series.

Funding Opportunities

- Prior to the COVID-19 mandated shutdown, the Fullerton Public Library offered passport services to residents and non-residents alike. Beginning August 25, 2022 members of the public may call the library to schedule an appointment to receive passport services. The City Council has generously allocated \$30,000 in American Rescue Act Plan (ARPA) funds to cover labor costs to start-up passport services via our Passport Office here in the Library.
- The Library received its annual contribution from the Library Foundation in December 2021 for a total of \$42,892.
- The Library Foundation also supports the Library Services portion of the Hunt Library Revitalization Project's Information Technology Grant in the amount of

\$200,000 to provide the 20% matching funding required for this Federal Communications Commission (FCC) grant.

- In addition the Library Foundation is funding the Glass Box Technology (City IT) contract for implementation of the above grant and \$8,149 for consultant Sutherland/Ed Tech in order to comply with the complex requirements of this grant administered by the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) which is an arm of the FCC.
- The Library Foundation supported the initial and monthly funding and of our new FPL website implemented by our Technical Services Division with the help of all library divisions. The Library Foundation supported the initial and monthly funding of Message Bee and Chat which involves the participation of the Adult, Children's, Circulation, and Technical Services Divisions. Message Bee will enhance the library's communication via email with all patrons. The communication will be in English, Spanish, and Korean. Chat will allow patrons to "text" their reference and other questions to library staff for answers and service that is not dependent on email or voice-only (telephonic) communication. Chat will have the advantage of communication in even more languages than Message Bee.
- The Library also received its annual contribution for 2022 from the Friends of the Library in March 2022 for a total of \$50,000.
- The Library received its annual \$2,400 donation in July from the Fullerton Sunrise Rotary. The funds are used to purchase picture books. In the past it has been possible to have Rotary Readers read a story at our Bedtime Bears family storytime, we hope to bring that back in the coming fiscal year

As always, thank you, for your support of our free and public Library.

Sincerely,

Ellen Ballard