

To:	Chair Deborah Kafoury Kim Melton, Chief of Staff Christian Elkin, Budget Director
From:	Vailey Oehlke, Library Department
Date:	February 12 th , 2021
RE:	FY 2022 Budget Submission Transmittal Letter

Library Overview

A cherished institution for more than 150 years, Multnomah County Library is a key community asset, meeting a complex set of evolving individual and community needs and demands. The library's requested budget of \$94.9 million dollars will help the library serve our community based on a set of priorities that change over time and on four pillars that will not change.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic we face profound challenges now and for the foreseeable future. People of color and other communities subjected to marginalization are experiencing higher risk and worse outcomes from COVID-19 as a result of systemic inequities. Multnomah County Library will focus library resources on our community's recovery, starting with those most deeply impacted by the crisis. Equity is at the core of the library's response, and the priorities below center equity and our community's lived experiences.

Our pillars:

- Free access for all
- A trusted guide for learning
- The leading advocate for reading
- A champion for equity and inclusion

Our priorities:

Helping people find work and develop career skills

- We help people look for work
- We offer resources to learn new job skills
- We help people with resumes and applications

Supporting education and learning for all ages

- We support teachers and educators in their work
- We offer students tools and resources to help virtual and in-person learning
- We provide tools and help for lifelong learning

Enhancing and diversifying virtual services

- We will expand digital collections and resources
- We will increase virtual services in the most spoken languages in our county
- We will engage more diverse voices and communities online

Technology training, access, and assistance for all

- We work to make technology available and useful for those who need it most
- We collaborate with partners to provide devices, access and training
- We amplify the urgency of digital inclusion through advocacy and action

Creating and maintaining safe and healthy spaces

- We serve people in buildings that are safe and healthy
- We follow public health guidance and use best practices
- We plan for future library spaces that support personal and public health

These pillars and priorities support Multnomah County's mission, vision and values. The library implemented new priorities in FY 2020 in response to dramatic shifts in community need resulting from COVID-19.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Efforts

Multnomah County Library is working to create a system that equitably nurtures, empowers and lifts staff, patrons and the community to their highest potential. Libraries are uniquely positioned to address barriers to opportunity and access that disproportionately affect families in poverty and communities of color. Besides residency, there are no membership requirements; no annual fees; and no restrictions based on identity, age, income, gender, race or creed. Multnomah County Library is committed to the goals of equity, inclusion and sustaining a workforce that reflects and engages the community it serves.

FY 2022 will be the sixth year of the library's equity and inclusion (E&I) program. Ongoing efforts include a continuing focus for the library's Executive Management Team, with a planned conversation series, training and coaching for that group and the broader management team.

In FY 2021, the library created a racial equity toolkit that included three general workbooks and an additional three workbooks focused on three groups: managers, white staff and staff of

color. Even as the library has been closed for public access inside buildings, staff and managers are utilizing these resources to support and enhance equity and inclusion in the library.

In FY 2021, the library assessed and reevaluated its priorities to address the needs of those most impacted by COVID-19, as well as oppressive/racist systems and committed to center race as the library restructures its services. Planning for in-person services has been led by front-line staff, predominantly culturally and linguistically diverse staff members who have and will continue to connect with the community to create community-driven services as we move forward. The library also established outdoor computer labs in areas where residents face the highest degrees of marginalization, added free printing services and offered support to other county agencies to offer assistance and resources around the eviction moratorium in addition to supporting a November General Election in which more than one-fourth of all ballots were returned through library locations.

The library has reallocated resources to better serve communities of color, including dedicating staff to support a grant to serve Black (African and African American) youth and families during the pandemic. The library has also allocated resources to hire staff to better serve the Native/Indigenous communities. The library will launch a community engagement team to gather community input to inform and develop services for communities that have faced the greatest barriers to library services. The library will add additional support to the Equity and Inclusion program within the Library Director's Office which will improve coordination of equity initiatives throughout the library system.

The library continues to participate in the countywide Workforce Equity Strategic Plan committee and as part of the countywide equity core team.

FY 2022 Budget Priorities and Key Issues

After the most trying year in recent memory, Multnomah County Library looks to Fiscal Year 2022 with a spirit of optimism and opportunity. The COVID-19 pandemic has required the library, like enterprises everywhere, to fundamentally rethink how it can deliver service and it has amplified the need for those services.

The impacts of the pandemic have fallen disproportionately on people and communities that have experienced marginalization and oppression. In addition, the coming year holds much uncertainty for how and where the library can best deliver services to meet community needs. To meet these challenges head on, the library's FY 2022 budget proposal focuses on equity and flexibility. This budget proposal seeks to align staffing and resources with anticipated shifts in services and spaces over the coming fiscal year.

In 2020, the library quickly shifted its foundational priorities to meet the needs of those most deeply affected by the pandemic and focus on community recovery. After a brief pause in the spring, the library resumed helping patrons by phone, email and then chat. Staff quickly devised a new process that allowed new patrons to sign up for library cards online. The library resumed patron holds and the return of materials in June.

Fiscal Year 2021 began with the elimination of all late fines and remaining balances, clearing fine debt from nearly 73,000 patron accounts and restoring access for thousands of patrons who had previously been unable to use the library because of debt. In FY 2021, the library added free wireless printing at all locations. In addition, the library added increased access to digital content by purchasing more copies of digital titles, including providing unlimited access to popular antiracism books and other titles. This year also saw innovative new efforts to connect with homebound seniors to share resources, convene important conversations and present events online, expand GED tutoring online, increase access through school districts and more.

Today, the library is taking a community-informed and community-centered approach to planning to enhance and expand services. This includes new online events and programs in multiple languages, new dedicated teams to support home learning and workforce development, partnerships with schools and school districts to increase student access, outreach to priority communities like housing developments and congregate settings, and more.

With building interiors closed to public access and a sharp reduction in the volume of physical checkouts due to building capacity and social distance limitations, and in order to establish new teams and refocused services, the library realigned its workforce in FY 2021, eliminating some positions and offering incentives for early retirement or voluntary layoff. That process had broader implications related to seniority, bumping and other contractual obligations. Some library staff remain in limited duration positions at the library and within Multnomah County and a number of positions have been held vacant until social distancing guidelines are no longer in place. Each of these will be factors in how the library staffs services as public access is restored and services continue to shift based on the pandemic and its aftermath.

Requested for FY 2022 is a set of organizational changes that will better support the library's current and future work. These include adding new internal leadership roles for bilingual and bicultural services for Russian, Chinese, Vietnamese and African immigrant populations (in addition to existing similar roles for Spanish language services and for the Black Cultural Library Advocate team). The library has also established a similar role in FY 2021 for the Native community and a systemwide Diversity, Equity and Inclusion program coordinator. In addition, the library's proposal includes organizational shifts to focus ongoing community engagement work and dedicated information services to the public under new units. The proposal further reorganizes management structures to support these new teams and existing teams created as a result of the pandemic.

The brightest spot of FY 2021 was the approval by voters of Measure 26-211, a historic \$387 million bond package that will build, rebuild and renovate eight libraries over eight years. That work includes a “flagship” library in East Multnomah County, similar in size to Central Library in downtown Portland; supports gigabit-speed internet to all libraries; and creates a central materials handling and distribution center to increase efficiency and cost-effectiveness.

The FY 2022 budget request includes positions to support the bond work to ensure project delivery, authentic community-centered input, public accountability and adherence to cost projections, timelines and legal obligations. This work will be captured in the Library Building Bond Administration program offer (80024) and is budgeted at \$0.8 million.

This unit, the Program Management Office, is created in partnership with the Department of County Assets and will be entirely funded by bond proceeds. The Program Management Office Director will serve as a liaison to the Board of County Commissioners. Staff from this office will support a Community Bond Oversight Committee to provide community guidance and reporting around bond expenditures.

Work on the library building bond will accelerate in FY 2022, with community engagement, facility siting, and design work beginning in earnest.

FY 2022 Budget Overview

The Library FY 2022 requested budget is \$94.9 million, a \$2.7 million increase from the FY 2021 adopted budget. Library operations are funded exclusively through the independent Multnomah County Library District, which was enacted by voters in 2012.

The Library’s FY 2022 proposed expenditures of \$94.9 million represent a 2.9% increase over the FY 2021 adopted budget. Notable budgetary changes include:

- A realignment of the Public Services Division program offers to prepare for the changes brought forth through the division’s management realignment efforts. This notably includes a new program offer, Community Engagement (80023), focused on creating connections with communities that have experienced the greatest barriers to library service.
- The addition of a permanent team focused on workforce development for communities that face the greatest barriers to employment services.
- The merger of the library’s communication and marketing teams to support great collaboration and support for these critical support functions.

- A proposed increase of \$0.3 million to support building improvement and supplies to support health and safety during the pandemic

In the eighth year of the Library District, the Library will levy a rate of \$1.22 per \$1,000 of assessed value. This is the same rate as the last fiscal year and below the voter-approved maximum of \$1.24 per \$1,000 of assessed value. The library uses an annual forecast of revenues and expenditures to anticipate the long-term needs of the district.

Other Significant Program Changes

The FY 2021 adopted budget had 530.00 FTE. The budget was modified in November 2020 to reflect some of the changes to library services and spaces due to COVID-19. That resulted in a net decrease of 22.75 FTE mostly in library public service locations. The FY 2022 budget proposes additional changes to the budgeted positions for the library. It includes some staffing to support the eventual return to in-person service and easing of social distancing guidelines. The requested budget also seeks to continue to evolve library services to meet the current and future needs of the community. The FY 2022 requested budget includes:

- 26.75 FTE net increase from the revised FY 2021 budget
- 2.50 FTE net increase from the FY 2021 adopted budget.

The FY 2022 budget also reflects a large number of positions that moved from one program offer to another. The three main factors for these changes were:

- The realignment of the FY 2021 Security program offer (80015) into the Public Services Management (80022) and public service location offers (80002, 80003, 80004)
- The realignment of public service management and program offers to result in the realignment of the public libraries in the public service location offers (80002, 80003, 80004) and the creation of a new program offer for Community Engagement (80023)
- The merging of the communications team, previously in the Library Director's Office program (80010), into the Marketing and Communications program (80019)

The FY 2022 requested budget includes a net increase of 2.50 FTE from the adopted FY 2021 budget. This includes:

- Library Building Bond Administration support paid for by bond proceeds - 6 FTE
- Public service location support for materials handling and customer service after social distancing restrictions have ended - 5.75 FTE
- Staffing for the Community Engagement program offer - 5 FTE

- A permanent workforce development team - 4 FTE
- Operations support for project management and evaluation - 2 FTE
- Education Services support for juvenile detention and school services - 1.5 FTE
- Facilities support for materials distribution - 1 FTE
- Intergenerational Services support for library services to people experiencing houselessness - 1 FTE
- Marketing and Communication support for video production - 1 FTE
- A reduction in Collections and Technical Services materials handling - 1 FTE
- Human Resources support for payroll and training - 0.50 FTE

COVID-19 Impacts

Library services have been deeply impacted by COVID-19. The library has been limited to pick up services for in person service in order to limit the spread of the virus. The library has increased virtual services and digital content to better serve people from a distance. The library will need to be prepared for a variety of operational realities in FY 2022. The budget reflects the staffing needs based on a return to regular in person service, but the library will continue to hold positions vacant that it cannot use based on current distancing guidelines and service constraints.

The library is preparing public locations for an eventual return of modified in person services. That work will require changes to the physical buildings. The FY 2022 budget contains \$310,000 for modifying the buildings and providing additional supplies for health and safety in the Facilities program offer (80014). The other major variable for our services is library staffing. The Public Services Management (80022) program offer contains \$453,800 in temporary personnel funds to help support library work based on the changing needs and requirements of library work in the year ahead.

Span of Control

The overall span of control for FY 2022 is projected at 1:9.26. This is a slight decrease from the FT 2021 ratio of 1:9.77, but remains greater than 1:9.

Division Level Organization Chart

