

Contra Costa County Library Foundation

In early 2021, the county librarian brought together an informal group of library supporters so that they could begin the work of establishing a countywide library foundation. Once established, the goal of the Contra Costa Library Foundation will be to secure additional funding for the library in order to further support its strategic priorities. Foundation funding will enhance public revenue and will be used to address opportunity and equity gaps in services, programs, and facilities; and provide funds for services that cannot be attained through existing revenue sources that will benefit the entirety of the county's residents.

The foundation will be an independent nonprofit organization that works with the community to raise funds for critically-needed programs and services delivered by the library system. The foundation's initial priorities will include raising funds for electronic resources that can be used by all county residents; strengthening the capacity of local library "Friends" groups through an affiliate program; and supporting capital projects in low-income communities.

A one-time allocation of \$50,000 in seed money will allow the Foundation Organizing Committee to:

- Enlist professional legal and financial expertise to assist with creating the foundation's fiscal and organizational structure and registration as a CA 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- Create a website presence and fund online hosting costs associated with a website

Contra Costa County is the only library system in the Bay Area without a county-wide foundation. \$50,000 in seed funding would signal the Board of Supervisors' endorsement for its creation and in so doing, would provide a powerful lever to attract strong board leadership and private funds for ongoing support and program development.

Attached is the \$300,000 proposal submitted by the Contra Costa Library Foundation Organizing Committee.

Recommendation

A one-time allocation of \$50,000 is recommended to support the establishment of the Foundation.

Proposal for One-Time Measure X Funds to Establish the Contra Costa Library Foundation

Request: \$300,000 in Measure X one-time funds to establish the foundation and provide the capacity to raise additional funds for library programs and services

Our county library system has always done more with less. Its funding is vastly disproportionate to the scale of need and lags far behind other Bay Area counties per capita. The County Library serves *all members* of our diverse population, but, given its current funding structure, it cannot do so in *equitable* measure to all residents and communities. We therefore recognize the call for revenue streams that can go above and beyond what public funding provides to bring more robustness and parity to our library system.

We are **the only county library system in the Bay Area** without a county-wide foundation that can serve to enhance public revenue. Funding support for our proposal will leverage the foundation's ability to attract donations from philanthropic organizations, corporations, and other contributors.

The Contra Costa Library Foundation is a "step-up" initiative whose seeds were sown when the Library Commission itemized extensive countywide disparities in a 2016 report, disparities that have only intensified since the report's publication and, especially, during the pandemic. The foundation's seeds have since grown, and we are now asking the **county to step up** to help us close the equity gap and build an organizational framework for more robust library support. We are requesting \$300,000 in one-time funding to cover start-up costs to establish the foundation.

Goal

The goal of the Contra Costa Library Foundation is to secure additional funding for the library system and to act as a catalyst to execute its strategic priorities. Through foundation funding, we hope to (1) address opportunity and equity gaps in services, programs, and facilities, and (2) provide money for services that cannot be attained through existing revenue sources to benefit the entirety of the county's residents. We intend for the foundation to be an independent nonprofit that works with the community to raise funds for critically-needed programs and services for the library system. To do so, the foundation will endeavor to solicit support for the library administration's funding priorities and will seek opportunities for coordination, potential collaboration, and organizational development with our local library foundations and friends groups. The foundation's initial priorities include funding for electronic resources and lendable technology that can be used by all county residents; strengthening capacity of library support

groups, particularly friends groups, through an affiliate program; and developing capital projects in impacted communities.

Over the past year, the foundation's organizing committee has conducted outreach to numerous community stakeholders and foundations both inside and outside of Contra Costa County; consolidated its mission, objectives, and strategy; and coordinated efforts with library administration to ensure that funding will be allocated responsibly and strategically in alignment with the Library's targets and community needs.

Funding Priorities

The seed money requested would be utilized to support the following aspects of the foundation's start-up operations:

- Identification of and agreement with fiscal sponsor
- Enlistment of professional legal and financial expertise to assist with creating the foundation's fiscal and organizational structure and registration as a CA 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- Board recruitment and development
- Digital branding; website creation, design, and hosting; and marketing efforts
- Continued outreach to branch libraries; local friends and foundation groups; and externally, to the broader philanthropic community and civic organizations to identify partnerships, needs, and priorities
- Employment of a contract-based part-time executive director and coverage for expenses related to virtual office equipment and other needs
- Definition and implementation of programs to fulfill our mission to benefit county libraries, which may include:
 - funding the purchase of technology/software to benefit all patrons
 - supporting capital projects for developing branch libraries
 - providing opportunities to share best practices and resources through an affiliate program

A Dual Focus on Equity

Contra Costa County is as much characterized by its pockets of immense wealth as it is by its areas of deprivation. The library system serves *all members* of this diverse population, but, given its current funding structure, it cannot and does not do so in equitable measure to all residents and communities. We are the only county library system in the Bay Area without a county-wide foundation that can serve to enhance public funding. Measure X offers a unique opportunity for the County to spearhead the development of the Contra Costa Library

Foundation, and its support will be multiplied many times over and yield significant dividends to our community.

Two hinges inform the foundation's rationale and structure: (1) Contra Costa County Library's insufficient funding, particularly relative to other Bay Area counties, and (2) the systemic disparities that result from the uneven contributions of friends and foundation groups and cities to particular libraries, which manifest in differences in open hours, programming quantity and quality, and other outcomes.

Comparative Funding of Contra Costa County Library Relative to Other Bay Area Counties

The Library is allocated dedicated funding of 1.5% of the 1% ad valorem property tax and does not receive any other general fund monies from the County. The Library's budget for FY 21-22 is \$36.1 million, less than 1% of the County's entire budget. In looking at other Bay Area counties with comparable funding mechanisms and governance, Contra Costa County is funded at the lowest level on a per capita basis. The chart below shows the relative funding levels, population served, and branch coverage for Bay Area county library systems.

Library	Funding per Person	Population of Service Area	Number of Libraries	Library Budget FY 19-20
Contra Costa	\$32.89	1,042,344	26	\$35,714,141
Alameda	\$49.54	613,679	10	\$35,234,732
Solano	\$55.96	389,856	9	\$22,745,956
Sonoma	\$57.84	488,863	14	\$36,272,703
Napa	\$77.85	133,015	4	\$11,213,195
San Mateo	\$105.55	283,997	13	\$61,546,698
Santa Clara	\$120.22	444,238	8	\$60,902,127
Marin	\$122.83	142,424	10	\$19,993,341

In comparison to other East Bay libraries, many of which are familiar to and used by Contra Costa residents, our county also ranks the lowest in funding per capita. Notably, it also receives less funding per capita than the Richmond Public Library, the only other library system in Contra Costa County:

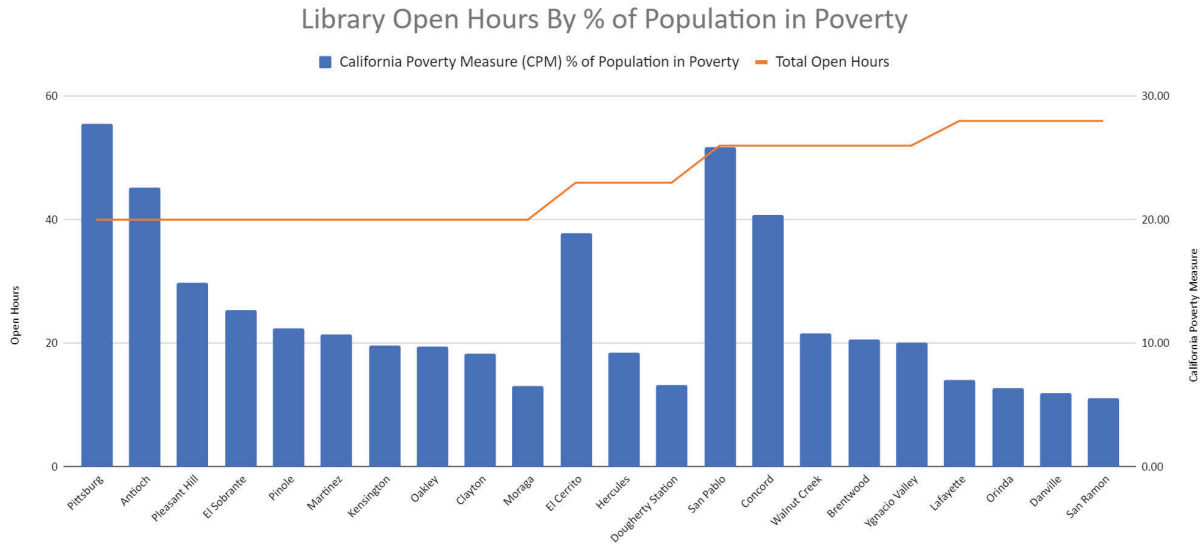
Library	Funding per Person	Population of Service Area	Number of Libraries	Library Budget FY 19-20
Contra Costa	\$32.89	1,042,344	26	\$35,714,141
Richmond	\$47.68	111,217	3	\$5,903,333
Pleasanton	\$51.17	79,464	1	\$4,124,212
Alameda City	\$59.93	81,312	3	\$4,897,331
Livermore	\$63.16	91,861	3	\$5,903,294
Oakland	\$97.41	433,697	18	\$42,619,842
Berkeley	\$166.67	122,580	5	\$20,734,529

In addition to lower funding per capita, Contra Costa County is also relatively distinguished by the fact that all other counties in the Bay Area have a countywide library foundation that provides an additional revenue source to support the Library’s mission. The chart below displays the net assets of these countywide foundations and other relevant information.

Library	Foundation Net Assets	Population of Service Area	Number of Libraries	Library Budget FY 19-20
Contra Costa	None	1,042,344	26	\$35,714,141
Napa	\$1,396,223	133,015	4	\$11,213,195
Alameda	\$1,246,839	613,679	10	\$35,234,732
Marin	\$707,073	142,424	10	\$19,993,341
Sonoma	\$365,347	488,863	14	\$36,272,703
Solano	\$319,649	389,856	9	\$22,745,956
San Mateo	\$244,151	283,997	13	\$61,546,698
Santa Clara	\$45,563	444,238	8	\$60,902,127

By any measure, the Contra Costa County library system is significantly underfunded. As a result, many residents have limited access to the library facilities and services they need and deserve. This inequity tracks across vectors of privilege: the branches that receive the largest

funding boost from their local governments and/or support groups are housed within high-income communities and have the lowest percentage of residents who are Black, Indigenous, and/or People of Color (BIPOC). The following four figures illuminate these disparities and impacts.

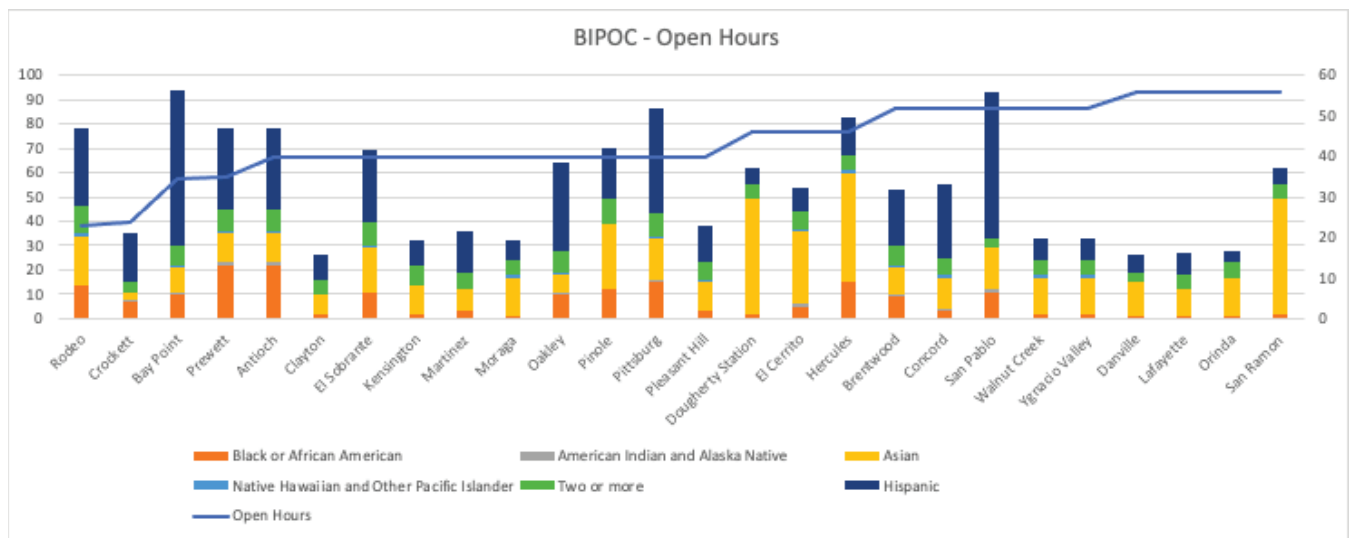


California Poverty Measure (CPM) % of Population in Poverty by Contra Costa Library Branch

Location	District	California Poverty Measure (CPM) % of Population in Poverty	Total Open Hours
Pittsburg	5	27.80	40
San Pablo	1	25.89	52
Antioch	5	22.62	40
Concord	4	20.40	52
El Cerrito	1	18.87	46
Pleasant Hill	4	14.91	40
El Sobrante	1	12.70	40
Pinole	1	11.21	40
Walnut Creek	4	10.77	52
Martinez	5	10.70	40
Brentwood	3	10.34	52
Ygnacio Valley	4	10.03	52
Kensington	1	9.79	40
Oakley	3	9.74	40

Hercules	5	9.21	46
Clayton	4	9.19	40
Lafayette	2	6.99	56
Dougherty Station	2	6.63	46
Moraga	2	6.55	40
Orinda	2	6.40	56
Danville	2	5.93	56
San Ramon	2	5.56	56

Only full service libraries included



Summary Of Funding Provided by Existing Library Foundation and Friends' Groups to Branch Libraries By District

District	Population	Number of CCC Libraries	Foundation/ Friends Groups	Annual Revenue	Annual Expenses	Total Net Assets
1	224,726	5	5	\$29,575	\$4,807	\$366,632
2	243,565	6	7	\$1,919,389	\$1,694,482	\$29,983,161
3	239,825	3	2	\$417,475	\$417,475	\$230,177
4	229,384	5	6	\$567,415	\$476,297	\$2,580,720
5	228,463	7	6	\$73,875	\$36,865	\$168,317

Data from most recent public tax filing from Guidestar

Commitment to Foundation Success

Contra Costa County libraries are already embedded in the community and are trusted and valued institutions that are uniquely positioned to improve and enhance the lives of our county's most vulnerable populations. Measure X funding allocated to a foundation supporting the Library would have an exponential impact for all Contra Costa County residents.

The County's commitment would signal the Board of Supervisors' endorsement of the creation of a Contra Costa Library Foundation, and in so doing would provide a powerful lever to attract strong board leadership and private funds for ongoing support and program development. We understand that you have many requests for impactful services. We hope that you will consider funding support for this important and impactful effort.

Please step up to help us launch and leverage this foundation that will afford tremendous opportunity and resources for county residents.

Contra Costa Library Foundation Organizing Committee

Members:

Nicole Gemmer (Chair)
District 2

Katherine Bracken
District 4

Kathleen Gilcrest
District 2

Susan Hildreth
District 2

Alison McKee
County Librarian

Rachel Rosekind
District 1

Peter Wilson
District 5