



## AGENDA REPORT SUMMARY

**Meeting Date:** June 27, 2023

**Subject** Los Altos Library Patio Project

**Prepared by:** Jennifer Weeks, County Librarian-Santa Clara County Library District (SCCLD) and Rose Baiza, Community Librarian- SCCLD

**Attachment(s):**

1. Letter of Funding Commitment (LALE)
2. Funding Commitment (Donor)
3. Letter of Support (History Museum)
4. Letter of Support (Library Commission)
5. Letter of Support (Friends)
6. Google Earth Map of Proposed Site
7. Concept Diagrams of Patio Space
8. Land Survey

**Previous Council Consideration:**

None.

**Fiscal Impact:**

The Library Patio Project is fully funded by private donations through the Los Altos Library Endowment. The cost of the project is estimated to be \$2 million with no funding required from the City of Los Altos. Cost for review and approval of the Design Review application could be waived if authorized by the City Council.

**Environmental Review:**

The City Council action authorizing the review of the proposed project is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3). Subsequent action taken during the review of the proposed project will be analyzed separately under CEQA.

**Policy Question(s) for Council Consideration:**

- Does the City Council wish to send this proposed project to the Development Services Director for review and necessary approvals for the use and expansion of approximately 7,700 square feet for construction of an enclosed patio with transitional green space at the Main Library.

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**Reviewed By:**

City Manager

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**Summary:**

- The Patio Project is fully funded by the Los Altos Library Endowment and supported by the Santa Clara County Library District who will take the lead on the public project management.
- The proposed library patio will provide the community with 7,700 square feet of safely enclosed outdoor space that can be used by residents of all ages to read, study, learn, and explore. Working in partnership with the History Museum, this project creates educational experiences both within the Historic Orchard and attached to the main library.
- Based on the needs assessment for the library, additional public space is a priority to allow the library to offer free educational events and flexible spaces for patrons to read and study. The current library community room space is limited in both size and accessibility, and this new extension creates an interactive outdoor space that will encourage discovery for all ages, as well as expand seating and event spaces.
- The History Museum and library are natural partners that can work collaboratively to highlight the Historic Orchard through innovative programming with a new outdoor patio space. The library and Orchard Commons joint programming ideas include diverse creativity, healing in nature, adopt-a-tree, oral history with apricots and orchards, and nature journaling and sketching.
- The patio project provides many opportunities for public programming with local organizations including schools, Master Gardeners, and GreenTown. Other potential community partners include LASD Living Classrooms, LASD Art Docents, The Garden Club of Los Altos, ArtVentures, Santa Clara Watercolor Society, and Ikebana.
- The project is supported by the Los Altos Library Endowment, the Chou Family, the History Museum, the Library Commission, and the Friends of the Los Altos Libraries.

**Recommendation:**

Staff recommends, if the City Council approves the proposal, sending the item to the Development Services Director for review and necessary approvals of this project.

**Purpose**

To create an outdoor space that provides residents with a place to read, relax, study, work, and learn. The patio will be used to provide free library programs for all ages, as well as open seating to use during leisurely time. Backed with research from professional library journals, outdoor



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spaces in libraries enhance the lives of residents. Due to limited space inside the library, library staff feel strongly that the outdoor space will expand options to best meet the needs of residents with 7,000 square feet of enclosed space.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, outdoor spaces are now more in-demand to provide patrons with opportunities to protect their health in a public environment. And the moderate climate allows for year-round use. According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the average temperature over the course of a year (San Jose and surrounding cities) is 71.5 degrees--making this outdoor space accessible year-round for residents of Los Altos and Los Altos Hills.

### **Background**

The vision of an outdoor patio space at the library to meet a community need was inspired by a private donation. Taking into consideration the need for more public space, the success of outdoor programming and the design trends of innovative library spaces, the library began working closely with the Orchard Commons Committee and the city to explore a way to highlight the Historic Orchard and create a unique outdoor space at the library.

With City Council approval to repurpose 7,700 sf of city space, the library will work with a professional architecture firm on the design that meets the needs of the community.

### **Recommendation**

Staff recommends, if the City Council approves the proposal, sending the item to the Development Services Director for review and necessary approvals of this project.