



March 13, 2024

Dear President Strickler and Members of the Library Board,

This letter is to bring you up to date on activities during the months of January and February, 2024 and to provide a look forward to some of the activities, programs, policy change drafts, board meeting items, and futures plans.

## Programs and Activities

### Community Outreach Specialist

Our Community Outreach Specialist (COS) Connie Dixon, started in February. The COS is placed in the Alameda Free Library Main Branch in cooperation with Housing and Human Services to address unmet social service needs. The COS is not a library employee and library policies and procedures are outside their scope of practice.

The COS will focus on the following:

- Act as point of contact for social services needs
- Connect Patrons to resources that City of Alameda has and referral services
- Office hours for meetings and referrals/linkages
- Possibility of creating a regular, informal group setting to address needs
- Triage crises and higher response needs
- Develop and maintain relationships with regular library patrons
- Ongoing collaboration with library staff to case plan for individuals
- Consult on individual situations
- Help with language to communicate library decisions
- Moderate re-entry meetings
- Bring educational resources and train staff on social work services
- Outreach to library patrons
- Support of library programming focused on constituents in need

The COS will not:

- Provide library services
- They provide a secondary layer of services specific to needs that are not traditionally met by library staff
- They will not buffer staff from patrons for regular library interactions
- Provide security services
- They are not solely responsible for ongoing enforcement of library policies
- Individual does not act as an emergency service worker
- All staff have the ability to contact non-emergency or 911 if needed.

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### **Supper and Support Program**

Supper & Support is held on every 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month. We had our second event out of the six-part series. The goal is to serve our residents with the highest unmet needs (unhoused and low income) by offering support and resources.

These are highlights from the February Supper & Support event:

- A total of 96 library patrons joined to listen in, grab a hot meal, browse the open closet, and/or receive informational resources.
- There were three local organizations who attended, presented, and offered support along with resources:
  - Alameda Food Bank
  - Alameda County Care Partners
  - Meals on Wheels
- Hot meals and snacks offered consisted of: Chinese food, macaroni and cheese, pastries, coffee, and water.
- There was an open closet available to the public with clothing, toiletries, masks, pens, and more.
- Printed flyers, informational sheets, and small gifts were provided by our local organizations
- After presentations, those who wanted to speak with representatives from each organization had an opportunity to engage with them for Q&A

In March, we will be focusing on social services and expect guests from Village of Love. We will also be offering clothes washing and drying in the parking lot.





**Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) Grant**

Supper and Support is made possible by the funding of the Friends of the Alameda Library. The funding will last through June. Due to the positive impact of the program, staff were looking at ways for it to grow and continue and found the California State Library LSTA Community Impact grant as a possible solution. We have received letters of support from various Community Partners such as ECHO Fair Housing, Housing and Human Services, City of Alameda Rent Program, and Friends of the Alameda Free Library. I attached a letter of support from the Library Board signed by Sara. The application is due on March 6<sup>th</sup> and in May we should hear from the State Library on which grants were accepted.

## Library Expansion Updates

### RESHAP Campus – Workforce and Economic Development Center (aka the Barn)

We are working with MidPen Housing and the Alameda Point Collaborative (APC) on the RESHAP Campus (Rebuilding Existing Supportive Housing at Alameda Point) as a potential site for a library at their Workforce and Economic Development Center that they have labeled as the Barn. I have had preliminary meetings with the RESHAP team, and they are excited to have the Library as a partner and felt that a Tool Lending service is a fantastic idea in that space.

To give you a deeper background on the project, I have attached an earmark request to Assemblymember Bonta from Doug Biggs, the Executive Director of APC. This gives a good summary of the Barn. I also included a letter of support by the Library Board signed by Sara and Thushan. Here is also a Community Engagement video created by MidPen Housing eight years ago: [https://youtu.be/U8nHGa4hgQk?si=pA7q0VcDHi\\_24drH](https://youtu.be/U8nHGa4hgQk?si=pA7q0VcDHi_24drH)

The next steps are trying to find various funding sources for the project and getting on the community outreach schedule to find out the service needs of the community. I'll go over some of these screenshots during the meeting.

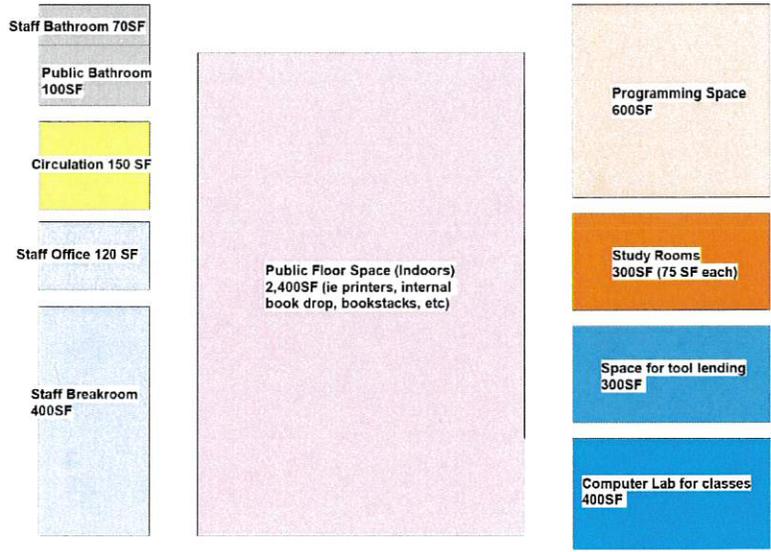
## Site Plan - Working



# Aerial View



## Library (Program SF ~ 4800SF) - Adjacencies



## Policy Updates and Approvals

I am requesting the Library Board to vote on two policy updates.

1. Library Card application has been updated to include all high schoolers to be able to apply for a Library Card without parent permission. For children under 8<sup>th</sup> grade we removed the Legal Guardian stipulation and require they only be a Guardian. This will increase access to library card patrons.
2. Extended Suspension form has been approved by the City Attorney's Office and staff. The final step for implementation is Board approval.

Thank you, Anita and Dimple, for assisting in the language of the policy updates.

## Alameda Poet Laureate

I am requesting to have one Board Member be part of the selection committee for the Alameda Poet Laureate search.

The Poet Laureate is an honorary title given to a person who has demonstrated excellence in the literary arts. The Poet Laureate will work with cultural, educational and other organizations to encourage the community to express their literary creativity and to create a community environment in which literary talent can thrive and be encouraged.

**Selection Committee:** Library Director; Library Board member; Alameda Island Poets representative.

Selection Committee reviews the candidates' qualifications and depending on the number of candidates, provides a list of 3-5 qualified candidates to the Mayor for appointment. The Mayor will have the "freedom of the list" to select the Poet Laureate from that list.

**Application:** Resume and three poems. Advertise & receive resumes (4-6 weeks)

### Responsibilities:

- The Poet Laureate term will be a three-year term with possibly one reappointment, no more than six years
- Poet Laureate is a voluntary position with no honorarium offered
- The Poet Laureate encourages citizens to express their literary creativity
- The Poet Laureate will promote and showcase original works of citizens
- The Poet Laureate creates works of the written word that commemorates special events in the life of the City of Alameda

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## **Friends of the Library**

The Friends of the Alameda Free Library are having their book sale on March 15-16. FAL is also seeking to hire an Executive Director. They have had a few interviews and are narrowing down the candidates.

If you have any questions about the items to be considered at the Board meeting, or if you would like to discuss these or any other items, please email me at [mromero@alamedaca.gov](mailto:mromero@alamedaca.gov) or call me at 510-747-7730.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the initials 'M R' in a cursive style.

Marlon Romero  
Acting Library Director