

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

December 15, 2019

A warm welcome to our new Council members and best regards to the returning members. We value our good working relationship and ongoing dialog. We know you are committed to finding the best path forward for the library system our community so loves, and that includes finding sustainable and predictable funding. The much needed funds you approved in October 2019 are helping with expansion of volunteer services, bi-lingual youth services, updates to the interior of the Reynolds library branch, and an additional \$700K for the North Boulder Library Branch building.

We expect continued progress in 2020 and the approval of funds is a good start. In the library we understand that great success can create increased demand, like a hold placed on the latest best seller, or the long waiting list for one our BLDG 61 programs. Our success should not be a signal that current funding is meeting all our needs. Rather, the Library is in high demand and must grow to meet our community's long term vision.

The projected construction cost for the promised NoBo branch is facing a \$1 million shortfall. In addition, though council included operating costs for NoBo in the upcoming 2021 budget there are many other related operating and facilities costs not scheduled for discussion. We need your commitment and leadership to arrive at a decision on sustained funding for the library.

You have pledged your support in stewarding this dialog including discussing and evaluating a library district plan. Delivering on your promises to build a new branch requires finding a fiscally sustainable path forward for our library. It is an opportunity to lead thoughtfully to make a positive and lasting mark in our community, and to secure a vision--not just for a fiscal calendar, but for the next generation.

This year will present an historic opportunity to determine the future of our cherished institution. In the spring we will have to submit the petition to put on the November 2020 ballot whether to create and whether to fund a library district, or simply whether to fund a library district. Our recommendation is that the County and City leaders create a district by proclamation and begin negotiation of the IGA. Then we rely on the voters to determine the funding.

We share your spirit of committed service to our community. It is time to act. Your leadership will live in the outcomes for our library. This commission and our community will be your partners as we navigate the path ahead.

Respectfully,

Tim O'Shea, Chair ▪ Juana Gómez, Vice-Chair ▪ Joel Koenig ▪ Jane Sykes Wilson ▪ Steven Frost