



CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
LIBRARY BOARD REPORT

AGENDA DATE: March 20, 2020
TO: Library Board
FROM: Administration Division, Library Department
SUBJECT: Eastside Library Update

RECOMMENDATION:
That the Library Board receive an update on the Eastside Library

DISCUSSION:
The Eastside Library is Santa Barbara's busy local neighborhood branch offering an array of services and programs for all ages.

Eastside currently hosts adult programs such as the Santa Barbara chapter of One Million Cups, a nationally recognized program that allows entrepreneurs and up and coming business owners to engage and connect with each other. Book discussion groups focusing on memoirs and biographies are held each month as well as programs to spark creativity such as Open Sew. Adults seeking employment help or needing to finish their High School Diploma can also participate in the SBPL Works! program at the Eastside Branch. Programs are available in Spanish as well such as the series of financial literacy classes and computer classes.

In addition to programs offered at the branch, staff get out into the community to develop partnerships with groups such as Women's Economic Ventures, Latino Elder Outreach Network, and the Milpas Association, and perform outreach to organizations like SBCC, the Chamber of Commerce, and the SB Yacht Club.

Eastside has a very active group of teens that gather frequently to offer feedback on existing programs and help plan for events for their age group. Currently, they are finalizing plans for the next Summer Reading Program. Other activities for teens include: film workshops, a variety of maker actives, and a drone flight program. Children also come in on weekly basis to participate in Wiggly Storytime, STEAM activities, field trips, and Stay and Play, a more informal program for family, friends, and neighbors to drop in and participate in stories and songs and to play and connect with each other.

After a year of planning and preparation, SBPL is pleased to announce the re-opening of the newly renovated Eastside Branch Library. Starting from the outside with new paint and the installation of solar panels patrons are welcomed with a fresh new look.

Inside, the new open floorplan and flexible space has created a bright, inviting community gathering place to learn and discover. The Library collaborated with Public Works to explore new possibilities for the facility and select new paint, flooring, and other design elements including user-friendly and more functional furniture. New features include a larger children's area, modern furniture and shelving that easily move around to create new programming spaces, USB ports for easy charging, and a mobile staff work station for assistance from anywhere in the Library. New all-in-one-computers, mobile launchpads, mounted OPACS, and other technology improvements are currently being implemented.

With the addition of the newly developed flexible space staff are excited for what's to come and are already planning to expand programming opportunities. The SBPL Works! office will add Pre-ESL classes and services to business owners with information, training and workshops in the new space. Eastside Librarian, Ahmad Merza, has already applied for a Google Business Grant to get this project underway. Events such as the recent poetry reading, will be held right inside the Library, allowing patrons use Library services in conjunction with the program.

Teens will be able to meet in their own space for the first time, and children will have access to a larger amount of hands on, early literacy tools and games to promote discovery and play as shown with the added train table and expanded Stay and Play program to be moved from the MLK room to Children's space for more learning stations and access to library material. The new space also presents a new opportunity to streamline services with Adelante Charter School. As there is more demand from other schools and groups to use the Library, Eastside staff have worked on solutions such as institutional class cards and structured visits that can better balance the needs of the students with staff capacity.

While the renovation is complete and new events are already being planned, staff are continuously looking towards the future for the Eastside Branch and have identified areas to focus future projects on such as revitalizing the patio areas and offering a laptop and charging kiosk that provides check out capabilities. Staff will also be conducting a formal needs assessment for the Eastside Branch to evaluate technology and library use in the new space, incorporating patron feedback to identify needs and formulate future branch priorities, goals, and needed staffing levels.

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