



# STAFF REPORT

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March 2, 2022  
File Number 1115-30

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## **SUBJECT**

**BUILDING FORWARD LIBRARY INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAM GRANT \$10 MILLION -**

## **DEPARTMENT**

Communications & Community Services

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Request the City Council approve Resolution 2022-32 authorizing the Deputy City Manager / Director of Communications & Community Services to submit an application to the California State Library for \$10 million in funding through the Building Forward Library Infrastructure Program Grant and complete all necessary documentation to receive and spend funds should they be awarded.

Staff Recommendation: Approval (Communications & Community Services: Joanna Axelrod)

Presenter: Joanna Axelrod

## **FISCAL ANALYSIS**

There is a requirement to match the awarded grant funds dollar-for-dollar. However, the City will submit a written Match Reduction Justification Request to have our match requirement eliminated based on our Local Operating Income Per Capita ("LIPC") number as part of the application process.

## **PREVIOUS ACTION**

None

## **BACKGROUND**

The Budget Act of 2021 (SB-129) allocated \$439 million in one-time funds to the California State Library to address life-safety and critical maintenance needs of public library facilities throughout California. This competitive grant program prioritizes funding for local library facilities located in high poverty areas of the state. The maximum grant amount per library facility is \$10,000,000.

The application period opened in February and closes March 21, 2022. Funds must be expended before March 31, 2026.



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Pursuant to SB 129, funding will be prioritized for the following:

- Projects addressing life safety and other critical maintenance needs; and
- Projects serving high poverty areas of the state.

For the purposes of this grant, critical maintenance and critical infrastructure projects are those needed to keep existing facilities, building-related structural components, and related building systems suitable for public use and compliant with all prevailing codes, rules, regulations, and standards governing their use, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. Examples include, but are not limited to, necessary repair or replacement of essential building systems like HVAC; repair or replacement of broken or nonfunctioning essential building components (locks, windows, elevators, and doors); roof replacement; and mold and asbestos abatement.

The California Poverty Measure (“CPM”) will be used to prioritize projects in high poverty areas of the state. Escondido Public Library’s CPM% of population in poverty is 29.25% which ranks us 141 out of 1126 library locations in California. This indicates that our project would likely receive priority in the category of “projects serving high poverty areas of the state”.

The Escondido Public Library resides in a 40,000 square foot building constructed in 1980 and is the sole library location serving a population of over 150,000 people. As with many aging City facilities, there has not been sufficient funding available to properly maintain the library. There are currently three known roof leaks and the windows seep during storms with high winds. Without addressing the roof and window issues, it is likely that there will be a major issue impacting library operations in the next 3-5 years.

In anticipation of the availability of future funding, Library Systems and Services hired Kathryn Taylor Design, a consulting firm focused on planning, engagement, and interior design for libraries, to help assess the existing facility to determine what is working and what can be improved in order to create more user-focused spaces. Kathryn met with library staff and City leaders for initial feedback and combined that with data from the community provided through annual surveys to serve as a starting point for a redesign of the existing first floor of the library.

The Escondido Public Library Critical Infrastructure and Modernization Project will replace critical infrastructure including lighting, roofing, windows, and HVAC systems throughout the facility. Fluorescent and incandescent lighting will be replaced with energy efficient LED. The original roof, which has exceeded its projected lifespan and has been repaired multiple times over the years but continues to leak, will be replaced and allow us to fix water-damaged areas throughout the facility. We will also remediate and replace the asbestos-laden ceiling tiles with a safer, more modern material. The Library has seven roof top HVAC systems which are approximately 15 years old with a 15-year lifecycle. The Library is a designated cool zone for residents during extreme heat waves. Due to the age of the HVAC units, we are



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experiencing major HVAC failures that have affected operations. These replacement efforts will extend the life of the building for the foreseeable future.

If sufficient funding is obtained, we would also install rooftop and carport solar systems which would complement the existing battery storage unit already in place at the Library. This would result in a roughly 60% offset to our annual electrical usage.

Through the strategic planning process and annual user satisfaction surveys, library staff have determined that the building fails to meet the needs of the community – most specifically in the area of providing meeting spaces and collaborative work and study spaces. Therefore, in addition to replacing critical infrastructure, this project will modernize the layout of the facility making it more functional and accommodating for how the community seeks to use it and providing a more efficient layout to support operational needs and the work of the Friends of the Library. This project will provide updated building systems and renovations to ensure that Escondido is able to deliver 21st century library services and programs in the library facility. Through the renovation, this project will provide reimagined functional spaces with features such as a market space and café, study rooms and meeting rooms, a new storefront Friends of the Library Bookstore, improved and more efficient staff workspaces, new flooring, paint, fixtures, signage, and shelving that allows for greater sightlines and a layout that provides more room for collaborative spaces and programming.

If the City is successfully awarded this grant, extensive community outreach will be done in order to help shape the final design. This will include input from the Library Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library, Library Foundation and other support groups as well library staff and the general public.

The Rough Order of Magnitude cost for the Escondido Public Library Critical Infrastructure and Modernization Project is estimated at \$13,000,000. As stated earlier in the Fiscal Analysis section, the City will request to have our matching requirement eliminated due to the fact that our Local Income Per Capita (LIPC) Level for FY 2021-22 is so low at \$12.88. Out of 183 library jurisdictions, there are only 31 who potentially qualify at this level which makes us highly competitive in this category. However, the maximum allowable grant request is \$10,000,000 so in order to achieve the full scope of the project an additional \$3 million would need to be identified. It is likely that if awarded this grant, the project would be phased in order to achieve all of the desired improvements. If, for some reason, the City is awarded a grant but the matching requirement is not eliminated then staff would return to the City Council to discuss options and receive additional direction.

## RESOLUTIONS

- a. Resolution No. 2022-32