

To: Boulder City Council
Cc: Jane Brautigam, Boulder City Manager
From: Boulder Library Commission
Subject: Annual Letter to City Council

December 19, 2018

The conclusion of 2018 marks a watershed year for the Boulder Public Library. Completion, acceptance, and a move to execute our Master Plan coupled with the productive and necessary dialogs around sustained, long-term funding for the Library frame our thoughts.

We are pleased and gratified that the conclusion of the November 27, 2018 study session showed unanimous consensus among Council members that our Library is significantly underfunded. You have received a plethora of materials including the approved 2018 Master Plan and a wealth of information at the July and November study sessions. Input from City finance and planning staff, independent financial consultants, and a legal overview provided in-depth analyses in response to Council's requests. We agree that this is policy work at its best and appreciate the ongoing process toward a better future for our library.

Key takeaways from the 11/27/18 study session:

- The Library is one of the City's crown jewels and might even be considered a core service.
- The City will retain a professional polling firm to conduct a comprehensive survey of in-city and out of city residents to gauge community attitudes around different ways to fund the Library. It is anticipated the surveys will be conducted in March and the results evaluated by April. This will allow Council in May to consider next steps.
- All members agreed it will be critical to educate the citizenry about the long term funding issues in step with an effective polling process.
- The decision to determine if a City ballot initiative is required for November 2019 elections will take place in May.
- The creation of a District will be one alternative for funding presented. The Library Commission has previously communicated our unanimous consensus that a District is the most viable option.
- The boundaries of the District are still to be determined with options including a City only boundary, following the BVCP boundaries, the boundaries proposed via County Commissioners (as presented), or another scenario.

We underscore that this is an historic opportunity for the City and you as its leaders to chart a new and equitable course for our Library. Recognizing and celebrating its unique role in our community is step one. Bolstering the investments that will sustain the library services we value, through a framework we can depend on into the future, is step two. Perhaps most importantly, this work can represent a positive shift in the relationship and engagement of residents outside of city boundaries, but most certainly members of our Boulder community. Taking a new step

toward shared services, and shared governance is an evolution of not only our services, but our Civics.

Therefore, it is of utmost importance that the library remain present on Council's calendar and agenda over the coming year. To help frame your considerations and assign focus to more immediate aspects of the BPL Master Plan our specific asks for next two-three years are listed.

- Opening the North Boulder Library branch.
- A larger maker space and expansion of BLDG 61 programming.
- Support service to Gunbarrel residents in the form of a corner library pilot project utilizing the methodology that proved successful in North Boulder.
- Fund and complete analysis of the main Library Campus North Building.
- Institute a pilot program to activate the Canyon Theater to a goal of 80% utilization with necessary variances and adjustments to support mixed usage and programming.
- Execution of the 2020 Strategic Technology Plan.

The Library Commission wishes to acknowledge your dedication of time and attention to the Library's future. We look forward to continuing these discussions and working toward collectively finding a solution to the Library's long term funding needs.

Sincerely,

The Library Commission

Joni Teter - Chair
Tim O'Shea - Vice Chair
Juana Gomez
Joel Koenig
Jane Sykes Wilson