

CORRESPONDENCE

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Leslie Rosenthal <
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 6:04 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Strong Support for the Central Library Earthquake Retrofit and Building Repairs Project

Some people who received this message don't often get email from

[Learn why this is important](#)

[⚠] CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you **know** the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button. For more information about the Phish Alert Button view article "KB0010263" on the DoIT portal.

Dear Members of the Pasadena City Council,

On behalf of the San Rafael Library Associates, a community group dedicated to supporting the San Rafael Library, we are writing to express our strong support for the Central Library Earthquake Retrofit and Building Repairs Project. As dedicated advocates for our local library and the Central Library, we deeply appreciate the essential role the Central Library plays in our community.

Since its unexpected closure in May 2021, the Central Library has faced significant challenges in maintaining its wide array of programs and services. Prior to this, the library was a dynamic center for large-scale events such as the STEAM Fair, ArtNight, and the Author Fair. Unfortunately, these events have either been canceled or significantly scaled down due to space limitations. For instance, ArtNight attendance dropped from over 2,500 participants in 2019 to just 191 at the Lamanda Park Branch in 2023. Similarly, the One City, One Story program saw a dramatic decrease in attendance from 2,500 to 250, now hosted in costly rented spaces.

The closure also affected the Donald R. Wright Auditorium, which once hosted a variety of programs including parenting classes, summer reading events, lectures, film series, and cultural performances. Many of these activities have been canceled or drastically reduced due to the lack of a suitable venue.

Furthermore, the Central Library offered exhibit spaces to community groups at no cost, enriching cultural engagement. These exhibits, once displayed in prominent areas such as the North Entry and Centennial Room, are no longer available, reducing community interaction. Important programs like National Financial Literacy Month, Citizenship Preparation Classes, and the LA Law Librarian & Law Library partnership have also suffered. With these services moved or canceled, patrons, particularly those needing legal resources near the courthouse, are left with fewer options.

Programs providing business counseling, health screenings, and language classes have faced similar disruptions, leading to cancellations or relocations. Volunteer involvement has diminished as well, with fewer opportunities for teens and summer interns.

The impact on children and teen services is especially significant. In 2019, the library hosted nearly 300 programs for youth, attracting thousands of participants. Post-closure, many of these programs, including storytimes and STEAM activities, have been reduced or canceled. Teen programming has seen a severe drop, with fewer volunteers and events now hosted at the Jefferson Branch, leading to a notable decrease in engagement.

The overall decline in library services is stark, with substantial drops in program offerings, attendance, computer use, library visits, item circulation, and reference inquiries from 2019 to 2023.

The Central Library is more than just a building; it is a vital community center fostering education, culture, and engagement. The closure has significantly hindered these roles, emphasizing the need for its reopening. We urge the

City of Pasadena to prioritize the funding and resources needed for the retrofit and repairs. Restoring the Central Library will revive an essential hub for our community, demonstrating a commitment to a vibrant and engaged city.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

The San Rafael Library Associates

Leslie Rosenthal
Janice Segall
Taka Suzuki
Katherine Wimmer
Angie O'Brien
Teresa Lamb Simson
Ellen Tan
Joan Hearst
Kathy Onoye
Joan Favre

San Rafael Branch Library
1240 Nithsdale Road
Pasadena, CA 91105

McMillan, Acquanette (Netta)

From: Leslie Rosenthal
Sent: Monday, July 22, 2024 6:31 PM
To: PublicComment-AutoResponse
Subject: Endorsement of Central Library Earthquake Retrofit Project

Some people who received this message don't often get email from [redacted]. [Learn why this is important](#)

[A] CAUTION: This email was delivered from the Internet. Do not click links or open attachments unless you *know* the content is safe. Report phish using the Phish Alert Button. For more information about the Phish Alert Button view article "KB0010263" on the DoIT portal.

Dear Members of the Pasadena City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for the Central Library Earthquake Retrofit and Building Repairs Project.

As Chairperson of the San Rafael Library Associates, a community group dedicated to supporting the San Rafael Branch Library, I deeply value the vital role that public libraries, including the Central Library, play in our community. Great cities are defined by great libraries, and the Central Library is a cornerstone of Pasadena's commitment to fostering a vibrant, educated, and engaged populace.

The Central Library is much more than a collection of books; it is a dynamic public space where individuals come to read, participate, enjoy, engage, and learn. It provides a supportive, welcoming, and engaging environment that benefits people of all ages, especially children. The library nurtures a love for learning in young minds and serves as a community center that fosters connections and growth for everyone.

The Central Library offers invaluable educational programs, cultural events, and quiet spaces for study and reflection, which are essential for personal and community development. The proposed retrofitting and repairs are crucial to ensuring the safety and longevity of this cherished institution.

Without the Central Library, our community would face a significant loss in programming and services. I strongly urge the City of Pasadena to prioritize the necessary funding and resources to complete this project. Reopening the Central Library will symbolize our city's commitment to a strong and vibrant community.

Thank you for your attention and support in this important matter.

Sincerely,

Leslie Rosenthal
Chairperson, San Rafael Library Associates

Leslie Rosenthal

Pasadena, CA 91105